

VEGAS

# seven<sup>®</sup>

October 14-20, 2010

THIS WEEK IN YOUR CITY

## Best Restaurants

Raku earns a top spot among the 27 winners in our very first dining awards



### PLUS:

Our food critic's worst dinners ever  
Get on board with Zane Lamprey's Booze Tour  
In the studio with Imagine Dragons

FREE

## Cocktail Culture

# Big-Ticket Imbibables

Excess is never enough. And, this week, we're prepared to prove it.

By Xania Woodman

ICE ON ICE

## The Monica Martini

*As served at Minus 5 Ice Lounge inside Mandalay Place and Monte Carlo, \$10,000*

The answer will surely be “Yes!” and likely before you’ve even popped the question as soon as she notices that her Jewel of Russia Ultra Vodka martini is garnished with a diamond engagement ring (a cool 90 percent of the cocktail’s cost). With just 48 hour’s notice, Ice Occasions will entomb the Aaron Lelah Jewelers ring of your choice into either a crystal clear ice sphere or cocktail glass made from pure Canadian glacier water. Lovebirds first get suited up in faux fur coats and hats before being sent inside one of Minus 5’s two world-famous Vegas ice lounges. There amid the carved ice statues, pelt-covered loveseats and chandeliers, the drinks are presented to the couple and the rest is up to him. Interestingly, the Monica is so-named for a Minus 5 bartender engaged three times in two years. But perhaps that’s a bit of trivia best left on ice. [Minus5Experience.com](http://Minus5Experience.com).



Clockwise from above: the Monica Martini, Frozen Beauty and King Richard's Pride.

## 35 BOTTLES AND COUNTING (DOWN)

## Nanbu Bijin 'Frozen Beauty' Daiginjo Sake

*Available in 720-milliliter bottles at Sushi Samba at the Palazzo for \$2,010, and \$2,400 at Shibuya inside the MGM Grand*

Seekers of extremely rare, ultra-premium sakes prepare to meet your sake grail. Kosuke Kuji San—heir to the Nanbu Bijin Kura sake brewery, Iwate prefecture brewers since 1915 and formerly Kuji Brewery—made this sake during his first year as master brewer. When it won the gold medal in a government-sponsored competition, Kuji San stored the 65 existing bottles at subzero temperatures for 10 years, after which just 35 were released on Chinese New Year, Feb. 14, to only a handful of restaurants in the world, including two in Las Vegas. With notes of grape and candied plum on the nose, Frozen Beauty is slightly sweet, soft and luxurious on the palate, and well-rounded. Shibuya sake specialist Dieter Xiao recommends pairing the Nanbu Bijin with Kampachi sashimi with fresh yuzu, truffle oil and garlic or Chilean sea bass cooked on Shibuya’s teppanyaki table.

## GREATER THAN THE SUM OF HIS PARTS

## King Richard's Pride

*As served at BOA Steakhouse, in the Forum Shops at Caesars, \$1,000*

Not only must you be in the chips but in the know to have what Richard’s having; King Richard’s Pride is not on the menu. “The spirits used to make it are the finest in the world,” says BOA general manager Brian Mongeon. “Each one has a history all its own. That’s what we tried to capture: the finest ingredients in history coming together to make a completely original modern cocktail.” Mixologist Eric Smith’s creation begins with two full ounces of Hennessy Richard Cognac (the top end of the Hennessy brand, named for its founder, Richard Hennessy; \$225 shot, \$7,200 bottle), continues with nearly an ounce of Dom Pérignon Rose 1996 (\$939), and culminates with Chambord, lime juice, a splash of cran and a muddled orange slice. “Despite its rich ingredients, it’s a very palatable, easy-to-drink cocktail,” Mongeon says. Adding impressive to incredible, the King’s tippie is served in a Baccarat “Vega” cocktail glass. Pride may be a sin, but you have to admit, it’s downright delicious. ■



The Monica Martini photo by Anthony Mair