

**A cocktail isn't complete without a smile.**

**Be enchanted by the world of cocktails according to the World's  
Cocktail Sub champion for 2013- Francisco Javier Lucas**

Francisco, bartender at the Med Playa Hotel Bali takes us into the world of high-class drinks.



Great performance of Francisco Javier Lucas

The World's Cocktail Sub champion chats about life behind the bar, and what his future holds, now that he's been rewarded with the silver medal for his technique and his inventive use of ingredients, at the World Cocktail Championship 2013, in the capital of the Czech Republic, Prague. His cocktail 'Green Sensation' (Category Aperitif) has been rated as the second best aperitif in the world.

Francisco Javier Lucas holds the position of Head barman at the Med Playa Hotel Bali in Benalmádena Costa, where he mixes drinks, serves customers with enthusiasm whilst chatting to them with a constant smile, making you want to come back to the hotel again and again. In our interview with Francisco, we would like to introduce you into a world of the cocktails where creativity and colourful inspiration lift your spirit!

Here is the interview. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

**When and how did you first get into the competitive world of bartending?**

With the aid of the first bartender I worked with at the Hotel Bali, D. Antonio Lucena (R.I.P) who first asked me to accompany him to the Provincial Competition organised by ABE Málaga-Costa del Sol (Association of Bartenders Málaga) at the Hotel Alay in 2002. I was fascinated by the experience and a year later there I was, competing in the Hotel Amaragua. I still remember my well deserved fifth place.

**What prompted you to become involved with ABE Málaga- Costa del Sol?**

I have always believed that being a member of the association is very beneficial. Belonging to an association of prestige and professionalism such as ABE Málaga- Costa del Sol, could only help me improve in my profession. Not surprisingly this association is one of the most popular, and has been successful in all the competitions participated in . All the top professionals in our industry have gone through ABE Málaga- Costa del Sol.



Francisco wins silver medal at the World  
Cocktail Championship 2013, held in Prague

**Any special prep-work to gear up for the finals this past week?**

Undoubtedly, from the first moment I was appointed to represent Spain at the World Championship, I had it very clear that it was a very serious responsibility and I would have to perform at a higher level than my competing colleagues. This became my main concern and that's what pushed me to do a thorough preparation plan, in which I found the help of great professionals of ABE Málaga- Costa del Sol, such as Manolo Martin and Ramon Ramirez from Sevilla, responsible for contestants' preparation for International Competitions and whose advice was a great help to me.

**How did you balance timing with technique during your performance?**

The most important aspect of my performance was based on a lot of training, memorizing and visualizing all steps, at all times, but I must admit that in International Competitions the clock runs much faster, or at least that's what it seems to me!

**Do you have a favourite drink to mix?**

"Green Sensation", which has as its base all the power of Grey Goose Vodka, the elegance of Cherry Marnier, the balance of Martini Dry and flavour of Finest Call Blue Curacao syrup, scented with orange peel. Do you dare to try it??!!



From left to right, J.A. Mena (President of A.B.E. Málaga- Costa del Sol),  
F.J. Lucas (World's Cocktail Sub champion), M. Jimenez (Manager of Medplaya Hotel Bali)

**What's your favourite thing about working behind the bar?**

Without any doubt, the most rewarding part of our job is when you become a customer's friend. If you provide a good service, preparing a recommended cocktail, and then when you see with satisfaction that the customer is enjoying and appreciating the moment of happiness in the bar, which is what definitely what all our customers want during their holiday.

**What can't you mix drinks without? Any bartender's secret recipe maybe?**

A jigger, (measuring tool) is indispensable in the world of cocktail making as it is a unique tool that ensures that the cocktail has the exact measurements and has the same taste every time.

**What tips can you offer to a newbie bartender?**

My highest recommendation is to put a lot of passion and enthusiasm into the process of learning, reading, and gathering of information in order to stay up to date as our profession is constantly evolving. And if one day things don't go as you planned, don't get discouraged and just try again. Furthermore and equally important are the customer relations. Don't forget that the customer is everything to you. All customers should be treated correctly, with respect and affection ... and then you will end up with a customer-friend, our greatest reward.

**What's been the most exciting aspect of participating in the Championship for you?**

The moment of the award ceremony, when the speaker announced that the silver medal is coming to our country, to the tune of the song 'Viva España'. It was an unforgettable moment when the entire Spanish team, from the President of FABA (Pepe Dioni), to my parents, colleagues, friends and journalists, all cried with emotion for our great achievement.

**What are your personal and/or professional goals for the future?**

I'm a young man and my intention is to continue developing, improving and learning every day. The hospitality industry is a profession that is undergoing major changes and you can not stay still. I consider myself very fortunate to be working in a profession that I love and, on the other hand, I also feel grateful to Hotel Bali and the Med Playa Hotel Chain for giving me the opportunity and responsibility to lead this Department of the hotel and to take on any other challenge in the future.

Francisco, Congratulations on this fantastic award! And thank you for sharing your experience with us.

---

The truly successful ones always seem to be passionate about what they do. Once you find your passion, go with it and don't stop just because someone says you can't do it. Live your dream. Take a chance...

Benalmádena Costa, August 2013

Brought to you by [Medplaya .com](http://Medplaya.com)

Written by Vanda Lehnerová