

SO SCOTTSDALE!

HOCKEY ON HORSEBACK

Former Arizona Coyotes captain Shane Doan trades his skates for riding boots at the 11th Annual Bentley Scottsdale Polo Championships

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SMOLDERING SIPPER

Mezcal is in the driver's seat for Highway to Helayna, El Chorro's twist on a traditional sour

The bar team at El Chorro travels to 18 East, which is Breakthru Beverage's state-of-the-art cocktail lab in Phoenix, several times a year to research and develop its seasonal menus.

"We start with a central theme, but then it is all about collaboration, creativity and seasonality when we start testing flavor profiles," says Helayna Hudak, head bartender at El Chorro. "For the fall, we decided it would be fun to theme each cocktail around song titles."

Hudak also saw the new menu as a chance to introduce El Chorro patrons to mezcal in an approachable way.

"While it has been trending for a few years, we hadn't as yet used the smokey spirit in any of our signature cocktails," Hudak says.

Enter Highway to Helayna (\$16), named both as an homage to the classic AC/DC tune and for Hudak herself, who designed the drink using one of her favorite mezcals, Mezcal Naran Espadin.

"Mezcal Naran, made in the Mexican state of Oaxaca, is a bit softer than some other brands on the market, making it a nice introduction to the spirit," Hudak says.

It is combined with freshly squeezed lemon and lime juices for acidity then pineapple puree and agave syrup to add sweetness.

"We add egg white and then give it a dry shake. Once frothy, we add ice and shake the contents again to chill it," Hudak says.

The foamy mixture is then double strained into a rocks glass. It's garnished with both a Luxardo cherry and a lemon peel.

"It is a lightly smokey twist on a traditional sour with an ultra-creamy texture and some surprisingly rich notes of barbecued pineapple," Hudak says. "It tastes heavenly despite its name."

El Chorro, 5550 E. Lincoln Drive, Paradise Valley; 480.948.5170; www.elchorro.com.

BY ALISON BAILIN BATZ / PHOTO BY DEBBY WOLVOS

