



June 19, 2014

## INDUSTRY HEADLINES

### Current Trends in Glassware: Adding Class with Glass

One of the hottest trends to hit drinkware in recent years was the Mason jar, a popular vehicle for all types of beverages, from ice tea to bourbon, and across all geographic regions. The Mason jar trend might have sprung to life in Southern cafes and summer picnics, but restaurants from New York to California embraced it as a trendy pitcher for individual libations.

These days, trends in glassware have moved beyond the Mason jar to more classic, old-fashioned beverage vessels, as well as variation, meaning a different glass for each style of drink. The major push amongst glassware purveyors is to help restaurants enhance guests' experience with the beverage and consider how the glass plays a role, says Jerry Moore, glassware product manager at glass purveyor Libbey Foodservice.

“What we are seeing is a diversification in glassware,” adds Susan Dountas, director of foodservice marketing for Libbey. “We don’t see a really large trend coming on board, like the Mason jar, but from our end, it’s more about helping our customers create the experience they want.”



→ At the newly opened Spyglass Rooftop Bar and fabrick restaurant at the Archer Hotel New York, mixologist Joe Goglia uses glassware to differentiate drinks, especially for the higher-priced premium spirits. Glassware is integral to the high-quality presentation, he says. He explains that Spyglass serves an Old Fashioned in stemmed glasses, which are not only nice to handle, but also allow the aroma to unfold, similar to the experience of drinking a premium spirit in a snifter.

“It doesn’t help the restaurant accomplish its goals if the glassware isn’t suitable,” says Moore at Libbey. “If it looks nice, the guest doesn’t mind paying the higher price for the beverages.”

Vintage glassware is also seeping into smaller restaurant and bar venues, says Johnny Swet, a mixologist and co-owner of JIMMY at The James NY and Chicago and mixologist at New York’s The Skylark. “There’s also a big return in classic glassware like the coupe, old-fashioned, and collins glasses,” Swet says.

At JIMMY Chicago, with its classic 1970s-chic feel, all the glassware has a silver rim, with specialty vintage cocktail shakers that match. Jimmy at The James New York easily has 10 different glasses for cocktails, “which really allows the drink selection to be very eclectic,” Swet says. “One of the things I cherish most, being a rye whiskey drinker, is the feel of a rocks glass in your hand. It must have the proper weight and feel when you hold it. It’s a small detail, but very important.”

Before craft beer and craft cocktails came to the beverage party, aromas and suitable glasses were more of an afterthought. But as Millennials become increasingly educated about proper beverage service, restaurants and bars are finding innovative ways to use different types of glassware, Libbey’s Dountas says.

Picking glassware can actually dictate the cocktail program, Swet says, as the size of a glass might decree what type of ice to use, for instance, and also allows the creativity to flow out. “[Bar managers say] maybe I will do a classic Vesper Martini in a coupe instead of a Martini glass,” Swet explains.

To that end, the range of glassware continues to evolve and expand. Libbey offers 149 different types of beer glasses, and 10 glasses for spirits recently debuted. Also trending are new options for hot beverages; as tea and coffee service gain popularity, Libbey's introduced a commercial French Press last year for tableside tea and coffee service.