

Created by: Debra C. Argen

Joe Fee of Fee Brothers - Interview

An interesting look at cocktail trends with fourth generation Joe Fee of [Fee Brothers](#), the famous line of cocktail mixes used throughout the hospitality industry.



When I asked Joe Fee what it must be like to be a part of a family business that is more than 140 years old, he replied "It is a puff up your chest with pride moment when I go out and see the production line running. I am also proud when I go on sales calls and say that the guy 2nd from the left on the label (John) is my great-grandfather."

Fee Brothers is a name that is both well-known and highly respected in the cocktail world for its quality line of bar ingredients, cocktail mixes, bitters, syrups, and garnishes. Their Bitters line includes Old Fashioned Bitters, West Indian Orange Bitters, Peach Bitters, Mint Bitters, Lemon Bitters, Grapefruit Bitters, and Whiskey Barrel Aged Bitters, although Joe let me in on a little secret that his sister Ellen has several new bitters on the drawing board, so definitely watch their website for new developments.



Their most popular bitters are the Old Fashioned Bitters and the West Indian Orange Bitters, although Joe's personal favorite is the Whiskey Barrel Aged Bitters, "The Whiskey barrels added a last little touch and smoothed it out. Make me an Old Fashioned with it, and I am all set. When we first introduced the Whiskey Barrel Aged Bitters we were not sure how they would be received, but everyone is loving it. This year we have three barrels aging that will be introduced in March 2008."

We talked about cocktail trends coming in and out of fashion, and how muddled drinks like the Old Fashioned found their way out, and are now definitely hot again with everything and anything being muddled in cocktails from avocado to rhubarb.

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"The Pina Colada was "king" during the Disco era in the late 70s and early 80s, and during that time, bitters were dead, and now they have come back in a huge way." When I asked him if he thought that the Pina Colada would be making a comeback, he replied, "Perhaps in a more refined way," to which I readily agreed. London and Australia are setting cocktail trends, which are coming to the United States. "It's not just juice in a glass and throw in some whiskey." At one time he worried about the demise of the bartender, but there is a new professionalism in the trade, which he said is perhaps influenced by the Internet and the Food Channel.

Fee Brothers is dedicated to their customers' satisfaction, and helping their distributors with last minute orders is not a problem, or as Joe so aptly replied, "No one goes thirsty." When not working at Fee Brothers along with his father Jack, and his sister Ellen, Joe spends his time out sailing or on the golf course.

Four generations later, "The House of Fee by the Genesee since eighteen hundred and sixty-three," is still owned and operated by the Fee family carrying on the tradition of creating quality products whose motto remains "Don't Squeeze, Use Fee's."



For information on **Fee Brothers Bitters** and their extensive product line and other recipes, please visit the website: www.FeeBrothers.com.



Read about the history of **Fee Brothers** along with recipes in the [Liquor Cabinet - Liquors](#) section. For

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additional recipes in Luxury Experience Magazine using Fee Brothers Bitters and Cordial Syrups, please click the [Search](#) tab, type in "Fee Brothers" and click "Exact Phrase."

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