

TOBIN ELLIS



By Melissa Molloy
Photo Courtesy of BarMagic

Tobin Ellis is an innovator of the bartending, hospitality and nightlife experience. The six time National Bartending Champion has been designing and building bars worldwide for the past 10 years, and has served as a technical advisor and judge for a number of television networks including A&E, Travel Channel, Food Network, and NBC. He started behind the bar 20 years ago in a small college town in Upstate New York, where he learned all about volume bartending. Since then he has traveled the world and started a consulting business called BarMagic.

BarMagic is a consulting company established in 1997. “We are a somewhat unique consultancy in that beyond all the typical cocktail lists, training and marketing experience we are very well versed in design, planning, construction, union re-classifications, and much more. I actually develop concepts, design bars in CAD, provide interior design, evaluate financials, manage construction, etc. Also, many people don’t realize that BarMagic was a consulting firm when there was no such thing as a “bar consultant.”

Ellis is now teaming up with Perlick to create a new line of bar equipment branded the “Tobin Ellis Signature Cocktail Station” by Perlick. From sinks to ice bins,

speed racks to drain boards and refrigeration, Ellis has spent hours on every design down to every last detail. Ellis wanted to design equipment that would make it easier for bartenders to pour great creative cocktails and drinks faster, ensure that their knees and backs hurt less, allowing bartenders more time to have fun with their guests.”

According to Ellis, the most important asset behind the bar is humor, “If you’re not having fun behind the bar, you’re not taking your job seriously enough.” Ellis adds, “My job is to unleash joy with reckless abandon. Anything less and I feel I would be a discredit to the craft. Doing one thing with passion and imagination for nearly 20 years has proven to be a massive asset and boundless joy. How many bartenders get to say they’ve designed bars from South Africa to Hawaii, made drinks for Aerosmith and the New York Yankees, and helped rebrand a handful of their most famous properties in the world? I truly believe I am the luckiest person on earth with the best job in the world.”

The ‘Tobin Ellis Signature Cocktail Station’ will be unveiled at the NAFEM show from February 19-21, 2015. Ellis will be there to host demonstrations at Perlick’s booth where he will use the new station to make classic and craft cocktails.