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SEPTEMBER 2016

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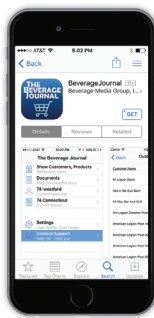
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The largest compilation of beverage alcohol price and brand information.

HOW BEER, WINE
AND SPIRITS
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MARKETPOINT

September means it's time to hit the books: this one in particular. From hot category selling tips to the industry's top talent making the news, this issue offers plenty to get schooled on.

- The cover story features the annual "**Bartenders to Watch.**" This year we highlight the current crop of Diageo World Class. This group of 15 talents, including former Connecticut bartender Jason Snopkoski, offers fresh insights.
- It's National **Bourbon** Month, so we give it the "101" treatment. Get the facts on "America's native spirit." Remember, too, these handy guides are available for download on our website.
- New Zealand **wines** take the spotlight with a feature on its market emergence.



- The "Beer Column" offers **brews** as the perfect meal enhancer, beyond replacing wines, with its pairing suggestions.
- Two state entrepreneurs hit the road with their **bar** concept, aptly named The Mobile Pub.
- On the **local** front, CPSA gives its legislative forecast. "Retail Review" ambles to Old Saybrook and further up coast, "Serving Up" reports a recipe from Mystic.
- We include not one, but four brand **profiles** in this issue: Gekkeikan, RumChata, Stemmari and Apothic.
- Plus, faces, places, new products and so much **more**. Read anytime, anywhere — in print or online.



ON THE COVER

World Class Bartenders photographed in Root Cellar Bar at W Washington, D.C.
by Andrew Kist.

Editor's Note: Nickel & Nickel Wines by Far Niente Winery was spelled incorrectly on page 19 in last month's issue.

WILD TURKEY NAMES ACTOR MCCONAUGHEY AS CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Academy Award-winning actor Matthew McConaughey has signed on as Creative Director for Wild Turkey in a multi-year partnership. McConaughey will serve as “chief storyteller” for Wild Turkey, both in front of and behind the camera, to reintroduce the bourbon brand - starting with television and digital campaigns that he will direct. “Wild Turkey has the history and qualities of a brand that depicts the dedication of someone to do something their own way, even if that way isn't always the most popular,” said McConaughey. “I want to help share their unique story.”



TALES OF THE COCKTAIL HONORS BACARDI AMBASSADOR

Colin Asare-Appiah, Senior Portfolio Ambassador Northeast for Bacardi USA, was named the “Best American Brand Ambassador” at the 10th Annual Tales of the Cocktail Spirited Awards on July 23. For the past five years, Asare-Appiah has worked towards fostering brand advocacy and building brand loyalty in the bartending community. “I am honored to receive this coveted American Brand Ambassador award,” said Asare-Appiah. “I enjoy engaging with and promoting the industry every day, and this award is a culmination of the efforts of the entire Bacardi trade advocacy family, spreading knowledge in a dynamic way that will further elevate the community for decades to come.”



BEER INSTITUTE PROMOTES CONSUMER TRANSPARENCY

The Beer Institute announced an initiative to encourage members to display consumer information on their products, packaging or websites. This new initiative would prompt beer companies to disclose serving fact statements, a list of ingredients, and/or a reference to the website with the information available through a QR code. According to a recent survey from Harris Poll and Nielson, 72-percent of beer drinkers say it's important to read nutritional labels when buying food and beverages.



FORD, JOSE CUERVO PARTNER TO MAKE CAR PARTS FROM AGAVE

Jose Cuervo and Ford Motor Company plan to use agave plant byproduct to develop sustainable bioplastic material for use in vehicles, giving the base ingredient of tequila a second chance at usefulness. The two companies are testing the bioplastic use for interior and exterior components, such as wiring harnesses, HVAC units and storage bins. Initial assessment found the material holds promise because of its durable and aesthetic qualities. “There are about 400 pounds of plastic on a typical car,” said Debbie Mielewski, Ford Senior Technical Leader, Sustainable Research Department. “Our job is to find the right place for a green composite like this to help our impact on the planet,” she said.



MONKEY SHOULDER NAMES NEW U.S. BRAND AMBASSADOR

Sebastien Derbomez was named U.S. Brand Ambassador for Monkey Shoulder Malt Scotch Whisky, a William Grant & Sons brand. Derbomez is responsible for promoting the brand story and showcasing Monkey Shoulder products through education and events. “Seb is a talented mixologist and advocate for both Monkey Shoulder and the industry as a whole,” said RJ Whittington, Monkey Shoulder Brand Manager. “His expertise, commitment to his craft and fun-loving personality make him a perfect fit for this role.” Derbomez formerly served as brand ambassador for Hendrick’s Gin in the U.S. and Australia.



DOUBLE CANYON RELEASES PLANS FOR NEW WINEMAKING FACILITY

Double Canyon, known for producing Cabernet Sauvignon from Horse Heaven Hills appellation in Washington, broke ground on a new winemaking facility in West Richland, Washington. Construction began in mid-August for the new 47,000-square-foot space. Double Canyon anticipates the facility to be complete by August 2017 with production capacity around 50,000 cases and the opportunity for growth.



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CHAMPION LPGA GOLFER KERR RELEASES NEW WINES

Cristie Kerr, an LPGA multi-winning American professional golfer, launched her second wine project, Kerr Cellars, under acclaimed Winemaker Helen Keplinger. Kerr Cellars features



wines from Napa and Sonoma, California vineyards. Kerr Cellars joins Curvature Wines in the Kerr brand portfolio. Keplinger was voted the 2012 Winemaker of the Year by *Food and Wine Magazine* and has been the winemaker for Kerr wines since 2013. “It is a privilege to be able to share these exceptionally fine wines, which began production in 2013, with the public,” said Kerr. “Much like golf, it takes a lot of time and patience to be in the wine business.”

ROBERT MONDAVI WINERY CELEBRATES 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Robert Mondavi Winery celebrated their 50 year milestone on July 16 at their winery in Oakville, California with live music, in-depth wine seminars and tastings, cooking demonstrations with local chefs, a photo booth, and horse-and-buggy rides through the historic To Kalon Vineyard. Masters of Wine Mark de Vere and Peter Marks led wine demonstrations throughout the day for guests. The winery was established in 1966 and is recognized as a pioneer and industry leader in the construction of Napa Valley wines. Staff at the winery prepared a short video to commemorate the anniversary and pay tribute to the late Robert Mondavi.



DIAGEO NORTH AMERICA RECOGNIZED FOR DIVERSITY IN LEADERSHIP

For the fifth consecutive year, Diageo North America was recognized by *Diversity MBA*



Magazine’s “50 Out Front for Diversity Leadership.” Diageo ranked 18th overall and was identified as the “Best in Class” for representation of women and people of color in senior leadership roles. *Diversity MBA* also named Diageo employees Lisa Lee, Brand Manager of North American Whiskey; Krya Patterson, Director of Diversity and Inclusion; and Kamilah White, Talent Engagement Business Partner and Supply to its “Top 100 Under 50” list.

J. LOHR WINEMAKER RECEIVES RECOGNITION FOR REDS

Winemaker Steve Peck of J. Lohr Vineyards was named Winemaker of the Year at the San Luis Obispo County Wine Industry Awards. Peck has been the red wine maker for J. Lohr



Vineyards for the past decade and leads the vineyard’s red wine program, which includes 2,600 acres of red varieties, focusing on Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Petit Verdot and Petite Sirah in Paso Robles and more than 140 acres of Pinot Noir in Santa Lucia Highlands and Arroyo Seco appellations of Monterey County.

CRAFT + ESTATE APPOINTED U.S. IMPORTER OF BURCH FAMILY WINES

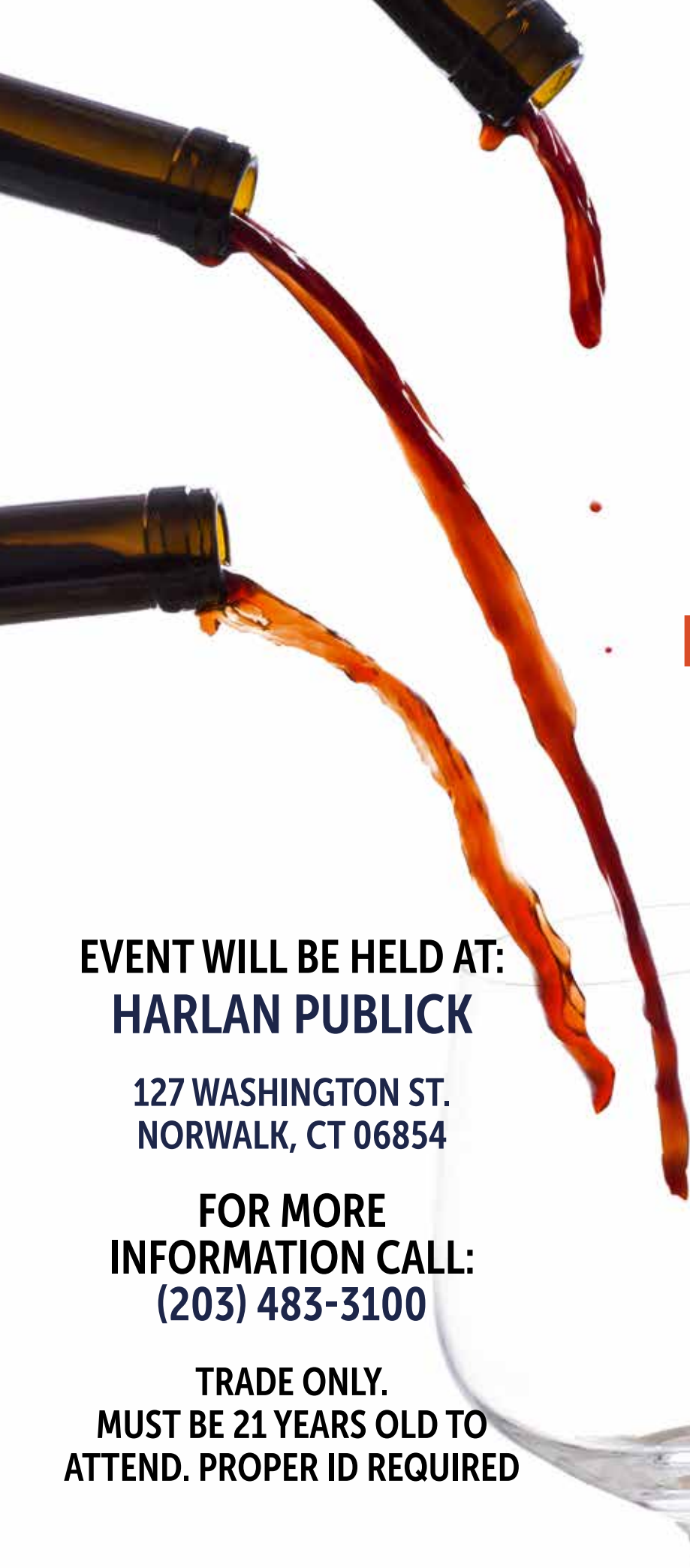
Craft + Estate, a member of The Winebow Group, announced they will be the exclusive U.S. importer of Burch Family Wines. “We are truly honored to represent these distinctive wines in the U.S. market,” said Liz Mathews, Senior Vice President of Craft + Estate. Burch Family Wines is a family-owned and operated company that produces Howard Park, MadFish, and Marchand & Burch wines from Western Australia’s Margaret River and Great Southern region. “At a time of renewed interest in Australian wine, Craft + Estate have taken a significant position with the ‘cool climate’ Australia category by adding these dynamic properties,” said Mathews.



PATRÓN TEQUILA ANNOUNCES BOTTLE ART CONTEST

Patrón Tequila announced the third edition of the “Art of Patrón” bottle contest, in which participants have the chance to win \$10,000. “People often tell us that empty Patrón bottles, and even our distinctive round corks, are just too beautiful to throw away. As a matter of fact, thousands of images of Patrón bottles transformed into interesting and unique art pieces have been posted on social channels and online,” said Lee Applbaum, Global Chief Marketing Officer at Patrón Spirits. Entries for the contest will be accepted until October 14 and winners will be named in November. For submission guidelines and instructions visit ArtofPatron.com.





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LATITUDE BEVERAGE PROMOTES SANGRIA, PROSECCO

Darchell Wilson, Sales Representative at Latitude Beverage Company, visited *The Beverage Journal's* Hamden office in July, while making the rounds to promote Mija Sangria and 90+ Cellars Prosecco to local businesses. Mija Sangria uses premium red wine and 100-percent real, unfiltered pomegranate, acai and blood orange fruit juices for a "fruit forward sangria with acidity, aroma and dry finish you would expect in wine." 90+ Cellars Prosecco, now available in a 4-pack of 187ml bottles, is harvested from grapes in the South Eastern Veneto region. The prosecco features "fresh peach, ginger and lilac notes."

Darchell Wilson, Sales Representative, Latitude Beverage with Mija Sangria and 90+ Cellars Prosecco.



PEEL LIQUEUR POURS TASTE AT CHARITY FUNDRAISER

Peel Liqueur was among the beer, wine and spirit vendors at The Calvanese Foundation Beer and Wine Festival in Southington on July 15. Peel representatives poured samples of their namesake all-natural Limoncello, Bananacello and Cremoncello, as well as their newest offering, Orangecello. The Peel Liqueur line is produced at their Central Connecticut Distillery in New Britain. Peel also produces non-alcoholic lemon and orange sodas. The charitable fundraiser featured more than 100 craft beers, wines and spirits to taste. The proceeds raised from the event benefited the Town of Southington. Additionally, as of June 1, Peel Liqueur products are distributed via Cellar Fine Wines in Essex. The sales team visited the Central Connecticut Distillery in June to learn more about the products and welcome the brand to their portfolio.



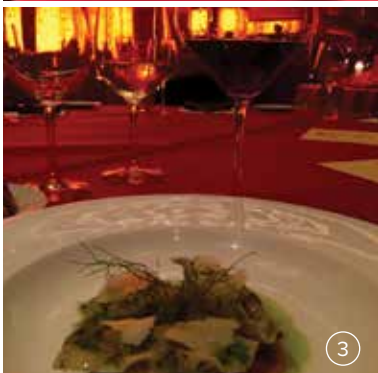
1. Angelo Mastrodomenico, Director of Product Development, Peel Liqueur; Beverage Specialist Donna Taylor; Gianfranco DiDomenico, Chief Operating Officer, Peel Liqueur.
2. Gianfranco DiDomenico, Chief Operating Officer, Peel Liqueur; Angelo Mastrodomenico, Director of Product Development, Peel Liqueur; Jenna Talbot, Hartford Sales Representative, Cellar Fine Wines; John Stapienski, New London Sales Representative, Cellar Fine Wines; Whitney Mitchell Algeri, New Haven Sales Representative, Cellar Fine Wines; George Carabetta, Partner, Cellar Fine Wines; Rich Veilleux, Sales Manager, Cellar Fine Wines.



KRUG CHAMPAGNE SHOWCASES VINTAGES AT WINE DINNER

Slocum & Sons and Winvian Farm welcomed U.S. Brand Ambassador Nicole Burke of Krug Champagne for a July 8 wine dinner. Krug vintages were paired with culinary creations prepared by Executive Chef Chris Eddy of Winvian Farm. Trade professionals and guests tasted through Krug Grande Cuvee, Krug 2003 and Krug Rosé. During the dinner, Burke spoke with guests about the Krug brand, which dates back to 1843, founded by Joseph Krug in Reims, France.

The Krug Champagne pairing dinner was held at Winvian Farms in Morris, Connecticut.



MURPHY DISTRIBUTORS FEATURES FRANK FAMILY WINES

Murphy Distributors featured Frank Family Wines at a July 22 wine dinner held at David Burke Prime at Foxwoods Resort Casino. The 2012 Frank Family Brut Rosé, 2014 Frank Family Chardonnay, 2013 Frank Family Pinot Noir and the 2012 Cabernet Sauvignon were the featured selections paired with food creations by Executive Chef Pedro Avila. Frank Family Vineyards of Napa Valley, California is a family-owned and operated winery producing Chardonnay, Zinfandel, Sangiovese, Pinot Noir, Petite Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignons. “Frank Family Vineyards share our passion for providing the best products in the industry, taking pride in all they do. It is the higher standard they project that has set them apart from other wineries,” said Matthew Murphy, President of Murphy Distributors.

1. 2013 Cabernet Sauvignon of Frank Family Wines.
2. A food and wine pairing.
3. A food and wine pairing.
4. The Sparkling Brut Rosé of Frank Family Wines.



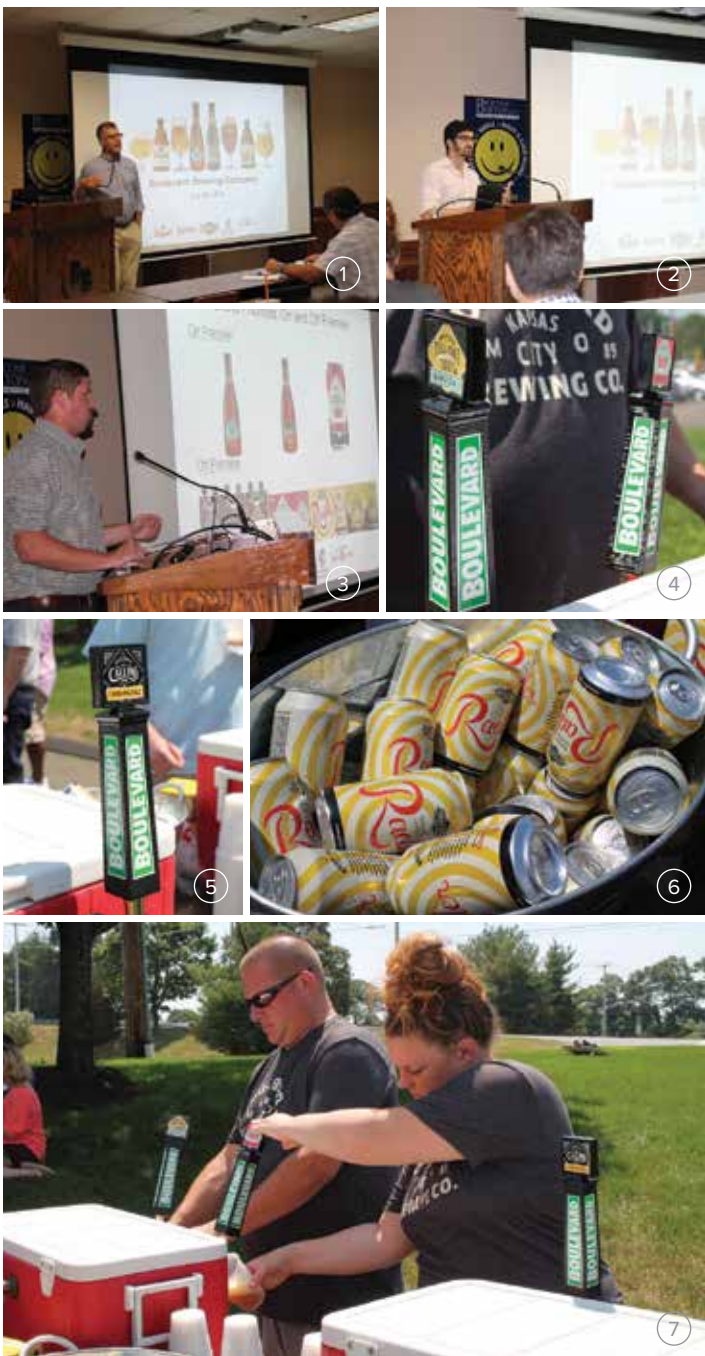
MONSIEUR TOUTON SELECTION PROMOTES SEASONAL WINES IN STAMFORD

Nathan Cloutier, Connecticut Sales Manager for Monsieur Touton Selection, Ltd., visited Giovana’s Wine and Spirits in Stamford on August 4, while promoting seasonal wines. Showcased wines included Chateau Montaud Rosé, MiMi en Provence Rosé, Villa Jolanda Prosecco, Agua de Piedra Malbec, Bollinger Champagne and Heidsieck Monopole Champagne. Monsieur Touton offers thousands of fine wines and spirits from more than 20 countries with an emphasis on premium selections in its distribution states. Monsieur Touton wines can now be found in *The Beverage Journal* Brand and Price Index listing and online via www.thebeveragejournal.com/connecticut/trade-login.

Nathan Cloutier, Connecticut Sales Manager for Monsieur Touton Selection, Ltd. at Giovana’s Wine and Spirits.

BRESCOME BARTON LAUNCHES BOULEVARD BREWING COMPANY

On July 22, Brescome Barton welcomed Boulevard Brewing Company of Kansas City, Missouri to their craft beer portfolio. The company's beers, Tank 7 Farmhouse Ale, The Calling IPA, Tell-Tale Tart, Ginger Lemon Radler, Tropical Pale Beer and Heavy Lifting IPA, are now available. Sean Fitzgerald, Boulevard Brewing Company's Market Manager for Connecticut, presented information about the brewery and its production processes, and shared unique selling points for introducing the brand to the local market. Boulevard Brewing Company, founded in 1989, is the largest specialty craft brewer in the Midwest. "I'm really looking forward to seeing what Boulevard can do over the next couple of months [in Connecticut]," said Fitzgerald. After the presentation, Bear's Smokehouse Barbecue provided lunch on site.



1. Robert Sussler, Executive Vice President and General Manager, Brescome Barton during the Boulevard Brewing Company beer launch.
2. Christopher Toia, Regional Market Manager, Boulevard Brewing Company, spoke about the Boulevard Brewing Company brand within the Duvel USA portfolio.
3. Sean Fitzgerald, Market Manager CT, Boulevard Brewing Company presenting on- and off-premise selling tips to the sales force.
4. Boulevard Brewing Company's Tell-Tale Tart and Tropical Pale on tap.
5. The Calling, an Imperial India Pale Ale.
6. Ginger Lemon Radler.
7. Adam Arpin, Beer Portfolio Manager, Brescome Barton and Kristy Chappell, Account Development Specialist, Craft Beers, Brescome Barton.

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8TH ANNUAL CONNECTICUT WINE FESTIVAL DRAWS THOUSANDS

The Connecticut Wine Festival was held at the Goshen Fairgrounds on July 23-24. Festival visitors sampled wines from Connecticut vineyards, attended wine seminars and shopped local artisans during the two-day gathering. The Connecticut Wine Festival is part of the Connecticut Wine Trail Passport Program.

Participating vineyards included Bishop's Orchards Winery in Guilford, DiGrazia Vineyards in Brookfield, Holmberg Orchard and Winery in Gales Ferry, Hopkins Vineyards in Warren, Paradise Hills Vineyard in Wallingford and Priam Vineyards in Colchester, Savino Vineyards in Woodbridge, Sharpe Hill Vineyards in Pomfret, Sunset Meadow Vineyards in Goshen, Taylor Brooke Winery in Woodstock, White Silo Winery in Sherman, Jones Winery in Shelton and Jonathan Edwards in Stonington.

Presenters of the wine seminars held during the event included Renee Allen, Founder and Director of the Wine Institute of New England, on Saturday, and Lauren Guerriero, the Wine Educator of WineTimeCT on Sunday. Festival Manager Sherrie Palmer said approximately 5,500 people attended the eighth annual wine festival.

1. Michaela Indermaur, Blair Barnette, Suzanne Zikoski, Jonathan Edwards Winery.
2. All of Sharpe Hill Vineyards: Kurt Vollweiler; Steven Vollweiler, Owner; David Vollweiler; William Vollweiler; Kaitlyn Vollweiler; Brandon Caffrey.
3. Bryn Bachmann, Tasting Room Staff, Miranda Vineyards.
4. Priam Vineyards at the Connecticut Wine Festival.
5. All of Hopkins Vineyard: Jim Baker, Winemaker; Carl Simmons; Rita Simmons; Jorge Salamanca; Ryan Bartholomew; Gina Zoef; Hilary Criollo, President; Paloma Criollo.
6. Savino Wine displayed at the Connecticut Wine Festival.
7. Danial Morris and Marquis Lawson, Holmberg Orchard and Winery.
8. DiGrazia Vineyard pouring tastes.
9. Sonia Savino of Savino Vineyards.
10. Matt and Melissa Schwab, Taylor Brooke Vineyards.
11. Eric Gorman, Owner, White Silo Vineyards.
12. Sharon Chichester and Ken Huber, Sunset Meadow Vineyards.





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USBG CT COMPETITION COMES TOGETHER FOR TWO JULY EVENTS

The United States Bartender Guild Connecticut (USBG CT) chapter, along with Allan S. Goodman and Eder Bros, Inc., held their seventh and eighth cocktail competitions out of a series of 10 in the "Connecticut Civil War Bartending Competition." The seventh event took place on July 11 at Elm City Social in New Haven. The competition featured Old Forester Bourbon. Jessica Rapuano, Bartender at Elm City Social, won first place. The eighth cocktail competition was held at The Engine Room on July 25 and also featured Old Forester Bourbon. Nikki Simches, Bar Manager at Cure Restaurant, won first place with her cocktail "The Old Kentucky Tea Bag." The last two rounds of the competition were held at The Loft on August 8 and Max Fish on August 22. A final competition will be held in September at Mezzo's Grille.

1. The USBG CT Civil War Bartending Competition took place on the rooftop at Elm City Social.
2. The selection of cocktails made during the competition.
3. Jessica Rapuano, Bartender, Elm City Social, won the seventh competition.
4. The competitors at the event.
5. Old Forester Bourbon was the featured spirit at both competitions. The Kentucky brand is the longest running bourbon on the market, at approximately 145 years old. It was first bottled and marketed in 1870 by George Garvin Brown, the founder of the Brown-Forman Corporation.
6. The cocktails created during the July 25 competition.
7. Jeff Conelius, Craft Spirit Specialists, Allan S. Goodman; Tom Kachmarck, CT State Manager, Brown-Forman; Nick Georgetti, Engine Room; Nikki Simches, First Place Winner; Erick Karadimas, Abigail's.

MURPHY DISTRIBUTORS WELCOMES SALUTE VODKA

Murphy Distributors of Branford is the exclusive distributor of Salute Vodka, an American-made spirit produced with corn and wheat grains and distilled four times for a "smooth, clean taste." One dollar of every bottle sold goes to fund select veteran charities and specific projects benefiting American servicemen and women. A "Made in USA" certification mark on the label shows the product is made entirely in the U.S. "Salute Vodka shares our passion for thinking outside the box and supporting Americans and the people who continue to make our country safe — our veterans. In an era of outsourcing, it's critical that we make a conscious effort to support products and service providers who employ and support the American workforce. This grass roots display of support of giving back is an essential element of true success," said Matthew Murphy, President, Murphy Distributors.



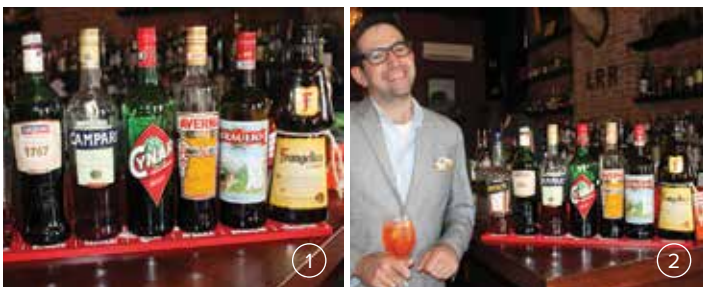


Photos by Michael Leung.

CDI HOSTS SERVICE INDUSTRY NIGHT AT INFINITY HALL

Hartford's Infinity Music Hall and Bistro hosted the second annual New England Service Industry Night on July 25 to celebrate the work of those in the hospitality and service industries. The event was sponsored by Bacardi and Connecticut Distributors, Inc. (CDI). The night included a Blind Iron Bartending competition, a speed bartending challenge and a restaurant "Jeopardy" game. Ashley Lurie of The Loft won "Best Overall Cocktail" and Andres Soriano of Max Fish won "Most Creative Cocktail" in the blind bartending competition. Aaron Stepka of Millwright's won at restaurant "Jeopardy," and Mike Skehan of J. Gilbert's won the speed bartending challenge. Local and national beers, wines and spirits were available for tasting. Yard Bird Co. and NoRA Cupcake food trucks were also on hand.

1. Infinity Music Hall and Bistro in Hartford hosted trade professionals for the second annual Service Industry Night on July 25.
2. Thomas Hooker Brewery of Bloomfield featured its local beers.
3. Mike Mills, Brand Ambassador, RIPE, showcased their all-natural bar juice line.
4. Rob Goldberg, Event Emcee and Host of "Bar Rated Trivia" with Nadine Gengras, Spirits Account Development Manager, Connecticut Distributors, Inc. (CDI).
5. Restaurant trivia contestants: Aaron Stepka, Bar Manager of Millwrights; John Phillips-Sandy, Bartender, Waterford Hotel Group; Matt Sternberg, General Manager, Half Door. Stepka took first place.
6. Competitors during the speed challenge.
7. Mike Skehan, Bartender, J. Gilbert's, Winner of the Speed Bartending Challenge.
8. Andres Soriano, Bar Manager, Max Fish won the Blind Iron Bartending Competition for "Most Creative Cocktail."
9. CDI's Nadine Gengras with Ashley Lurie, Bartender, The Loft and Rob Goldberg, Emcee and Host of "Bar Rated Trivia." Lurie won the Blind Iron Bartending Competition for "Best Overall Cocktail."
10. Rose McLean, Wine Manager, CDI; Chrissy Amatrudo, Bacardi Portfolio Manager, CDI; Nadine Gengras, Spirits Account Development Manager, CDI.
11. Competitors during the Blind Iron Bartending challenge.



CAMPARI GLOBAL AMBASSADOR SHOWCASES ITALIAN LIQUEURS

Brescome Barton and their guests welcomed Nick Korn, Italian Spirits Specialist and Global Ambassador for Campari America, to Hartford's Little River Restoratives for an educational seminar on August 2. Korn led a tasting titled "Taste of Italy," featuring Aperol, Campari, Cynar, Averna, Braulio and Frangelico while discussing the tasting notes, cocktail ideas, Italian culture and Campari brands. "All liqueurs are this balancing act of spirit, sugar and concentration of flavor," Korn said, while discussing their use in cocktails. Trade professionals shared their own recipes for incorporating the Italian liqueurs behind the bar. After the seminar, staff at Little River Restoratives featured the brands in a variety of tiki-inspired cocktails, such as "I Remember the Night" with Campari, Aperol, El Jimador Reposado, Montsarra Cava, Don's Mix, lime and soda.



1. The lineup of Italian liqueurs featured during the seminar.
2. Nick Korn, Italian Spirits Specialist and Campari Global Ambassador.
3. Trade guests examining Aperol for its color and smell before tasting.
4. Italian liqueur tasting mat during the seminar.
5. Little River Restoratives prepared a special cocktail menu featuring the Italian spirits for trade guests after the seminar.



BRESCOME BARTON PARTNERS WITH UNITED WAY FOR "NEW HAVEN WORKS"

The 2016 Brescome Barton in-house United Way campaign began with its recent professional clothing drive to support a local organization, New Haven Works. Brescome Barton's employees donated more than 150 articles of professional clothing, accessories and shoes to provide New Haven residents professional attire and the opportunity to make a great first impression at job interviews. The effort is one of many staff-driven, community-focused efforts in Brescome Barton's partnership with the United Way.



1. Danielle Mason, Human Resources Department, Brescome Barton with United Way of Greater New Haven's representative, Zoe Hunter.
2. New Haven Works' employees receiving the donation.

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A member of The Winebow Group



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MICHAEL CORSO SELECTIONS NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH CDI

Connecticut Distributors, Inc. (CDI) is now the exclusive distributor for Michael Corso Selections. The launch was held in August at CDI, with Michael Corso giving a presentation about his company, process and selection of the noted French wines. Michael Corso Selections offers small, family-produced French wines with special characters from their unique terroirs. Since 1972, Corso has worked in all aspects of wine sales including retail, restaurant, wholesale distribution, importer representation and importing, always with a concentration on European wines. The selections are now available in the Connecticut market via CDI.

1. Chris Sperling, Portfolio and Account Development Director, CDI; John Parke, President, CDI; Michael Corso, Managing Partner, Michael Corso Selections; Barry Glovitch, Regional Manager, Michael Corso Selections; Tom Talmadge, Business Manager, CDI; Greg Altieri, Account Development Specialist, CDI.
2. A lineup of Michael Corso selections: Jacques Girardin Bourgogne Pinot Noir, Jacques Girardin Santenay 1er Cru Clos Rousseau; Domaine Gilles Cote de Nuit-Village; Domaine Gilles Bourgogne Pinot Noir; and Domaine Gille Vosne Romanee.
3. A lineup of Michael Corso selections. Les Voisins Pinot Noir; Chateau Sainte Eulalie "Plaisir d' Eulalie;" Domaine Chamfort Cote du Rhone; Domaine Raspail-AY Gigondas; Domaine Chevalier, Croze Hermitage Rouge; and Domaine Chevalier, Croze Hermitage Blanc.
4. CDI team members learned about Michael Corso Selections' wines.



SLOCUM & SONS WELCOMES VERMONT'S MAD RIVER DISTILLERS

Mad River Distillers launched in Connecticut via Slocum & Sons on August 5. Mimi Buttenheim, President of Mad River Distillers, visited the Slocum & Sons headquarters to present the product line to the sales force: Revolution Rye, Maple Cask Rum, Bourbon Whiskey and First Run Rum. Mad River's Vermont-made craft spirits are produced under Chief Distiller and Co-founder Brett Little, who together with John Egan and Maura Connolly founded the company based in Waitsfield, Vermont, in 2011. Revolution Rye, which received 92 points in *Wine Spectator*, is 100% rye made with grains sourced from Vermont, New York and Massachusetts. Mad River Bourbon Whiskey is aged for one year and is a four-grain bourbon featuring corn, wheat, oats and malted barley. Mad River First Run Rum is aged in charred toasted barrels with aromas of cedar, oak and spice with notes of vanilla and smoky caramel. Mad River Maple Cask Rum is aged first in a mix of toasted and charred barrels, and then completes a secondary aging process in oak barrels that held pure Vermont maple syrup.

1. John Slocum, Executive Vice President and General Manager, Slocum & Sons introducing Mimi Buttenheim, President, Mad River Distillers.
2. Mad River Revolution Rye, Mad River Maple Cask Rum, Mad River Bourbon Whiskey and Mad River First Run Rum.

Meet the Entrepreneurs of the State's First Mobile Bar

BY LAUREN DALEY

When Marco Marcelo and Thomas Keane arrive, they bring the party. That's because they're driving The Mobile Pub, a 14-foot 1962 Shasta Caravan, that has been meticulously converted into the state's first mobile bar. The Mobile Pub, based in Waterbury, Connecticut, offers a full-service bar and catering packages for everything from birthday parties to bachelor and bachelorette parties, large weddings to small groups of friends who just want something special for their summer barbecue. The entrepreneurs talked about how they got the wheels in motion on this mobile barroom.

THE BEVERAGE JOURNAL: *How did you get the idea for The Mobile Pub?*

KEANE: At outdoor events, you often see food trucks (and caterers), but they're serving cocktails at a plastic table. It was lacking. Marco and I talked about the idea about a year and a half ago ... and created the concept. [At the time] we worked together at a restaurant.

MARCELO: Right. We worked together [for] about five years as partners, and developed a nice little chemistry, and so we decided to go into this little venture together ... It's given us a rejuvenation on bartending. It's been a joyride.

TBJ: *How did you select a vehicle?*

KEANE: We didn't want an ugly, boxy truck – we wanted a great feel, a really good vibe. We found that we wanted a retro caravan – vintage campers are chic enough for a bride, but masculine enough for a [man's] 40th birthday party. So it took



A summer outing featuring The Mobile Pub.

quite some time until we found [a vehicle] that had the right look. We went to Hudson, New York to look at campers ... We looked all over the greater New England area. We ended up finding the perfect camper in Bozrah, Connecticut ...

A lot of guests will come up to us and say, "I used to camp in something just like that!" or "That's so awesome," or "Let me look inside!" No matter what their age or background, when we drive by, people are like, "What is that? Let me see inside!" People smile. It's that whole fun, vintage style. People identify with that.

TBJ: *What kind of events have you done so far?*

MARCELO: A variety of events – weddings, birthdays, a Fourth of July party. We did a Jack and Jill [bachelor and bachelorette] party. We're not pinpointed. We're meeting all kinds of people, and it's been so fun. We're booked all over [Connecticut] for July and August.

KEANE: Our phones have been going nonstop. We're grateful, the excitement and buzz has been so great ... Our events have ranged in size from 40 people to a wedding of 150, so the scope of the parties we're doing changes. We recently got a call from someone who wanted to book us for an adult sleepover party. They were getting four or five food trucks, and inviting people over to pitch a bunch of tents. So this is for people who want to have fun. It's exciting.

TBJ: *So how does it work?*

MARCELO: The client selects a package, we try to customize it. When someone calls in, we get a feel of what they want, so they feel comfortable. We try to be as accommodating as possible ... We have all the brand names, everything they might want. Or if a client said, "I love Tito's Vodka," we can do that.

KEANE: For example, we just did a wedding where they wanted a mimosa bar. We try to get involved in local breweries, too.



Marco Marcelo and Thomas Keane.

POLITICAL OUTLOOK AND ISSUE UPDATES

BY CARROLL J. HUGHES, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CPSA



Political control of the General Assembly is always the major topic during an election year. This year is no exception, as widespread ambiguity has caused more intense conditions than seen in the past decade.

Many legislators have decided not to seek re-election this year for various reasons; ten more faced primaries to hold onto their seats. At this point, there will be close to 30 new people serving in the Connecticut legislature for the 2017 session.

The election will surely provide mixed results since many legislators are elected or defeated on local issues or political trends in a given area. Both Republicans and Democrats are expected to pick up seats, but the overall result may or may not change the control of the House and Senate. It is possible that the vote margin could be closer in one chamber or the other.

An unusual upset would be if one of the chambers changes party control. Although any scenario is possible, there will be certain vote totals affected by the top of the ticket, which will be the presidential contest. The only certainty anyone can predict is that there will be some surprises; however the collective nature of those surprises is not predictable by anyone.

The one certainty is that Governor Dannel Malloy will remain in office, as he is not up for re-election this year. However, there is speculation that he may depart to a position in Washington, D.C. if Hillary Clinton is elected president. While this is optimistic speculation, if that scenario were to occur, it would not be until well into the 2017 General Assembly session.

Regardless of any change, CPSA expects

to continue its very effective legislative efforts that proved successful in 2016, despite three attempts by the governor to change the ways the industry sells and markets its products.

UPDATES

Solid Waste Management Plan Has Been Completed

Connecticut's Solid Waste Management plan has been completed by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). It is now known, for the first time since the original plan was adopted in 1972, as the CT Materials Management and Recycling Plan.

The final document, released in July, outlines ways to increase recycling and the role of all parties in the system, from manufacturers and consumers, through refuse collection services and final processing.

In addition to products and packaging, significant attention is given to the recycling of food waste. Many of these initiatives will involve municipalities and businesses, which will be directed to separate food waste. Refuse haulers will be integrated as agents of enforcement by municipalities and the state even under current recycling requirements.

Connecticut's Packaging Task Force

One of the more significant events occurring over the next several weeks is the legislature's Packaging Task Force. The deadline requiring the task force to meet within sixty days of bill passage has gone by with only a few appointments to the panel having been made.

The bulk of work assigned to this task force involves recommending ways to increase recycling of all consumer products, reduce packaging, use more recycled materials in products, and to force manufacturers to produce more opportunities to provide "product stewardship."

The product stewardship provision has caught the attention of hundreds of product manufacturers. This concept embodies the idea that a product manufacturer will take responsibility for its product, including a system to recycle it at all levels in the disposal/recycling system.

Currently, there are several manufacturers who have developed product stewardship programs in Connecticut, including paint, mattresses, and electronics. Other issues under discussion include batteries, carpets, and tires. Alcohol beverage containers will certainly be a subject for discussion by the task force.



LEARN MORE

Visit us for information on any of these topics and more, at www.CTPSA.com.



CARROLL J. HUGHES
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CPSA

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FIFTH ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF OUTING

Brescome Barton/Worldwide Wines hosts its Fifth Annual Charity Golf Outing on Monday, September 19, 2016 at the New Haven Country Club in Hamden, CT in support of the Marine Corps Law Enforcement Foundation (MC-LEF). Registration is open until August 19, 2016.

MC-LEF provides educational assistance to the children of fallen United States Marines and Federal Law Enforcement personnel. Since their founding in 1995, MC-LEF has awarded over \$68 million in scholarships and other humanitarian assistance, and supported over 3,700 children.

Last year's golf event raised \$83,000.00 which will be paid out to the following US Marine Corp. family whose father was killed in Chattanooga: Wyatt and Wrylin Holmquist, children of USMC Sergeant Carson Holmquist. Each child will receive funding for their education upon their 18th birthday.

If you wish to donate to or participate in this year's event, please contact Mia Ginter at mginter@brescomebarton.com.

The Wine Cask

BY SAVANNAH MUL

David Galanto moved from inland to the shore about two years ago and with that move, he also sold his liquor store, Metro Spirits in Middletown, after 38 years. While he was ready for a personal change, he wasn't ready to leave the industry. He purchased a retail space in the Stop & Shop Plaza on Elm Street in Old Saybrook, the location of The Wine Cask.

Galanto downsized from owning a 6,500-square-foot store to his new venture, which was about 2,000 square feet at the time of purchase. This past January, he knocked down a wall to accommodate another 3,000 square feet of space, an intention he had for the location from the get-go.

Prior to his owning the store, The Wine Cask sold primarily, and not surprisingly, wine. Galanto said he receives phone calls from curious consumers asking if the store also sells liquor and beer products.



▲
Laura Hong, Store Employee; Kim Ertelt, Store Employee; and David Galanto, Owner.



LOCATION

105 ELM STREET
OLD SAYBROOK, CT

FACTS

SQUARE FOOTAGE: 5,000
YEARS IN OPERATION: 1½ YEARS

“I’m working on developing a new and different identity [for] the store,” he said. “People think it’s still just a wine store and I want to get away from that. I knew we needed to include the staple items, like Ketel One and Grey Goose, but a lot came from customer feedback [too],” he said.

Diversifying the store’s offerings has been a priority, and with help from area sales representatives, his experience and knowledge of the industry, plus all-important customer feedback, the store aims to be more than its current name. Natural light and wide aisles highlight hundreds of spirit categories and beer SKUs alongside the namesake offerings.

Galanto is looking towards a possible name change in the near future and is also updating the store’s website and presence on social media. The Wine Cask’s Facebook page helps drive traffic

into the store and make customers aware of their current full product offerings as well as upcoming tastings.

Compared to his previous Middletown store, Galanto sees a shift in consumer buying behaviors – perhaps due to location, but trending tastes seem to also be a factor. While he sells more wine in Old Saybrook, he remarks brown spirits, such as whiskey and bourbon, have notably been on the rise and craft beers continue to drive steady sales.

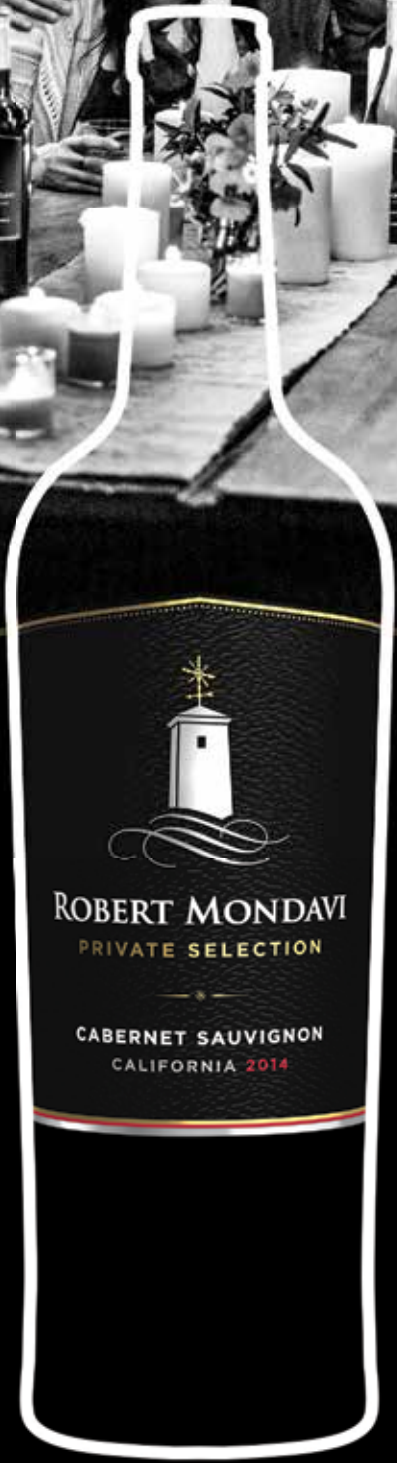
The Wine Cask staffs six employees who help work the registers, stock the shelves and manage social media. Galanto blends two passions with his latest venture while enjoying his new shoreline home and business location.

“I love seeing the people every day and I like drinking wine,” he said. “I’m a people person and I love the business.” ■

**FEATURE
YOUR STORE**



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



NEW LOOK. OLD FRIENDS.

INTRODUCING A NEW LOOK FOR
ROBERT MONDAVI PRIVATE SELECTION.

GOOD FOOD AND THE RIGHT BEER

BY JACK KENNY



Beer people can and do drink whatever they want with every kind of food. There are no rules, or even guidelines, that say which type of beer is proper for a given dish or course. A Rolling Rock drinker will uncap his favorite green bottle along with a bowl of chocolate pudding, thank you very much.

There are, however, suggestions galore for those who want to enhance the dining experience with a brew that will complement the meal. On-premise people probably have had some experience with food-beer pairings, but off premise the beverage and meal recommendations pretty much take place in the wine aisles. Some basic ideas and suggestions could extend that experience to the beer section.

Everyone knows something about pairing wine with food, and some know more than others. What they probably don't know is that some beers are considered more appropriate than wine with certain dishes. A good example is spicy food: There's nothing like a malty lager to counter the power of spices and capsaicin. Also, rich foods are well complemented by beers that are somewhat acidic, such as a Flanders red ale. Happily, there is no one beer for any type of meal.

Helpful information about pairings, as well as specific style recommendations, is available at a multitude of websites, but in particular at the site of the Brewers Association (brewersassociation.org). The BA recommends three points to keep in mind when selecting a beer for food.

The first is "Match strength with strength." A delicate dish works best with a delicate beer, they say, and the same with highly flavored foods and assertive beers. Keep in mind that the strength of a beer doesn't mean just its alcohol percentage, but also its malt character, hop bitterness, sweetness, richness and more.

"Find harmonies" is the second point to consider. Sharing a common flavor or aroma elements works well between beer and food. One good example: "the clean caramelly flavors of an Oktoberfest lager and roasted pork."

Third is "Consider sweetness, bitterness, carbonation, heat (spice) and richness." This is about interactions of food and beer, which can be specific and predictable. "Taking advantage of these interactions ensures that the food and beer will balance each other, with one partner not throwing the match out of whack. One sort of has to parse these out one by one as the situation demands, and find flavors that will enhance one another."

Some specific interactions:

- Hop bitterness, roasted malt, carbonation and alcohol in beer create a balance with the sweetness, richness (fat) and umami in food.
- Beer's sweetness and maltiness balances food's spiciness (chili heat) and acidity.
- Hop bitterness emphasizes spiciness and the heat from chilis.

The BA's beer and food matching chart, prepared by highly respected beer expert Randy Mosher, contains a good deal of useful information about beer types as well as pairings.

Say you have pilsner and blonde ale in the fridge and you want to create a meal around them. Choose lighter foods, such as chicken, salads, salmon or bratwurst. For cheeses, select Monterey jack or a mild white cheddar. For dessert, a lemon custard tart will do fine.

Next weekend you're planning a barbecue with some roasted, smoked meats and sausages. A perfect beer is porter, a dark brown ale whose aroma and flavor of roasted grains complement the rich meats, and whose maltiness balances the smoke and spice of the grilled foods.

India pale ale is a real treat with strong, spicy food, especially curry. Serve a bleu cheese such as gorgonzola, and end the affair with a ginger spice cake.

An abbey dubbel is a Belgian beer style that is brown, strong and features the characteristic sweetness and esters from specific yeasts. This beer is ideal for barbecued meats, meat stew, a thick steak, or a smoked rib roast. It's also great with chocolate desserts.

Beer Advocate, the website that contains tens of thousands of beer reviews and rankings by users, has a great page for food pairings. Simply choose your style of food from a long drop menu and a selection of beer types will result (beeradvocate.com/beer/style_pairings/).

For Chinese food, choose a Czech pilsner, Euro strong lager, Japanese rice lager, or a light lager. For Italian food you have the option of American blonde ale, American pale lager, light lager, and maibock/helles bock. For Latin American cuisine the list of beers is long and includes amber or red lager, English porter and Irish dry stout.

Bon appétit!

ABOUT JACK KENNY

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



WRITE TO HIM: thebeercolumn@gmail.com

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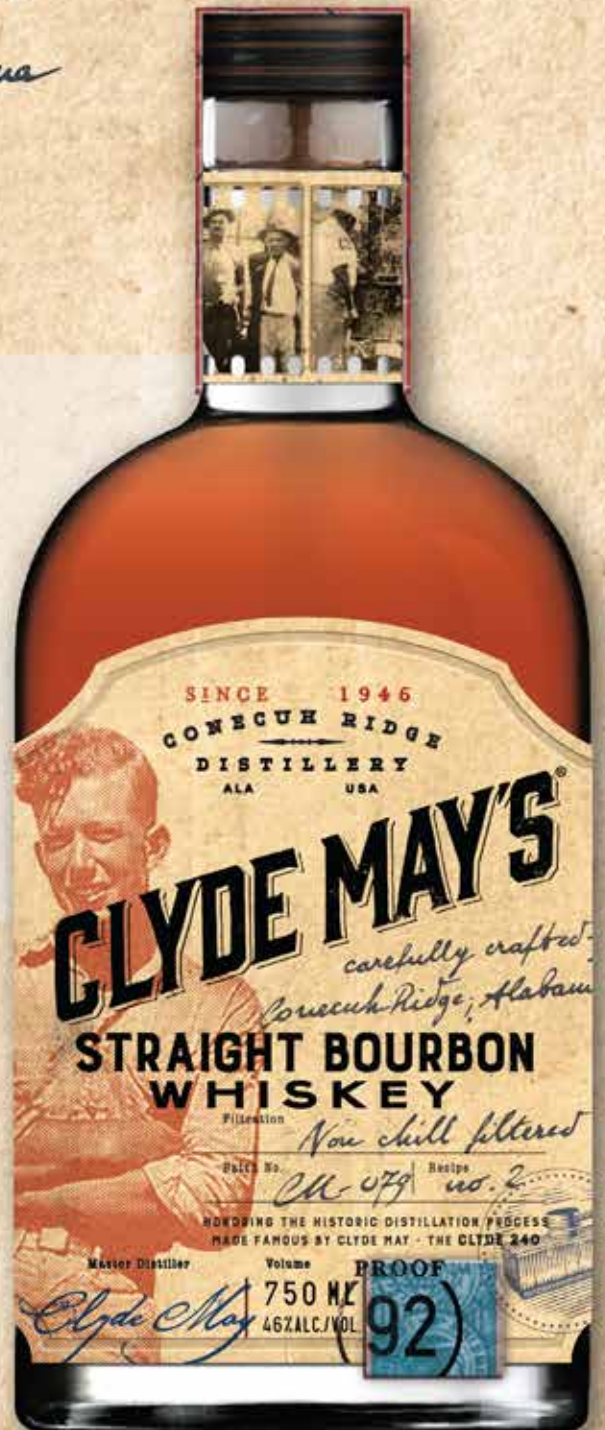
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SPICER MANSION

15 ELM STREET
MYSTIC, CT

The recently-opened Spicer Mansion is Mystic's new ultra-luxury destination. The hotel bar, Room No. 9 Speakeasy, is located behind a bookcase and down a set of stairs, and features a cigar lounge, rare rye whiskies and creative cocktails with accompanying food fare.



Food and Beverage
Director Charlotte
Berdensen.

FOOD AND BEVERAGE
DIRECTOR

Charlotte Berdensen

COCKTAIL

The Curious Traveler

RECIPE

Mix:

- » 4 oz. vodka
- » 1.5 oz. Yuzu juice
- » 1" piece of fresh celery
- » 4 whole white peppercorns
- » 2 dashes of celery bitters
- » Pinch of salt

In the shaker, muddle the celery stalk with the peppercorns, then combine all ingredients and shake. Double strain into a chilled martini glass, garnish with a celery blossom and lemon twist.

"For the most inquisitive, here is a refreshing drink that will allow you to discover a depth of flavors that please and surprise the palate," said Charlotte Berdensen, Food and Beverage Director, Spicer Mansion.

ORDERING ON THE RUN

THE BEVERAGE JOURNAL APP

BY IAN GRIFFITH

In recent weeks The Beverage Journal has launched a new app for trade buyers and sales reps who need to locate and price products on the move. You can scan a bottle to quickly research pricing, or replenish your stocks from a view of previously ordered items. Sales reps can use the app to sell by building sell sheets, shelf-talkers and taste-sheets. Buyers place orders directly with their distributors, while reps build point-of-sale materials, all with only a few taps.

For the past year, The Beverage Journal has been working with our colleagues at Beverage Media and Inventiv to build deeper integrations between our products. The initial beneficiaries of this effort were sales teams using the Pocket Advantage sales force automation app. Now we are rolling out an app that restaurants, bars and stores can use to search products and place orders online.

While thousands of retailers and restaurants already place their orders online through our trade-only website, an app adds convenience for buyers who live on their iPhone. Placing an order on the app is the same as doing it on our website. A retailer's order history from the website is available in a special filtered view on the Beverage Journal app. All orders placed through the app are conversely visible on the website.

More Useful Than Ever

For sales reps that have been building sell-sheets on our trade-only website, the app includes sell sheets along with some fun new tools. "Tap for Shelf Talker" helps you build shelf talkers for your products using ratings and store pricing.



The Beverage
Journal app
product
search tool.

"Tap for Taste Sheet" helps you build a placeholder for a tasting with labels for each wine. For reps familiar with Pocket Advantage, the new app takes the same features and expands them to the whole marketplace.

The best argument to use an app is when the native features of the phone or tablet can add benefits beyond what's possible on a website. On the one hand, the app will reduce frustration by storing all the product listings in the market on your phone or iPad. It frees you from the hassle of waiting for pages to load while on a spotty network. On the other hand, your smart device's natural advantage of having a camera becomes even more useful with the app, allowing merchants to scan a bar code on a bottle to place an order, build a sell sheet or create a shelf talker. It brings information about trade pricing and reordering to the floor of your restaurant or store.

We have been given a glimpse into a future, when we'll be able to superimpose relevant information on top of reality using a device that is already in our hands. Maybe with a future version of the Beverage Journal app we'll be able to superimpose the wholesaler, pricing, and critical ratings of wines as you pass your phone's camera across the shelf. For now, a bar code scan will get you to the same information.

The new Beverage Journal app is available from the App Store for iPhone, iPad and iPod touch or any iOS device. ■

The app is available at no extra cost for active, licensed Connecticut Beverage Journal subscribers. Contact Brian Slone for download information, password or to subscribe. 203-288-3375 ext.100.

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BEVERAGE MEDIA'S
• 2016 •

BARTENDERS TO WATCH

As bartending continues to grow as a career and attract the attention of aspirational achievers, the standards on display in the many and varied competitions held throughout the year have improved as well. A trip to a distillery or a hefty check are great prizes, but today, bartenders are just as keen for the accolades that an intense, multi-day competition can bring them.

Now in its seventh year internationally and fifth including U.S. participants, the lengthy test of skills produced in collaboration with the United States Bartenders' Guild,

USBG World Class Sponsored by Diageo, is a global training program and internationally recognized competition that aims to elevate the craft of the bartender and build careers in the drink industry.

The international nature of the competition and its rigorous process are why this year, Beverage Media decided that our annual survey of the field of men and women who stand behind the bar, our "Bartenders to Watch," should focus on those competitors who made it through multiple regional heats to contend earlier this year in World Class North American finals in Washington, DC.

TEXT BY JACK ROBERTIELLO

PORTRAITS BY ANDREW KIST





This year's World Class North American finals were held at the W Washington's intimate Root Cellar Whiskey Bar, in the lower level of the hotel's Mediterranean-inspired restaurant Pinea. Local ryes line the brick archways of the bar, signaling the bar's whiskey focus, but guests may also opt for barrel-aged cocktails and superb wines. Meanwhile, the hotel's rooftop lounge, POV, serves a balanced menu of classic and seasonal cocktails.

The prize? The right to represent the continent in the global finals, for the first time to be held in the U.S., (Miami specifically) in the last week in September.

Two years ago, the U.S. entrant, Charles Joly, won the competition, and this year, the mantle of America's bartending hero is borne by Andrew Meltzer, assistant manager of 15 Romolo, one of San Francisco's better-known cocktail watering holes.

"I'm so excited to be named the U.S. Best Bartender of the Year; it's something I've been working towards for quite some time. This competition has given me so much—excellent knowledge, skills and industry camaraderie that will have such valuable impact on my career," says Meltzer.

While Meltzer moves onto the finals, other contestants, some to whom have notched their third straight finals, have lots to offer as well. With backgrounds that might otherwise have pointed them toward careers in law, medicine, baseball or firefighting, these 15 bartenders represent a cross-section of where bartending is today in America.

As for World Class, the program is a six month education tour leading up to five Regional competitions and one North American Final; it drew thousands of applicants, with 75 finalists selected to compete regionally. With judges including past winners Joly, Tyson Buhler, Jeff Bell and Ricky Gomez, and

bartenders and educators including Tony Abou-Ganim, Steve Olson, Julie Reiner, Anu Apte Elford, Jacques Bezuidenhout, and USBG National President David Nepove, the battle for the annual crown of "World's Best" continues to grow in significance. Another reason these following 15 bartenders belong on the 2016 list of the ones to watch. ■

01

ANDREW MELTZER

CITY: SAN FRANCISCO, CA

BAR: 15 ROMOLO

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

My bar back, Simon, also bartends at a famous dive bar. He is very well trained and focuses on many more details than his patrons expect. I love watching him work and making awesome cocktails at a place that is known only for martinis.

Who have been your role models, in life and in the bar world, and why?

I owe so many thanks to Ian Adams and Aaron Gregory Smith, my two managers at 15 Romolo, for their endless support and guidance. They have taught me so much about being hospitable, running a good business, and passing on the torch of mentorship.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

My best friend's dad is a psychic and when I was a kid he said that I would be an actor.

What's your favorite method of decompressing after a week behind the bar?

I regularly see an acupuncturist and I get a massage. Add to that some yoga and lots of long walks, so I manage my stress pretty well. But nothing compares to an afternoon at Banya, the Russian bathhouse. If you're really needing a detox, they'll beat you with juniper and oak branches before throwing you in the cold plunge; that's what I call relaxation!

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

My favorite three drinks are the Daiquiri (with agricole white rum), the Manhattan (50/50, rye whiskey, on the rocks), and the Americano. My favorite spirit to mix with is whiskey because there are so many different styles, flavors and opportunities for great cocktails.



Outside of food, beverage and hospitality, what's your favorite moment?

Live music fuels me outside of work. I can't get creative without hearing some improvisational jazz or jams; I can't get limber without a good dance; and I definitely can't shake my tins to a nice rhythm without hearing a good beat to set my tempo.

02

JUSTIN WARE

CITY: HOUSTON, TX

BAR: JOHNNY'S GOLD BRICK

What has been most challenging for you about competing in such a high level competition as World Class?

Balancing my preparation time with running the bar. Being general manager of a bar is a more than a full time position, and having to balance the immense amount of practice, research and development that it took to feel prepared for World Class was very strenuous.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

I had the opportunity to stage at Anvil, which was a humbling experience that led to being part of the opening staff at Julep. These, to me, were great achievements and huge steps in my career.

**Who have been your role models, in life and in the bar world, and why?**

Bobby Heugel, Alba Huerta and everyone in their group. Everyone involved with that group has such a drive and passion for the industry it's infectious.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

I would most likely be working in a restaurant kitchen. I started with aspira-

tions to become a chef and had a brief stint as a prep cook and line cook. I still would like to get back in a kitchen and make restaurant-quality food.

Outside of food, beverage and hospitality, what's your favorite moment?

Graduating from Texas A&M in 2012. I am one of the first people in my family to get a four-year college degree. It was an incredible achievement for me because I have dyslexia and as a child people had low expectations for me. At some point I decided I would show everyone wrong

What advice would you give to anyone looking to pursue a career behind the bar?

Start small and stay humble. Learn, master and then perfect the presentation of the classics. Walk before you can start to run. No one ever knows everything and no one is the absolute best; there is always someone you can learn from or learn with. Be sure also to taste EVERYTHING—things that are delicious and new and things that are not so good.

03

CHRIS CARDONE

CITY: NEW YORK CITY, NY

BAR: I SODI

**What makes you a good bartender?**

I try to always remember that the time guests spend at my bar is extremely valuable to them. I try to make sure that everyone who sits in front of me leaves happier than when they entered in any way that I possibly can.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

I'm not sure I have a "proudest moment." I can honestly say that I'm grateful for every single day that I get to do what I love to do for a living, without compromising my integrity or personal beliefs.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

Miserable. In all seriousness, I wouldn't trade what I do for anything else in the world. However, if the New York Rangers need a backup goalie, I'm available.

What's your favorite method of decompressing after a week behind the bar?

I have two kids, five and three years old. Bartending in an extremely high volume

restaurant in NYC is my method of decompression.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Every single day I remind myself to be eternally grateful for this moment. "Life is available only in the present moment. If you abandon the present moment you cannot live the moments of your daily life deeply." ~ Thich Nhat Hanh

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

I truly enjoy agave spirits. Agave dances a beautiful dance between art, passion, religion and chaos. Everything about agave from its growth, to the production, to the product makes it pretty remarkable stuff.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to pursue a career behind the bar?

Be yourself. Be passionate. Work really hard. Always bring an empty cup. Be humble. Never stop trying to learn. Always try to be better than yesterday. There is more than one right way to do anything. But most importantly: Be a bartender, not a brand.

0 4

BLAKE JONES

CITY: ORLANDO, FL

BAR: THE COURTESY BAR

What makes you a good bartender?

My ability to talk to anyone as if I've known them for years. I grew up as an only child so having to make friends was a tough and challenging task. It taught me social skills, though, so being in this platform only takes it a step further. That and my attention to detail, because it's certainly not my ability to remember people's names.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

My first is when I moved on to the national finals for World Class. It was such a challenging year for me—I married my wife and got to do a lot of awesome things in the business, however I lost some really close friends and had some big upsets. So

moving on to nationals really gave me the boost I needed.

Secondly would be my wife winning her first bar competition. She's been bartending for many years but just started to get into this side of the business and I helped her with technique and spirit training in the beginning. So to see her do so well, and to see how she used the training and took it a step further, makes me super happy.

Who have been your role models, in life and in the bar world, and why?

The men who helped train me to be where I am today, Patrick Bolster and Jeff Knott, helped and taught me almost everything to get started behind the bar, and I am forever grateful for their patience, knowledge and compassion. Also Sean Kenyon, whom I met a couple years back. In the few hours we worked together I learned so much from him. We stayed in contact and he still gives me life lessons all the time. Whether he knows it or not, he's been a huge part of my career.



Outside of food, beverage and hospitality, what's your favorite moment?

Getting a photograph published for the first time. That was a great feeling. A moment of accomplishment that is indescribable for me, for sure.

0 5

LAURA NEWMAN

CITY: NEW YORK CITY, NY

BAR: MOTHER OF PEARL

What has been most challenging for you about competing in World Class?

Focusing and channeling all of my ideas into something clear and concise. I've been referring to competing in World Class as "bartender figure skating." On one hand, you want to wow the judges with something that's high-concept and totally new to them (like a quadruple axel), but at the same time you want to be 90% sure you'll nail it (more along the lines of a triple axel).

What makes you a good bartender?

On a technical level, I'm a great bartender because I am extremely fast. It can be so frustrating to go to other bars and see

them create cocktails without a sense of urgency. The number one thing that guests care about is getting their drinks quickly. A sense of urgency is something that is very difficult to teach, and it warms my heart to see a bartender knocking out a round of drinks in record time.

Who have been your role models, in life and in the bar world, and why?

Sother Teague has been hugely influential on me both as a bartender and as a person. I don't like saying that he's my mentor, because we've never actually worked together behind the bar, but beyond being one of my dearest friends, he's supported and encouraged me since the day I started bartending in New York City. He's influenced every career decision I've made.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

I'd probably be practicing law in some form. I'm very analytical, enjoy being locked in libraries doing research for days at a time and am probably the most stubborn and argumentative person I know.

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

I am a huge fan of wine, Sherry and vermouth—not only because of how dramatically they can transform cocktails, but because they're also delicious on their own. As a certified sommelier, I like to think that every time I drink these things I'm practicing and increasing the breadth of my knowledge. But I also just really enjoy drinking these things because of how delicious they are.



06

JOSHUA GONZALES

CITY: INDIANAPOLIS, IN

BAR: THUNDERBIRD

What has been most challenging for you about competing in such a high-level competition as World Class?

Having been to World Class nationals before, the thing to remember is that you are really competing against yourself. You succeed or fail on your own merit. It's all about the time you put in before you step in front of the judges. There is no room for error.

What makes you a good bartender?

I think I'm pretty good but I'm always trying to become a better bartender. Like all trades, bartending is a never ending series of learning lessons and opportunities to improve your skills. We never stop learning.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

Opening my own bar, Thunderbird. It was the most difficult thing I've ever done.

Who have been your role models, in life and in the bar world, and why?

I was fortunate enough to have Angus Winchester mentor me over the last year. He's been incredibly important in helping me develop as an owner/operator. It's amazing what you can accomplish when you admit all the things you don't know. Angus and his team helped me learn this lesson.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

Running political campaigns.

What's your favorite method of decompressing after a week behind the bar?

Spending time with my dog and watching pro wrestling.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

In 10 years I hope each of my current bartenders is operating their own joints,

and I'm pulling Sunday night guest shifts behind their bars.

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

Bonded bourbon is about the only thing I sip on. It's 100 proof perfection.

Outside of food, beverage and hospitality, what's your favorite moment?

Rescuing my pit bull from the humane society. Seeing her growth over the past year has been very rewarding.



07

ZACH LYNCH

CITY: JACKSONVILLE, FL

BAR: ICE PLANT

What has been most challenging for you about competing in such a high level competition as World Class?

The most challenging part of this competition has been trying not to overthink certain challenges, to over-complicate them but still keep them clever. I definitely know where the bar is set for years to come now after seeing the amazing group in the finals.

What makes you a good bartender?

I really love serving people and chatting them up. I would hope we all know balanced drinks, and great knowledge is available for most who want to learn, but you really can't teach loving to serve guests and making friends.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

The two years I have been a part of the World Class competition have definitely been a high point, but the proudest moment so far has been seeing how far the team and program at the Ice Plant have come since I was able to start it.

What's your favorite method of decompressing after a week behind the bar?

A laid back day with the wife and son is always a great decompression. I can get off of work at 3:00 or 4:00am but when Thatcher and the wife wake up at 7:00 I'm stoked to hang out.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

Hopefully running a really fun bar program or preaching the good word of hospitality and good spirits.

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

I really love the versatility of gin in cocktails and the complexity of the genre as a whole. There have been so many new styles of gin that I never get sick of trying new ones.

Outside of food, beverage and hospitality, what's your favorite moment?

Getting to watch my son grow up has been unbelievable. It was a whole new chapter in life that I'm loving.



A NEW LOOK FOR THE WORLD'S MOST AWARDED GIN

SAME GIN

NEW LABEL



Please raise your glass responsibly.

BEEFEATER® London Dry Gin. Product of England.
100% Neutral Spirits. Distilled From Grain. 47% Alc./Vol. (94 Proof).
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08

EGOR POLONSKIY

CITY: CHICAGO, IL

BAR: UNTITLED SUPPER CLUB

What has been most challenging for you about competing in such a high level competition as World Class?

The most challenging part was finding time to prepare for it and balance it with my regular work schedule. I manage and bartend at one of the busiest bars in Chicago and normally work 50-60 hours a week, and preparation for World Class probably added another 20-25 hours to the work schedule.

What makes you a good bartender?

Knowing the products behind the bar, being hospitable and knowing what is going on in the world, city and my neighborhood.

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

Gin. So many great drinks are made with it. Really a lot of flavor to build around. Even if a person says that he doesn't like gin, I rarely believe it. Most likely, that person never had an Aviation or Bee's Knees or Southside or Negroni.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

When I heard the word "mentor" from one of my bartenders.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

I studied to be IT engineer and IT marketing specialist. It Did not work out, obviously. Never considered any other option after.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

I basically don't know what is going to happen next month even. Opportunities come fast and most times are unexpected.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to pursue career behind the bar?

Do not ever stop working on yourself. Read more. Taste and taste and taste; train your palate. Learn to make really basic drinks really well. Live a healthy lifestyle.

09

KAMURAN MATARACI

CITY: DENVER, CO

BAR: HOP ALLEY

What has been most challenging for you about competing in such a high level competition as World Class?

Everything. It's designed to challenge you in every way possible, and it lives up to that expectation. Being around the other competitors all day constantly reminds you of the high level everyone is executing at. They're 14 of the most creative, disciplined and eloquent bartenders in the nation. Also, finding a headspace where I can talk to the judges like they're guests at my home bar, and shed the nervous awkwardness, is a challenge I was underprepared for.

What makes you a good bartender?

The bartenders I believe are "good," are the ones that hold court. They know something about every one of their guests. They

hold simultaneous conversations, with different people and groups at the bar. They move fast, but gracefully. They smile a lot. They speak and listen at all the right times. Maybe I'm in the minority, but my metric for assessing a "good bartender" has little to do with drinks or spirit knowledge. I'm far more impressed by a bartender who can cut off an over-intoxicated guest with such grace, the guest wishes to shake their hand on their way out.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

Catching and batting third for the Oakland Athletics. Probably a few starts at first base. Gotta protect the knees as I get older.

What's your favorite method of decompressing after a week behind the bar?

Letting my dog take me on a late walk when the streets are asleep. Listening to the silence is very calming.

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

Sherry or Low-ABV? That's what we're supposed to say, right?



Outside of food, beverage and hospitality, what's your favorite moment?

The moment when bread comes out of the toaster perfectly warm and crispy.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to pursue career behind the bar?

Listen, ask questions and be passionate about hospitality. Spirit knowledge and drink making will never be more important than one's ability to gracefully take care of their guests.

Raise Expectations



JOHN BARR RESERVE BLEND IS THE ULTIMATE BLENDED SCOTCH WHISKY, ACHIEVING THE HIGHEST SCORE WITHIN ITS CATEGORY AND PRICE TIER AT THE ULTIMATE SPIRITS CHALLENGE, THE PREMIER COMPETITION FROM AMERICA'S FOREMOST EXPERT ON DISTILLED SPIRITS, PAUL PACULT.



10

GIANCARLO AVERSA

CITY: DETROIT, MI

BAR: THE LAST WORD

What makes you a good bartender?

Engaging and pleasing my guests is my first order of business. I do a lot to educate myself on my methods and techniques of preparing cocktails and spirits. And I love learning about cocktails and spirits—how they're made and their histories.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

I'm very proud to have been involved in the World Class Program for three years in a row, of reaching the National Finals two times, and I am especially proud to represent my town of Ann Arbor, my chapter of the USBG (Greater Detroit)



and my state of Michigan in the cocktail industry.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

Pursuing a career in music. I'm in a band called The Pherotones, the house band at The Last Word with a weekly spot. I play piano, and I guess you could say we are a jazz band, but not in the traditional sense—we like to explore pop music, jazz and play fantasies on themes. In the same

night you could hear Duke Ellington, Cyndi Lauper, Franz Liszt and the Mario 2 theme song.

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

My go-to cocktails are either a classic rum Daiquiri with a rhum agricole, or a Hanky Panky with Tanqueray No. Ten. A classic single malt, an overproof bourbon or rye, a rich and smoky mezcal or a finely produced absinthe. It's hard to choose with so many great options, but any of these would make me very happy. P.S. I also love a cold can of Hamm's.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to pursue career behind the bar?

Make sure you like people and late nights. I try to remind people that it is a service industry that we are in. As a bartender your first priority should be to serve your guest. Knowledge, flair and great cocktails are integral to top level bartending, and longevity in the field. But I feel that a person stepping behind the bar should only do so if they truly like serving and making people happy.

11

JASON SNOPKOSKI

CITY: DENVER, CO

BAR: AVANTI FOOD & BEVERAGE

What has been most challenging for you about competing in such a high-level competition as World Class?

The biggest challenge has been to find brainstorming, planning, preparation and practice time. Running Avanti Food and Beverage, a high-volume program in Denver, plus maintaining a very active advisory role for Mécha and Mezón in Connecticut leaves minimal time. No matter how important the opportunity, it ultimately had to play second fiddle to my roles where the livelihoods of dozens of employees and the experiences of thousands of guests were at stake.

What makes you a good bartender?

Empathy, positivity, awareness and vision. The ability to connect the dots between people and things. Curiosity and the desire to learn everything.

Who have been your role models, in life and in the bar world, and why?

In the bar world I absolutely, positively would not be where I am today without Andy Seymour.

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

I tend to drink a lot of wine, Sherry and vermouth of all kinds, and gravitate toward niche categories of spirits like pisco, mezcal, agricole rum, brandy and amari.

Outside of food, beverage and hospitality, what's your favorite moment?

A few years ago my wife and I had a small, magical wedding in Puerto Rico followed by a simple barbeque back in



Connecticut with our friends and family. That was a monumental summer which set the tone for how we've lived our lives together since.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to pursue career behind the bar?

So many young bartenders put too much emphasis on learning cocktail recipes. Make understanding and practicing the art of hospitality your primary objective.



Gemma di Luna

ITALY'S NEW GEM

1 2

ERIC BENNETT

CITY: BIRMINGHAM, AL

BAR: CARRIGAN'S PUBLIC HOUSE

**What makes you a good bartender?**

On the hospitality side, I want to be a great host to every guest that walks into my bar. That means being attentive to their needs, making them feel at home, and personally and genuinely connecting to each guest. From the production side, it's learning new techniques, employing interesting flavor combinations, and creating cocktails that resonate for those that drink them.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

My proudest moment probably came after the first cocktail competition I won. I look back on that experience now and I am grateful to have even been included, considering how inexperienced I was. What made that moment great was that my parents were there—they were there supporting me and were able to see that what I was doing was worthwhile and

meaningful and that I could make “this bartending thing” a profession.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

I started working in a bar in college to help keep me afloat. I was in school as a biological chemistry major and wanted to be a gynecologic oncologist. So maybe I'd still be on that path. I am also very much interested in how people's minds work, so maybe I'd be pursuing something in the psychology field.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to pursue career behind the bar?

My first question is always, do you like to serve? Are you willing to put other people's wants and needs well ahead of your own well-being? Can you deal with people at their worst and still stay at your best? If so, then maybe being behind the bar is for you. You never really know until you actually do it—this profession is still very much trial by fire.

1 3

BRIAN MEANS

CITY: SAN FRANCISCO, CA

BAR: DIRTY HABIT

**What has been most challenging for you about competing in such a high-level competition as World Class?**

Knowing that you're competing against some of the best bartenders out there can be quite intimidating. Thinking of new flavor combinations for cocktails and presentation methods has always been a challenge for me.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

It probably has to be watching the bar I currently work in get built from the ground up, and watching it open and be successful.

Who have been your role models, in life and in the bar world, and why?

In the bar world would have to be Kevin

Diedrich, Brian MacGregor, Jacques Beuzidenhout, Jen Ackrill, Jon Gasparini and Greg Lindgren, Jenn Colliau, David Nepove, Jim Meehan, John Gertsen, Julio Bermejo, Ken Luciano, Steven Liles, Martin Cate, Andy Seymour, Neyah White, Lulu Martinez, Jeff Morgenthaler and Brooke Arthur. All of the above have contributed so much to our industry, whether with their cocktails, bars, management, financial tools or knowledge. I strive to continually learn from all of them.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

A firefighter.

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

I love beer... a good Kolsch on a hot day is awesome. Or Milk Stout... all day.

What advice would you give to anyone looking to pursue career behind the bar?

Learn as much as you can whether it's reading old cocktail books or new ones, but pay attention to those around you. Put your head down, work hard, be humble. We are extremely fortunate to do what we do. We get to make drinks and entertain for a living, travel the world and meet some amazing human beings. Be grateful.

1 4

NAOMI LEVY

CITY: BOSTON, MA

BAR: EASTERN STANDARD

What makes you a good bartender?

Making a delicious, well-balanced drink is just a small portion of what being a good bartender is all about. The rest is about being engaging, attentive and most importantly caring. I am genuinely invested in each of my guests having a wonderful time. The bar is my home and when you come into my home it is important to me that you feel taken care of whether you are trying my newest creation or just having a glass of water.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

I was the first person in my family to make



a career out of working in restaurants and bars. My little brother is now the second. I helped him get a bar backing job in college and he has worked his way up to bartender in one of the most renowned bars in DC. This year, he watched me compete in World Class. I found out how he was gushing to someone I know about watching me compete and how impressed he was. Nothing could make me prouder than making him proud.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

Event planning or perhaps teaching.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

I would love to have built a successful business by then and would like to be traveling a lot. Perhaps I'm the host of my own travel show? I think what is so wonderful about this business is the seemingly limitless possibilities when it comes to how you build your path.

Outside of food, beverage and hospitality, what's your favorite moment?

I have so many favorite moments from my travels: whether it is learning to Tango in a Milonga in Buenos Aires, watching Flamenco in the south of Spain, being invited to stay with a Priestess in Austria, or spending a night in a treehouse with my sister in Thailand. It is usually the meals or drinks I have shared with friends and family during those experiences that help make them so memorable.

1 5

JORGE VARGAS-BAQUEDANO

CITY: SAN JOSE, CA

BAR: JACK ROSE LIBATION HOUSE

What makes you a good bartender?

Besides making great drinks, I focus on hospitality and creating an experience for the guest. I want the guest to leave happy whether they just had one drink or we were able to have a conversation over dinner.

What's your proudest moment in the hospitality business?

My proudest moment was when I developed my style of shaking. I like to add a Latino flair when I shake, a little like dancing salsa. It makes shaking entertaining for the guest.

If you weren't tending bar, you'd be...?

Science is another one of my passions,

and if I weren't tending bar I would be a biologist working in National Parks around the country. Before I discovered tending bar, I went to school for zoology.

What's your favorite method of decompressing after a week behind the bar?

Either watching a great movie relaxing at home or going to the casino and playing in a poker tournament.

Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

In ten years, I will have hopefully made an impact on my local bartending community and will be enjoying being a dad to my first child due this August.

What drink or spirit is your go-to, and why?

My go-to spirit is gin because I like the different botanicals found in the different brands. It poses a challenge for a bartender to understand the different brands and the cocktails that highlight them. My favorite drink is a Gin and Tonic because you can taste all the botanicals and it is refreshing any day of the year.

Outside of food, beverage and hospitality, what's your favorite moment?

My favorite moment was becoming a United States citizen earlier this year. Being a Peruvian native, it was an especially proud moment for my wife and me.



BOURBON

101



BY JEFF CIOLETTI

When people talk about the worldwide whiskey renaissance, the first word that comes to most minds is bourbon. Sure, other styles are on fire at the moment—Irish, American rye, even Canadian—but the one that's got most of the globe talking is

America's native spirit. A couple of decades ago, producers could barely give the stuff away—it was “grandpa's drink” after all—but today bars in the most far-flung corners of the world (even Scotland!) have multiple shelves dedicated to the U.S.-made, corn-based whiskey.

WHERE IS IT PRODUCED?

Federal law dictates that only bourbon whiskey produced in the U.S. can be called “bourbon.” And the U.S. has numerous trade agreements with other countries to enforce that restriction as well. It is most closely linked to Kentucky, where it originated, where about 95% of it is made and where the style's most iconic brands hang their hats (and they're the only ones that can claim the prestigious label, “Kentucky Straight Bourbon”).



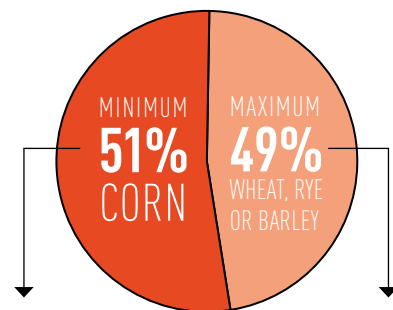
DID YOU KNOW?

Because bourbon is so closely associated with Kentucky, many had assumed it took its name from the Bluegrass State's Bourbon County. However, that notion has been challenged and largely debunked. Many historians assert that it's more likely bourbon took its name from Bourbon Street in New Orleans. True, most of the distillers were in Kentucky, but in the 19th century, a large number of the spirit's drinkers were in the Big Easy (sent there via the Mississippi River). Eventually people started referring to the whiskey as “that stuff they drink on Bourbon Street,” or so the story goes.

BOURBON ST

WHAT'S IT MADE FROM?

The first rule (and there are several) is that bourbon's mash bill must be at least 51 percent corn (though many go considerably higher). The remainder tends to be wheat, rye, barley or any combination of those.



HOW IS IT MADE?

Decisions to be made at the distilling stage include the ratio of corn/grains; types of yeast; and distillation strength and barrel strength.

- 1 The grains are milled into flour and cooked with water.



- 2 After the mash is cooled to a temperature hospitable to yeast, it's time to ferment, usually for around three days. It produces a beer-like beverage often referred to as "distiller's beer."



- 3 That liquid is then distilled to no more than 160 proof and must then go into the barrel at no more than 125 proof (it's diluted with water to bring the proof down).



- 4 In order for it to be called "straight bourbon" it must be aged for two years. Top brands age for at least four years. If the maturation period is under four years, the label must have an age statement. If there's no age statement, it's safe to assume it's spent at least four years in the barrel.

NOW ABOUT THOSE BARRELS...

It can be argued that bourbon was the first purposefully wood-aged whiskey style. The barrel rules and regimens continue to play a huge role in the finished product.

- THE BARRELS MUST BE MADE OF NEW AMERICAN OAK
- THE INSIDE IS CHARRED
- THEY MAY NOT BE USED AGAIN FOR BOURBON—ONE AND DONE

But lucky for Kentucky, the wood needn't be retired. Bourbon rules may dictate single use for the barrels, but most other whisk(e)y styles have no such requirement. Ex-bourbon barrels have held everything from Scotch to Japanese whisky (ex-Sherry casks are quite

popular as well), for varying periods of time, depending on the particular flavor profile the distiller wishes to achieve. The used bourbon casks are more in demand than they've ever been, especially as barrel-aged craft beers have become all the rage.



WATER, WATER

The distinctiveness of Kentucky bourbon owes a great deal to the limestone-rich water in the state, known for its alkalinity (high pH, the opposite of low-pH acidity) and its minerality.



FEATURED BRAND ELIJAH CRAIG



BATCH BY SMALL BATCH

Elijah Craig embraces not only bourbon's historic origin, but also its current-day quality and range of expressions. The brand is named for the Rev. Elijah Craig, aka the "Father of Bourbon," the man who first stored his whiskey in barrels that had been charred in a fire. Production of Elijah Craig Bourbon remains unapologetically hands-on.

SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

The brand's most important expression, Elijah Craig Small Batch, was first introduced in 1986, before the term "small batch" was ever popularized. Among its signature qualities:

- Made from 8- to 12-year-old bourbon, Small Batch delivers perfectly balanced taste; smooth yet full-flavored, thanks to extra aging
- Each batch is bottled exclusively from a dumping of 200 barrels or less
- New premium packaging brings enhanced shelf presence

CRITICAL ACCLAIM

Elijah Craig Small Batch was awarded a double gold medal at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition. It has twice been awarded "Best of the Best" from Whisky Magazine. And in 2014, the Small Batch won a Gold Medal at the WSWA Spirits Tasting Competition.

THE GOLD RUSH

- 2 oz Elijah Craig Small Batch
- ¾ oz Domaine de Canton
- ½ oz Fresh lemon juice

Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass, add ice and shake until well chilled. Strain into a cocktail glass and garnish with a Luxardo cherry.



COMMON USES...

SIPPING:

- Higher-end bourbons are meant to be savored, often with a drop or two of water to open up the flavor, or over one large cube of ice.
- Ditto for barrel-proof bourbons (anywhere from 110 to upwards of 140 proof).
- While higher-end bourbons would make amazing cocktails, keep in mind that means letting the other ingredients dilute and overshadow something people pay a premium for.



OLD FASHIONED:

- The Old-Fashioned actually fits the original definition of “cocktail” published in 1806: spirit, bitters, water and sugar. Typically served over ice.
- Bourbon, rye or other available whiskies were likely the main ingredient in the originals; brandy was also commonly used.
- There are many variations; common components beyond the core four ingredients are a slice of orange peel (with just enough fruit to juice the rim) and a cocktail cherry.



SELLING POINT

Although it did not become official until 1964, bourbon is the only distinctly American spirit. And it has never been better and more varied in options as it is today. For whiskey novices, bourbon is a good choice because its taste profile is sweeter than malt whiskies. Connoisseurs will relish the various single-barrel, high-proof and limited-edition bottlings. And as **America's spirit**, it makes a great gift, at diverse price points.



MANHATTAN:

- It shares a lot in common with the Old Fashioned, except for the addition of vermouth.
- Ice plays a less prominent role in the final pour; usually it's shaken with the bourbon, bitters and vermouth, but the liquid often is strained out, sans cubes.



MINT JULEP:

- A staple of the weeks surrounding the Kentucky Derby, the Mint Julep is made with muddled mint, simple syrup, bourbon and crushed ice, garnished with a sprig of fresh mint (pretty much like a snow cone for adults).
- Its proper vessel: a shiny metallic cup (most are stainless steel or silver plated; fancier ones are pewter and even sterling silver).



FEATURED BRAND JIM BEAM BLACK



RAISING THE BAR WITH EXTRA AGE

With bourbon sales on fire, product line extensions have proliferated. Among the most notable: Jim Beam Black, which just took home top honors—the “Bourbon Trophy”—at the International Wine & Spirits Competition (IWSC). This 86 proof Jim Beam Black ages years longer in white oak barrels than original Jim Beam. It appeals to whiskey drinkers who are looking to “trade up” and spend a little more on their bourbon. This expression demonstrates the impact of extra aging: a more advanced, complex bourbon experience—full-bodied, with smooth caramel and warm oak notes.

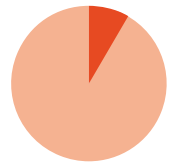
BOURBON & TENNESSEE WHISKEY BY THE NUMBERS*

2015 TOTAL VOLUME {INCLUDING FLAVORED WHISKIES}:
22.9 MILLION CASES

VOLUME CHANGE
2014-2015: **↑ +6.4%**

2015 TOTAL
SUPPLIER REVENUE:
\$3.1 BILLION

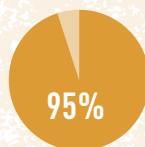
VOLUME SHARE
OF SPIRITS:
10.3%



SOURCE: IWSR U.S. BEVERAGE ALCOHOL REVIEW

BOURBON FUN FACTS

1 Kentucky produces 95% of the world's bourbon supply, but by definition it can be produced in any state.



2 Though all bourbon must be aged, there is no minimum aging requirement; products labeled straight bourbon whiskey must be aged at least two years.



3 Before Prohibition there were over 2,000 distilleries in Kentucky; now there are fewer than 30.



KENTUCKY BOURBON BY THE NUMBERS

(EXCLUDES BOURBONS OUTSIDE THE BLUEGRASS STATE)

2015 PRODUCTION VOLUME:  = 200,000 BARRELS
1.9 MILLION BARRELS



VOLUME IN
GALLONS:

**APPROXIMATELY
100.7 MILLION**
{ 1 BOURBON BARREL=53 GALLONS}
THE HIGHEST SINCE 1967

**BOURBON
INVENTORY IN
KENTUCKY [TOTAL]:
6.7 MILLION
BARRELS**
LARGEST SINCE 1974.

SOURCE: KENTUCKY DISTILLERS ASSOCIATION

WHAT'S IT TASTE LIKE?

- **Corn** gives it a sweeter profile than malt whisky
- **Caramel and vanilla** are the more pronounced notes, thanks to the barrel
- There also can be **spicy hints**, as well as a bit of nuttiness

The non-corn grains play a significant role in the overall profile:

- **High-rye** bourbons bring a lot of the grain's spicy character
- **Wheated** bourbons tend to be softer and a touch sweeter

TYPES OF BOURBON

- **Straight Bourbon:** Bourbon that must be aged for at least two years
- **Kentucky straight bourbon:** Must be made in Kentucky
- **Small Batch:** Bourbon from a small number of barrels—the definition of “small” varies from distillery to distillery and there's no set standard
- **Single Barrel:** Everything in that bottle came from a lone barrel
- **Barrel Proof:** Bourbon bottled at the strength from which it emerged from the barrel without the addition of water to bring down the ABV

**BACK TO
BASICS**

**Download Now at
BeverageMedia.com**

101 Tutorials on key categories to
improve your Wine & Spirits Education

4 The first bottled bourbon was sold in 1870; prior to that, the whiskey was shipped in barrels directly to taverns.



FEATURED BRAND
OLD HICKORY
GREAT AMERICAN WHISKEY



BOTTLED HISTORY

Deeply rooted in America's bourbon tradition, Old Hickory Great American Whiskey delivers character reminiscent of Andrew Jackson, acclaimed U.S. President, General and Statesmen. “Old Hickory,” as Jackson was known, was a connoisseur of fine whiskey, and enjoyed his own blend from a distillery on the grounds of his Tennessee plantation home.

HALLMARKS OF OLD HICKORY

- Each expression of Old Hickory is made from 100% brand-owned stocks.
- All the corn is sourced from farms within a 250-mile radius of the distillery.
- Water used to distill Old Hickory is drawn from glacial aquifers dating back 1.2 million years which formed the Ohio River basin as it looks today.

Old Hickory White Label

Proof: 86 proof, the traditional “perfect proof” preferred historically by American distillers

Character: Rich and near mahogany in color; intense spice and oak aromas; bold, masculine style, with notes of cedar and gingerbread

Finish: Long, with hints of pie crust and sweet tobacco

Usage: modern whiskey cocktails and bourbon connoisseurs



Old Hickory Black Label

Proof: 80 proof (combination of bourbon and whiskey)

Character: Amber in color; attractive aromas of cherry custard, pistachio gelato and almond nougat; silky texture; medium-to-full bodied taste

Finish: lingering flavors of white toffee, dried cherry and honey custard

Usage: traditional mixing or sipping straight





Te Motu Vineyard, Waiheke Island



Murdoch James Estate, Martinborough

NEW ZEALAND'S ZIP

LED BY THEIR ICONIC SAUV BLANC, NZ VINTNERS KEEP GAINING SHARE

BY W. BLAKE GRAY

Most countries experience ups and downs with exporting wines to the United States. Australia's hot, then it's not. Argentina's the next big thing, and then it's scrambling to maintain shelf space. New Zealand, though, just goes up and up, even with a fresh tidal wave of Sauvignon Blanc about to crash on our shores.

New Zealand had a huge harvest in 2014: nearly 30% bigger than its previous high, which was 2013. That's a lot of wine to sell, and for most countries it would mean a challenge, but the market drank it up. After a normal-sized 2015 harvest, this year's harvest is super-sized again, almost as big as 2014. But don't expect many discounts.

Last year sales of New Zealand wines in the U.S. were up 17% by volume and 18% by value in the stores Nielsen measures. And that's par for the course. New Zealand exports to the U.S. have nearly quadrupled in volume since 2006, according to New Zealand Winegrowers. There has not been a single year with a dropoff, not even in economic crisis years.

"If you look at the amount of wine consumed in the U.S., it's about 375 million cases," said David Strada, U.S. Marketing Manager for New Zealand Winegrowers. "We're still less than 2% of the country's consumption. We're still little New Zealand."

That is certainly the public perception, and it doesn't hurt. In reality, New Zealand exports more wine than Portugal or Argentina.

Hobbit Power and Beyond

"When Sauvignon Blanc started getting really strong, from about the early 2000's on, at that time, there were the Lord of the Rings movies," says Ken Mudford, Director of Inventory for Sherry-Lehmann



Brancott Estate, Marlborough



Te Mata Estate, Hawke's Bay



Palliser Estate, Martinborough

Wines and Spirits in New York. “There was the America’s Cup, which New Zealand won at that time. You couldn’t open the *New York Times* without there being an article about New Zealand of some kind. An awful lot of people visit New Zealand, too. Tourism is a major factor. When you do an in-store tasting, it’s amazing how many people have been to New Zealand. It always surprises me.”

Sherry-Lehmann might have more New Zealand wine than anywhere else in the U.S., with 140 SKUs, according to Mudford. Amazingly, less than half are Sauvignon Blancs.

But that’s an aberration. For all the media attention to Central Otago Pinot Noir, 93% of the Kiwi wine exported to the U.S. is white, and 86.5% of New Zealand’s total world exports are Sauvignon Blanc.

“They found a real niche with their Sauvignon Blanc,” says Terry Southard, a wine buyer for The Wine Library in New Jersey. “That trademark style really caught on. Not to mention, it’s a very affordable wine. Between \$10 and \$15 they’re able to make a Sauvignon Blanc that’s affordable and we’ll be able to make a good margin.”

You wonder when that gravy train is going to end. New Zealand increased its planted hectares by 50% in the last nine years. But many of the plantings are not Sauvignon Blanc, which means the country must sell more of its other

varieties. The locals are helping—unlike export-focused Chile and South Africa, New Zealand has a healthy domestic wine market, with consumption up 24% last year alone.

New Zealand makes excellent Chardonnay (9% of the country’s plantings) and Riesling, as well as Pinot Noir that can be pricey. They’re not completely on America’s radar yet, but Gary Itkin, general manager and buyer for Bottlerocket Wine & Spirit in New York says, “It’s not a big stretch for people.”

In fact, Itkin thinks a key reason that New Zealand wine hasn’t faced the kind of backlash that Australian wine did is it “checked the boxes” for sophisticated wine drinkers from the beginning: “They started with regional identification,” Itkin says. “It was New Zealand, it was Marlborough. It was New Zealand, it was Martinborough. There were already demarcated areas. When Australia was working through its popularity, it didn’t really matter where [wine] came from. It just became a general wine. It was Shiraz, that’s it. Every country has regional differences, but if people aren’t told it’s important, they don’t learn it’s important.”

So there’s no reason to expect this wave to lose its potency anytime soon. Even with no more Hobbit movies on the horizon, Middle Earth’s wine industry just stays magical. ■



Pegasus Bay Winery, Waipara

RECOMMENDED PRODUCERS

SAUVIGNON BLANC

- Dog Point
- Giesen
- Greywacke
- Matua
- Saint Clair
- Seresin
- Sileni Estates
- Tohu
- Villa Maria

PINOT NOIR

- Ata Rangi
- Craggy Range
- Felton Road
- Neudorf
- Peregrine
- Quartz Reef
- Rippon

OTHER

- Amisfield Pinot Noir Rosé
- Craggy Range Riesling
- Giesen Riesling
- Huia Brut sparkling wine
- Kumeu River Chardonnay
- Te Mata Cabernet Merlot

SAKÉ SAVOIR FAIRE

WITH A NEW SHAW-ROSS PARTNERSHIP, GEKKEIKAN TAKES THE SAKÉ CATEGORY IN THE U.S. TO THE NEXT LEVEL

BY KRISTEN BIELER

Gekkeikan is the largest supplier of saké in the U.S. Yet all that Yoshi Yumoto, VP Brand Manager for Gekkeikan, sees is untapped potential.

While there is talk of a saké “boom” of late, it remains a small category, and one which Americans still have much to learn about. “We are trying to drive the shift from the traditional saké accounts like Asian restaurants into mainstream accounts like Italian restaurants and bars,” Yumoto explains. “Interest from sommeliers and mixologists is fueling this, and chefs are recognizing just how food-friendly saké is. Our job is to educate them.”

Yumoto is a patient man—he’s started preaching the saké gospel on behalf of Gekkeikan nearly 30 years ago, back when the entire saké category was less than ¼ million cases in the U.S. (today Gekkeikan alone will sell nearly ½ million cases) and he’s still at it.

Many wine and spirits trade professionals are unfamiliar with the basics, such as temperature: “Serving saké hot is an American phenomenon that began when it was introduced here over 50 years ago. Premium sakés are best served chilled.” And shelf life: “Saké has a shorter shelf life than wine—ideally it’s consumed within a year of bottling. But once opened, it stays drinkable longer than wine—it’s good for two or three weeks in the refrigerator.”

AT A GLANCE

Traditional Gekkeikan’s biggest seller, this Junmai is semi-dry and delicious in cocktails. SRP: \$6.99 - \$8.99 for 750ml

Black & Gold: “A saké for saké drinkers,” describes Yumoto, this is fuller-bodied than most sakés and savory. SRP: \$14.99

Suzaku A Junmai Ginjo—meaning that 40% of the rice grain has been polished away—this is remarkably smooth, creamy and fruit-driven, and one of Gekkeikan’s fastest growing sakés. SRP: \$24.99

Horin: This Junmai Daiginjo—the highest grade of saké and one of Gekkeikan’s finest offerings—is ultra-smooth and creamy on the palate, with delicate layers of apple, lime zest, honeysuckle and eucalyptus flavors and an extra-long finish. SRP: \$45

Nigori: This roughly filtered saké has a rich, creamy texture and appealing tropical flavors; it’s taking off with younger consumers. Yumoto recommends serving this extra-chilled. SRP: \$13.99

Zipang: Packaged in 250ml single serve bottles, this lightly sparkling Junmai saké is lightly sweet with true saké character coming through in flavors of ripe melon and peach (and only 7% abv). SRP: \$6



Engaging Millennials

Gekkeikan is an old company: Passed down through 14 family generations over 370 years, dating back to 1637, it’s one of the oldest family-owned companies in the world. Yet it’s also one of the more innovative saké producers today.

The company introduced the Saké Meter Value on the back of bottles to communicate levels of sweetness, and released single-serve cans and bottles which have taken off with younger drinkers. “We want to find the balance between being accessible to U.S. consumers while still being authentic,” says Yumoto. A particular hit has been Zipang Sparkling Saké which is served in many nightlife venues such as New York’s Dream Hotel. “Saké Sangria has been very successful—and new flavors, like the Zipang Peach and Mango [release date Winter/Spring 2017].”

With seven large breweries in Japan and one in California (built in 1989), Gekkeikan is finding the majority of their growth here is being fueled by premium offerings like Horin and Black & Gold. It’s a strategy that the company’s new U.S. importer partner, Miramar-based Shaw-Ross International Importers LLC, is in line with.

“We are firmly focused on the premium side of the saké business,” says Yumoto. “And with our new partnership we are prepared to reach many more consumers who have yet to discover this ancient beverage.” ■

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A Premium Sparkling sake that is sweet with a light effervescence.

HORIN

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SUZAKU

A Premium Ginjo sake with a smooth, creamy and light fruit finish.

NIGORI

A "coarse" filtered sake that is naturally sweet with essences of peach, banana and mango.



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INTRODUCING 'TEAMCHATA'

RUMCHATA JOINS FORCES WITH BARTENDERS AND JACK DANIEL'S FOR ON-PREMISE GROWTH

BY JACK ROBERTIELLO

Proving there are always exceptions to the rule, the rum cream liqueur brand RumChata has successfully established itself as a stylish sipper in a category that has otherwise seen significant volume losses in the past few years. And now there are signs that the liqueur brand has started to blend over into the world of mixed drinks.

Especially with whiskies, RumChata has become a popular component in various party concoctions and has simultaneously made inroads into the on-premise environment. And the supplier took a major leap late last year to expand that whiskey mixability trend when it struck a partnership with Jack Daniel's, tying into Jack Daniel's Tennessee Fire and Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey.

"The partnership originated from the organic bartender and consumer trend of mixing RumChata with flavored whiskies such as Jack Honey [aka Honey Chata] and Jack Fire [aka Cinnamon Toast]," says Tom Maas, RumChata Founder and Master Blender.

The ongoing campaign consists of co-branded print and trade ads in lifestyle and beverage publications; dual/triple branded tool kits; an increased trade and consumer media spend; and on-premise national account menu placements. Both brands created recipe videos on YouTube as well as seasonal cocktails.

RumChata—a proprietary mix of five-times distilled Caribbean rum, fresh

cream, cinnamon, vanilla and other spices—has shown category-busting growth since its launch in 2009. The brand topped half a million cases for the first time in 2014 and is now available in large international markets like Canada, Australia, Spain, Germany, Great Britain and Mexico.

One factor helping spur RumChata's growth is that it contains one-third less butterfat compared to most cream liqueurs. Even more important, with widespread experimentation and steady sharing of recipes, especially on social media, the brand has experienced a boom in mixability both at home and at bars, says Maas.

Fanning Social Media

"Everything from straight bourbon to the many different flavors like maple and cinnamon and honey, even Irish whiskey, are being mixed with RumChata," Maas says. "Many bartenders started experimenting with RumChata and started sharing those recipes over social media, which really exploded. Social media has been absolutely huge for RumChata in terms of both consumers and bartenders sharing recipes."

For example, recently the RumChata Caribbean Cream cocktail, made with Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey, received more than 34,000

Caribbean Cream made with equal parts RumChata, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey and coconut vodka.

likes and was shared more than 20,000 times on the RumChata Facebook page. The drink, made with equal parts RumChata, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey and coconut vodka, is then shaken and strained into a Martini glass, harkening back to the sweet Martini trend of the early 2000s.

Other drinks have also garnered attention. The RumChata White Lightning shot cocktail, made with two parts RumChata and one part whiskey or bourbon, is becoming very popular. "RumChata naturally brings out the subtle flavors of the whiskey. In particular, with bourbon, RumChata does a wonderful job of enhancing the caramel, vanilla and oak notes." says Maas.

The impact of this turn to sweet and strong creamy drinks is showing, says Maas. "In our core markets we sell 40% of our volume on-premise. Nationally it ranges around 20%, but it is growing as we expand the on-premise distribution outside our core states."

And the brand is looking to extend its off-premise reach with a novel twist with MiniChatas: 25ml serving cups filled with real RumChata. Perfect for hot or iced coffee, the shelf-stable MiniChatas are specially packaged for resale—SRP \$12.99 for a box of 15. And after testing in IL, WI and FL, they are now available nationally. ■





1. BIG RED WINERY 2014 CABERNET SAUVIGNON, PASO ROBLES

This Cabernet Sauvignon is a premier example of Paso Robles quality: big country that promises and delivers big red wines, like this Cabernet. Bolstered by 10% Petite Sirah, rich, harmonious flavors of ripe plum, black cherry and berries mingle with subtle notes of loamy earth, vanilla and sage, closing with fresh fruit on the finish. After your first glass, it's perfectly clear why it's called Big Red. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

\$ SRP: \$19.99
bruncowine.com

4. ABERFELDY 16-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH

More mature than the popular 12-year-old and with a little less body than the coveted 21-year-old, Aberfeldy 16 presents a new version of the classic Highland-style malt. Aberfeldy's process—using water sourced from the Pitilie Burn, where alluvial gold mingles with the malt—gives the whisky distinctive honey notes. Aberfeldy 16 will join the John Dewar & Sons' single malt portfolio this fall.

\$ SRP: \$89.99
dewars.com

2. LVOV VODKA

Royal Wine Corp. is proud to introduce LVOV, a premium vodka from Poland. It is distilled and filtered 4 times through an activated carbon and candle process, giving the spirit clarity and refinement. Gluten-free—as it is made exclusively from the finest potatoes—LVOV offers a slightly herbal aroma with a touch of sweetness and minerals as well as a creamy finish. Available nationally; 750ml, 1L and 1.75L.

\$ SRP: \$15/750ml
royalwine.com

5. SEVEN DAUGHTERS MOSCATO & PINOT NOIR CANS

Seven Daughters, a Terlatto Wines brand, has launched two wines in convenient 250ml cans: the award-winning Moscato from Italy and Pinot Noir from prime California vineyards. Perfect for a day at the beach or any adventure on the move, the new cans are specially lined to preserve varietal character and consistency and contain the equivalent of two 4.2 oz glasses of wine.

\$ SRP: \$14.99/4-can pack
terlatowines.com

3. CONDE DE LOS ANDES RIOJA

The Murua family, owners of several Rioja bodegas, bought Conde de los Andes in 2014 as an ambitious recovery project. The first fruits of their labors are about to be released: a dry Blanco and a red Tempranillo, as well as a Semi-Dulce (semi-sweet white) and limited amounts of the 2001 Tempranillo (library release; SRP \$80). Grapes come from approximately 49 acres within the revered Rioja Alta subzone, from vines more than 50 years old.

\$ SRP: \$30-\$50
quintessentialwines.com

6. DONNAFUGATA 2015 SICILIAN WINES

Two wines from Donnafugata's "Fresh and Fruity" collection showcase indigenous Sicilian grape varieties in a fresh and juicy style. The 2015 Donnafugata "SurSur" Grillo derives its name from the Arabic word for cricket, the voice of spring; it resonates with bright peach and grapefruit with hints of herbs. The 2015 Donnafugata "Sherazade" Nero d'Avola, like its namesake narrator of *One Thousand and One Nights*, is enchanting, presenting aromas of strawberries and raspberries with hints of mild pepper.

\$ SRP: \$20
foliowine.com

P

new
products

7. PAUL MASSON PINEAPPLE & APPLE BRANDIES

Paul Masson, one of America's leading brandy producers, has added two new flavors. Paul Masson Pineapple is a delicate balance of the original brandy with overtones of candied pineapple and tropical fruit aromas. Paul Masson Apple delivers notes of fresh green apple, balanced by the warm notes of the brandy. Both are 54 proof and available in 50ml, 200ml, 375ml, 750ml and 1.75L.

\$ SRP: \$11.99/750ml
globe cbrands.com

10. NOVO FOGO 'GRACIOSA' CACHAÇA

Novo Fogo is an award-winning, organic Brazilian cachaça handcrafted at a zero-waste distillery at the edge of the Atlantic Rainforest. Their brand new "Graciosa" expression is aged for two years in repurposed oak and then 18 months more in castanheira do Pará (Brazil nut wood) barrels, yielding a vibrantly aromatic yet creamy character. Scents of pecan and orchids lead into cherry custard on the palate, finishing with clove and anise. 86 proof.

\$ SRP: \$34.99
globe novofogo.com

8. KIM CRAWFORD HOLIDAY BOTTLE

Kim Crawford, the #1 Sauvignon Blanc in the U.S., has unveiled their first ever limited-edition holiday bottle. Festively adorned with gold metallic detailing, this seasonal bottle is perfect for the holiday table, parties and gifts or even a stocking stuffer. This seasonal Kim Crawford Sauvignon Blanc will be available nationwide beginning in October.

\$ SRP: \$17.99
globe kimcrawfordwines.com

11. CODE ROUGE 'BRUT ETERNAL'

Gérard Bertrand, a leading producer of South of France premium wines, is pushing the envelope for the region's sparkling wine. His new Cremant de Limoux—a blanc de blancs made with Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc and Mauzac—is the result of meticulous blending of the various terroirs and grape varieties, aged on the lees for a minimum of 36 months. The provocative red bottle will turn heads, the Alpha and Omega symbols evoke the cycle of nature that inspired the name "Brut Eternal."

\$ SRP: \$28
globe gerard-bertrand.com

9. LAURELWOOD 2014 PINOT NOIR, WILLAMETTE VALLEY, OREGON

Oregon's Willamette Valley enjoyed an ideal growing season in 2014. This 100% Pinot Noir, crafted by winemaker Bob Stashak, was whole-berry fermented in small open-top bins and hand-punched; then aged in neutral French oak, preserving the ripe fruit. The wine shows black cherry, blackberry and currant flavors framed by spicy vanilla. The finish is luxurious as gentle tannins dissipate. Only 1,000 cases produced. Marketed by Bronco Wine Co.

\$ SRP: \$25.99
globe broncowine.com

12. TWISTED SHOTZ 'TAILGATE PARTY PACK'

The folks at Twisted Shotz are launching a "Tailgate Party Pack," just in time for football season. The multipack features their five most popular flavors—Rattlesnake, Washington Apple, B-52, Whipped Chocolate and Root Beer Flirt—so there's something to please everyone. Each individual Twisted Shotz combines two liqueurs in one double-chambered shot glass to conveniently bring the party wherever it happens to be. Alcohol by volume is approximately 20%.

\$ SRP: \$16.99/15-shot pack
globe twistedshotz.com

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ISLAND TREASURES

WITH VARIETALS & BLENDS,
STEMMARI LEADS THE WAY FOR SICILY

BY JACK ROBERTIELLO

When Stemmari winemaker Lucio Matricardi talks about Sicilian wines, what shines is his passion for changing the image of the island from that of bulk supplier of over-ripe wines to a special place where both indigenous and international varietals can thrive in a uniquely Sicilian way.

That almost sums up Stemmari's current marketing theme, in fact: "The art of living, Sicilianly," a catch phrase embraces the notion that wines can capture the culture, climate, and lifestyle of this special Mediterranean gem as authentically as possible.

Since Gruppo Mezzacorona, the Trentino, Italy-based owner of Stemmari, invested \$150 million in replanting and rebuilding 1,700 acres in two provinces where Stemmari grows grapes, the brand's sales have continued to explode—establishing Stemmari as the largest single Sicilian supplier in the U.S.

The portfolio consists of indigenous and New World varieties, with an emphasis on grapes of Sicilian origin, most notably Sicily's most celebrated red varietal Nero d'Avola; the refreshing

white varietal Grillo, (once used extensively to produce the much heavier Marsala wine), and a crisp fruity Nero d'Avola Rosé. Stemmari also has two high-end blends—Dalila, a white blend of Grillo and Viognier, and Cantadoro, a red blend of Nero d'Avola and Cabernet Sauvignon—and the newly introduced Baci Vivaci ("Lively Kisses" in Italian), a semi-effervescent refreshing white based on Grillo; and Stemmari's local Moscato. Also, a very expressive offering of Pinot Noir that reflects the climate of Sicily has been very well received.

"Everyone speaks about modernity and renaissance, but no one explains what it means," says Matricardi. "We should explain better what it means to move Sicily from old style to new style wines."

Bright Future for Nero

He says breaking preconceptions—like that Sicilian reds should be jammy powerhouses with a minimum of 14% alcohol ("Schwarzenegger wines," as he calls them)—is important, and that the Stemmari Nero d'Avola is one way to do so. "It has a beautiful color and ripe elder and tomato flower aromas true to the varietal that speak the dialect of Sicily, that show the beauty of the variety, the highest fragrancy, the pure flavors, and ripe fruit of the forest," says Matricardi.

Rusty Pape, VP of Sales for Prestige Imports, the U.S. arm of Mezzacorona, says that the varietal's growth here is partly down to the interest younger wine drinkers have



Lucio Matricardi

for the new. "When we taste people on everyday Nero d'Avola, whether in the trade or with consumers, they can tell this is a wine big in color, but soft and easy to drink—a great food wine." With Millennial consumers fascinated with unknown varietals, they

have become a target market for Nero d'Avola and Grillo especially.

"We position Grillo as something really fun to drink—it's different and unique, a great wine to serve as an aperitif, great with shellfish and lighter foods, a great alternative to Chardonnay and Sauvignon Blanc and even Pinot Grigio," Pape says.

Baci Vivaci is somewhat of a crossover wine, lightly effervescent but not considered a sparkling wine; it is all Grillo and only 10.5% alcohol, making it well-positioned for promotion for brunch, lunch and mid-day quaffing. "If you go to Sicily in the summer, you see many Sicilians drinking this lightly fizzy white," says Pape. "We launched at end of 2014. Once we put it into consumer's hands, they love it."

With Stemmari's on-premise success bolstered by their keg wine program, the company is now turning toward retailers as Sicily and southern Italian wines in general grow in recognition. Connecting to Sicily is important. "There has been a growing interest in southern Italian and Sicilian wines, and you're starting to see sections of stores devoted to them and that's where we will be," says Pape. ■



Stemmari celebrates Sicilian traditions, such as the *baglio* courtyard at the winery.



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APOTHIC EMPIRE

WHAT BEGAN AS A SIMPLE RED BLEND HAS BECOME A POWERFUL PORTFOLIO

BY JEFFREY LINDENMUTH

The name Apothic is inspired by the Greek “Apotheca,” which according to Apothic wine creator E. & J. Gallo Winery refers to “a mysterious place where wine was blended and stored in 13th century Europe...” The wild success of this wine, however, comes as no mystery, as it adeptly brings together popular taste, accessible price point, a booming category and Gallo’s robust distribution.

Apothic debuted in 2009 with a single \$10-\$11 red blend called Apothic Red (now known as Apothic Red Winemaker’s Blend.) According to Courtney O’Brien, Marketing Director of the premium business unit of E. & J. Gallo Winery, “We saw an opening between some of the cartoonish red blends and the very serious ones, a way to be slightly more sophisticated than the category leader to appeal to a younger generation.”

Part of Apothic’s winning formula includes harnessing the prestige of a vintage-dated wine, while still allowing the Apothic winemaker to blend the best possible wine. “One of the great benefits of Gallo is the ability to get the best grapes,” says O’Brien. “That means flexibility, so growing in volume does not present a problem in terms of maintaining quality or consistency.” As part of the sultry, gothic packaging in hues of black and red, the grapes of Apothic Red Winemaker’s Blend—Zinfandel, Merlot, Syrah and Cabernet Sauvignon—appear on the back label.

Keeping it simple for retailers, all Apothic SKUs are line-priced.



Building on Success

Differentiating among red blends can be a challenge, but Apothic has met it head on with line extensions that rely on bold flavor cues rather than getting bogged down in varietal percentages. Introduced as a seasonal in fall 2014, Apothic Dark proved so popular that it quickly became a permanent part of the portfolio. Apothic Crush, which launched in 2016, also attained full-time status after replacing Apothic Rosé.

There are certainly enough red blend lovers to go around. According to A.C. Nielsen, red blends are leading wine growth in the off-premise, accounting for more than 13% of the \$13 billion that consumers spent on table wine during the 52 weeks ended Sept. 12th, 2015. Perhaps most impressive is that the growth of Dark and Crush have not come at the expense of Winemaker’s Blend. “With Dark and Crush, we brought in 25% of new users from outside the Apothic brand,” notes O’Brien.

Enter ‘Inferno’

In the continued quest to keep current Apothic fans excited and engaged, a new premium-priced offering, Apothic Inferno, will debut in September. Priced around \$14 at retail, Inferno is a red blend, heavy on Zinfandel, aged in Bourbon barrels and marketed as “wine with a whiskey soul.” The limited release required sourcing 2,000 bourbon barrels and shipping them to the Frei of Sonoma winery, where the wine was matured. “We are all about being authentic. Every drop spends 60 days in the barrel,” says O’Brien,



noting that the barrel influence is apparent in the taste of Inferno, with notes of black cherry coupled with maple flavors.

After several years of high velocity growth, Apothic now leads the red blend category. Apparently, success breeds success, with all the Apothic wines performing well in tandem. Research from Gallo shows that four facings of red on the shelf offer the best performance per facing, so line them up!

It’s worth noting that Apothic drinkers also have a white option: Apothic White, which skews slightly more female and younger than the red renditions. In order to tap the potential of Apothic White, Gallo warns against having it get lost in the “other whites” section; it actually performs best alongside its red siblings.

Much like some of Gallo’s other highly successful brands, including Barefoot, Apothic drinkers have powerful brand allegiance—a rarity among the young city dwellers who form the brands core constituency. Their loyalty to Apothic has helped it to transcend its off-premise roots, appearing now in national chains like Outback, TGI Friday’s and Longhorn Steakhouse.

Apothic was ahead of the curve in digital marketing with a potent Facebook presence, and the brand continues to pursue ever more upscale event opportunities. ■

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AUSSIE WINE IMPORTS PICKING UP STEAM

No doubt Australia is climbing its way back into the American wine conversation....



The Mourvèdre vines found at Hewitson date back to 1853, making them the oldest in the world.

► **Frederick Wildman and Sons** is now importing for Hewitson Wines from the Barossa Valley. Family-owned since 1987, the Hewitson Family makes wines almost exclusively made from single vineyard sites. John Sellar, President of Frederick Wildman and Sons, notes, "The Australian category at the premium level is showing the beginning of a trend up."



► **Craft + Estate**, part of **The Winebow Group**, has signed on as exclusive U.S. importer of Burch Family Wines. Craft + Estate will import seven wines from Howard Park; four wines from MadFish; and two wines from Marchand & Burch. "At a time of renewed interest in Australian wine, Craft + Estate has taken a significant position with the 'cool climate' Australia category by adding these dynamic properties," says Liz Mathews, Senior VP of Craft + Estate.

► **Martin Scott Wines** is expanding the distribution of iconic estates Kaesler (Barossa) and Yarra Yering (Yarra Valley). Of special note are Kaesler "Old Bastard" Shiraz and Yarra Yering "Dry Red No. 1."



MARQUÉS DE RISCA HONORS ARCHITECT FRANK GEHRY

Marqués de Riscal is releasing a Frank Gehry Reserve Selection 2012, a limited-edition vintage honoring the decade-long relationship between the architect and the historic, 158-year-old family winery. The wine is made exclusively of Tempranillo from vines more than 80 years old and the bottle features a signed sketch by Gehry of the Hotel Marqués de Riscal, the stunning 43-room luxury property that opened in 2006. marquesderiscal.com



CHÂTEAU D'ESCLANS 'ROCK ANGEL' GETS A MAKEOVER

On the heels of last summer's new brand debut, Chateau d'Esclans, the luxury rosé producer in Côtes de Provence, is rebranding Rock Angel with all-new label design for the 2015 vintage, featuring a black and white drawing by artist Hello Von. The image is classical yet contemporary, evoking a sense of allure and sophistication. SRP \$35. esclans.com

FRONTERA 'AFTER DARK' SHAKES UP BLEND LANDSCAPE

Excelsior Wines, U.S. importer for Frontera and parent company Concha y Toro since 2011, is set to target a new generation of U.S. wine lovers. Starting this fall, Frontera wines will sport an "After Dark" tagline, a nod to the younger generation. Joining the 750ml line-up are two new blends: Moonlight White is a semi-sweet style, faintly effervescent, Moscato-based blend; After Midnight Red is a Cabernet Sauvignon-Syrah blend, rounded out with a touch of Merlot. With SRP of \$6/750ml, Frontera After Dark could put some downward pricing pressure on the burgeoning blend category.



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LOCALCHATTER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 19

We buy from local distributors ... We do have four different tap beers, and we've been trying to do cocktails on draft – there's a real movement in the mixology field towards that. So you make the mixed drink, and serve via tap. With a lot of millennials, that's popular now.

TBJ: *Do you serve food?*

MARCELO: We do offer food. We have catering package, as well, and a variety of different options. We work with a third party for catering, so we can provide anything from pasta to seafood. The main thing now, in the summer, is grill packages. We grill on-site.

KEANE: If people want a pig roast, or Italian food, or grilled chicken, we use different caterers for different things ... We want to outsource the best. There's a real movement for a food truck wedding right now.

TBJ: *Will you expand the business eventually?*

KEANE: We're already looking for another vintage camper. We have to find the right one again. We're looking for [circa] 1950 to 1970.

TBJ: *What's the feedback been like?*

KEANE: "Wow."



MARCELO: The buzz has been heartwarming, to say the least. "What a great idea;" "This is gorgeous;" "You guys are going to be great." We try to connect with every guest at the party. It's been an enjoyable ride.

KEANE: When you see little kids smile and ask if they can touch the caravan, when you hear grown adults say the words, "Awesome!" and "Cool!," it gets you excited. That's the really good part: when they light up. It makes you feel good. ■

Interview has been condensed and edited.



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