

GARNISHES AT BASSOON

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Bassoon opened in mid-2010 and impressed us with the imagination and creativity that they put into their garnishes, the more so because their garnishes are not simply competition creations but an everyday occurrence.

Under bar manager Domenico de Felice (formerly of the Lanesborough and Ritz hotels) and with head bartender Mario la Pietra in charge of day-to-day operations, the team creates a stunning visual range of cocktails that are a feast for the eyes as much as the palate. As with our previous garnish photoshoot at Nightjar, Bassoon's garnishes aren't gratuitous decorations, but form an inherent part of the drink.

Commercially too, they generate sales via the wow factor that travels across the bar as they are served. Such garnishes are, says Mario, the "business card of the bar world".

You'll note Bassoon's use of a catering dehydrator - a multi-leveled air drier with mesh shelves where slices of fruit can be dried. The bar also uses the technique to dehydrate liquids into solid 'dust', notably limoncello and Green Chartreuse.

Shortbread Roy

Fat-washed whisky, using unsalted Cornish butter, mixed with Cocchi vermouth, homemade Jerry Thomas bitters, chocolate bitters and cinnamon tincture, served in a teacup over hand-cracked ice, garnished with griottines cherries in homemade blends of coffee liqueur, rum, creme de cacao and dark brandy, with shortbread on the side, a dried orange slice and an orange twist.

