

Good For What Ails You

Hot toddies take the chill off this season.

BY MATT SORRELL | PHOTO BY JENNIFER SILVERBERG

> The toddy has been around for centuries—well before what we recognize as the modern cocktail. It was served in both hot and cold versions, and was simply made with whatever spirits were at hand, a little sugar, water and some herbs as desired—with nutmeg, cinnamon and mint as the common go-tos. Cold toddies eventually morphed into a variety of drinks, including the cocktail, while the hot toddy has kept its original identity, to a certain degree anyway.

Hot toddies were often imbibed as a home remedy for a number of ailments, from head colds to hangovers (sometimes, they still are). But first-aid aside, the hot toddy also makes for a fine cold-weather tippie, and it's an excellent source of experimentation for the home mixologist.

While in years past, toddies were made with everything from rum to brandy, the most popular version in modern times is made with whisky. So, it's no surprise that local whisky bar extraordinaire The Scottish Arms has some delicious variations of this classic libation available. Of course, The Arms does the classic hot toddy upon request, featuring the bourbon or Scotch of the customer's choice, along with the requisite hot water and some cinnamon, honey and cloves. They'll also add some tea into the mix occasionally to complement the chosen spirit. All in all, it's a solid take on the venerable toddy, and a fine way to keep the chill at bay on a blustery evening. But, for those customers who'd like to step up to something a little more complex and unique, the bar also does a special house version of the hot toddy, which takes this classic to a whole new level.

Bar manager Chris Lynch came up with the recipe, which features Ledaig 10-year-old single-malt Scotch as the base; a menthol liqueur, such as white creme de menthe; Green Chartreuse; a fresh squeeze of lemon and a lemon peel. Instead of straight hot water, this toddy incorporates English black tea for another layer of complexity. All of these subtle flavors interact precisely for a truly balanced drink. The single-malt makes for a bit of smoky flavor with some sweetness behind it, while the chartreuse lends herbal notes that complement the earthy tea, and the menthol brings a breath of mint to the mix. If that doesn't cure what ails you, we don't know what will.



Hot toddy at The Scottish Arms