

**S** SCOTTY'S TABLE  
*an american bistro*

131 SOUTH HIGGINS AVENUE  
 MISSOULA, MONTANA  
 406.549.2790

# Local Libations



GETTING TO KNOW WHERE THE LOCALS GO

By Ryan Newhouse

## Your Drink at James Bar

New to the Missoula scene this year is James Bar, where patrons bump elbows with the likes of Janis Joplin, Willie Nelson and a young Keith Richards. It's sophisticated and intimate, yet rustic in its overall impression—a perfect description of Missoula.

The James Bar is a venture co-owned and operated by Seamus Hammond. The bar is connected to Al & Vic's Bar, which Hammond's mother owns, but is completely separate, both by menu and ambiance. Many of the tables are inlaid with mosaics of dragonflies and trout. Some tables are just polished cross-sections of timber sitting on the wood floor. On the opposite wall from the bar is a stone fireplace, giving off small flickers of light and accentuating giant black and white posters of some of the greatest rock pioneers from the 1960s and '70s.

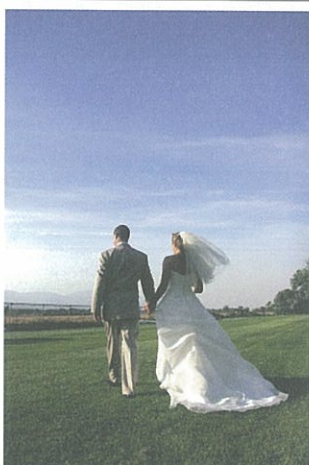
Hammond spared no expense making James Bar a true local resource. All of the lumber used in the construction of the bar and tables is from within an 80 mile radius, most of it from within nine miles, and all the steel is reclaimed.

One of my favorite reasons to go to James Bar is that they are always serving my favorite drink, and by this I mean James Bar is the kind of place that doesn't hand over a drink menu. You belly up to the bar, or bury yourself back in a corner table, and order your drink, your way. Their talented bar staff can whip up mojitos, Manhattans and mint juleps while pouring double-shots of Maker's Mark.

When you're done in the sun and you need to cool off, come into James Bar and ask for a Back in the U.S.S.R., which is a refreshing blend of mint, lime, citrus vodka and ginger beer. For drinks on the sweeter side, bartenders cook up an array of simple syrups from scratch and flavor them with different fresh fruits.

James Bar has what you want, so grab a friend and spend an evening where everything is local and the locals hang out. 🍷

*Ryan Newhouse lives and writes in Missoula, with his wife, infant daughter and some cats. He gets outside to play, fish and hunt whenever he can and tries not to let work get in the way.*



REBECCA STUMPF PHOTOGRAPHY  
[www.rebeccastumpf.com](http://www.rebeccastumpf.com)



**Red Bird**  
 RESTAURANT & WINE BAR

111 N. Higgins  
 nestled in the Florence Building  
 Monday-Saturday 5-10:30pm  
 On the web: [redbirdrestaurant.com](http://redbirdrestaurant.com)  
 Phone: 549-2906



Photo: Andy Kemmis

## Martinis at Finn and Porter

If you are a semi-experienced inner tube floater like I claim to be, then no doubt you've sloshed your way up the rocky bank behind Finn & Porter Steak Seafood & Chops after a hot summer's day spent lazily on the Clark Fork River. But afterwards, have you dried off, put on a clean shirt and gone inside to grab a seat on Finn & Porter's balcony to sip on a couple award-winning martinis? If not, make it a priority this summer.

Voted "Best Martini" in 2007 by the Missoula Independent poll, Finn & Porter offers some of the tastiest and most creative martini concoctions in town, shaken or stirred.

What I like most about sipping on a martini is that it is a drink stiff enough to keep you company while dining alone, but can also be festive enough to share with friends. And with the variety you will find at Finn & Porter, from the Lemon Drop to its own bourbon-based Montucky, there is a drink to tickle every palette.

Like the flowing waters outside their windows, Finn & Porter is not content to keep things the same. This summer they will be stepping up their martini menu a couple notches by expanding and improving their selections. John Melchior, Finn & Porter's general manager, says their plan is "bigger and better." 🌿

## White Wine at Lake Missoula Cellars

You may know your wines and you may know your music, but when you experience them together at Lake Missoula Cellars it's simply about the fun of it. And no one may have more fun with these two pleasures than Doug Wagner, owner of Lake Missoula Cellars.

"We're sophisticated but not pretentious," Wagner says. I would add that the folks at Lake Missoula Cellars are also generous, knowledgeable and make a darn good port wine (a.k.a. Le Bastard).

On a recent visit to Wagner's tasting room, he gave me a preview of a few summer white wines, yet to be bottled. First up was an orange riesling, produced from late harvest Washington riesling grapes. This semi-dry, semi-sweet wine would go great paired with any outdoor concert on a warm Missoula evening. We followed suit with a daring white port. A blend of riesling, chardonnay, muscat canelli and golden muscat grapes, this wine filled the glass with aromas of pear, apricot and peach. At about 18 percent alcohol by volume, this bright, crisp wine can be served with almost anything.

The mission of Lake Missoula Cellars is to be a community winery where people come to stay and not just pass through after they have tried a few samples. With a weekly schedule of live music, great indoor acoustics and an outdoor stage on the way, I recommend you get to Lake Missoula Cellars early and often. 🌿