

Meet the Quarter Bottle, a Glenfiddich Kindred Spirit serve designed to let consumers play mixologist.



Keeping Up with the Kindred Spirit

THE SECOND ANNUAL
GLENFIDDICH KINDRED
SPIRIT COMPETITION
CHALLENGES BAR
TEAMS TO THINK
OUTSIDE THE BOX

by Rachel Burkons / photos by Rebecca Peplinski

On a blustery February day in Dufftown, Scotland, bartenders from across the U.S. nervously awaited their chance to present a unique take on a serve of Glenfiddich. From cigars wrapped in tobacco designed to pair with various expressions of Glenfiddich whisky to Glenfiddich ice spheres and deconstructed bites designed to mimic the flavors in the classic Scotch, creativity was on high as the finalists in the Glenfiddich Kindred Spirit competition battled for the inaugural title.

This time next year, there will be a new champion crowned—will it be you? If you want to find yourself Scotland-bound, you'll have to get past the creative team at Chicago's Franklin Room first: There, Beverage Director Peter Kim and General Manager Tony Glover have brought a simple yet elegant serve to the Windy City, all with the aim of whisky education.

“Providing good service, particularly through our staff knowing our whiskey list well, is key to what we’re doing,” explains Kim. “And the phrase ‘kindred spirit’ really vibes with what we’re trying to provide at the Franklin Room, it signifies something you want to share together: We can share a great product with our guests and learn more about it at the same time.”

So with an educated consumer as the end goal, the team at the Franklin Room presents the Quarter Bottle, which offers that amount of Glenfiddich 18 in a carafe, along with the makings of a classic Old Fashioned—sugar, bitters and ice. “We decided to create a serve in the name of camaraderie,” says Kim. “The guests have some whiskey to share, but we’re also giving them the tools to make the most obvious and classic whisky cocktail of them all with this broken down Old Fashioned.”

“It’s a learning tool in and of itself,” continues Kim. “The base whisky is there, perfect on its own. Some purists, when presented with a spirit as quality as Glenfiddich, don’t want to add anything other than ice and water. But for other guests, it gives people the opportunity to play bartender for a second. As we’ve seen people get more interested in craft cocktails, we thought this would be a great way to bring them in—and teach them about whisky while we’re at it.”

Glenfiddich Ambassador David Allardice is a fan, and sees great potential with this simple-yet-sweet serve. “Peter’s Old Fashioned deconstruction with the 18 Year Old is not only very creative, but also empowers the consumer,” comments Allardice. “I like the idea of offering options. You get the whisky of course. Glenfiddich 18 is a tremendously rich and complex malt, perfect for an Old Fashioned cocktail. You also get an ice ball, water and all the tools to create your own classic cocktail, which can be fun and interactive for the guest,” he continues. “It’s an experience you can share with friends, and it helps to present the guest with various ways Scotch whisky can be enjoyed.”

While learning and experimentation is all part of the fun of the Quarter Bottle serve, the team at Franklin Room is sure to provide guidance to guests: “Measurements are important in cocktails,” admits Kim. “We’re not just dropping off a platter and saying, ‘Figure it out!’ Our staff will show them exactly how to make the drink, and we’ll have instructions and a recipe card they can take with them and hopefully share with their friends! We hope this is something that they can use to continue to explore whisky and craft cocktails long after they’ve left the bar.”

With the kindred spirit flowing through the Franklin Room, Kim admits that he’d love the chance to join next year’s winners at the distillery: “You can read about a distillery and its history all you want, but there’s something incredibly memorable about seeing the place, smelling the air, breathing in the history. It would be phenomenal!” ■■

K. S. 2.0!

Now in its second year, THE TASTING PANEL is proud to present the Glenfiddich Kindred Spirit competition! Are you making crazy-fun Glenfiddich popsicles? Do you dream in deconstructed drams? Show us your most creative serve for your chance to win!

Email KindredSpirit@TastingPanelMag.com to enter today!



Peter Kim is Beverage Director at Chicago's Franklin Room.



David Allardice, Brand Ambassador for Glenfiddich.