

# Mixing it up at the Burke

**Bartender  
Marcie  
Gadwah  
Perfects  
the Art of  
Mixing  
Vermont  
Signature  
Cocktails**



# Publick House



Marcie Gadwah demonstrates her craft at Burke Publick House — photo by David Seaver

**W**hen many of the Burke Publick House bar patrons roll into this rustic, homey restaurant in East Burke village, Marcie Gadwah starts mixing up their favorite cocktails before they even sit down.

Marcie believes this is one of the things that make for a great bartender. The special ingredient she adds to every drink is caring and kindness for her regulars and the plethora of summer visitors and tourists who flock to the Northeast Kingdom from mid-June through Columbus Day weekend.

“You have to read your customers and know what they are looking for,” Marcie explained. “When you know their drinks and you know their name, they like that.”

Striking just the right balance between serving customers in a timely fashion and getting up close and personal with them is an acquired skill that takes years in the making. Marcie has worked as a part-time bartender at Burke Publick House for about a year. Before that she practiced her mixology trade at Good Fellas in nearby Danville off and on for 10 years.

She was 13 when she first entered the restaurant business as a server on Cape Cod where she developed an affinity for getting things done to her customers’ satisfaction. Mixing cocktails and working behind the bar came later.

“I love the fast pace and interacting with customers. I come in and I always meet someone new,” Marcie said. “Being busy on your feet and on the go makes the time go by.”



BY ROBERT COOK

## BEHIND THE BAR

When she is not tending bar at Burke Publick House, Marcie works at CED Twin State in St. Johnsbury, where she was born and raised. That company is a distributor that specializes in electrical supplies and Marcie does their book-keeping. Along the way, this single mother has raised a son and a daughter, who recently graduated from college and is now seeking a master's degree in Boston.

"I have been doing this since they were wee little babies, so they totally get it," said Marcie. She works on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

In August, Marcie and her co-workers

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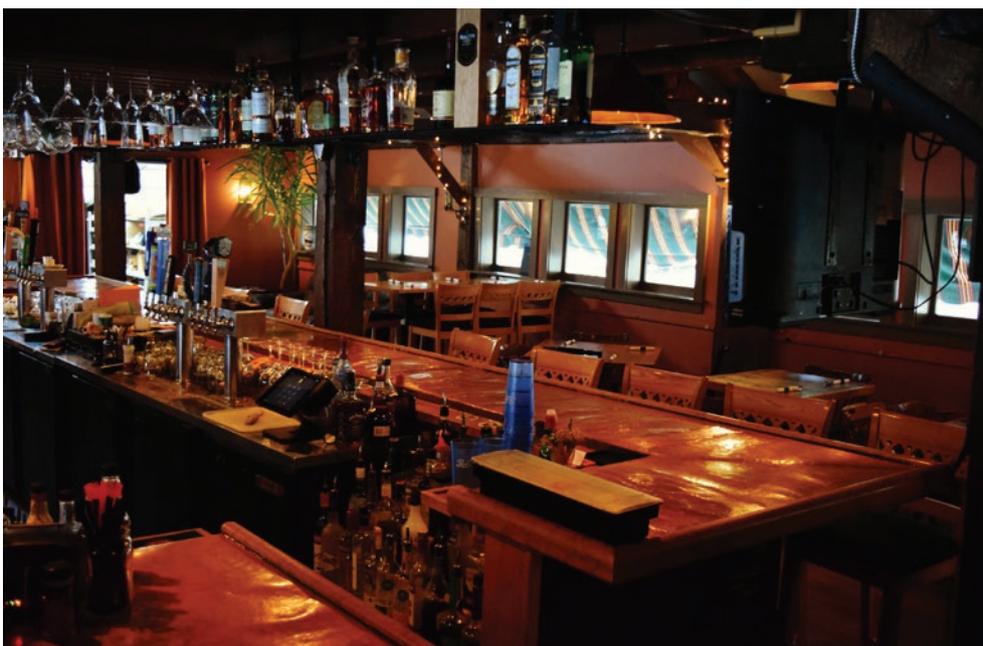
were in the throes of another busy summer tourist season. She said they will see a high influx of visitors right through mid-December.

When they are at their busiest, Marcie said they have the bartender who works in the well to make the waitresses' drinks, while another bartender serves as many as 25 people at the bar. When she works in the well, Marcie can quickly make two drinks at a time regardless of their ingredients, and each one is a work of art that places an emphasis on taste and presentation. She understands that her customers' anticipation for their cocktails is almost as powerful as the taste and flavor.

"I like to see the drinks when they are finished and looking good. It's almost an art. When the drink comes to the table, I want it to be in the correct glass with the correct garnish, and I want to hear that 'ooh' when the drink is set down in front of them," Marcie said.



Marcie Gadwah shakes up a Blackberry Mojito at the Burke Publick House — photo by David Seaver



The bar at the Burke Publick House — courtesy photo



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“When the drink comes to the table, I want it to be in the correct glass with the correct garnish, and I want to hear that ‘ooh’ when the drink is set down in front of them.”



*Two of Marcie's personal favorites are the White Linen and the Blackberry Mojito, which her customers enjoy during a hot Vermont summer after spending the day mountain biking, hiking and exploring the region.*

**< White Linen**  
 New Amsterdam Gin  
 Elderflower  
 Simple syrup  
 Lemon  
 Cucumber

“Customers see that drink walk by their table, and they will ask about it and they will tend to order it,” Marcie said. When that happens, it makes her feel like she has succeeded.

Two of her personal favorites are the White Linen and the Blackberry Mojito, which her customers enjoy during a hot Vermont summer after spending the day mountain biking, hiking and exploring the region.

They are also two of many specialty cocktails that Marcie has discovered through her research in her quest to offer customers new seasonal drinks.

“I enjoy making drinks. I enjoy teaching new bartenders how to make the drinks,” Marcie added.

Even as an experienced bartender, Marcie maintains an acute curiosity about her craft and always seeks out ways to raise her game to another level.

She often finds herself either reminding herself and teaching other bartenders some important cardinal rules.

“Basically, you have to be a grasshopper and be patient to get good at it,” Marcie explained. “You have to become confident with yourself as well.”

Marcie also knows that a bartender has to be the ruler of their small universe where a great attitude is always required, along with finite skills to mix a variety of drinks on automatic pilot when things get hectic.

Having the ease to talk with customers who watch her mix drinks in the well and ask her what she is creating is also a plus, Marcie said.

Besides making sure you do not overpour your drinks, Marcie said a good bartender is someone who is always watching and learning. “You can’t be cocky behind the bar.”

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Marcie is a valued member of the team assembled by owners Curtis and Nicki Cuccia, who have owned and operated the restaurant and pub since 2014. Located behind the Northeast Kingdom Country Store in East Burke village, patrons discover a gastropub filled with great food, friendly and

excellent service and delightful summer cocktails that will complement those perfect Green Mountain summer days.

While the Burke Publick House’s em-

## Blackberry Mojito

- Bacardi Rum
- Simple syrup
- Blackberries
- Mint
- Soda water



phasis is on its commitment to creating a superior gastropub experience for its dining patrons, Marcie and her staff provide the much-needed refreshment to match the restaurant’s goal to provide outstanding food and relaxation.

Some of the signature cocktails that patrons can enjoy at Burke Publick House this summer include:

- **The Vermont Sazerac** made with WhistlePig rye (Shoreham), Peychaud's bitters, sugar, absinthe rinse and lemon zest.
- **The Green Mountain Cosmopolitan** made with Green Mountain lemon and orange vodka (Stowe), a splash of cranberry and lime.
- A seasonal house specialty that is always popular during the Vermont summer is the **Sangria Punch Cocktail** made with brandy, peach schnapps, pineapple, red wine and finished with Citizen Cider.
- To feel closer to nature and be nurtured, **The Bee's Knees** is made with Green Mountain organic lemon vodka, elderflower liqueur, lemon juice, simple syrup served up with a twist and garnished with dried lavender flower.

“ I enjoy making drinks. I enjoy teaching new bartenders how to make the drinks. ”

Burke Publick House “is a very comfortable place where you can have a delicious four-course meal with a gin martini, Manhattan straight up, or a Bud Light and an appetizer,” she said.

“We have active people here who have been out on their bikes all day or their snowboards all day. A lot of people comment on how it is a very rustic, comfortable and friendly place,” Marcie said.

Within walking distance are two other establishments that offer patrons a completely different experience: The Tiki Bar, which is a bar with food trucks, and ➤

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BEHIND THE BAR

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Orange Rind. Marcie said the three restaurant/bars complement each other.

“We have the Tiki Bar across from us, a bar with food trucks, and the Orange Rind, so we all work off of each other. It’s a nice little hub we have here.”

Like many who work in Vermont’s restaurant and pub industry, Marcie often finds herself playing the role of tour guide. She makes it a point to stay up on the latest developments concerning nearby attractions, so she can offer them the best advice on where to find a great breakfast place, a good family hiking trail or give them insight into nearby cultural attractions in St. Johnsbury.

“When you are a server or bartender, it is almost like acting where you have to be whatever the customer needs,” Marcie added. ■



The Burke Public House in East Burke — courtesy photo

The Burke Public House  
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