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Behind the bar with Boy Fazy

BY COLIN GOMEZ

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The creative force behind the indulgent cocktails at EQ KL, Boy Fazy steps away from crafting liquid masterpieces to share some behind-the-scenes tales from his bar in this exclusive interview.

Mohd Nor Fazryne, better known as Boy Fazy, is EQ's talented Head Mixologist who has carved out a bit of a reputation for himself as an innovator in the world of spirits. His time at some of KL's most renowned nightspots has made him known around town for his edgy presentations, inventive combinations, and seemingly boundless beverage expertise. With over a decade of experience under his belt, he's just about seen it all. Today,

What's a surprising ingredient you love incorporating into your cocktails?

I have a strong appreciation for the traditional cuisine of Sabah, particularly the delicious local dishes since I love spicy food. Hinava and tuhau are traditional Kadazan dishes, with hinava being a sort of ceviche made with fish, lime juice, birds' eye chili, shallots, and grated ginger.

Tuhau is a highly aromatic wild ginger which is roughly diced, mixed with vinegar, garlic, chili, and salt, and serves as a condiment or relish. Both are some of my favourite Sabahan foods and I have incorporated those flavours into some [cocktails](#) in homage to my traditional food. I find this allows a person to travel even if they are just sitting at the bar.



What's the most unusual drink request you've ever received?

I once had a guest who kept requesting a really strong cocktail. I kept mixing my most potent versions of the drinks, but they did not seem to be strong enough. However, after a few minutes, when they started talking too much and got louder, I realised that I had fulfilled their request after all.

Walk us through your thought process when creating a new cocktail.

My cocktail creations and ideas are mostly inspired by food. When I think about making a new cocktail, the first thing that comes to my mind is food. I dissect the flavours of a dish in my head, working out the five taste elements—sweet, salty, sour, bitter, and umami—and then I consider which ingredient from that dish is suited to make a jump to liquid form.

Sometimes it's an herb that I can create a distillate out of, other times it is a mouthfeel I want to recreate, like a heavy crema or fizz. Then I go to my arsenal of flavours and ingredients and mix, blend, muddle, or heat until what I taste in my head comes to life in a glass.

If you could create a cocktail inspired by a movie, which would it be?

The Beekeeper starring [Jason Statham](#) would be the movie. Statham is my favourite actor, and the movie tellingly spells out the consequences of deception. Based on the premise of being misled, my cocktail would have a honeycomb as one of the main garnishes, which lures the drinker into

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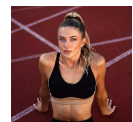
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that coming” way. Deceptive simplicity marking serious undercurrents!



What's your go-to drink?

My go-to drink is a highball. The art of a good highball is elegant simplicity. Highballs aren't meant to be boozy, but rather a drink that tamps down a spirit's heat to allow the layers of flavour to come through, carried and dispersed by the effervescence of the mixer.

If you could mix drinks in any city in the world for a week, where would it be?

It would be Indonesia, specifically Bali for sure, because the rich Indonesian diversity and their local sources of ingredients are so varied and flavourful. I would love to explore more about the country both as a visitor and through the eyes of a mixologist.

How do you handle it when someone asks for a recommendation but can't decide?

That's what we're trained for! If they can't decide, I will ask their preferences first, then I'll usually create and surprise them with a drink and watch their reaction. I love to see people's reactions to the drinks that I've created for them: it makes me feel like an achievement has been unlocked, and it satisfies me. Reactions or expressions say more than words can do.



What's your favourite story or memory from your time at EQ KL so far?

Every single day I walk through the doors of EQ KL, I'm filled with nostalgia and gratitude for the wonderful memories created here. The connections I've made with my colleagues and the guests have turned into countless heartwarming stories that I hold dear. One particular highlight was our collaboration with an award-winning bar, which was recognised as one of the 50 Best Bars in Asia.

It was a remarkable experience to witness the fusion of talent and creativity that resulted in such a prestigious accolade. Working with them helped me pick up different styles of mixing and techniques to create drinks. In my line of work, it's always about innovation grounded in technical experience. That's why the longer I mix, the better I hope to get!

"One for the road"

We ask Boy Fazy to describe PRESTIGE as a cocktail, and he likens us to an oldie but goodie.

"If PRESTIGE were a cocktail, it would be an Old Fashioned. This classic drink embodies sophistication, tradition, and timeless elegance, much like PRESTIGE does as a magazine. The blend of quality bourbon, a hint of bitters, and a touch of sugar reflects the title's commitment to high standards, rich content, and refined taste."

Note:

The information in this article is accurate as of the date of publication.

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