

Bar

The Consistency Standard

Five steps that make a cocktail taste the same on Tuesday as on Saturday, whoever makes it. Regulars reorder a favourite partly to see if it has changed.

Who

Every bartender, checked by the head bartender

When

Every cocktail on the list, on every shift

You need

A spec sheet for each cocktail, jiggers, tasting straws, the right glass

Measured by A current spec for every cocktail · Every pour measured with a jigger · Every mixed drink tasted with a straw

1 One spec

Every cocktail on the list has one written spec: each ingredient in ml, the method, ice, glass, garnish and finished volume. It is kept at the station, and only the head bartender changes it.

"Negroni: 30 ml gin, Campari, red vermouth. Stir 20 s, one cube, rocks glass, orange peel."

Common mistake Keeping the recipes in the senior bartender's head. On their day off, the drink changes with them.

2 Measure every pour

Pour every spirit, syrup and juice with a jigger, on the busiest night too, and for the drink you have made a thousand times. Free pouring shifts the balance a little with every glass.

"Jigger on every pour tonight, please, Luca, the Spritzes too."

Common mistake Free pouring once the bar gets busy. The time saved is lost again on the drinks that come back.

3 Taste first

Dip a clean straw into every stirred or shaken drink before it is strained, taste a drop and throw the straw away. A drink that is off is made again before it leaves the bar, never sent out.

"Too sharp, today's lemons are tart. Remaking it and telling the head bartender."

Common mistake Tasting only when something feels wrong. By then the guest has already had three sips of it.

4 Same glass, same garnish

Serve each cocktail in the glass and with the garnish on its spec, every time. If the glass has run out, tell the guest and offer the closest one before you make the drink, not after.

"Our Nick & Nora glasses are all in use, Dr Kowalski. May I serve it in a coupe tonight?"

Common mistake Changing the garnish because a herb ran out. The regular who orders it for the rosemary notices first.

5 Calibrate weekly

Once a week, every bartender on shift makes the same two cocktails side by side. The head bartender tastes them blind, names the differences and agrees each correction with the team.

"Week 41, Daiquiri x3: Karim short on lime. Spec unchanged, retaste Thursday."

Common mistake Calibrating only after a complaint. The drift had been there for weeks; one guest finally said so.

Your House Specs

The three cocktails your guests reorder most. Write each spec here so that any bartender on any shift makes them the same way.

The most ordered

Ingredients in ml _____

Method and ice _____

Glass and garnish _____

Taste: what to check _____

The house signature

Ingredients in ml _____

Method and ice _____

Glass and garnish _____

Taste: what to check _____

The one regulars test

Ingredients in ml _____

Method and ice _____

Glass and garnish _____

Taste: what to check _____

How to use this with your team

Fill it in with the head bartender at Monday's briefing. Each day one bartender makes one of the three to spec in front of the team. If two versions taste different, the card is corrected that day.

Part of the DolceVita Standards Library: free operating standards for every department of the hotel, at dolcevitahospitality.com/free-resources.