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THE BEVERAGE JOURNAL

MAY 2016



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GO TOP SHELF

SWEET BORDEAUX
SURPRISING RANGE,
LONG OVERLOOKED

SESSION BEERS
KEEPIN' IT LIGHT

**GIN &
TONIC**
BACK TO BASICS

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The largest compilation of beverage alcohol price and brand information.

HOW BEER, WINE
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MARKETPOINT

Springtime means a whole new wave of market opportunities. This month's issue is full of seasonally-inspired insights and expertise. Knowledge for you to translate into increased sales.

- May's cover story is another in the series called "Back to Basics." This time, it's **Gin 101**, with a special focus on the Gin and Tonic. We highlight established brands and newer craft gins.
- A category piece covers boxed wines: trends show better quality **wines** and a growing consumer fan base. We also dip into Bordeaux sweet wines and Vin de France.
- Vineyard View is back for its quarterly highlight. This time, our featured **winery** is Diamond Hill, located in Cumberland.
- What's **brewing**? Turn your attention to low-alcohol beers and their growing market appeal.



- Goslings, Blue Chair Bay Rum and Hornitos "Black Barrel" Tequila are among the **profiles** showcased. Study up for stronger selling.
- What's **new**? "Wine Buzz" and "New Products & Promotions" contain the latest releases.
- Check out the pages of "Around Town," "Retail Review" and "Serving Up" for your **local** market news fix. Do you have news to share? Let us know.



ON THE COVER

Spring welcomes gin in.

SMALL, INDEPENDENT BREWERS GROW IN DOUBLE DIGITS

The Brewers Association (BA) released 2015 data that reports U.S. craft brewing growth. Small and independent craft brewers now represent 12 percent of market share for the overall beer industry. In 2015, craft brewers produced about 24.5 million barrels, equaling a 13 percent rise in volume. The number of operating breweries in the U.S. grew 15 percent, now totaling 4,269. Of that amount, 2,397 are microbreweries, 1,650 are brewpubs and 178 are regional craft breweries. Over the year, there were 620 new brewery openings and only 68 closing. Craft brewers provide nearly 122,000 jobs, an increase of more than 6,000 from 2014.



LEONARDO LOCASCIO SELECTIONS APPOINTED IMPORTER OF IL MARRONETO

Leonardo LoCascio Selections (LLS), a member of The Winebow Group, has been named the exclusive U.S. importer of Il Marroneto, a Brunello producer led by winemaker Alessandro Mori. Il Marroneto produces two Italian wines, Brunello di Montalcino Il Marroneto and Brunello di Montalcino Selezione Madonna delle Grazie. "Alessandro's attention to detail and hands-on approach to winemaking result in wines that are deeply personal, artisanal gems. We are honored and thrilled to have his beautiful wines in the LLS portfolio," said Ian Downey, senior vice president and general manager of LLS.



CAPE CLASSICS NAMED U.S. IMPORTER OF DOMAINE PHILIPPE COLIN

Cape Classics is now the exclusive U.S. importer of Domaine Philippe Colin wines. About 15 wines from the 2014 vintage will be distributed by Cape Classics' partners nationwide. "Cape Classics seemed a good choice for our business, not only because they have made a very successful entrée into the importation of French wines to the U.S., but they are also perfectly positioned to champion the launch of Topiary, our new South African winery project, in the United States," said Philippe Colin, Proprietor and Winemaker at Domaine Philippe Colin.



E. & J. GALLO SUPPORT NAVY SEAL VETERAN'S EVEREST ATTEMPT

E. & J. Gallo announced new promotions for its Liberty Creek Wine portfolio aimed to help support Don Mann, a Retired U.S. Navy SEAL



and member of Team SIX, and his Mount Everest Climb in May 2016. Mann will join a Mount Everest expedition crew to attempt to climb the mountain to raise awareness of the challenges United States veterans face daily.

DISCUS REPORTS STRONG PROFITS FOR IRISH WHISKEY

In recent statistics provided by the Distilled Spirits Council, super-premium Irish whiskey grew 54.4 percent in 2015 and high-end premium Irish whiskey rose 13.7 percent. This adds to the continued growth of the Irish whiskey category, both high-end and super-premium, growing 589 percent and 3,054 percent, respectively since 2002. In 2015, more than 3.2 million, 9-liter cases of Irish whiskey were sold in the U.S., which generated \$664 million in revenue for distillers, according to the Distilled Spirits Council.



GRUPPO CAMPARI SET TO ACQUIRE GRAND MARNIER

Gruppo Campari will acquire Grand Marnier for the exclusive worldwide distribution rights, as well as become the majority stakeholder in Société des Produits Lapostolle S.A. (SPML). This resulted from a recent agreement between Gruppo Campari with SPML to launch a friendly takeover of SPML. The new distribution agreement will be effective July 1, 2016.



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BACARDI SEEKS TO REDUCE PLASTIC WASTE

Bacardi announced the launch of an in-house initiative to remove straws and stirrers in cocktails at company events. The companywide effort is part of its ongoing “Good Spirited: Building a Sustainable Future” environmental campaign. “Plastic straws don’t biodegrade, and their use is ubiquitous across many industries including the spirits market. We are resolved to be part of the solution, and this includes reducing the amount of waste we produce,” said Ian McLaren, Director of Trade Advocacy for Bacardi.



BLENDED SCOTCH WHISKY EXPECTED TO INCREASE IN SALES

Blended Scotch whisky is expected to grow, according to a new report from The IWSR and just-drinks. Volumes of blended Scotch whisky are expected to remain level or decline; however, they are forecasted to “recover strongly to the end of the forecast period (2020).” The blended sector will add a total of almost 7 million cases between years 2015-2020. Russia and China are two markets forecasted to add 1 million cases or more of blended whisky sales by 2020. India will build upon their recent growth, adding 3 million cases by 2020.



WENTE FAMILY ESTATES HONORED AT CHARDONNAY SYMPOSIUM

The International Chardonnay Symposium, set for May 12-14, will present its first “Legendary Family of Chardonnay Award” to Wente Family Estates. The Wente family began by planting 47 acres of grapes in 1883 in the Livermore Valley, growing to 200 acres by the 1930s. After Prohibition, the Wente family developed a Wente chardonnay clone, which changed California’s wine landscape. Today, 80 percent of chardonnay grapes grown in California comes from the family clone. This year, the Wente family celebrates their 80th anniversary of bottling the first varietal labeled chardonnay.



CONSTELLATION BRANDS TO ACQUIRE THE PRISONER WINE COMPANY BRANDS

Constellation Brands, Inc. will acquire The Prisoner Wine Company’s portfolio of brands from Huneus Vintners. The portfolio includes five fine wine brands led by The Prisoner, a fast-growing “super luxury” Napa Valley wine, and also includes Saldo, Cuttings, Blindfold and Thorn. The brands from The Prisoner Wine Company have grown quickly over the last three years, offering a portfolio of unique wine blends anchored by The Prisoner. Launched in 2003, The Prisoner has grown 28 percent in retail sales. The transaction is expected to close by the end of April. Huneus Vintners and Constellation will maintain a winemaking consulting agreement with The Prisoner Wine Company’s General Manager and Winemaker Jen Beloz and her production team.



NASA STUDY FINDS CLIMATE CHANGE WILL SHIFT WINE GRAPE HARVESTS

NASA and Harvard University published a study citing climate change is reducing the link between droughts and the timing of wine grape harvests in France and Switzerland. During the study of wine grape harvests from 1600 to 2007, researchers found harvests began shifting during the latter half of the 20th century. The study cites that higher-quality wines may be associated with earlier harvest dates in cooler wine-growing regions, like France and Switzerland. “Wine grapes are one of the world’s most valuable horticultural crops and there is increasing evidence that climate change has caused earlier harvest days in this region in recent decades,” said Ben Cook, lead author and climate scientist at NASA’s Goddard Institute for Space Studies and the Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory at Columbia University in New York. Researchers conducted their analysis using 400 years of harvest data from Western Europe. Their results indicate a shift in the role of drought and moisture as drivers of harvest-time and wine quality.



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ARE YOU READY?

BY LEN PANAGGIO



May is a pivotal month in the hospitality industry. The month contains events that are geared for our industry – from Cinco de Mayo to Mother’s Day to school graduations, and concluding with Memorial Day – it is chock full of great business opportunities. The big question is, “Are you ready?”

May is also the time that our customers start to think about summer beverages. And, while our rosés, summer beers, white wines and blender drinks will still be popular, there is another contender to consider for the season – rye whiskey.

While it’s been around for an eternity, rye whiskey has been quietly gaining momentum over the last few years. Usually created by bourbon producers, as they are very similar products, both are so American and so flavorful. What is rye whiskey? It is a mash made from 51% rye with the addition of corn and malted barley. It is distilled to no more than 160 proof, and aged in charred new oak barrels, at no more than 125 proof.

“Rough winds do
shake the darling
buds of May.”

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Much like the term we all see on Bourbon bottles, straight rye whiskey is aged in barrel for at least two years. So, as you can see, rye derives its flavor from rye itself, which is spicier (think rye bread), and the barrels that it is aged in. Rye whiskey tends to be drier than bourbon, which because of more corn is sweeter and has a bigger body. After prohibition, rye faded away, and bourbon became very popular, replacing rye in traditional drinks such as Manhattans, Old Fashioneds and Whiskey Sours.

Unlike the flavored vodka phenomenon, these spirits have no adulteration, their flavor stands on its own. With the explosion of mixology behind the bar today, the mixologists have to carefully and artfully find the balance between making flavorful, interesting drinks and being able to serve them in a timely fashion. With the mixology experience, the resurrection of older drinks is very real.

When I started out in the business many moons ago at The Chart House, they carried a brand that continuously survived: Old Overholt Straight Rye Whiskey. It wasn’t popular per se, but enough customers would ask for a rye that we had to keep it stocked. But, the spirit declined during the 80s and 90s. Now, the big bourbon houses are producing rye and with the interest in older drink recipes, our customers are seeking out bourbon and rye much to the glee of our bartenders.

Millennials are really driving this demand and seem to be embracing the ‘what is old now is new’ concept. As I have said in a previous article, this influential segment of the market is one that we all want to tap into. Rye is steeped in American history and there is a sense of pride in drinking these spirits, as well as a satisfaction derived from their flavor and versatility.

There are many Rye brands to put on your list, but one that really stands out for me is from the mid-1800s – Sazerac. The Sazerac cocktail was originally made with French brandy and bitters and was immensely popular. Through iterations over time, the brandy was eventually replaced with American Rye whiskey.

Smart operators will carry a bottle or two of Rye. If you don’t have at least one rye on your bar, shame on you! It’s time to get on the bandwagon. After all, our customers are always looking to us to provide them with what’s hip, not necessarily what’s new! Santé!



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.



Photos by Chris Almeida.

MATTEO MELETTI VISITS PROVIDENCE FOR A MARCH TRADE TASTING

Horizon Beverage Co. Origin Division welcomed Matteo Meletti to The Slow Rhode in Providence on March 9. The Meletti family has been producing Italian liqueurs since 1870. Matteo Meletti, the fifth generation owner, led trade professionals and United States Bartenders Guild Rhode Island (USBG RI) chapter members through a tasting of the brand's portfolio. The Italian liqueurs are distributed through Horizon Beverage's Origin Division and Wine Marketing Division in Rhode Island.

1. The Meletti portfolio of products includes Cioccolato, Sambuca, Limoncello, Meletti Dry, Meletti Anisette, 1870 Bitter and Meletti Amaro.
2. Laura Kanzler, Business Development Manager, Horizon Beverage, Origin Division; Joe Landolfi, Brand Manager Market Street Spirits, Opici Family Distributing; Sophie Daniels, Northeast Region Manager, Opici Family Distributing; Mateo Meletti, Meletti Italian Liqueurs.
3. Matteo Meletti leading a discussion.



USBG RI MEMBER REPRESENTS OCEAN STATE IN MARTINIQUE

United States Bartenders Guild Rhode Island (USBG RI) chapter member Kayleigh Speck was selected to compete in the World Finals Ti' Punch Cup hosted at Rhum Clément in Martinique. On March 11, Speck competed against 17 other bartenders from 10 different countries across the globe, including the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Italy, Hong Kong, Greece and others. More than 1,400 guests attended the event to watch the global bartenders perform. The three finalists in the competition represented Hong Kong, Italy and Switzerland. Ultimately, Dirk Hany from Switzerland won the Ti' Punch Cup 2016.

1. Competitor Kayleigh Speck of The Grange representing Rhode Island at the international competition in the first round of the event.
2. Peter Hollands of the United Kingdom, Competition Judge; Dirk Hany of Widder Bar in Switzerland, Winner; Frank Martucci Twin River Casino's General Manager of Beverage Operations, Competition Judge.



NEWPORT STORM BREWERY RELEASES NEW BREWS

Newport Storm released Smoke Ring, a smoked porter aged in oak barrels. The beer, crafted from hardwood smoked barley and chocolate malt, is matched with crystal malts and offers a “cherry tartness and a dark chocolate finish,” and an ABV of 7%. Smoke Ring is the first of six new beers Newport Storm Brewery will release this year. “Different barrels give different flavor and aroma profiles to a beer,” says Brewmaster Derek Luke. “And the slightly wild ferment taking place in the barrels used for Smoke Ring is what gives this brew a tart twist.” Along with Smoke Ring, Newport Storm also released Unknown Variable, an “experimental hop double IPA.” The beer has Munich malts, two row malts, wheat and features experimental #33, #7, equinox and dry-cascade hops. The beer is at 8% ABV. Newport Storm products are distributed via Horizon Beverage Wayne Division.

1. Smoke Ring.
2. Unknown Variable.



Photos by Richard Kizirian.

RI HOSPITALITY EDUCATION FOUNDATION NAMES PROSTART WINNERS

The Rhode Island Hospitality Education Foundation (RIHEF), along with ProStart® and Founding Sponsor US Foods, held the fifth annual Rhode Island ProStart® competition on March 10. Two student teams from William M. Davies Jr. Career and Technical High School were crowned the winners of the Culinary Arts and Food Service Management Competition. More than 30 area professionals judged the student teams. “I am so proud of all the hardworking students who dedicated months of practice and preparation for this event,” said Dale J. Venturini, President and CEO of the RI Hospitality Association and the RI Hospitality Education Foundation. “It’s because of students like this that Rhode Island is nationally-recognized for its outstanding culinary scene. I look forward to watching the students’ skills continue to progress and eventually become part of the skilled workforce we have here in Rhode Island.” The two winning teams will compete in the National Restaurant Association Education Foundation’s ProStart competition on April 29 – May 1 in Dallas, Texas.

1. **Front Row**, from left to right: Jules Olley, Tobey Sanborn, Jen Harpin, Rebecca Lentricchia, Alyshia Johnson, Kelly Ann Rojas, Dale Venturini, Melanie Rich, Kevin Thiele, Eric Steinhauer, Kim Paquette. **Middle Row**, from left to right: Vinny Costable, Joseph Parker, Karl Guggenmos, Ray McCue, Peter Figueiredo, Richard Agnieszka, David Dadekian, Amy Barclay, Steve Martel, Sam Glynn. **Back Row**, from left to right: Steven Trabucco, Brian Hamilton, Jamie Dwyer, Greg, Gamon, Joseph Vigliotti, Socrates Ramirez, Kristin Gennuso, Matthew Tortora, Emily Weidner.
2. From left to right: Dale Venturini, Lorena Rodriguez, Casey Torres, Zurisadai Avila-Sosa, Carmen Fernandez, Avia Payne, Caroline Velasquez, Elise Calhoun, Gabriella Fegundes, Pastry Chef Instructor Amy Hitzemann, Chef Instructor Santos Nieves, Chef Instructor Peter Fangiullo, Joseph Vigliotti.



Photos by Chris Almeida.

ANCHOR DISTILLING LEADS GIN PAIRING COURSE

Kelly McCarthy, Brand Development Manager of Anchor Distilling Co., hosted an educational tasting at Fluke Wine Bar and Kitchen in Newport in March. McCarthy led the session and cocktail tasting, which featured classics such as the Martinez, Martini, Aviation and Tom Collins. Fluke Wine Bar and Kitchen provided small bites to pair with the cocktails. The featured gins included London Dry Gin No. 3, Junipero Gin, and Anchor Old Tom Gin.

1. Kelly McCarthy, Brand Development Manager, Anchor Distilling Co.; Ryan Cunningham, Fluke Wine Bar and Kitchen; and Corey J. Hayes, Bar Manager, Fluke Wine Bar and Kitchen.
2. The featured gins: London Dry Gin No. 3, Junipero Gin and Anchor Old Tom Gin.
3. Kelly McCarthy, Brand Development Manager, Anchor Distilling Co. with guests.
4. A cocktail with Junipero Gin.



HORIZON BEVERAGE NAMED EXCLUSIVE STATE DISTRIBUTOR FOR BACARDI PRODUCTS

Bacardi USA has renewed its multi-year distribution agreement with Horizon Beverage in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. Effective April 1, the exclusive agreement includes the sales and distribution rights of the premium portfolio of Bacardi Brands, including Bacardi, Grey Goose, Bombay Sapphire, Dewar's, Martini, and Angel's Envy, among other brands. "Horizon Beverage is a name that represents family, trust and exceptional service among Massachusetts and Rhode Island retailers," said Pete Carr, Regional President for Bacardi North America. "Bacardi is proud to extend our long-standing partnership with this great company to continue a distribution force of significant capabilities, scope and dedication for Bacardi in these two markets."



NARRAGANSETT BREWING COMPANY MOVES OPERATIONS TO OCEAN STATE

Narragansett Brewing Company will return production operations to their home state for the first time since 1983. Narragansett will move operations to The Guild in Pawtucket, in conjunction with The Isle Brewers Guild. Company offices, which were located on 60 Ship Street in Providence, will now relocate to The Guild. The new space is 130,000 square feet and is located at 461 Main Street in Pawtucket. Narragansett Brewing Company began in 1890.

Architectural renderings of the new facility.



SAGE CELLARS HOSTS MARCH OPEN HOUSE

Sage Cellars of Warren hosted an open house enabling guests to sample from the Sage Cellars portfolio and learn directly from suppliers. Featured wines included Bosman Family Vineyards De Bos Wines, Rebel Coast Winery, Red Cap Vineyards, Lieb Cellars and Stellekaya Wines with featured “small bites” provided by Easy Entertaining.

1. Mika Bulmash from Wine for the World, next to Brad Norton, Sales Director, Wine for the World, explaining their South African portfolio to Jerry Ehrlich from Eno Fine Wines and Spirits in Providence.
2. A selection of food and wines during the Open House in March. Photo by David Dadekian.
3. Sean Humphries, Owner, Crave Mead.
4. Crave Mead Wines.
5. The Furies provided musical entertainment for guests.



SONS OF LIBERTY SPIRITS POURS AT WHISKEY FEST, GIN WINS STYLE AWARD

South Kingstown's Sons of Liberty Spirits Company was among many local, national and international spirit exhibitors at the inaugural Sun Whiskey Fest held at Mohegan Sun in Uncasville, Connecticut on April 1. More than 2,400 people attended the event, which included sampling opportunities, seminars and entertainment. Sons of Liberty offered tastes of Uprising American Single Malt Whiskey and Battle Cry American Single Malt Whiskey.

The company announced its True Born Gin – The Belgian Wheat Act was awarded the “United States Best Contemporary Style Gin” by the 2016 World Gin Awards, presented by TheDrinksReport.com. The gin, which is distilled from craft style beers, was subjected to a blind tasting panel of judges. Sons of Liberty Spirits Co. was the only American distillery honored in this year's final round of judging.

1. Bryan Ricard of Sons of Liberty Spirits discussing the portfolio, Founder and President Mike Reppucci is seen in the background.
2. True Born Gin – The Belgian Wheat Act was named “United States Best Contemporary Style Gin” by the 2016 World Gin Awards.





WATCH HILL'S THE OCEAN HOUSE RECEIVES ACCOLADES

The Ocean House in Watch Hill, Rhode Island was honored in March with a AAA Five Diamond award for their accommodations at the AAA Diamond Awards Luncheon in Boston. Every year AAA reviews about 28,000 hotels, resorts and historic inns. "Executive Chef John Kolesar and I, on behalf of the Ocean House, were honored to accept the prestigious AAA Five Diamond award for our hotel," said Johnathan Feiler, Director of Food and Beverage of the Ocean House. Later that same month, The Ocean House also received the AAA Four Diamond Award for their fine dining restaurant.

John Galvin, Executive Vice President, AAA Northeast; John Kolesar, Executive Chef, The Ocean House; Jonathan Feiler, Director of Food and Beverage, The Ocean House; and Lloyd Albert, Senior Vice President, AAA Public Affairs.



WARWICK RESTAURANT HOSTS SNOW LEOPARD VODKA LAUNCH

The Tree House Tavern and Bistro welcomed Edrington Americas for an educational Snow Leopard vodka tasting. Sammy Karachi, Brand Ambassador for Edrington Americas, led the discussion. Snow Leopard is created using spelt grain, an ancient super grain, which gives the vodka a nutty taste and creamy texture. The vodka is six-times distilled with floral and anise aromas. 15 percent of all Snow Leopard Vodka profits go directly to the Snow Leopard Trust, a world organization to study and protect snow leopards. To date, the spirit company has raised more than \$250,000. Snow Leopard Vodka is available through Alpha Distributing. "Snow Leopard vodka has been gaining new friends in Rhode Island this year with [our] 'Rediscover Vodka' events, led by New England Brand Ambassador, Sammy Karachi," said Jackie Connetti, Innovation and Market Manager RI, Edrington Americas.

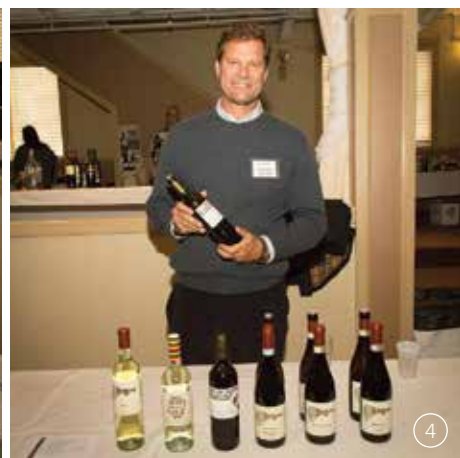
1. Sammy Karachi, Brand Ambassador, Edrington Americas; Jackie Connetti, Innovation and Market Manager RI, Edrington Americas; Amanda Paul-Garnier, Snow Leopard Brand Manager; Michael Gerard, Owner, The Tree House Tavern & Bistro.
2. Martinis made with Snow Leopard Vodka.
3. Snow Leopard Vodka.
4. Sammy Karachi leading the discussion about Snow Leopard.



Photos by Chris Almeida.

Oceanstate Wine & Spirits Hosts Trade Tasting

Oceanstate Wine & Spirits hosted a portfolio tasting on April 6 at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet in Cranston. Trade professionals were able to sample wines and spirits from around the world, as well as speak to suppliers. More than 20 winery representatives showcased their products for more than 125 guests.





Photos by Chris Almeida.

1. Clay W. Farmer, U.S. Brand Ambassador, Elena Walch, Italy.
2. James Smith, The Tasting Company.
3. Adam English, National Sales Manager, Vista Hills Vineyard.
4. Jean-Paul Schumann, Mack & Schuhle.
5. Adriana Prestigiacomo, Sales, Caffo.
6. Andrew Lix, Brand Ambassador, Cleveland Whiskey.
7. Roz Angoff, Director, Boston Sommelier Society.
8. Andrew Ventura, Sales, Baystate/Oceanstate Wine & Spirits.
9. Neil Palladino, TriState Sales Manager, Boutique Wine Collection.
10. Jessica Paul, New England Market Manager, O'Neill Vintners & Distillers.
11. Felipe Feliu, Export Director USA and Canada, Viu Manent.
12. Steve Curt, Sales, Oceanstate Wine & Spirits.
13. Lindsay Hurley, Sales and Marketing Coordinator, Baystate/Oceanstate Wine & Spirits and Jim Hayes, Oceanstate Wine & Spirits.
14. Jon Cavanaugh, Designer /Advertising and Marketing, Baystate/Oceanstate Wine & Spirits.
15. Henry Lavado, Market Manager Northeast, Alcohol by Volume (right) with a guest.
16. Mark Hirsekorn, Sales Manager, Vino del Sol.
17. Lorenzo Ficini, Sales and Marketing, Poggio Bonelli Wines and Sean Frazier, Director of Sales, Baystate/Oceanstate Wine & Spirits.
18. Joseph Cattin, with Joseph Cattin Wines, Alsace, France.
19. David Berlin, Eastern Regional Manager, 3 Badge Mixology.

ROSÉ REDUX: PINK WINES CONTINUE TO MULTIPLY

Are rosés going to be even hotter this summer than last? Suppliers seem to be betting on it. Brand-new bottlings continue to materialize, and buzz-makers keep putting all things pink front and center.

Terlato Wines, in one fell swoop, joining **Michel Chapoutier's** popular Belleruche Rosé are new rosés of disparate grapes and origins: **Il Poggione**, **Bodegas Valdemar**, **Sanford** and **Protea**. (Not pictured but also on the way: one by Chile's Lapostolle and Michel Chapoutier's daughter's new eponymous rosé, Mathilde.)



Royal is marketing a half-dozen kosher rosés, headed up by the brand new **Baron Herzog** Rosé of Cabernet Sauvignon; Pacifica (Washington) and Pságot (Israel). New from California: Vintage Point now has added a 100% Napa/Sonoma Pinot Noir to complement **SIP** Moscato. **Drew Barrymore** Pinot Grigio now has a Pinot Noir rosé to hang out with. From South Africa, the new **Vintales** rosé, aptly named Sunset, is a distinctive blend of Chenin Blanc, Pinotage and Muscat.



FALESCO ADDS NEXT GENERATION, NEW WINE

Italy's Falesco winery, in both Lazio and Umbria, founded in 1979 by Riccardo and Renzo Cottarella, is passing the torch. Tellus, a new trio of varietal wines, was created by Dominga Cotarella (daughter of Riccardo), who is now assuming a leadership role at the winery, working with her cousins Enrica and Marta (daughters of Renzo). Tellus (named after the Roman goddess of land and fertility) aims to be playful, stylish and accessible. The unoaked Chardonnay, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon are all Umbria IGP and priced at \$16. thewinebowgroup.com



Brothers Adam and Jordan with their father Yale Sager.

WINESELLERS' WAY: ILLINOIS IMPORTER KNOWS WHAT AMERICANS WANT

Adam Sager describes Winesellers, Ltd., as "a lean company that is sales people-heavy." This structure enables the family-owned Illinois-based company to act fast on trends and go deep in each market.

Winesellers Ltd. was founded in 1978 by Adam's father, Yale Sager, a pharmacist who caught the wine bug after being tasked with doing the wine buying for his drugstore. The initial focus was the German wines so popular in the Midwest.

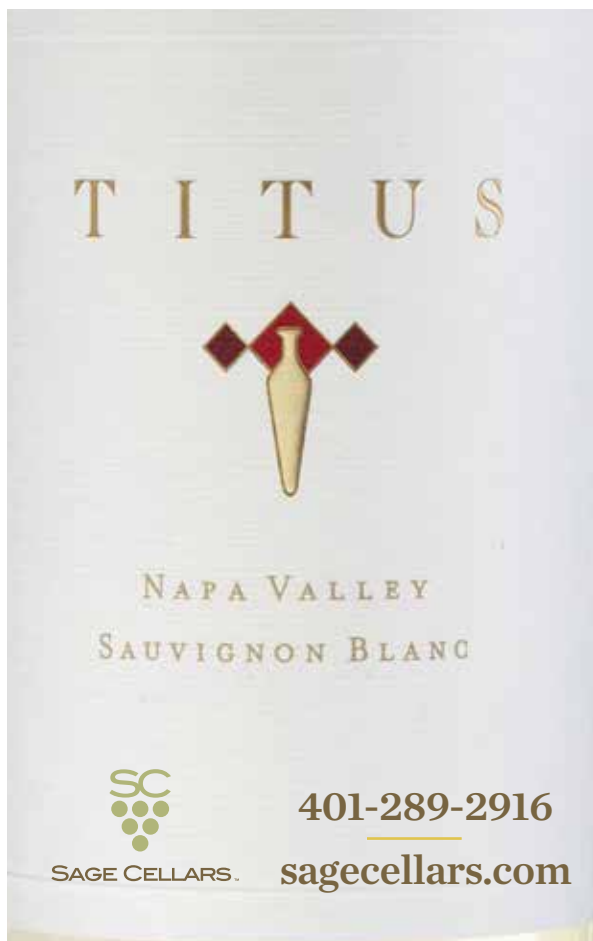
In 1980, Sager became Duboeuf's first U.S. importer and, ironically, Winesellers' growth spurt began when they lost that brand in 2004. "That was when we started exploring other regions and creating a more vibrant, diverse portfolio," shares Adam. Winesellers has tripled its sales volume since 2005.

Today, Winesellers represents wineries from 11 different countries. From scratch, the company built the Familia Zuccardi into the 4th largest brand from Argentina in the U.S. They've also developed their own successful brands, like California's Tortoise Creek and Italy's Tiamo organic wines. Winesellers' portfolio harnesses hot trends like wine-on-tap and artisan cider, as well as seeking out great wine regardless of marketplace popularity (they added Quinta de la Rosa's 10-year Tawny Port "because it is simply outstanding and we know we can sell it," says Adam).

"We offer quality wine that isn't in every grocery store, yet we have a very strong national presence for a company of our size," Adam notes. "Our portfolio has evolved, but our strategy hasn't: we work with family producers and aim to bring consumers the best wine values."

winesellersltd.com





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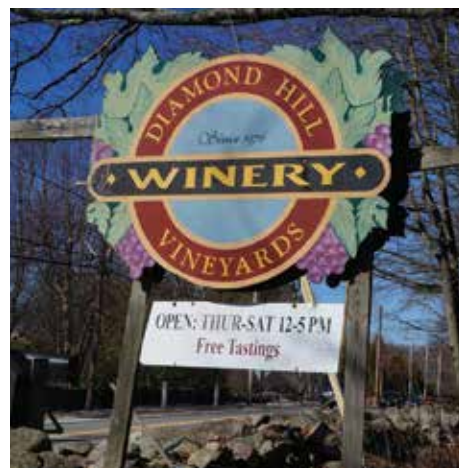


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40 Years Old and Going Strong

Diamond Hill Vineyards makes its customers at home

BY NANCY KIRSCH

Forty years of making and selling wine haven't diminished Claire Berntson's enthusiasm for Diamond Hill Vineyards' customers. "If we had a competition about who has the best customers, we'd win hands down," says Claire, who, along with husband Peter, runs the vineyard. "They appreciate everything we do; they love coming into our home [the site of the tasting room and gift shop]. They make you feel like you're part of their family – and that's reciprocal."

During the Vietnam War, Peter fulfilled his military service based in France, where he and Claire caught the "wine bug" – but only to drink. After returning home to Rhode Island, growing a variety of grapes and visiting countless vineyards to learn from the experts, Peter left his full-time job and he and Claire took the leap to establish the family business. In 1976, when they started, there was no focus on local foods and local wines, said Chantelle Berntson Rogers, their daughter. "Their friends and family

thought they were crazy," said Chantelle. "They had to be very committed."

Flash forward to today, five adults and two children all pitch in at the Cumberland, RI winery. They invite guests to bring a picnic and enjoy a glass of wine on the Bernstons' front porch. Chantelle's husband, Stephen, is the vineyard manager; Chantelle's brother, Allan Berntson, is the vintner; Chantelle and Stephen's children, Nate and Chloe, also help. Chantelle and Claire, who run the tasting room, are the wines' final tasters. Peter, at 75, still drives the tractor. "I grew up in the business; I worked, but never got paid. My kids get paid way better," Chantelle said, laughing.

Six of their 34 acres are dedicated to growing grapes, mostly for their sole estate wine, Pinot Noir, which Chantelle said is the most expensive to make. Although open acres could be planted with grapes, the current workload keeps everyone busy. Given New England's short growing season, the winery produces, at most, 200 cases a year, said Claire, though 100 cases is a more frequent yield.

Wines include River Valley White (a Chardonnay/Riesling blend), Scarlet Run (a Cabernet Sauvignon), Pinot Noir, and Pinot Noir Rose, among others. Their fruit wines continue to be big sellers. They buy the best apples, peaches, blueberries and cranberries they can find, generally from New England, to make those fruit wines, said Chantelle. Stephen makes customized wine labels, at a customer's request.

"We don't spray grapes with herbicides or pesticides," said Chantelle, though they haven't sought organic certification. Diamond Hill's wines, which don't have many sulfites, are aged in French oak barrels and go through gravity flow, not a commercial filtration system, said Chantelle.

Their wine tastings include every wine currently in production – as few as four and as many as 12 wines. "We consider you our guests; so we never charge [for tastings]," said Chantelle, who welcomes customers who return week after week, month after month. "When they want to have a glass of wine [and] bring friends back, then I know I'm doing my job."

Strong customer interest and market share are now more significant to the winery than are awards. "A [medal] around [a bottle] doesn't do anything for us anymore," said Chantelle. "We don't need to fight for shelf space any more, where we sell in [area stores]. We know [the wines] are good."





Claire Bertson pours in the tasting room.

The vast majority of the wines are sold in the gift shop; those wines sold in package stores are top sellers, said Chantelle, who noted that demand sometimes outstrips their supply.

At harvest time, customers help pick the grapes in trade for wine – yet another example of treating customers as family. “All those years, I used to think that work was so tough,” said Chantelle. “But the customers think it’s fun. At the harvest, [there is] something lovely about seeing all our work of the year come to fruition.”

Still channeling the French approach to wine, Claire said that she tells young people today, “Do what the French do; have it with food ... don’t think of wine as an alcoholic beverage; it’s a food [and] it complements what you eat.” ■

Vineyard View will be published quarterly as part of our continuing local focus. Contact dana@thebeveragejournal.com to be featured.



Claire Bertson and daughter Chantelle Bertson Rodgers.



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Liquid Assets

BY SAVANNAH MUL

The term “liquid asset” now holds a whole new meaning for David Radivonyk, who previously worked in finance for 32 years. Instead of referring to numerical assets on a balance sheet, the term now represents his business name, Liquid Assets, a fine wine and spirit shop.

When Radivonyk retired, he said, “I got bored. I put myself through college working in a package store and always liked it. It took me about a year to find this location [in Cranston], and after some long months it all came to fruition.”

Radivonyk also looked in Newport and Woonsocket, but the Cranston store was in the “best shape ... with a great location.” Liquid Assets was previously Healy’s Liquors; and the previous owners helped Radivonyk during the first few months for a smooth transition.

“[Since owning it] we’ve changed it around a lot and bought new wine racks. We’re always trying to improve it,” he said. Along with those improvements came a brand



Adam Lowrimore, Employee; Tom Buckner, Employee; David Radivonyk, Owner; Cameron Tabor, Employee.



LOCATION

995 PONTIAC AVENUE
CRANSTON, RI

FACTS

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 3,700

YEARS IN OPERATION: 1½ years
under current management

new point-of-sales system and a substantial increase in products, which Radivonyk said store employee Tom Buckner has been instrumental in helping with.

Buckner, who was previously employed at Healy’s Liquors and brought on to work at Liquid Assets, said the store went from offering a handful of single malt scotches to now carrying between 60-65 different brands. Liquid Assets has 19 cooler doors and carries more than 3,000 SKUs of wine. Since owning the store, Radivonyk said sales in organic wines continue to increase, and he fills two wine racks of organic vintages for his customers. “We also do a very good craft beer business,” he said.

Cameron Tabor, store employee and woodworker, built a bar at the store for the staff to conduct weekly tastings on Fridays and Saturdays. At every in-store tasting, the staff will keep a log book of what beer, wine or spirit was tasted to ensure that if a customer comes in a month or two later, they can give them exactly what they’re looking for. Tabor also built shelves for Liquid Assets to store the 50 ml bottle purchases, which

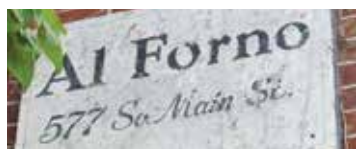


have shown strong sales at the store. “We may need [to] build another,” Radivonyk laughed. Radivonyk said the customers are what make it the most fun and enjoyable experience. “About 90 percent of our customers are loyal and repeat customers,” Buckner said. Radivonyk added, “we’re in a very diverse neighborhood ... the other 10 percent are people moving to the area or word of mouth recommendations.” Buckner said once new customers find out about the selection, variety and service, they quickly convert to loyal shoppers.

“It’s a fun business with a lot of hours,” Radivonyk said, “but the customers keep me going.” ■



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



577 SOUTH WATER STREET
PROVIDENCE, RI

The Italian restaurant serves classic dishes re-crafted to reflect the produce of New England's farms and waters, such as Dirty Steak with Hot Fanny Sauce and Clams Al Forno, alongside Italian wines and Italian-inspired cocktails.



BAR MANAGER: (Pictured) Sasha Spoerri
COCKTAIL: Sicilian Digestivo

RECIPE: Mix over ice:

- One shot espresso
- 1 oz. Tia Maria liqueur
- 1 oz. Fernet-Branca

Shake vigorously over ice to create a fluffy crema. Strain into a martini glass..

"With strong overtones of coffee and botanicals, this drink packs a surprisingly complex flavor profile, considering its simplicity," said Owner Johanne Killeen. "We love the structure of a meal in Italy. It is not a 15-minute quick bite, but rather a relaxed multi-course affair with plenty of wine that can last three hours. After an antipasto, a little bowl of pasta, a main course and salad however, a good digestivo is a great idea."

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- 2 oz. Brockmans Gin
- 1 oz. Lemon Juice
- 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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A Busy Session at the Rhode Island State House

Industry bills that could impact your business

BY LAUREN DALEY

A number of bills concerning alcohol are before the Rhode Island General Assembly this 2016 session. Here is a brief rundown of proposals that could impact the state's beverage industry and their status as of press time.

SENATE BILLS

SENATE BILL NO. 2059: This act would make the possession, purchase, or sale of powdered alcohol a crime punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000). "Powdered alcohol" means alcohol prepared for sale or other distribution in a dry powder or crystalline, or encapsulated in dry or crystalline form for direct consumption or reconstitution.

Status: As of Feb. 11, this bill was referred to House Judiciary.

SENATE BILL NO. 2061: The act would make the possession of an alcohol-without-liquid device a crime punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment. "Alcohol without liquid device" means a device, machine, apparatus, or appliance that is designed or marketed for the purpose of inhaling alcohol vapor or otherwise introducing alcohol in any form.

Status: Senate read and passed on Feb. 25. On Feb. 26, it was referred to House H.E.W.

SENATE BILL NO. 2070: This act would reduce the licensing fee to \$500 per year for a distillery producing less than 50,000 gallons per year, and provides a tax exemption on the first 50,000 gallons produced by an in-state distiller.

Status: On March 23, Committee recommended measure be held for further study.

SENATE BILL NO. 2072: This act would create a wine direct shipper license to allow for shipment of limited amounts of wine through the mail to eligible customers.

Status: This bill was heard by the Committee March 23.

SENATE BILL NO. 2075: This act would create a retailer Class WB license to purchase 500 to 2,000 gallons of wine from a wholesaler for use in wholesale manufacture of wine biscuits.

Status: As of March 23, Committee recommended measure be held for further study.

SENATE BILL NO. 2239: The act would permit the town of East Greenwich to grant Class B or C liquor licenses located in a Commercial CD-1 zone, even though within 200 feet of a school or place of worship.

Status: This bill was heard by the Committee March 23.

SENATE BILL NO. 2244: This act would provide that on and after 7/1/16, any city or town council would have the authority to exempt said city or town from the prohibition against the issuance of certain alcoholic beverage licenses within 200 feet of a school or place of public worship.

Status: This bill was heard by the Committee March 23.

SENATE BILL NO. 2382: This act would permit holders of manufacture's licenses to sell alcoholic beverages at retail for on-site and off-site consumption.

Status: This bill was heard by the Committee March 23.

SENATE BILL NO. 2651: This bill would authorize the holder of a wholesaler's Class C license to sell alcohol to manufacturers

of food products in connection with the manufacture of such products.

Status: As of Feb. 25, it was referred to Senate Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs.

SENATE BILL NO. 2701: This would allow the town of East Greenwich to grant a retailer's Class B license to be located on plat/lot 085 001 212 0000 of the applicable town of East Greenwich tax assessment map.

Status: This bill was heard by the Committee March 23.

SENATE BILL NO. 2702: This would establish new Class NB (Neighborhood Bar), Class S (Supper Club) and Class SB (Smoking Bar) licenses and also require licensees to cooperate with local licensing boards and law enforcement investigating potential violations.

Status: This bill was heard by the Committee March 23.

SENATE BILL NO. 2703: This bill would permit class A liquor retail license holders to elect on four (4) occasions annually to serve unlimited samples of wine products that are available for purchase from the licensee's outlet.

Status: This bill was heard by the Committee March 23.

SENATE BILL NO. 2772: This bill would allow class A liquor retail license holders to serve unlimited samples of wine products available for purchase on one occasion each year.

Status: This bill was heard by the Committee March 23.

SENATE BILL NO. 2855: This act would require any applicant or holder of a retail license for the sale of alcoholic beverages to file a certificate of insurance and maintain said liability insurance, including liquor-liability insurance, as a condition of holding a retail license.

Status: On March 23, the bill was introduced and referred to the Senate Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs.

HOUSE BILLS

HOUSE BILL NO. 7015: This act would permit the town of Lincoln to grant a proposed Class B liquor license within 200 feet 200 of a church.

Status: Committee recommended passage on April 1; item was placed on House Calendar for April 7.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7016: The act would permit the town of East Greenwich to grant Class B or C liquor licenses located in a Commercial CD-1 zone, even though within 200 feet of a school or place of worship.

Status: As of Jan. 14, Committee recommended the measure be held for further study.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7026 SUB A: This act would make the possession, purchase, or sale of powdered alcohol a crime punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).

Status: House passed SUB A on March 24.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7172: The act prohibits eligible recipients of direct cash assistance from using said funds to purchase alcoholic beverages, lottery tickets, tobacco products or other prohibited transactions.

Status: As of Feb. 24, the Committee recommended the measure be held for further study.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7257: The act permits dogs in outdoor dining areas of restaurants under certain circumstances.

Status: House read and passed on March 23. (It now heads to the Senate).

HOUSE BILL NO. 7266: The bill would reduce the licensing fee for distilleries producing less than 50,000 gallons to \$500, and grants a manufacturing tax exemption on first 50,000 gallons for in-state distribution by RI distilleries.

Status: As of Jan. 21, it was referred to House Finance.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7303: The act would allow for the sale of alcoholic beverages on the premises of a manufacturer of said

beverages, and the sale of said beverages for off-premises consumption. It would also amend the fee schedule for licenses.

Status: As of Feb. 9, Committee recommended measure be held for further study.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7469: The bill would authorize the holder of a wholesaler's Class C license to sell alcohol to manufacturers of food products in connection with the manufacture of such products.

Status: As of Feb. 9, Committee recommended measure be held for further study.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7499: This bill would allow class A liquor retail license holders to serve unlimited samples of wine products available for purchase on one occasion each year.

Status: House passed the item on March 31. It was referred to Senate Special Legislation and Veterans Affairs, and is scheduled for hearing and/or consideration on April 6.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7705: The act allows for the sale of alcoholic beverages on the premises of a manufacturer of said beverages, and allows the sale of said beverages for off-premises consumption. It would also amend the fee schedule for these licenses.

STATUS: Committee recommended measure be held for further study on March 22.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7620: This act would create a Wine Direct Shipper License for licensed producers in this or any state to directly ship a limited amount of wine to residents age twenty-one (21) or older for personal consumption, with oversight by the department of business regulation and/or the division of taxation.

Status: Committee recommended measure be held for further study on March 22.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7812: This would allow the city of Providence to issue a Class B, C or I license for use on plat 109, lot 289, within 200 feet of a church.

Status: Committee recommended measure be held for further study on March 24.

HOUSE BILL NO. 7953: The act would clarify certain sections dealing with alcoholic beverage licenses and enforcement, and would grant Providence the right to establish certain new liquor licenses and regulate live entertainment.

Status: Committee recommended measure be held for further study on March 29.

HOUSE BILL NO. 8002: The act would enable the board of licenses to exempt objections by adjoining property owners.

Status: On March 25, act was referred to House Municipal Government.

Also, as of March 17, the following two bills – which had been debated and discussed by industry members in the media – were withdrawn at the bill sponsor's request:

HOUSE BILL 7634: The act, entitled "Fair Workweek for Rhode Island," would have required employers to give their employees at least two (2) weeks' notice of their work schedules. It would have also required employers to pay their employees additional pay if they change their previously scheduled shift. Finally, it would have granted increased scheduling notice, with corresponding remedies, to employees for violations of their rights.

HOUSE BILL 7515: The act would have required employers to give their employees at least two (2) weeks' notice of their work schedules. It would have also required employers to pay their employees additional pay if they changed their previously scheduled shift. Finally, it would have granted increased scheduling notice, with corresponding remedies, to employees for violations of their rights.

Check full bills and statuses at: <http://www.rilin.state.ri.us/Pages/Default.aspx>. *The Rhode Island Beverage Journal* will be following the legislative session. ■

HOW IMPORTANT IS A PROACTIVE CRISIS PLAN?

Your Business Could Depend On It.

BY DALE J. VENTURINI



With the spate of negative media headlines surrounding restaurants that have experienced foodborne or human-contact illness, it is critically important that every eating establishment put a proactive crisis management plan in place now – before a crisis strikes. The necessity of reputation management after incidents like this cannot be understated. It's a headline that nobody wants, and the resulting media attention can have far-ranging ramifications long after the outbreak is contained and eliminated.

Recently, a national multi-unit restaurant chain experienced multiple foodborne illness and norovirus outbreaks across the United States, causing eatery closures, loss of consumer confidence, and millions spent on reputation management. This unfortunate situation has catapulted foodborne/human-contact illness to the very top of the media's attention and reports of this type of situation garner a great deal of coverage.

In an effort to assist members on preventing this type of situation, the RI Hospitality Association, in conjunction with the RI Department of Health, recently hosted the first in a series of norovirus seminars. The seminars cover food-safety protocols, safely handling a potential foodborne illness, and how to best contain and neutralize a threat. But, beyond our operational presentation, each business should have a tailored, individual crisis plan on how to best protect their business and brand in the event of a negative situation.

In Rhode Island, we recently experienced a very public norovirus outbreak at one of the most beloved restaurants in our state. While it was ultimately determined not to be the fault of the restaurant and caused by a sick patron spreading the virus while on property, initial media coverage caused a firestorm of misinformation in the public domain. Some consumers took to social media, falsely accusing the restaurant of a foodborne illness outbreak as it is so closely associated with sickness at eating establishments.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,

about 50% of all outbreaks of food-related illness are caused by norovirus. Food can get contaminated with norovirus at any point when it is being grown, shipped, handled, or prepared. Each year in the U.S., norovirus causes illness in approximately 20 million people on average. However, most outbreaks of norovirus illness happen when infected people spread the virus to others, as was the case in the Rhode Island incident.

Although this restaurant has never had a foodborne or norovirus illness outbreak in its 40-plus years in business, it did have a crisis communications plan in place and a public relations firm of record to assist in ensuring that accurate information was reported by the media and that reputation management began from initial reports of illness.

Within a matter of days, the media storyline had shifted, consumer sentiment was strongly behind the restaurant and when the establishment opened its doors again for business, there was a groundswell of support and 100 percent positive media coverage. The eatery was able to take a leadership role in combating norovirus and through close interaction with the RI Department of Health, is back to operating business as usual.

Having a crisis plan in place from the onset is critical for any type of business to effectively manage a crisis. A thorough plan will include a blueprint to follow for most types of crisis situations. This includes media statements, media protocols, and identified spokespeople. In a serious crisis, professional public relations help is critical. While the price tag for this type of PR can be high, it is money well spent to effectively mitigate the resulting damage to a business or brand.

Our industry is a cornerstone of the economy and a true success story. We all need to take necessary proactive steps to ensure that our storyline remains positive and our industry continues to flourish.

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.



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GIN & TONIC

101



BY W. BLAKE GRAY

Winston Churchill once declared, “The Gin and Tonic has saved more Englishmen’s lives, and minds, than all the doctors in the Empire.” A Gin and Tonic is the only good cocktail you can have on an airplane in coach class. It’s also a gourmet obsession in Spain that has made its way to the trendiest American cocktail bars. And because a G&T doesn’t require any fancy syrups or shrubs, you don’t need to be much of a mixologist to make one at home.

As with wine, the gin market is hot at the high end and cool on the bottom shelf. Gin is still a small percentage of the total spirits market, about 4% according to Nielsen. But sales by value are growing while sales by volume are actually dropping. So this is a good time to switch inventory away from the super-cheapies and to branch out into some of the new gins coming onto the market. And a classic, refreshing, deceptively powerful G&T could prove to be your MVST (Most Valuable Selling Tool).

GIN’S SECRET POWER

Gin begins, like vodka, as a neutral spirit (the base can be malt, corn, rye and/or molasses) **IT IS THE INTRODUCTION OF JUNIPER AND OTHER BOTANICALS THAT DEFINES GIN.** Sometimes these potent flavorings are infused; often they are re-distilled; a third method has trays of herbs, roots, berries and spices work like a filter to flavor the steam of the distillate.

In the end, gin is the extreme opposite of a neutral spirit. **THE PARTICULAR MIX OF BOTANICALS—ALWAYS A GUARDED SECRET, WHETHER IT’S SIX, A DOZEN OR MORE—DRIVES EACH BRAND’S IDENTITY.**

Flexibility of production is one reason that many styles of gin have developed over several eras of the spirit’s varying popularity—as well as why so many craft distillers are joining the gin game. And while London Dry is arguably still the standard, it functions like a trunk of a very complex tree. No matter which direction gin goes, it goes with power and personality.



GIN BOTANICALS: BUILDING BLOCKS OF CHARACTER

Gin's personality is a heady mix of assertive aromatics and flavors, led by spirit-defining juniper. A coniferous plant; Juniper's contribution to gin's character should be clean, green and pine-like (those juniper "berries" are actually tiny, smooth, pinecones). The juniper also works as a foundation for a variety of other spicy and savory botanicals—the exact combinations of which, naturally, are well-guarded secrets.



JUNIPER BERRIES

Piney, resinous. The EU requires it to be the "predominant" flavor in gin.



CORIANDER SEED

AKA cilantro. Tastes citrusy, unlike the leaves.



ANGELICA ROOT

Bitter, slightly herbal/musky.



CITRUS PEEL

Think zest; peels of oranges, lemons, grapefruit, etc. add brightness.



ORRIS ROOT

Flowery. Widely used in potpourri.



CUCUMBER

Very subtle and refreshing, not unlike cucumber water at health spas.



CARDAMOM

Warm and pungent. Enjoyed in coffee in the Middle East.



CASSIA BARK

Sometimes called "true cinnamon." Spicy.



LICORICE ROOT

Used in herbal medicine as an anti-depressant. No wonder G&Ts make you feel good.



GRAINS OF PARADISE

Similar to black pepper, which it once substituted for in European food.



ANISE

Anise or aniseed is an herb; similar to licorice and fennel.



FENNEL

A member of the carrot family whose anise-like bulb is prized by cooks.

WHAT'S SLOE GIN?

INFUSED HIGH PROOF GIN MADE WITH SLOE BERRIES

- * Sloe berries, which grow wild in the hedgerows of England, look like a mash-up of a blueberry and a Concord grape. But looks deceive: sloes are quite astringent and unpleasant to eat.
- * Resourceful distillers came up with a way of infusing them in high-proof gin, extracting their essence and tempering it with a bit of sugar.
- * The result is yet another branch of the convoluted gin tree, most famously paired with citrus and soda water to make the **SLOE GIN FIZZ**.



FEATURED BRAND FARMER'S GIN



BY DEFINITION, GIN IS NOT SHY.

The botanicals, introduced to pure neutral spirit, are critical to both character and quality. And since gin's flavor begins with famously assertive juniper, it could be argued that in no other spirit category is the provenance of ingredients so important.

For **FARMER'S SMALL BATCH ORGANIC GIN**, it all starts with USDA Certified organic grain. Distillate produced from organic grain has a remarkably clean character, perfect for an infusion of botanicals. In turn the botanicals are especially flavorful thanks to the liveliness and intensity that cannot be found in mass-production crops.

POWER MEETS ITS MATCH: BALANCE

But the real key to the Farmer's botanical mix is not strength but balance. Because many gins are one-dimensional and driven by juniper, Farmer's relies on a host of complementary botanicals:

- * **ELDERFLOWER** brings a delicate floral flavor.
- * **LEMON GRASS** adds vibrant, lemony notes.
- * **CORIANDER**, one of the oldest known gin botanicals, has a citrusy, nutty flavor.
- * **ANGELICA ROOT** brings a slightly sweet, warm, aromatic, musky taste.

Several remaining botanicals—kept secret, of course—are also essential to the Farmer's Gin flavor profile, while the final ABV (46.7%; 93.4 proof) delivers intensity in sync with the gin's bright, citrusy character.

THE BOTANICALS AND ORGANIC GRAINS USED IN FARMER'S ARE GROWN ON LAND FREE OF CHEMICAL PESTICIDES AND FERTILIZERS.

STYLES OF GIN

LONDON DRY

This is the **classic**: dry, with a flavor based on juniper and hints of citrus. Many of the most popular brands are in this category.

PLYMOUTH

The only gin with **Protected Designation of Origin status**; fruity on the nose, with an earthy flavor from plenty of cardamom and coriander.

GENEVER

The **OG** ("original gin"), invented in Holland around the 13th century; made with at least 15% malt, it has a richer mouthfeel than most gins.

OLD TOM

This obscure, sweeter style has been called the **"missing link"** between London Dry and more full-bodied genever. It's being revived as part of the cocktail renaissance.

NAVY STRENGTH

The British navy was partial to gin at **114 proof** (57% alcohol); these gins are popular with bartenders but might be a little strong for home consumers.

NEW AMERICAN

Gin is one of the **most popular spirits** for local craft distillers to make. It doesn't require barrel aging and can offer a distinctively different taste.

BARREL-AGED

The Dutch have produced barrel-aged genever for centuries, but barrel-aged gin — **brown, like whiskey** — is a newbie on these shores. Most local producers are still tinkering with the aging process to get the right amount of oak flavor. It's too early to tell if it's a fad or has stayingpower.

GIN QUOTABLES...

"Like a great fool, I went ashore with them, and they gave me some cursed stuff they called gin—such blasphemy I never heard...this was the unchristianest beastliest liquor I ever tasted."

— Edward John Trelawny, *Adventures of a Younger Son*, 1890

"I exercise strong self control. I never drink anything stronger than gin before breakfast."

— W.C. Fields, 1880–1946

**It's nine o'clock on a Saturday
The regular crowd shuffles in
There's an old man sitting next to me
Makin' love to his tonic and gin**

— Billy Joel, "Piano Man," 1973

ALL ABOUT TONIC

TONIC IS EXTRACT FROM CINCHONA TREE BARK ADDED TO FIZZY WATER

✱ Tonic comes to us from the Incas by way of the British empire. The Incas in Peru and Bolivia used bark from the cinchona tree to stop shivering. Spanish explorers soon figured out that the tree bark would treat malaria.

✱ By the 1800s, scientists had isolated quinine from cinchona. Powdered quinine was added to fizzy water and voila, tonic water. British administrators insisted their men drink tonic water daily as a malaria prophylaxis.

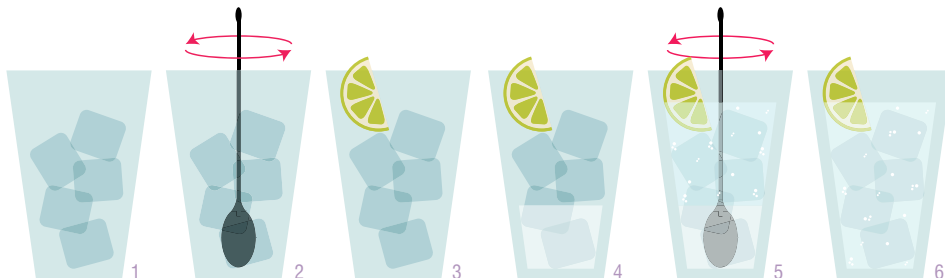
✱ Almost immediately the Brits starting adding gin to it—and one of the world's most perfect cocktails was born.



HOW TO MAKE A GREAT GIN & TONIC:

G&Ts seem like the simplest drink in the world. It's easy to make a passable G&T, but not much more difficult to make a great one. You can make G&Ts better with a few easy tweaks. Consider including these directions on a shelf talker in your store along with a display of both tonic and gins.

1. Use a big, clear glass: perhaps a tall beer glass or iced-tea glass. Use the largest, clearest ice cubes you can acquire.
2. Stir five large ice cubes around the glass to chill it. This is better than freezing the glass because the glass stays clear and gets no freezer aromas. Drain any water from the glass; leave the ice.
3. Rub a thin wedge of lime around the rim. Don't squeeze it. Put it in the glass.
4. Add the gin; 2 oz is a nice size portion.
5. Hold a cocktail spoon over the glass and pour about 100ml of tonic into it. This preserves the fizz. Stir gently.
6. Drink and repeat.



HISTORY: A CHEAT SHEET

13TH CENTURY

First written mention of genever in Bruges (in modern-day Belgium). They drink it as medicine, which explains the juniper flavoring.



LATE 16TH CENTURY

English soldiers encounter genever during battles with the Spanish in the Netherlands; the Brits call it "Dutch courage" and begin distilling it when they get home.

1689

Holland's William of Orange becomes King of England and passes laws actively encouraging the distillation of gin. Cheap, poorly made gin proliferates.



1820s

The newly invented column still allows the creation of neutral spirits, leading quickly to the London Dry style, which becomes king of the gin market by 1900.

CLASSIC GIN COCKTAILS BEYOND THE G&T

MARTINI

- * gin
- * vermouth
- * olive/lemon garnish



GIMLET

- * gin
- * lime juice
- * simple syrup
- * lime



SLOE GIN FIZZ

- * sloe gin
- * gin
- * lemon juice
- * simple syrup
- * club soda
- * lemon



NEGRONI

- * gin
- * red vermouth
- * Campari
- * orange twist



TOM COLLINS

- * gin
- * sugar
- * lemon
- * club soda
- * orange & cherry



BEE'S KNEES

- * gin
- * lemon juice
- * honey syrup
- * lemon peel



SELLING POINTS

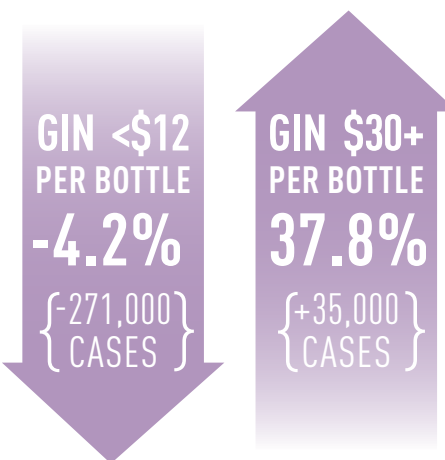
Some people will never like gin—it smells like a Christmas tree and tastes like medicine to them. But here are selling points that play off gin's strength...

- * **IT'S EXOTIC** – “Where else are you ever going to be able to encounter botanicals like orris root and cardamom and elderberry and fir?”
- * **IT'S COMPLEX** – “If you like sipping spirits, gin is the final frontier: so different from whiskey or Cognac, but arguably just as complex and rewarding.”
- * **IT'S SAVORY** – “You don't look like someone who drinks strawberry-kiwi vodka; gin is the most savory of spirits... a very grown-up flavor profile.”
- * **IT'S NEW** – “Wanna try something really new?” (Gin is old in the grand scheme of spirits; but it is new to a lot of today's LDA adults. Remember: Millennials love to experiment and they love authenticity; gin has both those areas covered.)
- * **IT'S CLASSIC** – “If you are ready to pour a G&T at home at any given moment, you are halfway to being a perfect host.”

GIN: WHAT'S HOT/NOT

According to DISCUS figures for 2015 vs. 2014 gin sales, the category is undergoing a fundamental shift. Gins under \$12 tumbled while bottlings over \$30 soared.

FROM 2014 TO 2015...



Gin supplier revenue overall fell 1% from 2014 to 2015, but all of the decline was registered **under \$12**. Both volume and revenue grew for Gin in the Premium (**\$12-\$20**), High End Premium (**\$20-\$30**) and Super Premium (**\$30+**) segments.

1920

The term “bathtub gin” first appears, referring to any style of homemade spirit (thank Prohibition for this new hobby). Often made by mixing cheap grain alcohol with water and flavorings.



21ST CENTURY

A boom in craft spirits brings fresh competition to London Dry, and a blossoming cocktail culture embraces alternative styles.

BACK TO BASICS

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- * by the **world's most experienced** Gin Master Distiller.

GREAT COCKTAIL, NEW TWIST

This summer, Beefeater Gin is putting a twist on the gin and tonic. How? By promoting the **B.L.T.**, a variation that calls for lemon instead of lime.

Lemon is true to the classic

way to drink a Gin & Tonic in the U.K., and also takes advantage of Beefeater's remarkably clean flavor balanced with strong citrus notes.

INTRODUCING THE B.L.T.

Bold but simple, the playful B.L.T. campaign will run May through August—prime Gin & Tonic season—both in advertising and colorful, London-inspired **POINT-OF-SALE**. The pitch here is appropriately reverential, encouraging home mixologists to “elevate this classic.”

At the same time, the B.L.T. serves an important function of reaffirming Beefeater's position as a premium call brand. Michelle Yukhtman, Associate Brand Manager for Beefeater, notes that the B.L.T. plays strongly into the current **PREMIUMIZATION TREND** within the category. “There is a natural appeal for shoppers who want to use an authentic, premium brand, to choose Beefeater for their Gin & Tonic.”

Perhaps most important of all: B.L.T. makes a simple drink better, without making it more complicated. According to the 2015 MSS US Macro Trade Report, the Gin & Tonic is the 2nd most popular simple drink among consumers, and the 3rd most popular simple drink ordered according to bartenders.



NEW THIS SUMMER!

B.L.T.

2 parts Beefeater Gin
3 parts Tonic Water
Serve with a Lemon





Above left to right:
Aromatherapy cocktail (with St. George Terroir Gin) from barmini by José Andrés in Washington, DC; made by Bartender Jose Rivera.
Death's Door Gin's take on Corpse Reviver No. 2 cocktail.

GIN GONE ROGUE

AMERICAN CRAFT DISTILLERS HAVE LED THE MOVEMENT TOWARD LESS JUNIPER, MORE DIVERSITY & HIGHER PRICE POINTS

BY PATRICIA SAVOIE



Like many American distillers, Farmer's Gin includes juniper in the mix, but with other botanicals layered on top as well. **Below:** Lance Winters of St. George Spirits is among those distillers barrel-aging gin.



What a difference a century can make. London Dry ruled the 1900s, but the craft boom of this century has used London Dry more as a blueprint of how *not* to make gin. This movement has often become particularly important at the higher end of the price spectrum: While the total gin category saw volume shrink about 1.8% last year, to fewer than 10 million cases (DISCUS), super-premium gins actually rose 37.8%.

Thomas Mooney, President of American Craft Spirits Association (ASCA) and CEO of House Spirits (Aviation Gin) explains, “The growth of craft distillers—most of whom make gin—has caught everyone by surprise. From under 100 a decade ago, now there are about 1,280, based on a new study led by ACSA.” Craft gin now represents about 2% of the total gin market. It is defined by relatively small producers (under 20,000 cases, with most under 10,000) and by a spirit of innovation and creativity.

Less Juniper, More Styles

Gin growth piggybacked on the renaissance of the cocktail, and the new gins gave mixologists a lot to work with. Allen Katz, co-founder of

New York Distilling Company, notes, “This outrageous gin resurgence is driven mainly by the ‘cocktail culture’ and by bartenders who experimented and created new drinks.”

The “American” or “Western” style places less emphasis on juniper and adds a bevy of other botanicals—elderflower (in Farmer's Gin, for example), sarsaparilla (Aviation), orris root (Lee Spirits), cinnamon (Greenhook Ginsmiths), orange peel, fir and so on. By adding a broader array of botanicals, the impact of juniper is tamped down, producing a more complex, layered spirit.

Some distillers are creating other types of gin, such as barrel-aged, which harks back to the Dutch genever or the sweeter Old Tom. Others emphasize the local sourcing of botanicals. Lance Winters, founder of St. George, walks through the local forests, foraging Douglas fir, sage, bay laurel and fennel. At Berkshire Mountain Distillers, founder Chris Weld is growing juniper, orris, angelica and other flavorings on six acres at the distillery.

Retailers have seen their gin shelves expand dramatically. At Astor Wines & Spirits in New York City, Head Spirits Buyer Nima Ansari has about 35 American gins on display, up from a dozen five years ago. He sees a growing market for barrel-aged gins and for gins that have whiskey

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1. Source: TOTAL US - XAOC + LIQ PLUS L52 Weeks 9.12.15
2. Source: RAD Depletions, Jan. 2015 ending December
3. Source: Nielsen TTL US XAOC 26 weeks ending 4/4/15

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characteristics, such as Chief Gowanus or St. George Reposado.

Following are some fine, eminently mixable craft gins that have gained recognition beyond their local circles:

BERKSHIRE MOUNTAIN DISTILLERS

(Great Barrington, MA)

Products: Greylock, Ethereal, Barrel-Aged Ethereal

Greylock is London Dry style but has a number of strong citrus flavors that balance the juniper. Ethereal is a limited edition gin with each batch given a new number and label color. Barrel-Aged Ethereal is aged 18 months in used bourbon barrels. Nice in a G&T.



BIG GIN (Seattle, WA)

Products: Big Gin, Bourbon Barreled Big Gin

Unapologetic in its juniper usage, Big is traditional and aggressive. Partners Ben Capdeville and Todd Leberman have only been at it since 2011, using a 100-gallon Vendome pot still custom-made in Louisville, KY. Having enjoyed success with Bourbon Barreled Big Gin, Peat Barreled is next.



DEATH'S DOOR SPIRITS

(Middleton, WI)

Products: Death's Door Gin

CEO Brian Ellison spends time picking juniper berries from the Wisconsin woods which go into Death's Door along with coriander and fennel. It works in classic cocktails or as a martini.



DISTILLERY NO. 209

(San Francisco, CA)

Products: No. 209, Kosher for Passover, Barrel Reserve

With a track record in wine (Rudd Oakville Estate) and gourmet retail (Dean & DeLuca), it's no surprise Distillery No. 209 takes gin seriously. Aside from the flagship gin, they make a Kosher for Passover version (sugar cane base; all non-grain botanicals), and limited-edition gins using used varietal barrels from Rudd.



FEW SPIRITS (Evanston, IL)

Products: Few American, Few Barrel, Few Breakfast

Founded by Master Distiller Paul Hietko. American, with its pepper notes, makes a bracing Negroni; Breakfast is infused with Earl Grey tea and bergamot.



GREENHOOK GINSMITHS

(Greenpoint, Brooklyn)

Products: American Dry, Beach Plum, Old Tom

Founded by brothers Steven and Philip DeAngelo.

The American Dry has elderflower and spice notes; nice straight-up or in mixed drinks. The Beach Plum is a variation on Sloe gin using locally harvested beach plums, which are slightly bitter.



HOUSE SPIRITS DISTILLERY

(Portland, OR)

Products: Aviation American

Distiller Christian Krosstad and mixologist Ryan Magarian created Aviation. Floral notes like lavender and spice notes like cardamom make it shine in a complex martini or the Aviation cocktail.



NEW YORK DISTILLING COMPANY

(Brooklyn, NY)

Products: Dorothy Parker American, Perry's Tot Navy Strength, Chief Gowanus New Netherland

Co-founded in 2011 by Tom Potter and Allen Katz. Dorothy Parker's hibiscus and cinnamon notes make it great in a Gibson or Negroni. Chief Gowanus is made by redistilling unaged rye with juniper and hops then aging it in oak.



PHILADELPHIA DISTILLING

(Philadelphia, PA)

Products: Bluecoat American Dry, Bluecoat Barrel Finished

Robert Cassell, Andrew Auwerda and Timothy Yarnall co-founded Bluecoat in 2005. The American Dry was one of the first craft gins—a pioneer in defining American Style. Citrus, orris, coriander.



ST. GEORGE SPIRITS (Alameda, CA)

Products: Terroir, Botanivore, Dry Rye Reposado

Jörg Rupf established St. George in 1982 as the first small American distillery since Prohibition. "Terroir" captures "a walk in the woods on a hot summer day." The Reposado is aged 18 months in casks used to age wines. ■





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BOOM BOXES

**AS THE FINE WINE MARKET CONTINUES TO EVOLVE,
BOX WINES ARE STEPPING UP FROM THE BOTTOM SHELF**

BY W. BLAKE GRAY

There's an old saying in the wine business: *The wine doesn't know what package it's in.* Well, more and more frequently, that innocent wine's package is turning out to be a 3L box. And maybe the wine does know where it is now—after all, it stays fresher for longer in a bag-in-box than it would in a bottle.

Staying fresh is a major selling point for box wines. As is the format's lower carbon footprint, and its cost-efficiency that is generously passed along to the consumer. But maybe the most important factor in the 3L bag-in-box market today is boxes' quiet ascent into the mainstream wine universe. Long the chunky foundation of a retailer's literal bottom shelf, 3L bag-in-boxes are now earning eye-level positioning, and sometimes their own wall.

How big is the boom in box wines? *Inc.* magazine recently stated "premium boxed wine has been growing 20% each year for the last ten years and 75% last year alone." That rate may well depend on what they mean by "premium," but the success—and expansion—of the category is hard to miss.

Sales of 3L boxes rose 10% by value and 13% by volume

LEFT: At Harry's Wine & Liquor in Fairfield, CT, box wines are stocked at eye level.
RIGHT: Beso Del Sol, a fast-growing 3L-boxed Sangria, exemplifies how suppliers are succeeding in positioning box wines as fun wines.
BELOW: Black Box, launched in 2003, is now an elder statesman of the 3L bag-in-box genre.

in 2015, according to Nielsen. Nielsen doesn't measure many independent wine shops, but that doesn't mean the trend isn't having an impact there also, literally on the bottom line.

Curiously, this comes despite the fact that many stores aren't exactly pushing them. Some don't even carry them. Julia Cochran, manager of the Wine Club in San Jose, CA, says they don't sell any 3L boxes in her store. Ditto 67 Wine & Spirits in Manhattan.





Vin Vault, from E. & J. Gallo, manages to project an upscale image without pretending to be anything but a box wine. For added mobility and outdoor utility, Delicato Family Vineyards added a 1.5L Brick and 500ml Mini to their popular Bota Box line.

Frank Pagliaro, owner of Frank's Wine in Wilmington, DE, says 3L boxes are selling even though he tries not to encourage them. "We don't ever recommend them and we bury them on the bottom shelf," says Pagliaro, "but they still sell really well."

INSIDE THE BOX (PHENOMENON)

At first glance, it seems discordant with the ongoing premiumization of wine. Sales of wines under \$10 are dropping nationally while sales of bottles over \$20 are rising faster, percentage-wise, than in any other price category. Box wines—even when three liters sell for \$24—represent pretty cheap wine.

Thinking positively, it's not a stretch to think that people are simply "getting" box wine. Perhaps it's not quite as integrated as the once-shocking notion of screwcaps, but still. Bargain-minded, frequent-drinking wine lovers "get" that the juice in the boxes is the same as the juice in the bottles.

Indeed, setting the supermarket aisles aside, the boom in box wines is alive and well in independent stores that embrace the phenomenon. And the boxes are easier than ever to embrace from a merchant's standpoint because

of a proliferation of new, higher-quality 3-liters, both domestic and especially imported.

"These are not your \$12 or \$14 boxes," says Patrick Monteleone, owner of Harry's Wine & Liquor Market in Fairfield, CT. "In the better box wines, we're seeing an increase. In the old favorites, the ones that were popular when I was a kid, they're fading."

Monteleone says his best-selling boxes are in the \$20 to \$25 range, and he doesn't think \$25 is a price ceiling. "I think there's probably a little room over the top of it," he says.

WHO-WHAT-WHEN-WHERE?

Who's buying these wines? That may depend on the store. Pagliaro says that about 80% of his box-wine customers are women, though in all age brackets "from the little old blue-haired ladies that used to buy Carlo Rossi four-liter jugs, to the book club ladies getting together to gossip about other neighborhood ladies, to the 20-somethings looking for cheap party wine."

Monteleone has not seen such a gender gap in box wine buyers in his store, but he suggests that may be because of his location. "We're right by the seashore," Monteleone said. "Typically when we think of the

boxed wine buyer, it's usually the senior crowd that has been drinking Almaden. My father has been drinking the same box wine for 30 years. These newer wines don't fit that category. For our people, it depends on what their social activity is going to be. 'We're going down by the water and it's a picnic, so this is what we're serving our group today.' It's not an income level or a wine savvy thing. Somebody is having a party on their back patio, and doesn't want glass on the patio."

The trend has been a decade in the making, since Black Box Wines introduced quality wines in a 3L box. In retrospect, the entire category owes a hat tip to Black Box for setting a new standard for varietal boxes. Now French, Spanish and Italian producers are putting quite-good wines in boxes. Some are specifically made for boxes, like Wineberry Chateau Tassin Bordeaux and La Petit Frog Picpoul de Pinet.

The Perrin family showed a huge endorsement of the 3L box category when they began selling the popular La Vieille Ferme brand in boxes. There is no doubt in Patrick Monteleone's mind that the name recognition is a plus. "You can take this brand that you know and trust and you can put it on your counter at home," Monteleone says.

When people can trust the name on the label, and the label is on a big ol' box, that certainly says something about the evolution of the American wine drinker.

Considering how fast 3L bag-in-box wines are selling, it's a bit surprising that the number of brand offerings has not exploded (compare to the proliferation of never-seen-before Proseccos and Malbecs). No doubt shelf real estate is still a barrier, but the pace of new brand entries is picking up as of late. Here are a few category's impressive breadth and quality:

■ POSITIVE SPRAWL

Along with Black Box, DFV's **BOTA BOX** has functioned as a reliable go-to line for many retailers, earning extra credit for their eco-conscious packaging. The brand has flourished with extensions, varietally as well as into both 1.5L bag-in-box "Bota Bricks" and smaller Tetra Paks. Interestingly, Bota Box drinkers' tastes appear parallel to bottle-drinkers'—the two red blends, RedVolution (launched 2012) and Nighthawk Black (2015) have outpaced varietal offerings (which are also growing nicely).



■ VIVE LA BOÎTE

These two French wines prove that the Old World can bag-in-box delicious French country wine with contemporary appeal. **MAISON CUBI**, whose name plays off the notion of a "house cube," partners with a variety of estates in Languedoc and Provence, and happily uses the Vin de France designation. Jenny & Francois works with a Rhône producer, making minimally processed Rouge, Rosé and Blanc for the **FROM THE TANK** boxes they proudly sell in their portfolio of artisanal labels.



Like its sibling Vin Vault, Gallo's The Naked Grape uses a colorful box to grab attention and provide information.

■ NOW THATZA BOX!

Having had success boxing their Home-made Barberone and both a red and white Spanish Sangria, Opici Wines decided to apply the format to another successful wine they import, **ALVERDI** Pinot Grigio. It debuted in September 2015, with the brand's bottle actually pictured on the eye-catching box.



■ BRONCO ADDS 'FOUR'

Is there any better indicator that a category is vibrant than when big players keep getting in the game? Having seen Constellation, The Wine Group (Big House, FishEye,) and E. & J. Gallo go big into boxes, Bronco Wine Co. has just hit the market with **FOUR**, a tasty California blend of Cabernet, Merlot, Petite Sirah and Petit Verdot.



■ WASHINGTON IN THE BOX

Branded bag-in-box wines from Washington State are surely another sign of the category maturing. Precept Wine—known for their **HOUSE WINE** brand—built a new, 20,000-square-foot boxing and bottling facility in Walla Walla in



2014, underscoring their commitment to 3L boxes. **POWERS**, long recognized as a value brand, offers even better ratio quality-to-price in the 3L size.



■ COOL SIPS

Can boxes still get "outside the box," so to speak? The format itself can be especially graphic. Consider Revolution Wine Company (now in 22 states), who puts their **EL LIBRE** Malbec into both bottle and 3L bag-in-box. Revolution's Steven Ward reports: "The BIB has been our fastest growing category. We are in the process of expanding the line based on initial sales response."



Meanwhile, one of the very newest—and arguably most curious—brands is **ARCHER ROOSE**, created by an entrepreneurial NYC-based couple, David Waldman and Marian Leitner, whose previous wine project was rather obscure (they created Pheasant's Tears in the Republic of Georgia). Their goal now: turn consumers on to high-quality wine at refreshingly low prices, starting with seriously well-made Cabernet, Carménère and Sauvignon Blanc from Chile. They refer to Archer Roose wines as "splendory without snobbery," which seems like an apt tag for the entire category.





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The sweet Bordeaux appellations are unique in that they are defined largely by climate, rather than soil. The convergence of two rivers—one cold, one warm—creates the fog that induces *Botrytis cinerea*, or noble rot.

REVISITING SWEET BORDEAUX

LONG OVERLOOKED, THESE UNIQUE LATE-HARVEST WINES HAVE SURPRISING RANGE—AND UTILITY

BY CHRISTY CANTERBURY MW

Like all of Bordeaux, this prestigious region's sweet wines have been looking for love lately. But whereas top reds and whites have only been lonely for a few years, even the best sweets have been forlorn for a while. Sales of Sauternes, Barsac, Cérons, Cadillac and their brethren are slumping. They're out of vogue.

Adding insult to injury, the French government now threatens to build a railway through Sauternes' historic vineyards. You hadn't heard? Not surprising. Wine lovers often rally against terroir-changing events: witness Germany's failed Mosel Bridge project. (Granted, the bridge failed for structural reasons, not because of wine folks' pleas. Still, the wine community was up in arms.) Yet, the racket hasn't been raised very intensely for sweet Bordeaux wines.

It's puzzling. Here is why the crowd should roar.

Terroir Specificity

Bordeaux's sweet wine diversity comes from two rivers. The closer a property is to the intersection of the Ciron's chilly waters and the Gironde's warm waters, the more its Sémillon, Sauvignon Blanc and sometimes Muscadelle vines will be infected with the noble rot that concentrates the grapes for these wines. Uniquely, it's climate, rather than soil, making the wine. Driving through southeastern Bordeaux in late fall is like driving through a steam bath. Eric Monneret of Château Lapointe in Pomerol previously worked at Château Raymond-Lafon in Sauternes. He remarked he often couldn't see the front of his hood when driving to work there.

The properties closest to this convergence produce the most concentrated and unctuous wines, especially on the western side of the Gironde, where the Ciron approaches from the southwest.

Here, top properties only make about one glass per vine. Conversely, the further away the property, the lighter the wines.

The Bordeaux Wine Council separates the terroirs into two categories: "Mellow and Fruity" (Bordeaux, Haut-Benauges, Bordeaux Moelleux, Bordeaux Supérieur, Côtes de Bordeaux Saint-Macaire, Francs Côtes de Bordeaux, Graves de Vayres, Graves Supérieures, Premières Côtes de Bordeaux and Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux); and "Unctuous and Intense" (Barsac, Cadillac, Cérons, Loupiac, Sainte-Croix-du-Mont and Sauternes.) Like Mariah Carey, there's more (vocal) stylistic range than you might expect.

Most in-the-know drinkers have sipped a Sauternes or Barsac or two. But, how about a Bordeaux Haut-Benauges or Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux? The "Unctuous" category carries the big stars, but their intensity, higher (14%+) alcohols and generous new oak flavor influences make

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SWEET BORDEAUX REGIONS

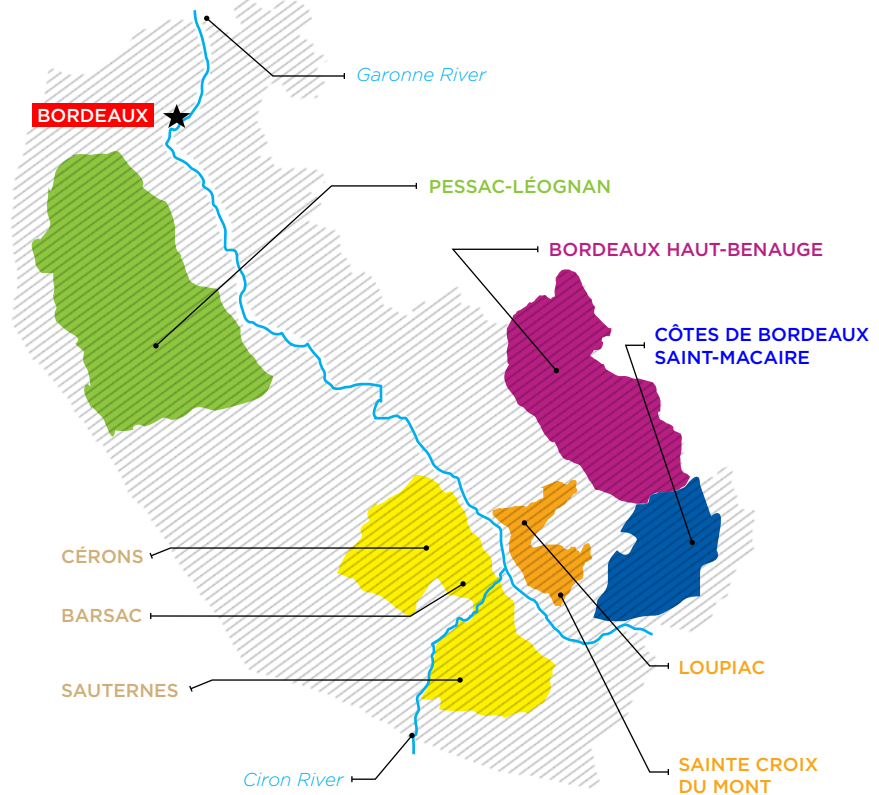
The Bordeaux Wine Council separates the sweet wines of Bordeaux into two categories. Properties closest to the intersection of the Garonne and Ciron rivers gain the greatest benefit from the area's fog; they produce the most concentrated and rich wines. Conversely, properties further away from the rivers produce lighter wines, which the council calls "Mellow and Fruity."

MELLOW AND FRUITY

Bordeaux Haut-Benaige
Bordeaux Moelleux
Bordeaux Supérieur
Côtes de Bordeaux Saint-Macaire
Francs Côtes de Bordeaux
Graves de Vayres
Graves Supérieures
Premières Côtes de Bordeaux
Sainte-Foy-Bordeaux

UNCTUOUS AND INTENSE

Barsac
Cadillac
Cérons
Loupiac
Sainte-Croix-du-Mont
Sauternes



them harder to pair with a large array of foods. "Mellow" wines are lighter with less viscosity and lower alcohol, making it easier to enjoy a second glass of these.

Stylistic differences create a broad price spectrum. It isn't unusual to see leading Sauternes estates' half bottles going for several hundred bucks—if you can get your hands on them. By contrast, 750mls of mid-weight sweet Bordeaux can sell for as little as \$20, sometimes less.

At the Table

Importantly, opportunities to sip sweet wines crop up long before dessert. A small sip of something sweet at the

A small sip of something sweet at the beginning of a meal is an easier sell; by the end, it's easy for most stuffed diners to resist sweet wines.

beginning of a meal is an easier sell. By the end, it's easy for most stuffed diners to resist sweet wines.

For starters, there's the traditional foie gras and Sauternes combo, but happily plenty of other dishes work beautifully, too. In Cadillac last December, I was

impressed by Château Biac's butternut squash soup with caramelized apples brilliantly executed by Youmna Asseily. Madame Asseily also recommends cream of broccoli soup with Roquefort as a starter followed by a Thai Green Curry Prawn main for a lighter meal that can easily accompany a 750ml bottle of a mid-weight sweet Bordeaux wine.

It's time to branch out, enjoy and support these delicious Bordeaux sweet wines. Their uses vary far more than we think traditionally, and so do their prices. Besides, there's more than discovery at stake here. Vintage variation aside, sweet wine production is declining. From 2009 to 2015, yields dropped 31% as châteaux produce more dry whites. Let's put some corks in this style drain! ■



With age, the sweet end of the spectrum in particular gains a rich golden color. Yields of sweet Bordeaux dropped 31% from 2009 to 2015—not only because of poor crops, but also due to an increase in dry wine production.



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2. Source: GuestMetrics – Total U.S. (YTD 4 weeks ending 12/27/15)
3. Source: GuestMetrics – Total U.S. - \$ Sales – Latest 52 weeks ending 2/21/16
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Founders All Day IPA is an example of brewers retaining hoppy-bitter style at lower alcohol levels.

EASY DOES IT

LOWER-ALCOHOL BREWS CARVE OUT A WELCOME NICHE IN THE BEER WORLD

BY JIM CLARKE

One of the first written records of beer consumption, from the Epic of Gilgamesh, captured the drink's effects: "Enkidu...drank the beer—seven jugs—and became expansive and sang with joy. He was elated and his face glowed."

It doesn't go on to say whether Enkidu was able to drive his chariot home that night, or how he felt the next morning. It certainly would depend on how strong those "jugs" were.

India Pale Ales, embraced widely as IPAs, are today's most popular craft beer style. The Brewers Association defines IPAs as having 6.3-7.5% alcohol. The Association defines the American Lager category as having only 3.2-4%, so IPAs offer a two-for-one return in terms of pure potency. It doesn't take advanced mathematics to realize that a couple of IPAs does

not amount to the same drinking experience as a couple of lagers.

Having More Than One...

That realization, especially for on-premise venues, has made the emergence of session beers a welcome relief. It's a hard category to put a label on. "What's a session beer?" says Bart Watson, Chief

Economist for the Brewers Association. "There's certainly a trend there, but getting specific statistics is tough because many of the styles are sub-styles (session IPA for example), or can be interpreted differently by different people."

Overall, session beers are defined as being lower in alcohol; the name is meant to suggest that one can drink multiple beers for a whole evening—a "session"—and still feel relatively human. But "light" craft beers never took off, according to Watson, as drinkers associated them with less flavor. According to Nielsen surveys, flavor is a top priority for 99% of craft beer drinkers.

In some states brewers have always had an interest in session beers. Restrictive laws in Oklahoma, for example, mean brewers there can only sell direct at the brewery if the beer is "low-point" (under 3.2% ABV) or if they buy the beer back





from a distributor; grocery stores can also sell only low-point beers, whereas one has to go to the liquor store for a stronger beer. "The state forces us to innovate on the low-point side," says Heath Glover, founder and owner of Willows Family Ales in Tulsa.

Flavor Hurdle

It's a challenge for brewers, according to Matthias Neidhart of beer importer B. United International, because flavor and alcohol both typically derive from the same thing: the amount of malt used in brewing. More malt means greater flavor intensity, but also more sugars and therefore, alcohol. So if session beers are really delivering in terms of flavor, it's a real tribute to the brewmaster's craft. "It's truly difficult to brew a 4.8 or 5% beer that's totally exciting in terms of flavor and aroma," says Neidhart. "The bigger the beer is, the more you can hide flaws and such."

Brewers such as Founders All Day IPA, are retrofitting higher alcohol styles



Left: Harviestoun Bitter & Twisted is imported from Scotland by Matthias Neidhart of B. United International. Right: Goose Island recently rolled out their Four Star Pils, at just over 5% ABV.

'Session Beers' maybe hard to define but every merchant and bar needs to have lower-alcohol options.

More malt isn't the only way to create complexity, though. For Glover, creating exciting session beers often means riffing on sour styles like Gose and Berliner-Weisse. Sour ales can still be quite heady, but these styles call for low alcohol and, in the case of Gose, additions of coriander and, unusually, salt. Drinkers are responding; interest in Gose, based on frequency of Google searches, has leapt far ahead of interest in sours generally.

Many traditional European beer styles qualify as sessionable. Among others B. United brings in is the Nightmare Yorkshire Porter and Harviestoun Bitter & Twisted from England, and the Reissdorf Kölsch and Fritz Briem 1809 Berliner Weisse, all of which clock in under 5% ABV with no sacrifice in flavor.

Brewers are also retrofitting higher alcohol styles: Full Sail's Session IPA, Founders All Day IPA and Lagunitas DayTime IPA are all examples of brewers retaining the flavor and hoppy-bitter style charac-



teristics at lower alcohol levels—5.1, 4.7 and 4.65% respectively.

Craft Pilseners also shot up 123% in 2015. Goose Island, known for their cultish 14.2% ABV Bourbon County Stout, recently rolled out their Four Star Pils—at 5.1%, definitely sessionable.

Seven jugs of Bourbon County Stout would leave you on the floor, but in the era of Gilgamesh, Enkidu's seven jugs might have been manageable after all...if they were session jugs. ■



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FRANCE'S VIN MAKEOVER

BY MAKING FRENCH WINE EASIER THAN EVER TO GRASP, THE YOUNG 'VIN DE FRANCE' DESIGNATION IS BOOMING

BY W. R. TISH

Geography has always been central to the wines of France. It was on the strength of the AOC system—of regionally identified wines based on specific grapes—that French wine earned its image as a quality standard for the rest of the world.

In the 21st century, though, varietally named wines rose in prominence, and the rest of the winegrowing world progressed dramatically. Wines defined by geography were perceived as complex. By contrast, the success of varietally named wines exposed a significant gap among French wines entering the global market. That gap also represented an opportunity.

Enter Vin de France in 2009, which finally allowed French wineries, cooperatives and négociants to shed their AOC handcuffs. Firms making “Vin de France” were empowered to source fruit from anywhere in the country, to combine

varieties that had traditionally stayed apart, and to put grape names and vintage on front labels.

The new category represented a fundamental shift both in philosophy and economics on the part of suppliers. With the new freedom to source and blend flexibly, wine producers are able to deliver better value (most Vin de France wines are between \$9 and \$15), and to ensure consistency of volume from year to year. The Vin de France designation also encourages innovation—Chardonnay with a little Muscat, why not?—and lets producers respond more nimbly to shifting tastes.

“What is interesting about this category is that it allows for creativity, flexibility, consistency and profitability. It allows us to be present in many markets at many levels,” notes Thomas Giubbi, Managing Director of Compagnie Rhodanienne. “We can provide the same level of quality year after year and we can

adapt our wine styles and marketing to individual markets.”

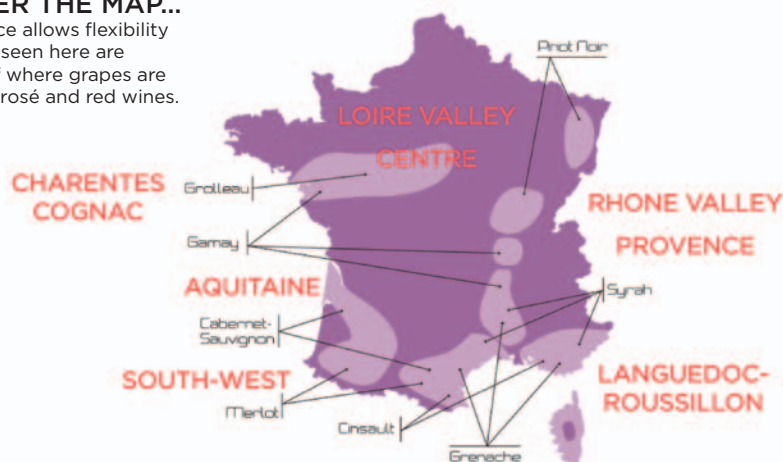
LATE START, FAST GROWTH

As a category, Vin de France was quickly embraced by the French wine industry: according to Business France 2015, in just six years it grew to account for 15% of French table wine exports—that’s 240 million bottles of varietal wines, not bulk wine. In the U.S., including the vintage on these wines was authorized by the TTB only since late 2012, so Vin de France wines are still very new to America. Even with this delay, U.S. Vin de France imports have more than doubled each year, and we are now taking in 9% of the category’s total bottle exports.

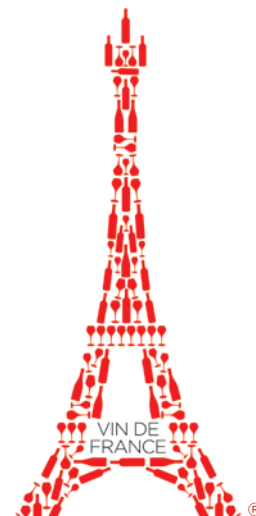
The category’s fast start has been fostered by a solid foundation of quality standards as well as a framework for trade promotion. The trade organization Anivin de France has been active promoting the wines abroad, via trade communications, consumer and influencer outreach and, perhaps most notably, an annual competition that showcases the quality, breadth and value of offerings in the category. Meanwhile, FranceAgriMer, a branch of the French Ministry of Agriculture, oversees category regulations and ensures traceability from the vineyard to bottling for all Vin de France wines on behalf of Anivin de France.

ALL OVER THE MAP...

Vin de France allows flexibility in sourcing; seen here are examples of where grapes are sourced for rosé and red wines.



Unlike the AOC system that prescribes specific grapes to be grown *within* specific areas, Vin de France producers can blend the best grapes from *across* the regions in France, using diversity of growing conditions and climate to their stylistic advantage.



VIN DE FRANCE
'BEST VALUE SELECTION'
2016 WINNERS



Nearly 400 Vin de France wines were judged in this year's Best Value Selection competition; only Gold and Silver medals were awarded, and those were capped stingily at 30% of entries (per OIV standards). Of this year's medal winners, 54 were red, 51 were white, 13 were rosé. Here are some awarded wines that are currently in the U.S. market:

1	Alain de la Treille 2015 Pinot Noir
2	Café du Midi 2015 Merlot
3	La Châsse 2015 Chardonnay
4	Florent Descombe 2015 Syrah
5	Les Fumées Blanches 2015 Sauvignon Blanc
6	Kiwi Cuvée 2015 Sauvignon Blanc
7	Kosmos 2014 Syrah-Grenache-Mourvedre
8	Maison de la Villette 2015 Cabernet Sauvignon
9	Patriarche 2015 Viognier
10	La Petite Perrière 2015 Pinot Noir
11	Plaisir de France 2015 Syrah Rosé
12	Réserve du Conseiller 2015 Chardonnay
13	Tussock Jumper 2014 Pinot Noir
14	Villa La Vie en Rose 2015 Négrette Rosé

impressed. Olivier Kielwasser, former buyer for the Giant Eagle wine program, said, "The wines over-delivered and in terms of taste profile Vin de France is extremely relevant. They integrate a French touch with their winemaking that differentiates them from other international wines."

Quickly and surely, this youthful category of modern wines is changing how Americans perceive and consume the French wines. ■



➔ See the full selection of medal winners at: vindefrancewines.com

Held annually in Europe since 2010, The Anivin de France competition features professional judges from key global markets to determine the Best Value Vin de France Selections. Fittingly given the category's global appeal, the results are revealed at Prowein each March.

WINDOW TO TRENDS

Analyzing the winners of the Best Value Selection competition also provides a glimpse at the category's on-trend dynamics. For instance, 87% of the 2016 medal winners announce their grape(s) on the label; and the bulk of awards were

Thanks to the varietal indications, Vin de France labels are consciously consumer-friendly.

in synch with today's international consumers: Chardonnay (22 medals) and Sauvignon Blanc (17) among whites, Cabernet Sauvignon (12), Merlot (13) and Pinot Noir among reds—plus 13 rosés. Blends in 2016 were all over the map, you might say, including such novel combinations as Viognier-Colombard-Muscat and Grenache-Merlot.

Another noteworthy trend, according to Anivin de France Director Valérie Pajotin, is the participation of established AOC producers: "Many of the most clever French exporters from an AOC region are adding Vin de France to their range to make the best value for money offer."

Also, while the bulk of Vin de France bottlings are under \$15 SRP, the competition this year saw an increase of upscale wines, such as the Kosmos red blend of Gerard Bertrand. Not to be glossed over is the fact that the medal-winning wines this year presented a preponderance of freshly branded wines; the category is teeming with contemporary names and catchy graphics.

American judges participating in the 2016 Best Value Selection came away



With popular varietal wines as well as creative blends, Vin de France wines dovetail with current consumer tastes.

SPREAD THE RUM LOVE

WITH SUMMER APPROACHING, BLUE CHAIR BAY RUM DIVES DEEP INTO DIRECT-TO-CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT

BY SARA KAY

Summer is a time for soaking up the sun. Not surprisingly, it's also Blue Chair Bay Rum's time to truly shine. Launched in 2013 by multiplatinum singer-songwriter Kenny Chesney, Blue Chair Bay has been a favorite of warm weather enthusiasts for its fun, relaxed vibe and tropical flavors. This summer, Blue Chair Bay is focusing on on-premise and off-premise activations and cocktail-driven promotions revolving around Chesney's 2016 "Spread the Love" tour and other summer events.

At the concerts themselves, spanning four months and multiple cities, specialty cocktails will be available at venue concession stands, with each summery drink showcasing a different Blue Chair Bay rum. Island Girl features the Coconut rum; High Tide features Banana; Blue Jean Baby features the White Rum and Long Legged Model features the Coconut Spiced Rum.



Blue Chair Bay is also working on expanding their already-successful brand ambassador program made up of more than 300 ambassadors, getting consumers excited about the brand. In addition to Chesney's summer tour, Blue Chair Bay will be engaging directly with consumers at a variety of festivals in Nashville, Houston, San Diego, North Florida and Tampa all summer long. All told, Blue Chair Bay activations will be engaging consumers at 100+ events nationwide.

"Blue Chair Bay has always taken a grassroots approach to marketing," says David Farmer, President and CEO of Fishbowl Spirits. "Once consumers taste the product and hear the story firsthand, they really develop a strong tie to the brand that is more difficult to achieve through other mediums. We feel the best way to connect with the consumer is to have them taste the product."

The choice to engage directly with the consumer at music events and festivals has done great things for Blue Chair Bay, notes Farmer. Since the brand launched in 2013, Blue Chair Bay has seen some impressive growth through their direct style of marketing. In 2015, the brand saw a growth of 17,988 cases, a 31.4% increase from 2014. "The response at these events is great," he says. "When you catch people in the middle of summer out to have a good time, they almost unanimously respond positively. Rum and summer go hand in hand."



ISLAND GIRL

Ingredients:

1½ oz Blue Chair Bay Coconut Rum
1 oz Orange Juice
1 oz Pineapple Juice
2 oz Lemon-Lime Soda

Method:

Build ingredients directly into tall glass with ice and stir. Optional garnish: orange slice and cherry.

Spreading Into Social

In the spirit of spending as much time outdoors as possible, Blue Chair Bay has also partnered with local radio stations to promote a Spread the Love tailgate contest in each of the stadium tour cities, encouraging fans to throw the best tailgate to win a backstage experience. Social media activations in stadium cities with the brand ambassadors will also take place during Chesney's tour, with fans able to take GIFs and photos with the ambassadors to post on social media using Blue Chair Bay's hashtag #RumOn.

The summer brings Blue Chair Bay on-premise as well, bringing island-themed activations to accounts. "We have a couple of tricks up our sleeve," says Farmer. "Our marketing team has created a conch shell-shaped vessel called the shell shot that consumers will be able to take a shot of Blue Chair Bay Rum out of. It's one of a kind, and we believe it will elevate our promos to the next level." ■



In tandem with Kenny Chesney's Spread the Love Tour from April 23rd through August 27th, concert venues will feature Blue Chair Bay signage, activation, and concession bars, and will serve summer-themed Blue Chair Bay cocktails.

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BRING ON THE BARREL

HORNITOS 'BLACK BARREL' APPLIES WHISKEY KNOW-HOW TO TEQUILA

BY JACK ROBERTIELLO

When talking tequila, Americans have become accustomed to the four main types: blanco, reposado, añejo and extra añejo, all based on time the spirit has spent in barrel. But not many tequilas focused on barrel-aging the way whiskey makers did, especially in exploring finishes.

That is, until Beam Suntory brought their whiskey-making skills to bear on benchmark brand Hornitos, aiming to create a tequila that took on the most interesting attributes of bourbon. "Hornitos Black Barrel is a 100% agave tequila uniquely aged to impart distinct and complex whiskey notes," says Claire Richards, Senior Director of Tequilas at Beam Suntory.

First, tequila distiller and brand source Sauza ages the tequila for 12 months in traditional used American oak barrels, and then moves the liquid to heavily

charred American oak barrels for four months, before finally transferring the spirit once again to specially-toasted barrels for two more months, in order to enhance smoky, whiskey-like notes and a vanilla character.

"Hornitos Black Barrel takes on two unique spirit profiles," explains Richards. Tequila consumers who enjoy a greater appreciation for the spirit want to explore other possibilities, she adds: "The groundbreaking aging process that Hornitos Black Barrel undergoes is unlike anything else in its category and gives it remarkable depth, complexity and rich character."

With 100% agave now a well-known standard for quality tequila, the extra barrel attention given at Hornitos becomes an important point of distinction. In addition, as whiskey, especially American made, becomes internationally more popular, tequila with a whiskey kick meets demands for more flavorful, sipping spirits—something Richards says Hornitos Black Barrel is poised to exploit.

Sauza's Finest

One of the largest distillers in Mexico, Sauza first produced Hornitos on Mexican Independence Day (September 16th) in 1950, and it is currently distilled entirely from mature blue agave at the Sauza La Perseverancia Distillery in Jalisco, Mexico.

Black Barrel has given the Hornitos brand a big credibility boost since it was first released in 2014, reaffirming Beam Suntory's position as a spirits industry leader and innovator. Richards notes,

Black Barrel's whiskey connection and 100% agave pedigree are stated clearly on the package, giving it an edge on the shelf.

"Hornitos Black Barrel is the most highly awarded tequila since 2014 based on all major spirits competitions."

She also reports that the brand has received positive reinforcement from both on- and off-premise accounts. At retail, Hornitos Black Barrel is backed with strong point-of-sale programs, on-site sampling and through bartender education dinners and events. "As consumer interest in the category continues to grow and evolve, we're ensuring that our tequila innovations are appealing to new interests and audiences," she says. ■

BLACK GINGER

Ingredients:

1 oz Hornitos Black Barrel Tequila
 1/3 oz Simple Syrup
 1/3 oz fresh Lemon Juice
 Rosemary sprigs
 Ginger Beer

Method:

Lightly muddle one rosemary sprig and combine remainder of ingredients (except ginger beer) in a shaker with ice. Shake vigorously and strain into a highball glass over fresh ice. Top with ginger beer and garnish with a rosemary sprig.



Hornitos mixologist Carlos Abeyta suggests that whiskey-like attributes make Hornitos Black Barrel a perfect candidate to put a fresh twist on cocktails like the Manhattan and Old Fashioned.



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GOSLINGS AMBER AMBITION

WITH THE NEWLY FORMULATED GOLD SEAL,
GOSLINGS MOVES TO THE LIGHTER SIDE OF THE RUM WORLD

BY JACK ROBERTIELLO

As iconic drinks go, the Dark 'n Stormy has long been known as a favorite of sailors at sunset and golfers at the 19th hole. The fact that the cocktail gained trademark status in 1991 serves to confirm the uniqueness of Goslings Black Seal, the dark side in that classic convergence of rum and ginger beer.

But Malcolm Gosling, President and CEO of Gosling-Castle Partners, and namesake of Bermuda-based family firm, had long believed there was an opportunity to create an equally distinctive amber rum, especially for younger legal drinking age consumers who might be looking for something light and mixable in a different way.

“Black Seal is such a unique blend—one that has stayed relevant in just about every international market we’re in—that we needed to spend quite a bit of time to create an exceptional amber product that would match the consumer’s expectations,” he says. “But this is very different; not just a gold version of Black Seal but something that will stand apart and we hope be considered the best in that category.”

Worth the Wait

Developing the right recipe of barrel blends for the newly-formulated Goslings Gold Seal rum took longer than anticipated, as blenders looked for a unique flavor profile, one that Gosling describes as a dry butterscotch quality. “We used different yeasts and fermentation techniques and stills and barrels for aging, that allows it to have a flavor that is almost sweet in the front but finishes rather dry, with an incredible mouthfeel creating a taste profile that is unlike any other amber rum on the shelves.”



Goslings' stake in the Dark 'n Stormy includes a separate Stormy Ginger Beer and 7% ABV premixed RTD cans.



Goslings Gold Seal is the result of years of experimenting with different yeasts, fermentation techniques, stills and barrel treatments.

But the process was long. “Our sales team was in a state of great frustration—they were promised a product and a year late they finally got it!” Gosling recalls. “We’re happy with where we ended up. It was worth the wait.”

A combination of rums crafted in continuous stills and pot stills, aged separately in once-used American white oak barrels and then blended using Gosling’s generations-old family method, the resulting Gold Seal, the first new product from the company in some time, is just now being introduced in select markets.

Hit the Market Running

While rum hasn’t been performing as well as a category compared to bourbon and single malt Scotch, for example, Gosling says his flagship brand is on fire, and those results encouraged him to launch the Gold Seal. “Black Seal has been growing at





Malcolm Gosling

double digits each year for some time. The flavored rums and the economy brands are the segments that are showing decline, but the premium and super-premium are showing solid growth, with the super-premium where Black Seal trades even better.”

And with the response Gold Seal has been receiving in its so far limited roll-out, Gosling is excited. “This product resonates. Of the thousands of people at the Honda Classic that attended, many would not have considered themselves amber rum fans when they arrived, I’m sure. This is a flavor profile that stands out.”

At the Honda Classic Golf Tournament in February in Palm Beach Gardens, FL, Gold Seal was introduced with a few new cocktails, including the South Shore, a play on the classic Southside referring to south shore of Bermuda. Made with Gold Seal, lemonade, bruised mint and topped with Goslings ginger beer, the South Shore proved to be so popular, the caterer needed to reorder 50 cases—as in 600 liters—after the first day.

“In addition to being a unique amber rum, it was also very important that it needed to be versatile,” explains Gosling. While Black Seal consumers range from LDAs to established and loyal consumers, with Gold Seal they are targeting the casual drinker still exploring, and who might want something lighter than a dark

rum. “We wanted to create a premium product good for the 21- to 35-year-old, something that mixes well with cola, but is also great on its own either neat or on the rocks.” Those consumers have long been a key target for spiced and flavored rums, but as those sub-categories have struggled, Gold Seal might provide a winning flavor experience.

Sampling Widely

As for breaking through into a crowded rum market at a time when many other lighter rums are struggling to keep up, Gosling intends to win over consumers one drink at a time, and expects the type of response his team received at the Honda Classic will be repeated with gusto as they move from sailing event to golf tournament this year, spreading the word that there’s a new seal around.

“Our strategy is to get it into people’s mouths,” Gosling emphasizes, “from being the official rum and ginger beer of the Americas Cup, and being the official rum of the Boston Red Sox, to sampling folks at other yacht races and fishing tournaments and a variety of golf



Goslings’ marketing strategy emphasizes sampling—the Gold Seal version of the Southside, called the South Shore, was a huge hit at this year’s Honda Classic golf tournament in Palm Beach Gardens, FL.

tournaments we sponsor, plus numerous locally organized events on the LPGA tour. All these are events that attract tons of people.”

Being a small company, this personal approach to alerting rum fans and exposing consumers to something new is key to the marketing of Gold Seal. Sampling has done wonders for Goslings Stormy Ginger Beer, which has been growing at high double-digit volume in the last few years.

And rather than cannibalize the dark rum market, Gosling expects Gold Seal will bring new consumers into the rum fold: “Our Goslings Black Seal fans are loyal and obviously committed to that taste profile. We see the Gold Seal appealing to an expanded consumer base, including those that would not consider themselves traditional rum fans. Gold Seal is smooth, soft, versatile and, most importantly, delicious.” ■

SOUTH SHORE

Ingredients:

2 oz Goslings Gold Seal
1½ oz Fresh Lemonade
½ oz Goslings Falernum
or Simple Syrup
2 oz Stormy Ginger Beer
Fresh Mint

Method:

Build rum, lemonade, syrup and fresh mint in a Boston shaker with ice. Shake vigorously and strain over fresh ice in a Collins glass. Top with a splash (about 2 oz) of Goslings Stormy Ginger Beer and garnish with a fresh mint sprig.





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1. BORTOLIN ANGELO VALDOBBIADENE D.O.C.G. PROSECCO SUPERIORE

Bortolin Angelo is arriving fresh off winning "Best Prosecco" at Vinitaly 2016. This Prosecco is made in the classic Extra Dry style (slightly sweeter than Brut), from 100% Glera grapes grown in Gia, the Valdobbiadene subzone known for pronounced acidity and minerality. Bortolin wines are bottled upon order, and the finished wines are kept at near freezing temperatures. The bottle, whose shape echoes the twist of a grapevine, also won a packaging award at Vinitaly. Limited markets.

\$ SRP: \$22.99
baronfrancois.com

4. HIGHLAND PARK ICE EDITION

Highland Park's new "ICE Edition," like the recent Valhalla Collection (championing Norse gods Thor, Loki, Freya and Odin), celebrates the Viking roots of the brand's Orkney Islands home. The evocative, bespoke glass bottle holds a 17-year-old single malt reflecting a harmony of peat smoke, vanilla, spice and earth leading into a creamy, rich, wood-tinged finish. Limited edition; a booklet recounts the story of the Norse Ice Giants and mythical dragon on the label. 107.8 proof.

\$ SRP: \$300
highlandpark.co.uk

2. KINKY VODKA & LIQUEURS

Kinky Vodka, the newest member of the Kinky family of products, is now available in 23 states nationwide, with the rest of the line of Blue, Flame, Gold and Pink liqueurs. To support the expansion, Prestige Wine & Spirits Group has launched a national integrated marketing campaign highlighting Kinky Vodka's "Unmatched Mixability" and focusing on fashion, fun, luxury and lifestyle. Available in 750ml, 1.75L and 50ml. Liqueurs 34 proof; vodka 80 proof.

\$ SRP: \$16.99
prestigewineandspiritsgroup.com

5. BELVEDERE PEACH NECTAR VODKA

Apple has been getting a lot of attention in the flavored spirit world, but don't count out peach. Belvedere has released a Peach Nectar expression, right in time for summer cocktail creations. The 80 proof spirit is made with American peaches and Polish apricots. No added sugar.

\$ SRP: \$39
belvederevodka.com

3. FOREST GLEN WINERY PINOT GRIGIO 'TEHACHAPI CLONE'

Forest Glen has gone retro, bringing back their beloved two-piece label look, seen here on the Tehachapi Clone Pinot Grigio (this clone is naturally white, not the usual reddish-gray Pinot Grigio color). Made in an "Old World" style, the smooth, balanced 2015 Forest Glen Tehachapi Pinot Grigio includes 8% Chardonnay and 6% Muscat; its tangerine aromas combined with slight vanilla are reminiscent of orange creamsicles. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

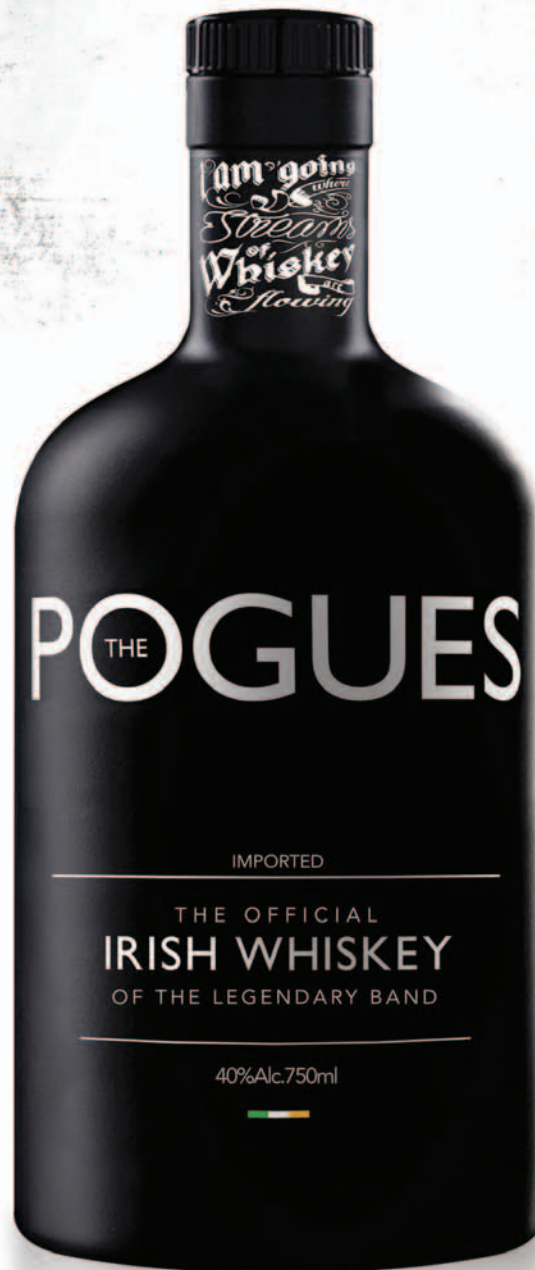
\$ SRP: \$10.99
bruncowine.com

6. BEERS OF MEXICO VARIETY PACK

Offering up an all-in-one fiesta solution, Heineken USA is again offering a seasonal Beers of Mexico pack, including the limited-edition Dos Equis Azul—a blend of golden wheat lager and blue agave. Also in the pack: Dos Equis Lager, Tecate and Sol. Available in 12- and 24-bottle formats and 12-pack cans. The program will be supported by social media, a Beers of Mexico content hub and eye-catching POS materials.

\$ heinekenusa.com

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ThePoguesIrishWhiskey.com

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P

new
products

(750ml pictured)

7. TIPPY COW

Following 18 months of test marketing, Tippy Cow is going national, on- and off-premise, with new packaging that colorfully conveys each of the brand's nostalgic flavors. Blended with Caribbean rum and real dairy cream from Wisconsin, Tippy Cow beckons with Orange Cream, Chocolate, Vanilla Soft Serve and Shamrock Mint, tapping into iconic sweet creamy flavors. Each is 14% alcohol; enjoy chilled, on ice or mixed with a variety of flavored spirits or coffee.

\$ SRP: \$16.99/750ml | \$1.49/50ml
globe tippy-cow.com

10. TWIN VINES VINHO VERDE

José Maria da Fonseca (J.M. da Fonseca) has introduced fresh, new packaging for their Twin Vines Vinho Verde. A longtime leader in the growing Vinho Verde category, Twin Vines offers a light-bodied, crisp wine with fresh fruit flavors, a touch of sparkle and a moderate alcohol content of 10%. The new packaging debuts nationwide in May. Imported by Palm Bay International.

\$ SRP: \$7.99
globe palmbay.com

8. CHASE POTATO VODKAS

Palm Bay International has taken on family-owned Chase Distillery, UK-based producer of single estate, "field-to-bottle" potato vodkas. For farmer William Chase, distilling came after a successful spell producing gourmet potato crisps (aka chips). Now, the 100% estate grown potatoes lead to a bespoke copper batch pot, Europe's tallest rectification tower; finally, the vodka is hand-filled and sealed on-site. Original Potato is joined by Chase Smoked and Chase Marmalade (all 80 proof), as well as an Elderflower Liqueur (40 proof).

\$ SRP: \$34.99
globe palmbay.com

11. BIVIO PROSECCO BRUT 750ML/187ML

Bivio Prosecco Vino Spumante Brut Sparkling Wine, made from 100% Glera grapes in the Veneto region of northeastern Italy, is now available in a 187ml format. Crafted by winemaker Marco Galeazzo, Bivio Prosecco is fresh and dry, with a fruity and floral fragrance, acidity to balance the residual sugars, and fine persistent bubbles. Marketed by Bronco Wine Company.

\$ SRP: \$18.99/750ml | \$7.99/187ml
globe broncowine.com

9. CASA NOBLE TEQUILA

Constellation Brands is relaunching ultra-premium Casa Noble Tequila with the biggest marketing investment in the brand's history. Casa Noble volume has more than doubled since being acquired in 2014. The campaign features new packaging, supported by advertising, social media and enhanced POS materials. In addition, where applicable, Constellation is executing cross-promotional opportunities with the company's iconic Mexican beer brand, Corona Extra, for a Cinco de Mayo promotion.

\$ SRP: Crystal \$39.99 | Reposado \$49.99 |
 Añejo \$59.99
globe casanoble.com

12. 'WASHINGTON APPLE' TWISTED SHOTZ



When the folks at Twisted Shotz introduced Washington Apple in the Pacific Northwest market in 2015, it became their hottest-selling flavor in just six months—inspiring them to launch it nationwide as part of the 16-flavor collection. Washington Apple combines Sour Apple and Canadian Whisky liqueurs in one double-chambered shot. Available in 4-packs as well as 15-shot party pack combinations. 40 proof.

\$ SRP: \$5.99/4-pack | \$17.99/15-shot pack
globe twistedshotz.com

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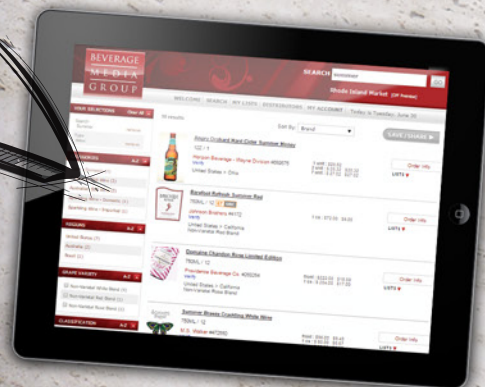
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