

Contact:  
Jordan Moore  
Phone:  
219.472.2880  
Fax: 219.472.2273

701 E. 83<sup>rd</sup> Ave.  
Merrillville, IN 46410  
www.whitelodging.com



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# PRESS RELEASE

## JW Marriott Indianapolis' Lead Bartender Selected as a Chopped! Bloody Mary Contest Finalist

*Jessica Taylor selected as top 12 finalist to compete in New York City on Oct. 18*

**Merrillville, Ind. (Oct. 2, 2014):** White Lodging and the JW Marriott Indianapolis are excited to announce that Jessica Taylor, lead bartender of the JW Marriott Indianapolis, has been selected as a top 12 finalist for the Chopped! Bloody Mary Contest live competition and was selected as Indiana's state champion in the entry round.

Taylor will compete at the live competition held in New York City on Oct. 18 at the Food Network's New York City Wine & Food Festival. The cast of Food Network's Chopped! including Ted Allen, Scott Conant, Maneet Chauhan, Geoffrey Zakarian, Aarón Sánchez, Alex Guarnaschelli and Marc Murphy will be present to judge the 12 finalists' creations and cast their votes for the judges' favorite.

The Chopped! Best Bloody Mary contest is hosted in conjunction with ABSOLUT VODKA and challenges bartenders across the country to submit a unique recipe version of the classic Bloody Mary cocktail. The contest had over 2,000 entries and named one winner of each state in the entry round. However, only 12 of the state winners were invited to the final event.

"The cocktails I create don't always look or taste exactly like the original cocktail, but are reminiscent of it," said Taylor. "My submission was inspired by fresh flavors and included my homemade Thai bitters. In my opinion, I think that part of the reason the judges picked it is it's something different."

Taylor's winning Bloody Mary submission was bright yellow, opposed to the traditional red, and featured yellow heirloom tomato juice. Taylor had also submitted other recipes in previous years, winning the state title. However, this is the first year she was selected to compete at the live competition.

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Taylor has been expanding upon her mixology talents for the past 12 years as a bartender, with the last four with White Lodging at the JW Marriott Indianapolis. Taylor is also a member of the USA Bartenders Guild, a professional organization for bartenders with over 4,500 members. She is one of 77 from Indiana and a part of the fastest growing state chapter.

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