

Sip tastes of liquid gold

Terri Dunbar-Curran

ARE you hot? Don't just have ice cream, have an ice-cream cocktail.

When Kurt Schlechter of Bartenders Workshop was approached to dream up a handful of delicious cocktails using Magnum's new Gold ice cream, he jumped at the opportunity.

"I was quite intrigued by the idea, in terms of creating new and funky drinks," he says of his partnership with Magnum. "It was really interesting to make them. I like new challenges."

His creations range from sweet and tasty to downright delectable. They're great on their own, but they also make a fantastic alternative to dessert at a dinner party.

"You just take a whole Magnum, that's the fun part. You throw it into the blender. I don't think you can drink thousands of them, though," he laughs. "But maybe one or two."

He has recently returned from Mexico where he secured his position as world champion at the Olmeca International Margarita Competition.

Schlechter started Bartenders Workshop with his brother 12 years ago, and while he counts flaring and teaching among his skills, he's particularly interested in the mixology side of his job.

"These days, people are not only eating great, they're drinking great, too. Just look at how many people are having cocktail parties at home," he says.

Creating the cocktails for Magnum was nothing new for Schlechter, who is often approached by companies to come up with new concepts using their products, or by bars and restaurants to design unique drinks for their menus. And that experimentation and creativity is one of the things he likes most about his job.

"At the bar school I have a little lab. I'm always coming up with new ideas. I look at what people eat, the fruits and blends people are enjoying at the time," he explains. "I start with something people will recognise and know. Then I look at different flavours. Everything must also be easily available. So the three important things are simplicity, availability and taste."

He also takes into account local and international trends. That's where his travelling to competitions comes in handy.

He makes a point of learning



MELTDOWN: Caroline Correa and Benicio Del Toro are the faces of Magnum Gold. Whip up a sweet and refreshing Gold cocktail or two this summer.

'You can put anything in a drink as long as the balance is right'

from other people's experiences.

Part of his prize at the recent competition was a trip to New York, the home of the top 35 cocktail bars. "It was fascinating to see how different cultures drink. They like bitter stuff, strong and short," he says. "That wouldn't work here. We have more of a fruity, sweet taste."

He describes cocktails as the freshest drink you can have at a bar, or make at home.

"Anyone can do it, it's all about blends. You can put anything in a drink so long as you get the balance right."

His preparation for the Magnum project involved him first eating a few and then deciding what flavours he could add to complement the already great taste.

"All of these cocktails are decadent drinks, there's no half measures here," he laughs.

"So no diet cocktails. The Gold Crush is almost a meal, it's a banana sundae, just jugged up.

"The Midnight Hot is something the guys can drink."

And some of the more unusual drinks he's created?

There were the vanilla and candyfloss martini, biltong Bloody Mary and the margarita he made in Mexico that included rooibos and naartjie salt, to name just a few.

GOLD DELIGHT

Ingredients:

25ml
Vodka
25ml
Nacht-
muzik
27.5ml
Amarula
1 Mag-
num Gold

Method:

Blend ingredients with crushed ice and serve. Serve in a hurricane glass and garnish with white chocolate shavings.



GOLD CRUSH

Ingredients:

12.5ml
Giffard
Butterscotch
25 ml Crème
de Cacao
12.5ml
Frangelico
1 banana
1 Magnum
Gold

Method:

Blend frozen. Serve in a tall cocktail glass with a chocolate powdered rim and garnish with flakes.



MIDNIGHT HOT

Ingredients:

50ml Jack
Daniels
12.5ml Kahlua
12.5ml Crème de
Cacao
12.5ml Crème de
menthe.
12.5ml Double
heavy cream
1 Magnum Gold

Method:

Shake the first three ingredients and separately shake crème de menthe and cream and layer. Serve in a martini glass and finish with chocolate flakes.



GOLDEN COFFEE

Ingredients:

25ml
Cold
Espresso
25ml
Kahlua
12.5ml
Sugar
Syrup
25ml
Vodka
1 Mag-
num Gold

Method: Blend all ingredients. Serve in a tall glass and garnish with three coffee beans.



CHOCOLATE COOKIE

Ingredients:

25ml
Kahlua
12.5ml
Vanilla
Syrup
25ml Half
Scoop
crushed
Ice
3 Choco-
late biscuits
1 Magnum Gold

Method: Blend. Serve in a tall cocktail glass and garnish with a chocolate cookie.

