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JANUARY 2017

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The largest compilation of beverage alcohol price and brand information.

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AND SPIRITS
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MARKETPOINT

It's a "brand" New Year! Ring in 2017 with new products and emerging trends, plus our comprehensive wine, beer and spirits listings.

- The cover story is **South Africa** and its wines. Opportunity abounds for consumers and trade alike.
- The **stars** (that's you!) shine at the annual RI Hospitality Association awards gala. Recap the highlights with us.
- What better time to predict the "next big thing" than the first issue of the New Year! Read what a handful of local experts **forecast** from the bar and the floor.

Happy
New Year

- Explore craft **beer** stats and see if the data meshes with your retail and on-premise observations.
- Beaujolais is beginning to bloom and the **Gamay** grape is gaining followers.
- Calorie-watching never goes out of style, and bars are ready to play along. Low-cal **cocktails** are an expanding trend.
- The annual **ProWein** preview offers an inside view into "the greatest wine show on Earth."
- Explore **local** news, event recaps, product launches and association news, plus "Retail Review" and "Serving Up."
- It's a new year, try new tools. Get your **password**, free with your subscription, and log-in to our trade-only site. Search and shop market products, shares lists and information with your reps or staff, create tasting sheets and so much more. It is the only online companion to the print magazine that you will ever need!



ON THE COVER

Photograph courtesy
of Lismore Estate Vineyards.

DEAR SUBSCRIBERS

Each year, we strive to present more relevant and local content – news you can use to sell your brands, stay informed and connect locally. It's news you can be a part of, too. We also deliver the market's most comprehensive product and pricing resource each month in print and anytime online, where you are linked to a rich product content resource that goes beyond pricing into current ratings, tasting notes, and even bottle shots and spins.

For more than 10 years, the companion, trade-only website provides a real-time link between on- and off-premise customers and wholesalers' sales teams in distributorships of all sizes. Along the way, we've evolved and enhanced our tech tools to serve today's market needs. The latest platform we've added is an iOS shopping app, which will be available to you in the year ahead.

INNOVATING FOR YOU

Each year we invest in creating more ways to help your business, no matter the size. We are here to support your unique work, whether you are part of a wholesaler team, importer, brand supplier, a retailer or an on-premise venue.

Your subscription includes your password and access to this invaluable online resource; call us to get activated and get more from our provided suite of beverage business tools.

These include features to search easily from thousands of products 24/7; place orders to multiple distributors; explore the best deals available; view "Up" and "Down" price indicators to help determine which month is best to buy; create custom portfolios; communicate with your sales reps; access labels, bottle shots and tasting notes; and create custom shelf talkers or tasting sheets and more.

We've done this as a natural response to serving all of our subscribers' (and their staffs') needs, offering platforms to keep your bars and shelves stocked, to help make sales communication and pipeline access easier, and to help create effective and innovative ways for licensed sellers and buyers to interact.

GOALS THAT SERVE OUR MARKET

Through our 75 years (and three generations) of doing local business, our goal remains steadfast: to provide and connect you with the market's most comprehensive resource for accurate pricing information, alongside industry news and insight.

We are a small but mighty team, ready to answer your questions about how to use all of our wholesaler, retailer or on-premise tools, and help you maximize your relationship with us. The cleaner design layout in our print magazine and the search, shop and order technology, custom tasting or sell sheet creation, competitive set info, and optimized search facets found on our trade website are all examples of ways we seek to meet your needs.

TALK TO US

Connect with us via social media, our reader surveys, our regular emails, or just pick up the phone. We serve both Rhode Island and Connecticut from our Whitney Avenue location in Hamden, Connecticut, and we are happy to meet with you at your location.

I also invite you to connect with me directly via dana@thebeveragejournal.com. Tell me what we can do better in 2017. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Dana Slone

Editor and Associate Publisher, The Rhode Island Beverage Journal



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FRIDAY, JANUARY 27TH

BOURBON TASTING

UNCAS BALLROOM | 6:00PM - 9:00PM

Taste a variety of fine bourbons and delicious hors d'oeuvres before sampling our selection of premium cigars.

MEXICAN NIGHT MARKET

UNCAS BALLROOM | 8:00PM - 11:00PM

Fiesta your way into the weekend at Sun Wine & Food Fest's Mexican Night Market with award-winning chef and TV personality, Aarón Sánchez.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28TH

ELITE CRU TASTING*

THE CABARET THEATRE | 3:00PM - 5:00PM

Taste the "best-of-the-best" vintages from around the world, as well as meet the winemakers and principals behind them.

***Includes a Saturday Grand Tasting ticket & \$50 iGourmet gift card.**

CELEBRITY CHEF DINE AROUND

UNCAS BALLROOM | 8:00PM - 10:30PM

Watch celebrity chefs prepare signature dishes at live cooking stations. Enjoy each dish with a complementary pairing of premium wine or beer.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29TH

BRUNCH WITH BATALI

UNCAS BALLROOM | 11:00AM - 2:00PM

Cap off the Sun Wine & Food Fest weekend with a meal of a lifetime at the "Brunch with Batali" event hosted by recognized and respected chef, Mario Batali.



Tickets on sale now at the Mohegan Sun Box Office and ticketmaster.com

Visit sunwineandfoodfest.com for more information.

G.H. MUMM CHAMPAGNE NAMES BOLT CHIEF ENTERTAINMENT OFFICER

Maison Mumm appointed Usain Bolt as the company's Chief Entertainment Officer. Bolt, who made history at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio when he achieved the "Triple Triple," three gold medals at three consecutive games, is a Jamaican-born sprinter and decorated athlete known to be the "fastest human ever timed." Bolt, in his new role with Mumm, will create "new and daring ways to bring celebrations to consumers," with the long-term goal of aiding the company's U.S. brand growth efforts.



KAVALAN NAMED BEST WORLDWIDE WHISKEY PRODUCER AT IWSC

Kavalan of Taiwan was named the Worldwide Whiskey Producer of the Year during the International Wine and Spirit Competition (IWSC). Since 2006, Kavalan Distillery has been dedicated to producing single malt whiskeys and has received more than 210 gold awards or above. YT Lee, CEO of Kavalan Distillery said, "Winning this new award is humbling and only makes us more determined to produce even better whiskey." This year the IWSC created seven new spirit "Producer of the Year" categories for titles such as brandy, gin, liqueur, rum, Scotch and vodka, as well as whiskey.



THORPE JOINS PABST BREWING COMPANY AS CEO

Pabst Brewing Company (PBC) announced that it has named Simon Thorpe as Chief Executive Officer, effective December 1, 2016. Eugene Kashper, current Chairman and CEO, will remain full-time Chairman of the Board and continue to play an active role in the business. There will be a 60-day transition period between Kashper and Thorpe to ensure a smooth handover. "He is both a true beer industry visionary and a highly respected operator. I have no doubt that Simon's breadth of experience and proven leadership capabilities will enable us to realize our ambition to become a best-in-class beer supplier and a truly great American brewing company." Thorpe was previously President and CEO of Duvel Moortgat USA.



CONSTELLATION BRANDS FIGHTS HUNGER THROUGH LOCAL INITIATIVES

Employees at Constellation Brands led the third annual Nourishing Neighbors initiative to help fight hunger in local communities. The initiative ran from October 24-28 and more than 1,040 employees from the U.S., Canada, Mexico and New Zealand took paid time off to volunteer at local food banks. Volunteer participation increased by 42 percent compared to 2015. Company and employee monetary donations totaled \$100,000, also an increase of 42 percent from the previous year. The company collected more than 84,000 pounds of food to distribute to local food banks as well.



ACKLEY BEVERAGE GROUP PURCHASES MERRIMAN VINEYARDS

Ackley Beverage Group, a private equity company in Seattle, purchased Merriman Vineyards in November. The vineyard is located in the foothills of the Oregon Coastal Range in the Yamhill-Carlton AVA. The 44-acre vineyard is comprised mostly of pinot noir and chardonnay grapes. Under the ownership of Ackley Beverage Group, Merriman Vineyards will expand fruit sourcing for Montinore Estate, which Ackley Beverage Group partnered with in 2016. "I'm looking forward to working with this vineyard and using its high-quality fruit for our wines," said Rudy Marchesi, President of Montinore Estate.



ON-PREMISE SPIRITS SALES TO GROW, RETAIL TO STAY THE COURSE

The outlook for drink sales in restaurants and bars calls for "more intense competition among on-premise venues and alcohol brands in 2017." The "On-Premise Intelligence Report" developed by Technomic and Beverage Marketing Corporation, said that "consumer occasions" fueling retail alcohol sales will remain flat in total adult beverage volume growth. However, dollar sales continue to increase on-premise as consumers gravitate towards more premium spirits, wine and beer products. The report stated that spirits is the only adult beverage category achieving volume gains in restaurants and bars. Cocktail prices and consumer willingness to pay are factors in that growth. Beer remains the most consumed type of alcohol in restaurants and bars, with wine second, and both are set to grow.



BACARDI CUTS GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Bacardi recently reported cutting its greenhouse gas emissions in half, a year earlier than its December 2017 target date. The 50-percent reduction in greenhouse gases can be attributed to improved energy efficiencies including lighting, motors, HVAC and compressed air systems. “We set an ambitious corporate responsibility goal, and we reached it nearly 15 months early,” said Mike Dolan, Chief Executive Officer of Bacardi Limited. “We not only achieved it, we surpassed it with outside-the-box thinking, hard work and the passion of Bacardi employees.” Bacardi is now setting new goals and targets to align with those determined at the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris last year. The spirit company is also supporting the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals.



VINEYARDS TAKE ACCOLADES AND RANKINGS INTO THE NEW YEAR

Bonterra Organic Vineyards was named American Winery of the Year by *Wine Enthusiast*, making this the first-ever vintner dedicated to organic farming to receive this recognition. The award will be accepted by Fetzer Vineyards’ CEO Giancarlo Bianchetti during the *Wine Enthusiast’s* Star Awards ceremony in Florida on January 20, 2017. The publication also named Oregon’s Willamette Valley as the 2016 Wine Region of the Year during its annual Wine Star Awards. *Wine Spectator* also released their Top 10 Wines of 2016 and ranked Lewis 2013 Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon in first place. The list continues with second, Domaine Serene 2014 Chardonnay Reserve; third, Beaux Freres 2014 Pinot Noir Ribbon Ridge; fourth, Chateau 2013 Climens; fifth, 2011 Produttori del Barbaresco; sixth, Orin Swift 2014 Machete; seventh, Ridge 2012 Monte Bello Santa Cruz Mountains; eighth, Antinori 2013 Toscano Tignanello; ninth, Chateau Smith-Haut-Lafitte 2013 Pessac-Leognon White; and tenth, Hartford Family 2014 Old Vine Zinfandel.



CONSTELLATION BRANDS ANNOUNCES PURCHASE OF GRUPO MODELO

Constellation Brands plans to purchase Grupo Modelo, a subsidiary of Anheuser-Busch, for \$600 million. The brewery is located in Obregon, Mexico and is estimated



to have four million hectoliters of production capacity. The acquisition allows Constellation Brands to obtain a functioning brewery to support its fast-growing, high-end Mexican beer portfolio, as well as give the brand flexibility for innovation. “We look forward to welcoming Obregon’s talented employees to our Constellation family and working together to continue to capture the ongoing growth we see in the high-end segment of the U.S. beer market,” said Rob Sands, President and CEO of Constellation Brands.

REPORT SITES TRENDS IMPACTING GLOBAL AMERICAN WHISKEY MARKET

Marketing strategy and promotions, new product launches and rising exports are sited as emerging trends impacting the global American whiskey



market from 2016 through 2020, according to a report from Technavio. “U.S. whiskey has a large market share in the U.S. and is driven by the growing interest for unique brands such as WhistlePig, which is a small batch, rye whiskey brand,” said lead analyst, Arushi Thakur from Technavio. “There is consumer demand for authentic products that have a high product value, such as rye whiskeys and small batch bourbons. The industry is also introducing new flavors such as maple, spiced and honey to target young consumers.”

DIAGEO RELEASES VIRTUAL REALITY CAMPAIGN TO COMBAT DRUNK DRIVING

Diageo introduced “Decisions,” a virtual reality experience that puts consumers of legal drinking age in the middle of a fatal drunk driving crash, the latest approach to educate consumers about the “importance of responsible decision making when drinking.” Diageo partnered with Johnnie Walker Scotch Whiskey on the rollout of this campaign, building on the brand’s “Join the Pact” program to end drunk driving. The “Decisions” campaign follows stories of three different vehicles and passengers, highlighting how a single decision can affect multiple lives. “These days, it’s easy for us to be desensitized to certain issues unless we live them out firsthand,” said James Thompson, Chief Marketing and Innovation Officer, Diageo North America. “Our hope is that this will be truly jarring for people and will help inform responsible decision-making while enlisting their advocacy in the ongoing fight against repeat, hardcore drunk drivers.”



IN CELEBRATION OF OUR INDUSTRY

BY DALE J. VENTURINI, PRESIDENT & CEO, RI HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION



Each year, I look forward to the RI Hospitality Association's Annual Meeting and 'Stars of the Industry' awards event. It's a time when the best and brightest in our industry gather to celebrate some truly outstanding individuals. This year, we were again fortunate to host our event at Twin River Casino, and they once again made the event shine.

More than 700 people attended the celebratory night and we gave out more than 90 awards over the course of what felt like a quick three-and-a-half-hour program. We were fortunate to have the Rhode Island Speaker of the House, Representative Nicholas Mattiello, with us, as well as several state house leaders and mayors in attendance.

"We all of us are stars and we deserve to twinkle."

- Marilyn Monroe

We awarded the service, achievements and amazing attitudes of the best and brightest in our industry. Our winners hailed from organizations representing hotels, restaurants, tourism, politics and allied businesses.

Many of the awards recognize employees; others feature vendors, tourism entities, emerging leaders and lifetime achievers.

They are our servers, cooks, dish washers, department managers, general managers, valets, event managers and elected officials who do their best every day for the public that they serve.

As I have often said, I wish I had the space to list each award winner by name in this column; but, there are simply too many and it would be a disservice to leave anyone out. However, I encourage you to take a few minutes to visit our website, rihospitality.org, and read through the 2016 winners. Their backgrounds and stories are an inspiration.

While reading through hundreds of nominations seems like a daunting task, it was amazing to see common themes emerge. Many winners were cited for mentoring others, as well as their team spirit, enthusiasm and going above and beyond what is required. It's no secret that the reason the hospitality industry in Rhode Island is so vibrant and well-recognized is because of the people – 70,000 of them to be exact. To be successful in this industry, you have to be passionate about your vocation and have a singular focus of excellence.

The wonderful thing about the Stars of the Industry event is that the majority of winners are nominated by their bosses, colleagues and even their customers. Having colleagues

and friends deem the winners worthy of the industry's recognition means a lot to each recipient. Watching them come up on stage filled with anticipation and pride is one of my most treasured moments as head of RIHA.

While we may have recognized the work of 90 or so individuals and organizations, there are many more who work to make the hospitality and tourism industry in Rhode Island such a wonderful, important and financially-viable community.

As we embrace 2017, a wonderful New Year's resolution is to encourage excellence in those around you. Take the time to help, mentor and advise colleagues and friends in our industry. And, keep an eye out for those outstanding stars in your own business. It costs very little to show your support and encouragement and the result will pay off in dividends!

Once again, congratulations to all of our 2016 Stars of the Industry recipients! It's because of you that Rhode Island is fortunate to have one of the best and brightest hospitality industries in the nation.

Happy New Year!



LEARN MORE

For anyone interested in learning more, please visit www.restaurant.org



ABOUT DALE J. VENTURINI PRESIDENT & CEO, RI HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

A veteran of more than 25 years in the hospitality industry, Venturini is considered by many to be the voice of the industry in the state of Rhode Island. She has been instrumental in improving the industry's educational and training programs in the state, as well as enhancing the bottom line of the business she represents. Venturini splits her time between the office and the State House, a constant presence for her membership.

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Annual “Stars of the Industry” Showcases State’s Talent and Supporters

More than 700 guests attended the annual “Stars of the Industry” dinner and awards ceremony held on November 30, 2016 at Twin River Casino. RI Hospitality Association (RIHA) and RI Hospitality Education Foundation have hosted this event for more than 25 years to recognize a range of professions and personalities within the restaurant and hospitality industries.

A cocktail reception and exhibition hour preceded the main awards dinner event, which was kicked off with a performance by the Troupe Monte Carlo, arranged by Fountain Street Creative. Dale Venturini, CEO and President of RI Hospitality Association, welcomed guests and Paul McDonald, singer/songwriter and “American Idol” finalist, performed during dinner.

Frank T. Galleshaw, III, of Wright’s Farm Restaurant received the 2016 President’s Award. The Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Vincenzo Iemma of Capriccio & Café Nuovo. Hotelier of the Year went to Robert J. Burnetti, Hotel Viking. Restaurateur of the Year was awarded to David Lahousse of both The Lodge Pub & Eatery and Kay’s Restaurant. Ecolab was voted Vendor of the Year. Volunteer of the Year was awarded to George McAuliffe,

Mews Tavern. Matthew R. Varga of Gracie’s earned Chef of the Year.

Three were named Bartender of the Year: Kerri Lynn Handrigan, Champlin’s Seafood Deck;

Jeffrey C. DeSautels, Fred & Steve’s Steakhouse; and Allison B. Willwerth, Shipyard and Blackstone Bar.

Tracy Rabar of Avenue N American Kitchen and The Pantry was named Woman of the Year; and Man of the Year was awarded to Norman L. LeBlanc, CPA, Kahn, Litwin, Renza & Co., Ltd. Three venues earned Farm to Fork Excellence in Sustainability: Nick’s on Broadway, Persimmon and Tallulah. Rep. Lauren Carson and Rep. William A. Walaska were recognized as Hospitality Ambassadors of the Year.

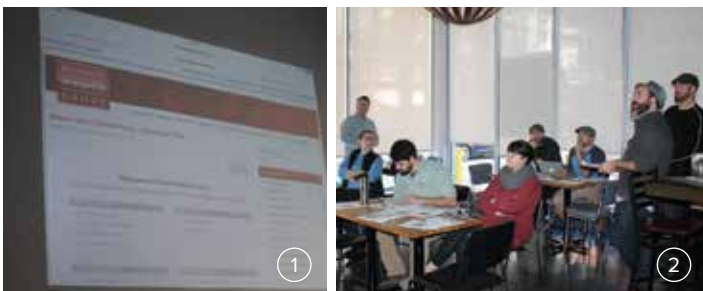
A complete list of award recipients and categories can be found at www.rihospitality.org. Hospitality professionals were nominated by the public and elected officials of the RIHA board. ■





1. Vendor displays and a cocktail reception preceded the main event.
2. Dale Venturini, President/CEO of the RI Hospitality Association.
3. Singer Paul McDonald, sponsored by Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI).
4. 2016 President's Award: Dale Venturini, President/CEO, RIHA; Frank T. Galleshaw, III, Wright's Farm Restaurant; Craig Sculos, Chairman of the Board, RIHA.
5. Lifetime Achievement Award winner Vincenzo Iemma of Capriccio & Café Nuovo, with Venturini and Sculos.
6. Hotelier of the Year: Robert J. Burnetti, Hotel Viking, with Sculos.
7. Vendor Representative of the Year Paul Fitzpatrick, Performance Food Group, with Sculos. Joseph Gaudreau, District Sale Manager of Sysco Boston (not pictured) was also named a Vendor Representative of the Year.
8. Volunteer of the Year George McAuliffe of Mews Tavern with Sculos.
9. Chef of the Year Matthew R. Varga of Gracie's with Sculos.
10. Bartender of the Year Kerri Lynn Handrigan of Champlin's Seafood Deck with Sculos.
11. Bartender of the Year Jeffrey DeSautels of Fred & Steve's Steakhouse with Sculos.
12. Bartender of the Year Allison B. Willwerth of Shipyard and Blackstone Bar with Sculos.
13. Woman of the Year Tracy Rabar, Avenue N American Kitchen and The Pantry with Sculos.
14. Man of the Year Norman L. LeBlanc, CPA, from Kahn, Litwin, Renza & Co., Ltd. with Sculos.
15. Farm to Fork Excellence in Sustainability winners Jake and Kelly Ann Rojas, Chef/Owners, Tallulah; Chef/Owner Champe Speidel of Persimmon and his wife Lisa Speidel; and Chef/Owner Derek Wagner of Nick's on Broadway with his wife Kayde Wagner.
16. Hospitality Ambassador of the Year Representative Lauren Carson with Venturini and Sculos. Senator William Walaska (not pictured) was also named Hospitality Ambassador of the Year.
17. Michael Lester, On-Premise Manager, M.S. Walker; Al Zannella, Vice President Sales and Marketing, Rhode Island Distributing Co.; and Frank Martucci, General Manager of Beverage Operations, Twin River Casino.
18. Harrison Elkhay, Corporate Beverage Director, Chow Fun Food Group and Ian Magiros, On-Premise Key Account Specialist, M.S. Walker.

Photos 2 – 16 provided by Richard A. Kizirian Photography.
Photos 17 – 18 by Chris Almeida.



USBG RI HOSTS EDUCATIONAL SEMINAR

The United States Bartenders Guild Rhode Island (USBG RI) chapter presented an educational seminar on November 14, at Aurora in Providence. *The Rhode Island Beverage Journal* and Atlantic Importing Company sponsored the seminar, which featured an introduction to *The Beverage Journal's* market-specific, trade-only product site. Topics included using ordering and order management tools; accessing ratings, tasting and pairing notes; how to use search, price and order features; building portfolios; managing order history and more. Nathan Popinski, Sales Manager from Atlantic Importing & Distributing led an educational tasting of Wigle Landlocked Buckwheat Honey Whiskey, Perc Coffee Liqueur and Garrison Brothers Texas Straight Bourbon Whiskey.

1. The educational seminar showcased *The Beverage Journal's* trade-only product search and ordering site focused on finding products and tips for use.
2. Brian Slone, Subscriber and Account Services Manager, *The Beverage Journal* and Chris Almeida, USBG RI, presenting to USBG RI members.
3. The interactive session allowed USBG RI members to access *The Beverage Journal's* suite of online tools and ordering site from their smart phones, iPads and laptops.



SAGE CELLARS GROWS TEAM, RECOGNIZED FOR CHARITABLE EFFORTS

Sage Cellars hired Danielle Pailiotta as a sales associate, adding on to the company's growing team. Pailiotta is a Rhode Island native with a "passion for food, wine and the service industry." She will oversee on-and-off premise accounts and promote the Sage Cellars portfolio during events. Pailiotta, who brings beverage industry and bartending experience to her role, joined Sage Cellars in October. In November, Sage Cellars Co-owner Anne Sage was recognized by the Rhode Island Foundation as a "Partner in Philanthropy," for her 10-year commitment to various non-profit projects with the foundation. The foundation is a "proactive community and philanthropic leader" in offering grants and strategic support to a host of efforts throughout the state.



1. Danielle Pailiotta, Sales Associate, during an in-store tasting at The Savory Grape in November.
2. Carol Golden, Rhode Island Foundation; Anne Sage, Co-Owner, Sage Cellars; Daniel Kertzner, Rhode Island Foundation; Pam Hewitt, Rhode Island Foundation. Sage was recognized on November 18, National Philanthropy Day, during a breakfast ceremony at Twin River Casino hosted by the Association of Fundraising Professionals Rhode Island Chapter.



THE WINE BROS. HOST LUNCH EVENT, ADD NEW BRANDS

The Wine Bros. of Rumford, Rhode Island hosted a “Liquid Lunch” at The Salted Slate featuring wine selections from Burgundy, Loire, Languedoc, Rhone, Lambrusco and Oregon on November 14. The Salted Slate provided small bites, along with an authentic leg of Iberico ham to pair with the wine selections. The Wine Bros. also welcomed new products to their portfolio in December. Wines included Domaine Cabirau Cotes du Roussillon; Plan Pagau Lot #11, 12, 13; Puydeval Rouge; as well as Vignale di Cecilia Organic Prosecco; Domaine Fay D’Homme Muscadet; and Vincent Caille la Part du Colibri Gamay.

1. Steve Wynn, Owner, Wine Bros., pouring for Steve Patterson of Metacom Kitchen in Warren.
2. Ben Lloyd, Chef, The Salted Slate serving small bites to Chris Bender, Owner, Stoneacre Pantry in Newport.
3. Domaine Cabirau Cotes du Roussillon, a blend of Grenache, Syrah and Carignan.
4. Plan Pagau Lot #11, 12, 13. Made under Laurence Feraud, the wine is produced from estate-grown grapes planted just outside Chateauneuf-du-Pape.
5. Puydeval Rouge is a blend of Cabernet Franc, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon, made under Winemaker Jeff Carrel.
6. Vignale di Cecilia Organic Prosecco is produced in the Veneto region located on the Colli Euganei Hills near Venice.
7. Domaine Fay D’Homme Muscadet, fermented in stainless steel tanks, is from the Muscadet Sevre et Maine sur lie Appellation.
8. Vincent Caille la Part du Colibri Gamay of France is grown on Gabbro soil with 40-year-old vines and aged in stainless steel.



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USBG RI NAMES NEW LEADERSHIP

The United States Bartenders Guild Rhode Island (USBG RI) chapter announced its 2017-2018 leadership team: Jen Davis, Chapter President; Kayleigh Speck, Vice President; Elizabeth Sawtelle, Secretary and Ben Terry, Treasurer. The USBG RI chapter hosts an array of beverage industry events and educational sessions with beverage suppliers and trade professionals and participates in regional, national and international industry events to further the profession and the craft of bartending. Rhode Island bar and industry professionals interested in joining the local chapter can visit usbg.org to learn more.

1. Jen Davis, President, USBG RI.
2. Ben Terry, Treasurer, USBG RI.
3. Elizabeth Sawtelle, Secretary, USBG RI.
4. Kayleigh Speck, Vice President, USBG RI.



TWIN RIVER'S MARTUCCI ELECTED TO NATIONAL BARTENDERS GUILD POST

Frank Martucci, General Manager, Beverage Operations of Twin River Casino, was elected to serve as Treasurer of the United States Bartenders' Guild (USBG) as part of its 2017-2018 national board of directors which includes Pamela Wiznitzer, Kyle McHugh, Summer-Jane Bell and five regionally-elected vice-presidents. Martucci, who was a founding member of the Rhode Island chapter, has long been involved with the USBG regionally and nationally, including charitable efforts with the trade association. The USBG supports opportunities across its chapters in the U.S. to "enrich career advancement opportunities" for its members through peer-to-peer learning, expert instruction, service projects, and competitions. Visit usbg.org for more information.

READ NEWS, BE NEWS

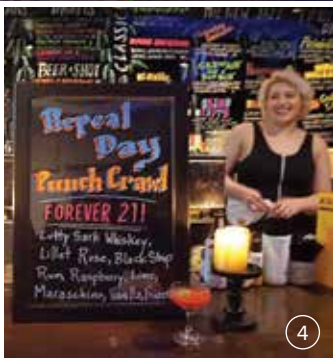
BEVcommunity is The Beverage Journal's online community for the local beverage industry. thebeveragejournal.com offers a connection to the local and national beverage industries (and the people who love you). BEVcommunity is where you are beverage industry news.



PROVIDENCE CELEBRATES REPEAL DAY WITH “PROHIBITION PUNCH-OFF”

The United States Bartenders Guild Rhode Island (USBG RI) chapter, along with Providence bars and restaurants, celebrated Repeal Day on December 5, 2016 with the Second Annual Prohibition Punch-Off. Bartenders from New Harvest Coffee & Spirits, Aurora Providence, The Slow Rhode, The Avery and Ogie’s Trailer Park created versions of a Prohibition-era punch featuring Cutty Shark and Lillet, for a chance to be named the “Repeal Day Champion.” At the end of the night, Aurora Providence was crowned the winner with their Prohibition Punch “Forever 21,” which featured Cutty Shark Whiskey, Lillet Rose, Black Strap Rum, raspberry, lime, maraschino and vanilla.

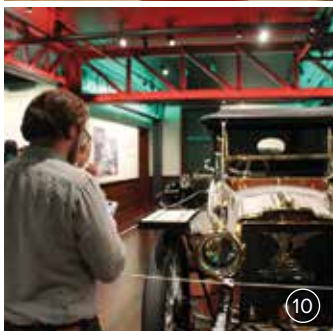
1. Jackie Connetti, Innovation and Market Manager, Edrington Americas at New Harvest Coffee and Spirits.
2. Frank Martucci, General Manager, Beverage Operations, Twin River Casino and newly-elected USBG National Treasurer with Jen Davis, Bartender, The Eddy and newly-elected USBG RI Chapter President.
3. Benjamin Terry, Bartender, New Harvest Coffee and Spirits next to his Prohibition Punch. Terry is the newly-appointed USBG RI Chapter Treasurer.
4. Audrey King, Bartender, Aurora Providence with the winning punch cocktail “Forever 21.”
5. Ann Boschini and Audrey King of Aurora Providence were named the winners of Prohibition Punch-Off.
6. Ann Boschini, Bar Manager, Aurora Providence with Erika Shubert, Sales Representative, Rhode Island Distributing Co.
7. Cocktail display at Ogie’s Trailer Park.
8. Caleigh McGrath, Bartender, Ogie’s Trailer Park.
9. A cocktail created at The Slow Rhode.
10. A cocktail created at The Avery.



VICKERS' LIQUORS HOSTS BOURBON TASTING AT AUDRAIN AUTO MUSEUM

Pre-War and Brass Era styles of automobiles and motorcycles set the backdrop for "Bourbon and Brass," a unique evening tasting presented by Newport's Vickers' Liquors. A variety of Scotch, bourbon and whiskey brands were showcased at the Newport Audrain Auto Museum on December 8. The Brass-Era symbolizes an early period of automotive manufacturing where brass fittings were used for trim, horns, lights and radiators and is considered to encompass 1896-1915. Guests were invited to sip through spirit portfolios and learn about the brands, sample from light fare and admire the vintage automobiles.

1. Newport's Vickers' Liquors hosted the bourbon tasting at Newport's Audrain Auto Museum.
2. Brass-Era automobiles and motorcycles amidst spirit displays welcomed guests.
3. Bourbon whiskies on display.
4. Rob Vickers, Co-Owner, Vickers' Liquors; Elizabeth Moniz, Employee, Vickers' Liquors; Mike Paradis, Store Manager, Vickers' Liquors showcasing their Sons of Liberty Single Barrel Bourbon made for Vickers' Liquors.
5. Laura Kanzler, Business Development Manager, Horizon Beverage Co., Origin Beverage Division, featuring The Glenrothes, High West, Widow Jane and Koval brands.
6. Kayleigh Speck, Innovation Brand Activator, Edrington Americas; Jackie Connetti, Innovation and Market Manager RI, Edrington Americas featuring Macallan products.
7. Will Calhoun of Johnson Bros. of RI Co., featuring Michter's, Dalmore and Glen Moray whiskies and bourbon.
8. Sons of Liberty Spirit Company produced a Single Barrel Bourbon specifically for Vickers' Liquors. Guests had the opportunity to taste the unique bottle.
9. Macallan poster beside a Pre-war/Brass-Era car on display during Bourbon & Brass event.
10. Guests browsed the displays while enjoying featured spirits.



Low-alcohol Gains, Sparklers Shine and Craft Liqueurs Take Flight

Local Experts Weigh-In on 2017 Trends

BY LAUREN DALEY



It's time to look ahead to what's coming up for the beverage industry in 2017. The past few years have seen waves of growth in craft brews, rosé wines, classic cocktails and the farm-to-bottle movement. We asked a handful of local industry professionals to look into their crystal balls and forecast what trends will emerge, pick up, or slow down in Rhode Island. Here are their expectations.

Certified Sommelier and Wine Director at The Coast Guard House in Narragansett, Elisa Wybraniec expects '17 to be a year of sparklers. "Sparkling wine sales in the U.S. have been growing for the past three years, with Prosecco leading the charge. Globally, sparkling wine sales are expected to grow at seven percent plus between now and 2019," said Wybraniec. "The growth in sparkling wine seems to have evoked a spirited herd of new selections to the U.S. market. One would have been hard pressed to find a Franciacorta, Cremant, Tasmania Rosé, German Sekt or British bubbly in restaurants five years ago ... When it comes to style, the door is wide open: red, white and rosé; from fruity Prosecco, fresh, clean Cremant, elegant Blanc de Blancs, toasty Champagne, charcuterie's friend Lambrusco, sweet style Moscato and domestic options that range from sweet stone fruit notes to toasted brioche, ensuring there is a bubble for everyone," said Wybraniec.

Edward Korry, Department Chairman of Dining and Beverage Services at the Center for Culinary Excellence at Johnson & Wales University's College of Culinary Arts, also thinks the local and sustainable trend will continue. Rhode Island "wineries are gaining traction, making better wines and have been joined by more producers doing interesting garage, small-production types of wine, beer and spirits – and more are on the way," Korry said. He also predicts a "greater interest in the 'natural wine' movement," that the rosé craze will continue, and that 2017 will bring "more amaros, bitters and digestivos being served both on their own and [in] cocktails."

Katrina M. Herold, Associate Professor at the College of Culinary Arts at Johnson & Wales University, expects the low-alcohol wine and beer trend to continue. "I read an interesting article recently about how Millennials are consuming less [high ABV beverages] as they experience their social interactions less in nightclub settings and more in restaurants ... I think we are going to see more use of fortified wines and beer as a base in cocktails."

Frank Martucci, General Manager of Beverage Operations at Twin River Casino, President of the United States Bartenders Guild (USBG) Charity Foundation and USBG 2017 National Treasurer, also predicts low-alcohol trends will continue to grow; amaros and sherry

will continue to rise in profile; and Spain's gin explosion will be reflected here at home. He also believes the industry will see a "trend toward personal health and well-being amongst beverage peers. In hospitality, we work in environments that are physically, mentally and emotionally demanding. I believe we will continue to see an increased awareness of [beverage] peers and beverage companies looking to create programs" to support that.

Jen Davis, 2017 USBG Rhode Island Chapter President and Bartender at The Eddy in Providence, expects the locavore trend to continue. "Local beverages are definitely on the forefront ... We have always had a presence of local beer with ... Revival, Trinity and Newport Storm. However, this past year we have seen an explosion of brand new breweries popping up all over the state. The juice these guys are producing is incredible." Local spirits and liqueurs will also continue to grow, she predicts. "We have great distillers and importers bringing new and exciting [spirits.]"

Jonathan Feiler, Director of Food & Beverage at Ocean House in Watch Hill, said both he and Wine Director PJ Alexander predict Cabernet Francs will be big in '17. "Many of our guests are learning that Cabernet Franc is a very

LOCAL TRENDS

CONTINUED ON **PAGE 26**

P

new
products

1. THE MACALLAN EDITION NO. 2

Edrington has launched The Macallan Edition No. 2, the second offering in an annual single malt limited series. Made with seven cask types sourced in Spain, The Macallan Edition No. 2 marks a collaboration between The Macallan Master Whisky Maker Bob Dalgarno and brothers Joan, Josep and Jordi Roca, co-founders of Catalonia-based El Celler de Can Roca, twice named best restaurant in the world.

\$ SRP: \$90
themacallan.com

4. GEMMA DI LUNA MOSCATO

Enovation Brands has added Gemma di Luna Moscato to its product line-up. Made from premium Moscato grapes grown in Italy's Piemonte region, it boasts a fuller effervescence than the gentle frizzante style typical of Moscato for a fully sparkling or "spumante" quality. The persistent perlage carries luscious fresh fruit flavors of nectarine, peach and apple balanced by vibrant acidity. And at 7.5% ABV, Gemma di Luna also taps into growing consumer interest in lower alcohol.

\$ SRP: \$16.99
enovationbrands.com

2. ANIMUS 2015 VINHO VERDE

Vinho Verde (which translates as "green wine") is Portugal's best-kept secret; fizzy and fresh, it is the most popular white wine from Portugal. "Verde" meaning "green" refers to the fact that these are young wines meant for drinking early. Light, crisp and delicious, Animus is a welcome surprise for white wine lovers. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

\$ SRP: \$14
bruncowine.com

5. JAMESON BLACK BARREL

Bold new look, same bold taste. Jameson Black Barrel Irish Whiskey has a newly redesigned bottle. Matured in a combination of American oak, Sherry casks and double-charred bourbon barrels, Jameson Black Barrel is a blend of "small batch" grain and traditional Irish pot still whiskeys. Rich flavors of fruit, toasted wood, warm spice and vanilla are framed by the smoky character imparted by the double-charred barrels.

\$ SRP: \$36.99
jamesonwhiskey.com

3. REVEL STROKE ROOT BEER FLAVORED WHISKY

Phillips Distilling has launched Revel Stoke Root Beer Flavored Whisky. Based on a blend of 3-year and 8-year Canadian whiskies, Revel Stoke aims to attract fans of surging hard sodas and traditional whisky cocktails. Phillips is no stranger to root beer, having introduced the first root beer schnapps in 1984. Revel Stoke joins a portfolio of six offerings. Smooth enough to sip neat; served chilled.

\$ SRP: \$13.99/750ml | \$15.99/1L
phillipsdistilling.com

6. THE DROP RED WINE

Now in 13 states, The Drop—which began with a canned rosé—is adding a red wine. Like the rosé, The Drop red is "crafted in California" and sold in four-packs of 250ml aluminum cans. Designed to be both easy and irreverent, The Drop cans feature the slogan "Quality grapeage. No breakage." as well as a stylized bear breaking a corkscrew. And of course a big selling point is its portability.

\$ SRP: \$14.99/four-pack
thedropwine.com



7. PATRÓN SILVER LIMITED EDITION TEQUILA

The 2016 year-end limited edition of Patrón Silver Tequila is carrying over to early 2017. This, the second annual special release, features a black and silver pewter label, intricately adorned with geometric lines and the iconic Patrón bee. The cork closure mirrors the black and silver aesthetic of the label, and the entire bottle is packaged in an attractive and easy-to-carry gift bag.

\$ SRP: \$59.99/1L
patrontequila.com

10. OWL'S BREW RADLERS

Owl's Brew, maker of tea-based cocktail mixers, is launching a line of Radlers. Similar to a Shandy, traditionally a Radler is a 50-50 mix of beer and citrus; Owl's Brew Radlers feature 60% beer, 40% tea, in four flavors: The Blondie (wheat beer, English breakfast tea, lemon); That's My Jam (with strawberry and pomegranate); Wicked Watermelon; and Short and Stout. Alcohol is 3.8%, except Short and Stout is 5%.

\$ SRP: \$12.99/6-pack
theowlsbrew.com

8. GLORIA 2014 RESERVA DOURO RED BLEND

Gloria by Vincent Faria is a dream come true for blend fans. A perfect combination of three Portuguese grape varieties (40% Tinta Roriz, 30% Touriga Franca, 30% Touriga Nacional), this wine offers rich fruit met by round tannins—enough to give the wine a strong presence but still make for easy-drinking. Wine Enthusiast 91Pts / Editor's Choice. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

\$ SRP: \$18
broncowine.com

11. TWO NEW SEAGRAM'S FLAVORED VODKAS

Seagram's is launching two portfolio additions: the first-ever Golden Apricot Vodka as well as Seagram's Ruby Red Grapefruit Flavored Vodka. Seagram's Vodka is five-times distilled. Made with all natural flavors, Seagram's Golden Apricot boasts a fresh apricot taste with a smooth finish. Seagram's Ruby Red Grapefruit strikes a balance of sweet and tart with a clean finish. Both innovations are highly mixable.

\$ SRP: \$11.99
seagramsvodka.com

9. TEMPLETON RYE 10 YEAR SPECIAL RESERVE

Templeton Rye, born during Prohibition, was reportedly favored by mobster Al Capone. Updating that tradition, Templeton Rye was revived in 2006, using a mash of 95% rye from MGP; in Templeton, Iowa, it is combined with local water via a proprietary formula. Celebrating 10 years of *legally* selling whiskey, Templeton 10 Year is made from 34 barrels, sold in a commemorative box; only 6,080 hand-numbered bottles available!

\$ SRP: \$149.99
templetonrye.com

12. THE SINGLETON SINGLE MALT WHISKY

Diageo is bringing The Singleton of Glendullan to the U.S. The portfolio includes a 12-, 15- and 18-Year-Old single malt whiskies. Aged primarily in Bourbon casks offering a rich, smooth character, the malts draw pure water from the high, wooded hills of Speyside. Besides being approachable, the brand is quite affordable among its single malt peers; packaged in a sleek canisters inspired by 19th century hip flasks. Currently in CA, FL, NY, CO, TX, PA, WA, NJ.

\$ SRP: 12YO \$34.99 | 15YO \$49.99 | 18YO \$79.99
thebar.com | malts.com

Standard Liquors

BY SAVANNAH MUL

The phrase “it runs in the family” comes to mind when describing the legacy behind Providence’s Standard Liquors. The store, which is currently in its third generation of family ownership, is now bringing in the fourth generation of family members.

Owner Jim Iezzi’s grandfather, Pasquale Rainone, opened the store shortly after prohibition in 1937, Iezzi said, because he saw the industry as a “profitable and good business to be in.” It was then passed down to Iezzi’s father, Donald, who took over during the 1960s, and now to Iezzi, who manages the store today. With help from his siblings, nephews and sons, the store operates on strong family values, he said.

Iezzi said this legacy also resonates into the community. “We have generations shop here, people love this area and if they move away and come back for visit, they always come to the store to say hello. It’s like we all grew up together,” he said. The original store sign, featuring a vintage Narragansett Lager Beer logo,



Christian Iezzi beside Terri Audet and Jim Iezzi.



hangs above the cooler doors in the store today.

“We’ve gone through a lot of transformation,” Iezzi said. His nostalgia takes him back to when the store was located on the first floor of a tenant house across the street from where it is today. In 1989, the Iezzi family moved the store to 829 Eddy Street and built upon the lot to expand the store.

With the transformation came a new store design. “We wanted to have the wide aisles and easy-to-see displays.” The low shelves give customers a full view of the store so they can find products easily, he said. Beer brings in the majority of the store’s sales, followed by spirits and wines.

Iezzi reads beverage publications, industry trade magazines and asks for customer feedback and recommendations to properly stock and manage the 4,000 SKUs offered in store. Specifically, he’s

seen red blends, craft beers, bourbons, cognac and Scotch as popular sellers over the previous year. He said the store has increased its keg selection too, catering to the college community, as well special orders placed per customer requests.

Standard Liquors hosts in-store tastings on the weekends to promote brands and new products. Iezzi finds store tastings help with sales due to the consumer purchasing multiple bottles of the featured wine, beer or spirit.

A larger transformation within the community is the loss of manufacturing in the area. Iezzi was concerned he would lose business from the customer base those businesses supplied. With friendly customer service and adapting to the changing demographics in the town however, Iezzi said Standard Liquors has “evolved to be the best [we] can be ... Customer service is important; that’s why this is a great place.” ■

LOCATION

829 EDDY STREET
PROVIDENCE, RI

FACTS

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 6,000
YEARS IN OPERATION: 80

FEATURE
YOUR STORE



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

Voters Green Light Tiverton Casino Plans

Promise of jobs, industry opportunity in long view

BY LAUREN DALEY

Voters have granted Twin River Management Group permission to build a casino in Tiverton, near the Massachusetts border. The measure passed at both the town and state levels. State law required the measure to pass both.

The passage allows Twin River to commence with its plans to build a \$75 million casino complex on 45 acres right off a major highway, Rt. 24, by the Massachusetts border. The ballot measure allows for the transfer of the Newport Grand license to a location in Tiverton. “But not wanting to be presumptuous, there is still much planning that needs to occur,” Twin River spokeswoman Patti Doyle stated in an email

to *The Beverage Journal*.

“In general, we project that the new casino will employ 550 to 600 full- and part-time workers, ranging from dealers, waiters and waitresses, restaurant workers, cage personnel and security. It’s a bit too soon for us to detail exact number of employees in each department,” Doyle stated.

“The beauty of the license transfer is the enhanced revenue to the state of Rhode Island. For example, Newport Grand currently contributes \$27 million to the State. In our first full year of operations, Twin River-Tiverton will generate a minimum of \$50 million if nearby Massachusetts competition comes on line,

and \$70 million if that nearby competition does not,” Doyle continued. “Importantly, the community of Tiverton will receive annually \$4 million from Twin River, a combination of gaming revenue share and payment in taxes, licenses and fees.”

Doyle said it’s “too early for us to project what the sit-down and take-out restaurants will be, but we know there will be a combination of both, along with a central lounge/bar area that can host live entertainment, similar to what occurs at the Lighthouse Bar at Twin River in Lincoln.” The new casino is anticipated to open July of 2018.

Dale Venturini, President/CEO of RI Hospitality Association, stated: “Twin River-Tiverton will add significant jobs to the hospitality industry. Jobs that will stay in Rhode Island and revenue that will stay in Rhode Island. The owners of Twin River have been great partners to our industry and continue to communicate with us, as well as the town of Tiverton, on all aspects of the new casino.” ■



CRAFT BEER: ATTITUDES AND CONSUMPTION

BY JACK KENNY



About 85% of craft brew aficionados consume their beer mainly at home. The most common method of learning about craft beers and breweries is from friends and family members. About half of craft beer consumers have consumed all three main types of beer – domestic commercial, imported and craft – in the past two weeks. These are among the findings in a newly published report by GutCheck, a Denver-based market research company.

GutCheck specializes in new product introductions, advertising and marketing, and consumer research. The study of craft beer consumption, published November 2016, surveyed 300 consumers in the USA. Respondents, 32% of whom were female, were 21 years of age or older, the majority of whom ranged from 30 to 39, with a strong showing (19%) in the 55-64 bracket. The sampling covered all regions of the lower 48 states.

The purpose of the research was to understand how craft beer drinkers think about and consume craft beer. A stated goal was that larger beverage companies might “leverage the insights toward attracting the craft beer consumer segment.” As we know well, that’s something that the large beverage companies, particularly brewers, have been attempting to do through an increasing number of acquisitions over the past several years.

Here are some of the key findings of the GutCheck study (some of the top findings might appear to be obvious, but in context with all options surveyed they become clear):

- » No single craft beer brand dominates the market. Instead, highest awareness and purchase scores are for brands that are available nationwide. Here are the top 10 brands with their awareness scores: Blue Moon (Coors), 81%; Sam Adams, 63%; Yuengling, 59%; Sierra Nevada, 57%; Goose Island (AB-InBev), 52%; Dogfish Head, 48%; New Belgium, 48%; Lagunitas, 39%; Stone, 29%; Ballast Point, 27%.
- » Grocery stores and package stores are the main source of craft beer purchases for about two-thirds of respondents. In third place were restaurants and bars, followed in order by breweries (a strong showing there), mass merchandisers, convenience stores, and club and warehouse stores.
- » Nearly 80% of consumers ranked taste and flavor in their top three decision factors for purchase of craft beers. Again, another obvious choice, but one that major beverage companies might want to weigh more heavily against the other survey choices, which all ranked below 40% in the following descending order:

brewery/brand, cost, mood, style, season/weather, alcohol content, occasion, recommendation, promotion/sale, rating, and packaging appearance.

- » 83% of respondents named family and friends among the top three ways they learn about craft brands and brewers. The next two, at 64% and 58% respectively, were menus in restaurants/bars and seeing new beers on store shelves. The rest of the group included advertisements, brewery tours, recommendations from package store employees (at 39%, not a bad showing), brewery websites, and online forums and articles.
- » Craft beer attitudes (% = agreement with statement):
 - » Craft beers are more distinctive than domestic or imported commercial beers: 89%
 - » A wider variety of flavors are available from craft brewers: 86%
 - » I support local businesses when I buy craft beer: 82%
 - » Craft beer tastes better than commercial beer: 81%
 - » I will travel or wait in line to buy exclusive craft beer brands: 53%
 - » I drink craft beer because it is higher in alcohol: 43%
 - » Craft beer brands that get acquired by large/corporate beer brands are sell-outs: 38%
 - » Craft beer has more health benefits than domestic and imported beer: 32%

GutCheck classified its respondents in two groups: light beer drinkers and heavy beer drinkers. The light beer drinkers (69%) consume 10 or fewer 12-ounce servings of beer over two weeks. The rest are considered heavy drinkers, who indicated that higher alcohol content is a main reason for buying craft beer.

Craft beer devotees sample more than three styles of beer during an average two week period. These include, in order of preference, lager, pale ale, wheat, Belgian, IPA, pilsner, brown ale, stout, red ale, cream ale, sour, porter, and kolsch.

Worth noting in the study is that only 17% of respondents drank craft beer exclusively during the two weeks prior to taking the survey. 10% drank craft and imports, 27% consumed craft and domestic commercial beer, and 47% divided their consumption among all three types.

A summary of the GutCheck study, titled “Craft Beer Agile Attitudes and Usage,” is available for download at www.gutcheckit.com/resources/craft-beer-agile-attitudes-usage-study/

Resolutions

BY LEN PANAGGIO

2017 has arrived. Most of us take a thorough inventory this time of year, in order to create the final P&L to turn in to Uncle Sam. And, since most of us work on a calendar year for our fiscal year, the timing is right. It is bittersweet; we want to make as much as we can, but we don't want to pay taxes (legally, of course).

We all work on thin margins, so as you take stock of what you have, what do you see? Are there products from your spirits program sitting on your shelves that haven't moved for years? My guess is that there is that product that was sold to you with so much promise years ago. It was on fire! Sadly, the fire burned out rather quickly, or it just didn't work for your customers for whatever reason.

Everyone wants to hold on to those items so the p.c. looks good, especially those who have been charged with the responsibility for beverage costs, but it's better to figure out a way to get rid of those dead, useless products. It won't hurt cash flow, but may reduce your profit somewhat, which will save on taxes. Before you unload it, though, ask your chef if he or she can cook with it, and ask your bar manager to get creative and move this dead stock. It's taking up valuable space behind your bar, not allowing you to look at newer, trendier products.

Do you have some craft beers that haven't moved in a while, either? Remember, they are a perishable product and over a long time will skunk out. Many have born on or best by dates, so the guest may turn them back in after reading (but really, you should check them before they even go out to your guests). I have done it many times, much to the chagrin of the bartenders. Again, ask culinary if there is anything that can be done to salvage the inventory.

Then there is wine, another perishable product, again listing a born on date: the vintage. Do you have a mainstream Sauvignon Blanc that is five years old? Probably no good for anything. Toss it, but first, ask your wholesaler if they will swap for fresher product, you'd be surprised.

My point is: at this critical juncture, at the end of one fiscal year and the beginning of the next, assess where you are.

You do have time to make the adjustments to the inventory, so my advice is to do so. At the same time, assess your equipment. It may be working, but not efficiently and that costs you money. Look at all aspects of your bar program, this is a perfect time to do so and the financial benefits may be real. And don't just focus on the bar, culinary has the same issues. What's in the freezer? How long has it been there?

Create some resolutions to try and avoid in the future what has happened in the past. I am a big believer in sitting down with staff and getting their feedback and buy-in. It helps in the long run. It will make your place run smoother and be more profitable.

As I write this, there is a lot of optimism in the air that the economy will grow in ways we haven't seen in years. The smart operators will be prepared for this and our guests will be watching us. Take stock of where you are and position yourself to win. We are in a very dynamic, fluid business, our guests are looking for the smart operators don't rest on their laurels. Be one of them.

I hope you all had a great 2016 and that 2017 will be even better. Happy New Year!



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www.oakhilltavern.com



ABOUT LEN PANAGGIO

BEVERAGE CONSULTANT

Len Panaggio's career in food and wine spans more than three decades as an owner and as a beverage director at some of the top restaurants in Rhode Island. Currently a hospitality consultant, Len is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island and has attended the Culinary Institute of America Master Sommelier program and the Sterling School of Service and Hospitality.

FLIP SIDE PINBALL BAR

1 RAILROAD AVENUE
WESTERLY, RI

From 1970s vintage pinball to more modern machines, Flip Side Pinball Bar offers guests a chance to enjoy a unique evening out. Located across from the train station in downtown Westerly, the new venue features an extensive selection of local, national and imported canned and tap brews, a custom wine list and, of course, creative, custom cocktails to accompany the classic games.



^
Bartender Farley.

BARTENDER

Farley

COCKTAIL

The Mup

RECIPE

Build in glass:

- » 1.5 oz. Basil Hayden Bourbon
- » .5 oz. Drambuie
- » 1 oz. Caffo Liqueur Solara Triple Grand Orange
- » Dash of bitters

Served on ice with cherries.

“Our drink is called The Mup,” said Co-owner Dana Carvey, “and Mup was a misread for ‘MVP’ and this is the MVP of our cocktail list. Caffo Solara Orange is rich[er] and has more of a vanilla flavor ... we wanted to find a way to present this spirit to our customers without them sipping it as a stand-alone.”

LOCAL TRENDS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

versatile grape,” Feiler said. “With local producers such as Jonathan Edwards and California producers such as Viader making great, yet different, examples of the grape, one can find a wine to go with a variety of foods. Many of our guests are asking for the grape by name and searching them out when they are in retail shops and other restaurants.”

Feiler and Alexander predict a rise in tequila and Scotch, too. “Over the summer and into the fall, we’ve noticed many of our guests substituting tequila for vodka and rum in many of their favorite drinks,” said Feiler. “They’re looking for great quality tequilas to enjoy with soda, bitter lemon soda, grapefruit juice and on its own over ice.”

As for Scotch, “Many of our bourbon drinkers have switched to Scotch,” he notes. “This trend will go forward into 2017. Many of our guests are finding that Scotch is more complex [and] can give them a new experience each time. We have many of our corporate groups asking us for Scotch seminars for their guests, and ... those guests are buying more Scotch than any other spirit for personal consumption at home.”

Jonathan Pogash, “The Cocktail Guru” and Regional Vice President of the USBG, “Cocktails that are quicker and easier to execute at busy bars and restaurants will continue to surge. The idea is that customers are not interested in waiting too long for good quality cocktails. Minimizing ingredients is key, as well as setting up your bar stations for maximum efficiency. I see more and more bartenders actually designing bars, because there is nothing better than a bar designed by someone who has actually worked behind bars. Barrel-aged cocktails and cocktails on tap are an emerging trend.”

Pogash also says more natural [cocktails]

coming onto the market nowadays. It’s all about efficiency for home cocktail-making, while still utilizing mixers that don’t include artificial sweeteners, colors, or other unnatural ingredients.”

“In 2017, spirits will see an even more intense focus on barrel-aging,” predicts Renée B. Allen, Founder and Director of the Wine Institute of New England. “Special bottlings of traditionally aged spirits, such as whisky, will be cocooned in every type of cooperage out there, from cognac to cabernet barrels. Using traditional barrels and then a second style of barrel for ‘finishing’ will become more common,” she said.

“Secondly, spirits that are not typically aged — such as vodka and gin — may find themselves spending time in oak for flavor, color or just the novelty of it,” Allen said. She also predicts an increased interest in liqueurs, especially amaro, and that the “craft liqueur movement will expand to include ever more creative components, including locally foraged botanicals. Infusions will also get more creative — if you can stick it in a jar, you can use it to infuse.” Lastly, she expects a trend of Eastern-themed cocktails made with tea bases and Asian spirits, such as shōchū and baijiu.

As for wines? “We’ll see more single varietal wines, highlighting grapes we’ve never heard of, from some of the hundreds of indigenous grapes in Old World countries,” Allen said. She also predicts that the trend of “healthy,” low-calorie, low-alcohol wine will continue — and possibly that colored wines, like blue, will hit the shelves, “followed by the entire rainbow of possibilities,” she said. “Sparkling wines will continue to gain ground ... look for England to become a more significant performer when it comes to bubble ballet.” ■

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COOL CLIMATE SOUTH AFRICA

**CAPE SOUTH COAST, AN EMERGING COLLECTION
OF MARITIME REGIONS, REPRESENTS THE
COUNTRY'S NEW WINEMAKING FRONTIER**

BY KRISTEN BIELER



LEFT: Paul Cluver Estate in Elgin Valley.
ABOVE: Lismore Estate in Greyton.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Snowcapped mountains behind Gabriëlskloof estate in Bot River, where Peter-Allan Finlayson now serves as winemaker.

As wine regions go, South Africa intuitively seems like a warm one. Indeed, many of the country's established regions—like Stellenbosch or Franschhoek—are sunbaked and Mediterranean. Even the more recently celebrated Swartland region features warm daytime temperatures and little rainfall, ideal for sun-loving grapes like Cabernet, Grenache and Cinsault.

But in September, as I stood in a windswept vineyard in Hemel-en-Aarde watching whales crest in the frigid Walker Bay, or drove up a mountain pass shrouded in thick, chilly fog to get to the isolated Elgin Valley, I was struck by just how cool-climate some of South Africa's wine regions in fact are. "Americans have a perception of the continent of Africa as quite hot; they assume South Africa's

wine country must be as well," says Sam Timberg of Meridian Prime, one of a handful of boutique U.S. importers that have sprung up in recent years specializing in South African wine. "But the country has tremendous diversity in climate and the cool climate zones are making some of the most exciting wines right now."

Not unlike the recent ascension of cooler regions around the globe (Tasmania and Victoria in Australia, Leyda in Chile) championed by high-acid-wine-loving sommeliers, South Africa's cool-climate zones have become hotbeds of innovation. While there's cause for excitement across the entire Western Cape (including historic Stellenbosch, still responsible for one third of the country's wine), the cool climate regions are generating an outsized proportion of buzz.

'Cape South Coast' is Born

One might question why some of the most premier grape-growing sites are just now being explored in a country that has been producing wine for 357 years? "Until 1992, the KWV wine cooperative had regulatory powers and limited planting in cool-climate zones in favor of warmer areas that were easier to farm and that produced higher yields," explains Jim Clarke, Marketing Manager for Wines of South Africa.

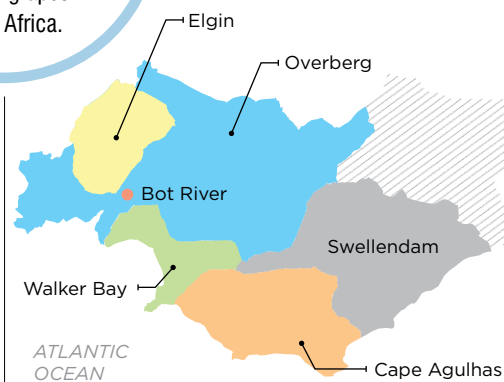
They're on the map today, known collectively as Cape South Coast. Officially defined in 2010 from a group of previously stand-alone districts located southeast of Stellenbosch, Cape South Coast is characterized by cooler temperatures and proximity to the Atlantic. "The most significant

role of Cape South Coast was to help indicate that the regions of Elgin, Bot River, Walker Bay and Elim are all influenced by the ocean," explains Paul Cluver, whose family pioneered Elgin Valley decades ago. "The biggest advantage is allowing producers to blend grapes from various sub-regions and not have to list the origin as Western Cape."

Cape South Coast producers—about 60—have more than climate in common: They are overwhelmingly small, independent and quality-focused. They are a diverse bunch, but almost uniformly they are aiming for balanced wines that emphasize freshness over fruit, oak or alcohol. There are advantages to being a new region in an old wine producing country—particularly one with a rocky past. Cape South Coast has no bulk-production cooperative culture to overthrow, and no vines carelessly planted in the wrong places that need ripping out. It also doesn't have the shameful social justice issues which still haunt South Africa's more historic regions. "It can be hard for

Cape South Coast features the highest concentration of premium wineries and the highest overall prices for grapes in South Africa.

CAPE SOUTH COAST South Africa





Koen Roose of Spioenkop in his Elgin vineyards.

established regions to change the game,” says Pascal Schildt, who founded Pascal Schildt Selections in 2011 to import South African wines. “They grow lots of grapes, traditions are in place and large estates dominate.” In other words, as South Africa’s wine industry continues to be reimagined in a post-Apartheid landscape, it could be the newer, less-explored regions that are best positioned to lead the way.

Elgin: From Apples to Wine

“In my opinion, Elgin is the most exciting region for Chardonnay,” says Schildt, who represents Paul Cluver, the region’s original winery. Topographically, Elgin (in the Overberg region) is shaped like a crater, an elevated basin isolated by mountains. It’s only an hour’s drive from Stellenbosch yet couldn’t be more different: ocean proximity and a unique cloud pattern means it is frequently covered in thick fog, and it gets twice as much rain. Apples and pears have reigned here for over a century, but a growing number of farmers are planting vines.

“It’s windy and cool in Elgin, even in the summer, which means we have a late ripening season and our grapes retain lots of acidity,” says fourth-generation Paul Cluver. His family has farmed orchards in Elgin since 1896 and his father, Paul Sr., was the first to grow grapes in the 1980s. “Even a decade ago there were only a handful of wineries; today there are over 20,” he adds. “We are still such a young area—the average vine is only ten years old—and have so much to learn about

our terroir, but we know that cool climate varietals, namely Chardonnay, Pinot Noir, Sauvignon Blanc and Riesling, thrive here.”

British-born Richard Kershaw—South Africa’s only Master of Wine—made wine all over the world before choosing Elgin to start his own project in 2012 focusing on clonally selected, site-specific wines. “A lot of regions describe themselves as cool climate, but it’s a relative term at best,” says Kershaw. “Elgin is without a doubt the coolest region in South Africa and comparable to Southern Burgundy and the Northern Rhône, which explains why Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Syrah do so well here.”

Making the most of Elgin’s long growing season and shale soils, Kershaw works with low-yielding Burgundian clones and employs artisan practices—hand-picking, indigenous yeasts, whole bunch pressing, a gravity-fed winery—to craft his refined, mineral-driven wines.

“Richard’s wines at \$50 a bottle compete with far more expensive wines made elsewhere,” says Timberg, who imports Kershaw. “Richard’s MW accreditation gives him great

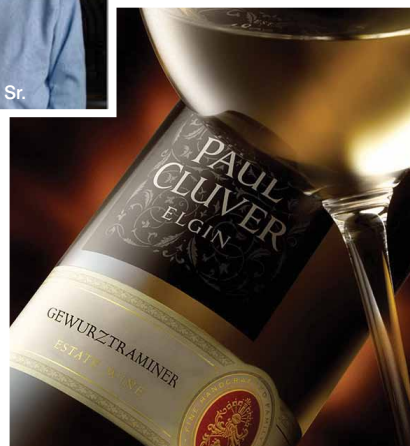
credibility and is often our foot in the door, but it’s ultimately the wines that get people talking.”

Others in the valley are finding a similar boutique, minimal-intervention winemaking philosophy coaxes the best from Elgin terroir. Spioenkop (first vintage 2010) was founded by a Belgian couple, Koen and Lore Roose. “Terroir is important to us; we believe in ‘appellation’ or ‘wine of origin’ in its purest form,” says Koen Roose, who rejects industrial yeasts and practices biodynamics in the vineyard, to stunning effect in his Sauvignon Blancs, Chenins and Rieslings. Iona, created in the late ’90s by Andrew Gunn is another biodynamic producer that has quickly built a reputation for outstanding white wines.

Well-known producers from elsewhere—including the historic Franschhoek-based Boschendal and Thelema in Stellenbosch—have both launched an “Elgin Series” within their portfolios, proving that Elgin has built brand equity. “Elgin is becoming known as a region to watch and grape prices are increasing,” says Cluver. “I really believe Elgin will rise as one of the truly unique and super-premium wine growing regions of the world.”



Paul Cluver Sr.



Names to look for:

Iona, Paul Cluver, Kershaw, Shannon, Spioenkop

Hemel-en-Aarde: Pinot’s Promised Land

Walker Bay’s most famous subregion, Hemel-en-Aarde, translates as “Heaven and Earth” and it more than lives up to the name. Lack of a paved road into the high-lying, mountain-ringed valley kept



TOP: Creation winery in Hemel-en-Aarde
RIGHT: Hannes Storm of Storm Wines



it undeveloped for decades, but today it's no longer a secret that the maritime climate combined with shale and clay soils makes it prime Pinot Noir territory.

Timothy Hamilton Russell made the bold and prescient move to plant Burgundian varieties here in 1975. His eponymous winery, run today by son Anthony, still makes some of the region's finest examples. "Tim was stubborn—he insisted on planting vines where they were not meant to be planted," says Peter Finlayson, who was the winemaker at Hamilton Russell from 1979 to 1990. He started the Bouchard Finlayson label in 1989, and today his son, Peter Allen Finlayson, has garnered international acclaim for his boutique Pinot label, Crystallum.

"Developments in Hemel-en-Aarde over the last decade have been extraordinary," explains Hannes Storm, who made wine at Hamilton Russell before launching Storm in 2012. "When I started in 2000, we were only three producers. Today there are 35." Storm has made wine around the world and his brother makes Pinot in Santa Barbara under the same label. What makes Walker Bay Pinot so unique is "the higher clay content in our soils," he says. "Hemel-en-Aarde wines have less alcohol concentration, roundness and sweetness than many California examples, but more texture and structure."

The last decade has seen an influx of newcomers, including Kevin Grant's acclaimed Ataraxia winery, and Jean-Claude and Carolyn Martin's Creation Estate. Stellenbosch-based Bruwer Raats of Raats Family Wines teamed up with his cousin, Gavin Bruwer to launch B

Vintners. "The purity of fruit one finds in Walker Bay Pinot Noir is balanced with a distinct savory, saline element which is the signature of this area," says Gavin Bruwer. "The energy that currently grabs our whole industry, gives South Africa much of a New World feel, but resulting wines are often more Old World in character—restrained, food friendly—which is what this terroir gives us."

Chris and Suzaan Alheit of the much-celebrated Alheit Vineyards are illustrating the region's potential with white grapes: Their signature Hemelrand Vine Garden bottling is a field blend Roussanne, Chardonnay, Chenin, Verdelho, Viognier and Muscat. Chris believes the potential in Hemel-en-Aarde, as well as the Overberg where the Alheits also source grapes "is still mostly unrealized." In his mind, a critical point of difference: "The majority of the wineries here are artisan producers here are trying their best to make top stuff; what makes us unique is a virtual absence of huge commodity producers." Storm agrees this is a defining aspect of the region's winemaking culture: "We are a small region that has only ever produced premium, site-specific wine; and we all share a passionate drive to better understand our terroir."

▲ Names to look for:

Hamilton Russell, Newton Johnson, Storm Wines, Ataraxia, Crystallum, Bouchard Finlayson, Alheit, B Vintners

Bot River & Greyton: The Rhône of South Africa

Just west of Hemel-en-Aarde lies the Bot River, home to a mere 10 small, family-run wineries. A wine-producing region



ABOVE: Gavin Bruwer and Bruwer Raats of B Vintners



RIGHT: Peter Allan Finlayson of Crystallum & winemaker at Gabriëlskloof





since the 1940s (for decades mostly fortified), Bot River benefits from Walker Bay's signature cool ocean breezes and summer rain.

Sebastian Beaumont runs the wine farm his parents founded in 1974, one of the first quality still wine producers. Beaumont and winemaker Niels Verburg (who has since left to start his own brand) spent decades testing various vines to see which had the greatest potential, and determined Chenin Blanc was what Bot could excel at. "We are trying to show Chenin in a fresh, dry, light style, unlike the big, voluptuous examples you get from Stellenbosch," says Beaumont. With old vines from some of the original plantings in the '70s and '80s, he picks earlier and ferments on skins with only native yeasts.

"It's easy for us to get ripeness, but more interesting to aim for restraint," says Niels Verburg, whose wines—labeled Luddite—often clock in at a mere 12% alcohol. Verburg planted his vines on the eastern slopes of the Houw Hoek Mountains, and has been crafting spicy, high-toned Syrahs and refined Chenin Blancs since 2000.

"Aromatics are a dime a dozen: We are all trying to make chewy wines that are all about texture," says Samantha O'Keefe of Lismore Estate. A California native, O'Keefe bought an old dairy farm at the base of the stunningly beautiful and isolated Rivieronderend Mountains in 2003, becoming the first and only producer in the remote Greyton region (officially in the Overberg district). Inland from Bot



LEFT: Suzaan & Chris Alheit of Alheit Vineyards
ABOVE: Samantha O'Keefe of Lismore, the only producer in the remote Greyton region

"Aromatics are a dime a dozen: We are all trying to make chewy wines that are all about texture."

—Samantha O'Keefe

River, Greyton gets its cool climate status from elevation and mountain snow.

Extensive soil surveys convinced O'Keefe she had found the ideal spot for Rhône stars Syrah and Viognier: "Greyton looks very much like the Northern Rhône with shale soils, veins of granite, low temperatures and significant summer rainfall." Her wines—first produced in 2006—have proved her hunch correct, and developed a cult following (Robert Parker called Lismore's Syrah one of the best he's tasted from South Africa). She's now planting other Rhône grapes, Roussanne and Marsanne.

"In retrospect, I was very naive," O'Keefe shares. "I've learned a lot of hard

lessons in the process"—like the time baboons devastated her Syrah crop. But her timing was fortunate, she believes: "When I began, South Africa was just starting to embrace terroir-driven wines that were not made in a cookie-cutter, commercial style. My farm developed as a thriving sommelier culture developed here; they were the first to believe in my wines. Now the general market is increasingly looking for unique wines."

Names to look for:

Lismore, Beaumont, Luddite, Gabriëlskloof

The Cool Future

The hunt for additional cool climate zones is far from over. Stellenbosch's acclaimed de Trafford family is currently pioneering the remote Malgas region farther east than even Cape Agulhas with their Sijnn winery (debut vintage 2007) where they are experimenting with Portuguese varieties. And the small, sea-sprayed Elim peninsula is attracting more attention and producers.

Timberg believes that while basic understanding of South African wines in general may still be lacking in the U.S., the entire category will benefit by promoting "stylistic and regional diversity," which cool climate regions exemplify: "A decade ago, I often had to explain that South Africa was a country on the continent of Africa, but today there has been a shift, and there is more interest in these wines. Some of the newer regions have helped open doors for our small but powerful category." ■

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PROWEIN 2017: ON TOP OF THE {WINE} WORLD

EVERY MARCH, DÜSSELDORF BECOMES THE EPICENTER OF THE WINE INDUSTRY

BY W. R. TISH

Now, with more than two decades under its belt, there is no more debate about whether ProWein is the wine industry's most important trade show. Its size, scope, calendar primacy and organization have combined to make it an annual epicenter for ongoing business; a springboard for market development; a petri dish for networking; and the launch pad for new products and ventures. For three days every March (19th-21st this year), Düsseldorf becomes the epicenter of the wine industry.

Last year the show attracted 6,200 exhibitors and over 55,000 visitors—*trade only*—with more than half from countries

outside Germany. The numbers were up about 6% from 2015. With such sheer size—a large stadium's worth of people—one might fear it being overwhelming. On the contrary, ProWein's parent company is in the business of managing global-minded trade shows. "Messe Düsseldorf is one of the world's major trade fair locations," notes Marius Berlemann, Global Head Wine & Spirits, Director ProWein. "We organize over 50 trade fairs. Most of them are leading industrial fairs with huge stands and exhibits. ProWein is unique. While the stands might be smaller, no other trade fair in Düsseldorf has more exhibitors than ProWein."

ProWein 2017 will be organized in nine interconnected halls; Berlemann explains, "Halls 9 to 17 form a distinct route, avoiding unnecessary detours for visitors." The layout—enhanced by a comprehensive website and dedicated app—ensure optimal efficiency for exhibitors and attendees. And the special challenges of the wine industry are no problem for the organizers: a service team of about 200 collects and delivers over 1.5 million tasting glasses each day of the show.

With more than 6,000 exhibitors from 60+ countries, all major wine nations and regions are represented at ProWein—the "classics" from Europe and the New World as well as the more "exotic." There are also more than 400 spirits exhibitors from 30 countries.

Progressive Programming

Exhibitors comprise the backbone of the show; while Italy, Germany and France traditionally lead this participation, dedicated sections of the halls feature Spain, Portugal, Austria, Australia, New Zea-

AND WORLDWIDE, TOO....

The ProWein portfolio also includes ProWine Asia (May 8 – 11, 2017 in Hong Kong) and ProWine China (November 14 - 16, 2017 in Shanghai). These events offer the international wineries, producers and exporters taking part in ProWein in Germany the opportunity to explore the markets in Mainland China and South East Asia—both regions experiencing higher demand for a wide ranging variety of wines and spirits.



Marius Berlemann,
Global Head Wine & Spirits, Director ProWein



ProWein is ultra-efficient and all-business. Over 500 tastings, seminars and workshops take place either in the ProWein Forum or directly at the exhibitors' stands. Topics receiving special attention this year include innovative packaging, unusual marketing concepts and cocktails using coffee, wine and craft beer.

land and South Africa, as well as the U.S., Canada, China, Brazil and Lebanon—and even such burgeoning regions as Tunisia, England and Bolivia.

In addition, ancillary programs feature more than 500 tasting areas, guided sessions and seminars. These provide ample opportunity for ProWein to be at the leading edge of industry trends—from environmental issues to packaging innovation and category-specific developments. One tasting zone will showcase multi-provenance winners from the Mundus Vini competition. The ProWein Forum will offer a blend of themed tastings and lectures. “Same But

Different” is a returning seminar focused on extraordinary marketing concepts. At the FIZZZ Lounge, an annual area highlighting bar trends, presentations will take on “Spirits & More: Exclusive Cocktails with Coffee, Wine and Craft Beer.”

Of special interest to Americans in the business: “Route USA,” tailored specifically to our three-tier system. A joint effort of ProWein and *Wine Enthusiast* magazine, “Route USA” guides American visitors to producers with special signage on their booth indicating their interest in finding importing and distribution partners in the United States. In addition, Berlemann notes there is a special link on their website to “Route USA” (prowein.com/RouteUSA2), listing the names and booth numbers of all participating exhibitors.

This conscious effort to stay ahead of the market comes across loud and clear in the variety of topical seminars. Similarly, exhibitors naturally choose ProWein as the ideal place and time to launch new projects. Berlemann explains, “The timing of ProWein is not fortuitous. One of the success factors of ProWein since its launch in 1994 is that March is an ideal time for suppliers to present the new vintage, and it precedes all the other major wine shows.”

Satisfaction Situation

Annual exit surveys help the Messe Düsseldorf organizers fine-tune their programming, infrastructure and attendee and exhibitor mix. “The survey gives us a good indication where we and the market



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- For general information, visit prowein.com or mdna.com
- For details regarding tickets or exhibiting, contact Messe Düsseldorf North America: (312) 781-5180; Fax (312) 781-5188; email: info@mdna.com
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stand. Figures clearly show that ProWein is the world's most important business platform for the entire sector,” says Berlemann. “The highest increase from outside Europe was posted by visitors from overseas, mainly from Asia. Overall, we are seeing a trend where ProWein is primarily attracting decision-makers with great purchasing authority: over 70% of the attendees were from top or middle management.”

Perhaps most important of all, attendees have registered their success: one in two visitors confirmed that they found new suppliers at ProWein; two-thirds were able to get useful information on trends and innovations; and almost 96% stated they had entirely reached their goals of their trade fair visit. No surprise: more than half the visitors in 2016 planned their visit for ProWein 2017 before they even left Düsseldorf last March. ■



The Messe Düsseldorf fairgrounds, designed expressly to house trade shows, is like a huge campus. ProWein exhibitors are grouped sensibly by country of origin, in nine connected but distinct “halls” that are easy to navigate, with great ventilation and signage.

LOW ALCOHOL COCKTAILS

THE 'SESSIONABLE' CONCEPT FINDS
FOOTING IN THE COCKTAIL WORLD,
NOT JUST BEER

BY JACK ROBERTIELLO



GREEN
ARROW

*Dolin blanc vermouth,
muddled mint, Kyoto cold
brew coffee, topped with
honey cream*

Demitasse,
Hollywood, CA

International travelers have long marveled at America's plate-sized steaks, endless buffets and schooners of soda. Recently, add to portion shock a general surprise at the potency of many en vogue cocktails. It's not only tourists who struggle with some of the more impactful contemporary creations.

But high-octane tide has begun to turn a bit, with more and more cocktail menus including lower-alcohol options. Many factors have contributed to the move: concerns about over-serving customers, the sense that strong and stirred drinks can dull the palate and appetite, a general trend to include a range of potencies and flavors in all beverages, and the slew of lower alcohol ingredients now available for the bartender's tool kit. What's become known as sessionable in the craft beer world—meaning beverages

moderate in flavor and potency—is now having an impact on cocktail menus.

What counts as lower-proof? The average properly-made cocktail in a standard portion size can range anywhere from about 20% alcohol by volume up to about 25-30% for those strong and stirred. A drink based on vermouth, Sherry, amaro or other lower-alcohol ingredients rather than stronger spirits, as in those basic aperitivo cocktails the Americano or the Aperol Spritz, will instead be served, depending on the recipe, at between 8% and 13% alcohol.

The attractions for operators to include these sorts of drinks are obvious. Comparably less expensive ingredients likely make for more profitable drinks; and given a customer used to stronger drinks might safely consume two aperitivo cocktails, the number of drinks served may increase as well. Variations of the Aperol Spritz, especially during brunch service, have definitely benefitted from the lighter proof trend.

Mother of Invention

Restaurants limited to beer and wine tend to really push the boundaries in the lower-alcohol arena. At Demitasse Roastery & Kitchen in Hollywood, in addition to espresso and tea beverages, wine, saké, vermouth, and coffee are the bases for a number of drinks, including the Blood Orange Saké Swizzle (saké, lime, and a

rosemary and black pepper garnish), the Adult Spice Latte (the cardoon-based amaro Cardamaro and cinnamon syrup) and the Green Arrow (Dolin blanc vermouth, muddled mint, Kyoto cold brew coffee topped with honey cream).

The range of currently available vermouths now helped form the menu at Washington, D.C.'s Nido, where the happy hour is known as the "vermoutherie." Vermouth highballs, locally produced rosé vermouth on tap and many other vermouths by the bottle set the stage of a cocktail program broadly based on twists on the classics. "There is so much variation and depth of flavor in vermouth, and it's a lot of fun to play with," says owner Erin Lindle.

In San Francisco, Octavia launched with a vermouth program in place and carries nine or so, each listed on the menu to be served straight, on the rocks with bitters and orange, or with tonic, bitters and orange. The house cocktail includes two types of vermouth and Lillet mixed with yuzu juice. "We wanted to create a unique offering that would attract attention and be exciting for our diners," says Beverage Director Paul Einbund.

In another part of town, the drink programs at Plumpjack Group-owned Forgery and Wildhawk, includes numerous low-alcohol drinks; at Forgery, about half feature sherries and vermouth—for example, the Gran Cobbler, made with Gran Lusso Vermouth, raspberries, absinthe and lime. With a small bar and



One means of dialing back potency is using flavorful lower-alcohol products as a base. In San Francisco, Hip Hops is one of the many vermouth-driven cocktails at Nighthawk. BELOW, LEFT: Forgery's Gran Cobbler, based on Gran Lusso Vermouth, raspberries, absinthe and lime. BELOW, RIGHT: "The House Cocktail" at Octavia, prominently features Lillet Blanc.

limited spirits selection at Wildhawk, beverage honcho Jacques Bezuidenhout boasts an entire menu page dedicated to vermouth cocktails. "We have one [Hip Hops, made with Martini Ambrato, grapefruit, pineapple gum and hops] that customers love especially because they can have two or three without worrying about too much alcohol."

Fine dining destinations are especially welcoming to the low-alcohol approach. Kenny Arbuckle, bar manager at Santa Monica's Southeast Asian Cassia, maintains a changing section of low-alcohol cocktails on the menu. The

most popular these days is Rome with a Bloody View (Leopold Bros. Aperitivo, lemongrass- and pineapple-infused dry vermouth, blood orange syrup, fresh-squeezed lime juice).

Less is More

Some drinks don't necessarily eschew the stronger stuff, just measure them lightly. Japanese whisky is a secondary ingredient in Cassia's Dragonfruit Collins, made with the gentian- and quinine-fortified wines Bonal and Suze, Kikori Whiskey, and dragonfruit and lime juices. Sherry takes the lead in the Starfruit Sherry (Fino Sherry, starfruit, orgeat, lime, Thai basil) and the Cortez (sparkling Riesling, Amontillado Sherry, cinnamon syrup, lemon).

"I think proof isn't necessarily always the driver," says Arbuckle. "It's more about the quality you get from certain liqueurs and vermouths and the lighter amaros. A different flavor profile than the one you get from more spirit-forward cocktails."

While Sherry-based cocktails have become more common lately, Port generally has yet to receive the same sort of attention. One notable exception: Elixir in San Francisco, where owner H. Joseph Ehrmann currently features Sandeman Port with lemon, soda and ice.

But regardless of the venue, contemporary customers are clearly less interested in the punch they get per drink than they are the flavor experience at whatever proof, and sometimes, going lighter is the best way to bring better flavors out. ■

FORGERY PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE KEPPLER



Fine dining destinations are especially welcoming to the low-alcohol approach.





CRU BEAUJOLAIS

IN THE

POST-NOUVEAU WORLD

CLASSIC FRENCH GAMAY GAINS FRESH LIFT FROM MERCHANTS AND SOMMS

BY DAVID LINCOLN ROSS

Gimmicky from the get-go, Beaujolais Nouveau has been in steady decline. The fanfare-padded release of the first wine of the harvest (popularized in the 1970s) had a great run. And yes, as a fresh, fruity expression of the Gamay grape, it still deserves a place at the Thanksgiving table.

But there is so much more to Beaujolais. The region's distinct sub-regions, or crus, all produce Gamay-based reds of consistent quality. And their generously fruity yet smooth character is in fact resounding with the American public. The 10 crus of Beaujolais—Brouilly, Côte de Brouilly, Chiroubles, Chénas, Fleurie, Ju-

liénas, Morgon, Moulin-à-Vent, Régnié and Saint-Amour—posted a robust 63% gain in the first six months of 2016 versus the same period in 2015, according to the French Agriculture Ministry.

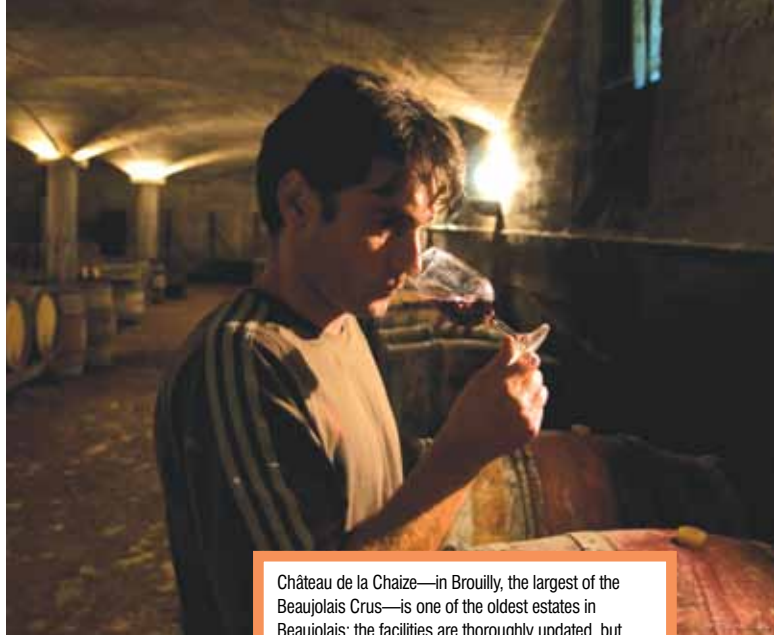
That is some real momentum. The recent growth appears to be fomented in large part by trade enthusiasm at the point of sale. The wine simply has many advantages that make it easy to recommend, both on- and off-premise.

Raj Vaidya, Wine Director, Restaurant Daniel, New York, says, "Beaujolais crus offer incredible bang for buck." Daniel's wine list features 13 crus, including a 2001 Domaine de Vissoux "Garants" Fleurie,

While not considered as "serious" as Bordeaux or Burgundy, place definitely matters with cru Beaujolais. Above left, Fleurie, one of the 10 official sub-divisions, or crus, of Beaujolais.

for \$95 and a 2009 Domaine Barbet Saint-Amour for \$75. He adds, "Beaujolais crus also age better than many realize, which is why I love to list some older vintages."

"We've all seen what Burgundy pricing has been in the last three vintages, with shortages, so we've enhanced our cru Beaujolais selections," says Veronica Litton, Wine Director, Crown Wine & Liquors in Miami. "I am proud to say Crown features all 10 crus."



Château de la Chaize—in Brouilly, the largest of the Beaujolais Crus—is one of the oldest estates in Beaujolais; the facilities are thoroughly updated, but ancient presses on display speak to the legacy. Right: Stéphane Aviron is among a wave of modern winemakers focusing on old vines and embracing biodynamics.

Terroir & Beyond

J.R. Thomason of Flatiron Wine & Spirits, New York, sums it up: “A Beaujolais Cru is cheaper than Burgundy, and at \$20 you can have a terroir-driven Chenas or Saint-Amour.”

Georges Dubœuf, founder of Les Vins de Georges Dubœuf, and renowned for promoting Beaujolais (Nouveau in particular) since the early 1960s, is seeing better opportunities than ever for crus in the U.S. “Our exports of crus Beaujolais are up this year, and our importer, distributors and customers are passing on the message of their incredible value in the world of wine.”

Dennis Kreps, co-owner of Napa-based Quintessential Wines, importer of Dubœuf’s portfolio, says, “One of the key points to effectively selling Georges Dubœuf’s Cru Domaine and Château wines is location. The wines represent the nuances of ‘place’ just as much as Côte de Beaune and Côte de Nuits, at very approachable prices.”



“Surprising value. Authentic terroir. Excellent table manners. Even earth-friendly practices. Beaujolais has a lot going for it.”

-Dennis Kreps

Gamay’s intrinsic food friendliness also presents opportunity. In texture and flavor, it offers natural appeal for Pinot Noir, Merlot and even red blends drinkers. Beaujolais also has an affinity with Côtes-du-Rhône, another bistro-approved French regional favorite.

Anthony Cohen, Brand Manager, French & European Estates, Frederick Wildman and Sons, New York, importer of three producers of Beaujolais, including Château Fuissé, Domaine Labruyère and Stéphane Aviron, asserts, “Beaujolais is Lyon,” referring to the food capital of France, where a roast chicken, *pommes frites* and a Beaujolais are revered as a gastronomic holy trinity. He adds, “Crus are food friendly, fruity, not overpowering, yet complex.”

Trey Beffa, co-owner of K&L Wine Merchants, with three stores in San Francisco, sees yet another attraction: “Younger winemakers in Beaujolais are pursuing

sustainable farming and introducing natural or organic, and/or bio-dynamic wines; this is stimulating our customers to try these new cru wines.”

Surprising value. Authentic terroir. Excellent table manners. Even earth-friendly practices. Beaujolais has a lot going for it. Nouveau fading toward nostalgia has opened the door for greater focus in the trade on cru offerings, notes Pascal F. Salvadori, Vice President, Senior Portfolio Manager & Director of Education, Esprit du Vin (Palm Bay International), which represents Château de La Chaize from Brouilly.

Jules Dressner, co-owner of New York-based Louis/Dressner, importer of seven cru Beaujolais producers, summarizes: “Beaujolais is fun and affordable, and people finally figured this out. But they can also be complex and terroir-centric, so you can ‘geek out’ to them. It’s the best of both worlds.” ■

SELLING TIPS

- ▶ “You know Beaujolais Nouveau—time to try a Cru! Similar plot, but with more action...”
- ▶ Fruity, low in tannins, Beaujolais Crus are ideal for people who love white or rosé wines, or even Pinot Noir or red blends.
- ▶ “Try it with a little chill—it’s bright and fruity but smooth.”
- ▶ Just like Beaujolais Nouveau is great with turkey, Beaujolais Crus make the perfect match with roast chicken...and much more.

RED TRUCK & HELIX HIT THE ROAD

NOVEL CORK STOPPER IS OPENED & CLOSED BY HAND, WITHOUT LOSING THE CELEBRATORY 'POP'

BY W. R. TISH

Innovation is a word people in every trade love to toss around. Products themselves, of course are a common target of tinkering; packaging is perhaps even more frequently the focus of marketers' attention.

But when you stop to think about it, notes Carlos de Jesus, Marketing Director of world-leading cork supplier Amorim, packaging in the wine industry has seen no true inventions for decades. "In our industry, Helix is the first packaging breakthrough of the 21st century," says de Jesus. "All the others—screwcaps, bag-in-box, even cans and Tetra-Pak—were born last century."

What is Helix? In short, the world's first corkscrew-free cork, easily opened and re-closed with the twist of one's wrist. The ergonomically-designed stopper, made from natural cork, is specially threaded to fit the custom bottle. The need to engineer both a new bottle and a new stopper required extraordinary cooperation between Amorim and the world's largest bottle manufacturer—as well as the

national marketer, Bronco Wine Co. (broncowine.com), which chose the Red Truck line as the first brand in America to feature Helix.

From Bronco's standpoint, outfitting Red Truck—as well as the pink, white and green "Truck"-labeled wines—with Helix was a natural choice among their brands. "What could be more American than Red Truck?" asks Bronco Wine Co. Chairman Fred Franzia. "Do you know how many pickup trucks are sold in America? Helix is a new idea for a timeless icon."

Overall, development of Helix took four years. The novel technology needed to deliver on several levels, according to de Jesus: "The most obvious is the look and performance as a closure," he says. "Also, it could not present any complications on the bottling line."

The Pop Loved 'Round the World

While Helix, like other non-traditional packages, is fundamentally about convenience, de Jesus emphasizes that Helix offers easy opening and reclosing without losing the positive aesthetic of the uncorking process. Around the globe, he explains, the sound of a bottle of wine being uncorked evokes a positive, happy response whenever it is heard. "Developing Helix has opened up some territory that we—Amorim, the cork indus-

Developing Helix required unprecedented cooperation between bottle, cork and wine supplier.

try, the wine industry as a whole—had been neglecting. Or at least overlooking," he shares. "We can not underestimate the marketing power of that 'POP!'"

Amorim did not create the pop, but Helix retains it; this feature is a true point of distinction relative to screwtops, making it a good selling point.

Amorim conducted market research in China, UK and USA for Helix. While Bronco is the first to use in the U.S., some 26 brands are already using Helix around the world (France, Italy, Spain, Germany, Portugal, Austria, South Africa.)

Fred Franzia notes that for Bronco Wine, Helix is "not a test" for Red Truck. "We are strong believers that this will be a back bar on sale item as well as an easy open-easy close for the one-glass-a-day-at-home drinker."

Industry eyes will be watching closely when the new Helix-equipped bottles of Red Truck roll out in January, nationwide. And all ears will be tuned in for this 21st century invention that delivers not only maximum opening/reclosing convenience, but also a modern version of the timeless "pop." ■



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The development of Helix is the result of a four year collaboration between Amorim and O-I, companies with extensive design and innovation expertise.

Convenience

For the very first time, consumers can enjoy the ritual of uncorking the bottle, including the associated “pop,” without the need for a corkscrew.

GREEK & BEYOND

JOHNNY LIVANOS, GENERAL MANAGER
OUSIA, NEW YORK CITY

BY ALIA AKKAM



Johnny Livanos is the General Manager overseeing the beverage program of Ousia, the new Mediterranean venture from Livanos Restaurant Group inside the New York residential building VIA 57 WEST.

BEVERAGE MEDIA GROUP: New Yorkers have long loved your family's restaurant, Molyvos. How will the soon-to-open Ousia be different?

JOHNNY LIVANOS: We like to think of Ousia as Molyvos' kid sister. Molyvos is recognized as one of the top destinations for traditional Greek food and boasts the largest selection of Greek wine in the U.S. Ousia will have a more contemporary approach—expect playful plating and presentation. At every establishment, Livanos Restaurant Group emphasizes using only the freshest seafood and local produce, so this will play a large part on the menu at Ousia as well. Our wine list highlights indigenous varietals and notable selections from Spain, Italy and France.

BMG: Ousia is a restaurant. Is one of the priorities of the drink program finding synergy with the kitchen?

JL: When I am building a cocktail, I always turn to food. For example, we have the Baklava Island that reflects both the current tiki craze and my love for the dessert. I looked to find the flavors that make baklava so delicious in items on our backbar. So, we use aged rum to provide

“The most important thing is being able to discuss the flavor profile of a drink and provide benchmark comparisons that help someone.”

a richness and molasses quality, allspice dram to add a layer of baking spice and walnut liqueur to give the drink a nutty element.

BMG: What are some other cocktails poised to be favorites?

JL: Athena the Wise is our Manhattan variation with bourbon, sweet vermouth and Rakomelo, a Greek spirit that blends honey, cinnamon and allspice. The Pomegranate Pisco Punch is fruity, savory and full of alliteration: Pisco, pineapple, pomegranate and pink peppercorn all shaken together and served up. Cardamom is widely used in Greek and Middle Eastern cuisine; our Ousia Mule includes cardamom-infused vodka, Aperol, lime juice and ginger beer.

BMG: When starting a restaurant from scratch, how do you ensure that your hospitality structure is solid from the get-go?

JL: The first step is hiring for personality. You can teach anyone how to serve, but it's harder to train someone to be nice and compassionate. Before we open, we will conduct about two weeks of in-depth training to make sure our staff is well educated on the food and beverage selections. In addition, we plan on bringing in industry experts—winemakers, brewmasters and distillers are the best at engaging staff. As much as you work to prepare for every scenario, a lot of the most rewarding training happens on the fly when dealing with real guests who have real needs.

BMG: Although diners are increasingly familiar with Greek products like Retsina and Mastika, how do you spark an educational conversation with guests?

JL: One of my favorite things to do is talk about booze, but not everybody out there who dines with us cares about, say, what type of still is used in the distillation process or what kind of soil a particular grape is grown on. The most important thing is being able to discuss the flavor profile of a drink and provide benchmark comparisons that help someone form an idea of what it may taste like. You never want to shove information down someone's throat when they are just trying to enjoy a nice meal, but if they are genuinely curious and have a lot of questions, I like to go all out. They are allowing me to geek out about beverage, so I will have some fun with it: give them a taste, show them the bottle, tell them a story. ■

LIKE WHAT YOU SEE? GET THE WHOLE PICTURE

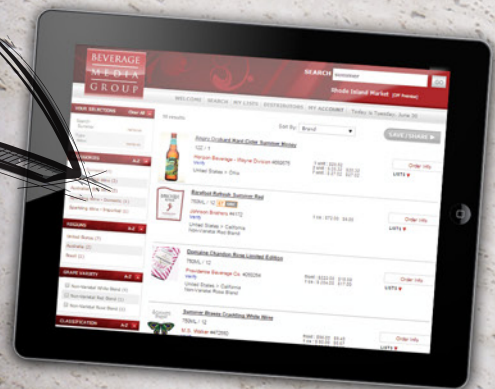
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