

An upscale nightclub bar in Jerseyville? Here's Proof

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JERSEYVILLE - After seeing nightclubs in places as far-flung as London, San Diego and Miami Beach, Jerrod Capps asked why Jerseyville, Illinois could not have such a place.

So he made one.

Proof, located at 111 State St., has been built from the basement as an upscale comfortable lounge area in Jerseyville. With plush leather sofas, marble counter and bar tops and exquisite flooring and wall covers, it does a great job looking like it would be found somewhere closer to San Diego or Miami Beach than the traditional idea of Jerseyville, but that idea is swiftly changing.

"I wanted to have a good dirty martini without having to drive to Godfrey or Alton or even St. Louis to do it," Capps said. "I figured I couldn't be the only one in town to want that in Jerseyville."

Dirty martinis and craft beers are the specialties of Proof, Capps said. Patrons can enjoy adult beverages as they enjoy the state-of-the art entertainment technology within the historic brick walls of the building - some of which still show minor damage from a historic fire from the 1930s, adding to the aesthetics. Large TVs streaming videos, sports and interactive games are across both floors of Proof.

"We have trivia here practically every night, and it's interactive across the country," Capps said. "The other night, we were number one in the country for a while. We also have Texas Hold-Em poker, with no stakes of course. It's just for fun."

That technology continues with both the bar's sound system, touchless light switches in the restrooms and its gaming machines, which are in a room surrounded by tinted windows to give gamers privacy and comfort. All of these additions were done by Capps and his partners within a building, which did not even have a second floor when he started.

"We gutted the place," he said. "We added new plumbing and wiring, and finished the floors. For years, this place didn't have an upstairs. Every time we wanted to add something new, we thought about it a while until we came up with an even better way to do it."

The upstairs bar features a deck with a great view of Downtown Jerseyville - a view which starts many conversations.



"People from all age groups look out on the dates of those buildings," Capps said. "That one over there is dated 1888, that's just over 20 years after Lincoln was president. There is a lot of history in those buildings."

Also in view from the walk-out deck, which is shaded by a small covering, are [George's Local Brew](#) and Chopped - two other recent developments in Downtown Jerseyville also bringing more people to the small city.

"We're not competition," Capps said. "Actually, we all work to bring more people here. I see familiar faces and new people here every night, and people coming up to Jerseyville don't have to stay in one place, they can walk from place to place downtown like they do in Alton. We have great bars and places to go, and we can all work together to bring more people to the city."

The City of Jerseyville itself has been very supportive of Proof. Capps said Jerseyville Mayor Bill Russell as well as other city officials visited him through the entire gutting and rebuilding process of the building. Capps said the city has been very supportive of the shared vision of the Proof management team.

Another part of that gutting and rebuilding process was the complete renovation of the basement, which holds nearly bottomless hot water heaters, a homemade walk-in cooler and even a dumbwaiter, which goes from the basement to the second floor.

"On busy nights, we have staff down here who can send more bottles up to the first and second floor bars," Capps said.

The building also features an elevator as well as an ADA-compliant ramp in the back of the building in order to be accessible to anyone.

In the near future, Capps said Proof will serve food from the adjacent Red Bird Deli, who will prepare it in their kitchen before delivering it to Proof. He said Proof will also have a completed VIP area with tinted windows, a private server, a private bartender and a refrigerator full of favorite drinks.

Currently, Proof has a VIP area with extra posh furnishings and bottle service.

More information on Proof can be found on its [Facebook page](#).

