

More than just a killer view. 5 things to know and what to order at Swizzle in Louisville

Lennie Omalza Special to the Courier Journal

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PHOTOS: Inside at Swizzle The Galt House Hotel in downtown Louisville

Swizzle at The Galt House Hotel in downtown Louisville is known for its unique menu, chic bar, revolving floors and Ohio River views.

Dining out is one of my favorite pastimes, and I've been to more Derby City restaurants than I can count. There are also a handful of full-service Louisville establishments that I've been to so often, I have no idea how many times I've visited them. [Swizzle Dinner & Drinks](#) is one of those places.

Set on the 25th floor of [The Galt House Hotel](#), the retro-style supper club boasts steak, seafood, unique cocktails, and more — plus, a rotating dining room. General manager Westley Harris got me up to speed on the popular customer picks, as well as what's new at this downtown spot.

Steak and seafood are the most popular menu items at Swizzle



The filet at Swizzle Dinner & Drinks in The Galt House Hotel in downtown Louisville. *Courtesy Of The Galt House Hotel*

Harris said the eight- and 12-ounce filets are always the steaks of choice, but guests are fond of the Chilean Sea Bass, which is served with a torn baguette, squash, zucchini, roasted sweet peppers, cured tomatoes, pesto aioli, and aged balsamic.

“We’ve (also) added quite a bit more seafood items,” Harris told The Courier Journal. “We’ve got a fresh tuna poke (and) a king crab ceviche, and we seem to be running out of those items on a daily (basis).”

The smoked old fashioned is not to be missed at Swizzle



Inside Swizzle restaurant at The Galt House Hotel in Louisville. *Courtesy Of The Brandman Agency*

“I was the original creator of the cocktail menu here, so I keep (our) bartenders up to speed,” Harris said with a laugh. “We pump out fresh, fun cocktails.”

There are swizzles, of course, which Harris explained is a type of cocktail that is served with fruit and crushed ice. And being in downtown Louisville, the beverage program boasts a variety of bourbon-based concoctions as well.

Guests can try the Sting Like a Bee, named after “The Greatest” and made with Old Forester, lemon juice, Mike’s Hot Honey, and ginger puree; or It’s Bourbon Thyme!, which blends Four Roses bourbon, peach puree, lemon juice, and fresh thyme, and is topped with angostura bitters.

And for an Instagram-worthy drink experience, there’s the smoke box old fashioned, which — as its name would suggest — is presented in a box filled with smoke.

“We have different scents, different flavors (of) smoke,” Harris said, “(and) you can choose your bourbon, (and) it comes right to the table.”



Swizzle Dinner & Drinks in The Galt House Hotel in downtown Louisville. Courtesy Of The Galt House Hotel

He added that the customer favorite seen in numerous social media videos was a last-minute menu addition he created while experimenting with a cocktail smoking gun.

“We bought a rum (which) came in a little wooden box with a porthole window,” he explained. “I just happened to put an old fashioned in there and smoked it. ... Our CEO was like, ‘This is amazing. We’ve got to put this on the menu.’”

That was two days before Swizzle opened, and the menus had already been printed. But CEO Scott Shoenberger felt strongly about making the addition. “(So) we had it changed,” Harris recalled, “and that has forever been our number-one cocktail.”

Guest chef-created dishes on the menu each quarter at Swizzle



Fried Chicken Livers with Bourbon Peach Pepper Jelly from chef Amarys and Jordan Herndon at Swizzle at The Galt House Hotel in downtown Louisville. *Courtesy Of The Brandman Agency*

Last November, Swizzle relaunched its Urban Bourbon Trail Chef Series, which showcases inventive approaches to Southern cuisine by different chefs from around the world. The featured dishes are centered around bourbon and change every quarter. Current offerings come from chefs Amarys and Jordan Herndon from [Palm & Pine](#) in New Orleans.

“It’s a fried chicken liver dish, and it’s absolutely fantastic,” Harris exclaimed. “They’ve made a bourbon sauce glaze that gets drizzled over the top.”

He added that the series helps to both spread the word about Swizzle’s bourbon offerings and keep the menu options exciting.

“We have a huge (bourbon) collection,” he said. “We’re one of the largest accounts in the state. (And) we want to keep everything fun and fresh — we don’t want (guests to see) the same menu ... every time (they) come up here.”

Daily happy hour and a Thanksgiving Day meal at Swizzle



Peppered Beef Carpaccio with Four Roses Bourbon Teriyaki Sauce from Chef Abbi Merriss at Swizzle at The Galt House Hotel in downtown Louisville. Courtesy Of The Brandman Agency

Happy hour at Swizzle is from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday. There is a selection of appetizers and burger entrees that are priced down during the two-hour window, as well as numerous cocktails priced at \$8 or less.

“We even have our smoke box old fashioned, which is normally an \$18-\$20 cocktail,” Harris said. “That’s coming out at \$8 during happy hour.”

Harris added that Swizzle is also open on Thanksgiving Day, with both the regular menu available, as well as a holiday-inspired dinner option with turkey, mashed potatoes, and all the fixings. Reservations can be made via OpenTable or by calling the restaurant directly.

The team is also starting to prepare for the 2024 Kentucky Derby.

“We will start going live Dec. 6 for this year’s upcoming Derby,” Harris said. “People will need to ... make reservations quick because those fill up very fast.”

Swizzle is 'Sexy. Swanky. Social.' But a suit isn't required



The Galt House Hotel in downtown Louisville. Courtesy Of The Brandman Agency

Though the restaurant boasts a supper-club vibe, Harris stresses that he and the team strive to make it an approachable space for all.

“We don’t (have) a dress code,” he said. “It’s not like full-on, white tablecloth dining. ... We want everyone to be able to come up here and enjoy this view, and have something to eat.”

He added that being 25 floors up offers a view that can’t be found anywhere else in Louisville. “We are one of the only dining rooms on the Ohio River,” he said. “You cannot find a better view in this city for dinner. This is as good as it gets.”

Swizzle Dinner & Drinks

WHAT: This is a retro-style supper club that serves prime steak, sustainable seafood, local produce, original cocktails, and more.

WHERE: The Galt House Hotel, 140 N. 4th St.

SERVICES: Dine-in and carryout; 4:30 to 11 p.m. Monday through Saturday; closed Sunday

CONTACT: swizzle25.com, 502-252-2500