

THE BAR

By Lisa Lubin



Winging It

A stadium designer scales down with a butterfly-inspired cocktail lounge

Kansas City-based architect David Manica has designed stadiums around the world, from FC Barcelona's upgraded Camp Nou to the Raiders' future home in Las Vegas. Now he has come home to open a decidedly more intimate venue: the Monarch Cocktail Bar & Lounge.

"I'm happy that I get to travel around the world and come back to Kansas City," Manica says, "but there wasn't anything here like the high-end bars of London or Moscow. So I decided to open one myself."

The name of the bar resonates with the city's sports history, as the Kansas City Monarchs were a legendary Negro league baseball team that employed Satchel Paige, Jackie Robinson, and Ernie Banks. But Manica's inspiration actually came from a fellow frequent flyer: the monarch butterfly.

Butterflies are a key element of the bar's signature fixture, a scene-stealing chandelier that's made up of 1,000 laser-cut, custom-formed acrylic lepidoptera designed in cooperation with the Kansas City Art Institute. (The shape of the butterflies was inspired by a handcrafted sculpture by Venetian artist Paolo Brandolisio.) Then there's the menu, which features cocktails inspired by the monarch's migratory routes, complete with GPS coordinates. The West Coast Migration, for instance, includes green chile vodka from St. George distillery in California and Sombra mezcal from Mexico. "We liked the idea that the menu would be more than a list of drinks," Manica says, "that it would tell a story—and that story, of course, is tied to the monarch butterfly."



Aaron Leimkueller of All Levels Photo (bar, hallway); Brandon Cummins (cocktail)



THE SNACK

Secret Aardvark Habanero Hot Sauce

Anyone who has seen the first episode of *Portlandia*,

in which a restaurant waitress offers a couple of diners the complete bio of the chicken on the menu—and the couple responds by traveling to the farm to meet the chicken—knows that the people of Oregon's largest city take the provenance of their food seriously. So it comes as no surprise that on many restaurant tables there, the hot

sauce of choice isn't Tabasco or Sriracha, but locally made Secret Aardvark Habanero Hot Sauce. Stacy Moritz and her late husband, Scott, started selling the sauce, a slightly chunky mix of habanero, tomato, carrot, garlic, and onion, in Portland farmers markets in 2004, and it soon found its way into local markets and eateries. It has since won polls as Portland's

favorite hot sauce and has also earned a somewhat dubious designation: "We're Portland's most stolen hot sauce," Stacy says. "I lose a lot of customers that way. Restaurants are just like, 'We can't afford it.'" Instead of resorting to thievery, buy a pack of three bottles for \$20. secretaardvark.com

—Justin Goldman

Stacey Lamb (Secret Aardvark)