

## Micah Olson, Mixologist, Crudo Restaurant

Written by Debby Wolvos

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**An interview with Micah Olson, Mixologist at Crudo Restaurant.**



**AFM:** What was your vision for having your own bar space at Crudo?

**MO:** The analogy is that the restaurant side of Crudo is Chef Cullen Campbell's bedroom and the Crudo bar is my bedroom. We get to make our spaces our own. I love it.

**AFM:** Yet the bar is totally on par with the restaurant.

**MO:** Absolutely. It's about using local, fresh ingredients and being very precise in the execution and presentation of the finest cocktails.



**AFM:** What does it mean to be a great mixologist?

**MO:** A bartender can make you a Manhattan. A mixologist can also tell you the history of the Manhattan, what country it came from, how it's changed over the years, and create a fresh and well-constructed version. I create outside the box.

**AFM:** As a mixologist, do you specialize in taking it culinary?

**MO:** Yes. It's about breaking a drink down into specific measurements and knowing the acid and sugar levels. I enjoy discussing details about the production of the spirits, the science, the culture, the history.

**AFM:** How did you get your start in the culinary/bar world?

**MO:** I started at the Royal Palms as a busser. Then I got bitten by the wine bug. By age 24, I was a sommelier. I was the wine buyer at Sanctuary Resort and I was bartending one day a week. Ryan Magarian, who is regarded as one of America's top mixologists did a class on using fresh juices and creating unique flavors. I became hooked.

**AFM:** The bar space at Crudo is tucked away and doesn't look like a typical bar that you'd find in Arizona.

**MO:** Exactly. People tell me that the bar looks like a place in Seattle or the Hamptons, or Santa Barbara.



**AFM:** What's your current favorite cocktail?

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**MO:** It's a drink called the Tongue Tied. It's a play off of a drink served at a Chicago restaurant called Sable. I use muddled strawberry with Mezcal, Amaro, lime juice and lavender tincture.

**AFM:** How do you create versions of the classics?

**MO:** I select the best spirits and make all of my own syrups. I try to give everything a little bit of love so there is a variety of very unique, classic and seasonal cocktails.