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JULY 2016

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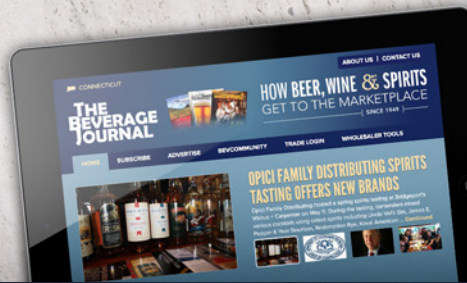
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The largest compilation of beverage alcohol price and brand information.

HOW BEER, WINE
AND SPIRITS
GET TO THE
MARKETPLACE



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MARKETPOINT

The July issue has us moving into deep summer: a great time for sales along our sunny shores and inland, too. Vacationers and staycationers mean big business for you.

- Get ready for “**Vodka** 101,” which focuses on the classic neutral spirit. Plus, two pages on flavored vodka and special profiles and side bars on ... vodka!
- Sweet Bordeaux, Chilean Sauvignon Blanc and cool climate offerings from California shine in **wine** reporting.
- Craft **spirits** bring delight ... and dilemma. Think there are too many SKUs now? Just wait. Market insight predicts a continued boom.
- Locally, we have another page-turner of tastings and event **recaps** in “Around Town.” Your news is our news; make sure you tell us of your events, launches and staff news.



- Open the door and see what's **inside**. “Retail Review” day trips to Wine Store Warehouse in Westerly while “Serving Up” meanders to Machines with Magnets in Pawtucket.
- “Association News” looks at creating a quality **workforce** across all sectors of the hospitality industry.
- Plus read about all that's hot to stock and serve, brand profiles to give you a **selling** edge and so much more.



ON THE COVER

Photograph by Jeff Wasserman / Stocksy

PURITY VODKA APPOINTS NEW PRESIDENT

Purity Vodka has appointed Brian Citron, who previously served as General Manager for the company, to President and Chief Executive Officer. Citron has been responsible for developing the brand's U.S. sales since 2013. "It has been a privilege to be a part of building Purity Vodka, and I look forward to leading the team in our next phase of growth," said Citron. Purity Vodka is created by Master Blender Thomas Kuuttanen and is produced in southern Sweden. The brand has been awarded for its taste with more than 125 gold medals in international blind tasting competitions.



REPORT RELEASES TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL BRANDY MARKET

The Global Brandy Market is expected to exceed \$63 billion by year 2020, reports Technavio in a recent study. The top four trends the report outlines for steady global growth are rising innovation in process and product, strategic acquisitions in the industry, consumption shift to brandy and cognac cocktail trends. "The market has grown steadily due to strong demand in emerging countries such as India and the Philippines, where more young consumers are being added to the consumer base," said Vijay Sarathi, lead analyst at Technavio for alcohol beverage research.



NEIL PATRICK HARRIS RETURNS AS HEINEKEN LIGHT SPOKESPERSON

Heineken Light released two television commercials and four digital videos starring Neil Patrick Harris, who has returned to the role of Heineken Light spokesperson for his third year. In the videos, Harris finds himself in compromising situations with authority figures while tasting Heineken Light. "I couldn't be more excited to continue working with Heineken Light and bring this project to life in a fresh, hoppy new way," said Harris. Heineken Light is a Gold Medal winner at the 2015 European Beer Star Awards and the "Best Tasting Low Calorie Lager" winner at the 2013 and 2014 World Beer Championships.



KOBRAND ADDS MEDICI ERMETE WINES TO ITALIAN PORTFOLIO

Kobrand Wine & Spirits added Medici Ermete Italian wines to its import portfolio and will manage the sales and marketing of the brand. Medici Ermete is widely known for their single vineyard Lambrusco Cru. Kobrand Medici Ermete import portfolio includes Concerto Reggiano Lambrusco DOC, Solo Reggiano Rosso DOC, I Quercioli Secco Reggiano Lambrusco DOC and I Quercioli Dolce Reggiano Lambrusco DOC. Medici Ermete is in its fourth generation of family winemaking.



DISTILLERS VISIT CAPITOL HILL TO LOBBY ON TAX AND TRADE ISSUES

Over 40 distillers from across the country gathered June 7-8 in Washington, D.C. for the Distilled Spirits Council's seventh annual Public Policy Conference. The distillers participated in 120 Congressional visits with their home state legislators to urge support for a reduction in the federal excise tax on spirits, and passage of trade legislation to open markets for American spirits products. The distilled spirits sector experienced a record sixth-consecutive year of market share gain, with supplier sales up 4.1 percent in 2015. The sector supports 1.4 million jobs and generates \$141 million in economic activity annually. U.S. distilled spirits exports topped \$1.57 billion in 2015.



WINE MARKETING TEAM FOR THE FAMILY COPPOLA ADDS FOUR

Francis Ford Coppola made four new management hires to The Family Coppola's marketing department. Jennifer Leitman, who comes from the television and digital industry, will serve as Vice President of Marketing; Kathleen Murphy will serve as Director of Innovation and is responsible for bringing awareness to new product launches as well as the Sofia and Votre Santé brands; Gabriela Becker joins as Director of Marketing, overseeing the global marketing efforts of the flagship Diamond Collection, Rosso & Bianco, and Gia; and Rebecca Gilbert, joins as Senior Brand Manager responsible for the Virginia Dare Winery portfolio as well as the Director's and Director's Cut tiers. Coppola assumes the role of Chief Marketing Officer and will work closely with the department to expand consumer marketing efforts.



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JOHNSON BROTHERS LAUNCHES NEW CRAFT BEER DIVISION, ADDS NEW BREWS

Johnson Brothers, Inc. announced the May launch of its new craft beer division, The Artisan Beer Company. The new division of the company marks “the opportunity of building a dynamic craft beer portfolio comprising of local, domestic and imported craft beers,” said Keith Miranda, president of Johnson Brothers, Inc., of North Kingstown. The launch includes two of the new craft beer additions, Thimble Island Brewing Company, located in Branford, Connecticut and Napa Smith Brewery of Napa California. The sales team visited the brewery for its launch event on May 6, 2016. Thimble Island beers include American Ale, Coffee Stout, India Pale Ale and a variety of seasonal releases now available in the Ocean State. Napa Smith Brewery’s launch event was held at Providence Coal Fire Pizza Restaurant in North Kingstown, also in May. Napa Smith Brewery’s beers include Pilsner, Lost Dog Red Ale, Hopjava Coffee Ale, Hopageddon Imperial IPA, Golden Gate IPA and Amber Ale.

1. The Johnson Brothers, Inc. sales team featuring Justin Gargano, Founder and President of Thimble Island Brewing Co. (center left) and Keith Miranda, President, Johnson Brothers of Rhode Island (center right).
2. Aimie Likens, Executive Assistant, Thimble Island Brewing Co.; Keith Miranda, President, Johnson Brothers of Rhode Island; and Justin Gargano, Founder and President of Thimble Island Brewing Co.
3. Dan Cole, Manager of Brewing Operations, educated the team about Thimble Island’s brewing process and its beers.
4. Justin Gargano discussing details about the Thimble Island Brewing history.
5. Keith Greenstein, Regional Manager, Napa Smith Brewery; Don Barkley, Head Brew Master, Napa Smith Brewery; Keith Miranda, President, Johnson Brothers of Rhode Island; Scott Gstell, National Sales Manager; and Mark McLean, Johnson Brothers of Rhode Island.
6. The Johnson Brothers of Rhode Island sales team with Don Barkley (center), Napa Smith Brewery Head Brew Master.

HORIZON BEVERAGE CELEBRATES GOSLINGS RUM SALES

In May, members from Horizon Beverage, Copley Division celebrated a year of successful 2015 sales of Goslings Rum by going to New York City. They enjoyed “Dark and Stormy” cocktails on the Hudson River, while cheering on the American Cup Trials with the Goslings Rum and Castle Brands teams.

Horizon Beverage staff in New York City celebrating sales accomplishments.

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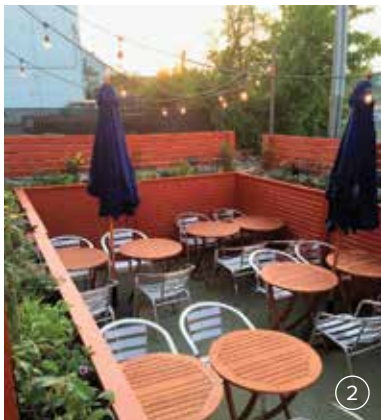
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PANE E VINO RISTORANTE & ENOTECA ANNOUNCE NEW GENERAL MANAGER

Joseph and Esther DeQuattro, owners of Pane e Vino Ristorante and Enoteca, hired Cristiano Labia as the new general manager for the restaurant. Labia, from Rome, Italy, came to the United States in 1994 working at Bella Blu in New York City. Labia developed his public relations and management skills through working at Le Madri Restaurant, Bellavita and as the general manager and sommelier for Casa Tua in Aspen. Most recently, he served as the Food and Beverage Manager at the Ritz Carlton in Aspen. Pane e Vino has also opened the back patio of their restaurant to accommodate seating for thirty guests. The restaurant is located on the historic Federal Hill in downtown Providence and features cuisine of Southern Italy. The menu highlights seasonal flavors, fresh local produce and imported specialties from Italy, as well as an all-Italian wine list.

1. Cristiano Labia, General Manager, Pane e Vino Ristorante.
2. Pane e Vino recently opened their outdoor dining patio for the 2016 spring and summer seasons.
3. Joseph and Esther DeQuattro, Owners, Pane e Vino Ristorante.

RHODE ISLAND'S PERSIMMON RECOGNIZED BY TRAVEL MAGAZINE

Persimmon, which moved to the East Side of Providence in May, has been recognized by *Travel + Leisure* magazine in a list of "The Best Farm-to-Table Restaurants in Every State." Persimmon is helmed by Chef Champe Speidel, who is four-time semifinalist for a James Beard Foundation Award. Persimmon offers guests locally sourced ingredients, fresh pasta, seafood, meat and game.

Champe and Lisa Speidel, Owners, Persimmon.



Photo by Rupert Whiteley.



SONS OF LIBERTY SPIRITS WINS DOUBLE GOLD FROM GIN TASTING

Sons of Liberty Spirits of South Kingstown received a Double Gold medal for their True Born Gin - The Belgian Wheat Act from *Fifty Best* during a competition in May in New York City. True Born Gin is the company's first gin line distilled from craft style beers. Judges blindly taste tested spirits based on a one to five scoring point system, with five being the best. True Born Gin was one out of eight gins to take home a Double Gold honor. "When we launched *True Born*, we sought to redefine another category with the beer-into-spirit methodology that developed us a reputation as a forward thinking whiskey distillery," said Sons of Liberty Founder, Mike Reppucci. "To be awarded our second Double Gold in two months for this gin is beyond awesome. We've worked very hard to reimagine what gin can be and it's certainly paying off."

True Born Gin - The Belgian Wheat Act was awarded a Double Gold honor by *Fifty Best*.



LOCALS COMPETE IN BULLEIT BOURBON COCKTAIL COMPETITION

Providence Beverage Co. and Ogie's Trailer Park in Providence hosted area bartenders in a cocktail competition featuring Bulleit Bourbon on May 9. Local bartenders submitted their recipes for a chance to reign as champion using the award-winning Kentucky whiskey inspired by the small batch technique used over 150 years ago. Kayleigh Speck of The Grange took first place. Kaitlyn Delanos of Persimmon followed in second place and Greg Mayer of The Dorrance was named to third place.

1. Kayleigh Speck, first place winner; Greg Mayer, third place winner; Kaitlyn Delanos, second place winner.
2. The winning Bulleit Bourbon cocktail.
3. Kayleigh Speck mixing her cocktail.
4. Contestants and Bulleit Crew: Stephanie Merola, Andino's Italian Restaurant; Ryan Kennedy, Cook and Brown Public House; Greg Mayer, The Dorrance; Kaitlyn Delanos, Persimmon Providence; Kayleigh Speck, The Grange; Samantha Royds, Gracie's; Joe Stracuzzi, Rooftop at Providence G; Amy Desmarais, Garde de la Mar; Jared Iannelli, Providence Beverage Co.; Domenic Italiano, Diageo; Tom Hiller, Mill's Tavern; Matt Simmons, Ogie's Trailer Park; William Coddman, Master of Whiskey.



Photos by Chris Almeida.



MCLAUGHLIN & MORAN HONORS HEAVY SEAS BEER WITH TAP TAKEOVER

Doherty's East Ave Irish Pub hosted a tap takeover on May 12, featuring Heavy Seas Beer of Baltimore, Maryland to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the brewery. Hugh Sisson, brewery founder and CEO of Heavy Seas Beer, along with staff from McLaughlin & Moran Elevated Spirits Division, celebrated the anniversary. Doherty's Pub featured 21 different Heavy Seas beers on tap, including Loose Cannon IPA. The Heavy Seas Beer tap takeover has stopped at various bars and restaurants along the Eastern seaboard to commemorate the anniversary. McLaughlin & Moran Elevated Spirits Division distributes Heavy Seas Beer in the state.

Jack Doherty, Owner, Doherty's East Ave Café; Hugh Sisson, Founder and CEO, Heavy Seas Beer; Terry Moran, President, McLaughlin & Moran, Inc.



ALTOS TEQUILA HOSTS SEMINAR FOR BEVERAGE PROFESSIONALS

Rhode Island Distributing Co. members welcomed Jesus Hernandez, Master Distiller at Olmeqa Altos Tequila, for a brand educational seminar at Providence's Los Andes South American Restaurant on May 25. Hernandez spoke about the production of Olmeqa Altos Tequila and trade professionals were able to taste Olmeqa Altos Plata and Reposado. Olmeqa Tequila is a hand-crafted tequila made with authentic, traditional methods at the heart of Los Altos, Mexico.

1. Art Chamberland, Pernod Ricard Portfolio Manager, Rhode Island Distributing Co.; Matt Browne, Trade Development Manager, Pernod Ricard; Jesus Hernandez, Master Distiller, Olmeqa Altos; Amanda Soumelidis, Market Manager RI, Pernod Ricard; Vito Lantz, Trade Development Representative, Pernod Ricard.
2. Jesus Hernandez, Master Distiller, Olmeqa Altos Tequila.
3. Olmeqa Altos Plata and Reposado Tequila.



Photos by Chris Almeida.



TEQUILA SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS EARN CERTIFICATION

Many Rhode Island beverage professionals attended a tequila seminar taught by a representative from the Consejo Regulador del Tequila (CRT), based in Washington, D.C. The day-long course was held at Twin River Casino on May 10 and focused on the "Award T" certification for workers in the industry to expand their knowledge in the category of tequila. The seminar focused on the fermentation, distillation, regulations, appellation, the history and mythology, as well as the transformation of the spirit over centuries. At the end of the class, participants took a multiple choice test to pass and earn the "Award T" certification.

Trade professionals gathered at Twin River Casino to earn their "Award T" certification in tequila knowledge.

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Photos by Chris Almeida.

BEST OF NEWPORT SHOWCASES LOCAL BRANDS AND FACES

Local spirit, wine and beer vendors, along with artisanal exhibitors, gathered at Rosecliff Mansion in Newport on May 19 for the “Best of Newport” annual gathering.

1. Claire Simpson-Daniel, Public Relations and Events Coordinator, Newport Storm Brewery and Newport Distilling Company, makers of Thomas Tew Rum.
2. Johnathan Pogash, The Cocktail Guru and United States Bartenders Guild Rhode Island (USBG RI) chapter member.
3. Newport Vineyards showcased their wines.



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Photos by Chris Almeida.

USBG RI VISITS MASSACHUSETTS DISTILLERY

In May, chapter members from United States Bartenders Guild Rhode Island (USBG RI) chapter traveled to Plymouth, Massachusetts for a tour and educational tasting at Dirty Water Distillery. The micro-distillery produces Better Knot Amber Rum, What Knot White Rum, Clementine Vodka, Ginger Vodka, Chastity Vodka, Nosh Vodka, Bogmonster, a cranberry gin, and Velnias, a Lithuanian honey liqueur called krupnikas. While in Massachusetts, USBG RI chapter members spoke with trade professionals about building a USBG chapter in the local area.

1. All USBG RI members unless noted: Ian Single; Kaitlyn Delanos; Sasha Griffith and Noah Griffith of The Pour Farm Tavern in New Bedford, Mass.; Stephanie Merola; Kristine Dunphy; Elizabeth Sawtelle; Johnathan Pogash; Megan Pogash.
2. USBG RI chapter members during the tour at Dirty Water Distillery.

RHODE ISLAND BEVERAGE PROFESSIONAL JOINS PERNOD RICARD

Vito Lantz, former bartender at The Dorrance in Providence, has joined the Pernod Ricard team in Rhode Island as a Trade Development Representative. In his new role, he will work with brands and on- and off-premise locations to build sales.

Vito Lantz, Trade Development Representative, Pernod Ricard.



Photo by Chris Almeida.



M.S. WALKER HOSTS HEAVEN HILL DISTILLERS' BOURBON TASTING

M.S. Walker sales representatives recently participated at a bourbon tasting, which was held after a Rosanne Cash concert at the Veterans Memorial Auditorium in Providence in April, organized through FirstWorks and the Renaissance Providence Hotel. Cash, is an American singer-songwriter, author, and daughter of the late country music star Johnny Cash. After the concert, guests were able to sample a variety of bourbons from Heaven Hill Distillers, which included Bernheim Original, Elijah Craig Small Batch, Evan Williams Black, Evan Williams Single Barrel and Rittenhouse Rye.

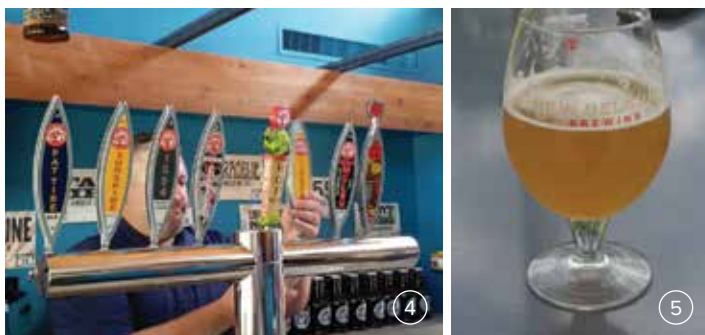
1. The tasting menu and featured cocktails for the event.
2. The featured bourbons.
3. Kathleen Pletcher, Founder and Executive Artistic Director, FirstWorks with Rosanne Cash, singer/songwriter. Cash attended the M.S. Walker Bourbon tasting.
4. Sean Whittle, Sales Representative, M.S. Walker and David Montoya, Sales Representative, M.S. Walker.
5. Bourbon samples available for sample.



HOTEL VIKING CELEBRATES 90TH ANNIVERSARY IN HOSPITALITY BUSINESS

Newport's Hotel Viking celebrated a successful 90 years in the hospitality industry. On May 22, employees from Hotel Viking gathered together to celebrate the hotel's milestone. The 208-room hotel first opened its doors in May of 1926 and is a member on the Historic Hotels of America. Hotel Viking will honor their milestone throughout the 2016 year with special promotions and events, including weekly specials at its One Bellevue Restaurant or One Bellevue Lounge where visitors pay only 90 percent of the bill. Guests are also encouraged to participate in the "Share Your Story" Contest of memorable moments from their stays or visits at Hotel Viking via the hotel's website.

1. Kevin Wise (center, holding cake) is the night auditor at Hotel Viking and celebrated more than 20 years at the hotel. Linda Shoe, (next to Wise on the right) has been with Hotel Viking for more than 35 years working in housekeeping. The group celebration took place on May 22, 2016.
2. Hotel Viking's 90th anniversary celebratory cake.



NEW BELGIUM BREWING HOSTS C&C DISTRIBUTORS FOR LAUNCH EDUCATION

Fort Collins, Colorado-based brewing company, New Belgium, famed for its Fat Tire beer brand, hosted the C&C Distributors sales team who are launching the product in the Ocean State. The team spent a comprehensive day with brewery representatives training on New Belgium's history, the beers and the brand. The team also enjoyed a bicycle ride into Fort Collins for lunch, following the inspiration of the Fat Tire Amber Ale. That flagship brew, reflected now in the company's logo, originates from a co-founder's bicycle trip through Belgium from brewery to brewery. Other beers include Ranger IPA, an India pale ale (IPA); Citradelic, an India Pale Ale with Tangerine, Rampant Imperial IPA, an American double/imperial; Heavy Melon, a Watermelon Lime Ale (summer seasonal) and two gluten-free beers, Glutiny Pale Ale and Glutiny Golden Ale. Other offerings from the brewery that will hit the market sometime later this year include; 1554 Black Lager, a Belgian dark beer; Abbey Belgian Ale, an abbey dubbel beer; and Trippel Belgian Style Ale, a Belgian-style tripel; and various seasonal and limited-edition beers.

1. The New Belgium Brewing Co.'s bike logo.
2. Beer School welcome sign for the launch team inside the brewery.
3. Heading into the brewery for the tour.
4. On tap at the brewery tour tasting bar. Pouring is Matt Bronson, CT and RI Market Manager, New Belgium.
5. A glass of New Belgium Fat Tire Amber Ale from the outdoor patio tasting venue.
6. The C&C team enjoys a bike ride from the brewery into downtown. Matt Bronson, CT and RI Market Manager, New Belgium; Eric Queenan, Sales Rep., C&C; Christopher Correia, Sales Rep., C&C; Joe Sincerny, Field Marketing Manager, C&C; Keith Morris, On Premise Sales Manager, C&C; Anthony Micheletti, Sales Rep., C&C; Justin Kelley, Sales Rep., C&C; Craig Lancaster, Sales Rep., C&C; Scott Dulieu, Sales Supervisor, C&C; Many Cruz, Sales Rep., C&C; and Greg Holmes, CT/NY/RI Regional Manager, New Belgium.



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New England Tequila & Rum Festival Showcases Brands for a Second Year

The Grand Tasting at the New England Tequila & Rum Festival returned for its second year on May 7 at Twin River Casino in Lincoln. Russell Davis, star of Spike TV's "Bar Rescue," served as the event's emcee for a second year in a row. Trade professionals offered event guests tastes of tequilas, rums, spirits and beers from the many international, regional and local brands represented. The event also featured tequila and rum pairing seminars alongside food and entertainment.

Blind tasting competitions and a dinner at Fred & Steve's Steakhouse were some of the trade-only highlights preceding the public grand tasting. Approximately 2,000 people attended this year's festival, enabling Twin River to present a check from a portion of ticket sales in the amount of \$7,000 to the Johnson & Wales University Center for Food and Beverage Management program, for student and teacher enrichment opportunities.



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1. Frank Martucci, General Manager Beverage Operations, Twin River Casino with Russell Davis, Event Emcee. Davis appears on Spike TV's "Bar Rescue."
2. Cary Simms, Portfolio Manager Constellation Brands MA/RI, Horizon Beverage with Ben Hancock, Field Sales Manager, Constellation Brands.
3. Anthony DeSerio, United States Bartenders Guild Connecticut (USBG CT) chapter member and member of Patron's "60 Hands Alliance" serving samples of Patron, Roca Patron and cocktails.
4. Joe Landolfi, Brand Manager, Market St. Spirits, a division of Opici Wines, with Jen Murphy, Brinley Gold Shipwreck Rum.
5. Deedra Cetoute, Promotions, Mount Gay Rum with Alex Thibault, Key Account Manager, Remy Cointreau USA with Mount Gay Rum.
6. Amanda Mathiesen, Promotions, Don Julio Tequila.
7. Dennis Rochford, Regional Brand Manager, Hotel California Tequila.
8. Mike Mills, Senior Brand Ambassador, RIPE Bar Juice; Jay Scenti, Campari America; Nicole Mercier, Promotions; Gary Dritschler, Market Manager, Campari America.
9. Jason Tamanin, South Florida Brand Champion, Herradura Tequila.
10. Brent Ryan, Master Distiller, Newport Distilling Company and Clare Simpson-Daniel, Public Relations and Events Captain, Newport Distilling Company.
11. Paul Mathes, New England Regional Manager, Shaw-Ross.
12. Art Chamberland, Pernod Ricard Portfolio Manager, Rhode Island Distributing Co.
13. Dana Strom, Regional Manager New England, Fishbowl Spirits; Nate Churchill, United States Bartenders Guild Philadelphia chapter member with Blue Chair Bay Rum.
14. Nicole Canella, Promotions, Edrington, with Brugal Rum.
15. Christine Langford, Sales Representative, M.S. Walker.
16. Alexei Beratis, President, Inspired Beverages.
17. Leo Luciano of Heineken with Tecate and Dos Equis Beer.
18. Steven Gubb, Owner, Gubba Rum.
19. Peter Waite of Bully Boy Distillers serving cocktail samples to guests.
20. Brian Warrenner, Associate Professor, Center for Food and Beverage Management, School of Hospitality, JWU; Frank Martucci, General Manager of Beverage Operations, Twin River Casino; Brian Van Gyzen, Associate Professor, College of Management, School of Hospitality, JWU; Michael Sabitoni, Department Chair, Center for Food and Beverage Management, School of Hospitality, JWU. The \$7,000 donation from proceeds of the festival's ticket sales will be used for JWU student fellowships and faculty internships

The Wine Store Warehouse

BY SAVANNAH MUL

Frank Celico and his wife, Donna, are deeply rooted in community service. From donating to local scholarship programs, conducting charitable tastings, working with the rotary club, the library, the Westerly Land Trust and other local foundations, the Celicos give back in any way they can. With that philosophy in mind, they manage their business in similar fashion.

“You can almost sense the atmosphere of the business,” said Celico, who created his business around “mutual respect and kindness, efficiency and attentiveness.” He believes a business guided by these attributes keeps the customer loyal and the store successful – and employees happy.

The staff, which is made up of approximately 16 employees, encourages customers to browse, providing advice and guidance when needed. “We encourage them [to browse]; that’s where the comfort level comes in,” he said. “When it looks like they need help, we ask what their price range is and what products they



Frank and Donna Celico, Owners, The Wine Store Warehouse.



LOCATION

86 FRANKLIN ST.
WESTERLY, RI

FACTS

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 5,200
YEARS IN OPERATION: 30

normally buy ... by talking with them a bit, we can direct them to the right area with choices.”

He said the store has become more of a destination point for shoppers in Rhode Island, as well as in Connecticut, because of the close proximity to the border.

Located along the aisles of the store is what Celico calls aisle advisors. Celico explains that if a customer is curious to know detailed information about the product, they can scan the SKU under the device and tasting notes, food pairings, cocktail recipes and other information will appear on the screen to give the customer an idea on how best to serve the product. “The customers love this. They can find out more,” said Celico, who also recommends his employees use it to stay up-to-date with new products entering the store.

Wine drives the majority of store sales, followed by boutique beers, which is

Celico’s terminology for the many craft beers on the market. “People that are into beer, they are fanatics,” he said. “The Mix-a-Six option we offer provides a lot of choices for them.”

The staff develops their own point-of-sale material to display on the wine racks and shelves. The tags include a cooler door number, which tells the customer if the product is available chilled and which cooler they can find the product in. “In order to do the volume of business we do, it’s important to serve the customer in an efficient way,” Celico said.

As for finding time running a business, donating their time to the local community and being with family, Celico said, “It’s about improving the quality of life in the community. We wanted to do more than make a living. It’s been very rewarding sharing the wealth with the community.” ■

FEATURE
YOUR STORE



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HARASZTHY'S TRAIL

A CALIFORNIA LEGEND CRISS-CROSSES THE NATION TO MEET, GREET & EAT WITH TRADE PARTNERS

BY KRISTEN BIELER

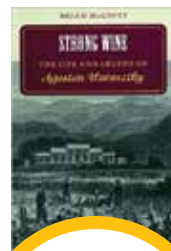
Vallejo (Val) Haraszthy, founder and winemaker at Sonoma's Haraszthy Family Cellars, will spend the better part of this year driving a 1951 Willys Jeep around the country. He pulls behind him a trailer with Weber grills and spends his days meeting with—and cooking for—the distributors and retailers throughout the country that sell his wines, racking up thousands of miles along the way.

Compared to those who use airplanes and rental cars to sell their wines, this may sound like a tough journey. Yet, as he is quick to point out, it's actually a piece of cake compared to the pilgrimage made by his great-great-grandfather, Agoston Haraszthy. A Hungarian immigrant who arrived in America in the 1840s, Agoston packed his large family into a wagon and headed to California on the Santa Fe Trail via the treacherous Donner Pass. "He came west in one type of wagon, and I'm heading east in a different type of wagon," says Haraszthy.

In fact, it's Agoston's story that Val Haraszthy is traversing the country to tell. Agoston (in addition to becoming the first sheriff of San Diego) founded California's

first commercial winery—Buena Vista, which still operates in Sonoma. The reason he is called the "Father of the California Wine Industry," however, is because he introduced European grape varieties (*vitis vinifera*) to replace the humble Mission grape that had been used for California's wine production. Accepting a commission from the governor, Haraszthy went to Europe and collected thousands of vine cuttings and planted them in California, kick-starting the wine industry as we know it.

But wait—the story of Haraszthy's inherited legacy gets even better: Agoston became friends with General Mariano



Strong Wine:
The Life and Legend of Agoston Haraszthy by Brian McGinty, Val Haraszthy's cousin

Vallejo, the last of Mexican governors of Northern California and the founder of Sonoma in 1834 (and a winemaker himself). Vallejo was captured in 1946 by Sonoma settlers who wanted the territory for themselves. ("A high energy group of local settlers who lowered the Mexican flag and hoisted a badly-drawn bear flag and declared the Republic of California—the state's flag to this day," explains Haraszthy).

Vallejo was lucky to survive, and two of his daughters later married two of Agoston Haraszthy's sons, creating a multi-family wine dynasty.

A Zinfandel Specialist Comes Full Circle

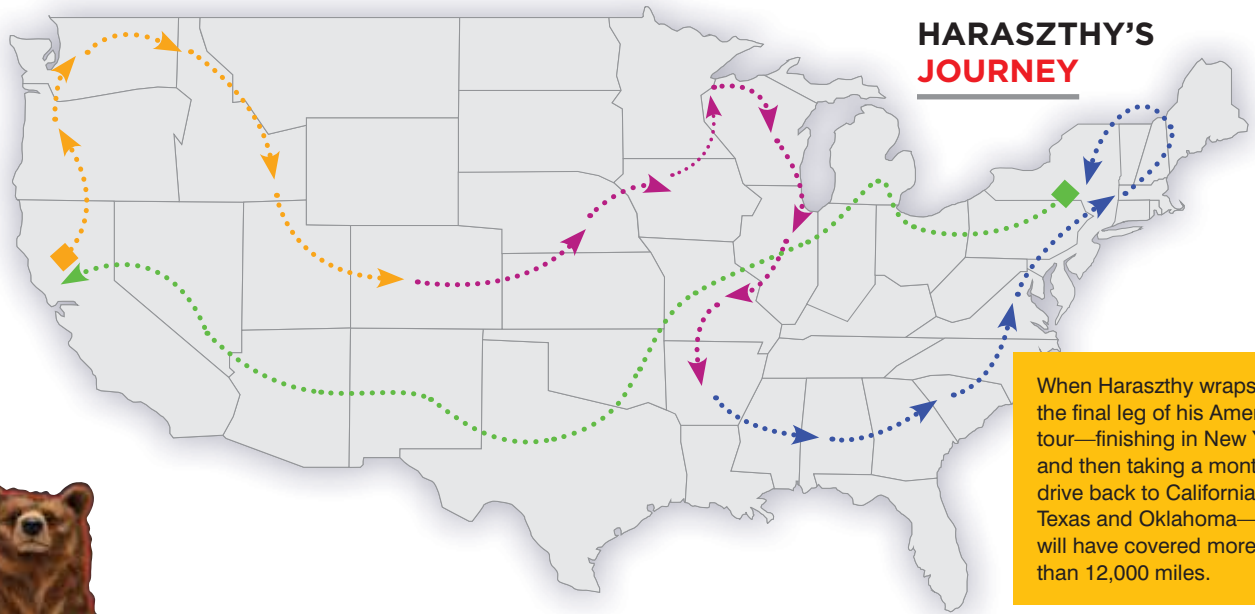
A fifth-generation Sonoma native, Val Haraszthy took a job in 1972 as a cellar rat at Buena Vista, the very estate founded by his great-great-grandfather. After years honing his skills, he founded Haraszthy Family Cellars in 2006, dedicated primarily to the production of California's signature grape, Zinfandel.

"Zinfandel is so expressive of the place where it grows—it changes so much from one place to another," says Haraszthy on



Haraszthy's 1951 Willys Jeep, which has a 360 horsepower Corvette engine. "It's a beast and it's 65 years old, but it's surprisingly comfortable," he reports. "It's very much like a wagon—you point the hood in the direction you want it to go."

HARASZTHY'S JOURNEY



When Haraszthy wraps up the final leg of his American tour—finishing in New York and then taking a month to drive back to California via Texas and Oklahoma—he will have covered more than 12,000 miles.



Tour #1 (April): Oakland, CA ▶ Denver, CO

Tour #3 (June/July): Little Rock, AR ▶ New York

Tour #2 (May): Denver, CO ▶ Little Rock, AR

Tour #4 (Sept/Oct): New York ▶ Oakland, CA

why he loves the variety. He makes wine from the three most important California regions for Zinfandel: Sonoma Valley, Lodi and Amador County. “Each has a different spice rack flavor profile driven by clonal selection and the site itself—the soil, the sun, the wind and dirt,” he notes.

But wine is about more than simply what’s in the bottle; it’s the individuals, the stories, the connections. “This is a people-driven business,” says Haraszthy. “When I was developing this company, I would stop by stores and restaurants and really try to make a connection with the people selling my wine. But I have 40 distributors nationally and haven’t met 90% of them. I wanted to find a way to broaden my reach in a really authentic way that would make an impact—without rental cars and business suits. So, I got the Willys Jeep and a BBQ wagon.”

Haraszthy isn’t attempting rarified gourmet cuisine (although his BBQ spice rub is a highly coveted secret recipe). “I grill some pork loins, cook some beans and slaw and we sit outside and get to know one another, and I tell them the story of my family. It’s very simple, but it resonates in a memorable way and the reaction has been incred-

ible.” His inspiration was one part “the Oscar Mayer Wiernemobile of my childhood” and one part “Wishbone, the cantankerous old cook on the [1960s] television show *Rawhide*. He would cook hearty trail food and always had your back when any trouble came along. I named my trailer after him.”

When Haraszthy wraps up the final leg of his American tour—finishing in New York and then taking a month to drive back to California via Michigan, Texas and the Southwest—he will have covered more than 12,000 miles. It’s not too early to call the tour a success: Haraszthy has tripled sales in many markets (“We’re at 25,000 cases this year but are confident that we will be a 100,000 case brand in a few years,” he predicts.)

Some things are just better the old-fashioned way, says Fred Franzia, CEO of Bronco Wine Company, the exclusive national distributor for Haraszthy Family Cellars: “When I was younger, we would sit in meetings with Ernest Gallo or Robert Mondavi or Louis Martini. Now you go to those same meetings and everyone’s a lawyer or a public relations guy. Val is a dinosaur—he’s a throwback with a real family and a real history.” ■



Val Haraszthy

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1 Case of Bush’s Baked Beans; Pineapple, Onions, Ranch Dressing, Plates/Napkins/ Utensils

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- ★ Bearitage 2015 Sauvignon Blanc (CA)
- ★ Haraszthy 2014 Old Vine Zinfandel (Lodi)
- ★ Haraszthy 2013 Amador Zinfandel
- ★ Haraszthy 2013 Reserve Zinfandel, Indian Springs Ranch (Sonoma Valley)
- ★ Haraszthy 2013 Dry Creek Zinfandel (just released)



MANAGING A BETTER FUTURE

BY DALE J. VENTURINI

The hospitality industry is a continuously growing segment of the U.S. economic picture. This year alone, the restaurant industry is expected to realize \$783 billion in sales and employ 14.4 million in good-paying jobs, according to the National Restaurant Association's 2016 Restaurant Industry Forecast.

Among the key challenges restaurants and other segments of the industry are facing, in addition to legislative and regulatory hurdles, is retaining and recruiting employees. While the restaurant industry added approximately 2 million jobs since the nation's economic recovery in 2010, which equates to roughly 900 new jobs per day, maintaining a quality workforce is still a challenge.

Over the past year, we have heard from many of our members who are facing difficulty in finding and keeping qualified employees. This brings up a much bigger challenge: the necessity of providing programming to adequately train our existing and next generation of the workforce. The RI Hospitality Education Foundation has trained thousands and thousands of students and adult learners over the years, helping to further their education, gain valuable new skills, or adjust to a changing career path.

Our training is funded in large part through state and federal grants. And, while the hospitality industry is one of the biggest revenue-generators for the state, we are often overlooked when it comes time to allocate training dollars in favor of other

established industries. It seems that the general consensus is that the hospitality industry doesn't create good-paying jobs.

However, restaurants added middle-class jobs at a rate four times higher than the overall economy. Between 2010 and 2014, the number of restaurant jobs with an income range between \$45,000 - \$74,999 rose nearly 38%. The number of jobs in this range in all other segments of the economy rose just 8% in the same period. This tells us that there is room for growth and advancement for employees equipped with the right tools.

Fortunately, we have recently formed partnerships that we believe have the ability to positively assist workers who want to reach that next rung on their career ladder. The RI Hospitality Association in partnership with the National Restaurant Association's ManageFirst® program, Real Jobs Rhode Island, the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation and the RI Hospitality Training Academy, recently launched a program to help workers within the hospitality industry gain the necessary tools and training to advance their careers with the industry.

The course, RI Food Management Training Program, will be open to anyone who is currently working within the industry in the state of Rhode Island, and who wants to learn the tools necessary to advance his/her career. During the 10-week course, which meets

once a week for an eight-hour period, employees will have the opportunity to earn valuable industry certifications including: ManageFirst, which provides certification in hospitality and restaurant management, hospitality and human resources management and supervision, and controlling food service costs. Students will also earn the ServSafe® Essentials Food Safety Managers Certification.

In addition, students who successfully complete and pass all four courses including an elective and have 800 hours of industry work experience will also receive the Professional (MPF) Credential. Electives consist of a wealth of industry topics from accounting, to customer service, to nutrition, marketing and bar and beverage management – all necessary skills in furthering a career within the hospitality industry.

The RI Hospitality Association will be accepting a select number of applicants this fall, and the cost of the classes, which range from \$745 - \$995 depending on membership status, represents a drastic discount on similar courses being offered in nearby educational institutions. In addition, the RI Hospitality Education Foundation will offer scholarships up to \$500.00 for the first six applicants. The program, valued at \$4,500, is provided by funding from Real Jobs RI.



LEARN MORE

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



ABOUT DALE J. VENTURINI PRESIDENT & CEO, RHODE ISLAND 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.

GIN UP

BY LEN PANAGGIO

It's clearly a big year for politics. And, a term we regularly hear from the pundits is that the candidates are trying to 'gin up' their base. In our world, trying to 'gin up' our base also has some meaning as the term is derived from English terms to agitate or excite. Well, it is time to get excited again about the spirit gin.

With the advent of mixology, the search for unique or new products is never-ending. But one has to look no further than your back bar to see that gin is already here and it has its place in a vibrant spirits program. Retro cocktails are hotter than ever and gin is an ideal spirit to make these old-world cocktails new again.

When looking through *The Beverage Journal*, there are so many options to choose from. Gin is like the original flavored vodka, as they both started out the same way. It all started in 17th century Holland (some say in Italy even earlier) as a medicinal drink to cure several ailments. To make it more palatable and medicinally potent, the addition of juniper became standard, followed by other botanicals over the years. Fast forward to today.

There are basically five styles of gin: Plymouth Gin, a fruity and highly mixable spirit with one producer, Plymouth. Old Tom, which largely died out with Prohibition, but a few survived, with Ransom being the one to look for. Genever, the Dutch style, higher in malt with almost a whiskey flavor ... Bols is the go-to in this category. London Dry, the style we are all familiar with; brands like Beefeater, Bombay and Tanqueray dominate this category. Additionally, New American, which came about with the mixology movement in America, displays many differing flavors and are fun to use.

In today's world, sharp bartenders will have several types of gins

and styles to use to ply their craft. When we think of retro drinks today, one gin drink is a standout, the martini. According to aficionados, this classic cocktail was originally contrived using gin, not vodka. When ordering martinis today, there are many choices, but this tried-and-true classic has endured.

Other classics include the Negroni, which features gin, vermouth and Campari; the Gimlet, which contains simple syrup, gin and Rose's lime juice; and the Jasmine is a combination of Cointreau, Campari, lemon juice, and of course, gin. These are just a few samples of drinks that are easy to make yet bursting with flavor; and in a busy, fast-paced bar environment, bartenders will love them.

Things change so rapidly that it can make your head spin. Today, distillers making gin are playing with differing flavors. Hendrick's, made in Scotland, immediately comes to mind with its signature rose petal and cucumber aromas. What we've witnessed in the flavored-vodka arena is starting to emerge to a smaller extent with gin. It will be interesting to see how the flavor profiles develop to capture in particular that important millennial generation.

Distillers are always in search of that next home run and as operators we need to assess what truly works best for our programs. We need to keep in mind the ability of our staff to buy into and to promote these drinks and the desire of our guests to embrace them. They need to be marketed effectively whether on a drink list, table tents or via social media. It's July, and for those of us on the coast, we have 12 weeks of the season we've all been waiting for. Capitalize on it.

Have a great summer!



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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.

MACHINES WITH MAGNETS

400 MAIN STREET
PAWTUCKET, RI

Machines with Magnets is a multi-use art space and recording studio. The newly-remodeled bar, which specializes in classic cocktails, craft canned beer and natural wine, is open during monthly curated art shows and live concerts.



BARTENDER
Catherine Hood

COCKTAIL
The Blood of Rongo

▲
Bartender
Catherine Hood.

RECIPE

- Mix:
Shake with cracked ice:
- » 1 oz. Beefeater Gin
 - » 1 oz. Blackwell Rum
 - » 3/4 oz. guava nectar
 - » 1/2 oz. hibiscus syrup
 - » 1/4 oz. lemon juice
 - » 1/8 oz. St. Elizabeth Allspice Dram
 - » 2 tsp. coconut cream

Pour over crushed ice. Top with 5 dashes of Angostura Bitters. Garnish with pineapple frond, black violas (or other edible flowers) and cocktail umbrella.



“The Blood of Rongo is a fun, boozy, summer sipper, perfect for a heatwave,” said bar manager Seth Manchester. “It captures the classic flavors of tropical fruit and warm spices of vintage Tiki drinks. A modern, elegant riff on a Fog Cutter.”

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- 2 oz. Brockmans Gin
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- 1 oz. Sugar Syrup
- 4 Raspberries
- 6 Blackberries

Muddle the berries and sugar syrup in a shaker. Add Brockmans and ice and shake. Single strain the mixture into a tumbler over ice. Garnish with a blackberry, raspberry and mint sprig.

SOUR BEE FIZZ

- 2 oz. Brockmans Gin
- 1 oz. Honey Syrup
- ½ oz. Lime Juice
- ½ oz. Lemon Juice
- 1 Egg White



Mix all ingredients together and shake vigorously over ice. Single strain into a margarita glass. Garnish with a lemon peel.



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All Flavors

90+ POINTS

BTI Taste Rating

Stoli
THE VODKA



VODKA

101

BACK TO
BASICS

BY JEFF CIOLETTI

Vodka may have emerged from Eastern European distilling and drinking cultures, but as far as spirits are concerned, it's probably the closest to the Wild West anyone's going to get. That's because there's no clear standard mandating from which starchy or sugary bases it must be fermented.

That's not to say there aren't some standards in place. The European Union, for instance, sets the vodka ABV minimum at 37.5% (75 proof). On these shores, the TTB sets the ABV

floor at 40% (80 proof). The U.S. regulatory agency defines the spirit as "neutral spirits distilled or treated after distillation with charcoal or other materials so as to be without distinctive character, aroma, taste or color."

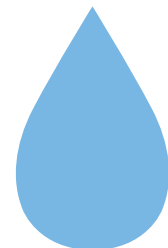
However, vodka's complete lack of all of those things makes it the nearly perfect blank canvas on which mixologists can paint their masterpieces. Ask a group of cocktail crafters and enthusiasts, "What's the most mixable spirit?" and at least nine out of 10 of them will likely answer, "Vodka."

WHERE IS IT PRODUCED?

Anywhere. **There are no official region-of-origin protections for vodka** (despite the best efforts of many former Eastern Bloc countries). Technically, a distiller in any part of the world can distill a spirit from just about any fermentable base and call it vodka. Despite that, it's still very closely associated with countries in the "**Vodka Belt**"—especially Russia and other former members of the Soviet Union, as well as Poland and Nordic countries like Sweden and Finland. The rise of craft distilling in the U.S. has created a wave of new American interpretations of the spirit.

DID YOU KNOW?

The word "vodka" derives from the word for "water" in many Slavic languages, *voda*. Adding "ka" to a Russian name makes it the diminutive form, as a form of familiarity and affection. So "vodka" is, essentially, but not directly, "little water" or "my dear water."



FEATURED BRAND
CROP

WHAT'S IT MADE FROM?

An easier question to answer would be, “What’s it not made from?” If it’s got fermentable sugars, it’s pretty much fair game. However, the two classic bases are:

- Grains—wheat most commonly, but other cereals like rye and corn often find their way into the mash.
- Potatoes are another popular base.

Distillers have also made vodka from beets, grapes, molasses, milk, apples, even hops.

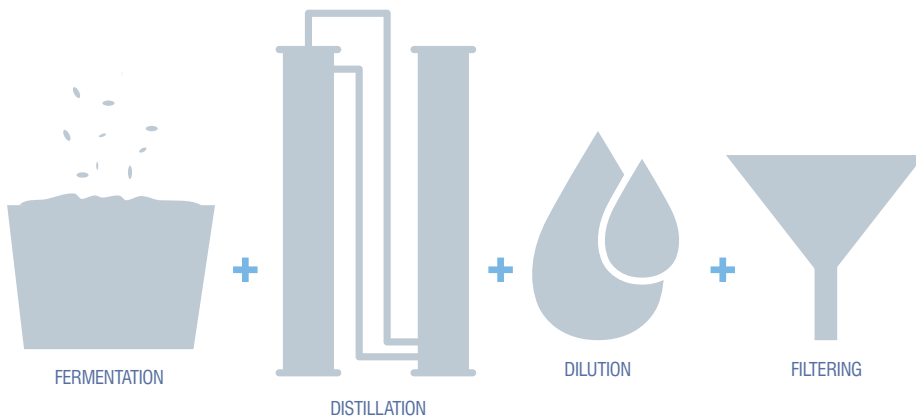


FUN FACT

MINIMUM PROOF FOR VODKA IN THE U.S. IS 80. FOR THE EUROPEAN UNION, IT IS 75.

HOW IS IT MADE?

Production is deceptively crucial in vodka, as the name of the game is **purity**—whatever bells and whistles are employed lean toward stripping away flavor.



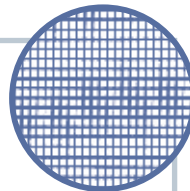
1. Distillers create a mash from the malted grain, potato or other fruit or vegetable source.

2. Once the fermentation process ends, it’s distilled multiple times, typically through column distillation. The continuous distillation process removes impurities and results in a spirit that’s at least 190 proof. A spirit that’s upwards of 95% alcohol is more pure grain alcohol than vodka and barely drinkable.

3. What goes up in proof must come down; vodka is bottled between 80 and 110 proof, so every vodka is diluted. A typical 80 proof vodka contains 60% water, and there is no adding of botanicals or barrel treatment post-dilution, so that water is critical.

4. Distillers then filter it through charcoal multiple times. (Marketers are apt to tout a very high number of passes, and/or alternate filtering material, for what they say is optimal purity.) After that, they add a little more water to bring it to its desired ABV of around 40% (80 proof).

Charcoal—or, more accurately, activated carbon—remains a popular vodka filtering agent, but brands have also touted sand, diamonds, paper, bamboo, cellulose, rock and precious metals as points of filtering/marketing distinction.



VODKA'S FOUNDATION

When making vodka, there is nowhere for the distiller to hide. With the goal of stripping away all extraneous flavor—and no barrel-aging to fall back on for development—the spirit’s purity is paramount. While some producers downplay the material used for pre-distillation mash, others consider it critical.

For **Crop Harvest Earth Vodka**, the base is USDA certified organic grain, harvested from fertile soil free of artificial fertilizers, pesticides and chemicals. The purity of the mash sets the foundation for a pristine final spirit, which is also used for flavored expressions, infused with all natural Cucumber, Tomato or Meyer Lemon.

All Crop vodkas benefit from hands-on, small batch production:

- Each batch of Crop is distilled only the exact number of times necessary to remove specific impurities and their unwanted flavors from that particular batch.
- Crop is distilled so efficiently that no carbon treatment or charcoal filtering is required.
- The end result is a refreshingly crisp, clean, pure vodka.

BABYLON EXPRESS

- 2 parts Crop Organic Cucumber Vodka
- 1 part Elderflower Liqueur
- 1 part Pineapple Juice
- ¼ part Lime Juice

Combine with ice in shaker; pour into rocks glass. Garnish with pineapple fronds.



FEATURED BRAND
LEAF VODKA



WATER: THE DIFFERENCE-MAKER

By law, all vodka must be diluted. After it has been brought down from its peak of at least 190 proof (95% ABV) during distillation to 80 proof (40% ABV) for bottling, the final product is effectively 60% water. It follows that a brand's water source is critical to its character. Leaf Vodka is one notable supplier that not only stresses the importance of water, but proves its impact with a pair of flagship products made exactly the same way except for different water sources: one in Alaska, one in Colorado.

- Leaf Vodka made from **Alaskan Glacial Water** uses as its source Blue Lake, which is fed by four separate glaciers, imparting a pure, smooth taste.
- Leaf Vodka made from **Rocky Mountain Mineral Water** gains an unusual richness and complexity.
- Both 5 times distilled and USDA Certified Organic

The distinctions are subtle, but to vodka lovers they are quite real, and for mixologists, experimenting with both can reveal pronounced distinctions in cocktails.

PEAKED LEAF

- 2 oz. LEAF Vodka made from Rocky Mountain Mineral Water
- Grapefruit Juice
- 1 Lime Wedge



Fill highball glass with ice, and add vodka. Fill the rest of the glass with grapefruit juice to just below the rim. Garnish with lime.

GOLD LEAF

- 2 oz. LEAF Vodka made from Alaskan Glacial Water
- Orange Juice
- Splash of Ginger Ale
- 1 Orange Wedge



Fill highball glass with ice, and add vodka. Fill the rest of the glass with orange juice to just below the rim. Top off with ginger ale. Garnish with orange.

COMMON USES...

It's hard to know where to begin because it's probably the most common cocktail base there is. But here are a few:

BLOOD MARY

It wouldn't be brunch without a good Bloody; and many a Bloody has been batched using the most basic of vodkas.



VODKA MARTINI

Many purists insist that gin is the only spirit for a Martini, but vodka is just as popular. (Doesn't hurt that 007 typically orders his with vodka and "shaken, not stirred"—giving rise to another catchphrase that makes Martini fans cringe.) In its most basic form, the Vodka Martini is vodka and vermouth (typically dry), chilled with ice and then strained into a stemmed martini glass and garnished with olives.



WHITE RUSSIAN

Jeff "The Dude" Lebowski's favorite drink, the White Russian usually consists of vodka, coffee liqueur (Kahlua is most common) and cream (occasionally milk).



VODKA + JUICE

The Screwdriver (with OJ), The Greyhound (grapefruit) and the Seabreeze (grapefruit and cranberry) are benchmarks; their easy-drinking popularity helped fruit-flavored vodkas make sense.



MOSCOW MULE

Ginger beer (not ginger ale, mind you) and lime juice has both stood the test of time and inspired spin-offs; properly served in a rounded copper mug.



HARVEY WALLBANGER

Granted, the *raison d'être* of a Harvey Wallbanger is Galliano, but there is actually more vodka than liqueur in there. A hit in the '70s, this drink was born in the 1950s, supposedly named after a surfer.



WHAT ARE THE LATEST VODKA TRENDS?

- It's less about fancy, VIP bottle service with super-premium badge brands and more about quality ingredients and transparent, authentic provenance and processes, especially as consumers are more educated about where, how and with what their beverages are made.
- Thanks to the product's natural neutrality, points of distinction often center on production methods, water sources and filtration. Predictably, the more expensive the vodka, the more specific and fine-tuned these elements become.
- Similarly, packaging has become a focal point among marketers, especially at higher price points.

FUN FACT

THE TWO MONTHS FOR HIGHEST VODKA CONSUMPTION ARE DECEMBER AND JULY

IMPORTANT DATES IN VODKA HISTORY

1782

The first industrial distillery is opened in Poland, in Kresy, the eastern part of the country, controlled by the Russian empire. It is also around this time that producers begin making vodka from various unusual substances besides grain and potatoes.

1917

Commercial vodka is brought to America by émigré Rudolph Kunetchansky, who fled the Russian Revolution.

1960s

Vodka sales soar as a new generation of Americans discovers cocktails like the Moscow Mule and begin mixing vodka with fruit juices and tonic.

VODKA BY THE NUMBERS

VODKA REMAINS TOP DOG, COMMANDING

32%

SHARE OF SPIRITS CONSUMPTION IN THE U.S. IN 2015

THE CATEGORY HAS DECLINED SLIGHTLY OVER PAST FEW YEARS, BUT STILL LEADS WHISKEY BY MORE THAN

11 MILLION CASES

THE DECLINE IN VODKA IS IN THE FLAVORED SECTOR MORE THAN NEUTRAL

FLAVORED VODKA SALES WERE DOWN

↓ -5.9% IN 2015

SOURCE: 2016 IWSR US BEVERAGE ALCOHOL REVIEW

SELLING POINTS:

- As the most mixable spirit, it will never go out of style.
- Every home bar needs vodka—at least one. That's also why vodka makes a great gift.
- Because vodka is essentially neutral, buying by the label is as risk-free as any spirits category gets.
- Craft spirit producers have brought an artisanal edge to a spirit that was once in danger of being commoditized. Consumers are paying a premium for vodkas they perceive as hand-crafted with a good story behind them.



VODKA QUOTABLES

“Money, like vodka, turns a person into an eccentric.”

— Anton Chekhov

“The first glass of vodka goes down like a post, the second like a falcon and the third like a little bird.”

— Russian Saying

“A glass for the vodka, for the beer a mug, and for the table, cheerful company.”

— Russian Toast

FEATURED BRAND
KHORTYTSA



AUTHENTIC UKRAINE

Much is made of vodka's deep roots in Eastern Europe. In an interesting twist, Khortytza is making the most of both Ukraine's authentic distilling legacy and state-of-the-art technology.

- Distilled in Ukraine using modern techniques amid a culture with centuries of vodka expertise.
- The Khortytza (Hor-Ti-Tsa) distillery was built from the ground up and named after the island of Khortytza, Ukraine's natural and historical marvel.
- Water passes through silver, platinum and carbon filtration for ideal transparency, stability and taste; the De Luxe goes through an additional quartz filter.
- Third largest global vodka brand; named one of the world's best distilleries at the 2014 New York International Spirits Competition.

As is the case with many vodka producers, Khortytza makes a range of expressions:

Khortytza De Luxe represents the perfect combination of natural ingredients and the purest water; exquisite flavor and soft texture.

Khortytza Platinum has excelled at the Ultimate Spirits Challenge for the past two years; 2015 judges called it “a winner on all levels.” Delicate and balanced, it is perfect for cocktails.

Khortytza Ice is a game-changer: infused with mint, lime and menthol, it delivers exotic flavor and a feeling of coolness; plus the Ice bottle changes from frosted white to deep blue when the vodka is perfectly chilled.

Khortytza Pepper Honey Hot pairs the piquancy of red peppers with sweet honey, and is Ukraine's first vodka with peppercorns in the bottle.



1975

Vodka becomes the best-selling spirit in the U.S., with about 32 million cases sold (less than 2% imported).

2007

In 2007 a group of countries including Poland, Sweden and Lithuania tries to get the EU's definition of vodka changed to exclude any products not made from potatoes or grains. While the effort fails, the regulatory body amends EU law to stipulate that any vodka not derived from spuds or grains must include what it is distilled from on its label, if it is to be sold in the EU.

FLAVORED VODKA 101

Barely half a decade ago, the vodka category's flavored segment seemed to be dominated by headline-grabbing concoctions that infused the spirit with the artificial essences of everything from dessert confections to popular breakfast foods. Whipped cream, blueberry pancakes, marshmallow fluff and gummy bears were all fair game, as far as beverage developers were concerned.

The unconventional flavors, proved—for a little while at least—to be a dependable way for established, mature vodka brands to grab a little more shelf space, and add a little incremental volume to their mostly flat trademarks. For lesser-known brands, it generated press and put them on the radar. But the novelties quickly wore off as consumer tastes evolved. Those brands were good for driving trial, but they generated few repeat purchases.

WHAT WERE THE FIRST FLAVORED VODKAS?

Today when we hear the term “flavored vodkas” we immediately think of products that employ the expertise of flavor houses to approximate the sensory experiences of everything from fruits to those aforementioned indulgent sweets. However, flavored vodka is rooted in the centuries-old Russian and Eastern European tradition of natural vodka infusions. Indigenous fruits—**blackberries** for instance—as well as **roots, herbs** and spices like **ginger, horseradish, dill** and **coriander** are just a few items that have found their way into infusions over the years. One celebrated example is Żubrówka—vodka delicately

flavored with lightly sweet **bison grass**, a grazing favorite of wild bison on the border of Russia and Poland.

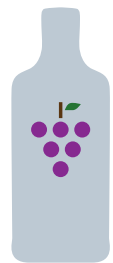
In America, Flavored Vodka as a category started in earnest in the late 1980s, with **citrus** expressions prominent among the earliest commercially successful flavors. The pace and diversity of new expressions picked up in the '90s, to the point where homemade infusions—often on display—became a bar trend. Restaurants like Washington, DC's Russia House and New York City's Ukrainian eatery Korchma Taras Bulba are particularly well known for their infusions, usually served in 2-ounce portions to be sipped neat.

DID YOU KNOW?

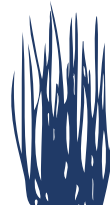
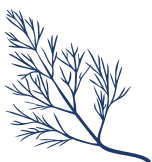
Compared to neutral vodka, flavored vodkas typically are 5% lower in alcohol by volume and 10% lower in proof—70 proof, as opposed to the standard unflavored 80 proof. The lower proof helps ensure that the flavors can be the star, with alcohol more in the background.



UNFLAVORED
STANDARD:
80 PROOF



FLAVORED
STANDARD:
70 PROOF



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WINE ENTHUSIAST RATINGS
SCORE OUT OF 100 POINTS

TITO'S® 95 USA PTS
HANDMADE VODKA

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Grey Goose® FRANCE	84 PTS	Absolut® SWEDEN	84 PTS



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Try American! It's Better.**

————— ★ ————— *Tito*

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FLAVORED VODKA 101

WHAT'S TRENDING NOW?

Despite recent declines in flavored vodka consumption, there's still plenty of opportunity for growth, as producers migrate toward both the tried-and-true and flavors that are trending throughout the drinks and culinary worlds.

- **Citrus fruits** never really go out of style.

Expect more focus on citrus, from classic lemons and limes to one of the most popular go-to fruits across the board: grapefruit. Blood orange is another one that has gained a lot of traction.



- Consumers increasingly are spicing things up, so there seems to be continued potential for **chile pepper infusions**.

On the much cooler side, **cucumber** is very much on trend. **Savory vodkas** in general also can be the perfect base for a Bloody Mary—especially horseradish, dill and peppery versions and, in some cases even bacon.



- **Hybrid**, or **combo**, flavors are becoming a popular way for producers (and marketers) to bring novelty to flavored vodka. Some seemed perfectly logical (strawberry-banana) others more exotic (Cognac and peach).



- Perhaps counterintuitively, emphasis on **natural ingredients** is another rising trend; this reflects the growing “green” awareness of consumers in general, but also, the plethora of kooky flavors makes it easier for products made with organic/all-natural ingredients to stand out.



FLAVORED VODKA BY THE NUMBERS:

12.36 MILLION

9 LITER CASES SOLD IN 2015



SHARE OF TOTAL VODKA VOLUME:

17.3%



FLAVORED VODKA VOLUME PEAKED IN 2013, AT ABOUT

14.5 MILLION CASES

FLAVORED VODKA'S BIGGEST % JUMP WAS FROM 2010-2011:

27.1%



{MEANWHILE, NEUTRAL VODKA GREW JUST 2.1%}

SOURCE: 2016 IWSR US BEVERAGE ALCOHOL REVIEW



WHERE IS ALL THE FLAVORED VOLUME GOING?

And here is where we zoom in on what someday may be seen as flavored vodka's legacy, which is prompting flavor to start flowing through the whiskey category as well. **Flavored whiskey volume was up nearly 7% last year**, according to the Distilled Spirits Council.

SELLING POINTS

- **Flavor is hot**—it's what people want in beverages, whether it's soda, juices, waters or cocktails.



- **Giving a gift?** If the recipient has a favorite sweet, fruit or savory flavor, a flavored vodka should thrill them.

- Flavored vodka's first heyday was the '90s...and still holds some nostalgia power for Boomers.

- Trying to lighten up? Flavored vodkas are **lower in alcohol** than unflavored vodka.

- Flavored vodkas are built for **cocktails**—handmade shelf talkers with recipes can maximize this appeal.



BACK TO BASICS

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THE FRESH, COOL TASTE OF
CUCUMBER WITH A BRIGHT,
CRISP BURST OF LIME FLAVOR

AVAILABLE IN 1.75L, 1L,
750ML, 375ML AND 50ML



2016 FLAVORED VODKA CHART

No spirits category has ever come close to flavored vodka in terms of the speed and volume by which it has grown. Trends heat up, then cool; brands are launched and brands fade away; still, it grows. When we created a flavored vodka chart in 2006, there were 250 products, and in 2010, there were 320. This year, our list has grown to over 500 flavored vodkas. How many of these products do you stock?

APPLE		BERRY	BLUEBERRY/ BLACKBERRY	CHERRY	COCONUT	CRANBERRY	GRAPE	GRAPEFRUIT
Absolut Apple	44° North Mountain Huckleberry			44° North Rainier Cherry	Burnett's Coconut			Absolut Ruby Red
Burnett's Sour Apple	Absolut Berri Açai			Alchemia Wild Cherry Wisniowa	Ciroc Coconut			Belvedere Pink Grapefruit
Ciroc Apple	Belvedere Wild Berry			Burnett's Cherry	Devotion Coconut			Burnett's Ruby Red Grapefruit
Georgi Apple Cider	Burnett's Red Berry			Devotion Wild Cherry	Exclusiv Coconut 5			Charbay Ruby Red Grapefruit
Georgi Green Apple	Ciroc Red Berry			Effen Black Cherry	Finlandia Coconut			Deep Eddy Ruby Red
Ivanabitch Dutch Apple	Cavôda Pink			Georgi Cherry	Georgi Coconut			Finlandia Grapefruit
McCormick Apple	Finlandia Redberry			Grey Goose Cherry Noir	Ivanabitch Coconut			Pinnacle Ruby Red Grapefruit
Pucker Sour Apple Sass	Ivanabitch Blackberry			Ivanabitch Cherry	New Amsterdam Coconut			Shady Fruit Real Ruby Red Grapefruit
Seagram's Green Apple	Ivanabitch Red Berry			Pinnacle Cherry	Pearl Coconut			Skyy Infusions Texas Grapefruit
Skyy Infusions Honeycrisp Apple	Menage à Trois Berry			Pinnacle Cherry Whipped	Pinnacle Coconut			Smirnoff Ruby Red Grapefruit
Smirnoff Green Apple	New Amsterdam Red Berry			Pucker Cherry Tease	Pravda Coconut			Smirnoff Sourced Ruby Red Grapefruit
Smirnoff Sours Green Apple	Pearl Red Berry			Skyy Infusions Cherry	Skyy Infusions Coconut			UV Ruby Red Grapefruit
Stolichnaya Gala Applik	Pinnacle Berry			Smirnoff Cherry	Smirnoff Coconut			
Three Olives Jacked Apple	Pinnacle Red Berry			Sobieski Black Cherry	Sobieski Toasted Coconut			
Van Gogh Wild Appel	Seagram's Red Berry			Stanislav Wild Cherry	Three Olives Coconut Water Elvis Presley			
	Smirnoff Red White & Berry			Stolichnaya Wild Cheri	UV Coconut			
	The Jewel of Russia Berry Infusion			Svedka Cherry	Van Gogh Coconut			
	Three Olives Berry			Three Olives Cherry				
				Van Gogh Black Cherry				

LEMON/LIME/CITRUS	
360 Sorrento Lemon	Pucker Lemonade Lust
Absolut Citron	Ruskova Citron
Belvedere Citrus	Skol Citrus
Burnett's Citrus	Skyy Barcraft Margarita Lime
Charbay Meyer Lemon	Skyy Infusions Citrus
Crop Harvest Earth Meyer Lemon	Smirnoff Citrus
Deep Eddy Lemon	Smirnoff Lime
Exclusiv Limon 2	Smirnoff Sorbet Light Lemon
Fleischmann's Royal Citrus	Sobieski Cytron
Georgi Lemon	Sobieski Lemon Meringue
Grey Goose le Citron	Stanislav Delicate Citron
Hangar 1 Citron "Buddha's Hand"	Stolichnaya Citros
Hangar 1 Kaffir Lime	Svedka Citron
Ivanabitch Lemmon	Three Olives Citrus
Ketel One Citroen	Three Olives Dude
McCormick Citrus	Tru Lemon Organic
Menage à Trois Citrus	UV Citrus
New Amsterdam Citron	UV Lemonade
Pearl Citrus	UV Citrus Yellow
Pinnacle Citrus	Van Gogh Citroen
Pravda Citron	White Nights Lemon
	Zachlawi Platinum VDK Citrus Splash

MANGO
Absolut Mango
Belvedere Mango Passion
Burnett's Mango
Finlandia Mango
Georgi Mango
Ivanabitch Mango
New Amsterdam Mango
Pinnacle Mango
Skyy Infusions Tropical Mango
Smirnoff Mango
Three Olives Mango
Van Gogh Mango

ORANGE	
360 Mandarin Orange	Pinnacle Orange Whipped
Absolut Mandrin	Pravda Orange
Burnett's Orange	Shady Fruit Real Valencia Oranges
Charbay Blood Orange	Skinny Girl Tangerine
Devotion Blood Orange	Skol Orange
Dripping Springs Texas Orange	Skyy Infusions Blood Orange
Finlandia Tangerine	Smirnoff Orange
Fleischmann's Royal Orange	Sobieski Orange
Georgi O Orange	Square One Bergamot Organic
Grey Goose L'Orange	St. George California Citrus
Hangar 1 Mandarin Blossom	Stanislav Mandarin Orange
Hanson of Sonoma Organic Mandarin	Stolichnaya Ohranj
Ivanabitch Orange	Svedka Clementine
Jacquin's Mandarin Orange	Svedka Orange Cream Pop
Ketel One Oranje	Three Olives Orange
McCormick Orange	Three Olives Rangtang
New Amsterdam Orange	Van Gogh Oranje
Pinnacle Mimosa	White Nights Mandarin
Pinnacle Orange	Zachlawi Platinum VDK Orange Swirl

PEACH
360 Georgia Peach
44° North Sunnyslope Nectarine
Absolut Apeach
Belvedere Peach Nectar
Burnett's Peach
Ciroc Peach
Cristal Durazno
Deep Eddy Peach
Exclusiv Peach 7
Georgi Peach
Ivanabitch Peach
New Amsterdam Peach
Pearl Peach
Pinnacle Peach
Pravda Peach
Ruskova Peach
Seagram's Peach
Skyy Infusions Georgia Peach
Smirnoff Peach
Smirnoff Sorbet Light White Peach
Stolichnaya Peachik
Svedka Peach
Three Olives Peach
UV Peach
Van Gogh Cool Peach

PINEAPPLE
Burnett's Pineapple
Ciroc Pineapple
Exclusiv Pineapple 9
Frís Pineapple
Georgi Pineapple
New Amsterdam Pineapple
Pinnacle Pineapple
Skyy Infusions Pineapple
Smirnoff Pineapple
Smirnoff Sourced Pineapple
Three Olives Pineapple
Van Gogh Pineapple

POMEGRANATE
Charbay Pomegranate
Pearl Pomegranate
Pinnacle Pomegranate
Smirnoff Pomegranate
Stolichnaya White Pomegranate
Three Olives Pomegranate
Van Gogh Pomegranate

2016 FLAVORED VODKA CHART

RASPBERRY				HYBRID FRUITS		CHOCOLATE	
Absolut Raspberri				Absolut Cherry Kran	Smirnoff Sorbet Light Pineapple Coconut		
Burnett's Blue Raspberry				Brooklyn Republic Blueberry Coconut	Smirnoff Sorbet Light Raspberry Pomegranate		
Burnett's Raspberry			OTHER FRUITS	Brooklyn Republic Elderflower Apple	Smirnoff Sourced Berry Lemon		
Effen Dutch Raspberry			Absolut Pears	Brooklyn Republic Lychee Lemon	Smirnoff Sourced Cranberry Apple		
Finlandia Raspberry			Burnett's Pear	Brooklyn Republic Passionfruit Pear	Smirnoff Sours Fruit Punch		
Fleischmann's Royal Raspberry			Figenza Fig Flavored	Burnett's Apple Berry	Svedka Grapefruit Jalapeño	CARAMEL/ HONEY	360 Double Chocolate
Georgi Raspberry		WATERMELON/ MELON	Grey Goose La Poire	Burnett's Fruit Punch	Svedka Mango Pineapple	Garvey Caramel	Alchemia Chocolate Czekoladowa
McCormick Raspberry		Burnett's Watermelon	Kai Lychee	Burnett's Pink Lemonade	Svedka Strawberry Lemonade	Khortytssa Honey Hot Pepper	Iceberg Icefusion Chocolate Mint
Pinnacle Raspberry		Georgi Watermelon	Kleiner Feigling Fig	Burnett's Strawberry Banana	Twenty Grand Infused with Cognac Apple	Miodula Honey	Pancraccio Chocolate
Pucker Raspberry Rave		Grey Goose Le Melon	Moses Date (Kosher)	Jacquin's Raspberry Pomegranate	Twenty Grand Infused with Cognac Grape Almondine	Nemiroff Honey Pepper	Pearl Chocolate Covered Cherry
Ruskova Raspberry		Ivanabitch Watermelon	Pearl Plum	Pinnacle Caramel Apple	Twenty Grand Infused with Cognac Maraschino Cherry	Poluger No 4 Honey & Allspice	Pinnacle Chocolate Whipped
Skol Raspberry		McCormick Watermelon	Pinnacle Pear	Pinnacle Cherry Lemonade	UV Pink Lemonade	Smirnoff Karamel	Stolichnaya Chocolat Kokonut
Skyy Infusions Raspberry	STRAWBERRY	Pucker Watermelon Wow	R. Jelinek Plum Bohemia	Pinnacle CranApple	UV Salty Caramel Apple	Smirnoff Kissed Caramel	Stolichnaya Chocolat Razberi
Smirnoff Raspberry	Burnett's Strawberry	Skyy Barcraft Watermelon Fresca	Skyy Barcraft White Sangria	Pinnacle Kiwi Strawberry	Van Gogh Açai Blueberry	Smirnoff Wild Honey	Stolichnaya Colada
Sobieski Raspberry	Georgi Strawberry	Smirnoff Melon	Skyy Infusions Dragon Fruit	Pinnacle Tropical Punch	Volí Raspberry Cocoa Fusion	Sobleski Karamel	Three Olives Chocolate
Stanislav Ruby Raspberry	Skyy Infusions Wild Strawberry	Smirnoff Watermelon	Smirnoff Passion Fruit	Ruskova Orange & Pineapple		Spring 44 Honey	UV Chocolate Cake
Stolichnaya Razberi	Smirnoff Sorbet Light Summer Strawberry	Smirnoff Sours Watermelon	Smirnoff Pear	Smirnoff Sorbet Light Mango Passion Fruit		Stolichnaya Salted Karamel	Van Gogh Dutch Chocolate
Svedka Raspberry	Stolichnaya Strasberi	UV Salty Watermelon	UV Sangria			Van Gogh Dutch Caramel	Van Gogh Rich Dark Chocolate
Three Olives Raspberry	Svedka Strawberry Colada	Van Gogh Melon	Van Gogh Banana				
UV Blue	Three Olives Strawberry						
Van Gogh Raspberry							

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Data compiled from BeverageMedia.com. Product availability may vary by market. Consult your local sales representatives.

DESSERTS/CONFECTIONARY														
	360 Cola	Pinnacle Peachberry Cobbler												
	360 Glazed Donut	Pinnacle Pecan Pie												
	360 Buttered Popcorn	Pinnacle Pumpkin Pie												
	Burnett's Sugar Cookie	Pinnacle Rainbow Sherbet												
VANILLA	Burnett's Whipped Cream	Pinnacle Red Liquorice												
	Chase Marmalade	Pinnacle Strawberry Shortcake												
	Crop Harvest Earth Spiced Pumpkin	Pinnacle Whipped												
	Georgi Whipped Cream	Smirnoff Peppermint Twist												
	Iceberg Icefusion Crème Brûlée	Smirnoff Cinna-Sugar Twist												
	Ivanabitch Whipped Cream	Smirnoff Fluffed Marshmallow	COFFEE											
	Jacquin's Cotton Candy	Smirnoff Iced Cake	Cold House Mocha			TEA								
	Jacquin's Strawberry Shortcake	Smirnoff Root Beer Float	Hanson of Sonoma Organic Espresso			Absolut Wild Tea								
	Jacquin's Whipped Cream	Smirnoff Spiced Root Beer 100°	Lucky Player Café Royale			Belvedere Lemon Tea								
	Lucky Player Candy Apple	Smirnoff Whipped Cream	Smirnoff Dark Roasted Espresso			Burnett's Sweet Tea								
	Lucky Player Meringue Pie	Sobieski Cynamon	Sobieski Espresso			Charbay Green Tea								
	McCormick Whipped	Spud Sweet Potato Pumpkin Spice	Spud Sweet Potato Caramel Macchiato			Deep Eddy Sweet Tea								
	Pearl Wedding Cake	Three Olives Bubble	Stanislav Café Mocha			Devotion Tiki Tea			CUCUMBER					
	Pinnacle Atomic Hot	Three Olives Cake	Three Olives Triple Shot			Firefly Peach Tea			Burnett's Cucumber Lime					
	Pinnacle Cake	Three Olives Loopy	Van Gogh Double Espresso			Firefly Raspberry Tea			Crop Harvest Earth Cucumber					
	Pinnacle Cinnabon	Three Olives Root Beer	Van Gogh Espresso			Firefly Skinny Tea			Effen Cucumber					
	Pinnacle Cookie Dough	Three Olives Tart	Zachlawi Hazelnut Cappuccino			Jeremiah Weed Sweet Tea			Hanson of Sonoma Organic Cucumber					
	Pinnacle County Fair Cotton	UV Cake	Zachlawi Mocha Cappuccino			McCormick Sweet Tea			Iceberg Icefusion Vodka Cucumber					
	Pinnacle Key Lime Whipped	UV Candy Bar	Zachlawi Platinum VDK Cold Brew			Seagram's Sweet Tea			Pearl Cucumber					
	Pinnacle King Cake		Zachlawi Toasted Caramel Cappuccino			Seraphine Chai Tea			Pinnacle Cucumber Watermelon					
						Sweet Carolina Sweet Tea			Prairie Vodka Cucumber					
									Skinnygirl Cucumber					
									Square One Cucumber Organic					
									Svedka Cucumber Lime					
										SAVORY				
										Absolut Cilantro				
										Absolut Peppar				
										Crop Harvest Earth Tomato				
										Hanson of Sonoma Organic Habanero				
										Hophead Hops				
										Pinnacle Habanero				
										Polugar No 2 Garlic & Pepper				
										Polugar No 3 Caraway				
										Sobieski Bizon Grass				
										Spud Heirloom Tomato				
										Spud Red Hot Chili Pepper				
										Square One Basil Organic				
										St. George Green Chile				
										Stolichnaya Hot				
										The Bay Crab Seasoning				
										Tru Garden Organic				
										UV Sriracha				
										Zu Zubrowka Bison Grass				
											MISC.			
											Absolut Hibiskus			
											Absolut Kurant			
											Baltic Mist Gorzka			
											Ciroc Amaretto			
											Exclusiv Rosé 6			
											Exclusiv Vodka XO Napoleon			
											Hanson of Sonoma Organic Ginger			
											Kai Lemongrass			
											Khortytza Ice			
											Pinnacle Amaretto			
											Pinnacle Peppermint Bark			
											Ruskova Elderflower			
											Smirnoff Amaretto			
											Spud Ginger Lemongrass			
											Three Meadows Spirits Peony			
											Valentine White Blossom			
											Van Gogh Mojito Mint			
											Yazi Ginger			
											Zu Zubrowka Bison Grass			

COASTAL FORECAST

INCREASING QUALITY AND DIVERSITY ARE EMERGING IN CHILEAN SAUVIGNON BLANC & PINOT NOIR, DRIVEN BY KEY REGIONS CLOSE TO THE COAST

BY W. R. TISH



Someday, the oft-told tale of Carmenere being identified in Chile may be remembered for an unforeseen plot twist. “Sauvignon Blanc was rediscovered along with Carmenere,” noted Fred Dexheimer, well-traveled Master Sommelier and longtime ambassador for Chilean wines.

What holds these wines together? “All of the Sauvignon Blancs we are trying today are from three different regions, all 15 miles from the coast,” he explained. In essence, the past two decades of viticultural exploration in Chile have brought broad benefits, in the form of “great winemakers and great geologists, figuring out the what where how and why of what to plant.”

Perhaps the greatest benefit of all has been seeing the direct link between Chile’s cool, mostly coastal regions and rising quality across multiple varieties. “The wines of Chile are more energetic than ever,” he offered at the start of the tasting at Beverage Media’s office along with three NYC sommeliers, focusing on Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon.

The somms were: Paul Greico of Terroir wine bars; Luke Boland of La Sirena; and Chris Raftery of Corkbuzz Studios. Following are some of their impressions

and tasting notes from the cool-climate Sauvignon Blanc and Pinot Noir flights, as well as thoughts on Chile overall. (Cabernet will be featured in an upcoming issue.)

SAUVIGNON BLANC

The consensus here was in the diversity of styles. Luke Boland explained, “You had some of the more typical, expected Sauvignon Blanc that was really big and blousy and citrusy and aromatic, and some a bit more restrained, more mineral driven,

almost more of what you would associate with an old-world style.”

“If you lined all three up and said ‘guess what they are,’ I would be stunned if someone said they’re all Sauvignon Blanc,” said Paul Greico. “What is consistent is a good line of acidity for all of them.”

While the Leyda struck tasters as the most typical, the Casa Silva “Cool Coast” was tagged for its distinction. Chris Raftery said, “It almost drank like something Ligurian. It had that really flinty, sea-breezy, kind of thing. It was this very interesting, beachy feel to it, that was really great.”

PINOT NOIR

As a flight, the Pinots were perhaps more surprising, showing a purity of fruit and with each wine punching above its price



Top, opposite: Cool morning mist lifts on Casablanca Valley, one of Chile's emerging coastal wine regions.

Bottom, from left: Panel of sommeliers: Fred Dexheimer, MS; Paul Greico; Luke Boland; and Chris Raftery.



class. “With the Sauvignon Blancs, you always have the common theme of really vibrant, zesty, fresh acidity that was beautiful. It was kind of the same with the reds,” noted Boland, adding, “Nothing here was one-dimensional.”

The Leyda (\$15) and Morandé (\$15), both held their own, showing personality as well as varietal correctness. Raftery was smitten with the Leyda: “It’s a little darker, a little juicier, lot of cranberries—it’s a Thanksgiving wine for me.” A savory, earthy edge proved key for the very drinkable Morandé.

The Valdivieso and Clos des Fous, priced higher, more than lived up to expectations. The former displaying exotic herbs and dried citrus; a “polished but wild feel” for Boland. Though just a few vintages old, the “Subsollum” proved it has the terroir chops to get a table of sommeliers excitedly talking soil, and clones and cool breezes.

IN THEIR WORDS...

▷ **CHRIS RAFTERY:** “For me, the new Chile is going to be about exploring terroir and exploring microclimates and sub-zones and expressing variety above all else while maintaining freshness.”

▷ **LUKE BOLAND:** “In terms of the potential for making really fresh, vibrant white wines, lighter bodied red wines, from what we tasted today, the Chileans can be hugely successful. To me, I think that focusing on some of those misconstrued grape varieties, polishing that up and really honing in on and taking a full hold

of that coastal feel—that lighter style—would be really good.”

▷ **PAUL GREICO:** “When you read about Chile, we all focus on the central valley and closer to the Andes and super hot days and producing a certain style of wine. But now, with movement toward the water, the cooler growing climate throughout the course of the day, but still great luminosity provides an energy into these wines. When you taste them, there’s vibrancy there. Whether that’s reflected through Sauvignon Blanc or Pinot Noir or other so-called cool-climate varietals, it really is exciting.” ■

THE COOL PANEL

SAUVIGNON BLANC

CASA SILVA 2014
“COOL COAST,”
COLCHAGUA VALLEY



Super distinctive, with a seabreeze, salty/savory tang that could transport you to the beach. Memorable. \$20 (Vine Connections)

SANTA RITA 2015
“FLORESTA,”
LEYDA VALLEY



Pungent on the nose and intense on the palate, with a burst of herbs and ripe citrus. Packed; pining for food—maybe grilled fish and citrus salsa. \$25 (Palm Bay)

TERRUNYO 2013
CASABLANCA VALLEY



Rounder, with more subdued fruit, but still bright. Mineral notes made it the most Old World-ish, while the touch of age helped the fruit blossom. One for the list. \$23 (Excelsior)

VIÑA LEYDA 2015
LEYDA VALLEY



Zesty, green, snappy and fresh, with generous citrus fruit and a slight tropical vibe. Great acidity and nice palate weight. Would make a great glass pour. \$16 (Winebow)

PINOT NOIR

CLOS DES FOUS 2013
“SUBSOLLUM,”
CACHAPOAL VALLEY



Light body belies serious vibrancy; rich yet elegant... a “somm wine.” Drinking great now, with textbook Pinot red fruits. \$28 (Vine Connections)

MORANDÉ 2014
CASABLANCA VALLEY



Interesting savory/smoky style; dried herbs and earth as well as a lively spicy quality. Could take a light chill and go great with BBQ. \$15 (V2 Wine Group)

VALDIVIESO 2013
SINGLE VINEYARD
CAUQUENES VALLEY



A complex beauty, with concentrated notes of dried citrus, amaro and fennel; both bright and burnt; great balance of finessed fruit and savory notes. \$25 (Wine Bridge Imports)

VIÑA LEYDA 2015
LEYDA VALLEY



Notes of dark fruit, pepper, cherry and cranberry; some savory elements as well. Fruit here could use more time to resolve, but already juicy and fresh. \$15 (Winebow)



St. Emilion

BORDEAUX MOMENTUM

THE COMPELLING CASE FOR BORDEAUX NOW

BY KRISTEN BIELER



Médoc

Newsflash: Starting in 2020, the Médoc's Cru Bourgeois producers will be splitting their wines into "Cru Bourgeois" and "Cru Bourgeois Supérieur." Riveting news, this is not. In trying to make their wines more accessible (and due to a fair amount of internal squabbling) the Bordelais seem to be endlessly rejiggering their classification systems.

What began as an attempt to build a positive reputation for Médoc producers (those left out of the famous 1855 Classification) morphed into a multi-decade litigation nightmare. Suspended in 2003, Cru Bourgeois was reborn in 2010 after seven years of legal battles (some estates declined to participate out of protest). "Changing classification systems within the weighty history of Bordeaux is difficult and each category is reluctant to lose its advantages," says Crus Bourgeois du Médoc Vice President Francois Nony.

"Today it is becoming more commonplace to go through the courts, which can be long and protracted."

Meanwhile, over on the Right Bank, four lesser-known Côtes regions have banded together to form the Côtes de Bordeaux, in an effort to create a more powerful marketing platform. Critics question if it makes sense to group such a geographically widespread swath of regions under one label.

Drama aside, the real question remains: Will any of this actually make affordably-priced Bordeaux—the vast majority of what the region produces—easier to understand, promote and sell to American consumers?

Perhaps it's best to let the wines speak for themselves. Bordeaux under \$40 retail has never tasted finer—and people are starting to notice. Here are a number of things Bordeaux has going for it today:



The landscape of Bordeaux has been carefully segmented for centuries, and the wines have been meticulously classified. Now, in the 21st century, those systems are being flexed to meet the demands of the global wine market.
Above: a Cru Bourgeois futures tasting.
Right: Château Phélan Ségur, in St. Estèphe.



Cru Bourgeois Really, Actually Means Something

The strict monitoring system implemented with the category's rebirth in 2010 mandates that every estate's wine be tasted blind every year in order to qualify—and the resulting quality surge has been significant. “We’ve never seen such large quantity of chateaux have such an increase of quality in such a short time,” says Frédérique de Lamothe, Director of the Cru Bourgeois Alliance. “You can’t be Cru Bourgeois just because your grandfather was.”

Nony reminds that Cru Bourgeois wines share the same terroir as the Médoc’s famous Cru Classé wines, and producers are required to use estate fruit: “Cru Bourgeois are some of the best Cabernet/Merlot wines in the world at prices primarily in the \$20 to \$30 range. In other parts of the world, some of these wines could be listed as single-vineyard wines, and priced many times higher.”

Imports are increasing, an indicator that buyers are starting to acknowledge the Cru Bourgeois quality seal. “In the US, Cru Bourgeois were often confused with the informal ‘petit châteaux’ category, which had no real quality standard,” Nony describes. “Consumers felt that Bordeaux was an all-encapsulating AOC. Today we see the Cru Bourgeois classification is beginning to have meaning.”

Quality Across Bordeaux Skyrockets

“The quality revolution in Bordeaux over the last decade has been extraordinary,”

says Martin Sinkoff, VP, Director of Marketing, Frederick Wildman & Sons. “Improvements in technology has benefited the first growths all the way down to the entry-level wines from Bordeaux.”

Mary Gorman, a Master of Wine and now Market Advisor on North America for the Bordeaux Wine Council, sees the biggest improvements in the most affordable wines—Bordeaux and Bordeaux Supérieur in particular: “These wines are clean and energetic with a more vibrant fruit expression than traditionally was the case—without losing that Bordeaux backbone of terroir,” she says.

Modern enology and consultants add up to wines with fewer flaws and more fruit purity. Gorman also points to innovative thinking: “There is a whole new generation of young people who have traveled much more than their parents, who have worked harvests in Australia, California, New Zealand or Burgundy and were exposed to different viticultural and winemaking practices.”

Best of all, prices aren’t going up. One great example of this is Saint Estèphe’s Château Phélan Ségur. Since the Gardinier family purchased the estate, they have

“The interest in Bordeaux today is not being driven by the elite names.”

— Patrick Capiello

poured money into the vineyards and winery, and the wines have reached new heights. “This being said, we never had the intention to pass on drastic price increases to our customers,” says Véronique Dausse, Director of Château Phélan Ségur. It remains today an amazing value, a Grand Cru at around \$50 a bottle.

Right Bank Makes Some Noise

Some of the best opportunity for value in Bordeaux is coming from the collective Right Bank sub-regions now known as the Côtes. They formed a union in 2009 to raise visibility. “No one paid attention to Castillon, Cadillac, Bourg, Francs, Blaye, etc. back when all eyes were on the elite producers, but today these outer boroughs are bringing some of the best quality for money in the region,” says Patrick Capiello, owner of Pearl & Ash and Rebelle in New York City.

Côtes de Bordeaux is also luring significant investment from owners of top châteaux in Saint Emilion and Pomerol. “Côtes de Bordeaux has really become a hotbed of dynamism and probably where you have the greatest concentration of organic and Biodynamic growers,” adds Gorman.



Phélan Ségur has a second label called Frank Phélan that sells in the US for about \$25.

THE 267 CRU
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29 MILLION BOTTLES IN 2012,
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26% OF THE MÉDOC'S VINEYARDS.

While the separate Côtes are spread out—Francs and Castillon are located at the eastern end of the Bordeaux region, while Blaye is in the west and Cadillac in the south—they have a fair amount in common: They are Merlot-based, situated on hillside vineyards (a true rarity in Bordeaux), mostly family-run, ready to enjoy on release, and mostly in the \$15-\$20 range.

Somm Love is Back

Falling out of fashion for a time was the best thing that could have happened to Bordeaux, believes Capiello: “A generation of sommeliers didn’t drink these wines and whenever that happens, it benefits a region. Today’s somms reject what they saw from old somms and Bordeaux is hot again as more wine professionals realize how rich in tradition this region is and how food-friendly the wines are.”

Sinkoff has happily witnessed the end to “Bordeaux bashing” amongst younger sommeliers, and recently led a sommelier trip to the region: “There is an equal and opposite reaction—what is bashed becomes interesting,” he believes.

SPOTLIGHT: WHITES



When people think Bordeaux white (if they think about it at all) it’s one of two camps: The top whites of Pessac Léognan or the simple quaffers of Entré-Deux-Mers. Château Smith Haut Lafitte, pictured here, is definitely in the former camp. But a large middle ground is home to a growing number of excellent wines. “It’s more diverse than ever, and an increasing amount of white is being made all over Bordeaux,” says Mary Gorman. As many appellations don’t allow for white wine, much of the good stuff goes under the humble Bordeaux Blanc designation. Look also for big quality strides in Entre-Deux-Mers whites as well.



Bordeaux’s Right Bank is famous for Pomerol and St. Emilion, but owners of châteaux in those areas are now investing in properties in the newly configured Côtes de Bordeaux.

IN 2015,
56% OF THE BORDEAUX WINES
IMPORTED TO THE U.S. WERE
BORDEAUX/BORDEAUX SUPERIEUR,
14% WERE DRY WHITE,
15% (RIGHT BANK – COTES
+ ST. EMILION, POMEROL,
FRONSAC + SATELLITES).

The Rise of the Small Estate

Small, little-known estates account for over 90% of the wine produced in Bordeaux. Top growths account for only 3%. Yet Gorman reports the number one reason people list for not buying Bordeaux is because it’s too expensive; that it’s all investment-grade wine. “In the press, Bordeaux is still ruled to an extent by the top estates and we are working hard to change this conversation,” Gorman states.

Capiello has observed quite clearly that the small, family-run estates are making the wines today’s sommeliers are intrigued by: “The interest in Bordeaux today is not being driven by the elite names. When a region is dominated by a few top producers, it muddies the pond of what that region actually is, which was the case here for so long, but it’s changing now.”

They are Easier to Find

In many cases, Bordeaux has been notoriously hard to track down. Over 70% of Bordeaux wines still sell through the négociant system which means lots of middlemen and multiple importers. This lack of exclusivity is a problem when it comes to marketing and building a brand.

Yet Gorman sees a growing number of chateaux today avoiding the négociant system, going direct to U.S. importers with regional and national availability.

“It used to be there were one or two specialists, but today more major distributors carry very good Bordeaux, and the interest in organics is picking up, too,” says Capiello. “There is a much clearer path to market for so many of these wines today with many more exclusives.”

Frederick Wildman is one example: The company massively beefed up its Bordeaux offerings in 2009 when it partnered with Compagnie Medocaine, a leading Bordeaux negotiant. “Having available stocks of Bordeaux on our shores has really helped the category—restaurants and retailers don’t want to buy overseas,” says Sinkoff.

As Futures Wane, Value Offerings Excite

The legendary futures (*en primeur*) campaign—via which investors can buy up Bordeaux before it’s bottled—used to be a buzzed-about annual ritual. This past campaign for the promising 2015 vintage failed to drum up the excitement many had hoped for. The *en primeur* thrill may be gone. Wine Spectator noted recently: “Since the 2009 vintage, négociants are holding large stocks of past vintages and American retailers are wondering if their customers truly want classified-growth Bordeaux anymore.” And if they still do want to spend big bucks on famous names, why sink it into wine to be delivered two years from now when other fine vintages can be had right now?

Some speculate that moderately priced, well-reviewed, ready-to-drink Bordeaux is stealing futures’ thunder. “There is a newfound confidence among the smaller more modest winegrowers, who for a long time have existed in the shadow of the great chateaux,” says Nony.

And in post-Recession America, there is a sense of discovery attached to great wine values. Capiello has about 300 Bordeaux on his list and many are under \$75. A lot of his affordable Bordeaux even have some bottle age; he offers a 2006 for \$35, for example.

Martin Sinkoff adds: “The sweet spot for Bordeaux—where the region truly excels at value—is under the \$100 on a restaurant list. Few other regions could possibly complete.” ■

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CRAFT'S STAYING POWER

THINK THERE ARE TOO MANY LABELS OUT THERE? WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN...

BY JACK ROBERTIELLO



Overcrowded shelves, you say? The proliferation of new distilleries and brands may seem already to have created an bulging-at-the-seams market, but there are plenty of signs that the expansion has only just begun. As more states see the value in changing laws to ease the way for these small spirits businesses to open and, crucially, to sell wares directly to visitors, industry watchers can only expect newer to follow the new.

Currently it's difficult to pinpoint its size, but according to the recently launched Craft Spirits Data Project [CSDP, led by the American Craft Spirits Association (ASCA), International Wine and Spirits Research, and Park Street], craft spirits represent about 3.8 million of the nearly 211 million cases of spirits sold annually in the U.S., with the average craft distiller selling about 3,200 cases per year here—tiny compared to the 80 percent of volume the top 15 suppliers represent. Today there are more than 1,300 active craft spirits producers operating, with the number of production facilities in the U.S. more than tripling since 2007.

Above: An ACSA 2016 Award plaque; filling bottles of Aviation Gin at House Spirits in Portland, OR; Bayou Rum barrelhouse in Lacassine, LA. **Left:** checking the still at House Spirits.

Says the non-profit's ACSA Executive Director Margie A. S. Lehrman, whose organization now boasts about 300 members: "We are only at the beginning of the craft spirits movement. The interest in local products, this vibe of those spirits being more hip, and people wanting something that's unique is just going to help."

When looked at from another angle, craft spirits are already bigger; a recent report by Goldman Sachs predicted that consumer mega-trends toward authenticity, quality and premiumization means craft spirits could more than double volume to 11% by 2020. Definition plays into this, as Goldman includes such brands as Tito's Handmade Vodka and other craft-scaled spirits owned by major companies. By contrast, the CSDP follows ACSA guidelines, including only distillers whose volume is below 316,000 cases, and which are independently owned and operated, with no more than 25% capital and operating control coming from a non-craft producer.

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Washington's Woodinville, currently selling out all they make within the state, and Bayou rum from Louisiana Spiritis are brands poised to explode. Being able to serve not only samples but also cocktails, has proven critical for many craft distillers. Pictured here: cocktails available at Far North Spiritis, in Hallock, MN, not far from the Canadian border.

Local Magic

Either way, most retailers expect to be taking on more new distiller products. Says Josh Hammond, President of Buster's Liquors and Wines in Memphis, "I think the best way to look at what's happening is to take a quick glimpse at the craft beer industry. In a matter of years it's gone from 200 or so to more than 4,000 brewers, more than pre-Prohibition." He notes Pyramid Distillery as one of the local distillery success stories.

Most retailers, when asked about small distillers, cite how customers are attracted to local brands with interesting stories. "It all comes down to people wanting to try something new and exciting, and everybody is in favor around here of helping someone local," says Greg Rixson, General Manager of the Grand Forks unit of the Happy Harry's Bottle Shops chain in North Dakota. At their stores, craft brands get marked on the shelves with starbursts to help interested customers locate them.

Rixson points out that even in the Midwest, the eagerness of bartenders to experiment and serve the new and unique, along with customer interest in cocktails, drives interest in the unusual local spirits. "For instance, there's a small Minnesota distillery, Far North, that's very big for us, a complete field to glass farm operation where they grow their own grains and they make

gin, vodka, spiced rum and they're working on a Minnesota rye. They've been out working with bartenders and restaurants, creating their reputation."

The Big Picture

According to former Maker's Mark distiller and consultant Dave Pickerell, who has built or advised about 60 small distilleries, few craft spirits will surpass the 30,000 case range, although some are better positioned than others for growth. "There are basically three groups of small distillers," he says. "The lion's share are underfunded businesses who are making spirits just because they can, who have cobbled together a nice business and don't need much, and most won't sell very much. The second group is trying to make a family business grow and need to break even and make money fairly quickly, and they are likely only to be regional. And then there's a small handful of very well funded companies, and they'll provide the next big brands on the horizon." He cites Washington's Woodinville Whiskey Co., currently selling out everything they make within Washington state, and Bayou Rum as brands poised to explode.



Dave Pickerell has helped set up dozens of small distilleries.

Huber's Starlight Distillery in Indiana, with product sold in nine states, is one of those farm business distilleries, with an established winery, fruit orchards and fields of grain ready for distillation. Now the Chair of the Distilled Spirits Council's 138-member small distiller group, Ted Huber says the changing of laws in Indiana was key to their growth, in

terms of being able to offer visitors tastes and especially cocktails at the distillery. "We had to be able to have the ability to sell directly to visitors and not only pour spirits but to serve them in cocktails. We're very niche—a large farm making brandies and growing unique corn—and part of our appeal lies in people touring the distillery and the fields. People are able to see and smell the orchards—it has a major impact, just as it did for wineries in the 1990s."

In fact, estimates are that direct shipping and tasting rooms currently sell more craft product than bars and retailers.

Pickerell says rather than craft, he prefers the term "small and independent" to describe the current crop of little guys. "They don't have a corner on craft and many of the large well-known distillers are nothing but craft." He mentions that some now revered small whiskey makers made awful stuff on their first pass, but have since figured out their distillation practices.

Hammond agrees. "It's a blurry area for consumers and retailers; what makes it craft? Is it craft when moonshine is made with bubblegum flavor?"

Pickerell believes the small guys realize that their existence depends on their ability to self-distinguish. "Making something that's exactly like Maker's Mark isn't going to sell anything," says Pickerell, "if for no other reason than they have to charge more because of economies of scale. But make something different—using a Sauternes finish or Madeira cask or second barrel—or do things to change the texture, character and quality that the big guys maybe never thought of. Then maybe they will be able to last." ■

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COOL

CALI

SOUTH OF THE BAY, COASTAL WINDS CREATE VINEYARD HOTSPOTS

BY JIM CLARKE

Assumptions are a funny thing. “I think it was in 2000 that I met Jim Clendenen and tasted the wines of Sanford & Benedict,” says Rajat Parr, Wine Director of the Michael Mina Group. “They were so fresh and vibrant. I was totally confused, because I had the perception that Santa Barbara was a warm place, but it’s really quite cool.”

Parr isn’t the only person to assume that California, especially south of San Francisco, was all sunshine and palm

trees, but today California’s cool climate wines are finally having their day in the sun. It’s true on the North Coast, too. “People call it ‘refrigerated sunshine,’ but it’s really about the Pacific Ocean,” says Jasmine Hirsch. Hirsch Vineyards, on the Sonoma Coast, is just three miles from the ocean.

As anyone who’s ever dipped a toe in those coastal waters can attest, the Pacific is definitely chilly, owing to currents moving south from Alaska. Vineyards close to the ocean profit from it, as do

those further inland when valleys and mountain ranges funnel that cool air off the ocean, as they do in Anderson Valley, Arroyo Seco and Santa Barbara.

Trial & Error & Trial

While Napa and other, warmer areas found their vinous identity relatively quickly, recognizing the virtues of these cooler areas took longer. Jerry Lohr, one of the early leaders of the Central Coast, didn’t realize what he was dealing with

“People call it
‘refrigerated sunshine,’
but it’s really about
the Pacific Ocean.”

— Jasmine Hirsch



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¹Consumer label test conducted by wine opinions, 1/8/16 (n=612, 40% respondents - millennials)

²Nielsen total US XAOC dollar sales 26 wks ending 12/05/15; Lifestyle segment includes 72 brands driven by packaging/brand/label

³Nielsen total XAOC 26 wks ending 12/5/15; "Dark Label Index" includes 23 popular brands featuring black or dark labels

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when he first planted in the Arroyo Seco back in the 1970s. “Jerry planted several different varieties, Chardonnay and Cab and other varieties,” says J. Lohr Vineyards & Wines COO Jeff Meier, “but it was much cooler than anyone thought. After three or four years he realized it was too cool; the Merlot never set, the Cabernet never ripened.” Lohr replanted to Chardonnay, Riesling, and a couple other, more appropriate varieties.

For a long time these vineyards went unrecognized, as many of the Central Coast’s grapes went into cross-regional blends, but today more and more wineries are based there, with Pinot Noir and Chardonnay as their calling cards. But the cool conditions are more varied than that suggests.

Steve Clifton came across Santa Barbara and the Sta. Rita Hills in particular in the 1990s: “In northern Italy you have a cool climate in Alba from the mountains, with a warm element coming up from the Mediterranean. I wanted to find places where the same battle is taking place between a cooling element and a warming element. In the Sta. Rita Hills you can take the cool climate thing and expand it to find the pocket for the thing you want to grow.”

For Clifton’s Palmina brand, that was northern Italian varieties like Pinot Grigio, Barbera and Nebbiolo. However, finding the best spots can be hampered by growers’ economics. “You see Grüner Veltliner and other things popping up in the Sta. Rita Hills, but it’s really hard when Chardonnay goes for \$3,500/ton.”

Parr sees potential for varieties like Chenin Blanc and Trousseau, if consumer education can maintain a market for them.



Cool in Control

There’s plenty of room for stylistic variety, too. Unlike in many European regions, “we have a really big picking window,” Hirsch explains. “At 12-13% alcohol, the grapes are ripe enough, and then there are six to eight weeks of more sunshine. Alcohol can be 12.5% up to the 14s and 15s. We have choice and freedom most years.”

Even without a long hang time the wines may take on an unexpected richness. “In Arroyo Seco we can get winds up stronger than 20mph six to eight hours a day,” says Meier. “It slows ripening and extends the growing season, which lets Chardonnay take on layers of palate richness, as the fruit starts making glycerol instead of sugars, while keeping the high acids and low pH.”

Five years ago, Hirsch and Parr actually created a non-profit organization, In Pursuit of Balance (IPOB), to encourage and promote more restrained wines. Most, if not all, of the



Top: J. Lohr’s Fog’s Reach Vineyard, Greenfield, Arroyo Seco AVA. Jerry Lohr was among the first to plant and replant—pairing the right varieties with the cool coastal pockets. The J. Lohr Vineyard Series showcases the best fruit from small vineyard enclaves from Napa Valley down through the Central Coast.

36 members worked in cool-climate areas, including Hirsch Vineyards and Parr’s two projects, Sandhi and Domaine de la Côte.

Parr was once vocal about his preference for lower alcohol wines, but today his emphasis is on acidity. From a sommelier point of view, he says the acidity opens up more possibilities for food pairing. “I see acidity as key. The goal is more acidity, vibrancy, and balance, but you can have that at 12% and at 15%.” While IPOB’s message has been contentious at times, and was seen by some as a rejection of bigger wines that were favored by some critics, Hirsch and Parr announced in May that the group would cease its official operations at the end of 2016. “This discussion about balance and wine’s place at the dinner table has become a common part of the conversation about California wine all over the world,” says Hirsch. That’s cool. ■



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2016 ULTIMATE SPIRITS CHALLENGE

SHAKES AND STIRS



In March 2016, Ultimate Spirits Challenge™ (USC) again thought outside the competition box by gauging the mixability of spirits in selected classic cocktails. This was in addition to evaluating them served neat against their categorical peers. To further broaden USC's evaluation data for distillers, importers, and suppliers, the star-studded USC judging panels tested hundreds of spirits in appropriate cocktails over multiple sessions at the Ultimate Beverage Challenge Evaluation Center in Hawthorne, NY.

The identical recipe was painstakingly measured, including dilution, in milliliters for each cocktail by world-class professional bartenders, such as Sean Kenyon, Leo DeGroff, and Troy Clarke, in every suitable category to ensure fairness. All Gins were tasted in a Tom Collins; Tequilas in a Classic Margarita; North American Whiskeys in a Ward Eight; World Whiskies in a Rusty Nail; Brandy and Cognac in Sidecar; Pisco in Pisco Punch; Vodka in a Cosmopolitan; light Rums in Hemingways and older Rums in Mai Tais; and Dry Vermouths in a 50:50 Martini and Sweet Vermouths in a Reverse Manhattan.

Each cocktail was judged blind individually, accompanied by a glass of the spirit poured neat next to it. Cocktails were scored on a 1-to-5 star scale, with 2 ½ to 3 stars being thought Delicious, 3 ½ to 4 stars Very Delicious, and 4 ½ to 5 stars Drop Dead Delicious.

Said USC Judging Chairman F. Paul Pacult, "For the second year in a row, USC's cocktail inclusion brought an exciting, practical, and vital aspect to our competitive spirits analyses. As the only major spirits competition in North America to include mixability evaluations as part of the entry fee, USC's findings provide marketers with valuable insights as to how their spirits perform in classic cocktails. What's not to like about having expert analysis by this generation's A-list cocktail judges: Jeff Bell, Jacques Bezuidenhout, Tad Carducci, Don Lee, Andy Seymour, Joaquin Simo, Paul Tanguay, Francis Schott, and David Wondrich? Marketers and producers should never forget that spirits aren't only consumed neat. Consequently, their inclusion in category appropriate cocktails to gauge their mixability is paramount to their overall purpose and success."

HERE ARE ALL THE RESULTS FOR SPIRITS SCORED 4 ½ TO 5 STARS, RATED AS DROP DEAD DELICIOUS:

BRANDY/COGNAC: SIDECAR

- ★★★★★ 5 Stars
- Leyrat X.O Elite Cognac
 - Cognac Frapin VSOP Grande Champagne Cognac
 - E & J VS American Brandy

- ★★★★★ 4.5 Stars
- Courvoisier XO Cognac

PISCO: PISCO PUNCH

- ★★★★★ 4.5 Stars
- Alto del Carmen Essence of Muscat Pisco
 - Pisco Porton Acholado Pisco

CALVADOS: BRANDY DAISY

- ★★★★★ 5 Stars
- Christian Drouin XO Calvados

- ★★★★★ 4.5 Stars
- Christian Drouin Selection Calvados

GIN: TOM COLLINS

- ★★★★★ 5 Stars
- Stonecutter Spirits Single Barrel Gin
 - Plymouth Gin

- ★★★★★ 4.5 Stars
- The West Winds Gin "The Cutlass"
 - Beefeater London Dry Gin
 - Fifty Pounds London Dry Gin
 - Fords Gin London Dry Gin
 - Bombay Sapphire East Gin
 - Booth's Cask Mellowed London Dry Gin

RUM - LIGHT: HEMINGWAY

- ★★★★★ 5 Stars
- Cane Run Number 12 Blend Rum

RUM - DARK: MAI TAI

- ★★★★★ 5 Stars
- Marauda Steelpan Rum
 - PARCE 12 Years Old Rum
 - Appleton Estate Special Rum
 - Cruzan Single Barrel Rum

- ★★★★★ 4.5 Stars
- Damoiseau XO Rhum Agricole
 - Don Q Signature Release Single Barrel 2005 10 Years Old Rum
 - Ron Viejo de Caldas 3 Years Old Rum

TEQUILA: CLASSIC MARGARITA

- ★★★★★ Stars
- Década Single Estate Blanco Tequila
 - Pueblo Viejo Añejo Tequila
 - Blue Nectar Silver Tequila
 - Chinaco Añejo Tequila
 - Corazon Blanco Tequila
 - Santera Reposado Tequila
 - Blue Nectar Founder's Blend Añejo Tequila

WHISK(E)Y - NORTH AMERICA: WARD EIGHT

- ★★★★★ 5 Stars
- Knob Creek 9 Years Old Kentucky Straight Bourbon
 - Old Forester Signature Kentucky Straight Bourbon
 - Clyde May's Bourbon

- ★★★★★ 4.5 Stars
- Wild Turkey Rare Breed Bourbon
 - Barrell Bourbon Batch 006 Straight Bourbon
 - Blanton's Original Single Barrel Kentucky Straight Bourbon
 - Eagle Rare Single Barrel 10 Years Old Kentucky Straight Bourbon
 - Old Forester Birthday Bourbon 2015 Kentucky Straight Bourbon
 - Hillrock Solera Aged Bourbon
 - Hirsch Small Batch Reserve Straight Bourbon
 - Knob Creek Single Barrel Reserve 9 Years Old Bourbon
 - Hochstadter's Vatted Straight Rye Whiskey

WHISK(E)Y - WORLD: RUSTY NAIL

- ★★★★★ 5 Stars
- Powers Signature Release Blended Irish Whiskey
 - Highland Park 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisk
 - Oban Little Bay Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Highland Park 15 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Oban 14 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky

- Old Pulteney Navigator Single Malt Scotch Whisky
- Dalwhinnie 15 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky

- ★★★★★ 4.5 Stars
- Redbreast 15 Years Old Irish Pot Still Whiskey
 - Middleton Barry Crockett Legacy Irish Pot Still Whiskey
 - Knappogue Castle 14 Years Old Single Malt Irish Whiskey
 - Buchanan's Deluxe 12 Years Old Blended Scotch Whisky
 - Aberlour A'bunadh Batch 52 Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Bunnahabhain 12 Years Old Islay Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - The Glenlivet Founder's Reserve Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Sia Blended Scotch Whisky
 - Cutty Sark Prohibition Edition Blended Scotch Whisky
 - The Glenlivet Nadurra First Fill Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - anCnoc Rascan Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Johnnie Walker Green Label 15 Years Old Blended Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Tullibardine 500 Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Ardbeg 10 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Aberlour 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Dewar's White Label Blended Scotch Whisky
 - Old Pulteney 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Glenmorangie Original 10 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky

VERMOUTH - DRY: 50:50 MARTINI

- ★★★★★ 5 Stars
- Martini Riserva Speciale Ambrato Dry Vermouth

VERMOUTH - SWEET: REVERSE MANHATTAN

- ★★★★★ 5 Stars
- La Quintinye Vermouth Royal Rouge Sweet Vermouth

- ★★★★★ 4.5 Stars
- del Professore Rosso Sweet Vermouth
 - Martini Rosso Sweet Vermouth

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new
products

1. NEW BACARDÍ FLAVORS: RASPBERRY & GRAPEFRUIT

Bacardí is aiming to jazz up the summer cocktail scene with two new flavored rums: Bacardí Grapefruit is a white rum infused with pink grapefruit flavors to create a sour and semi-sweet fresh taste. Bacardí Raspberry is infused with citrus and raspberry flavors to create a mouthwatering blend of sweet and tart. Both new flavors are now available in 750ml, 50ml, 200ml, 375ml, 1L and 1.75L sizes; and both are being promoted via social media with signature punch recipes.

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

4. ORPHAN BARREL 'RHETORIC' 22YO BOURBON

Diageo's Orphan Barrel line of rare whiskies, created with the goal of sharing lost barrels with discerning consumers, has added Rhetoric 22-Year-Old Bourbon. Aged one year longer than last year's Rhetoric 21-Year-Old, this release (the eighth Orphan Barrel overall) is slightly more mature. Remaining barrels of Rhetoric will continue to be aged and re-released annually, allowing aficionados to collect the series and compare the different ages side-by-side. Mash: 86% corn, 8% barley, 6% rye. 90.4 proof.

\$ SRP: \$110
orphanbarrel.com

2. CANADIAN CLUB 100% RYE

Bucking the Canadian tradition of producing whisky labeled rye but featuring only a small percentage of the grain in the mash, Canadian Club has launched a 100% Rye Whisky. One of the few premium all-rye whiskies on the market, the new release delivers flavors of caramel, vanilla and oak, leading into a spicy but balanced finish. It debuted to acclaim in Canada in 2014. Bottled at 80 proof, it can be enjoyed neat, on the rocks or in cocktails.

\$ SRP: \$19.99
canadianclub.com

5. KING MALBEC 2014

Guarachi Wine Partners has launched King Malbec, a fresh brand of Argentine Malbec targeting millennials. Crafted by well-known Argentine winery Bodega Norton, King Malbec playfully dubs itself the "almighty sovereign of the vines" and the packaging features royal caricatures that honor Mendoza, the "kingdom" of Malbec. The deep-red 2014 100% Malbec has aromas of ripe red fruits, cassis and pepper; the juicy palate has friendly tannins and spicy notes.

\$ SRP: \$12
guarachiwinepartners.com

3. OAK VINEYARDS 2014 RED BLEND

At {Oak Vineyards}, the motto "Have fun, life is short" translates into their wines, which are crafted with the philosophy of minimal intervention. Crush it, ferment it, bottle it... boom—great wine for everyday enjoyment! Now sporting a new label, the {Oak Vineyards} line features signature California varietals as well as this dry 2014 Red Blend, showing aromas of dark fruit, coffee and vanilla and flavors of cherry, blueberry and plum. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

\$ SRP: \$6.99
broncowine.com

6. NEWCASTLE 'BEST OF BRITAIN' 12-PACK

Newcastle Brown Ale has introduced a third, limited-edition variety pack brewed in collaboration with Newcastle's sister brewery, Caledonian, one of the oldest and most respected breweries in the UK. Available now, Newcastle's Variety Pack Batch #3 will include the brand's new Caley Amber Ale (6.5% ABV, 26 IBUs) in combination with returning, limited edition Newcastle British Pale Ale (5.8% ABV, 39 IBUs) and flagship Newcastle Brown Ale (4.7% ABV, 18 IBUs).

heinekenusa.com



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7. TAKA 2015 SAUVIGNON BLANC

True to the terroir of Marlborough, New Zealand, the 2015 TAKA Sauvignon Blanc is full of bright tropical, melon and citrus notes. A juicy mid-palate, packed full of delicious tropical and citrus notes, is combined with a lovely fresh, mouth-watering acidity. It's lovely as an aperitif, and very versatile with food, especially seafood dishes, chicken/pork dishes and fresh, leafy green or pasta salads. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

\$ SRP: \$16.99
broncowine.com

10. ZUCCA RABARBARO

New in the fast-growing bitters category, the amaro Zucca Rabarbaro has launched nationwide, marketed by Disaranno International. Based on rare Chinese rhubarb and natural herbs, the unique, bittersweet taste of the century-old elixir is especially popular among mixologists. The newly launched Zucca Rabarbaro has a higher alcohol content (30% ABV), allowing for the digestif to act as a cocktail base or even be enjoyed neat. Founded by Ettore Zucca in 1845, and re-discovered by descendant Carlo Zucca in 1919, this unique liqueur is now poised for discovery here.

\$ SRP: \$31.99
zucca.it

8. THE GLENROTHES PEATED CASK RESERVE

On the heels of launching The Glenrothes' Reserve Collection last year, Anchor Distilling is introducing a new non-age-statement single malt from the Speyside distillery: Peated Cask Reserve. For this expression, The Glenrothes selected the 1992 single malt and gave it a temporary home in a cask hailing from peaty Islay, thereby giving the whisky a kiss of peat smoke. Malt Master Gordon Motion describes the whisky as "lemon fruitiness, spicy and deliciously smoky." 80 proof.

\$ SRP: \$54.99
anchordistilling.com

11. THREE THIEVES RED BLEND

Three Thieves line has added a Red Blend, composed of 37% Zinfandel, 32% Merlot, 20% Cabernet Sauvignon and 11% Syrah. The new blend joins Chardonnay, Pinot Grigio, Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon offerings in the Three Thieves lineup, which is marketed nationally by Trincherio Family Estates. The Red Blend is fruity and rich, with berry flavors and toasty, sweet oak notes that linger to a smooth finish. Three Thieves also produces Bandit wines in Tetra Pak.

\$ SRP: \$7.99
threethieveswine.com

9. INTRINSIC 2014 CABERNET SAUVIGNON

Ste. Michelle Wine Estates has launched Intrinsic, a "raw yet elegant" Cabernet Sauvignon from Columbia Valley (Washington) that was produced using "extreme" extended maceration. The young wine stayed in contact with the grape skins for nine months after harvest (typical time is one month). This prolonged contact aims to add depth and concentration, while developing a smooth texture. The label was designed by Brooklyn street artist Zimer, celebrating the urban cities where wine is often enjoyed.

\$ SRP: \$22
intrinsicwineco.com

12. ASTÉLIA 2015 ROSÉ

Languedoc producer Domaines Paul Mas has created a new rosé: Astélia. It is named after *vigneron* Jean-Claude Mas's daughters—Astrid, Elisa and Apolline—and the Astélia label depicts an image of the three girls. The 2015 blend of Mourvèdre, Cinsault, and Grenache and Syrah, showing notes of cherry and red fruits, was sourced from across 12 estates. Varieties were vinified separately before blending, and aged on the lees for up to 40 days.

\$ SRP: \$17
palmbay.com

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new
productsMAKEOVERS &
LIMITED EDITIONS

1. COURVOISIER COGNAC

The rich purple and gold of Courvoisier's new label evoke modernity and luxury, but also the timeless character of the brand's 200-year legacy. The makeover also creates a subtle distinction between the three marques, appearing increasingly more intricate based on the expressions' ages. Though the VS and XO retained their shapes, VSOP is no longer presented in a Josephine bottle, allowing the bartenders and consumers to easily differentiate the expressions.

\$ SRP: VS \$30 / VSOP \$40 / XO \$140
globe courvoisier.com

4. KORBEL 'SUMMER SPARKLE'

Bright blue hues and twinkles reminiscent of sun rays adorn Korbel California Champagne's new limited-edition "Summer Sparkle" bottle. Inside is Korbel Extra Dry, the second most popular expression from the Sonoma-based winery and the perfect ingredient for crafting summer cocktails because of its balance and fruit-forward style. Its light flavors also pair easily with salads with sweet, fruit-based dressings or with spicy foods, especially dishes that use cilantro, ginger or chiles.

\$ SRP: \$13.99 (same as regular Korbel Extra Dry)
globe korbel.com

2. ESPORÃO'S MONTE VELHO

One of the best-selling brands in Portugal, Monte Velho is celebrating 25 years with a sleek yet traditional redesign. New packaging for the 2015 vintage of Monte Velho White and Red was inspired by customary Alentejo "mantas," or rugs, an integral part of the region's cultural identity. The gold, printed pattern of mantas ties the wines more closely to the region, as is explained on labels for both the White and Red. Produced and marketed by Herdade do Esporão in Alentejo.

\$ SRP: \$12
globe esporao.com/en

5. ZAC POSEN FOR ECCO DOMANI

Fashion meets fruit (again!) in the limited-edition design of Ecco Domani Pinot Grigio by Zac Posen. The stylish bottle reflects Posen's rich relationship with Ecco Domani, which stretches back to 2002 when the designer received the inaugural Ecco Domani Fashion Foundation Award. Posen also did a redesign of the easy-drinking Pinot Grigio in May 2015. Beyond the wine glass, Ecco Domani has contributed more than \$1.8 million to support up-and-coming designers.

\$ SRP: \$12 (same as regular Ecco Domani)
globe eccodomani.com

3. KNAPPOGUE CASTLE IRISH SINGLE MALTS

The new packaging for Knappogue single malts (12-year Single Malt Irish Whiskey; 14-year Twin Wood Single Malt Irish Whiskey; 16-year Twin Wood Single Malt Irish Whiskey) puts fresh emphasis on the 1467 castle in County Clare, Ireland, after which the brand is named. The rounded bottle shape, aqua blue color and combination of modern and traditional fonts also work to make the bottle stand out from the crowd of traditional whiskeys.

\$ SRP: 12YO \$42 / 14YO \$59.99 / 16YO \$100
globe knappoguewhiskey.com

6. LANCERS ROSÉ & WHITE

First conceived in 1944 in Portugal, Lancers was originally packaged in highly identifiable, painted clay "crock" bottles. Lancers Rosé and Lancers White wines have now reverted back to this concept, distinguished by rustic red and deep green coloring. The new packaging is a modern take, however, featuring environmentally friendly glass bottles with a plastic sleeve that offers protection from sunlight, helping to preserve the wine's fresh, fruity character.

\$ SRP: \$6.99
globe palmbay.com

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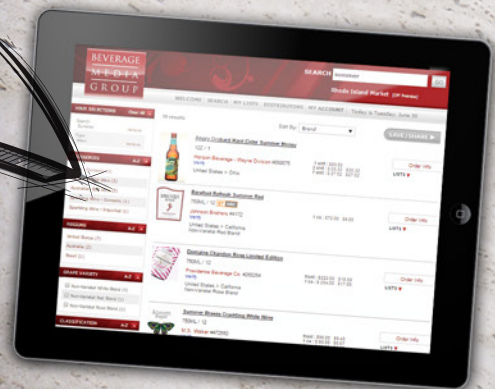
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