BAR INDUSTRY *News*

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The Rise of Premium Craft Cocktails

The most profitable bar drink category is topping the chart as the most popular in 2025.

Cocktails, especially when made with premium spirits, generate a potential yield of 85-90% profit margins.

With the opportunity to increase profits, there are also a few challenges that require bars to adapt to the rise in cocktail demand.

Increased storage and dedicated mixing stations for the additional ingredients and prep involved.

Strategic placement of blenders, ice machines, and other essential tools to optimize workflow.

Increased ice storage for the different types of ice used in cocktails. Watch for more on ice storage for different types of cubes in this publication.

TIP: To prepare for peak hours, pre-batching certain ingredients or juices helps reduce prep time, allowing bartenders to focus on the final touches when presenting to customers.

The demand for craft cocktails has prompted many bar operations to adapt their designs, storage, bar equipment, supplies, and workstations to provide bartenders with the space and tools they need to efficiently serve these high-profit beverages.

Following Craft Cocktails in Profitability

Wine generally has average pour costs between 25-28%, with average gross margins of 72-75%.

Top-Shelf Shots are highly profitable due to the small cost difference between top-shelf and standard options, coupled with customers' willingness to pay for premium choices.

Draft Beer typically has the slimmest profit margins compared to other options, but it can still be a reliable source of revenue, especially when paired with promotions.

The bar industry in 2025 is experiencing rapid growth and presenting new opportunities for increased profits.

The U.S. bar industry sales are projected to hit $38.0 billion in 2025, reflecting a solid 12.2% CAGR over the last five years. Consumers are seeking and willing to pay more for unique and creative experiences, as well as premium liquors. The challenge for bars is adaptation to new trends and technologies. Success depends on innovation, flexibility, and customer experiences. Make sure your bartenders are equipped with the tools they need to generate profits.

Low and non-alcoholic beers, wines, and flavorful mocktails are gaining popularity, with sales increasing by 31% last year. In addition, craft sodas, packed with flavor, such as an orange Dreamsicle soda, are appealing to many as a favorite alternative.

Technology and the use of AI can bring significant advantages to your business, including enhancing customer experiences, inventory management, and more.

Read more about utilizing AI in your business on page 10.

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MIXOLOGY GEAR

"I'm incredibly particular about my bar tools."

— Leandro DiMonriva
The Educated Barfly

RAISE THE BAR WITH THE UCG SERIES

Crystal Clear Ice. Unmatched Style. Ultimate Performance.

Elevate your cocktail experience with the UCG Series—an undercounter ice machine with a gourmet twist for bars. Whether you're mixing signature drinks or timeless classics, the UCG delivers slow-melting, crystal-clear cubes that enhance every pour.

- **Built for Bars -** Designed for mixologists who demand perfection
- **Compact & Stylish –** Fits seamlessly under the counter with sleek stainless steel design
- **Pure Ice, Every Time –** Vertical spray tech ensures crystal-clear cubes with no impurities
- **Quiet & Fast –** Keeps up with the rush without disrupting the vibe
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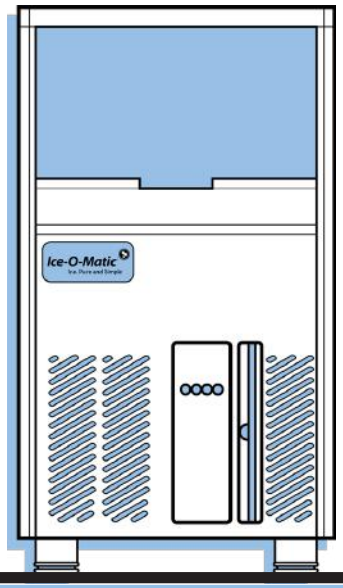


What's On Your Bar Menu?

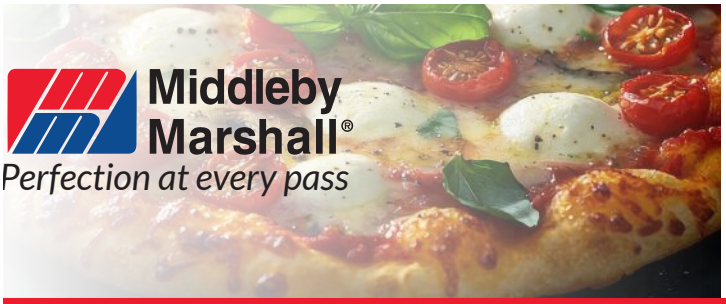
The most popular and the most profitable Bar Food Menu Items in 2025.

Chicken Wings, topping the list as the most popular bar snack, can potentially bring 70-75% profit margins. Offering various sauces and rubs enables customization and higher profit margins.

Additional popular menu items with high profits:

- Pizza
- Burgers and Specialty Sliders
- Nachos, Chips, and Dips
- French Fries
- Mozzarella Sticks
- Soft Pretzels
- Fried Pickles
- Flat Breads
- Charcuterie Boards
- Sample Platters

Remember customization options equals happy customers, upsell opportunities, and higher profits.



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We are more than pizza. Built for bars.

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Expect More. More Flexibility. More Features.

Manufacturing superior equipment and innovative systems in the USA since 1969.

Four Distinct Underbar Lines

Each fulfills a distinct need, from base models to distinguishably elevated.

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100+refrigeration models; one-zone units are rated to NSF Standard 7.

Proper Pour Advantage

Ensure proper beverage handling and dispensing with minimal operational loss.

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A-200 | Upright

ICE TRENDS IN BARS

The demand for a variety of ice shapes and sizes creates opportunities and challenges for bars.

With the rise in premium cocktails comes the need for a variety of ice shapes and sizes behind the bar. Bartenders are creating picture-perfect cocktails that impress with a variety of visually appealing ice shapes.

Additionally, different ice shapes and sizes melt at varying rates, affecting the dilution of a drink. Larger, denser ice melts at a slower rate and is ideal for cocktails.

Crushed or nugget ice chills drinks quickly and provides a different texture.

Customers are noticing the quality and type of ice used in their drinks, and they like to take and share pictures of drinks that impress. Bartenders have the talent to choose the best ice for a variety of drinks, bringing the magic.

THE QUESTION:

How are bar operations navigating the need for increased ice storage?

Bartenders are using insulated ice bins that minimize melting and maintain ice quality.

Bartenders are utilizing underbar ice chests that are efficiently designed for smaller spaces, offering quick access and keeping ice close at hand.

Some businesses are finding it beneficial to invest in specialized storage units, especially if they prioritize specific ice types, such as sphere ice.

We are at the forefront of the evolving needs and expectations of the modern bar scene, as well as the shift towards more diverse and effective ice storage solutions. **Contact us anytime to discuss ice management solutions that can enhance cocktail quality and optimize your operation. We are here to help!**

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Meet the Bakers Pride® P44 Brick-Lined Countertop Oven — The Bar's Best Friend.

Big flavor. Small space. Zero compromise.

When your back-of-house space is tight but your demand for quality is high, the Bakers Pride P44BL delivers.

This electric double-deck workhorse is perfect for bars, pubs, and venues looking to serve crowd-pleasing pizzas, pretzels, flatbreads, and more —all without the footprint of a full-size oven.

Features brick-lined ceilings, designed for quicker recovery and additional top heat intensity. Ideal for thin crust pizza in high volume operations.

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The Delta HT-E SEER removes lipstick and keeps glassware sparkling *Clean the First Time*®. Our Steam Elimination & Energy Recovery technology keep glassware in top shape.

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PREPARED TO SET STANDARDS

Ergonomic soft grip handles allow safe handling and are specifically designed to enhance grip and promote control even in humid conditions. The Dual Grip collection delivers remarkable performance while also helping to protect wrists and hands during use.

- Professional sharp stainless steel blades
- Ergonomic, nonslip, two-component handles that are water and fat resistant
- Swiss made, dishwasher safe and sterilizable

FROM THE MAKERS OF THE ORIGINAL SWISS ARMY KNIFE™
ESTABLISHED 1884

ELEVATE AND EXCEL

To successfully update a bar business for 2025, focus on equipment and supplies that integrate modern technology, promote sustainability, and meet evolving customer expectations for elevated experiences.

WHAT CAN AI DO FOR YOUR BAR BUSINESS?

An AI-powered point-of-sale (POS) system can track customer purchase history and preferences, enabling bartenders to suggest drinks or food pairings tailored to the customer's tastes.

Bars can use AI to adjust drink prices based on demand, time of day, or even local crowd levels. AI can also be utilized to suggest music based on the crowd, event, or desired ambiance.

AI can analyze past sales, seasonal changes, and local events to forecast demand for specific products. This predictive model allows bars to optimize their inventory, preventing over-ordering of perishable items and ensuring they never run out of popular drinks.

AI can forecast peak hours and busy days by analyzing historical sales data and external factors, such as weather and holidays, enabling managers to create optimal staff schedules, reduce labor costs, and maintain service quality.

AI can be used to target promotions based on customer data and identify customer groups for targeted email or app notifications with personalized promotions.

AI can be used for social media optimization to analyze engagement trends and provide an ideal posting schedule for maximum visibility. It can also help draft creative social media posts and email content. Some bars use AI to analyze publicly available information about their competitors, providing insights into their strategies and pricing.

AI can be used to analyze customer feedback from online reviews and social media. This gives bars actionable insights to improve customer satisfaction and stay ahead of trends.

AI assistants can be integrated into platforms to provide employees with immediate answers to questions about their schedules, the menu, or company policies. This can reduce everyday errors, support faster learning, and create a feeling of inclusiveness.

Virtual reality and AI can be used to create realistic practice scenarios for staff, like handling a busy shift or a difficult customer, without real-world risks. This can build confidence and improve on-the-job performance.

Employee Training

Product knowledge empowers your employees to be experts on all drinks, including house recipes, ingredient details, and wine and beer selections. Be sure to include training on techniques for suggestive selling of premium drinks or additional menu items to increase revenue.

Customer service, including communication, active listening, creating a top-notch experience, and handling difficult customer situations with professionalism.

Responsible alcohol service is crucial for safety and compliance, encompassing the identification of signs of intoxication, proper ID verification, and adherence to local alcohol laws and regulations to protect both patrons and the establishment.

AI can create personalized training programs for each employee, adapting to their specific learning style. This can improve skills faster and boost staff retention.

SPILL-STOP

STRAINERS

Item#	Description
1016-0	Fine Mesh Strainer, Stainless, Conical
1014-2	Cocktail Strainer, 4-Prong, Gold PVD Coating
1014-8	Cocktail Strainer, 4-Prong, Black PVD Coating
1018-2	Julep Strainer, Gold PVD Coating
1018-8	Julep Strainer, Black PVD Coating

JIGGERS

Item#	Description
100-20	Multi-Level Jigger, Stainless, ½ x 2-1/2 oz.
818-12	Japanese Style, Gold PVD Coating, 1 x 1-1/2 oz.
818-18	Japanese Style, Black PVD Coating, 1 x 1-1/2 oz.

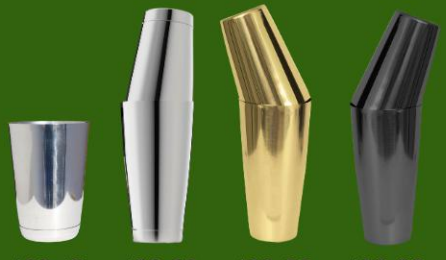
CRAFT THE BEST BAR EXPERIENCES!

MIXING TINS

Item#	Description
103-70	Cocktail Mixing Tin, Stainless, 26 oz.
103-72	Cocktail Mixing Tin, Gold PVD Coating, 26 oz.
103-78	Cocktail Mixing Tin, Black PVD Coating, 26 oz.

COCKTAIL SHAKERS

Item#	Description
103-18	Cocktail Shaker, Stainless, 18 oz.
103-60	Shaker Can Set, Stainless, 28 oz./18oz
103-62	Shaker Can Set, Gold PVD Coating, 28oz./18oz.
103-68	Shaker Can Set, Black PVD Coating, 28oz/18oz.



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ICETRO
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The Square Cube

Crafted Ice. Elevated Experience.

The new Icetro IM-0480-AQ Square Cube produces true 1.25" cubes, engineered for visual impact, optimal dilution, and exceptional clarity.

Perfectly symmetrical and precisely crafted cubes that elevate every cocktail, spirit, or beverage they accompany all while boosting sales and profits.