

MARKET WATCH

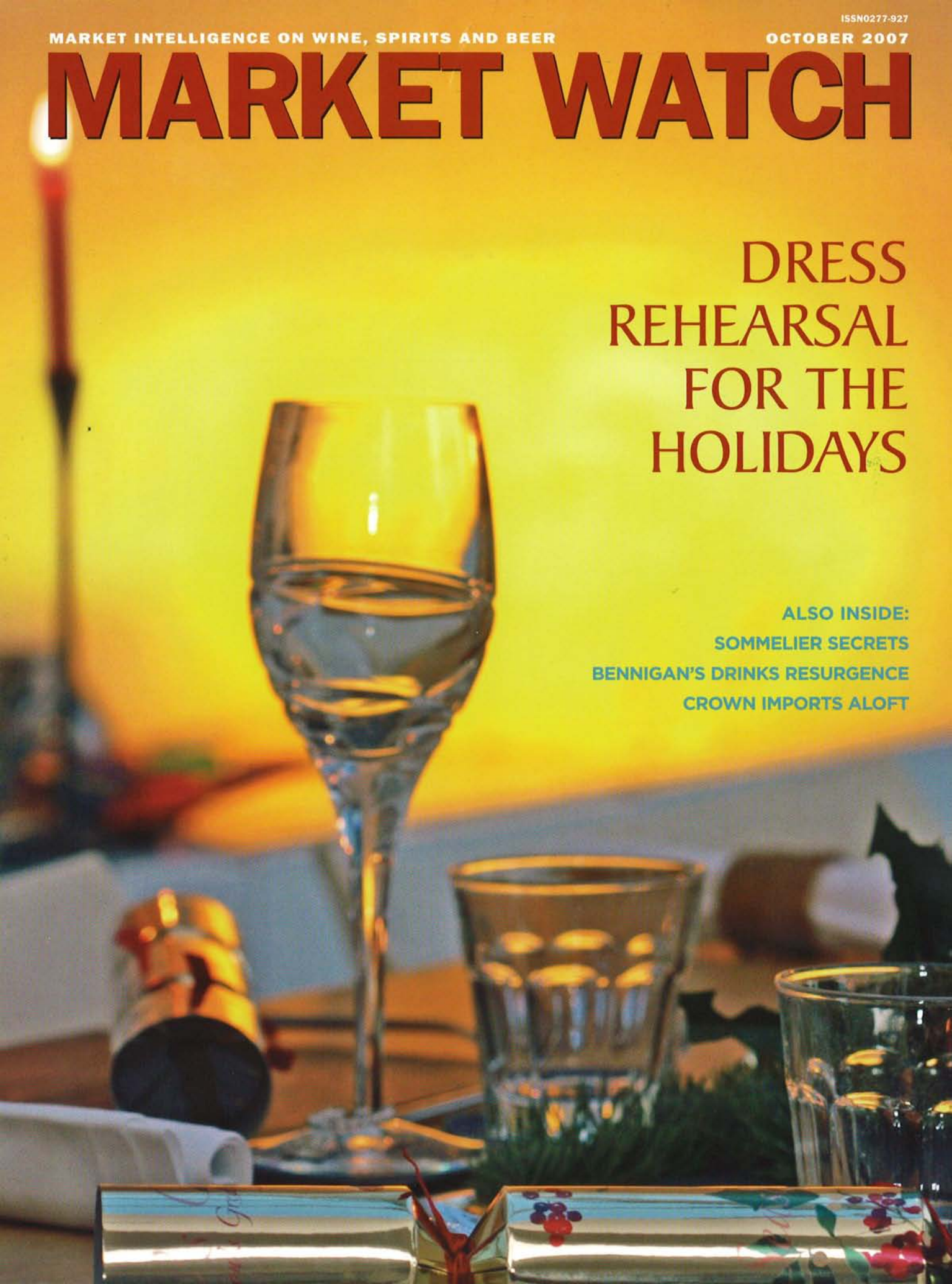
DRESS REHEARSAL FOR THE HOLIDAYS

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Drinks On Cue

Suburban Seattle's Parlor serves quality drinks to well-heeled pool buffs

Though pool is the primary entertainment at Parlor Billiards & Spirits, the Bellevue, Washington, venue has little resemblance to a traditional billiard hall. With multiple bars, an upscale lounge and a menu of more than 50 specialty drinks and 100-plus spirits, Parlor has become one of suburban Seattle's chicest nightspots.

"Calling it a pool hall would be a misnomer," says Micah O'Malley, Parlor's co-bar supervisor. "It's luxurious; there's nothing else like it in Seattle. We cater to a more affluent crowd and we're transitioning into a high-end lounge where people can enjoy nice cocktails."

At its inception two years ago, Parlor Billiards & Spirits focused heavily on pool—the 20,000-square-foot space has more than 30 pool tables and hosts leagues and tournaments—but the bar component has been steadily increasing in importance. The main bar has an eye-catching 42-foot strip of ice spanning its length and the second bar is in the recently converted posh Ultralounge area. Separated from the billiards tables by curtains, Ultralounge has plush seating and features a DJ three times a week. "It's a Vegas-style VIP lounge," O'Malley says, adding that more people are coming to Parlor just to visit the trendy space.

For O'Malley, Parlor provides personal and professional enjoyment. The 29-year-old Washington state native has worked in the restaurant industry for 15 years, focusing on the bar since he turned 21. He's also an avid pool player and admits that he once aspired to play professionally. Though



Micah O'Malley combines his love of pool and drinks-making at Parlor Billiards & Spirits in suburban Seattle.

that didn't pan out, O'Malley says he's happy behind the bar, especially in a place where he can occasionally get in a game of pool.

Martinis are the bar's specialty, and Parlor boasts some 20 offerings (\$8 to \$9), along with several Champagne cocktails and coffee drinks (\$6 to \$8.50). As for spirits, Parlor lists numerous Tequilas, whiskies, rums and vodkas (\$6 to \$160 a 1¼-ounce pour for the Remy Martin Louis XIII Cognac). "We focus on higher-end ingredients," O'Malley says. "All of our house cocktails are made with brand-name liquors; we don't use basic well spirits. Our goal is to offer a diverse list, especially for people with a more sophisticated palate."

Parlor also serves 10 beers on tap (\$3.75 to \$5) and roughly 15 bottled brews (\$3.50 to \$12), including several local microbrews and the Peel's line of malternatives. Wine is available (\$5 to \$9.50 a glass, \$20 to \$250 a bottle) too, with Champagne bottle service proving popular in Ultralounge. Parlor also has a chef on hand to prepare upscale bar food (\$5.45 to \$13.85), such as Kobe beef sliders.

Though he's tried many career paths—including acting and modeling in Los Angeles—O'Malley is settled today. In the future, he looks forward to moving up the management ladder and helping expand Parlor Billiards & Spirits, as the owners have plans to open outlets in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Las Vegas and Portland, Oregon. But for now, O'Malley is content. "There are so many opportunities at Parlor," he says. "There's really nothing like it."

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Laura Pelner

Micah O'Malley's recipes

THE PARLOR APPLE (\$8.50)



Ingredients:

1½ ounces Pendleton Whisky; ¾ ounce DeKuyper Sour Apple Pucker; ¾ ounce Berentzen Apfel liqueur; 1 ounce cranberry juice; 1 green apple slice; cinnamon sugar.

Recipe:

Rim a Martini glass with cinnamon sugar and set aside. Combine all liquid ingredients in an ice-filled shaker and shake vigorously. Strain into the Martini glass. Garnish with a floating apple slice.

DIRTY POTATO (\$9)



Ingredients:

2½ ounces of Chopin vodka; ½ ounce olive juice; 2 blue cheese-stuffed olives.

Recipe:

Blend Chopin and olive juice in an ice-filled shaker. Shake vigorously and strain into a Martini glass. Garnish with skewered blue cheese-stuffed olives.

POMEGRANATE COCKTAIL (\$9)



Ingredients:

1¼ ounces Pearl Pomegranate vodka; ½ ounce Pama Pomegranate liqueur; ½ ounce Patrón Citrónge; ½ ounce fresh pomegranate juice; 1 ounce sour mix; 1 maraschino cherry; 1 flower.

Recipe:

Mix all liquid ingredients in an ice-filled shaker. Shake vigorously and strain into a Martini glass. Garnish with a cherry and a flower.