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* by Emma Roberts

Chain Reactions

WHEN SUPPLIES RUN SHORT, THE PROS KEEP COOL

It's been over a year and a half since the pandemic upended our lives and our industry. One of the biggest challenges at the restaurant where I work has been sourcing: Products that would normally come within a few days or weeks are taking much, much longer, from the shades that were backordered for nearly four months to our investor's favorite bourbon, Whistle Pig 15 Year. At this point, we've seen it all—or more accurately, we've waited for it all.

And we're not the only ones. One of my favorite bartenders, Karla Hammer at The Maybourne Beverly Hills, has also been experiencing disruptions in spirit and wine shipments. "We find ourselves excited to create a cocktail only to find out the spirit we were looking forward to using is unavailable," she told me. "We are constantly rotating our wine list to accommodate what is available." But Hammer makes it work by experimenting with liquor types and brands she hadn't previously used—and her guests are enjoying the results. "After 25 years of bartending, not only has this been interesting but I truly believe it has made me appreciate my craft and fall in love with it all over again," she acknowledged.

The search for solutions extends, of course, to the beginning of the supply chain. PJ Dwyer, chief revenue officer and partner at Nosotros Life and Spirits, has run into several issues for tequila production. "We source all of



PJ Dwyer is chief revenue officer and partner at Nosotros Life and Spirits.

our raw materials in Mexico and have been experiencing serious shortages in glass supply," he told me. "Glass shortages can be attributed to labor shortages and distilleries competing for limited [resources]." When I asked how he overcame those challenges, he said Nosotros invested in growing the operational team to rethink their supply chain; one new hire had access to vendors the company wasn't aware of, including an artisanal supplier who uses 100% recycled glass—all the better for a company that, as Dwyer says, "firmly

Josh Goldman is the co-founder of Silvergrin Vodka.



believe[s] in sustainable practices throughout all aspects of our business."

As the co-founder of Silvergrin Vodka as well as a bartender and bar consultant, Josh Goldman has been dealing with everything from a shortage of qualified employees to unfilled orders from distributors that don't have enough delivery truck drivers to delays in imported products. To change the narrative, his philosophy is to go with the flow. "Running a bar is like riffing with jazz musicians," he observed.

"Things can change at any time, and you have to roll with the changes or your listeners will hear the disharmony."

And that's exactly where I find the beauty in the storm: watching our industry innovate and create solutions to every crisis we face. The rays of sunshine are coming through. **🍸**

Comments or general life questions? Send Roberts an email at 100proofemma@gmail.com or reach out to her through her YouTube channel, 100 Proof Emma, or Instagram @100proofemma.