

# The 126 Brings Prohibition to Burlington

but welcomes low-ABV and non-alcoholic drinkers with an extensive menu



Emily Morton demonstrates her craft at The 126 — photo by Lee Kahrs

**T**ucked down on College Street just off City Hall Park is Burlington's own speakeasy style bar, The 126 (formerly named Deli 126). Featuring a low-light, old-school but elegant atmosphere, just walking into the place makes you feel like you're getting away with something.

The 126 not only offers craft cocktails but a wide array of the popular low-ABV drinks. Bar manager and professional bartender Emily Morton has been in the business for roughly a decade and consid-

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ers herself a connoisseur of low- and no-alcohol cocktails. 802Spirits asked Morton for her insights into the bar business as well as the increasingly popular low-ABV drink culture.

**What makes a good bartender?**

A good bartender understands flavors, can help make the best cocktail for their guests' individual tastes, is organized and is a good multi-tasker.

**I'm sure one of the things that makes a good bartender is liking where you work. What makes The 126 a good bar?**

Having it be your own bar program certainly makes me biased to The 126 (we dropped "Deli" when we re-opened after COVID shutdowns)! We hope to be inviting to all people, no matter what their alcohol preferences, their knowledge of 1920s social traditions or their existing >

BY LEE J. KAHRIS

*Always drink in moderation.*



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cocktail knowledge. The only thing required is an open mind (and perhaps an introductory interest in cocktails or jazz).

**Is it more complicated or does it require more creativity to create a new mocktail than a cocktail?**

I prefer to call them “non-alcoholic cocktails” for that exact reason! I put in as much creativity and focus to flavor-balancing in a non-alcoholic cocktail as I do with the alcoholic ones. I find that the term “mocktail” connotes that the drink is “less than.”

“ I think it’s harder to make a well-balanced, exciting non-alcoholic cocktail than an alcoholic one. ”

**Are low-ABV drinkers more or less demanding than regular alcohol drinkers?**

I usually find they are less demanding since they were not expecting an extensive menu. We call them “Temperance Cocktails” on our menu at The 126, since the temperance movement started Prohibition, that feels very “on brand” for us. I think it’s harder to make a well-balanced, exciting non-alcoholic cocktail than an alcoholic one — getting the flavor balance and savory elements without alcohol is more of a challenge.

**What is the most important thing to understand about low-ABV mixology?**

It’s just as important as alcoholic mixology. Any stigmas shouldn’t be there if you feel like ordering no- or low-ABV and, if anything, it will show your bartender’s skill more than ordering a cocktail you’ve had before!

**The 126**  
**126 College St. #40, Burlington**  
**deli126vt.com**



Emily Morton puts a finishing touch on a cocktail at The 126 — photo by Isabelle Federico



**Her Favorite**

Asked about some recipes for low-ABV cocktails, Morton provided a number of the most popular ones at The 126 (see them starting on page 10) and noted, “My favorite, and a very classic low-ABV cocktail, is ‘The Bamboo.’ Credited both to ‘some Englishman’ in New York City, and to Louis Eppinger at The

Grand Hotel in Yokohama, Japan in 1886, it is perhaps the best known sherry cocktail.

“It’s two parts Amontillado sherry, one part dry Vermouth, two dashes of orange bitters and one dash of Angostura bitters. It can be made into an ‘Adonis Cocktail’ by subbing sweet vermouth for dry, and omitting the Angostura. Both should be stirred and served up with an orange twist.”