

# Sam Jeveons Mixologist

**Before moving to Hong Kong**, Sam headed famous award winning bars like Milk & Honey, Trailer Happiness and The Player in London. Now, he's the Director of Alconomics Asia, an extension of a UK based bar consultancy company. Sam has travelled to many parts of the world, but has just made Taiwan his home. In fact, it's safe to say that this globe-trotter is as in love with Asia as Asia is with him. It was not surprising then, that OK!'s partner for the OK! REDefine+REDesign Party last month, Belvedere, got Sam to customise two cocktails just for us, which we aptly named, Poh Poh Loves To Party and Orlando Bloom Me. We had a little tête-a-tête with the man behind our cocktails.

## What's the different between mixology and bartending and how did you get into it?

From the age of 16 I was working behind a bar of some description – the English pub style initially. Throughout university I worked in great bars, nightclubs and boutique hotels to earn money. When graduation came and I had to enter the "real world" of work I had the choice of following my academic experience or my work experience. Academically I majored in Russian Politics – that's why I chose a career in hospitality.

I was then and am now a bartender. Mixologist is a new phenomenon, a description created in an attempt to separate the professional bartender from the thousands of part time bartenders earning cash for fun. Worse than mixologists are the ones that call themselves bar chefs! (laughs)

**You mentioned that in England, being a mixologist isn't perceived as a proper profession, do you**

## observe the same in the other countries that you've travelled to?

When I initially started out, bartending was considered by some (in my small town) to be a part time job, not a proper job, not a career. My move to first Australia and then London changed this perception.

## What is the most common bartending mistake?

Believing that entertaining is more important than serving great drinks. The art of flairing is a skill shown off by many in Malaysia for the value of entertaining the customer, but this skill should be secondary to the art of making good drinks that taste balanced.

## What is the most difficult thing about bartending?

Bartending should educate, entertain and enthuse the customer. The first step in this task is to interact with the customer as an equal, to be able to converse naturally and informatively on any topic overcoming the perception of being subservient. Having this confidence is the hardest part of the job, but once it is achieved, it will be the strongest skill a bartender can have in his armoury. This is the hardest part of bartending as well as the long hours, memorising recipes, never holding down relationships.... (laughs)

## What do you like about your job most?

Meeting people! No other profession allows you to meet people from such different walks of life, from so many different professions, all mingling together in the one bar.

## What is it about each of the two special cocktails (Poh Poh Loves to Party and Orlando Bloom Me) that distinguishes itself from other more commonly available cocktails, like a B52 or Long Island Ice Tea?

(It is the) freshness of ingredients, quality of ingredients and hopefully the presentation of the finished cocktails that set them apart from more commonly ordered cocktails. To equate the cocktails to food they are fine dining in comparison to the commonly consumed fast

food cocktails such as the Long Island and worse still the B52! (laughs)

## Out of the three Belvedere vodkas, which is your favourite?

Pomarańcza rocks my world right now. (Pomarańcza is Belvedere's orange flavored vodka) I can't get enough of it. Just try Pomarańcza with apple juice as an introduction to it – you will be hooked!

## If you could make a Belvedere cocktail that is inspired by Kuala Lumpur, what would you call it?

Struys Martini. Local model and TV host / celeb Jojo Struys was the host of the inaugural Belvedere Asian regional cocktail competition held in HK last year. Jojo is also the first friend I made in KL and through her friends I was able to see a completely new side of the city – one that a visitor would never normally see.

## How many times have you been to KL and what do you love best about Kuala Lumpur and its night scene?

I have spent about seven or so weeks in KL on at least six trips to the city. The vibrancy of so many cultures blending together, the size of the youth culture that will form the future of the city in years to come, the choice of venue from refined to world class nightclubbing all play a part in creating a great culture and sub-culture of KL's nightlife. There is something for everybody – the only thing that needs to change is the level of traffic in the city, It's hard to visit different bars one night! (laughs)

## How to make a Struys Martini

Fresh pineapple, fresh lemon juice, Belvedere Citrus vodka and the herb Thyme. Aromatic, refreshing and beautiful – just like Jojo and friends



BELVEDERE VODKA

