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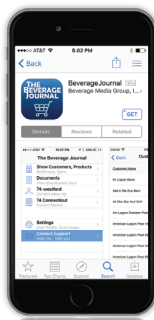
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The largest compilation of beverage alcohol price and brand information.

HOW BEER, WINE
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MARKETPOINT

The April issue blooms with news to use from the floor or the bar. Bring greater value to your customers by sharing your knowledge on tastes and trends.

- It's the "Age of **Agave**." Neat, on the rocks, or as a cocktail base, American consumers are embracing tequila while suppliers continue to enhance category offerings.
- U.S. consumers are also enjoying more **mezcal**. Bartenders have long known the secret of its unique taste profile; with their help, the market is ready to take flight.
- It's back-to-basics with **Chardonnay** 101. The popularity of this white is unparalleled, so drink up its past and present, shifting styles and selling points.



- The category slump of **Port** is set to turn around. New marketing techniques, especially on-premise, are boosting the classic fortified wine.
- One of Spain's emerging regions, **Priorat**, is embracing terroir. New plantings amidst a Mediterranean climate, later harvests and slate soils make for unique wines.
- Closer to **home**, we visit Salem for a look inside Gardner Lake Liquors in "Retail Review," and sip a seasonal cocktail in West Hartford at India Restaurant & Bar in "Serving Up." Pages of events and launches are found in "Around Town."
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ON THE COVER

Felipe Mendez, owner of La Milagrosa Agave Bar and Listening Room, Brooklyn, New York. Photographed by Andrew Kist.

Editor's Correction

March's "Serving Up" on page 47 featured Inishmor Pub in Colchester. The pub offers 26 draft beers among its beer, wine and cocktail menu selections.

DOUBLE CANYON NAMES MICHAUD AS WINEMAKER

Kate Michaud joined Double Canyon as its winemaker. In this role, she will direct and oversee all winemaking operations from the vine to the bottle. Most recently, Michaud was the first Washington-based winemaker funded by Naked Wines, enabling her to produce 90+point cabernet sauvignons. She also served as a winemaker and assistant winemaker for Covey Run and Cone Ridge. Double Canyon, known for producing benchmark cabernet sauvignons, is currently constructing a new winemaking facility close to the brand's vineyard in the Horse Heaven Hills appellation. Once construction is complete, Michaud will offer direction on the 50,000-case capacity facility.



WASHINGTON STATE ANNOUNCES RECORD WINE GRAPE HARVEST FOR 2016

Washington State's 2016 wine grape harvest totaled 270,000 tons, a 22-percent increase from 2015 and the biggest harvest in the state's history, according to the Washington State Wine Commission's Annual Grape Production Report. Red varieties produced more tons than white with 58 percent of the harvest. The largest share of this growth was cabernet sauvignon with an increase of 23,700 tons from the previous year. Cabernet sauvignon and merlot ranked the highest in tons of red varieties; chardonnay and riesling ranked highest in tons of white grapes. Washington also surpassed 900 winery licenses in 2016.



SCOTCH WHISKEY ASSOCIATION NAMES NEW CEO

Karen Betts has been named the Chief Executive Officer for the Scotch Whiskey Association (SWA). She is the first female and eighth CEO of SWA in its 105-year history. Most recently, she served for 16 years with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as the British Ambassador to Morocco and has held a variety of positions in London and overseas. Betts replaces David Frost, who stepped down from the role in November 2016. "It's an exciting and challenging time for the Scotch whisky industry, and I am looking forward immensely to helping ensure its success into the future. I am also delighted to be moving back to Edinburgh with my family," said Betts.



CASTLE BRANDS TO BUILD U.S. PRESENCE OF ISLE OF ARRAN DISTILLERS

Castle Brands announced a five-year exclusive agreement with Isle of Arran Distillers Limited. The exclusive distribution agreement includes The Arran Malt Single Malt Scotch Whisky and Robert Burns Single Malt Whisky and Blended Scotch Whiskey for the U.S. market. Richard J. Lampen, President and CEO of Castle Brands, said this agreement will "leverage our distribution platform and our successes with our Jefferson's bourbon portfolio and our expanding Irish whisky offerings." Euan Mitchell, Managing Director at Isle of Arran Distillers said, "We are delighted to be working with Castle Brands to build our profile in the U.S. market and introduce our award-winning brands to even more whisky aficionados. We have many exciting releases planned for the years ahead."



WINE INSTITUTE SURVEY REVEALS SUSTAINABILITY TRENDS

The Wine Institute and the California Sustainable Winemaking Association (CSWA) released its 2016 Trade Survey, which found the trade views sustainability as a product benefit to distinguish wines in the marketplace. Seventy-three percent of respondents in the wholesale and retail tier said "they frequently or occasionally consider sustainability when deciding what to sell." The survey also reveals the packaging of sustainable products is important as a way to identify organic wines. The study also reported the trade ranked "environmental attributes high, citing integrated pest management, water conservation and protection of natural resources as defining attributes of sustainability."



LUX WINES ADDS ICONIC ITALIAN BRANDS FOR U.S. MARKET

Lux Wines, wine importer and independent division of the E. & J. Gallo Winery, was granted exclusive U.S. rights to distribute Italy's Argiano wines and Jermann wines. Of Arigiano wines, Lux Wines will import the historic Brunello di Montalcino DOCG; Rosso di Montalcino DOC and two IGT wines - Solengo and Non Confunditur. The Jermann portfolio includes iconic brands Vintage Tunina, Vinnæ, Dreams, Pinot Grigio, Sauvignon Blanc and Red Angel. Lux Wines sales force and marketing departments are "committed and well-positioned" to represent the latest portfolio additions, according to a news release.



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CRAFT + ESTATE EXPANDS PORTFOLIO WITH BURGUNDY OFFERINGS

Craft + Estate, a member of The Winebow Group, announced its appointment as exclusive U.S. importer of nine properties from Burgundy including Domaine Pierre Gelin, Domaine Jean Grivot, Domaine Tolleot-Beaut, Domaine Xavier Monnot, Domaine Alain Chavy, Domaine Gagnard-Delagrange, Domaine Blain-Gagnard, Domaine Laurent Cognard and Maison Joseph Burrier—Château de Beauregard. “The rich heritage of these domaines and the unrivaled quality of this collection are very compelling,” said Liz Mathews, Senior Vice President of Craft + Estate. “We are honored to carry this historic portfolio forward and represent these extraordinary growers.”



CONSTELLATION BRANDS RECOGNIZED AMONG “MOST ADMIRERED” COMPANIES

Constellation Brands has been named among the 2017 “World’s Most Admired Companies” by *Fortune* magazine. The publication surveys executives, directors and analysts to rate companies with strong reputations within their industry and across other industries. The companies are measured on innovation, people management, use of corporate assets, social responsibility, quality of management, financial soundness, long-term investment value, quality of products/services and global competitiveness. Constellation Brands was ranked fourth in the beverage industry category and scored high in all categories, most notably in quality of products and service, innovation and social responsibility.



BROWN-FORMAN APPOINTS BARRIE AS WHISKY MAKER FOR SCOTCH PORTFOLIO

Brown-Forman appointed Rachel Barrie as whisky maker for its Scotch whisky portfolio that includes the BenRiach, The GlenDronach and Glenglassaugh Distilleries, effective March 1, 2017. Barrie succeeded Billy Walker, who will continue to support and share his expertise throughout the transition. For the past five years, Barrie served as the master blender of Morrison Bowmore Distillers and led whisky creation for Bowmore, Auchentoshan and Glen Garioch, and most recently Laphroaig and Ardmore. She also worked with the Glenmorangie Company for 16 years.



ANGOSTURA NAMES JODHAN AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Angostura Holdings Limited named Genevieve Jodhan as Chief Executive Officer; she has been acting in this position since September 2016. Jodhan previously served as the Executive Manager to the International Sales and Marketing division. She is now the first woman to head one of Trinidad and Tobago’s largest manufacturing companies, outside the energy sector. In her new role, she will lead Angostura’s executive management team and support the Board of Directors on growth strategies and key decisions. Jodhan spearheaded international sales growth in Europe, Asia and Australia and has directed the development of the brands in many emerging markets including Russia, Czech Republic and Armenia.



GRAND MAYAN TEQUILA ANNOUNCES M.S. WALKER AS U.S. IMPORTER

M.S. Walker will be the U.S. importer for Guadalajara, Mexico’s Grand Mayan Tequila, a premium 100-percent Blue Agave tequila brand. Grand Mayan Silver is distilled three times and is “crystal-clear tequila” with fresh agave aromas. Grand Mayan Ultra Aged is a blend of tequilas aged three, four and five years in American and French oak casks, producing a darker tequila with aromas of nuts, agave and chocolate. Grand Mayan Single Barrel is a limited release ultra aged tequila sourced from single barrels between five-and six-years-old.



BOSTON BEER COMPANY CEO SET TO RETIRE IN 2018

Martin Roper, President and Chief Executive Officer of The Boston Beer Company, who led the company for more than 17 years, announced plans to retire in 2018. The Board of Directors created a search committee to assist in “identifying and evaluating best candidates to succeed Roper.” Roper said he has advised the Board of Directors of his retirement plans a year in advance to ensure a “very smooth transition and full and thorough search process for my replacement.” Jim Koch, Founder and Chairman of The Boston Beer Company said, “With the strong leadership team he has built, we are set up for success, and I am confident we will find a very capable CEO to step into his big shoes and lead Boston Beer into the future.”





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Budget Takes Aim at Minimum Bottle Pricing

SB 789 fades away while the Governor's budget offers next threat



FROM STAFF REPORTS

One of Gov. Dannel P. Malloy's bills to change Connecticut's liquor laws ended up with no support in the legislature's General Law Committee on March 7, officially killing the bill.

Senate Bill 789, "An Act Concerning the Regional Competitiveness of Connecticut's Alcoholic Liquor Prices," targeted current state laws regulating minimum bottle pricing. The public hearing saw a packed house on Feb. 21, with overflow spilling into an adjacent space, as many beverage retail owners, wholesalers, trade associations and community members weighed in on the subject.

However, when Gov. Malloy presented his budget plan on February 20, it included a measure also aimed at eliminating the current minimum bottle pricing law as one of many means to address the state's \$1.7 billion deficit via Senate Bill 787, "An Act Concerning Revenue Items to Implement the Governor's Budget," Section 21.

The Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee heard testimony on SB 787 during its public hearing on March 9. A full day of testimony from a variety of stakeholders across the many potential impacted sectors filled the roster and the room, with a focus far beyond the bottle price law.

Carroll J. Hughes, Executive Director of the Connecticut Package Stores Association (CPSA), testified before the committee, opposing SB 787 Section 21. Hughes, in his written testimony, stated that if minimum

bottle were to be eliminated, CPSA estimates a loss of over 600 stores, 3,500 retail jobs and a loss of municipal tax totaling about \$10 million, and losses to secondary services would exceed \$15 million.

The impact, CPSA said, also would trickle through related industry sectors. "Almost all local package stores sell Connecticut-made products," said Hughes in a written testimony from the record. "There are local breweries and distilleries that would experience catastrophic losses, since package stores are their primary outlet for goods."

Hughes said the CPSA surveyed its members asking "if they have plans to expand or renovate" their retail locations, which could inject a "potential expenditure [of] almost \$50 million in craftsmanship and other associated costs of renovation or expansion" into the state's economy. Responses back from the survey, said Hughes, indicate that more than 100 retail business owners are "not confident to make those expenditures under the pall of these bills every year that are so detrimental to their small businesses."

Larry Cafero, Executive Director of the Wine and Spirit Wholesalers of Connecticut (WSWC), testified on behalf of liquor wholesalers represented by the trade group. "This puts most of Connecticut's 1,150-plus family-owned package stores at a devastating competitive disadvantage to big box liquor stores who have large storage capacity and plenty

of capital to buy many months' worth of inventory." He also explained since Prohibition, each state in the union "has some form of price regulation on their alcoholic beverages."

"If you're truly trying to lower the price for consumer ... it's certainly the taxes we put on them," said Cafero during the public hearing on SB 787. He explained that Connecticut's excise tax on spirits is 34 percent higher than Massachusetts and 44 percent higher than Rhode Island. On wine, Connecticut excise tax is 30 percent higher than Massachusetts and 20 percent higher than Rhode Island. The same goes for beer, for which the excise tax is 24 cents per gallon in Connecticut as compared to 11 cents per gallon in Massachusetts and Rhode Island.

Cafero, when asked, also reviewed in more detail with the legislators the post-Prohibition three-tier system and the roles of suppliers, wholesalers and merchants in setting prices. When asked about the larger economic impacts if Section 21 passes, Cafero said, "You're talking about a whole lot of people out of work."

Hughes explained in a call that even if 787 "goes through, it doesn't necessarily mean that minimum bottle is in the bill ... as it's only one item ... and they might remove it."

Bill text and testimony can be found on www.cga.ct.gov. For updates on developing stories, check www.thebeveragejournal.com/community.

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

BY CARROLL J. HUGHES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CPSA

On Tuesday, March 7, the Hughes and Cronin team defeated the minimum bottle bill in General Law, SB 789. There was no support for the bill amongst any of the seventeen members of the committee. In a bi-partisan procedure, the bill was not put on the agenda for a vote.

The private label bill, HB 7116, and the bill that would increase fines for violation of minimum bottle, HB 5975, were both placed on the consent calendar, which is unanimous approval by the committee. The bills will now go to the House floor.

Now, we have Section 21 of SB 787, the Governor's revenue bill, which was heard Thursday, March 9, in a Finance, Revenue & Bonding Committee public hearing. Section 21 would remove minimum bottle pricing.

The following excerpts are from testimony submitted by Carroll Hughes on behalf of the association. To read the full testimony, please visit the CGA website's Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee page.

"If the minimum bottle were eliminated, CPSA estimates a loss of over 600 stores or more. This would be accompanied by the loss of over 3,500 retail jobs, and salesmen and drivers for wholesalers ... We also estimate that the loss of municipal tax revenue would be about \$10 million. Losses to secondary services, including suppliers, and other industry-related services would exceed \$15 million.

"There are local breweries and distilleries that would experience catastrophic losses, since package stores are their primary outlet for goods. These businesses employ approximately 800 employees, and were started, in almost all cases, with state economic development money, as well as private funding.

"... The liquor price structure is out of date ... Rhode Island has no bottle bill, allowing it to sell beer at \$1.68 per case less than Connecticut. Under the Governor's proposal to increase the bottle bill, it would increase case price an additional \$1.20 per case, to a total of \$2.88 more per case than Rhode Island. Retailers in Connecticut are fortunate to make one or two dollars per case. With no sales tax on a \$20 case, this would increase to four dollars per case or more.

"We estimate an initial dip of one to three dollars per bottle if giant chain stores are allowed to sell below cost. This drop, if extended to the total sale of alcohol products, may well drop sales by 20%, resulting in a loss of sales tax revenue, with no corresponding increase in product sales. This would result in up to \$10 million in sales tax revenue losses.

"Chain stores are not normal competitors. They only compete against themselves ... They all have exclusive products that they can sell below cost for whichever period is needed to eliminate competition.



CARROLL J. HUGHES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CPSA

Once competition is eliminated, they can change their pricing schemes to increase profits."

We are urging everyone to talk to their legislators in opposition to section 21 of SB 787, which removes minimum bottle. The issue will not be resolved soon as the Finance Committee has until the end of April to report. The budget will then go to the Appropriations Committee to be approved.

Republicans are pushing for a budget by the first week of April, but it is uncertain if this will happen. Nevertheless, the budget finance issue will not be resolved until the budget is adopted by the entire General Assembly and signed by the Governor.

This could happen by the deadline of June 7, or it could extend into a special session. We are asking you to remain active against section 21 of SB 787 until the budget is adopted.



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DIAGEO HOSTS USBG CT FOR MEMBERSHIP DRIVE COCKTAIL COMPETITION

Diageo welcomed United States Bartenders' Guild Connecticut (USBG CT) chapter members and Brescome Barton to its Norwalk headquarters for a membership drive cocktail competition on February 13. During the first round, the six competing bartenders, Juan Meyer, Owen Wiseman, Jeff Hodson, Jonathan Tellis, Ashley Lurie and Rachel Markoja, created two different cocktail recipes in six minutes using two of three brands: Ketel One Oranje, Don Julio Blanco and Bulleit Bourbon. The judges, Justin Zylick of Diageo, USBG CT Chapter President Adam Patrick and April Wachte, Founder and CEO of Swig + Swallow cocktail mixers, noted taste, aroma, presentation, technique and creativity as first-round criteria. Wiseman, Markoja, Lurie and Meyer advanced to the second round, where each had 10 minutes to shake up a Ramos Gin Fizz featuring Tanqueray 10, which was revealed to them before the start of the final round. Meyer was named the first place winner, followed by Lurie and Markoja. The prizes for the top three winners included a one year membership to the USBG CT, a Diageo gift bag and a one year subscription to *The Connecticut Beverage Journal*.

1. Diageo welcomed USBG CT members and competitors.
2. Diageo brands Ketel One Oranje, Don Julio Blanco, Tanqueray 10 and Bulleit Bourbon were the featured spirits during the competition.
3. David Rudman, Director of Education and Account Development, Brescome Barton and Craig Ventrice, USBG CT Treasurer and Bar Manager at Kawa Ni, addressed competitors and guests.
4. Justin Zylick, Vice President of Sales, Diageo and competition judge; Adam Patrick, USBG CT President and competition judge; Craig Ventrice, USBG CT Treasurer; April Wachtel, Founder/CEO, Swig + Swallow and competition judge.
5. First place winner Juan Meyer, Beverage Director, Z Hospitality Group.
6. Competitor Ashley Lurie of Ch'i Public House in Norwalk, second place.
7. Competitor Rachel Markoja of Ideal Tavern in Southington, third place.
8. Competitor Owen Wiseman of Kawa Ni in Westport.
9. Competitor Jonathan Tellis, Bartender, Hub and Spoke in Bridgeport.
10. Competitor Jeff Hodson, Bar Manager, Hub and Spoke in Bridgeport.
11. The three judges, Justin Zylick, Vice President of Sales, Diageo; Adam Patrick, USBG CT President; and April Wachtel, Founder/CEO, Swig + Swallow, reviewing the cocktails during the event.



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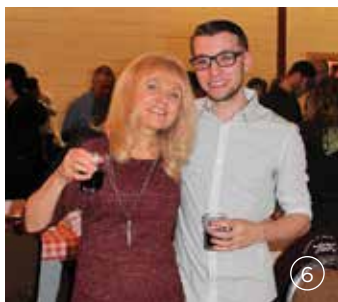
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NAUGATUCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY SHOWCASES CONNECTICUT BRANDS

Connecticut-made products took center stage at the sixth annual Savor CT, an event presented by the Naugatuck Historical Society on February 18 at the Naugatuck Portuguese Club. Connecticut beer, wine and spirit brands poured tastes while area restaurants showcased menu offerings. Avery Soda of New Britain and Bigelow Tea of Fairfield also served samples while Stonehouse Baked Goods of Naugatuck and Fascia's Chocolates of Waterbury gave guests sweeter options. Proceeds from the event went to benefit the Naugatuck Historical Society.

1. Asylum Distillery of Bridgeport Co-owners Rob Schulten and Neil Doocy.
2. Tom Maugeri and Ryan Whipple of The Corner Tavern. Maugeri was pouring selections from Back East Brewing Company of Bloomfield and Half Full Brewery of Stamford.
3. Gina Gentile, Bar Manager, Thimble Island Brewing Company of Branford.
4. David Baker, Owner, Litchfield Distillery featured Batches' Double Barreled Bourbon Whiskey, Bourbon Whiskey, Coffee Bourbon, Vodka and Gin.
5. Christa Asselin pouring selections from Waypoint Spirits, based in Bloomfield.
6. Naugatuck's Fine Wine & Liquor Owner Donna Ploski with Timothy Chapman, Employee.
7. Sunny Rajvansh, Sales Representative, Slocum & Sons, pouring fruit brandy and eau de vie selections made by Westford Hill Distillers in Ashford.
8. Luke Ross and Tim Cronin of Black Hog Brewing Company in Oxford.
9. Guests during the Savor CT festival at the Naugatuck Portuguese Club on February 18.

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1



2

SLOCUM & SONS HOSTS POLIZIANO WINE DINNER IN MIDDLEBURY

Slocum & Sons, in conjunction with Meet Me Here Restaurant of Middlebury, hosted a wine dinner featuring selections from Italy's Poliziano Winery on February 16. Poliziano's wines, billed as "The true taste of Tuscany," are produced in the Montepulciano region. The featured wines included Adami Garbel Prosecco; 2014 Poliziano Rosso di Montepulciano; 2013 Poliziano Vino Nobile di Montepulciano; and 2011 Poliziano Asinone. Meet Me Here Restaurant paired the wine selections with charcuterie and cheese, mixed green salad, boneless short ribs with polenta and vegetables and, lastly, a chocolate torte with raspberry sauce. Poliziano's Margherita Pallecchi guided guests through the tasting, presenting information on the region, vineyard, wine making process and history.

1. Margherita Pallecchi, Poliziano; Paul Burne, Slocum & Sons; Liz Ruskey; Robin Burne; Kate Cassidy, Dalla Terra Wines; Niall Houton, Slocum & Sons.
2. Featured wines and menu for the Poliziano wine dinner on February 16 at Meet Me Here Restaurant of Middlebury.



MURPHY DISTRIBUTORS HIRES INDUSTRY VETERAN

Murphy Distributors of Branford hired industry veteran Tim Clarke as its newest sales executive to the team, effective January 2017. Clarke has previously held various management roles, including at E. & J. Gallo Winery and Connecticut Distributors, Inc., and he operated a family-owned cordial business. In his new role, Clarke will work alongside the sales team to develop and promote sales growth. "We're excited to welcome Tim to the Murphy team and to help continue the exceptional growth of the company," said Matthew Murphy, President of Murphy Distributors.

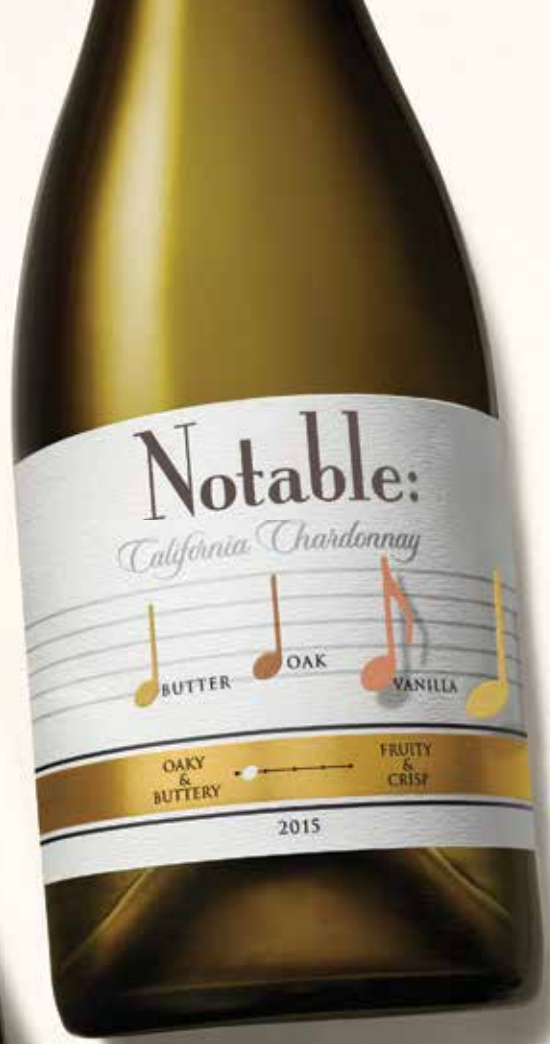
Tim Clarke, Sales Executive, Murphy Distributors.



CENTRAL CONNECTICUT DISTILLERS OFFERS NEW HARD SODA

Central CT Distillers, the makers of all-natural, award-winning Peel Liqueurs, have expanded into hard soda offerings with their latest brand, Hard Hittin' Vodka Soda. The spiked sodas are offered in two flavors, Vodka Limon and Vodka Orange. In an effort to minimize waste and improve efficiency, Owner Gianfranco DiDomenico said the lemons and oranges they use to produce Peel Limoncello and Peel Orangecello are then freshly squeezed and mixed with carbonated water, cane sugar and vodka, for a 6% ABV spiked soda. The name Hard Hittin' pays tribute to New Britain, Connecticut, DiDomenico's hometown and the location of the distillery.

NEW!



FOLLOW = : THE : = FLAVOR NOTES

OAKY & BUTTERY ————— FRUITY & CRISP

OAKY & BUTTERY ————— FRUITY & CRISP



PIU FACILE FEATURES SELECTIONS ON- AND OFF-PREMISE

Bruno Ceniccola, Owner of Branford-based Piu Facile, showcased his portfolio of Italian red and white wines at First and Last Tavern in Middletown in February. Piu Facile Imports offers Italian wines from the Guardiense Winery, located in a small village of Guardia Sanframondi in the Province of Benevento, Campania region. In March, Piu Facile Imports also featured the wines at Putnam Spirits and Liquor Mart in Norwalk.

1. First and Last Tavern's Banquet Manager Clark Denis and Owner Tony Scacca.
2. Dana Stucke, Employee, Putnam Spirits in Putnam on March 3.
3. Alex Di Enzo holding Guardia 33 Aglianco and Ken Roeder holding Guardia 33 Falaghina, both floor managers at Norwalk's Liquor Mart.

MURPHY DISTRIBUTORS LAUNCHES EVANS & TATE MARGARET RIVER WINES

Murphy Distributors added Evans & Tate Margaret River wines to its portfolio, which include Butterball Chardonnay, Fresh as a Daisy Sauvignon Blanc, Big Squeeze Shiraz and Smooth Operator Red Blend. Made under Winemaker Matt Byrne, the line hails from the Margaret River appellation of Western Australia. Big Squeeze Shiraz features ripe plum and cherry notes with "pure flavors of the Shiraz varietal." Smooth Operator Red Blend is made from cabernet sauvignon and merlot grapes with plum and currant flavors with a "subtle earthy complexity." Fresh as a Daisy Sauvignon Blanc has "juicy fruits on the palate with an intense, dry finish." Lastly, Butterball Chardonnay is bright golden green in color with "creamy and ripe" stone fruit notes.



1. Evans & Tate Butterball Chardonnay.
2. Evans & Tate Fresh as a Daisy Sauvignon Blanc.
3. Evans & Tate Smooth Operator, a red blend of cabernet sauvignon and merlot.
4. Evans & Tate Big Squeeze Shiraz.



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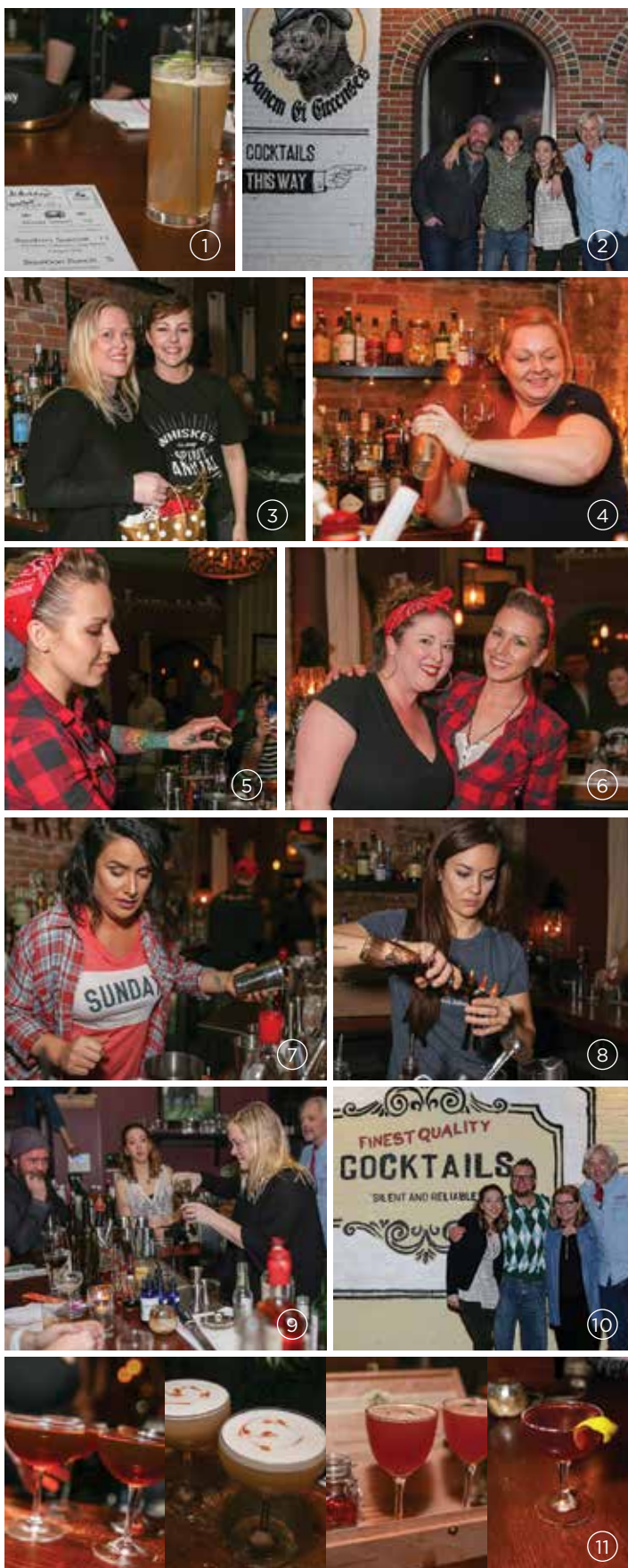


Delightful
flavors of apple,
pear, and crisp
citrus with *a hint*
of effervescence

LITTLE RIVER RESTORATIVES HOSTS ALL-FEMALE BARTENDING COMPETITION

Little River Restoratives, Litchfield Distillery and Slocum & Sons welcomed area bartenders and guests for its “Women & Whiskey” event, an all-female bartending competition on February 26. Competing bartenders included Michela Zurstadt from Cook and the Bear in West Hartford, Rachel Markoja of Ideal Tavern in Southington, Ashley Lurie from Ch’i Public House in Norwalk, Nikki Simches from Cure in Farmington, Heather Julia of Bin 228 in Hartford and Jessica Rapuano from Elm City Social in New Haven. Each competitor featured Litchfield Distillery products in their cocktails. Markoja took the first place win, with Lurie in second place and Zurstadt as third place winner.

1. Little River Restoratives hosted the “Women & Whiskey” cocktail competition featuring Litchfield Distillery products, whose Batchers’ spirits line includes Bourbon Whiskey, Double Barreled Bourbon Whiskey, Bourbon Whiskey Port Cask Finish, Vodka and Gin.
2. The event judges included Chris Parrott, Owner, Little River Restoratives; Renee Touponce, Executive Chef, Firebox; Christen LaRochelle, Manager, Slocum & Sons; Jack Baker, Co-owner, Litchfield Distillery.
3. First place winner Rachel Markoja of Ideal Tavern with Alexa Doyer, Mixologist, Little River Restoratives.
4. Ashley Lurie of Ch’i Public House during the competition. Lurie won second place.
5. Competitor Michela Zurstadt of Cook and the Bear, who took third place.
6. Competitors Heather Julia and Michela Zurstadt during the competition.
7. Competitor Nikki Simches of Cure.
8. Jessica Rapuano of Elm City Social during the competition.
9. Markoja mixes her cocktail as Chris Parrott, Owner, Little River Restoratives, Christen LaRochelle of Slocum & Sons and Jack Baker, Co-owner, Litchfield Distillery, look on.
10. Christen LaRochelle, Manager, Slocum & Sons; Joel Russel, Sales Representative, Slocum & Sons; and Jack Baker, Co-owner, Litchfield Distillery next to his wife, Pam Baker.
11. Cocktail creations during the competition.



Photos by Michael Leung.



ANGELINI WINES LAUNCHES NEW PRODUCTS, HOSTS TASTINGS

Angelini Wines added three new wines to its portfolio: Finca el Origen Estate Blend 2015, Finca el Origen Estate Malbec Rosé and Bastide de Pierre Côtes de Provence Rosé 2016. Finca el Origen Estate Blend of Argentina is made from the 2015 harvest and is a blend of 51% cabernet sauvignon and 49% malbec. Ruby in color, the wine offers floral notes with white pepper and red berry flavors and hints of vanilla from the barrel aging process. *Tasting Panel* magazine gave the wine a 90-point rating in its fall 2016 issue. Finca el Origen, a Malbec Rosé from the 2016 harvest, was named to *Wine Enthusiast's* list of "Best Buy of the Year" in December 2016. French rosé Bastide de Pierre is also new to Angelini Wines, made from 60% grenache, 20% cinsault and 20% syrah. The wine is light pink in color with notes of peaches, citrus and pineapple. Also in February, the Angelini Wines sales team visited accounts to promote wines from Grapes of Spain. Account visits included Carmine's, Geronimo's, New England Beverage Company, Stone's Throw Restaurant and Silverbrook Wine & Liquor.

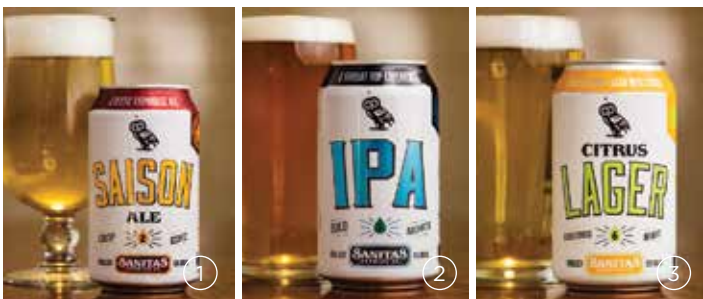
1. Bastide de Pierre Rosé from the Côtes de Provence region.
2. Finca el Origen Malbec Rosé from Mendoza, Argentina.
3. Finca el Origen Estate Blend 2015 from the Uco Valley in Mendoza, Argentina.
4. Andrew Holod, National Sales Manager of Grapes of Spain presenting to Erica Flanagan, Wine Manager, New England Beverage Company of Orange.
5. On left, Peter Hamm, Owner, Stone's Throw Restaurant of Seymour with Andrew Holod, National Sales Manager, Grapes of Spain.
6. Holod pouring a sample of wine for Ryan Silverbrook of Silverbrook Wine and Liquor in Orange.
7. Grapes of Spain wine portfolio lineup.



ACE DISTRIBUTING RECOGNIZES DUTHCRAFT VODKA'S BTI RATING

Ace Distributing of Plainville recognized Dutchcraft Vodka of Holland from within its spirits portfolio for receiving a 96-point Platinum Medal from the Beverage Tasting Institute (BTI). The designation represented "the highest points of any vodka for 2017," said Ace Sales Representative John Maguire, who visited area accounts and *The Beverage Journal* office in Hamden on March 7. Dutchcraft is a small-batch artisanal vodka produced and bottled in Holland. The grains are distilled five times for purity and then filtered through charcoal.

1. John Maguire, Sales Representative, Ace Distributing with Dutchcraft Vodka.
2. Dutchcraft Vodka of Holland received a 96-point Platinum Medal from the Beverage Tasting Institute.



CELLAR FINE WINES WELCOMES NEW BREWS AND ITALIAN WINES

Cellar Fine Wines of Essex added Boulder, Colorado's Sanitas Brewing Company to its beer portfolio. Sanitas, now available in 12-oz. cans, includes Grand Cru, Black IPA, Saison, American IPA, Cherry Saison and Citrus Lager, all handcrafted using sustainable methods. Co-founders Chris Coyne and Michael Memsic say the inspiration for their logo, an owl and star, was an owl who would perch in a nearby tree and observe late-night brewing sessions and brand meetings. The star represents the icon once adorned on breweries from Belgium to Germany, whose points represent malted barley, grain, hops, water, yeast, and the brewer, "elemental ingredients in quality beer." On March 6, Cellar Fine Wines welcomed Winemaker Enrico Chioccioli to the state in support of launching new portfolio additions from the Italian wine line. Chioccioli Altadonna Family Estate Wines sits on 39 1/2 acres in Tuscany and has been operating for two generations. Cellar Fine Wines launched the new wine selections with a sales presentation at its Essex warehouse, followed by an in-store tasting on March 7 at Madison Wine Shop.

1. Sanitas Saison is the brewery's take on a classic Saison expression, with tangerine and bubble-gum-like Belgian yeast, offering grassy hop aromas.
2. The American IPA is gold in color with ripe pineapple and "dank grassy hop undertones followed by bold bitterness."
3. The Citrus Lager is a California-style lager "fermented with lager yeast and brewed with organic Mexican limes and American oranges."
4. Enrico Chioccioli presenting to the Cellar Fine Wines sales team in Essex. One of two sons of Stefano Chioccioli, an award-winning winemaker, brothers Niccolò and Enrico Chioccioli Altadonna strive to produce high quality Italian wine from their Tuscany estate from harvest to bottling.
5. Chioccioli Altadonna Family Estate Wines Rosalto and Ororosa, both rosés.
6. All with Cellar Fine Wines except where indicated: Rich Veilleux, General Manager; Whitney Mitchell Algieri, Sales Rep., New Haven County; Janeen Carabetta, Marketing Manager; Andrew Clas, Sales Rep., Fairfield County; Enrico Chioccioli, Brand Manager, Chioccioli Altadonna Family Estate Wines; Andy Fredericksen, Craft Beer Manager; George Carabetta, Operations Manager; Anna Dziedzic, Sales Rep., Middlesex & Hartford Counties; Jeff Sharp, Sales Rep., Hartford & Litchfield Counties.

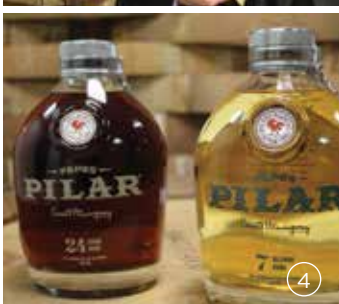
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A NEW TAKE ON A
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CDI RAISES FUNDS FOR FOOD BANK, LAUNCHES NEW PRODUCTS

Connecticut Distributors, Inc. (CDI) presented a check to the Connecticut Food Bank for \$11,090 on March 3. Money raised from local sales of Kenwood Wines funded the donation, which will provide 22,180 meals for children and families in need of assistance.

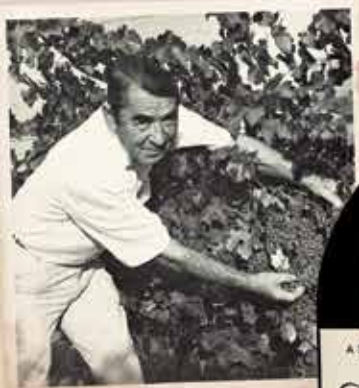
On the same day, the CDI sales team heard presentations on new products including Captain Morgan Loco Nut, Papa Pilar Rum and the latest Bacardi portfolio addition, Banana. Diageo’s Kim Maciejewski and Jena Goetz presented an education session on Captain Morgan Loco Nut, a 20% ABV blend of real coconut liqueur, Captain Morgan Original Spiced Rum and Caribbean spices. It is also gluten-free and dairy-free. The label design includes a “scratch and sniff” element with coconut aroma. Mahalo Spirits Company, founders of Angel’s Envy Bourbon, was then highlighted with its product offering, Papa Pilar Rum, which is made in conjunction with the family of Ernest Hemingway, and named after his boat, Pilar. Papa Pilar 3-year-old Blonde and Papa Pilar 24-year-old Dark are now available. Both rums are solera blended and aged first in American oak bourbon barrels then transferred to port barrels (for dark) and then Spanish sherry casks during the resting process. Lastly, Kevin Hickey, Market Manager for Bacardi USA, presented Bacardi Banana, a white rum blended with the natural flavor of banana. The spirit uses non-GMO natural flavor, is gluten free and 70 proof/35% ABV.

1. Steve Baye, Vice President of Business Management, CDI; Michael Davidow, Corporate Development Manager, Connecticut Food Bank; and John Parke, President and CEO, CDI.
2. Steve Giles, Diageo; Kim Maciejewski, Diageo; Jena Goetz, Diageo; and Steve Baye, CDI, with Captain Morgan Loco Nut.
3. Peter Kawulicz, Business Manager, CDI; Richard Plutzer, Regional Manager Northeast Division, Mahalo Spirits Company; John Parke, President and CEO, CDI; Nadine Gengras, Portfolio and Account Development Manager, CDI with Papa Pilar Dark and Blonde Rum.
4. Papa Pilar Dark and Blonde Rum. The spirit is aged and blended in a unique process using American oak bourbon barrels, port wine casks (dark only), and Spanish sherry casks.
5. Bacardi’s Kevin Hickey and Peter Kawulicz, Business Manager, CDI with Bacardi Banana.





The winery THAT LAUNCHED AN ENTIRE wine region.



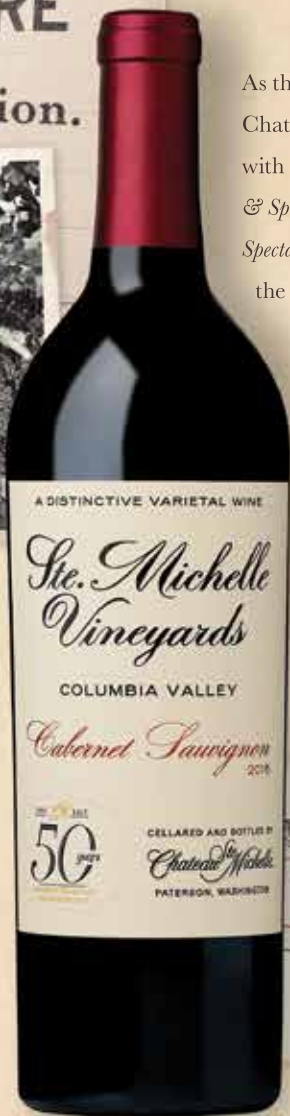
The legendary André Tchelistcheff helped bring our first vintage to life in 1967.



In 1967, Ste. Michelle Vintners produced its first Cabernet Sauvignon, with guidance and support from the legendary international winemaker André Tchelistcheff.

It was the release that put the Washington state wine industry on the map. Still, there were skeptics in those days. "Wine from Washington?" sniffed one sarcastic critic. "What side of the Potomac do the grapes grow on?"

Undeterred, the early pioneers of Washington wine understood the state's potential—with growing regions that share the same latitude and similar terroir as the great French Bordeaux vineyards. Fifty years later, Washington is the nation's No. 2 producer of premium wine with more than 50,000 acres planted, nearly 1,000 wineries in operation and 14 designated appellations.



The 50th Anniversary Special Bottling



Chateau Ste. Michelle

Cabernet Sauvignon from the Columbia Valley



As the state's leading winery, Chateau Ste. Michelle has enjoyed considerable acclaim with 22 "Top 100 Wineries of the Year" honors (*Wine & Spirits*) and 18 "Top 100 Wines" designations (*Wine Spectator*). Our landmark chateau near Seattle is one of the most visited wineries in the world.

We're flattered, but we don't spend a lot of time polishing our medals. Our goal is to blend craftsmanship with innovation to create exceptional wine experiences. Whether it's a connoisseur opening a bottle of 93-point* Cabernet Sauvignon from our Canoe Ridge Estate at a dinner party, or a newbie discovering a Columbia Valley Riesling at our Summer Concert Series.



Washington state's terroir shares similarities with the great wine-producing areas of France.

So let's toast our first 50 years. But only as motivation to produce even more remarkable Chateau Ste. Michelle wines, moments and memories in the next 50.

Cheers. The best is yet to come.

*June 2016, *The Wine Advocate*



CDI WELLNESS COMMITTEE EARNS ACCOLADE

Connecticut Distributors, Inc. (CDI) received the Gold Award at the Business Council of Fairfield County’s Annual Healthy Workplace Employer Recognition Awards Ceremony on February 13. The CDI Wellness Committee formed in 2015 to promote health and wellness within the organization and will continue its mission to “bring more wellness energy into 2017.” The committee meets monthly to identify and plan company-wide initiatives. Efforts include creating a company walking path, Fitbit and gym reimbursement programs and implementing healthy food choices in vending machines.

All from Connecticut Distributors, Inc.: Mary Padgett, Warehouse Assistant; Sandra Terenzio, ADS/Trade Marketing Manager; Kristin Ferrara, On-Premise Sales Representative; Virginia Viglione, Executive Assistant; Macy Engengro, Human Resource Administrator; and Maura Tancredi, Director of Human Resources.



HARTLEY & PARKER WELCOMES SPRING WITH NEW PRODUCTS

Hartley & Parker, Limited welcomes two new spirit products to its portfolio: Bailey’s Almande and Captain Morgan Loco Nut. Bailey’s Almande, a gluten-free and dairy-free liqueur, is a light-tasting spirit made with almond milk and has natural flavors of nuts and vanilla. Captain Morgan Loco Nut is a 20% ABV blend of real coconut liqueur, Captain Morgan Original Spiced Rum and Caribbean spices. The label design includes a “scratch and sniff” element featuring a coconut aroma. Captain Morgan Loco Nut is also gluten-free and dairy-free.

1. Bailey’s Almande is a gluten-free and dairy-free almond liqueur made with almond milk, almond essence, cane sugar and real vanilla.
2. Captain Morgan Loco Nut, created with Captain Morgan Original Spiced Rum blended with coconut liqueur and natural spices.
3. Jerry Rosenberg, President, Hartley & Parker, addressing the sales team.
4. Jerry Rosenberg, President, Hartley & Parker; Stephen Giles, Diageo; Kim Maciejewski, Diageo; Jena Goetz, Diageo; Tom Graham, Diageo/Inspira; David Rosenberg, Vice President, Hartley & Parker; Blaise Tremazzo, Spirits Director, Hartley & Parker.



NEW

Stop time



WINE MADE FOR MOMENTS THAT STOP TIME





BACARDI BRAND MASTER VISITS UNH HOSPITALITY STUDENTS

The Hospitality and Tourism Management Department at the University of New Haven welcomed Bacardi's Global Brand Master of Rum & Cane Spirits, David Cid to its campus on March 2. Renée Allen, Adjunct Professor for the Hospitality and Tourism Management Department, hosted special guest speaker Cid for his annual presentation on the history and production of rum to a full house of more than 60 students from the department's rum and mixology classes. The students tasted molasses, the sugarcane derivative from which most rum is produced, as well as several Bacardi products. The flight consisted of Leblon Cachaça, Bacardi Superior, Bacardi 8, and newly-released Bacardi Banana, a product aimed at the Millennial generation, and one of which Cid was instrumental in developing.

1. Bacardi's David Cid lectured on the production of rum to a full house of UNH students.
2. Renée Allen, Adjunct Professor for the Hospitality and Tourism Management Department, University of New Haven, and David Cid, Global Brand Master of Rum & Cane Spirits, Bacardi Global Brands.

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TEJO: READY FOR PRIME TIME

A MODERN PUSH IN AN ESTABLISHED REGION SPELLS MAJOR OPPORTUNITY IN AMERICA

BY W. R. TISH

Tempting as it may be to venture “outside the box” in business, the case of Tejo—a long established yet dynamically modern wine region in Portugal—reminds us that checking off the right boxes is a surer way to go. In short, Tejo is poised to take advantage of multiple factors that are coming into synch at the same time—and in turn which make natural selling points.

E-Z NAME. Officially changed from Ribatejo to Tejo in 2010 (and not to be confused with Alentejo), Tejo (pronounced Tay-zho) rolls easily off the tongue, in the spirit of other American favorites such as Chablis, Merlot, Malbec, Rosé.... It’s easy to say and easy to remember.

THE HEART OF PORTUGAL.

Imports of Portuguese table wine into the U.S. have risen for the past 12 years. Tejo is literally at the heart of the Portuguese wine country, thanks to its vital river, ancient cork forests and viticultural history dating back to Roman times. Besides offering the hallmarks

(earth-fruit balance; fine structure) that have spelled success for the category, Portugal fits right into the recent (Millennial-fueled) trend of embracing unusual and lesser-known wines and grape varieties.

RIVER LOGIC. Some of the greatest wine regions in the world are river valleys—Germany’s Rhine and France’s Rhône being one obvious example. Rivers are also key to Bordeaux, the Loire Valley and Rioja. The River Tejo is the Iberian Peninsula’s largest river, flowing down to Lisbon—and has the same moderating effect, which tempers the daytime heat and extends the growing season of the microclimate.

BANG FOR BUCK. In keeping with the reputation of Portugal’s table wines overall, Tejo wines deliver excellent quality-price ratio.

GOING NATIVE. While both indigenous and international varieties thrive in Tejo, a new generation of winemakers are crafting truly unique, ter-

The Tejo river benefits the region’s wines by moderating the microclimate; it also provides a direct route to Lisbon.

roir-driven wines. Noteworthy indigenous grapes include Touriga Nacional, Aragonês (Tempranillo) and Trincadeira among the reds and Fernão Pires and lively Arinto for the refreshing whites.

SPLENDID BLENDED. Blending in Portuguese wine is as old as the proverbial vine-covered hills, but recent combinations are better than ever now as many are focusing on blends of indigenous varieties with international ones. This is yielding unique, distinctive wines expressing sense of place.

TRADITION+TERROIR. Some Tejo producers still use traditional foot treading—a nod to the region’s heritage. Red wines represent the bulk of the production but Tejo does produce unique and refreshing whites, often as blends. Indigenous grapes thrive in Tejo’s warm climate and complex soils, while retaining their high natural acidity, producing balanced wines with bright fruit characteristics.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES. In the off-premise, Tejo reds and whites are poised to stack as Best Buys and to promote for their hip, offbeat grape combos. On-premise, they fit into “Discovery” sections on wine lists, and can deliver tremendous margins for wine by the glass. Their appeal as table wines stretches from the traditional lover of classic European table wines to the younger LDA adult exploring wine’s latest developments. ■



Coming to NYC
May 17-18

12 Tejo producers
at USATT

Supplier Booths
+ Master Class



Indigenous varieties are key to Tejo’s quality & novelty.





EXTRAORDINARY WINES. COMPELLING VALUE.

DISCOVER TEJO

The Tejo Wine Region, one of the oldest in Portugal, is now flourishing with renewed energy, continuously improving quality, and a unique range of appealing wine. Driven by a new generation of winemakers, the Region's heritage of blending many of Portugal's fabulous indigenous grapes is now being further enhanced by the creative addition of international varieties. The outcome? Astonishing QPR from unique combinations of varieties; a fascinating range of aromas, flavors and complexities; consistently delivered in consumer- and food-friendly styles.

As Portugal gains recognition for delivering high quality at reasonable prices, Tejo wines are at the forefront. This previously little-known region starts less than an hour up-river from Lisbon is now being discovered and embraced by a new generation of consumers.



DEFINED BY A RIVER AND REFINED BY TRADITION

Visit WinesofTejo.com for more information on the region and to see what the excitement is all about.



**COMING TO NYC
MAY 17-18**

- 12 Tejo producers at USATT
- Supplier Booths + Master Class

VINHOS DO
TEJO WINES

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AN HISTORIC WINERY THAT WON'T STAY IN THE PAST

SOUTH AFRICA'S ICONIC 332-YEAR-OLD BOSCHENDAL ESTATE FINDS A NEW AUDIENCE IN THE U.S. MARKET

BY KRISTEN BIELER

Ancient wine estates aren't always the most experimental. South Africa's Boschendal is a proud exception. While South African imports continue to struggle in here, Boschendal's U.S. sales were up 135% last year, specializing in two of the fastest-growing categories: rosé and sparkling. "Our tremendous heritage and place in the history of South Africa's wine industry gives us the flexibility to be creative; we feel more freedom to try new things," says Lizelle Gerber, Boschendal's head winemaker.

Boschendal was founded in 1685 by French Huguenot Jean le Long who identified the Franschhoek region (French corner) as prime grape growing territory. The farm—a celebrated example of Cape Dutch architecture—has passed through a handful of owners (including a Prime Minister and the DeBeers Mining Company) and survived the phylloxera epidemic.

SUSTAINABLY CHARGED

Boschendal has been a pioneer in sustainable farming. World Wildlife Fund (WWF) named the estate a Conservation Champion for their clearing of alien vegetation, elimination of pesticides and water conservation.

Fast-forward to the 1970s. Boschendal was the first in South Africa to build a gravity-fed winery, and first to make a barrel-fermented Chenin Blanc. "At Boschendal we have always experimented," says Gerber. "We have a 'Playpen' range for our small batch projects." In an effort to move toward "an increased focus on texture and oak restraint," Gerber explains, her team has been trying out a range of new wine-making vessels like wooden eggs, amphoras and foudres.

Wines on Trend

Boschendal's "Rose Garden" Rosé—named for the estate's fairy tale-like Rose Garden, a heritage site in South Africa—hit the market a few years ago and quickly become one of the most beloved South African rosés in the U.S. market, crafted in a fruit-driven, fresh style. Not quite as pink, but another intriguing standout is the sophisticated crisp, pale blush Chardonnay (61%) and Pinot Noir (39%) blend.

Perhaps South Africa's best kept secret? It's Méthode Cap



Boschendal's
Chardonnay
Pinot Noir 2016



PACIFIC HIGHWAY
wines & spirits

Classique (MCC) wines, sparkling wines made like Champagne, and Boschendal has diligently championed this style. "We were the first South African winery to make a Blanc de Noirs in the 1980s, and we've been perfecting our MCCs ever since," shares Gerber. Four of Boschendal's sparklers are here, from the Brut NV and Brut Rosé (top sellers in the U.S.) to the Grande Cuvée and the prestige Boschendal Jean de Long, aged 60 months on its lees.

Perhaps the most significant evolution at Boschendal has been the discovery of their own terroir. "We are still learning so much here about our own vineyard sites," explains Gerber. Which has led to many plantings being relocated and varieties being better-matched to soil types.

Their terroir obsession also led Boschendal to recognize the potential of the cool-climate Elgin Valley—years before it developed the renown it has today. The winery bottles their Elgin Appellation range separately—tiny lots of Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. ■



Boschendal's Sparkling
Methode Cap Classique (MCC)



BOSCHENDAL

Founded 1685



*the Rose Garden
in full
bloom*



*The
Rose Garden*

ROSÉ

*The historic rose garden at Boschendal
is a national treasure housing one of the
oldest collections of roses in the Cape.*



BOSCHENDAL

CREATING HISTORY SINCE 1685

FINE WINE OF SOUTH AFRICA

available now

PROUDLY IMPORTED BY PACIFIC HIGHWAY WINE & SPIRITS

Moscato to Merlot: Growing the Millennial Customer



Photo: Courtesy of Sharon Porpiglia.

guest columnist
RENÉE ALLEN

BY RENÉE ALLEN, CSS, CSW, FWS

If you are a purveyor of wine, you've probably secretly rejoiced when observing a patron browsing the Barolos or lingering in front of the latest Kermit Lynch selections. This is a person who knows wine, you think to yourself. Your efforts here will be rewarded.

Although your heart may not skip that same beat when noticing a young couple eyeballing smartly-named sweet and sparkling moscatos, working with novice wine drinkers can be an incredibly rewarding experience. It may be tempting to dismiss certain consumers as non-serious wine drinkers based on their age and selections, but every virgin palate provides the potential for education and expansion. While teaching wine and spirits both privately and at the university level, I have had the pleasure of introducing hundreds of fledgling wine drinkers a year to the world of wine.

As with many things epicurean, developing one's taste for wine is a progression. It is the rare novice wine drinker who begins a lifelong love of wine with a glass of 15% ABV zinfandel. Most wine drinkers begin their vinous journeys with wines that they perceive as semi-sweet or sweet. In fact, studies show that, as a nation, Americans generally prefer their wines fruity and semi-sweet.

A dry wine is one that does not have enough sugar remaining after

fermentation is complete for the average person to detect. If this residual sugar is above the average person's detection threshold, it is considered off-dry, semi-sweet, or sweet, depending on the level of sugar remaining. Wines that often contain some perceptible residual sugar in them — e.g., moscato, white zinfandel and riesling — are the ones most-often identified as favorite wines of the millennials. There is some science behind this.

Sugar in wine makes our palates more receptive to the other components in the glass, softening the effects of phenolic compounds such as tannins, increasing mouthfeel, and even taming the alcohol itself. And while one can happily live out their life enjoying sweet wines alone, my experience has been that once exposed to a larger variety of wines, most of these sweet-sipping newbies are not only willing to expand their vinous rosters, they are downright excited about it. If a seller can take a consumer on a journey from his or her comfort zone of sweet moscato to the more nuanced tastes of pinot noir and beyond, it is a rewarding experience for both.

After establishing a patron's preference for a sweeter profile, a good route to take is to offer a dry yet fruity white for them to taste. One of the most challenging distinctions for a novice wine drinker to

make is that between a wine that is sweet and one that is dry but fruity, with the taster more often than not identifying the dry, fruity wine as being sweet.

Those with a self-proclaimed preference for sweet wine are often receptive to dry wines with fruity profiles. Sauvignon blanc, especially one from New Zealand, is the perfect dry but fruity wine to recommend for this maiden voyage. Other fruity but dry whites to try include verdejo, albarino, pinot blanc and vermentino, just to name a few.

It might seem that the logical next step would be to introduce lighter reds at this point, but don't shy away from pulling out some bolder beauties to explore. While some uninitiated palates might reject mouth-puckering tannins and nose-tingling high alcohol at first, I have seen tasters eschew light-bodied pinot noirs while embracing complex cabernets.

Although science may once again offer an explanation — there is some research to indicate that very high alcohol may be interpreted by our brains as being sweet, even in the absence of perceptible residual sugar — personal taste could just as well provide the explanation. Of course, there will be new imbibers who

GUEST COLUMN
CONTINUED ON PAGE 68

location, location, location



Introducing Cherry Pie multi-vineyard Pinot Noir. Wine with a distinct sense of place, from hand-picked vineyards in California. From gravelly, well-draining sites in Monterey, elevated vineyards on steep slopes in the Sonoma Coast, and warm, sandy soils in Santa Barbara, each cluster begins with the influence of its surroundings.

*Welcome to our neighborhood,
to our home, to the vineyards of Cherry Pie wines.*

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Gardner Lake Liquors

BY SAVANNAH MUL

For three years, Anthony Lewis owned and operated Salem Auto on Old Colchester Road. He had an empty store front next to his garage and was always unsure of what to make of the space. He thought about renting out the space, but when a liquor license in town became available, he saw it as “an appealing opportunity to grow,” he said.

Lewis co-owns Gardner Lake Liquors with permit holder and father-in-law, Lawrence Silva, and his sister-in-law, Lauren Silva, who together operate the business. Store employee Jess Tilley helps manage the store while Lewis may be assisting customers at the auto shop. With the liquor store next to his auto shop, Lewis said, “This all just fit together.”

Tilley brings her industry experience from working as a bartender for many years and in retail at other alcohol beverage locations in the area. Lewis said he relies on Tilley’s expertise and





LOCATION

468 OLD COLCHESTER ROAD
SALEM, CT

FACTS

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 1,200
YEARS IN OPERATION: 1 1/2

recommendations, along with aid from their sales representatives and customer feedback, to stock the store selectively.

“He asks for my opinion and appreciates my feedback,” said Tilley. “We are always willing to bring in anything for a customer [too]. I know what will sell, what I can sell and what won’t.” With the

limited space he has, Lewis said, “I do what I can to snake things in. I’m not afraid to bring in new products.”

Gardner Lake Liquors actively uses its Facebook page to advertise products and promote in-store tastings. Tilley said she knows the posts are effective because she receives messages, calls and store requests from

customers asking for the products she chooses to showcase.

At the end of any given day, Lewis said, when he reviews his sales figures, profits are “split almost evenly across all categories.”

Gardner Lake Liquors is surrounded by many campgrounds and Lewis said he is excited to welcome back the seasonal campers this spring and summer. “I like it over here, it’s no stress,” Lewis said. “The customers are great and we’re looking forward to the summer season. The locals are really happy to have this place here.”

When asked what it’s like to manage and own two completely different businesses, Tilley laughed and said, “He’s good at multitasking.” Lewis continued, “With Jess here [and family], it’s not so bad.” ■



Owner Anthony Lewis with Jess Tilley, Store Employee.

FEATURE YOUR STORE



If you own a small, medium or megastore and would like to be featured, email: dana@thebeveragejournal.com

BEER FORECAST

HAZY

BY JACK KENNY

In centuries past, beer was cloudy. Hazy and murky are other apt descriptors. Beer in those days was unfiltered, and nobody cared, because there was no other kind of beer. The liquid was poured into an opaque vessel of earth, bone, horn or metal. Glass was rare and affordable only by the aristocracy.

When commercial glass took off in the mid-1800s, folks could see into their beer, sort of. Around the same time, clear lagers became the thing, and since then clear beer has been the standard. Wheat beers, of course, are allowed to be hazy, but any other brew that isn't clear has something wrong with it. So we believe.

During the reign of clear beer, a cloudy lager or ale was given the jaundiced eye because it might have become infected with unwanted bacteria; the yeast might have suffered some issues, or was the wrong strain; certain adjuncts were problematic, or the filtration system wasn't performing as it should. Maybe the brewer cooled the beer too quickly, or perhaps it was overly dry-hopped. Any of those could apply.

In the past few years, the American craft beer palate began to experience a change, thanks in large part to the brewers of New England. It's a small evolution, to be sure, but it has captured the attention of deeply serious beer lovers (and beer snobs, to be sure) and it's growing at a fairly good clip. The subject is hazy beer, aka New England IPA.

The trend is believed to have started in Vermont with Alchemy Brewing's creation of Heady Topper, a double IPA. Joining it are the beers of Hill Farms, also in Vermont, Tree House in Massachusetts, and Connecticut's own New England Brewing. It has since spread across the continent and the internet, spawning fans and furor, delight and snark.

The cloudiness can range from a gentle nimbus to a full-on cumulus. Suspended yeast cells are a contributor, as are particles from barley and oats (if used). Water chemistry plays a role, too, as does the dry-hopping process. Dry-hopping is the addition of significant quantities of hops at the end of the boil, or just afterward during fermentation. Its purpose is to add aromatic characteristics to the batch. Compounds in the hops known as polyphenols contribute to the turbidity. (Turbidity, the word, makes some beer people uncomfortable, even though it is accurate. Brewers use it mostly to identify beers that are murky as the result of infection.)

Those who are presented with a hazy beer for the first time might regard it with furrowed brow, but consumption will dispel the doubt. These are beers with pronounced flavors, redolent of such fruits as mango, papaya, pineapple and others; they are majestic for good reasons.

First, they are fresh. They must be, because hops have a short shelf life in a bottle or can, and a very short life on tap. Hop character is volatile and breaks down, so a bold hoppiness is difficult to maintain. Most cloudy beers, if left in the bottle or growler, will clear as the suspended solids settle.

Second, they are not filtered. Making a clear beer involves conditioning at cold temperatures. It also makes use of clarifying agents to reduce haze. Finally, it is filtered. These can diminish the aroma and flavor of hoppy beers. Eliminating those steps yields a hazy beer that possesses a higher concentration of hop oils and other aroma/flavor compounds. The appearance might startle, but the reward for the senses can override that minor discomfort.

Over time, those desirable flavors and aromas will change. Put a fresh bottle of hazy beer in the fridge for four weeks and the change will be noticeable. The haze will have diminished or settled completely; the hop character will have degraded – not necessarily in a bad way – and the experience will not compare to that of the previous month.

New things are objects of praise and scorn, and especially in scientific fields do the critics find fault at a high pitch. It pays off, however, to give a creation time to develop some sophistication rather than attack it at inception. It's the same with beer. A few years from now, turbid beer will be met with benign smiles, just around the time that something newer comes along to get jumpy about.



ABOUT JACK KENNY

Jack Kenny has been writing the Beer Column for *The Beverage Journal* since 1995.



WRITE TO HIM: thebeercolumn@gmail.com

CASK & CREW: FULL SPEED AHEAD

UNIQUE TRIO OF WHISKIES BREAKS NEW GROUND

BY JACK ROBERTIELLO

Amidst the current North American whiskey boom, there are all sorts of new non-distiller products being brought to market, some controversial for obscuring the real story behind their origins. Not so with Cask & Crew, an emerging brand of three whiskies—two flavored and one straight—that has united the trends of product innovation and flavored brown spirits into a product that has obviously caught lightning in a bottle; the first run of about 22,500 bottles released in January has already sold out the first production run to distributors.

“Our crew worked so hard to ace every touch point,” says Mary Rose DeMarco, Director of Creative & Marketing Communications for Rochester, NY-based supplier LiDestri Spirits. “This first batch went much faster than we anticipated. We feel like we nailed it—in the packaging, the bottle, the liquid and the audience. We were trying to cover every possible angle and challenge.”

Cask & Crew, both straight and flavored, comprises blends of sourced whiskies—51% three-year-old Alberta Canadian rye and 49% American three-year-old corn whiskey (more about that a bit later). The line currently includes the straight, labeled Blended Rye, bottled at 40% ABV, and two flavors the producer touts as “corrected”—Walnut Toffee and Ginger Spice (35% ABV). LiDestri credits the idea behind the Italian tradition of *caffé corretto*, or “corrected coffee”—an espresso into which

a touch of grappa or liqueur is splashed—for the inspiration behind the flavored Cask & Crew expressions.

“We wanted to provide a great product for whiskey drinkers as well as newcomers to the category. Each flavor has gravitated toward a different consumer,” DeMarco says. “If they aren’t whiskey drinkers, we suggest the walnut toffee—it has a slightly sweet, pleasing background and is hard not to love. One key differentiator is the whiskey-forward profile—it was important to us not to overpower the whiskey.”

Ginger Spice (which is ginger with a “warm spice blend” added) has won fans among bartenders for its mixability with ginger ale and ginger beer, she says, especially in Florida which has become a strong on-premise market.

Other new brands have succeeded lately by blending whiskies from different regions (see High West for a prime example). LiDestri has pushed the envelope a little with Cask & Crew, selecting aged corn whiskey from uncharred oak barrels. But at a time when corn whiskey is gaining some popularity as an authentic American style whiskey, the different flavor profile that results makes Cask & Crew potentially stand out.

Credit Where It’s Due

The name “Cask & Crew” is an homage to the 19 hand-selected *casks* (charred barrels for the rye, raw for the corn whiskey) and the *crew* who brought the brand to life, including the innovation team that worked for



CREW
RYDE

1½ oz Cask & Crew Blended Rye Whiskey
3 oz Ginger Ale
Splash of Cranberry Juice

Build ingredients over ice
in a tumbler or rocks glass.
Garnish with orange peel.



about 18 months to develop the best grain combinations. “We wanted to honor the people involved, and build the brand story from the inside out—everyone from the team who honed the whiskey blend to the group who filled the bottles,” says DeMarco. Bottle labels display signatures from many crew members, not just the distiller.

Priced at \$23.99-\$26.99/750ml, Cask & Crew’s Batch 1 has been sold in Upstate NY, NJ, FL, CT, MD, KY, and GA. This March, Metro NY, DE, MO, DC and LA were added, with the goal of 12 states in total by the end of spring. To meet anticipated demand, LiDestri is gearing up production for Batch 2 at the same rate, 7,500 bottles per SKU. Cask & Crew is the first premium whiskey in LiDestri’s expanding portfolio; the company also provides contract manufacturing for spirits, liqueurs, wine-based products, cream liqueurs and other specialty liquor-based products. ■

INTRODUCING

CASK & CREW

SMALL BATCH WHISKEY

51% CANADIAN RYE | 49% AMERICAN CORN WHISKEY

BATCH 1

A unique blend of American Corn Whiskey and Canadian Rye producing the smoothest, most approachable whiskey blend to join the whiskey renaissance.



STRAIGHT RYE
WHISKEY BLEND

3-year-old 51% Canadian
Rye & 49% Kentucky
Corn Whiskey



WALNUT TOFFEE
WHISKEY

golden caramel flavor
combined with a bitter
note of nutty walnut



GINGER SPICE
WHISKEY

kick of real ginger and a
touch of earthy spice for
a complex yet smooth
mouth feel



WHISKEY A-GO-GO

Whiskey, by its very nature, needs to be distilled, aged and bottled. That takes time. And so it is rather impressive brand new ones are cropping up. Credit to the marketers? In any event, new bottlings present a great opportunity for merchants to encourage trial; research suggests that today's brown spirits sippers are more open to experimentation than those of yesteryear. Here are a few fresh to market.

The latest release in Glenmorangie Single Malt Whisky's Private Edition series, **Bacalta**, takes its name from Scots Gaelic for baked. Overseen by Dr Bill Lumsden, heavily toasted American oak casks seasoned by Malmsey wine—the sweetest and most prized of the Madeira wines—lend layers of sun-baked sweetness to Glenmorangie Bacalta. Non chill-filtered; 92 proof; SRP \$99.99. glenmorangie.com



White whiskey—aka moonshine or white lightning—gets coddled by 3 Badge Beverage Corporation's Mixology division. The result is **Bib & Tucker Small Batch White Whiskey**, double distilled using a column still followed by an old-fashioned pot still. Minimal oak contact (24 hours) allows the whiskey to gain structure, body and faint coloring. SRP \$40; 92 proof. 3badge.com



Craft + Estate, a member of The Winebow Group, is bringing in two new whiskeys. New to the Wolfburn range, **The Aurora** Single Malt was aged in a combination of American oak and Oloroso Sherry casks, yielding an intriguing balance of sweet and savory notes. SRP \$63; 92 proof. The first release of the Marquess Series from Tullibardine, **The Murray**, pays homage to an historic Scot, Sir William Murray; the whisky has been laid down in first-use bourbon barrels; bottled at cask strength. SRP \$75; 112 proof. craftandestate.com



Anchor Distilling is bringing the sought-after New Zealand Whisky Collection to the U.S. Founder Greg Ramsay discovered hundreds of barrels of cask strength whiskeys that had been distilled in the world's most southern distillery in Dunedin, by Canada's Seagram's. The distillery had been mothballed at the end of the 20th century, the quietly maturing barrels are now being bottled. Anchor will import four expressions, each 375ml; SRPs \$84.99-\$229.99. anchorsf.com



The trick is LED technology and laser-cut glass

BELVEDERE VODKA LIGHTS UP THE NIGHT (CLUB)

Via LED technology and laser-cut glass, Belvedere Vodka is again turning heads in Miami, Las Vegas and NYC. Their Midnight Saber follows the path "blazed" by previous limited releases of the Night Saber (2012) and Silver Saber (2014). The electrified, luminous 1.75L bottles really grab attention from across a dark room, which, of course, is why it's tailored for clubs with bottle-service menus. The bottle stays lit for hours and is also waterproof, so ice buckets are fine. belvederevodka.com

BAILEYS BREAKS NEW GROUND WITH ALMANDE

Fermentation and distillation are ancient, so it is rare to find something actually new under the beverage alcohol sun, but Baileys Almande definitely brings a fresh take on a traditional liqueur. This dairy- and gluten-free spirit blends the nutty flavors of real almond milk with vanilla. Serve alone over crushed ice or mixed into a cocktail; the signature Baileys Almande Refresh calls for 3 ounces each of Almande and coconut water over ice... perfect for the post-yoga crowd. SRP \$21; 26 proof. baileys.com



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AGE OF AGAVE

TEQUILA CONNOISSEURSHIP EMERGES, TRANSFORMING IT INTO A SIPPING SPIRIT

BY JEFF CIOLETTI





Agave-based spirits have found themselves in a bit of a best-of-both-worlds sweet spot previously reserved for the likes of whiskey and Cognac. Not only are they among bartenders' favorite cocktail bases of late, but the Mexican distilled beverages—especially tequila—are enjoying increasing prominence as sipping spirits.

“There’s definitely a trend toward consumers enjoying tequila neat or on the rocks, driven by pure curiosity and the knowledge they’ve gained, especially with our aged expressions,” says Christine Moll, Category Marketing Director, Tequila for Campari USA, which markets Espolón Blanco and Reposado, among other limited releases.

It’s been a movement that gradually has been building since the early 2000s, when marketers wagered that the same premiumization phenomenon that had been driving vodka sales had a place in the tequila category as well.

Last year, total U.S. tequila volume was up just over 7% to 15.9 million cases, according to the Distilled Spirits Council, with the high-end and super-

premium price tiers growing 16% and 7.3%, respectively.

LOOKING UP(SCALE)

Patrón usually is credited as the most high-profile pioneer in the superpremium space and both boutique and mass-market brands have a presence in the above-premium tiers.

But it’s not all about putting a fancy label on an even-fancier bottle. There’s genuine connoisseurship happening as consumers have become far better-versed on everything from flavor nuances to production processes to maturation grades.

“The true tequila connoisseur, a growing group, is as informed as their counterparts in whiskey or wine these days,” observes Ken Austin, founder of Tequila Aviión. Austin notes that much of the “sipping” consumption is happening on the rocks, something that Lee Applbaum, Chief Marketing Officer at Patrón Spirits International, has witnessed as well.

ABOVE: Agave fields, like this one supplying Casamigos, provide the distinctive raw material, which is then cooked, fermented and distilled. Alex Gabriel Mendoza competes in the 2017 Road to the Hacienda Challenge, sponsored by Tequila Herradura; participants were tasked with creating a twist on a classic cocktail.

“Consumers in the tequila category have matured in their understanding, not just of the nomenclature around it—what makes a reposado and an añejo and what’s a tahona, for the more advanced,” Applbaum says, “And even one step further from that, consumer skepticism around claims of ‘authenticity,’ ‘hand-crafted,’ ‘artisanal,’ has trickled down to tequila—which is a good thing.”

It’s apropos that Applbaum mentioned the tahona, the colossal two-ton stone wheel that only the most traditional of traditional producers use to crush agave and release its juices. A few years back his company launched the Roca Patrón line of tequila whose agave was milled through the tahona process (‘Roca’ refers to the volcanic rock from which the tahona is carved).

Patrón also plays in the luxury space with its Gran Patrón line, whose retail prices tend to be well into the triple digits. The jewel in that crown is Gran Patrón Burdeos which is aged in American and French oak barrels and finished in vintage Bordeaux barrels. You won’t be finding that one in a strawberry margarita.

Similarly, Tequila Aviión markets Reserva 44, a limited, small-batch extra añejo that’s aged for nearly four years in

OPPOSITE: Casamigos creators George Clooney and Randy Gerber are among the young-brand owners who are successfully positioning their tequilas as both mixable and sippable. Blue Weber agave fields of and bottles by Patrón.

RIGHT: Like tequila, mezcal production—seen here at Mezcales de Leyenda—involves cooking agave piñas before fermenting and distilling. Critical differences: for mezcal, agave is sourced from anywhere, not just Jalisco; and many types of agave are permitted.



oak—43 months and then an additional month in petite barrels, to be exact. Austin recommends that consumers enjoy it neat or with a single ice sphere. He says the trade has dubbed Reserva 44 the “Pappy van Winkle of the tequila category.”

That power of celebrity certainly isn’t lost on the Casamigos brand, as partners in the business are high-profile entertainment and nightlife industry entrepreneur Rande Gerber and George Clooney. They play up the artisanal production process, particularly the 72 hours that the agave piñas spend baking in traditional stone ovens, the 80-hour fermentation process and the use of a proprietary house yeast. Its marketing positions it as a sipping tequila, especially its reposado and añejo varieties, and yet it is also becoming a mixologists’ favorite.



SIPPING SPECTRUM

Of course, there’s a continuum to connoisseurship. But most curious tequila consumers looking to trade up have, at the very least, been seeking out 100 percent agave products.

Some brands are positioned to enable that trade-up from right within their own portfolios. Sauza is a good example. The Beam Suntory brand has the more mass-market-friendly Sauza Silver and Sauza Gold, but then offers its Sauza Signature Blue line of 100 percent agave options. And their sibling brand Hornitos Black Barrel beckons with more complexity yet, gained from a special aging regimen that uses traditional, charred and toasted barrels.

Don Julio has three sipping tequilas, each with a point of distinction. Don Julio 1942 is an añejo created for the 60th anniversary; Don Julio 70 Clear Añejo (created for the 70th anniversary) is given a charcoal filtration that restores the crisp agave notes found in the Blanco while also stripping its color. And Don Julio REAL, their extra añejo, is produced only from the best estate-grown agave and is pot-distilled, yielding only three barrels per cycle.



Casa Noble, bought in 2014 by Constellation, features a solid ultrapremium lineup of Crystal, Reposado and Añejo tequilas. Named “Tequila Producer of the Year” at the 2016 International Spirits Challenge, Casa Noble is one of the few certified organic and kosher tequilas on the market today. But as with other well-distributed brands, it is important to have a crown jewel atop the portfolio. In Casa Noble’s case, the brand has a rare, limited release luxury line called Colección del Fundador. The first edition, Alta Belleza, launched in 2016.

It is a single-barrel Extra Añejo finished in ex-barrels of Robert Mondavi To Kalon Cabernet Sauvignon; only 563 bottles were available to the world.

Cuervo has excelled in special editions. Jose Cuervo Reserva de la Familia has been released every year since 1995. Self-dubbed “the world’s first extra-añejo tequila,” it is aged in both French and American oak, and each annual release is enhanced by an special artist-decorated

AGAVE: HERE’S LOOKIN’ AT YOU

With both the tequila and mezcal categories growing, SKUs are multiplying, both in terms of brands and expressions, and the marketing is becoming more evocative. Graphically, the distinctive, spiky Blue Weber Agave plant still rules on many labels; El Jimador, Tres Agaves and Corazón are just a few examples. But brands are getting bolder, tapping into agave’s wild and exotic persona, as well as iconic Mexican imagery beyond agave.

Agave Loco playfully calls itself crazy, which fits the product well as it is aged in used bourbon barrels and then cured in a formula of six peppers.



Eyecatching and as utterly simple as “Uno, Dos, Tres,” **123 Organic Tequila** distinguishes the three main levels of tequila, and the bottles are handblown from recycled glass.

New from Palm Bay International, partnering with top three tequila producer Casa Don Roberto, **Tequila Bribón** is named for the legendary and wildly charismatic Mexican figure on the label.



Inspired by the famed masked wrestlers of Mexico, **El Luchador** is organic and at 110-proof is fast becoming a mixologist favorite (and standout on the back bar).



M.S. Walker is importing **Grand Mayan** Tequila in three expressions—Silver, Ultra Aged and Single Barrel—in beautiful hand-made Talavera clay bottles. Also available in 100ml and 1.75L.



A new trio from Don Sebastiani & Sons plays with Spanish language: **Contigo** (meaning “with you”) **Silver**; **El Fumador** (The Smoker) **Reposado**; and **El Macho Añejo**.



Jose Cuervo celebrates 222 years with a limited-edition series, muralist and artist Ricardo Cavolo visually narrates the history of Jose Cuervo across the Especial Gold and Silver bottles.



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Introducing our latest limited-edition tin, artfully crafted in collaboration with renowned Mexican artist Adrian Dominguez. The stunning artwork features traditional Mayan animal legends, and when it's paired with Patrón Silver, there's no better mix to illustrate Mexico's rich artistic heritage.



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La Milagrosa Agave Bar and Listening Room in Williamsburg, Brooklyn

MEZCAL MATURITY

While mezcal—tequila’s smoky, mostly Oaxacan cousin—is also an ancient craft, its toehold in the U.S. is young indeed. The granddaddy of our mezcal market is arguably Del Maguey, a brand founded way back in 1995. Visionary Ron Cooper put single-village mezcal on the map, unapologetically importing multiple SKUs, demonstrating how ancient processes combine with varying micro-climates and terroir to give each creation its own unique, rich character. Striking green Del Maguey bottles were the first mezcals to reach the back bar of many U.S. establishments.

In the 21st century, mezcal’s natural connection with tequila has made trial much easier for agave aficionados. And the market now has a range of options, many with evocative names (Scorpion, Illegal, Sombra, Montelobos, El Buho). It’s notable that the hip SXSW Festival in Austin has an official mezcal this year (Kimo Sabe); and the category has its own celebrity brand in Cheech Marin’s Tres Papalote. Perhaps the most mainstream sign of all: Illegal, after taking on investment by Bacardi, recently entered a national distribution agreement with Southern Glazer’s. And new entrants continue to illustrate the natural variety of mezcals; Mezcales de Leyenda currently offers five different organic mezcals, from five different regions using five different agave plants.

Megan Barnes, Beverage Director of the mezcal-centric Washington, DC watering hole Espita Mezcaleria, has encountered a broad spectrum of consumers, and she’s got quite an arsenal at her disposal, with some 135 different mezcal bottles. “The level of knowledge ranges in our guests,” Barnes observes. “Our regulars tend to take notes, keep journals and even photograph the bottles they enjoy. I’d say more newcomers are likely to ask for a ‘smoky mezcal.’ Offering flights is a lot of fun because it allows us to tell a story.”

One of those flights is designed to demonstrate how terroir influences the agave from region to region, just as it does with wine grapes. It includes three mezcals made from the Espadín variety—there are some 30 agave varieties that can be used in mezcal, versus only one, Weber Blue, for tequila—all made in a similar manner but with vastly different flavor profiles.

A brand new destination for mezcal enthusiasts in Williamsburg, Brooklyn, is La Milagrosa (The Miraculous). From the outside, it looks like (and is) a Mexican deli. But behind the dried chiles, prickly pears, chorizo, sauces and the like—staples used in owner Felipe Mendez’s Cerveceria Havemeyer restaurant next door as well as at his well-known La Superior—is a freezer door that leads to a reservations-only “agave bar and listening room.” With curved wood walls and ceiling optimizing the acoustics, Mendez is able to unleash his dual passions—15,000 vinyl records and dozens of tequilas and mezcals. ■

ROOM TO GROW

Many automatically associate “sipping” with “aged,” but, as Patrón’s Applbaum points out, there’s been a definite trend toward drinking blanco/silver tequilas on their own: “Enjoying blanco tequila on the rocks, you really taste the agave and the citrus notes coming out from it.”

That’s not to say tequila sipping is exactly where it is with whiskey, but that means there’s plenty of untapped potential. “There is still a lot of room for increased knowledge when it comes to people who consume tequila only in a margarita—the number-one cocktail in the U.S.,” says Avion’s Austin. “This bodes well for the tequila category, especially in the ultra-premium segment.” ■

TEQUILA AGE DESIGNATIONS

- **BLANCO** (aka silver) is clear and unaged.
- **JOVEN** (aka gold or abocado) spends several months in tanks before bottling.
- **REPOSADO** (meaning rested) is the first definitive level of aging; these tequilas rest in wood (usually oak) barrels for two to 12 months.
- **AÑEJO** (meaning “old” or “mature”) applies to tequilas aged at least one year in oak barrels; these tend to be darker, smoother and more complex.
- **EXTRA AÑEJO** tequila has rested at least three years in barrel.

Mezcal bottlings in the U.S. have their fair share of creative packages—and because there are more variables in production (types of agave and techniques), mezcal brands often have distinct selling points.



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LAUNCHING: Q1 2017

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MENTIONS IN
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MADE WITH REAL FRUIT

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THE 2ND LARGEST
FLAVOR TREND IN
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MILLENNIALS
CHOOSE
AUTHENTIC AND
LOCALLY SOURCED
FLAVORS³



UNIQUE
FLAVORS AND
PROVENANCE
= ATTRIBUTES
FOR MILLENNIAL
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SKYY CALIFORNIA BREEZE

1 PART SKYY Infusions® California Apricot
2 PARTS Lemon Lime Soda
SPLASH of Cranberry Juice
Glass: Collins with Cubed Ice
Garnish: Apricot Wedge

Sources:

- ¹ Lightspeed GMI/Mintel, February 2014
- ² IFF/Technomic Flavored Beverage Trends, September 2016
- ³ Mintel, 2016
- ⁴ Sensient, 2016



PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CALIFORNIA WINE INSTITUTE.

CHARDONNAY

{ NEED TO KNOW }



BY W. BLAKE GRAY



While there is some debate over what is the king of red winegrapes (Cabernet? Nebbiolo?), Chardonnay is the undisputed queen of whites. The most widely planted winegrape in California, it is also clearly the most popular wine in the U.S., with sales increasing every year.

People love Chardonnay because it is generous—full of fruit and then some. It is sometimes called a wine-maker’s grape because it is so moldable; treatment in the vineyard, during fermentation and barrel-aging can dramatically impact style. Which is all the more reason to take a look at what makes this popular wine tick.

CHARDO-HISTORY

1680s

The first mention of Chardonnay was in the Mâconnais, where “Chardonnay” was said to make the best wine. It takes its modern spelling from a Mâconnais village named Chardonnay (population 162) near Uchizy.

1936

The first varietally labeled Chardonnay in the U.S. was released. This shift represented a fundamental distinction, affirming that New World wines were based on the *grape*, while Old World wines still defined themselves as a product of *place* first.

1976

Chateau Montelena becomes the most famous Chardonnay in American history by besting a field of French and California Chardonnays in the “Judgment of Paris” tasting.

STYLE POINTS

Chardonnay is both flexible and generous; indeed, one of its strengths is its recognizable, embraceable flavors, which can manifest in distinct ways.

Fruit can fall into several camps; depending on ripeness when picked and type of fermentation, flavors can be:

CRISP AND TART

[Green Apple, Lemon, Grapefruit]



STONE/TREE-FRUITY

[Peach, Red Apple, Pear]



TROPICAL

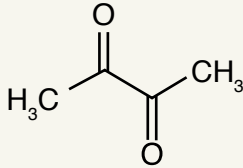
[Banana, Coconut, Guava]



Then if the wine has been put through malolactic fermentation and aged in oak barrels, a whole other layer of aromatics and flavor elements come into play; think butter, oak, yeast, vanilla, caramel, toasted marshmallow...

WHAT MAKES A WINE TASTE BUTTERY?

If a Chardonnay smells and tastes like butter, it's no wonder. Diacetyl, a chemical that gives butter its flavor, is a natural wine byproduct resulting from a technique called "malolactic fermentation," or "malo" for short. This technique can be applied to both white and red wines, but you don't notice it in the reds, and it is expressed vividly in Chardonnay.



WHAT MAKES A WINE TASTE OAKY?

Just as with whiskey and Cognac, some flavors in wine come from the wooden barrels it ages in. Vanilla, coconut, toast—these are all flavors of wood. A generation ago the only way to add those flavors was to use new wooden barrels, but those are expensive. Today, for cheap wines many big wineries soak a teabag of oak chips, or use wooden staves in stainless steel tanks. It does the trick for less.



TABLE TALK

Chardonnay is about the best wine on the shelf to go with roast chicken. Consider that as a shelf talker. In fact, whatever it is going on the family table at night, chances are Chardonnay can make it better.

Other Chardo-partners:

LOBSTER & SHELLFISH

This classic combo works especially well with a big buttery Chard.



CHEESE

Mais oui, notably Camembert, Gouda, Gruyere... even mac & cheese.



FISH

Lighter wines go with medium-textured fish like trout, snapper, Chilean seabass; heftier, oaked wines with meatier fish like salmon, tuna, monkfish.



PASTA

Chardonnay is right at home with creamy and cheesy pasta dishes, as well as with primavera.

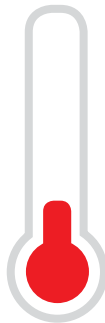


NOTHING

Lest we get too caught up in the food pairing game, it's worth noting that Chardonnay remains one of America's most popular sipping aperitif wines—its flavors are widely appealing.

KEY TO QUALITY: 'CHILL'

Not surprisingly, given Burgundy's marginal climate, it is widely agreed that the best **Chardonnays come from cool climates**, so it's worth knowing the locations of cool regions in generally warm countries. For example, Monterey and the Sonoma Coast are cooler than Napa Valley and yield excellent Chardonnay.



FUN FACT: NATIONAL CHARDONNAY DAY IS



1980s

It was not until the '80s that Chardonnay overtook Chenin Blanc as America's most popular wine—not just white wine—from California. Chardonnay has been No. 1 ever since.

1990s

Chardonnay wasn't necessarily considered a luxury wine until the 1990s. A turning point was the film *Disclosure*, in which Demi Moore seduces Michael Douglas with a bottle of high end Napa Valley Chardonnay (1991 Pahlmeyer).



LABEL LOGIC

Chardonnay, being both flexible and expressive, lends itself well to clues on the back label about how it tastes.

- If it's "**toasty**," it's likely oaky. Wines that taste buttery will often just come out and say "buttery." Nothing wrong with transparency like that.
- If you read "**rich**," it went through malolactic fermentation. Words like "**crisp**" or "**fresh**" suggest it probably didn't go through malolactic; and some labels will get more technical, describing how part of the wine went through malo and part did not, implying balance.
- Among the most important label trends of all: **Unoaked Chardonnays** are still certainly less common than barrel-aged ones, but they are **definitely gaining attention** because they usually announce it right on the label, often with catchy, "steely" monikers.



SELLING POINTS

Chardonnay is both super-cool and super-uncool at the same time. Here's how to sell to both the younger crowd and the classic oak fans.

- Consider two different Chardonnay sections, "**Classic**" and "**Cool**."

Under **Classic** you can put Napa Valley Chardonnays, and staples in the \$12-and-under arena. In short, this is your Chardonnay "establishment," built on trusted brands. And those brands can and should span price ranges.

For **Cool**, think modern Sonoma Coast Chardonnays, cooler South African Chards, New Zealand (NZ is very underrated Chardonnay country) and Chablis. Depending on your clientele, all your white Burgundy might go here.

- Even today, not everyone realizes Chardonnay is the **white grape of Burgundy**; it never hurts to point it out.
- Remember that stylistic distinctions among Chardonnays cut across price points; don't be afraid to cross-reference wines of similar primary character. "**If you like that, try this!**"
- Shelf talkers and bottle neckers are important. Use phrases like "Big & Buttery" or "Yeasty/Toasty" when the style merits; ditto "Fresh & Mouthwatering." Don't be afraid to write "This is not your grandma's Chardonnay" or "Great Gift."



CALIFORNIA: CHARDONNAY CENTRAL

IN 2015, CHARDONNAY
REPRESENTED IN CALIFORNIA:

16.4% | **633,572**
OF ALL GRAPES & TONS CRUSHED

{ THE NEXT-MOST-POPULAR WAS
CABERNET SAUVIGNON, AT 14% }

THERE ARE NOW ABOUT **100,000**
ACRES OF CHARDONNAY PLANTED IN
CALIFORNIA; IN 1941 THE OFFICIAL
TOTAL WAS 100 ACRES.

TOP CALIFORNIA COUNTIES,
BY CHARDONNAY VOLUME:



GEEK SPEAK

People talk about "Wente clone" Chardonnay, after Ernest Wente took cuttings from France's University of Montpellier viticultural nursery in 1912. But in fact, Wente's original cuttings probably included multiple clones and in the 100+ years since, they have mutated, so the meaning of "Wente clone" is quite fluid.

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2 OZ SILVER TEQUILA

1 OZ ST. ELDER

.5 OZ FRESH
LIME JUICE

SHAKE ALL
INGREDIENTS WITH
ICE & POUR INTO A
CHILLED GLASS AND
GARNISH WITH LIME.





ANY PORT IN A STORM

**FACING SLUGGISH SALES STATESIDE,
PORT SUPPLIERS ARE GETTING CREATIVE**

BY JACK ROBERTIELLO

Since sampling is still arguably the best form of promotion possible, Port marketers have been emphasizing consumer exposure; above, an event featuring Fonseca. Below: Port's flavor intensity and range of sweetness levels make it an excellent ingredient for cocktails.

Fourth-generation Port producer Rupert Symington, currently joint managing director of Symington Family Estates, was distressed by what had awaited him in New York City last fall. At one of the country's major annual wine events, his brands—Graham's, Cockburn's, Dow's and Warre's, along with other ports—had been shunted off to a small and sideline area.

It was perhaps emblematic of the American wine business trending away from the classiest of fortified wines even at a time when others with some sweetness—sweet red blends and fruity Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignons—have been gaining popularity. No wonder he seemed unhappy.

The story of Port's declining fortune's in the U.S. is laid bare in the figures. Data from the IDVP (Port and Douro

Wines Institute) from January through November 2016 indicates that Port imports to the U.S. were down—5.7% altogether although the drop was smaller (4.3%) among premium Ports. That's



bad news from the sixth-largest Port imbibing market.

But there are moves afoot to change that trend.

For folks like Symington, making sure their single-varietal Touriga Nacional and Touriga Franca wines from Quinta do Bomfim and Quinta Senhora de Ribeira get attention among the fine-wine-buying community is important, he said last fall. Also, getting younger consumers to understand that Port producers make wines—ruby, tawny, late bottled vintage, rosé, white—suitable for many drinking occasions is essential. Cockburn's Special Reserve, which fundamentally changed the Port game in 1969 by bridging the quality gap between everyday Ruby Ports and expensive Vintage Ports, recently underwent a reinvigorating package design.



LEFT: Cockburn's Special Reserve broke new ground in 1969 and recently got a stylish and modernizing makeover. RIGHT: Bartender Jenn Knott at 312 Chicago created her award-winning "Mama I'm Coming Home" using cider, pecan-infused Scotch, Fonseca Bin 27, honey syrup, cinnamon sticks and cloves.



Mixing Things Up

Another Port house, the Fladgate Partnership (TFP), which includes Taylor Fladgate, Croft and Fonseca, has taken another approach, angling into the cocktail world via a bartender education tour last year, with more set for 2017.

"There are really several lines of attack, the most obvious being Port paired with desserts in top-end restaurants," says Adrien Bridge, chief executive officer of TFP. "But in 2009 when we launched Croft Pink, we recognized the way to the market was very much through the bartender rather than through the sommelier when trying to sell something different. That was successful among bartenders precisely because they are people who can understand flavor profiles and have ways to use them that can expose our Ports to new customers."

That doesn't mean a house like TFP won't continue to work with sommeliers and retail accounts, and to organize restaurant training and sampling events. But they see cocktails as a growth opportunity. So far, so good; their on-premise cocktail-focused brands were up, including Croft Reserve Tawny (up 384%), Fonseca Siroco White (up 29%) and Croft Pink Rosé (up 43%).

Andy Seymour has been leading the bartender training for TFP, and says for many, Port is an entirely undiscovered category. "Some may know the names



of the various types, but for the layman bartenders who haven't had a lot of education, most of them haven't done much with Port." The hope is that, like with amaros, vermouths and Sherry, bartenders will embrace the category "and add new colors to their palettes," he says.

Education Meets Innovation

Bartender Jenn Knott at the Kimpton Hotel restaurant 312 Chicago (where ten Ports are sold by the glass) says Port needs more exposure to staff and customers. "Both Sherry and Port offer

interesting flavor and balance that I might otherwise get from syrups, shrubs juices or the like," she says. "Port has a fair amount of sweetness so you don't need other sweeteners, but you can also go from a very sweet Ruby to the more structured and drying types." Her New York Sour variant uses Amaro Montenegro, Cognac, lemon and a float of late bottled vintage tawny, a twist that she says adds a flavor dimension hard to find otherwise.

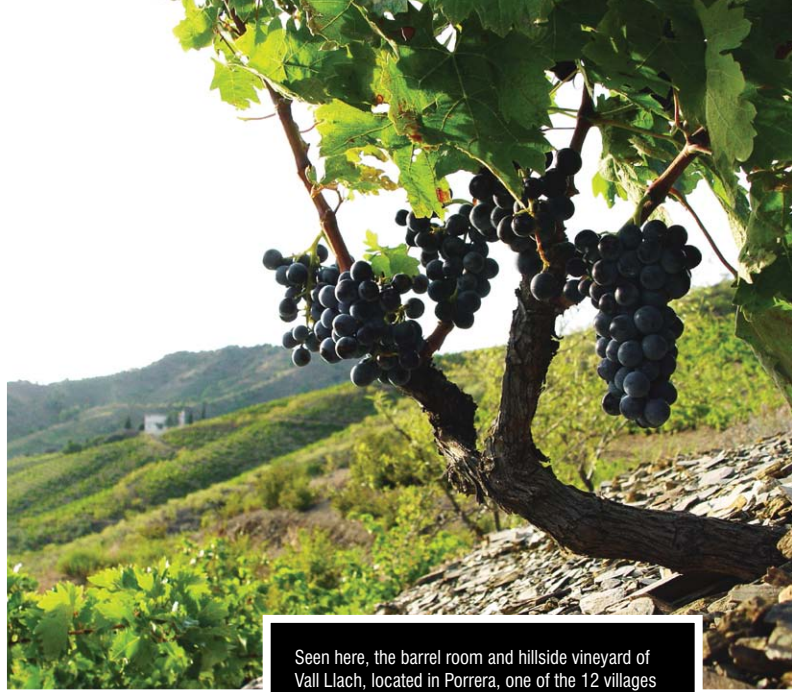
Charlie Schott of Chicago's Chicken and Fish has had a hit with his sangria-esque Purple Drink, made with red wine, Port and orange blossom water. He, too, has served a New York Sour version using Port. "A splash can add sweetness and well as tannins and it's the perfect application in the New York Sour much better than pinot noir for example," he says.

Seymour says Ruby Port is a great start for cocktail experimentation, a natural match with whiskey, while he's been presenting white Port with cucumber, cilantro and tonic, similar to a version served at New York City's Dante. Tawny works well with reposado tequila, rum agricole and the like, adding sweetness backed by flavors of dried fruits and nuts.

However Port gets served today, the American market is a lesson for producers, says Bridge. One Croft Pink customer bought 1,000 bottles and put it in a slushie machine to make an adult sorbet. It taught us, among other things, that sometimes Port is not just for dessert," recalls TFP's Bridge. "It can serve many purposes." ■

Croft Pink has found more success among bartenders than sommeliers.





Seen here, the barrel room and hillside vineyard of Vall Llach, located in Porrera, one of the 12 villages of Priorat recognized as distinct terroirs.

PRIORAT ON THE SPOT

THIS RUGGED SPANISH REGION IS PROVING POWER CAN COME WITH TERROIR

BY JIM CLARKE

By many accounts the days of 15° alcohol wines are waning, but word has yet to reach Priorat. Nonetheless, this small corner of Spain is striving harder for balance and living up to its reputation for quality: Priorat, together with Rioja, four hours drive to the northwest, are the only appellations within Spain to received the vaunted Denominación de Origen Calificada (DOCa) designation, setting them above the rest of Spain's booming and diverse wine scene.

Largely abandoned in the late 1800s thanks to urbanization and phylloxera,

Priorat came back to life as a modern winemaking region with the 1989 vintage, when five producers—Alvaro Palacios (Clos, now Finca, Dofí), René Barbier (Clos Mogador), Clos Erasmus, Clos Martinet and Clos de l'Obac— banded together to produce wines there, drawn by the ancient Garnacha and Cariñena vines they found clinging to steep mountainsides.

New plantings included international varieties like Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, and Syrah, and for a time the wines leaned toward an “international style” that spoke of quality, but not necessarily of Priorat's terroir.

“They started pulling back from the excesses of the '90s, making wines more terroir and limiting the use of oak.”

— Oscar Garcia, 67 Wine & Spirits

The nature of Garnacha and Cariñena, as well as the hot, dry growing conditions, means Priorat will always produce strong wines, but Oscar Garcia, Spanish Wine Buyer at 67 Wine & Spirits in Manhattan, says he saw a change in style starting about three years ago. “They started pulling back from the excesses of the '90s, making wines with more terroir and limiting the use of oak. The growth of white wines has also played an important role; Garnacha

Priorat is one of only two regions in Spain to qualify as DOCa.





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From left: Salus Alvarez, President of the Consejo Regulador of Priorat; Jaleo in Washington, DC, is one restaurant that is consciously exploring stylistic variations among the subzones of Priorat; Priorat is known for precipitously steep, rocky hills.

Blanca definitely jumped into the lead as the basis for those wines. They've always been among my favorite white wines of Spain, with lots of character and quality."

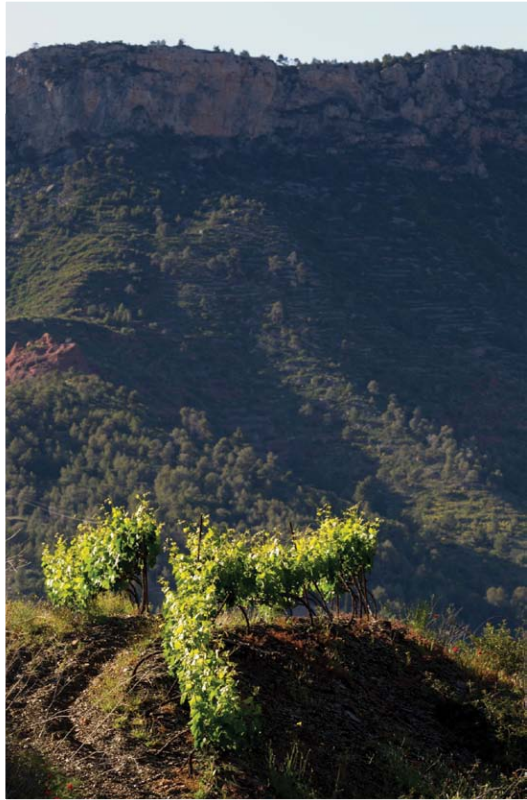
Enter a New Era

In 2009 the Priorat Consejo rolled out the Vi de la Vila designation, which recognized the 12 villages of Priorat as distinct terroirs. "I'm a big supporter of the Vi de la Vila," says Nicole Andrus, Spanish Imports Specialist for Folio Fine Wine Partners. "It makes sense; Priorat has an undulating topography, unlike, say, Napa. Porrera, where Vall Llach is, is closer to the Mediterranean than say Gratallops or Scala Dei, so it's cooler in the morning and evenings. That delays harvest close to a full month compared to those other villages. The *llicorella* [Priorat's distinctive slate soils] in Porrera is different; on the right

RELIABLE PRIORAT PRODUCERS
Mas d'En Gil - Bellmunt del Priorat
Vall Llach - Porrera
Clos Mogador
Alvaro Palacios - Gratallops
Terroir Al Limit - Torroja
Ardèvol - Porrera
Mas Doix
Mas Martinet - Gratallops
Scala Dei
Clos Figueras

side the soils are harder and colder, with larger chunks of stone, which are harder for the vines to burrow into." Pulling back on oak and extraction has allowed differences to express themselves more clearly.

For example, Jordi Paronella, Sommelier at Jaleo in Washington DC, says the wines of Gratallops may be "bigger wines with higher concentration and more earthy notes," compared to those of Porrera, which are marked by "more freshness and acidity." For Paronella, that means the wines are more flexible at the table than they once were. In addition to the red meats so suited to the more powerful wines, "you can now pair Priorat wines with all kinds of vegetables," as well as pork dishes and even cod.



With over 100 producers working in the region today, there are also wines suited to most every price point. "Entry-level Priorats," says Andrus, "made with international varieties in the blend and/or younger vines (under 30 years old), can be great values, affordable enough to pour by-the-glass. Young vine Priorat tastes like old vine Cabernet." But the top wines, made from scrawny, 100-year-old vines clinging to an 80° slope, as in Vall Llach's Mas de la Rosa, may need seven vines just to produce one bottle of the wine, and are often priced accordingly. Are they worth it? Says Andrus: "Old Vine Priorats hold up to the Grand Crus of the world." ■



Noble struggle:
Vall Llach vine in llicorella soil



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CHECKLIST FOR SURVIVING DISASTERS

BOTH NATURAL AND CIVIL CATASTROPHES CAN STRIKE YOUR BUSINESS. BE PREPARED.

BY ROGER MORRIS

What could go wrong? It's a simple question, but one with many complicated answers—and now more than ever it's a question retail store owners and managers should ask themselves as a first step in formulating disaster preparedness plans. A short list of potential catastrophes would include both natural disasters—floods, hurricanes, tornados, wildfires—and manmade disasters such as arson, rioting, even terrorism.

Realize that some potential disasters, such as hurricanes, may allow you a few days to react and to enact final preparations, while other catastrophes strike without warning. A starting point

for preparing a disaster plan, is to establish a preparedness checklist that will help lessen the impact of a disaster while helping steer the business

through a period of crisis, allowing you a speedy restart with minimal lost time and revenue.

This is not as ominous as it sounds. It starts by considering the types of disasters that your business might face, unlikely as they might be. Nobody knows this better than you—it's a byproduct of “location, location, location.” Consider your climate—if you are in Boston, snow/ice-related disasters merit attention, but earthquakes, not so much; in Los Angeles, it's the opposite.



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Also consider local infrastructure, and the specific utilities you rely on. Would your store benefit from a backup generator?

As you begin to clarify areas in need of attention—specific to your business—you will naturally be in a position to plan, prepare and, if needed, execute. As you review the points below, you can ask yourself: How do I prepare to meet each possibility? And what do I need to be doing during the emergency in order to re-start quickly? The only good way to manage these vital questions is to make sure you have answers in place before you really need them.

Here is a checklist of considerations:

Have the right insurance. Concentrate on the two largest needs: First, insurance for property damage and potential injuries to employees and customers, with acceptable deductibles; and, second, insurance to cover revenue losses during business disruption, which will be more expensive. The Insurance Information Institute says the latter should cover revenue lost during closure, fixed expenses that will still need to be met, plus expenses incurred if/when operating from a temporary business location.



Comply with all fire safety measures. Knowing and observing your local fire codes is a legal requirement as well as a first step in planning. You should



Having fire extinguishers does little good if every member of your staff doesn't know where they are and how to use them.

also perform regularly scheduled audits, not only to keep things updated, but to constantly familiarize yourself with these safety measures and how to enact them during an emergency.

Drill your staff on details. For example, having fire extinguishers does little good if every member of your staff doesn't know where they are and how to use them. Based on the location and layout of your store, be sure staff knows what is expected of them if there is a sudden civil disturbance or act of terrorism.



Have an emergency evacuation plan. The Hartford insurance group recommends that businesses “make sure that routes and exits are well lit, clearly marked and easily accessible.” Blocked evacuation routes is a major cause of deaths during fires. Also determine an outside meeting point so that all staff members can quickly be accounted for.



Secure offsite records storage. All electronic records—store inventory, employee, business, government, tax—

should be backed up regularly and stored offsite. Paper records not in current use, but which must be retained, should be kept somewhere away from the business. These storage sites may include home offices, bank safety deposit boxes and commercial storage facilities.



Put together an emergency contact list. And keep copies in various places. Include among these contacts emergency personnel (fire, police, ambulance), insurance agents, employee home numbers, even tradesmen who can help you clean up and secure your site.

Plan your re-opening before the need ever arises. The most immediate questions are: “If my business is almost or totally destroyed, would I stay here, or relocate elsewhere? If I stay here, where would I temporarily do business? If I leave, where would I look to relocate?” Those answers may dictate whether you should arrange in advance lines of credit or seek additional insurance coverage.

This list is by no means exhaustive, but it is a start toward getting you prepared for a disaster you hope will never happen. ■



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P

new
products

1



2



3



4



5



6

1. MEZZA DI MEZZACORONA 'ITALIAN GLACIAL BUBBLY'

Leading Italian producer Mezzacorona goes in a fresh new direction with launch of Mezza di Mezzacorona, a crisp "Italian Glacial Bubbly." Appealing to the Instagram-generation with its dynamic packaging and wallet-friendly SRP, the bubbly has a crisp, friendly flavor profile that takes aim at occasions from brunch to pre-party to poolside, on its own or in a cocktail. And for authentic Italian terroir: estate-grown grapes (60% Chardonnay, 30% Pinot Bianco, 10% Müller-Thurgau) hail from the foothills of the Italian Alps.

\$ SRP: \$14.99
worldofmezza.com

4. CICCIO & FIGLI 'C3' CARCIOFO LIQUEUR

Just as their entire line of liqueurs and amaros is going national, Washington, DC-based Ciccio & Figli also launched C3, a bitter aperitivo. Based on an infusion of three types of artichokes, cardoons, grapefruit and 18 more botanicals, C3 is barrel-aged for 12 months; 46 proof. With medium-to-high bitterness, C3 was designed for fans of cocktails like the Negroni and Americano in mind.

\$ SRP: \$35.99
domaineselect.com

2. SKYY INFUSIONS CALIFORNIA APRICOT

Skyy Infusions has added California Apricot to their line of flavored vodkas. The first premium apricot-infused vodka made with real fruit, it can be enjoyed on the rocks, in cocktails, or paired with two parts IPA for a twist on the summer Shandy. Campari America believes authentic fruit flavors will continue to grow in vodka as confectionary expressions decline. Available in 50ml, 750ml, 1L and 1.75L; 70 proof.

\$ SRP: \$13.99/750ml
skyy.com

5. VIÑA ARDANZA RESERVA 2000 RIOJA

It is not often a 17-year-old new release in its prime comes along, but La Rioja Alta is offering a decade-later re-release of their critically acclaimed Viña Ardanza Rioja Reserva from the 2000 vintage. The wine is 80% Tempranillo and 20% Garnacha. Following stainless steel fermentation, it spent 36 months aging in American oak barrels that averaged four years of age, developing classic Rioja character.

\$ SRP: \$125 | \$750/6-bottle wood case
riojalta.com/en/

3. KOMODO DRAGON 2014 RED BLEND, COLUMBIA VALLEY

When glaciers covering what is now the Pacific Rim melted, they sculpted eastern Washington's Columbia Valley, leaving deep sandy, rocky, alluvial soils—ideal for winegrowing. Komodo Dragon takes its name from the other side of the Pacific Rim, the mysterious jungles of eastern Asia. No mystery to the wine, though, a blend of Merlot, Cabernet and Syrah with rich flavors of ripe plum, blackberries, spice and black tea. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

\$ SRP: \$18.99
broncowine.com

6. HELLBOY HELL WATER CINNAMON WHISKEY

Dark Horse Comics and Prestige Imports have launched Hellboy Hell Water, a cinnamon-infused whiskey based on the bestselling comic book character, who protects America from the occult, paranormal and supernatural. Hellboy Hell Water is micro-distilled in the Smokey Mountains using a proprietary mashbill of corn, wheat and barley; bottled at 66.6 proof, with tamper-proof caps and labels. Marketing plans include life-size Hellboy cutouts and partnering with local comic book stores.

\$ SRP: \$19.99
prestigeimportsllc.com

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P

new
products

7



8



9



10



11



12

7. TOM GORE VINEYARDS RESERVE CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Tom Gore, second-generation grape farmer from Sonoma County, has released a Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon from the 2014 vintage. Grapes (99% Cabernet, 1% Petit Verdot) come from Alexander Valley. Complex aromas include blackberry, cigar box and and caramel; more berries and plum on the full-bodied palate. Tannins are firm and supple, supporting the long finish.

\$ SRP: \$40
tomgorevineyards.com

10. MICTHER'S 10 YEAR RYE

The release of Michter's 10 Year Single Barrel Kentucky Straight Rye marks the first by Pamela Heilmann, who in 2016 became the first woman since Prohibition to serve as Master Distiller at a Kentucky Distillers' Association member distillery. After aging in fire-charred, new American white oak barrels, the rye was bottled at 84.8 proof. Spice, pepper, citrus, butterscotch and oak all play a part in the rye's complex character.

\$ SRP: \$150
michters.com

8. BLUE CHAIR BAY KEY LIME RUM CREAM

The latest from Blue Chair Bay will take drinkers right to the Florida Keys. Both luscious and tangy, Blue Chair Bay Key Lime Rum Cream starts with classic key lime zest, then leads to a rich, buttery middle and a graham cracker crust finish. Like the other Blue Chair Bay expressions, this rum cream is inspired by country music star Kenny Chesney's love of the island lifestyle. Available in 50ml, 750ml and 1L; 30 proof.

\$ SRP: \$18.99/750ml
bluechairbayrum.com

11. SVEDKA BLUE RASPBERRY VODKA

Blue Raspberry is the latest addition to the Svedka portfolio, continuing Svedka's focus on flavor innovation. Blue Raspberry delivers on the extreme flavor trend with an explosive sweet berry and tart lemon profile. Two-tone packaging further communicates a message of boldness, with vibrant fuchsia tones transitioning to an electric blue hue. Available in 50ml, 375ml, 750ml, 1L and 1.75L; 70 proof.

\$ SRP: \$12.99/750ml
svedka.com

9. STONE CELLARS NEW PACKAGE RELEASE

Founded in 1893, Stone Cellars crafts a portfolio of smooth, classically structured varietal wines. Grapes come from family-owned vineyards through California. In the winery, Stone Cellars uses traditional winemaking techniques to achieve optimal flavors, depth and balance. The 2015 vintage is layered with rich berry fruit and smoky oak notes. Ideal with red meats and grilled vegetables. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

\$ SRP: \$8.99/750ml | \$14.99/1.5L
broncowine.com

12. CUSTARD CHARDONNAY

Don Sebastiani & Sons has launched Custard, with a North Coast Chardonnay designed to be "comfort wine." The idea: it is a silky sipper with flavors of pear citrus and vanilla; but at 14.5% alcohol, the wine is also sturdy enough to pair with rich dishes, like butternut squash ravioli. After fermenting in stainless steel on the lees, the wine then undergoes malolactic to add creaminess before aging in new French oak.

\$ SRP: \$21.99
custardwines.com

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SERVING UP

INDIA RESTAURANT & BAR

54 MEMORIAL ROAD
WEST HARTFORD, CT

Recently opened in downtown West Hartford, India Restaurant & Bar creates traditional Indian cuisine with a farm-to-table dining approach. Creative cocktails, made with fresh ingredients and Indian spices, as well as diverse wine and beer selections, accompany the classic dishes.



^
Bartender
Lauren Crocen.



BARTENDER
Lauren Crocen

COCKTAIL
Faithfully Ginger

- RECIPE**
Build in a shaker with ice:
- » 1.5 oz. St. George Gin
 - » 1 oz. St-Germain Liqueur
 - » .5 oz. lime juice
 - » .5 oz. ginger juice
 - » Pinch of turmeric
 - » Lime slice garnish

Fill the cocktail shaker with ice, add St. George Gin, St-Germain, lime juice, ginger juice and a pinch of turmeric. Shake until chilled and pour into chilled martini glass. Garnish with a lime.

“Our Faithfully Ginger is an award-winning cocktail and is always so popular amongst our patrons. Even when entertaining at home, I always begin service with this incredible drink. Composed of gin, elderflower liqueur, fresh lime juice, ginger and turmeric, its flavoring is smooth and so versatile that it pairs well with any dish,” said Chef Prasad Chirnomula, India Restaurant & Bar.



GUEST COLUMN
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36

already appreciate drier and darker wines – young-drinking cabernet sauvignon from California and Argentinian Malbec usually top the list – but even those who have never heard of these grapes are only a few sips away from becoming lifelong fans.

The purpose behind this is not to say that drinking dry is somehow superior to sipping sweet. The idea is that, with a little bit of education and experimentation, a whole new world of wines to enjoy can be unlocked for the new wine drinker. And, as with so many other things, the more one knows, the more one wants.

By helping consumers develop and expand their palates, the retailer cultivates customers who will ultimately purchase a greater variety of wine, as well as a potentially more expensive selection of wine. For the sweet-toothed few who refuse to dabble in dry wines, make sure you point them to the Sauternes aisle.

ABOUT

Renée Allen is the Director of Education for the Connecticut-based Wine Institute of New England. She is a wine and spirits educator and writer, as well as a wine judge. She can be contacted at www.wineinstituteofnewengland.com.



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WELCOME TO “EVERYTHING CONNECTICUT.”

This special section highlights Connecticut-made brands from the state’s distilleries, breweries and vineyards. The goal is to create a showcase for new and established local brands, all in one place.

This guide is also an alphabetical resource for bar and restaurant staff and retailers to easily source and create a homegrown selection of brands for your unique local customer base. It also allows new brands to be introduced or showcased to the trade as a marketing resource.

We hope you enjoy the first iteration of our local product reference guide. It’s just getting started and is set to grow!

Each month we will add new suppliers for this April-May-June version. Look for an October-November-December version too: deadline is September 4th.

If you have a product to showcase, contact us at 203.288.3375 ext. 103 or visit www.thebeveragejournal.com/connecticut/advertise/special-programs.





ASYLUM DISTILLERY

Asylum Distillery is the first distillery in Fairfield County since Prohibition, 98 years ago. We make craft, small batch gin, vodka, corn whiskey (aka moonshine), and our recently-introduced Fifth State whiskey. All spirits are gluten-free and proudly made from non-GMO corn from fourth-generation farmers in Somers, Connecticut. Our products are mashed, fermented, distilled and bottled in Bridgeport. Sign-up on our website for a personal tour and tasting with the distiller. Asylum Distillery self-distributes; please contact us directly to order.



bridget@asylumdistillery.com

203.258.3422

asylumdistillery.com

CENTRAL CONNECTICUT DISTILLERS

The co-founders of PEEL Liqueurs opened their own distillery, Central Connecticut Distillers located in New Britain, in 2015. The new facility is where the PEEL line of small, hand-made batches of award-winning, all-natural gluten-free liqueurs is produced: Bananacello, Limoncello, Cremoncello and the most recent, Orangecello. They are also proud to launch their Hard Hittin' brand of spiked sodas in two flavors: Vodka Limon and Vodka Orange. The lemons and oranges used in producing the PEEL Limoncello and Orangecello are freshly squeezed and mixed with carbonated water, cane sugar and vodka for 6% ABV spiked soda. Support local. Distributed via Allan S. Goodman and Cellar Fine Wines



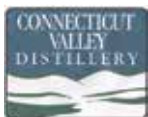
gdidomenico@drinkpeel.com

860.983.8443

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CONNECTICUT VALLEY DISTILLERY

Smuggler's Rum is produced in small, single batches at our Connecticut Valley Distillery. Our distillery uses only handcrafted copper pot stills, the key to our success of award-winning smooth New England styles of rum. Established at the turn of last century, Connecticut Valley Distillery has created two rums. Smuggler's Silver and Smuggler's Spice pay homage to those Prohibition-era rum smugglers; especially those who through luck, and a lot of skill, never earned acclaim through detection. Pre-order our Limited Smuggler's "Oak Aged Honey" Rum for May 2017.



Smugglers@CTValleyDistillery.com

860.966.7248

CTValleyDistillery.com

HICKORY LEDGES FULL MOONSHINE

Full Moonshine is skillfully handcrafted at Hickory Ledges Farm by owners and distillers, Bill and Lynne Olson in the tradition of their ancestors which dates back to 1797. The tasting room showcases the family's original distilling permit. Our small batch process creates a smooth, clean spirit with a flavor profile second to none. Enjoy the essence of fresh pressed apple cider, local maple syrup, native cranberries, select corn and clear spring water that distinguishes Full Moonshine from the rest. The line includes Apple Pie, Cranberry, Pete's Maple "80" and Circa 1797. Distributed via Eder Bros., Inc. and Allan S. Goodman.



olsonlyne@hickoryledges.com

860.693.4039

fullmoonshine.com



LITCHFIELD DISTILLERY

Nestled in the hills of northwest Connecticut, Litchfield Distillery proudly batches award-winning craft spirits made with the best ingredients our local farmers have to offer. Our Batches' series of premium spirits includes an array of fine bourbon, whiskeys, vodkas and gin. Conveniently located on Rt. 202 in Litchfield, we invite consumers to visit for a free tour and enjoy a tasting of our Spirit of Hard Work™. Litchfield Distillery products are distributed via Slocum & Sons.



jbaker@litchfielddistillery.com

203.592.7793

litchfielddistillery.com

ONYX SPIRITS COMPANY

In 1865 we lost our family distillery, Chaffee & Co., to the federal government after shipping barrels of moonshine and whiskey to Canada and “forgetting” to pay the tax. During Prohibition, we may have accidentally operated a speakeasy in our family hotel in Middletown, Connecticut. Co-founders Adam and Pete have endeavored to liquefy their passion for craft spirits through opening Onyx Spirits Company and producing America’s first ultra-premium moonshine and Connecticut’s first whiskey, Secret Stash. In 2015, we opened our speakeasy tasting room, where you are all most warmly invited. Distributed via Allan S. Goodman and Winebow.



contact@onyxmoonshine.com

860.540.6699

onyxmoonshine.com

SONO 1420 ARTISAN DISTILLERS

SoNo 1420 Artisan Distillers is a craft distillery producing small batch, ultra-premium spirits in historic South Norwalk. We handcraft two whiskeys and three gins using seeds and flowers from the cannabis sativa plant (hemp) to create some of the best tasting - and arguably the most intriguing - distilled spirits on the planet. Come visit us in the new Maritime Village residential complex. We're a short walk away from the restaurants and nightlife of Washington Street, the Maritime Aquarium, and the South Norwalk train station. Opening Summer 2017! Different. Daring. Delicious.



ted.dumbauld@sono1420.com

203.957.3312

sono1420.com

THE REAL MCCOY

The Real McCoy is a small batch single blended rum artisan crafted in copper stills and authentically aged 3, 5 or 12 years in American oak bourbon barrels. Founded in Mystic, our 85+ award-winning rum is ethically and sustainably produced in a traditional dry style - no added sugar or flavor, and naturally gluten free. Our heritage is based on the legendary Bill McCoy, Prohibition’s gentleman rum runner who sailed just 3 miles off the Northeast coast, legally delivering only top quality, unadulterated spirits which became known as “The Real McCoy.” Distributed via Worldwide Wines.



@TheRealMcCoyRum on Twitter

realmccoyspirits.com



BLACK HOG BREWING CO.

Black Hog Brewing Co. located off I-84 in Oxford is open Friday-Sunday for pints, flights, limited bottle conditioned offerings, cans and fills. You can find food trucks parked outside the brewery on Saturdays, and ask about our in-house cheese selection. 12 unique taps from light lagers, experimental wild fermented sours and IPAs to Imperial stouts and our World Cup Gold winning Granola Brown Ale. Drink to the Hog! Distributed via both HDI and Star Distributors.



tom@blackhogbrewing.com

203.262.6075

BlackHogBrewing.com

BROAD BROOK BREWING COMPANY

Broad Brook Brewing Company is a craft microbrewery located in the heart of CT's Tobacco Valley. Since 2010, we've gone from brewing in a garage to our first taproom in East Windsor. In less than three years, we are already planning a big expansion into Suffield for the fall of 2017. We owe all of our success and growth to our loyal customers. We have over 25 unique beers. Broad Brook Ale, Hopstillo IPA, Chet's Session IPA, and Porter's Porter, our main four, can be found all over CT. Distributed via Rogo, Star, F+F, A. Gallo.



info@broadbrookbrewing.com

860.623.1000

BroadBrookBrewing.com

SHEBEEN BREWING COMPANY

Shebeen Brewing Company welcomes the warmer weather with our new lineup: Bullet Takes Flight DIPA, Fore!, Session IPA, Single Hop IPL, Pineapple Wheat, and Cannoli Beer. Our first DIPA, Bullet Takes Flight, is named for its hops; Falconer's Flight and Green Bullet. It's fruity, floral, and hazy while packing an explosive aroma. This year's Fore!, made with Citra and Mosaic, is loaded with citrus and tropical fruit notes. The beer is 4.4% ABV, but very flavorful. Signature Single Hop IPL showcases CT-grown cascade hops. Shebeen Brewing Company products are distributed via Cellar Fine Wines. The brewery is open Wednesday through Sunday for tours and tastes.



ShebeenBrewing@live.com

203.514.2336

shebeenbrewing.com

THIMBLE ISLAND BREWING COMPANY

Founders Justin Gargano and Mike Fawcett both grew up on the Connecticut shoreline and founded Thimble Island Brewing Company in 2010, naming the business after the cluster of islands off the coast in Branford. The brewery continues to expand its offerings with several standard varieties available on tap at bars and restaurants in the state, as well as specialty brews found only in the brewery's tasting room. Located in Branford at 16 Business Park Drive, Thimble Island Brewing is open daily for tours and tastes. It also features a private event space. Thimble Island Brewing Company self-distributes.



justin.gargano@thimbleislandbrewery.com

203.208.2827

thimbleislandbrewery.com



DIGRAZIA VINEYARDS

DiGrazia Vineyards was founded by Dr. Paul DiGrazia in 1978 when he planted the first vines at their Brookfield location. The winery followed suit in 1984. They went from producing four different wines to now offering 18 unique styles today. Winemaker Aaron Cox crafts unique formula wines not made anywhere else due to proprietary recipes and winemaking methods. DiGrazia Vineyards takes pride in our wholesale network. Our referrals to vineyard visitors to the Connecticut package stores that carry our products are part of our winery tour. The vineyard self-distributes. Contact Mark Langford for more information.



info@digraziavineyards.com

203.775.1616

digraziavineyards.com

JONATHAN EDWARDS WINERY

At Jonathan Edwards Winery, we have the distinct pleasure of making wine from both the west and east coasts. Since starting our winemaking adventure in Napa Valley, we continue to work with some of the best vineyards in the country. In addition, our estate vineyards in Connecticut allow us to have the ultimate control over our local wine, creating "New England Charm with Napa Style." Located in North Stonington, the winery is open daily for tours and tastings, and also hosts weddings and private events. Jonathan Edwards Winery self-distributes.



mark@jedwardswinery.com

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