

# MIXING IT UP...



Master mixer Mollie Atherton from the Ribble Valley enjoyed a trip to the bright lights of Barcelona after winning a national cocktail competition

**P**harmacology graduate Mollie Atherton, who was originally going to pursue a career in medical sciences, has won a UK competition for her cocktail mixing skills.

As Northcote's head bartender, self-confessed 'science geek' Mollie, 22, took the prestigious first place prize with her Lady Austissimo cocktail in the competition run by Brockmans gin and BAR magazine.



Having graduated from Bristol University with a degree in Pharmacology, Mollie who is from Whalley, explained her thinking behind the winning cocktail, which contains coriander seeds, rose peppercorns, blackberries and blueberries, mixed with Brockmans and a splash of Cointreau: "The idea for this cocktail came from thinking about the botanicals used in Brockmans.

"Rather than trying to add new flavours I thought I might enhance its natural flavours by using the botanicals used in the distillation process.

"A gin and tonic is a thing of beauty and I hope that with this cocktail I have managed to eek out the real essence of what makes Brockmans a timeless classic."

Her prize for winning the competition was a trip to Barcelona where she mixed her cocktail at a party attended by 400 people and hosted in a historic warehouse, now used to house art installations and



other cultural events.

"This was my first competition. And while I really enjoyed creating my entry I never thought I'd even come close to winning," said Mollie, who was joined by runners up Stephen McGonigle, 27, of The Playboy Club, near London's Hyde Park, and Dario Guaglione, 29, from the Whistling Shop in the East End.

At the party the trio of top bartenders made their winning cocktails before a select VIP segment of invited guests.

The night also involved live music, the premiere of an art film, a laser graffiti display, an interactive percussion session and a myriad of Brockmans' cocktails.

There was also an after-party held at Mutis, which is located in the Eixample district of Barcelona, and is known as one of the most exclusive clandestine bars in the world.

"The party was amazing. I couldn't believe how spoiled we all were. We helped kick

off the event by making our winning drinks for the guests," added Mollie, who after leaving university, got a job working in a cocktail bar in Bristol.

"I wasn't just ready for a career in medical sciences and so got a job and then spent a winter season out in the French Alps working in a bar in the resort of Meribel."

On returning home to the Ribble Valley she then joined the bar team at Northcote.

After tasting Mollie's winning cocktail, Mark Ludmon, the Editor of BAR magazine commented: "This is very drinkable with a lovely balance of flavours and a delightful colour. It really complements the gin.

"It seems a relatively simple recipe but it's very unusual and delicious."

Although a winning master mixer, Mollie confesses to not being a huge cocktail drinker herself: "I prefer a glass of wine or a gin and tonic, which is why I based my cocktail on a G&T. I wanted to make something that I would enjoy." ■



## Mollie's Lady Austissimo

*Stir in a glass:*

- A pinch of whole coriander seeds
- A pinch of rose peppercorns
- 2 fresh blackberries
- 2 fresh blueberries
- ½ handful of fresh coriander
- 3 dashes of orange bitters

*Add ice to stirring glass and stir in:*

- 50ml of Brockmans Gin
- 20ml of Cointreau

Mix for around one or two minutes then double strain into a glass over fresh ice. Pour over a small bottle of Fever Tree Mediterranean Tonic and garnish with orange peel twist, fresh coriander leaf and a single fresh blackberry.