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Atlantans Combine Whipped Cream and Liquor to Create Whipahol

The 36-proof liquor that comes in a canister will soon be available in Florida and Tennessee

By John Kessler
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“When a problem comes along, you must whip it. Before the cream sits out too long, you must whip it.”

So proclaimed Devo in the group’s 1980 paean to the nitrous oxide canister and its many uses. But as Paul Urbanowicz and Tyler Moore have learned, this advice simply isn’t true.

Not the problem part; the cream part. Urbanowicz and Moore have discovered the cream can sit out for hours and hours, particularly when it is 36 proof.

As a result, these two Atlanta inventors are getting ready to release a product they think will forever change the world of silly cocktails as we know it.

So original and so potentially game-changing is this creamy newcomer that the inventors had to invent a word for it.

It is a beautiful word, a portmanteau of the highest order, and it tells you all you need to know: Whipahol!

Yes, folks, we’re talking flavored, alcoholic whipped cream. It goes on like Reddi-wip and goes down like a shot of moonshine.

“You can put it on shots, shooters, martinis or daiquiris!” exclaims Urbanowicz, 41, the fast-talking and endlessly enthusiastic whipaholic-in-chief. “People from 21 to 65 love it.”

He shakes a canister of orange whipahol and, pssssssttt, sprays a tall rosette of pastel foam atop a shot of DeKuyper Thrilla Vanilla liqueur. A barfly’s cupcake. “It’s a Dreamsicle!”

“Go ahead — just tip it back,” Urbanowicz encourages a guest inside his Atlanta factory, where a full bar stands in one corner and a dormant production line in the other, waiting for the first order to roll.

“See! The cream coats the bite out of the liquor,” Urbanowicz explains. “It’s very smooth, but you know you’re drinking alcohol.”

Urbanowicz and Moore, 25, have lots of cocktails based on the first four flavors of their product, which is properly called Whipped Lightning brand whipahol. Cinnamon whipahol and cinnamon schnapps? It’s a “Fire Extinguisher.” Macadamia whipahol and crème de menthe? That’s a “Mac ‘n Menthe.” As for the amaretto whipahol, you may just want to spray an extra large serving in a dish and garnish it with a drizzle of Frangelico. That’s what these guys call a “drink-sert.”

But first they have to sell the stuff.

Because of a state law that prevents bars from selling liquor from containers smaller than 750 ml, the Whipped Lightning boys have yet to get a Georgia distributor. So they’re beginning with distribution deals in neighboring states and are working toward getting a



Georgia waiver.

“We expect to be in Nashville and Gainesville [Fla.] by Halloween,” says Urbanowicz. “In the beginning it will only be sold on premises in key bars, restaurants and forward-thinking places that want to adopt something new.”

In about 90 days, whipahol will be available in liquor stores at about \$9.99 for a 375 ml. canister. That’s when Urbanowicz expects the “do it yourself” crowd to start experimenting and finding new uses.

“I’m sure people will be doing body shots and getting crazy with it,” he predicts. “But of course we don’t want that to be the central focus.”

Of course not.

“When a good time turns around, you must whip it. You will never live it down, unless you whip it.”

It all started with that crazy, I-could-just-quit-my-job-and-go-into-business idea.

A little over three years ago Urbanowicz found himself at a crossroads. He was skilled at collecting advanced degrees — a J.D., an M.B.A. and a C.P.A. — but, he admits, “found the corporate world disagreeable.”

Urbanowicz was the chief financial officer of a wastewater treatment plant when Tyler Moore rode in on a tractor. Moore took a break from his job as a country club chef and became the treatment plant’s groundskeeper. “I was by myself all day on a tractor, watching hawks and deer,” says Moore, who was happy to be no longer catering weddings.

Though there was this one bride. She wanted something really special. Something for her wedding that no one else would have.

Playing in the kitchen, Moore dumped a bottle of Amaretto di Saronno into a KitchenAid mixer. He added a carton of 40 percent milkfat cream. “And that’s it,” he recalls.

The alcohol-infused whipped cream was such a hit that Moore thought about it all the while he rode that tractor, and finally brought the idea to Urbanowicz.

The two set off on three years of testing — first long weekends, then whipahol parties. Urbanowicz, a near teetotaler, went to bartending school. They shopped for equipment, obtained a patent, found a space, found another space where the landlord would let them produce spirits on premise, and quit their jobs.

Urbanowicz’s and Moore’s company, Maple Grove Products, is the only producer of distilled spirits in the state of Georgia, according to David Dyal at the Georgia Department of Revenue.

That doesn’t mean they distill the spirits themselves. Rather, they purchase pure grain alcohol by the 55-gallon drum, mix in cream, flavorings, coloring, nitrous oxide and ... whipahol!

After the first few canisters came off the assembly line, Urbanowicz and Moore noticed something unusual about their product. When refrigerator cold, the cream comes out as an airy, thin, shapeless foam. When at room temperature, it turns dense and creamy. Food scientist Harold McGee, author of “On Food and Cooking,” believes the reason is that the fat particles stick together when cold and refuse to blend with the alcohol.

Now, on the eve of whipahol’s debut, Urbanowicz and Moore are busy collecting opinion. At a recent tasting, a group of friends who post on Yelp.com assembled at Eclipse di Luna restaurant in Buckhead to try some whipped cocktails. (All the whipahol was donated; the Atlanta Journal-Constitution paid for the alcohol.) Reactions were mixed.

“I usually don’t have consistency issues, but this is kind of weird,” opined Broderick Smylie of a vodka shot topped with orange whipahol.

“I can feel my eyes start to cross,” Hardy Wallace said of the definite alcoholic punch.

But Joel Corpus called the amaretto and macadamia flavors “awesome by themselves.”

And Katie Winter smiled in delight at the taste of a Kahlua and Frangelico shot topped with amaretto whipahol.

“I think it goes really well on top of a girlie shot,” she laughed, ready for another.