

   **THE NARDCAST** 

MUSIC, FOOD & BOOZE

Behind the Stick with Kyle Dessert of The Duck Dive
August 30, 2019



Looking for a summer cocktail? Stop in [The Duck Dive](#) and try their Peach Beach cocktail, crafted with Absolut Elyx vodka, peach, fresh lemon juice, honey, aquafab and plum bitters. It's creamy and refreshing. [Kyle Dessert](#), lead bartender at The Duck Dive in Pacific Beach, is shown in the above video crafting this tasty libation.

Peach Beach

What's the story behind this cocktail?

Duck Dive's GM Rebekah Lemke came up with the groundwork for the cocktail. After a few recipe tweaks between the two of us we perfected this peach vodka sour that's to die for – not to mention one of the most aesthetically pleasing cocktails we've created.

If you had to pair this cocktail with a dish, what would you pair it with?

Something light like fresh fish or a chicken dish like our adobo chicken tacos.

What kind of experience can diners expect at The Duck Dive?

We love to keep it light and fun here. The entire staff is capable of having a blast while killing it on the floor or behind the bar. Expect awesome food, excellent cocktails, a killer selection of cold local beers and unmatched hospitality.

About Kyle Dessert

Are you from San Diego?

No, originally I'm from Sacramento. I spent 6 years in the navy stationed in Norfolk, Virginia. After honorably serving my country I decided that San Diego was going to be where I made my home. I packed up my truck drove straight here and have been living my dream in paradise ever since.

How has your journey been leading up to your role at the Duck Dive?

So my first position at Duck Dive was security. After only a few weeks of working in a bar, I knew I wanted to be a bartender. They have fun, interact with people, and obviously make more money! A few months at the door was enough and I was soon asked to barback, which I knew was the first step in becoming a bartender. It wasn't long before I was promoted and I have been slinging drinks ever since. Now I'm one of the lead bartenders and I absolutely love what I do.

What's your favorite cocktail on the menu?

I don't think I have a favorite on the menu. It's really easy to work at a place that has such an awesome cocktail program, makes my job fun and easy.

Define the perfect cocktail.

For me, it's all about balance. Not too sweet, not too bitter, not too boozy. I've come to find this is a very situational thing and it's fun finding the perfect drink for a guest that doesn't know what they want.

What are some cocktail trends you are noticing in San Diego?

People are broadening their taste horizons and it's become so fun and interesting to see the exotic taste combinations that people come up with. San Diego is very progressive in this and some very unique ideas have surfaced and patrons are loving it. Most bars have beautifully crafted cocktail menus to go along with awesome food menus to be paired with.

What's your favorite drink to make behind the bar?

I like to keep it classic. I love a good old fashioned or Manhattan. These drinks are very simple but if you don't take the care to craft them properly they can turn out horrible and the guest will notice the difference.

What's your favorite spirit?

I am, and will always be, a whiskey man. Recently though, I have acquired a taste for gin and I never thought I would.

What is one thing you wish people understood about bartending?

That it's not just pouring drinks. A robot could just mix ingredients in a glass and you can drink it. The human aspect of bartending is what I value the most. Interacting with people, making them feel welcome and happy and comfortable. There is an aspect of mutual respect that bartenders and customers must have and I love when people leave my bar with a smile saying how good a time they had.

What should everyone stock in their home bar?

The basics. Simple syrup, bitters, citrus and of course their favorite spirits.

What do you do in your spare time when you're not creating cocktails?

I like to stay active. Lots of outdoor things like: Biking, hiking, skating, fishing and swimming. I'm a fitness specialist too, so I am in the gym most days. Also a full time student working on my degree in kinesiology.

What's next for you?

My goal for life has always been to keep progressing. So for me right now my goals are to finish school and to keep growing professionally as a bartender as well as personally to become a better man all around. I love where I'm at and I love what I'm doing and I love the opportunities on the horizon. I'm very excited to see what my future holds.