

Hit Me With Your Best Shots

MEET A BARTENDER WHO SERVES UP **ANYTHING BUT EUPHEMISM**

BY RON DONOHO / PHOTO BY JANELLE MAAS

Tiffany Tapella is a nice, Midwestern-bred girl who is talking about working as a bar manager at The Shout House...and the popularity of blow jobs. Shots, that is.

"Blow jobs are the most popular shot we sell," says the outgoing Chicago native, who has a captivating streak of pink-colored hair on the right side of her head. "We get a lot of bachelorette parties, and it's just a given that you get the bachelorette, or the whole group, that shot."

A blow job shot, for the uninitiated wallflower, is a layered drink of Kahlua and Bailey's Irish Cream. It's served in a round shot glass, and topped with whipped cream. Tapella says the male bartenders often offer to sit on the bar and serve the shot off their laps to female patrons.

Or, since The Shout House is all about live, interactive show business, revelers are often asked to come up on stage and down their shot astride one of the bar's dueling pianos.

If you're not already blushing, here's Tapella describing the male version of the racy shot: "It's called a muff diver. It's basically the same ingredients, but we put the shot glass in a martini glass. And picture the martini glass filled with whipped cream. You have to stick your face into it to get to the shot. You can't help but get whipped cream all over you. It's a lot of fun."

Tapella says you have to have a good sense of humor to work at—let alone be a patron in—The Shout House. "Everybody's a comedian here," she says. "You have to be light-hearted and you have to appreciate humor, even tasteless humor. And there's a lot of sarcasm here. We don't mind picking on customers to have some fun."

The piano bar attracts a wide age range, from 20-somethings to octogenarians. The music kicks off at 7 p.m. and runs continuously until closing



time. But after five years of slinging drinks, Tapella says that when the bar gets busy, she really doesn't hear the music.

"You know that every night somebody is going to request Billy Joel's *Piano Man*," she says. "And there are always a lot of Elton John songs. I guess I notice when they play some dumb 1980s music; you know, some Eddie Money or Oingo Boingo. But the funniest is when they play current hip-hop stuff, like Black Eyed Peas. In a weird way, it's really good. It's crazy."

Tapella helped open The Shout House in downtown San Diego, and has worked at the company's two other locations in Chicago and Glendale, Arizona. She's lived in San Diego for six years, and her first job here was as a cocktail waitress at The Onyx Room.

She manages the bar a couple nights a week, and bartends other nights. A Scripps Ranch resident, she plans to move to Pacific Beach early next year. "Every Midwesterner wants to live at the beach, right?" she says.

Tapella likes the nightlife, but is just as content to stay home and watch movies, particularly stupid comedies and anything with Ryan Reynolds. "I loved *Van Wilder*," she says. "And I love movies like *The Hangover*."

At work or at play, this hot shot never seems to be far from a good laugh. ■

"You have to be light-hearted and you have to appreciate humor, even tasteless humor."

The Shout House
655 4th Ave., Gaslamp
619.231.6700
thesouthouse.com

C'MON AND SHOUT

The show at The Shout House begins at 7 p.m. with dueling piano players banging out nonstop tunes. Each night, two pairs of musicians perform, playing alternating sets that last about an hour.

"They're really talented—they literally know thousands of songs," says bar manager Tiffany Tapella. "If they've heard a song and never played it before, they can usually figure it out. And if they definitely don't know something, the next time you come back I guarantee they will have learned it."