



DU JOUR

**BEST BUFFET OR ACTION STATION
CATIE AWARDS 2024**



SYNOPSIS

A symphony of summer unfolded at a hazy outdoor soiree, where the visionary "Du Jour" station debuted. Elevating gazpacho to an art form, colorful savory concoctions dazzled thanks to heirloom ingredients. Setting this celebration apart was the spirited twist—London-dry gin, smooth tequila, and classic vodka effortlessly paired with their color-saturated counterparts. The station, a blend of interactive chef-attended charm and traditional bar elegance, encouraged guests to choose between nouveau gazpacho over ice or a delightful low-proof cocktail. Each coupe, a canvas in and of itself, epitomized the culinary team's commitment to dietary inclusivity, culinary innovation, and pure visual delight.



THE CONCEPT

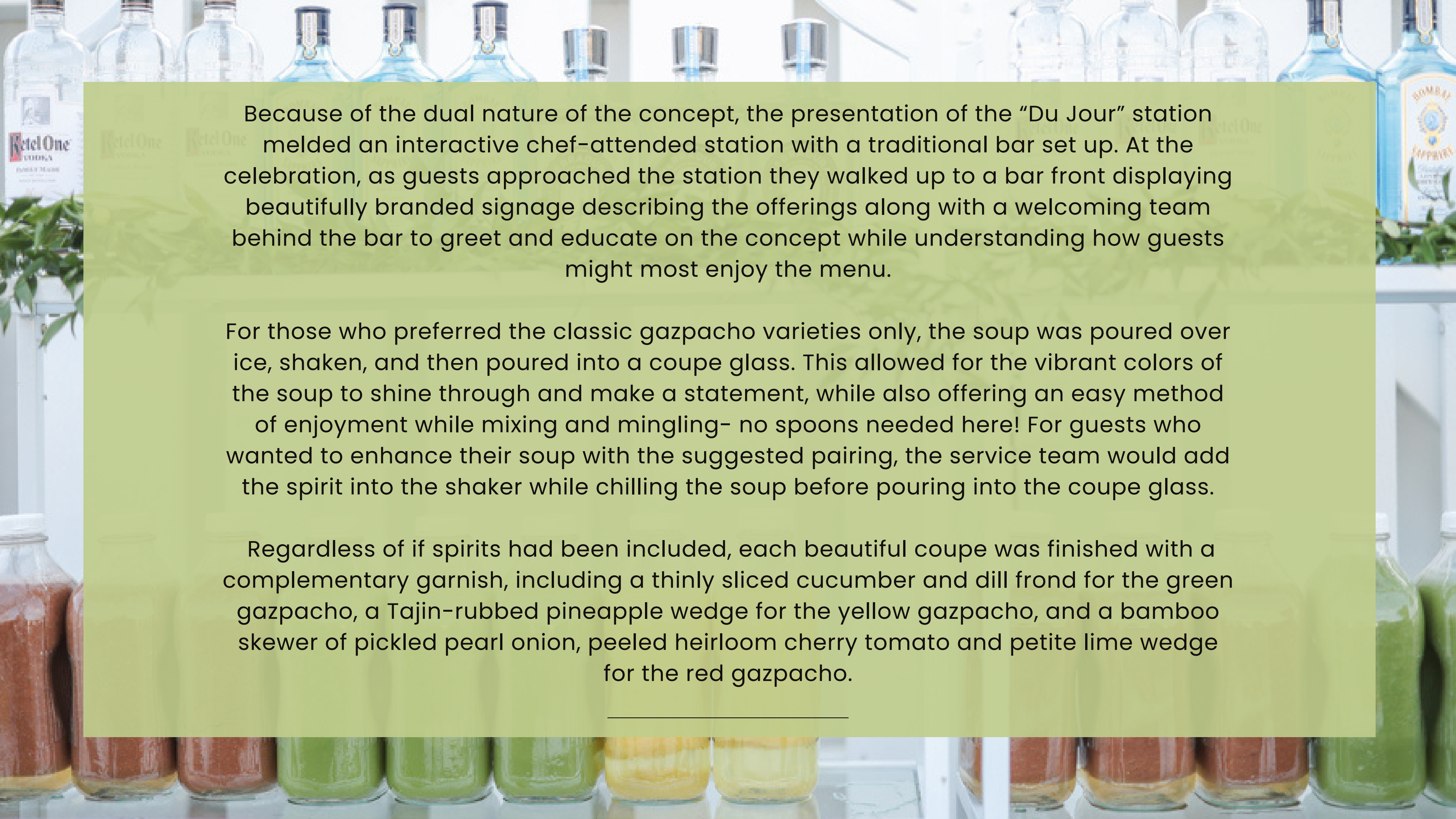
The summer months in the north are filled with warm sunshine, outdoor celebrations, and a bounty of produce only seen for a few fleeting moments throughout the year. In planning for a July soiree that embraced each of these joyful elements, the chef team dreamed up a concept that married the beauty of fresh fruits and vegetables with an interactive station not yet seen in the marketplace.

The “Du Jour” station concept drew inspiration from a nouveau approach to a traditional gazpacho. Using a variety of local and seasonal ingredients, the culinary team created three different varieties of soups that included a green gazpacho featuring melon, cucumber, and dill, a yellow gazpacho with pineapple, yellow tomato, and yellow watermelon, and a roasted red gazpacho with tomato, red bell pepper, jalapeño, and shallot.

While this concept on its own was a true celebration of summer, the chef team decided to add an additional layer of interest and interaction to the station by including the potential for the addition of a thoughtfully paired spirit. A London-dry style gin was paired perfectly with the green melon and herb-based gazpacho, a smooth tequila was teamed up with the yellow sweet and savory soup, and a classic, icy vodka was available to enhance the red gazpacho with tomato and red bell peppers.

The beauty of this twist was that if guests simply wanted a refreshing summer soup it was readily available to them, and if they wanted to add a spirit to the dish, it became an equally delicious low-proof cocktail.





Because of the dual nature of the concept, the presentation of the “Du Jour” station melded an interactive chef-attended station with a traditional bar set up. At the celebration, as guests approached the station they walked up to a bar front displaying beautifully branded signage describing the offerings along with a welcoming team behind the bar to greet and educate on the concept while understanding how guests might most enjoy the menu.

For those who preferred the classic gazpacho varieties only, the soup was poured over ice, shaken, and then poured into a coupe glass. This allowed for the vibrant colors of the soup to shine through and make a statement, while also offering an easy method of enjoyment while mixing and mingling- no spoons needed here! For guests who wanted to enhance their soup with the suggested pairing, the service team would add the spirit into the shaker while chilling the soup before pouring into the coupe glass.

Regardless of if spirits had been included, each beautiful coupe was finished with a complementary garnish, including a thinly sliced cucumber and dill frond for the green gazpacho, a Tajin-rubbed pineapple wedge for the yellow gazpacho, and a bamboo skewer of pickled pearl onion, peeled heirloom cherry tomato and petite lime wedge for the red gazpacho.



THE CREATIVE

The creative process used to conceptualize and design the station was born from a dedication to highlighting a variety of local ingredients while also developing an experience for guests that they'd not yet come across.

Inspired by a delicious Bloody Mary mix at a local restaurant but not wanting to have a cocktail that morning, Chef realized that there was a great opportunity to have a delightful, balanced experience that could serve a variety of tastes.

From there, creating a moment where all guests were welcome to engage in the station became a top priority. Beyond this menu being either spirit-free or spirited, the gazpachos were created to intentionally be gluten-free, dairy-free, and vegan.

THE SET UP

Outside of ensuring an inclusive dietary spectrum, design was also of top importance. We don't just eat with our eyes first; we sip with them too. Beyond the thin, high-quality glass coupe glasses used to present the soup, the setup of the station was well thought out to present a polished, cohesive look for guests while ensuring a work station that was efficient and enjoyable for the culinary team.

Each gazpacho filled a curvy milk glass bottle and was sorted on shelving at the back of the station by color blocking. The corresponding options spirits were placed on the shelf above so guests could clearly see what all of their options might include. With the sparkling glass and vibrant colors, the vertical display was a delightful sight to come upon.

To give color and texture to the front of the station, fresh produce was displayed to not only add to the aesthetic but also help communicate to guests what ingredients they would soon be enjoying.

From a functionality standpoint, the station was equipped with all of the necessary wares to execute a seamless vision. From coupe glasses to shakes, jiggers to ice, the station attendants had everything they needed to create a delightful sip for the engaged guests.





THE CHALLENGES

With this concept not having been seen before in the market, the biggest challenge was deciding the best way to educate guests as they approached the station. With careful training of the service staff attending the station, the team was able to engage with guests upon their arrival at the Du Jour station and walk them through the fact that the station offered a little something for everyone – it could be everything from a delightfully refreshing chilled summer soup to a low-proof cocktail.

Secondarily, fine tuning the recipes for each of the gazpachos was of top importance. When introducing spirits to any liquid, the alcohol in the spirit will naturally enhance any of the sugar or saline elements present. It was critical for the chef team to test each soup and season appropriately, while at the same time not adding overt flavors that may conflict with the coordinating spirit should the guest opt to include that in their “Du Jour” experience.

RECIPES

Green Melon Gazpacho

2 ea Santa Clause Melon
2 ea english cucumber (seeded)
2 bunch fresh dill
2 fl oz lemon juice
2 tbsp sugar

1 ea Cucumber sliced thin for garnish
1 bunch fresh dill picked for garnish

Blend all the Ingredients together and push through a fine mesh strainer. Slice the cucumbers very thin for garnish. Its Intended to float on the surface with a sprig of dill.

Alcohol Enhancement ratio Is 3:1 gazpacho to spirit.

Yellow Watermelon Gazpacho

2 1/2 ea yellow watermelon
1 lb yellow tomatoes
1/2 ea pineapple

Pineapple triangles for garnish
Tajin seasoning for garnish

Blend all Ingredients together and push through a fine mesh strainer.

Put tajin seasoning on a plate and dip one side of a pineapple triangle in the Tajin seasoning.

Alcohol Enhancement ratio Is 3:1 gazpacho to spirit.

Roasted Red Gazpacho

3 lb Roma Tomatoes (half seeded)
1 ea English cucumber
1 ea Red Bell Pepper (seeded)
1 ea Jalapeno (seeded)
1 ea medium sized shallot
1 bunch cilantro
1 ea clove of garlic
2 fl oz red wine vinegar
1 ea lime (juiced)
1 ea lemon (juiced)

Purée all Ingredients together and strain through a china cap.

Skewers of peeled heirloom grape tomato, pickled pearl onions, lime wedges.

Alcohol Enhancement ratio Is 3:1 gazpacho to spirit.

3.5' SHELVING UNIT

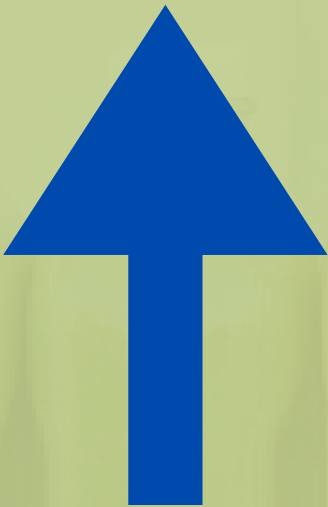
3.5' SHELVING UNIT

SERVICE AREA

5' MARBLE TOP BAR FRONT

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FREESTANDING
STATION
SIGNAGE



GUEST APPROACH

