



{now we're talking}

Hi, again. It is I, Edwin Decker (call me Ed). In this space, we will be presenting a bartender's advice column. This is where we will answer your questions about life, love and the pursuit of mixing and/or consuming cocktails.

It's going to have an emphasis on the night club business, but will also delve into other areas since, as you know, bartenders are eager shamans, ready and willing to help out any customer who happens to be drowning his or her sorrows in a beer mug and in dire need of advice.

Whether you're a bartender wanting to know the best way to cut off a customer, a customer wanting to know the best way to comport himself in a bar, or just a regular Joe wondering what's the best way to retrieve your Pearl Jam box-set from his ex-girlfriend (who recently broke up with you because you slept with her roommate), this is the place to ask.

And what, you may ask, gives me the right to advise people on such matters? Well, that's easy. I'm a bartender—I have a PhD in *Crying in Your Beer*, a Bachelor's degree in *Your Football Team Lost*, *Get Over It* and a Master's in *Whaddya Havin', Bub?*

Want to ask a question or suggest a bartender to be featured? Email ed@edwindecker.com or visit edwindecker.com

Mr. Ed

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

BY EDWIN DECKER

Hello. My name is Edwin Decker. Recently, *PacificSD* requested an interview with me as their featured bartender. When they found out I was also a published writer, they thought, "Well, dang! How about we cook two birds with one fire and have Decker interview himself?"

Works for me.

I arranged to meet myself at Winston's Beach Club in Ocean Beach and, over a couple of hot toddies, asked myself a little bit about my history in the business.

"I started bartending in the mid '80s for a now defunct concert club in Kearny Mesa called The Bacchanal," I responded. "We had a wide variety of national acts go through there—from B.B. King to Nine Inch Nails to Randy Newman to Red Hot Chili Peppers to Devo to Marie Osmond to Kiss to YouNameIt. One of the greatest aspects of the job was boozing after hours with some of my rock-and-

roll idols. After the Bacchanal, I slung drinks in a number of live music venues, including Winston's Beach Club, 4th & B, Buffalo Joe's and Blind Melons, which became 710 Beach Club, where I have been working for the last 10 years or so."

"Why do you continue to bartend after 25 years?" I asked myself.

"Because I still love the job," I replied. "I find the culture and personalities to be fascinating. Also, as a journalist, there are all sorts of writing fodder that can be found in the bar biz, all kinds of kooks running around. For example, there was this one guy who didn't want to leave the bar at closing time. So he removed all his clothes—I mean all of them—and wrapped his arms and legs around a wooden support beam. I felt awful for the bouncers who had to yank and tug on this crazy naked man 'til he finally succumbed and was dragged out the door kicking and screaming. It wasn't pretty, but I got a column out of it." ■

Biggest tip: \$500.00 (almost). I turned it down because he was inebriated.

Strangest celebrity encounter: I accidentally saw Moby's naked buttocks in the green room at 4th & B.

Most expensive drink poured: I don't know, 10 bucks maybe? What can I say, I work low-brow.

Number of bands seen while working: 15,000 (approximately)

Number of alcoholic beverages served: 882,000 (approximately)