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FEATURES

10
ON-PREMISE ADVICE
Fall into the season's changes with a shift in focus.

30
RETAIL REVIEW
Tiverton's Crossroad Liquors' expansive offerings keep customers coming back.

34
SERVING UP
A signature Siena Restaurant Group cocktail recipe is revealed.

36
AMERICAN SINGLE MALT
A long-clamored-for designation gives the whiskey category new momentum.

40
SCOTTISH INSPIRATION
A slew of indie U.S. bottlers are taking cues from across the pond to blend their barrels.



44



46



48

44
IN BALANCE

Cesari Justo strikes the right chord with its single-vineyard reds.

46
WHISKEY: WHAT'S NEW

The newest national releases set to stand out.

48
MAXIMIZING RETAIL DESIGN

Wine and spirits shop owners weigh in on creating appealing, functional spaces.

DEPARTMENTS

5 Issue Highlights

6 News Front

12 Association News

14 Around Town

32 New Products

Page 1a The Index

Liquor Brand Index | Wine Brand Index | Beer Brand Index

The largest compilation of beverage alcohol price and brand information.

HOW BEER, WINE AND SPIRITS GET TO THE MARKETPLACE

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Please Recycle This Magazine

Issue Highlights

October is here. Along with pumpkin spice, another predictable indicator of last quarter's arrival is an action-packed calendar. Offering up tasting opportunities, festivals and showcases, fall events create demand for retailers to get those items shelved and stocked throughout O-N-D.

Our website offers trade show and event listings in real time, as we find out about them — be sure to check the Calendar tab and the Upcoming Events news section. Make sure we know about your events, too.

Onto the insides. American whiskey gets the cover story. When the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau announced a formal definition of American single malt whiskey as a category this summer, the long-awaited move was celebrated by domestic spirits makers. Producers say the designation will accelerate U.S. Trade Association efforts for American single malts to be recognized as a category by other countries, with growth both here and abroad. The report explores the nuances and the potential. Plus, a look on U.S. bottled blends, taking a page from the Scottish playbook.

From there, new products, store design tips and additional topics give you talking points to use with customers and colleagues. Locally, we look across Rhode Island's dynamic marketplace for stories that include a bevy of event recaps, a preview of the season's opportunities, an economic summit review, a retailer's success story and a cocktail recipe that takes on a classic and innovates.

Welcome to fall. Are you ready? We're ready.



Dana

Dana Slone
Managing Director & Editor

Editor's note: *We hope you enjoyed LABOR DAY in September. Did you spot the typo? We did, regretfully, after the fact. Consider us humbled and human. Onward. October. It is October, right?*



ON THE COVER

Photograph by Jennifer Chong/Stocksy.

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MIJENTA TEQUILA RECEIVES B CORP CERTIFICATION

Altos Planos Inc., producer of award-winning, additive-free and sustainable Mijenta Tequila, announced in August that the company received B Corp certification from nonprofit organization B Lab. The only tequila producer to receive the recognition to date, the company met or exceeded the B Impact Assessment criteria measuring an organization's social impact across categories including corporate governance, the environment, community, employees and customers. Now established as a Public Benefit Corporation, Mijenta has been committed to acting responsibly since its launch in September 2020. Mijenta's efforts include creating carbon-neutral products and eco-friendly, biodegradable packaging and supporting reforestation and sustainable agriculture, clean energy use and investment through a variety of nonprofit partnerships.

MOLSON COORS CONTINUES INVESTMENT IN EQUITY

As part of its Project Justice initiative, Molson Coors announced another $1.5 million donation to BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and people of color) organizations dedicated to equity, empowerment, justice and community building, bringing its total cumulative investment to $4.5 million since 2020. As part of this year's initiative, Molson Coors is allocating more than $500,000 in grants to provide educational cost relief to students from underserved communities seeking to finish college degrees across North America. Project Justice was launched in 2020 in response to civil unrest and the inequitable impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on BIPOC communities. Since its inception, Molson Coors has invested more than $4.5 million in nearly 60 organizations across the United States and Canada.

ANALYSTS REPORT PREMIUM WINE MARKET SET TO EXPAND



The Global Premium Wine Market was valued at $343.83 million in 2021 and is expected to reach $531.69 million by 2029, registering a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 5.60% during the forecast period of 2022 to 2029. A recent report issued by Data Bridge Market Research said that premium wine market drivers will include a rise in the alcohol socialization among consumers, market growth of restaurants and bars, rise in disposal income and the continued emergence of e-commerce platforms. Global consumers benefit from the growth in e-commerce options, including a convenient shopping experience, on-time home delivery and a variety of schemes, which is further contributing to the market growth, showing that the off-trade distribution channel offers the opportunity to impact the CAGR.

CALIFORNIA'S DRY CREEK VINEYARD CELEBRATES FIVE DECADES



On August 24, exactly 50 years ago, Dry Creek Vineyard founder and California wine pioneer David S. Stare received the necessary permits to build the first new winery in Dry Creek Valley, Sonoma County, following Prohibition. Founded in 1972, Dry Creek Vineyard paved the way for a renaissance of winemaking and viticulture in the Dry Creek Valley. The history of the multigenerational family winery is full of notable firsts within the industry, including being the first to plant Sauvignon Blanc in the Dry Creek Valley, the first to label a wine as Fumé Blanc in Sonoma County (among other varietal firsts), the first to pioneer Dry Creek Valley's American Viticultural Area status and the first to receive a U.S. patent for the design of printed sustainable sourcing information on a cork. Stare's daughter, Kim Stare Wallace, currently leads the company as its president.

WSWA APPOINTS CREIGHTON AS PRESIDENT AND CEO

The Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA) President and CEO Search Committee has named Francis Creighton as incoming President and Chief Executive Officer for the association. He will join WSWA in November and is currently President and CEO of the Consumer Data Industry Association. WSWA, in a move to bolster its government affairs team, said that Creighton, "brings government relations expertise, consumer behavior experience and a vision for the future of WSWA." Prior to joining CDIA, Creighton served as Chief of Staff to U.S. Senator Chris Murphy of Connecticut. Before that, he worked in the legislative and executive branches on financial services, employee benefits and campaign finance reform. In the private sector, Creighton led government relations for the Financial Services Roundtable, as well as the Mortgage Bankers Association, and was recognized as a "Top Lobbyist" by *The Hill*.



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Corona Light: Per 12 fl. oz. serving average analysis: Calories: 99, Carbohydrates: 5.0 g, Protein 0.8 g, Fat 0.0 g.
Corona Premier: Per 12 fl. oz. serving average analysis: Calories: 90, Carbohydrates: 2.6 g, Protein 0.7 g, Fat 0.0 g.

MAISON LOUIS LATOUR LEADER PASSES AWAY AT AGE 58



Louis-Fabrice Latour, president of Maison Louis Latour, from Burgundy, France's most prominent and historic wine producing families, died on Sept. 5 of cancer. He was 58. Latour was the seventh Louis and the 11th generation leader from the award-winning winemaking family, whose iconic business dates back to the 18th century; he took over from his father in 1999. His dedication to the wines of Burgundy and vision grew burgeoning business, which was founded in 1797. First comprised of 114 acres of premiers and grands crus vineyards in Corton, Latour expanded its contemporary-era holdings across Ardèche, Var, Chablis, Beaujolais, Côteaux de l'Auxois and Pierres Dorées. Under his leadership, Maison Louis Latour produces approximately 750,000 cases of wine a year, making it one of the largest négociants in Burgundy. Latour served in numerous leadership roles within the French wine industry and was a well-known and respected personality, educator and ambassador within the international wine community, sharing knowledge from his family's tradition of creating world-renowned wines.

KENTUCKY BOURBON HALL OF FAME TO INDUCT WILSON



Michter's announced that its Master of Maturation and Chief Operating Officer Andrea Wilson will be inducted into the Kentucky Bourbon Hall of Fame. In 2009, Wilson "broke the glass ceiling" when she became the first woman to ever chair the Kentucky Distillers' Association. Wilson was born in Louisville, Kentucky, and graduated from the University of Louisville with a Bachelor of Science, Chemical Engineering and a Master of Engineering, Chemical Engineering. She rose to the position of Director of Distillation and Maturation for Diageo, North America, in her early career roles, and upon joining Michter's in 2014, she embarked on a series of roles at Michter's Shively Distillery, Fort Nelson Distillery and the company's farm and operations in Springfield. Since 2005, she has served as either a board member or an alternate board member of the Kentucky Distillers' Association and holds numerous accolades for achievements within, and contributions to, the industry.

SANGIACOMO VINEYARDS CELEBRATES 95 YEARS IN SONOMA COUNTY



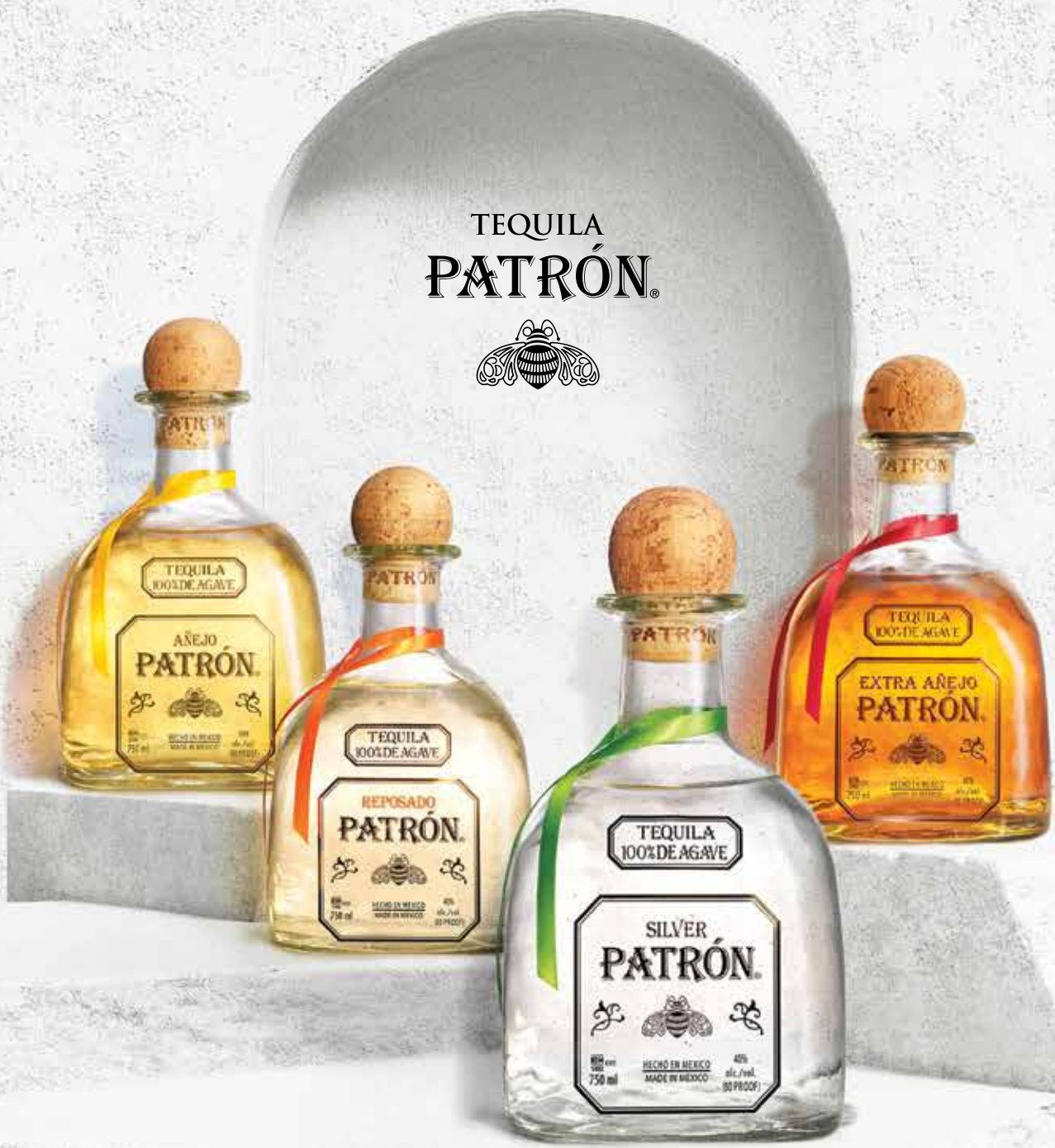
The Sangiacomo family celebrated 95 years of farming and stewardship in Sonoma County wine country. The family's roots in the region began on Aug. 30, 1927, when founder Vittorio Sangiacomo signed the deed to the 55-acre Eden Dale ranch, at the southern end of the Sonoma Valley in what is now the Carneros appellation. The historic agricultural property, dating back to the mid-1800s, was at the time an award-winning fruit tree farm, but shifted agricultural focus after planting its first Sonoma vineyard, Green Acres, in 1969. For the past 53 years, the family has continued their farming heritage by growing premium cool-climate wine grapes from their 1,600 acres of certified sustainable estate vineyards in Carneros, the Petaluma Gap and Sonoma Coast. To celebrate the near-century milestone, the Sangiacomos are releasing the remaining amounts of the vineyard's namesake Home Ranch Chardonnay, including the inaugural 2016 vintage, along with many other exclusive estate bottlings.

CONSTELLATION BOLSTERS CALIFORNIA WATERSHED HEALTH EFFORTS

Constellation Brands, Inc., announced a two-year commitment of $700,000 in total contributions to The Nature Conservancy (TNC). The contribution is partly intended to benefit watersheds in California communities where Constellation Brands operates, contributing to the company's water replenishment targets first announced in April 2022. Its February 2022 donation of $200,000 will be used to support TNC's broader Global Resilient Watersheds program, which is focused on making watershed health a priority by investing in nature-based solutions, such as forest protection, regenerative agricultural practices, wetland restoration and natural vegetation corridors along waterways, and aims to restore watershed health and revitalize degraded freshwater systems around the world. The remaining $500,000 donation will be leveraged over two years to target watersheds located in communities where a number of Constellation's winery facilities and operations reside.

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FALL IS UPON US

BY LEN PANAGGIO

Meteorological fall started just a few weeks ago, and with the ever-shortening days, it's impossible not to see winter on the horizon. But for now, let's enjoy October — the bridge month that takes us from summer to winter. This time of year, we are inundated with everything pumpkin.

The bar is not immune to the influence, with pumpkin beers being embraced by the public and continuing to thrive, with new recipes and more and more brewers getting in on the game. I can't say that I blame them. But, before there was pumpkin everything, there was another category that reigned supreme in the fall: Oktoberfest beers.

Without getting too into the weeds about it, these beers were created in Germany and were consumed at the big festival held every September in Munich. Years ago, there were no Oktoberfest beers brewed in the U.S. and we had to rely on German imports, of which there were six: Paulaner, Spaten (my favorite), Hacker-Pschorr, Augustiner, Hofbräu and Löwenbräu. Sadly, it seems Löwenbräu is not available in Rhode Island, but, thankfully, Jim Koch, Founder of Samuel Adams, pioneered brewing Oktoberfest beer in America. His version is very close to the real deal and I enjoy it as well as the German brews.

Now, I constantly joke about having Oktoberfest beers on your list in January, February, etc., but it's true: unlike pumpkin beers, which seem to thrive through Thanksgiving, Oktoberfest beers' window seems to close shortly after Columbus Day. Don't get caught with the beer, as it probably won't sell and will ultimately spoil.

While pumpkin beers seem to steal the show, let's not forget what other fall beverages exist. Pumpkin vodka, whiskeys, liqueurs and syrups are popular; ask your mixologist to create a few craft cocktails using the ingredients.

And we can't forget the apple! In last month's Beverage Journal, I read about a seasonal wine being introduced to Rhode Island, Oliver Apple Pie from Oliver Winery & Vineyards in Indiana — something I never thought I would see. It displays notes of all the baking spices associated with apple pie — go figure! And, of course, there's always the classic Appletini.

Now, I know blueberry season has passed, but while we're on the subject of fruit, there's also a sparkling wine made with Maine blueberries called Bluet. Peaches and pears are also out, so, again, create drinks celebrating the bounty we so enjoy. Remember, wine can be made from any fruit. Even cider is considered a wine and, again, there are more and more ciders on the market, and what you can do with them is almost endless.

Aside from these beverage options to consider in these difficult times, we do need some levity, and creating new drink options just may take your focus off your struggles. As the resort areas start to hunker down and business hopefully picks up in the cities, the labor crisis is not getting much better, if at all.

I have never seen bartender positions available like I am seeing now. And, sadly, I am seeing price increases on drinks. Talking to some bartenders, operators are adding what they can to a drink to offset rising costs, be it a quarter or a dollar. And many wines are seeing substantial increases in their product due to many reasons: fires, weather, shipping, labor, etc.

My message is simply stated: hang in there and find the things that make our industry fun! After all, our guests are counting on us to keep them abreast of trends, be them new or retro.

10 steak & sushi
BLACKSTONE CATERERS
George's of Galilee
Matunuck Oyster Bar
OAK HILL TAVERN HOUSE OF BAR-B-QUE
The Lobster Pot



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Len Panaggio / Beverage Consultant

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

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LOOKING AHEAD AT RHODE ISLAND'S ECONOMIC OUTLOOK IN 2023

Voice of Rhode Island's Lodging, Restaurant, and Tourism Industry.

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

Last month, the RI Hospitality Association (RIHA) hosted its 19th Annual Economic Outlook Breakfast, providing a deep dive into how Rhode Island's vital hospitality industry will fare in 2023. While the event was held virtually the last two years, this year's in-person event was well attended by hundreds of industry professionals.

Panelists included **Hudson Riehle**, Senior Vice President of the Research & Knowledge Group at The National Restaurant Association (NRA), who provided insight into the restaurant industry; **Rachel Roginsky,** Principal of Pinnacle Advisory Group, who offered data and perspective in the lodging industry; and **Heather Singleton**, Chief Operating Officer of RIHA and the RI Hospitality Education Foundation (RIHEF), who discussed how the workforce looks in the year ahead.

Analysis on these fronts suggest that by 2023, Rhode Island's restaurant and lodging industries will continue to reshape and recover in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, international inflation and economic concerns, and other global factors.

Roginsky analyzed the lodging markets in Providence, Warwick, Newport and Middletown. Providence saw a significant increase of 38.5% in RevPAR from 2021, but the market is still down 15.7% from 2019. Warwick also shows an increase from last year. With passenger counts continuing to increase at T.F. Green, and more conventions and events in the area, a significant decrease in unemployment and a recovering economy, Warwick's RevPAR increased 27.2% from 2021, and has increased 18.4% since 2019. On Aquidneck Island, Newport saw a substantial increase in RevPAR (up 14.0% from 2021, and up 22.2% from 2019). Roginsky analyzed the Middletown market, noting that RevPAR is up 21% from 2021 and 21.1% from 2019.

Hudson Riehle addressed the economic backdrop and performance of the restaurant and food service industry nationally. According to Riehle, the industry will remain in transition throughout 2022, and 2023 national restaurant sales are projected to advance, despite strong geographic variations.

Some of this year's biggest challenges for restaurant operators include employee recruitment, the economy, food costs and availability, sales volume, and labor costs. According to Riehle, hospitality job openings were over 1.3 million in July of 2022. The growth of labor costs is accelerating, with average hourly earnings increasing by 11.1% in 2022, compared to 9.3% in 2021, 3.1% in 2020, and 3.8% in 2019.

While inflation is likely to decelerate in 2023, economic growth is expected to be more moderate. Additional national restaurant industry findings suggest that a greater emphasis will be placed upon food delivery, carry-out, drive-thru service, alcohol, new business models, cost management, value-added products, and digital services/products.

Heather Singleton, who spoke on behalf of RIHA/RIHEF, discussed key statistics affecting the Rhode Island labor force, as well as leisure and hospitality employment on a national scale. According to her findings, Rhode Island's unemployment rate in July was 2.7% compared to 6.0% in July of 2021. Similarly, the United States' unemployment rate in July was at 3.5% compared to 5.4% in July of 2021.

Since findings suggest that hospitality labor shortages and rising labor costs are not going away any time soon, Singleton's presentation highlighted various available resources for employee recruitment and retention. Among these resources is the Rhode Island Hospitality Jobs website, a convenient resource for its hospitality members to post job openings and for job seekers to easily identify local opportunities in the industry through the use of a simple search tool; the RI Hospitality Association Group 401(k) Plan, established in partnership with U.S. Wealth Management; RIHEF's Cook Apprenticeship Program; and The Rhode Island Employee Retention Credit (ERC). All can be found on **rihospitality.org**.

The net-net is that Rhode Island's recovery process is ongoing, albeit at an accelerated rate. Many factors stand in the way of a swift and full recovery including supply-chain, workforce, food costs and more, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and other global factors. But all projections are pointing to a better 2023 for all.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR | **DALE J. VENTURINI,** President & CEO, RI Hospitality Association

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

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NOIPA Fest Debuts in Celebration of Beer Styles

The Beervana Fest team, led by founders Mike Iannazzi of Nikki's Liquors and Brian Oakley of Julians, hosted the inaugural NOIPA Fest at The WaterFire Arts Center in Providence on Aug. 7. The organizers said of the event, "Everybody loves IPAs. When we began Beervana Fest way back in 2008, our mission was to bring craft beer front and center into the spotlight and help to enlighten the community as to what a big world craft beer was and could be ... we also felt that the market has a need to learn about the many beautiful and exciting classic styles that are really not getting much exposure in the current world." Billed as an "exploration and celebration of diverse beer styles," the festival offered guests the opportunity to expand their craft beer horizons with tastes of lagers, ales, Belgian blonds, dunkels, pilsners, goses, milds, gruits, kolschs, porters, barley wines and more.



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Photos by Laura Widness.

1. The inaugural NOIPA Fest took place at The WaterFire Arts Center in Providence on Aug. 7.
2. The unique festival celebrated diverse craft beers from around the world in a variety of styles.
3. Festival Co-founders Mike Iannazzi, Nikki's Liquors and Brian Oakley, Julians.
4. NOIPA event team ready to welcome guests.
5. Brian Reilly, Sales Manager, von Trapp Brewing.
6. Von Trapp Brewing Pilsner Bohemian Lager, Vienna Style Lager and Dunkel Lager.
7. Narragansett Bohemian Pilsner.
8. All of Narragansett Beer: Lee Lord, Head Brewer; Cameron Hutchinson, Field Sales Manager; and Tony Barber, Production and Operations Manager.
9. Chris Martin, Brand Ambassador and Nicolette Hopkins, Manager, Nikki's Liquors.
10. Mike Esposito, Import Beer Manager – New England, Samuel Smith's Brewery, the oldest brewery in Yorkshire, England.
11. Guests enjoyed tastes of diverse beer styles, including lagers, dunkels, pilsners, goses, kolschs, porters and more.
12. All from Exhibit 'A' Brewing Company: Lauren Chabot, Taproom; Matthew Steinberg, Co-founder and Head Brewer; and Kevin Lamory, Sales/Logistics Manager.
13. Exhibit 'A' Brewing Company Orval Trappist Ale.
14. Jenna DuCharme, Brewer and Narissa Smith, Sales Representative, Jack's Abby.
15. Kate Sheriff, Brand Ambassador and Kevin Leavitt, Brewer, Revival Brewing Co.
16. Alex Malcolm, Field Sales Representative – New England, Allagash Brewing Company.
17. Tim Coleman, Weihenstephan. Located in Bavaria, Germany, Weihenstephan is known as the oldest brewery in the world.
18. Adam Aktchian, RI/CT/MA Sales Manager, Two Roads Brewing Company.
19. Homer Johnson, Business Development Director, Shaidzon Beer Company.
20. Kyle Stewart, Sales Representative and Kelly Marciano, Sales Manager, Zero Gravity Craft Brewery.
21. Sarah Karlavage, New England Market Manager, Duvel USA.
22. Duvel 6.66% Belgian Blond, La Chouffe Belgian Blond Beer and Brewery Ommegang Dream Patch Sour.



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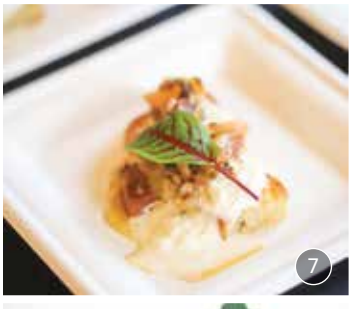

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Photos by Laura Widness.

FARM FRESH RHODE ISLAND RETURNS TO NEWPORT

Farm Fresh Rhode Island hosted its annual Local Food Fest, a celebration of local food growers and food producers, on the grounds of Newport's Castle Hill Inn on Aug. 9. Sponsored by Castle Hill Inn and Newport Restaurant Group, guests of the sold-out event enjoyed freshly made seasonal fare prepared by local chefs paired with cocktails, wine and beer selections on the venue's Chalet Patio and lawn, which overlooks Newport Bridge and the Narragansett Bay. Proceeds benefited Pawtucket's Farm Fresh Rhode Island, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting local farms and increasing community access to locally grown foods.

1. Farm Fresh Rhode Island, a celebration of local food growers and food producers, took place at Castle Hill Inn in Newport on Aug. 9. Guests of the sold-out event enjoyed freshly made seasonal fare prepared by local chefs paired with cocktails and local wine and beer selections.
2. David Dadekian, President, Eat Drink RI; Andy Teixeira, Chef, Newport Vineyards; Derek Wagner, Owner and Head Chef, nicks on broadway; Phay Kim, Pastry Chef, nicks on broadway; Elizabeth Sawtelle, General Manager, nicks on broadway; and Xavier Munoz, Sous Chef, nicks on broadway.
3. From the nicks on broadway team: Schartner Farms heirloom cherry tomatoes, Narragansett Creamery stracchino cheese, herb pesto and strawberry vinaigrette on house-baked bread.
4. Herbs from Skydog Farm garnish a cocktail featuring spirits from The Industrious Spirit Co.
5. Andrew Kientz, Tasting Room Manager, The Industrious Spirit Co.
6. Marissa Stashenko, Co-owner and Jamie Buscher, Brand Development Manager, Anchor & Hope.
7. Fried focaccia with stracciatella, peaches and bacon from Newport Vineyards, Narragansett Creamery and Wishing Stone Farm.
8. Cait Jackson, Head Bartender and Nicky Glasscock, Bartender, The Industrious Spirit Co.
9. Cocktails featuring spirits from The Industrious Spirit Co.
10. Paula Anderson, Co-Owner, New Harvest Coffee Roasters.
11. The Industrious Spirit Co. Blue Velvet Bourbon Whiskey.
12. Kendra Carlisle, Marketing Coordinator and Savannah Mediano, Guest Services Representative, Newport Vineyards.





BALLY'S EMPLOYEES SOAK EXECUTIVES IN SUMMER ALS CHALLENGE

Lincoln and Tiverton employees and executives from two Bally's Rhode Island properties donated approximately $7,000 in a summer pursuit to dunk their bosses as part of the ALS CEO Soak Challenge on Aug. 12. Inspired by the Ice Bucket Challenge, the CEO Soak has grown to become a corporate engagement opportunity for the ALS Association across the U.S. and in Rhode Island. ALS, which stands for amyotrophic lateral sclerosis and is also known as Lou Gehrig's, is a fatal progressive nervous system disease. The CEO Soak engages business and community leaders while raising critical funds and awareness for the ALS Association's mission. Senior Vice President and General Manager of Bally's Tiverton Casino & Hotel Craig Sculos and Vice President and General Manager of Bally's Twin River Lincoln Casino Resort Tony Rohrer braved 100-degree temperatures to do their part in the local cause.

1. Tony Rohrer, Vice President and General Manager, Bally's Twin River Lincoln Casino Resort.
2. Craig Sculos, Senior Vice President and General Manager, Bally's Tiverton Casino & Hotel.









HOTEL VIKING SHOWCASES KETEL ONE BOTANICAL SPRITZ GARDEN

Hotel Viking in Newport debuted its Ketel One Botanical Spritz Garden for the summer set within its One Bellevue Patio. Using Ketel One Botanical's Cucumber & Mint, Peach & Orange Blossom or Grapefruit & Rose, guests enjoyed a custom and cooling spritz. Each of the 30% ABV Ketel One Botanical expressions, which have 73 calories and 0 carbs per serving, are created from the award-winning Dutch-imported vodka distilled with real botanicals, 100% non-GMO grain and infused with natural fruit essences. Each botanical essence is individually and naturally obtained through innovative extraction methods and distillation processes for the freshest, cleanest and most crisp taste possible. Spritzes were paired with Executive Chef Patrick Popores' shareable plates, created to enjoy from the historic Newport location. The Garden Patio offers outdoor seating with an advantageous view of iconic Bellevue Avenue. Ketel One Vodka and Ketel One Botanical are distributed by Mancini Beverage – Providence Beverage division.

1. Hotel Viking's Summer Spritz Garden bar showcasing Ketel One Botanical's Cucumber & Mint, Peach & Orange Blossom or Grapefruit & Rose.
2. A pour of prosecco to accent a Ketel One Grapefruit & Rose spritz.
3. Camila Ordonez creates a Ketel One Botanical Spritz. Ordonez is one of Hotel Viking's J-1 students and food runners. "A part of the functionality of the Spritz bar came with training service team members to build the spritzes as a way to facilitate the hospitality experience," said Christina Mercado, Assistant Director of Food and Beverage, Hotel Viking.
4. A custom Ketel One Botanical Spritz.



REMUS REPEAL RESERVE SERIES VI LAUNCHED

Ross & Squibb Distillery released its Remus Repeal Reserve Series VI Straight Bourbon Whiskey in September, available via Mancini Beverage – Rhode Island Distributing division. The limited-edition bourbon is the sixth annual offering of the distillery's award-winning Remus Repeal Reserve Bourbon collection. Bottled at 100 proof/50% ABV, Remus Repeal Reserve Series VI's release coincided with National Bourbon Heritage Month. Created by Master Distiller Ian Stirsman and his team of master distillers and master blenders, Series VI comprises five bourbons, aged between eight to 14 years, from its 175-year-old Lawrenceburg, Indiana, distillery. Made in a signature high-rye style, the medley changes each year, allowing Stirsman and his team to experiment with their various mash bills and aged reserves.

Remus Repeal Reserve Series VI is comprised of 2% 2008 Bourbon (21% Rye), 17% 2012 Bourbon (36% Rye), 27% 2012 Bourbon (21% Rye), 29% 2014 Bourbon (21% Rye) and 25% 2014 Bourbon (36% Rye). Series VI leads with aromas of rich candied fruit with a hint of nutmeg and saddle leather.



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MANCINI BEVERAGE WELCOMES NEW WINES, RUMS

Mancini Beverage – Rhode Island Distributing division welcomed new offerings to the market. The first set comes from New Zealand: Rapaura Springs Reserve Sauvignon Blanc 2021 and Classic Sauvignon Blanc 2021. The winery is family-owned and sustainability-centered, its label featuring a circle of rocks signifying the pure spring in its vineyard in the heart of Marlborough, New Zealand, fed by the pristine waters that collect in the Southern Alps. The 92-point wines exemplify the region's Sauvignon Blanc wines, with herbaceous and tropical fruit aromas, highlighted by the vibrant fruit flavors, expertly crafted from selected vineyards. Reserve wines define the region. From the sunny shores of Florida comes Siesta Key Rum in two expressions: Spiced Rum and Toasted Coconut. Siesta Key rums are handcrafted in small batches using natural ingredients at its artisan distillery located in Sarasota. Founded in 2007, Siesta Key Rum has been producing its award-winning rums since 2010.

1. New Zealand's Rapaura Springs Reserve Sauvignon Blanc 2021 brims with succulent flavors of passion fruit, tropical fruit and citrus balanced with crisp acidity and a distinct salty minerality. Its Classic Sauvignon Blanc 2021 offers juicy fruit flavors and crisp acidity, which combine to deliver a mouthwatering finish.
2. New from Florida: Siesta Key Spiced Rum, small-batch rum infused with a proprietary blend of spices sweetened naturally with domestic honey, and Siesta Key Toasted Coconut Rum, small-batch rum infused with raw shredded and toasted coconut, with no added flavors or coloring.



Photos courtesy of Foolproof Brewing Company.

FOOLPROOF BREWING COMPANY HOSTS AUGTOBERFEST

Foolproof Brewing Company welcomed Oktoberfest season with its Augtoberfest held in the "dead of summer" at its Pawtucket brewery on Aug. 13. Guests enjoyed music from The Pogs and the Kickin Brass Band, access to food trucks including La Costa Lobster & Tacos, a souvenir German stein and special events including the stein-hoisting contest among the day's activities, as well as plenty of cold Foolproof brews such as Foolproof Ocean State Lager, 4.8% ABV; Foolproof Ocean State Amber Ale, 4.8% ABV; and Foolproof Augtoberfest Märzen Lager, 6% ABV. Foolproof Brewing produces its handcrafted beers from its Grotto Avenue location, which includes a 30-barrel brewhouse and taproom, and is distributed by Mission Beverage in Rhode Island.

1. Foolproof Brewing Company stood ready to host its Augtoberfest on Aug. 13.
2. Guests enjoyed the day of Rhode Island-made brews, German themed music, food trucks and games.
3. Cold brews included Foolproof Ocean State Lager, Ocean State Amber Pale Ale and Augtoberfest Märzen Lager.
4. Stein hoisting is a traditional Bavarian contest in which competitors hold a full 1-liter beer stein in front of their bodies with a straight arm, parallel to the ground, with the last person holding the pose declared the winner.
5. Foolproof Augtoberfest Märzen Lager, 6% ABV, is also available canned.





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BEST BEVERAGE BRINGS IN NEW SOUTH AFRICAN WINES

Best Beverage welcomes new wines to Rhode Island from several South African regions and suppliers. Partnering with Vine Street Imports, this portfolio expansion highlights a new generation of lower-intervention, organic and natural-leaning winemakers. Storm Point wines, named for the storms that dominated nautical exploration centuries ago in the Western Cape, are made by Winemaker Mick Craven and showcase the accessibility of South African Chenin Blanc, with a palate that is bright with herbal undertones and a minerally driven finish, as well as the appealing nature and value of their red blends, which offer a vibrant freshness unique to the region. In Swartland, Jurgen Gouws' Intellego Wines project offers Pink Moustache, a Cinsault, Syrah and Mourvedre light-red blend; and Kedungu Red Blend, a Syrah, Mourvedre, Cinsault and Pinotage blend with a tremendous depth of flavor and notes of fynbos, South Africa's dusty, herbal counterpoint to the Rhône Valley's garrigue. From the Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley, Natasha Williams offers a dry sparkling wine under her own Lelie van Saron label. Made of 66% Clairette Blanche, 24% Vermentino and 10% Muscat d'Alexandrie, the Jade Méthode Ancestrale is bone-dry and floral with notes of white peach.

1. Storm Point 100% Chenin Blanc offers stone fruit and citrus notes with a splash of salt water. Storm Point Red is a blend of Cinsault, Syrah and Carignan, with the last two aforementioned grapes fermented whole cluster and the Cinsault fully destemmed, aged in older barrels for nearly a year.
2. From the Swartland region, Jurgen Gouws' Intellego Wines project offers Pink Moustache, a light-red blend, and Kedungu Red Blend, each made from grapes that are grown in younger and older vineyards on small parcels of land in the Abbotsdale, Riebeek and Malmesbury areas.
3. From the Upper Hemel-en-Aarde Valley, Natasha Williams' Lelie van Saron Jade Méthode Ancestrale offers a sparkling wine that is dry and floral with notes of white peach perfect for any occasion.



HORIZON BEVERAGE ADDS TRULY VODKA SELTZERS

Horizon Beverage Co. of Rhode Island welcomed Truly Vodka Seltzers, new from the Boston Beer Company, set to launch in the state in October. Available in four flavors — Blackberry & Lemon, Cherry & Lime, Peach & Tangerine and Pineapple & Cranberry — each is made with premium, six-times-distilled vodka and real fruit juice, 5% ABV, packaged in 355-ml slim cans. Each has 110 calories, 2 grams of sugar and 4 grams of carbohydrates, making for a refreshing and bubbly beverage to chill and serve. Sold in variety pack format, October will see launch events in support of retail point of sale. The new RTDs build on the launch of spring's Truly Flavored Vodka releases in partnership with spirits producer Beam Suntory.

Truly Vodka Seltzers are newly available in Blackberry & Lemon, Cherry & Lime, Peach & Tangerine and Pineapple & Cranberry.



J.J. CORRY CREATES MODERN BONDED IRISH WHISKEY

Best Beverage welcomed J.J. Corry Irish Whiskey to its Rhode Island spirits portfolio. Each expression is aged, finished, blended and bottled on the McGuane family farm in County Clare in the style of Irish whiskey bonders of the past. The "Golden Age" of Irish whiskey, the late 19th century, was a time when every town in Ireland had its own particular flavor of whiskey, as hundreds of distilleries operating on the island did not have their own brands of whiskey. Rather, each made whiskey and sold it wholesale to the bonders. The business model was extremely accessible, as there was no expense in building or running a distillery, which meant that there were whiskey bonders in every town. In 2015, founder Louise McGuane wanted to secure the future of her father PJ's farm and make a contribution to the resurgence of Irish whiskey. She built a rackhouse and blending room on her father's land, which PJ still farms today, and with that became Ireland's first modern whiskey bonder. The family emulates the conditions of aging and blending used by Irish whiskey bonders of old while applying modern-day know-how.

The first offerings from J.J. Corry are The Hanson, a bright, fruit-forward Irish whiskey with notes of toasted coconut and vanilla fudge, and The Gael, a classic whiskey made from rare mature single-malt and grain whiskeys ranging from nine to 28 years old. The Gael features flavors of white stone fruits, lime, candied orange and pink peppercorns.



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OCEANSTATE WINE & SPIRITS ADDS FIESTA CHARRA, UPTOWN COCKTAILS

Oceanstate Wine & Spirits welcomed new selections into its Rhode Island portfolio with Fiesta Charra, a private label 100% agave tequila, and a new size format for the existing product line from Uptown Wine Cocktails. Fiesta Charra Tequila Alteña, imported from Mexico, offers two expressions, Blanco and Reposado. Uptown Wine Cocktails is a woman-owned premium, ready-to-drink cocktail brand founded by Merrilee Kick, the founder of BuzzBallz. Its premixed offerings added a new size to its existing 1.5-liter bottles and 750-ml bottles: new 375-ml cans, two servings per can. Each flavor is made with natural ingredients, 13.9% ABV and designed to be chilled, shaken and shared.

1. Fiesta Charra Tequila Blanco is crisp and clean with layered notes of pear and citrus. Fiesta Charra Tequila Reposado features hints of ginger and vanilla notes that accentuate blue agave and a slight oak finish. Both come in a 1-liter format.
2. Uptown Wine Cocktails offers premixed drinks with vibrant blends of wine and natural ingredients; no corn syrup, no artificial flavors and kosher. The ready-to-serve premixed flavors are now offered in a 375-ml can format, including the popular Chocolatini, Margarita, Mango Margarita and Piña Colada.

Summer Showcase of Flavors Benefits Special Olympics

Savor the Flavors of Rhode Island, a signature food and wine tasting fundraiser for Special Olympics Rhode Island, was held at Harbor Lights in Warwick on Aug. 18. Emceed by Co-host Mario Hilario of NBC 10, the event showcased cuisine from more than 25 venues from around the Ocean State paired with wine, beer and spirits selections, which included brands from within the portfolios of Horizon Beverage, Mancini Beverage and sponsor MS Walker. Rhode Island-specific brand tastes such as KEEL Vodka, Sons of Liberty Beer & Spirits Co., Two Gals Cocktails, Narragansett Beer and more were showcased alongside a range of domestic and imported offerings. Special Olympics Rhode Island is a year-round sports training and competition nonprofit organization with 501(c)(3) status, providing state and national opportunities for thousands of state athletes since its founding.



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Photos by Adam Haley.

1. Savor the Flavors of Rhode Island showcased cuisine from more than 25 Ocean State venues, paired with a variety of wine, beer and spirits brands.
2. NBC 10 News Anchor Mario Hilario hosted the Aug. 18 benefit for Special Olympics Rhode Island.
3. The benefit for Special Olympics Rhode Island included several tasting opportunities and "wine cork" surprise offerings.
4. Wines from event sponsor MS Walker of Rhode Island included Cantina Lavis Sauvignon Blanc, Broadside Cabernet Sauvignon, Aragosta Vermentino di Sardegna, Hampton Water Rosé and Forever Young Rosé.
5. All of MS Walker: Marc Berry, Fine Wine Specialist; Gabriella Matos, Sales Representative; and Tom Short, Sales Representative.
6. Brand Ambassadors Wallky Diaz and Dana Horton, with Astral Tequila and Ketel One Botanical Vodka Spritz.
7. Bryan Madeiros, Tito's Handmade Vodka.
8. Featured beverage brands included The Botanist Islay Dry Gin, Campari and Martini & Rossi Rosso Sweet Vermouth.
9. Brand Ambassador Jessica Cruz, Rémy Cointreau pouring a taste of The Botanist Gin.
10. Nick Brown, Sales Representative and Brand Ambassador, Sons of Liberty Beer & Spirits Co. showcasing Chair 2 Light Wheat.
11. Alicia Adolf, Marketing Representative and Chris Serafini, Field Sales Manager, The Long Drink.
12. The Long Drink in Strong Citrus, Traditional Citrus, Zero Sugar and Cranberry flavors.
13. Brand Ambassadors Christine Jason and Lori Swift showcasing Cupcake Rosé Watermelon Swizzle and Rancho La Gloria Strawberry Margarita Wine Cocktail.
14. Rancho La Gloria Ready to Drink Margaritas in Classic Lime, Watermelon, Mango, Peach and Strawberry.
15. Brand Ambassador Sarah Petersen, Fishers Island Lemonade.
16. A pour of Fishers Island Lemonade.
17. Cupcake Signature Sweets wines in Berry, Watermelon, Peach and Sweet Red.
18. Brand Ambassador Lauri Cianci highlighting Faustino Rioja Crianza and Art Collection Chardonnay.
19. Tastes of Faustino Rioja Crianza.
20. A brand representative with Pourers, LLC, showcasing Jelly Jar Berry Sorbet Rosé and Peach Cobbler.
21. A pour of Bread & Butter Cabernet Sauvignon.
22. Vanessa Laporte-Coyne, Promotion, Narragansett Beer highlighting Del's Rhode Island Hard Tea.
23. A pour of Del's Rhode Island Hard Tea.



TWISTED TEA SWEET TEA WHISKEY LAUNCHES IN RHODE ISLAND

Horizon Beverage Co. of Rhode Island welcomed Twisted Tea Sweet Tea Whiskey, made with real brewed tea and inspired by the brand's flagship product Twisted Tea Hard Iced Tea Original. The new Sweet Tea Whiskey packs the classic sweet tea taste balanced with real, well-rounded whiskey for a smooth blend of oak and bright lemon. Perfect on its own or as an addition to a cocktail, at 32.5% ABV, Twisted Tea Sweet Tea Whiskey is available in 50-ml, 750-ml and 1-liter bottles. In July 2021, the Boston Beer Company and Beam Suntory announced a long-term, strategic partnership to extend select brands. Twisted Tea Sweet Tea Whiskey is just one example of an iconic brand innovation stemming from the collaboration. As part of the partnership, Boston Beer Company, which will handle national marketing and advertising, public relations and social media promotion for Twisted Tea Sweet Tea Whiskey, is leveraging Beam Suntory's expertise in distillation, distribution, sales, and trade and local marketing for the new product.

Twisted Tea Sweet Tea Whiskey is made with real brewed tea and inspired by the brand's flagship product Twisted Tea Hard Iced Tea Original.











NEWPORT POLO SERVED IN STYLE BY THE COCKTAIL GURU

Team from The Cocktail Guru, led by Jonathan Pogash, continued to offer a tasty brand showcase to guests of Newport International Polo Grounds & Pavilion throughout August. Multiple beverage brands were featured at the annual summer specialty cocktail bar in Portsmouth. Presented by bar talent from The Pony Express Bar, each international match provided an opportunity to showcase spirits brands from a custom cocktail menu. Sponsors included Aperol, Cinzano Prosecco, Van Gogh Vodka, Marie Brizard Elderflower Liqueur, Cutty Sark Blended Scotch Whisky, Sipsmith London Dry Gin, Maker's Mark Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whisky, Hornitos Plata Tequila, Tommy Bahama Tommy No. 2 Rum, Montelobos Mezcal, On The Rocks Premium Cocktails, Grand Marnier and RIPE Bar Juice, among them, and extended through an additional Après Polo cocktail experience. The team wore newly branded pineapple apparel, the international symbol of hospitality.

1. A private party at Newport Polo during the Jamaica match with The Cocktail Guru team's Michael Connor, Erin Kindness and Sean Cormier.
2. Katrina Krueger, a veteran Newport Polo server, showcases The Cocktail Guru-branded pineapple apron.
3. The Cocktail Guru's leader, Jonathan Pogash, managing a summer event in new company-branded swag.
4. The August Jamaica match Après Polo experience was sponsored by Marie Brizard and Tommy Bahama.
5. Bartender Michael Connor showcases a cocktail sample made with Marie Brizard Elderflower Liqueur and Tommy Bahama Tommy No. 2 Rum during Après Polo.











Photos by Adam Haley.

NARRAGANSETT BEER HOSTS PET ADOPTION PARTY

Narragansett Beer hosted its annual Dog Days of Summer Pupfest adoption event at its brewery in Providence on Aug. 21. Guests were invited to bring their own four-legged friends or meet new ones from featured local pet adoption organizations including Rhode Island Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Friends of Homeless Animals, Rhode Home Rescue, Fetch Pet Care and Heart of RI Animal Rescue League. Guest pups had the chance to be featured in a fashion show and costume contest throughout the day's festivities, which included live music and food from local vendors to enjoy alongside Narragansett brews.

1. Narragansett Beer hosted its annual Dog Days of Summer Pupfest adoption event at its brewery in Providence on Aug. 21.
2. David Bagnall, Bartender/Taptender, Narragansett Beer.
3. A guest getting to know a rescue pup.
4. Representatives from several pet adoption charities were in attendance.
5. Guests mingled with furry friends during the afternoon event.





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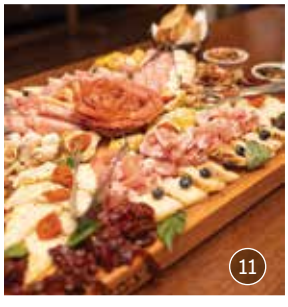

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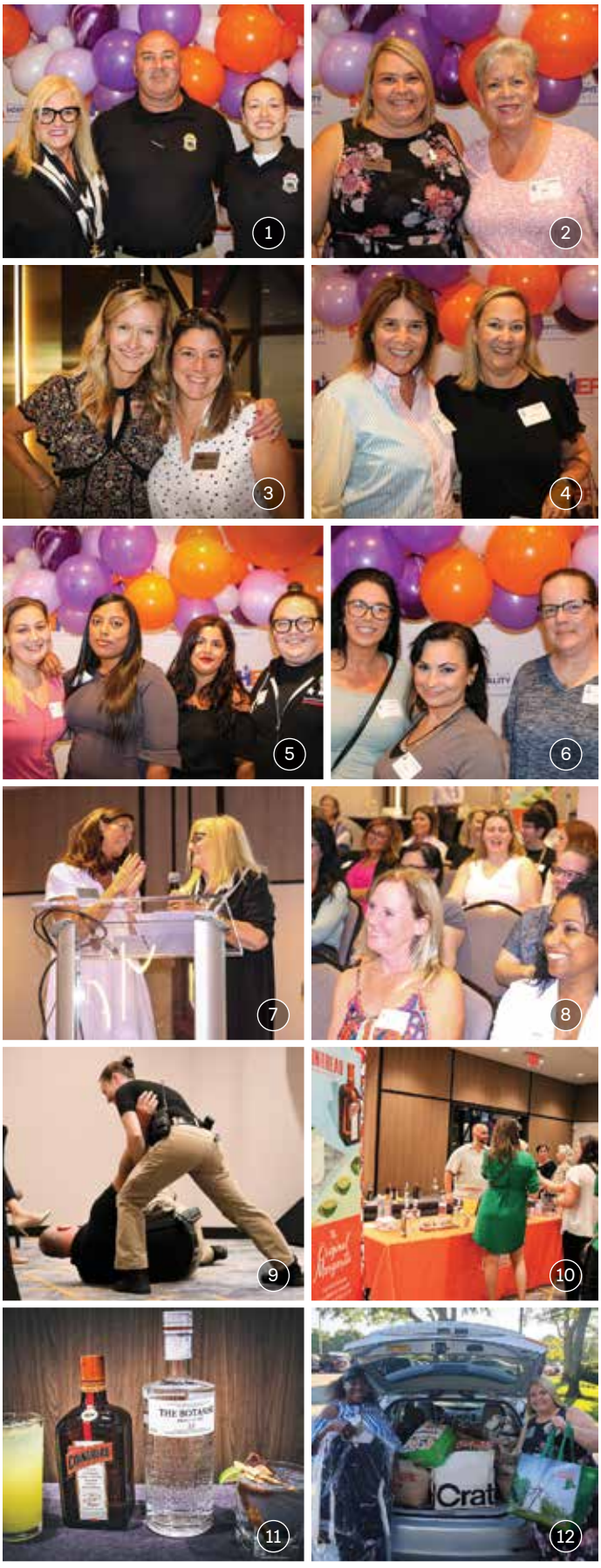

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Photos by Laura Widness.

MS WALKER TRADE SHOW SHOWCASES SELECTIONS FROM WINEBOW

MS Walker of Rhode Island hosted a trade tasting featuring wines from its Winebow portfolio at Massimo in Providence on Aug. 23. The event began with an educational seminar for MS Walker's sales team, led by Lauren Trivellini, Territory Manager, Winebow Imports, followed by the trade tasting featuring a diverse selection of vintages from Winebow's Heritage Portfolio, which focuses exclusively on the European wines of Winebow Imports. Sales staff poured selections for accounts and trade guests throughout the evening.

1. MS Walker hosted a trade tasting featuring wines from Winebow's Heritage Division Portfolio at Massimo in Providence on Aug. 23.
2. Figuière Méditerranée Rosé and Saint Cosme Little James' Basket Press Sauvignon Viognier.
3. All of MS Walker except where indicated: Vanessa Brown; Matt Supinski; Marc Berry; Marc Guillotte; Rico Lanni; DJ O'Brien; Tom Short; Ryan Lavoie; Dave Montoya; Owen Thorpe; Michael Lester; Gabby Matos; Chris Berry, Winebow Imports; Jaimie Puckett; Peter Morais; Howard Gantz; Melina Catelli; and Lauren Trivellini, Winebow Imports, Heritage Division.
4. Lauren Trivellini, Territory Manager, Winebow Imports, Heritage Division.
5. Castellare di Castellina Chianti Classico, Bolgheri Rosso, Altesino Brunello di Montalcino, Castello di Neive Barbaresco and Damilano Barolo Lecinquevigne.
6. Di Majo Norante Sangiovese, Zenato Alanera Rosso Veronese, Cantele Salice Salentino and Zenato Ripassa Valpolicella Ripasso Superiore.
7. Fat Bastard Pinot Noir, Fat Bastard Cabernet Sauvignon, Saint Cosme Côtes du Rhône and Château de Rouanne Vinsobres.
8. Tiefenbrunner Pinot Grigio on ice.
9. Clean Slate Riesling on ice.
10. Borsao Garnacha Selección, Borsao Tres Picos Garnacha, Bodegas Volver Tarima Hill Old Vines, Bodegas Volver La Mancha Tempranillo and João Portugal Ramos Vila Santa Reserva Red.
11. Guests enjoyed charcuterie and small bites prepared by Massimo's cuisine team.



WOMEN IN HOSPITALITY EVENT CREATES COMMUNITY

The RI Hospitality Association (RIHA) hosted another event in its ongoing Women in Hospitality (WIH) series, this one themed as a self-defense awareness event on Sept. 1 at the Providence Marriott Downtown. In partnership with the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce, RIHA presented a women's self-defense awareness seminar with the Providence Police Department. The demonstration was followed by cocktails featuring The Botanist Gin and Cointreau presented by Rémy Cointreau. Guests went home with a pepper spray keychain, courtesy of event sponsor Cormack Routhier Insurance, Inc. As part of the event, guests donated professional business attire, resulting in an entire truckload for Foster Forward, an East Providence nonprofit with a mission to empower lives impacted by foster care. Each WIH event brings together professionals for networking and community work opportunities.

1. Dale Venturini, President/CEO, Rhode Island Hospitality Association (RIHA) with guest presenters from the Providence Police Department, Lieutenant Michael J. Fallon, Director, Training Bureau and Detective Tracie Miller-Dygon.
2. Heather Singleton, COO, RIHA and Leslie Kosky, Associate Professor, Johnson & Wales University.
3. RIHA's Caroline Bhatia, Director of Membership and Cindy Stepanian, Finance and Administrative Assistant.
4. Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau's Elizabeth Buckley and Christina Phillips.
5. Providence Performing Arts Center's Jillian Robillard, Pamela Halloway, Amanda Motta and Elizabeth Rainone.
6. Bally's Twin River's Mackenzie Monteiro, Melanie Dimauro and Melissa Williams.
7. Elizabeth Catucci, President/CEO, Northern RI Chamber of Commerce and Dale Venturini, President/CEO, RIHA.
8. Kathleen Marshall, Account Executive, Cormack Routhier Insurance, Inc. (front left), Sponsor and guests during the presentation.
9. Lieutenant Michael J. Fallon, Director, Training Bureau and Detective Tracie Miller-Dygon demonstrating self-defense techniques.
10. Michael Loudon, State Manager, Rémy Cointreau showcasing The Botanist Gin and Cointreau brands.
11. Cocktails, including the Gin & Tonic "Fall Edition" and a Pineapple Jalapeño Margarita, made with The Botanist Gin and Cointreau.
12. Bernadette Tavares, Director of Career Pathways, Foster Forward and Heather Singleton, COO, RIHA with donations of professional business attire.

Photos by Katie Kleyla, Rhode Island Hospitality Association.



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GREY SAIL BREWING SUPPORTS CHILDHOOD CANCER RESEARCH

Westerly's Grey Sail Brewing of Rhode Island kicked off its fifth year of partnering with Brewing Funds the Cure to support the National Pediatric Cancer Foundation with the release of Rising Hope Hazy Peach IPA. The beer release party on Sept. 1 began Grey Sail's month-long efforts, where 100% of the proceeds from Rising Hope sales are donated to the foundation. In addition to the release of the IPA, Grey Sail also supported additional charitable events at its brewery and taproom: the Fill the Truck Toy Drive, collecting approved toys for Hasbro Children's Hospital, and a Bald Is Beautiful Haircut Event, where stylists from Bella Vita Salon were on hand to help donate locks or shave for Pediatric Cancer Awareness, with all donations sent to Wigs 4 Kids. In the first two years of the release of Rising Hope, craft brewing partners across the country have raised more than $500,000 for pediatric cancer research. Founded in 2011 by Jennifer and Alan Brinton, Grey Sail Brewing is Rhode Island's southernmost brewery, located in the converted 1920s-era Westerly Macaroni Factory.

1. Grey Sail Brewing of Rhode Island released Rising Hope Hazy Peach IPA, an annual, national collaboration with Brewing Funds the Cure to support the National Pediatric Cancer Foundation, with sales benefiting research efforts.
2. Jennifer Brinton, Co-owner, Grey Sail Brewing, talking about the Brewing Funds the Cure program.



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Photos courtesy of Ocean House.

OCEAN HOUSE HOSTS LABOR DAY BEACH BASH

Award-winning Ocean House in Watch Hill hosted its annual Labor Day Beach Bash on Sept. 2 for a festive and indulgent night set on the venue's private white sand beach. Billed as the "ultimate end-of-summer fête" with a bountiful menu and live music from One Love for guests to dance to under the stars accompanied by the crashing waves of the Atlantic, the event included a New England raw bar, hot and cold buffets, grill stations, assorted miniature desserts and a beach bar. Private beach cabanas were also offered. Brands at the bar included Château d'Esclans The Beach Rosé, Sonoma-Cutrer wines, Johnnie Walker Red Label, Mount Gay Rum, Tanqueray London Dry Gin, Bulleit Bourbon, Sauza Silver Tequila Hacienda, Tito's Handmade Vodka, Narragansett Lager, Bud Light and Grey Sail's Flying Jenny among offerings.

1. Château d'Esclans The Beach Rosé showcased on the white sand beach of Ocean House.
2. A New England raw bar station with shrimp cocktail, oysters, littleneck clams, crab claws and ceviche shooters.
3. Dragana Reljic with Sonoma-Cutrer wines ready for beach table service.
4. Set with the Atlantic Ocean as backdrop, Steven Chronister readies for cocktail service.

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RETAIL REVIEW

Crossroad Liquors

BY **SARA CAPOZZI**







LOCATION

1540 Bulgarmarsh Road
Tiverton, RI



FACTS

Square footage:
5,000

Years in operation:
15

Established in 1995, Crossroad Liquors has been owned by Paresh Patel since 2007. Paresh's nephew, Johnny Patel, runs the store day to day with his partner, Sunil Patel. The family has been in retail for decades: Paresh's parents, Naram and Sangita Patel, owned a few convenience stores in the area in the 1980s and '90s, and Paresh eventually got into the liquor store industry.

Following in his uncle's footsteps, Johnny Patel began his career working for another uncle, Tony Patel, at his Fall River, Massachusetts, store, Royal Liquors. After gaining six years of work experience and product knowledge, Patel became manager at Crossroad Liquors in 2010.

He runs the store with two main priorities, he explained: giving the customers great service and selling products at a fair price. "The service is 100% [the] key," Patel said. "That's the number one priority for business in my store." He also keeps prices low, consistently. "You know how some stores are constantly changing prices, or they might put something on special?" he asked. "I just keep it low prices every day, that way our regular customers can shop every day."

Patel keeps Crossroad's selection interesting for shoppers with a regular rotation of new products. "Anything that seems like it will be the next big thing, we try to carry," he said. "And if it has a good run, we keep carrying it."



Crossroad Liquors' Manager Johnny Patel.

Shoppers also appreciate Patel's guidance when he gives them product recommendations and pairing suggestions. He also doesn't hesitate to do special orders. "Whatever their choices, whatever the customer wants, we can get it for them," he said.

The store offers a diverse and expansive range of whiskies, allocated Scotches and rare bourbons. Awaiting shoppers is a wide selection of craft beer from local and national breweries, plus ready-to-drink items along with seltzer, the "fastest moving category right now," Patel said. Seltzers have been "flying off the shelves this past summer," he said, but with the approach of fall, pumpkin beers and craft beer in general become the most in-demand picks, along with bourbons.

Crossroad Liquors' customer base fluctuates with the seasons. In the summertime, traffic increases with tourists traveling between Little Compton and Tiverton, while in the winter, shoppers tend to be more local. "We get both, but seasonal is always better because you get that extra bump in business," Patel said. In the winter months, the clientele is mainly from Tiverton and the bordering towns of Fall River and Westport, Massachusetts.

Customers enjoy a variety of other perks, including tastings on Friday evenings, a vast cigar selection to pair with their purchases and the store's new private-barrel bourbons through its barrel programs. Patel stays connected with the client base through his Instagram account and the store's Facebook page, where he announces the arrival of new products to keep customers engaged.

Crossroad Liquors continues to find success with its plentiful selection, friendly atmosphere and convenient location. As the store continues to grow, the Patels hope to expand into more locations. ■

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

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NEW PRODUCTS



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1. BATCH 22

Actor Matthew Arkin fell for aquavit on a European film set more than 40 years ago, and that passion has sparked the creation of Batch 22 Classic Gold, an American version of the traditional Scandinavian spirit created with partners Bruce Glassman and Marc Marosi. Instead of anise, fennel, and cumin, ingredients that typically define aquavit, the founders opted for a less overpowering citrus-spice-botanical recipe—fittingly the 22nd iteration—that emphasizes dill and caraway.

SRP: $39.99 per 750-ml bottle
drinkbatch22.com

2. SILVER OAK CELLARS

Family-owned Silver Oak Cellars produces only Cabernet Sauvignon from its Napa Valley and Alexander Valley wineries. Its latest offering, the Silver Oak Alexander Valley Cabernet Sauvignon 2018, is rounded out with 4.2 percent Merlot and one percent Cabernet Franc. Aged in American oak barrels for 18 months after blending, the fruit-forward wine exhibits juicy cassis and pomegranate on the palate.

SRP: $90 per 750-ml bottle
silveroak.com

3. CITADELLE GIN

It was 1996 when Maison Ferrand owner and master blender Alexandre Gabriel introduced Citadelle, the revolutionary French gin marrying 19 botanicals. To celebrate the spirit's 25-year anniversary—and its state-of-the-art distillery that opened in Cognac last year—Gabriel has released Citadelle Gin Juniper Décadence. Aged in small, custom juniper casks, it has a smoky, herbaceous profile rife with juniper, pepper, coconut, and ginger.

SRP: $34.99 per 700-ml bottle
citadellegin.com

4. BREAD & BUTTER WINES

Bread & Butter's roster of everyday wines includes California Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, rosé, and a DOC Italian Prosecco. Its most recent innovation? A crisp, food-friendly Pinot Grigio spun from California grapes by winemaker Linda Trotta.

SRP: $15.99 per 750-ml bottle
breadandbutterwines.com

5. RAGNARÖK RYE

Virginia distillery Catoctin Creek and American heavy metal band GWAR—which also has roots in the state—have teamed up once again for the second edition of Ragnarök Rye, which first made its debut in 2021. The 92-proof whiskey, aged in charred new white oak, sugar maple, and cherry wood barrels, is adorned with label artwork from GWAR's album, The New Dark Ages, and capped in collectible metal die-cast toppers that represent all five band members.

SRP: $99 per 750-ml bottle
ragnarokrye.com

6. LINDEN LEAF

Harmonious bundles of botanical molecules are the backbone of Cambridge, England-based Linden Leaf's 88 Organic Molecular Gin and Singularity Organic Molecular Vodka, now available stateside. The sipping gin comprises 88 flavor molecules from 28 botanicals (20 percent of them fresh) like yuzu, calamansi, grains of paradise, and Aztec sweet herb, while the silky vodka stars an organic, non-GMO mix of wheat, barley, rye, and ancient grains such as spelt.

SRP: $38.88 to $28.99 per 750-ml bottle
shoplindenleaf.com

NEW PRODUCTS



7



8



9



10



11



12

7. RENEGADE RUM

The Caribbean island of Grenada flaunts motley terroirs and Renegade Rum Distillery—from Mark Reynier of Waterford Whisky fame—is putting them front and center with its quartet of Single Farm Origin white rums. Highlighting different cane varieties and distillation styles, the pre-cask collection spans Nursery, from La Calome Valley; Hope, influenced by pyroclastic boulders; and Lake Antoine, one from cane grown on Lower Crater Lake South and the other from Upper Crater Lake South.

SRP: $65 per 700-ml bottle
renegaderum.com

8. HARD ROCK GRAB 'N' GO COCKTAILS

Hard Rock International expands its ready-to-drink portfolio of hard seltzers and classic libations with Grab 'n' Go Cocktails under the license of Stewart's Enterprise Holdings, Inc. First up: breezy, single-serve cans (10% ABV) of Long Island Iced Tea and New Orleans favorite, the Hurricane.

SRP: $2.99 per 19.2-oz cans
hardrock.com

9. WILDERTON

Portland, Oregon-based Wilderton crafts non-alcoholic spirits with raw botanicals from around the globe, including smoky Earthen and bright Lustre. Now, there's the spritz-ready Bittersweet Aperitivo, melding grapefruit, orange blossom, and Italian lemon with sandalwood, gentian, and wormwood. Chardonnay grape juice adds a balanced wine-like jolt of sweetness.

SRP: $34.99 per 750-ml bottle
wildertonfree.com

10. BRISTOW GIN

Bristow Gin, produced at Mississippi's Cathead Distillery, has rolled out a bold seven-year-old Barrel Aged Reserve alongside its one- and four-year-old expressions. One of the oldest barrel-aged gins to hit the market, it is reminiscent of a whiskey, layered with notes of mature oak, caramel, and vanilla.

SRP: $100 per 750-ml bottle
catheaddistillery.com

11. SCOUT WILD

Scout & Cellar, the fast-growing winery founded by Sarah Shadonix, has partnered with Miller Family Wine Company to unveil Scout Wild, a line of wines spawned from grapes grown without toxic pesticides and free of artificial ingredients. The inaugural lineup of California Sauvignon Blanc, rosé, and a red blend—Scout & Cellar's first foray into retail—all embrace the brand's trademark Clean-Crafted Commitment.

SRP: $18.99 per 750-ml bottle
scoutandcellar.com

12. LITTLE BOOK

For "To the Finish," Chapter 6 of Freddie Noe's Little Book Whiskey series, the eighth-generation master distiller of the Fred B. Noe Distillery turned to the kitchen for inspiration. The five complementary liquids Noe combined in the 117.45-proof whiskey take cues from the woods he smokes in the grill for family meals. A five-year-old Kentucky straight bourbon is joined by four-year-old straight malt whiskeys finished with cherry and maple wood staves as well as hickory- and apple wood-smoked barrels.

SRP: $124.99 per 750-ml bottle
littlebookwhiskey.com

BRISTOW PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF ANDREW WELCH

Siena Cucina • Enoteca

5600 Post Road
East Greenwich, RI

The acclaimed Siena Restaurant Group offers two locations featuring authentic Tuscan cuisine, each in a warm and lively atmosphere. The first, from which this month's cocktail feature is showcased, is Siena Cucina • Enoteca, which opened in 2007 in East Greenwich and its second location, Tavola da Siena in Smithfield, opened in 2013. Both locations feature the same award-winning menu with daily dinner specials that showcase local and seasonal flavors. Owner Anthony Tarro, who studied Tuscan cuisine in Bologna with more than 30 years of focus on Italian cuisine, along with a team that includes Corporate Executive Chef Nathaniel Williams and in-house Pastry Chef Patti Banker, creates a palate of flavor to entice and enjoy. General Manager Christine Amorim has studied extensively to create drink options unique to each venue, from seasonal cocktail offerings to curated beer and wine selections. Siena Cucina • Enoteca's award-winning wine menu features offerings from California, France, Italy and beyond, with a monthly wine special carefully chosen to pair with menu items. Amorim and the bar team offer an extensive martini menu and signature mixed cocktails, as well as seasonal sangrias and a "Cocktails for Two" cocktail-to-go program.





The Siena Cucina • Enoteca Bartender Sarah Barry with the Negroni Giocosi cocktail.

Bartender
Sarah Barry

Cocktail
Negroni Giocosi

Ingredients

- 1.5 oz. Aperol
- 1.5 oz. Cocchi Vermouth di Torino
- 1.5 oz. Gin Lane 1751 "Victoria" Pink Gin
- Garnish: orange peel twist

Method: Combine ingredients in a mixing glass. Add ice and stir. Strain into a rocks glass over fresh ice. Garnish with a thick orange peel twist.

"Siena puts a twist on the classic Negroni for its newest drink menu offering," said General Manager Christine Amorim. "The Negroni Giocosi will be slightly sweeter than the classic bitter recipe. Giocosi, which translates to 'playful' in Italian, is the perfect way to describe the atmosphere that our bar provides. What better way to spend an evening than in an environment that is inviting, classy and encourages you to have fun."

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THE SLOW BURN OF AMERICAN SINGLE MALT

AFTER A SIX-YEAR FIGHT FOR OFFICIAL RECOGNITION, IS IT FINALLY AMERICAN SINGLE MALT'S TIME TO SHINE?

BY AMY ZAVATTO

During a fierce blizzard at the bitter end of winter in March 2016, nine American distillers gathered at Binny's Beverage Depot in Chicago to hash out a definition for the nascent category of American single malt whiskey.

"We gave ourselves four hours to discuss what would be figured out in 45 minutes," laughs Matt Hofmann, the master distiller and cofounder of Westland Distillery, a 100 percent single malt producer in Seattle. To him and his cohorts—who that same day also formed the American Single Malt Whiskey Commission (ASMWC)—it was a no brainer. With the abundant availability of barley (thanks, in part, to the growing craft beer industry), the fascinating potential of regional style and climatic influences, and the global thirst for single malt whiskeys, the notion of officially establishing American single malt seemed a shoo-in.

Six years later, the application to make that definition official has finally made it through the door of the Bureau of Trade, Tobacco, and Firearms (TTB), which announced on July 29, 2022 what Hofmann and the other ASMWC founding members have been wait-

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF STRANAHAN'S / WESTLAND DISTILLERY

ing for: An amendment to federal law 27 CFR part 5 to include American single malt whiskey as a distinctive product worthy of its own official standards of identity, codified into U.S. law. At the time of writing, it was in the requisite public comment period.

For producers making American single malt—which grew from a few pioneers of the category in the late '90s and early aughts, like McCarthy's Single Malt from Hood River in Oregon and St. George Spirits in Alameda, California, to over 200 today—it's been a long road just to get to the beginning. But in the crowded U.S. whiskey arena, where bourbon is booming and rye is king, will the few lines added to the current TTB regulations be enough to make the category stand out? Or is it just another novel liquid notion doomed to dissipate like whiskey evaporating into the ether? Hundreds of distillers are gambling on the former—and there's reason to believe they may well be right.

THE NEW (OLD) DEFINITION OF AMERICAN SINGLE MALT

Indeed, Hofmann, along with his former marketing director at Westland, Steve Hawley, and the other distillers at the table on that frigid day years ago—among them, Balcones Distilling in Austin, Texas; Westward Distillery in Portland, Oregon; Few Spirits in Evanston, Illinois; Triple Eight Distillery on Nantucket, Massachusetts; Santa Fe Spirits in Santa Fe, New Mexico; Virginia Distillery Co. in Lovington, Virginia; Headframe Spirits in Butte, Montana; and Copperworks Distilling in Seattle—quickly agreed on the basic tenets to define American single malt.

"As we understood them, and which are enshrined into law in other countries, single malt must be made in one single distillery. It is malt, meaning 100 percent malted barley, and, for our purposes, it's made in America," says Hofmann. "The only thing that's really different from the Scottish definition is we allow use of any type of still, where they use pot still only."

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF WESTLAND DISTILLERY



OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Owen Martin, the head distiller at Stranahan's // Westland Distillery // ABOVE: Matt Hofmann, the cofounder and master distiller at Westland Distillery

So why did it take so long for the TTB to get on board? It wasn't that they weren't amenable or it isn't a good idea; it was more a case of bad timing. Not long before the ASMWC launched, the TTB kicked off a massive, 144-page overhaul of the federal standards of identity for all spirits categories, a huge, time-consuming undertaking in its own right. Add to that an administration change at the highest level and a government shutdown, and, well, American single malt was just going to have to wait in line a little longer than expected.

"I've been flying to D.C. and sitting in front of [the TTB] saying this needs to be a priority for the last six months," says Hawley, who has been president of the ASMWC since its inception. "My sole goal has been to keep it at the top of their priority list." With the overhaul of old regulations sewn up and a new executive order by the Biden administration to encourage more competition in the alcohol space, it seems American single malt's time has come.

HOW AMERICAN DISTILLERS ARE DIFFERENTIATING

The unique character of American single malt, as compared to other country's versions of the same, may be the real muscle in making the category fly. In addition to having ample access to the necessary agricultural resource (barley), distillers embrace a spirit of vive la différence here, pushing to differentiate it even within the confines of its narrow definition.

"I'm excited to see regional diversity. Scotland as a region is only as big as Texas, and the temperature doesn't vary that much. But in the U.S., you'll see regional differences all over the place because the country is huge," says Owen Martin, the head distiller for Stranahan's in Colorado, who has been focused on making single malt since its founding in 2004. "Single malt spirits here allow for embracing regional differences that add a unique character to the category."

Nora Ganley-Roper and Adam Polonski, the owners of Lost Lantern, a Vermont-based independent bottler of craft whiskey, have been keeping an eager eye on American single malt's development and consumer demand for it, slowly but surely adding bottles to their stock. "We think that Balcones in Texas is doing an amazing job of exploring what single malt from a hot and dry climate looks like; it's something not seen anywhere else in the world," says Ganley-Roper. "We also really like what's going on in American single malt in the Southwest, with distillers like Santa Fe Spirits and Whiskey Del Bac in Tucson, which are both independently making single malt smoked with mesquite wood. It's a distinctly regional answer to Scottish peat."



American single malt makers are also wisely using the category's lesser-known status in the U.S. on a broad level to learn from the mistakes of other single malt-producing countries. Creativity and regional style aside, as competition ramps up, legally defining the category means less problems with faux imitators, lawsuits, and headaches down the road. Japan in particular has suffered from lack of a legal definition for its whisky, despite commercial production dating back to the 1920s, and evidence of whisky distilling going back 50 years before that. "Japan has a long history of complications with single malt because they never defined what whisky and malt whisky meant in Japan," says Hawley. As a result, "there are unscrupulous players making and selling fake single malt at a premium."

Meanwhile, the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States has successfully worked to get countries like Japan to officially recognize American whiskey categories, such as bourbon. Up to now, however, Japanese importers wouldn't recognize American single malt. "The response we got from Japanese regulators on American single malt was if you guys don't recognize the category domestically, then we won't recognize it here until you do," says Hawley. Once the standards of identity are accepted, Japan and other countries ripe for exporting will broaden the consumer base for American single malt internationally.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS WITH EDUCATION

American single malt's anonymity to a larger audience isn't just about regulation. It's safe to assume that your average whiskey dabbler doesn't regularly peruse the TTB's multi-page section on spirits regulations, but consumer education is only part of where American single malt's issues lie.

"I've seen American single malt grouped with Scotch whisky and Japanese whisky sections of stores. I've seen American single malt listed on a menu with bourbon and just scattered all over," says Christian Krogstad, the founder of Westward Whiskey, which has been solely focused on making American single malt for a decade. "The consumer piece is hardest, but it's coming along because the trade is finally getting behind American single malt. More and more, you're seeing liquor stores and bars with an American single malt section. Total Wine, for example, is going to do an experiment in 20 stores creating an American single malt section. It's happening! And it's getting shelf space."

Another issue American single malt is slowly overcoming is that of barrel age. "Name more than one or two American single malts that are over 10 years old. Age is a big factor; despite [the fact] that it doesn't necessarily mean quality, consumers think that way," says Colton Weinstein, the cofounder of roving distilling outfit Liba Spirits, who also dabbled in single malt expressions while the head distiller for Corsair. Current releases of American single malts with more than a decade of age include Triple Eight Distillery's American single malt, the Notch, with 12- and 15-year-old releases available, and Stranahan's, which began releasing Mountain Angle, its 10-year-old single malt, in 2020. Others are likely to follow.

ABOVE: Lost Lantern Whiskey // BELOW: Aged whiskey samples of Westward Whiskey



BIG BRAND SUPPORT IS THE NEXT STEP

"Perhaps the larger issue is the big guys haven't released any, so there are no vast marketing campaigns to educate consumers about the category," says Weinstein. "So much money is behind bourbon as a category, but you don't see that with American single malt yet."

This is quietly changing. Jack Daniels recently announced the release of a trio of bottled-in-bond whiskeys; one, the Triple Mash, contains 20 percent single malt Tennessee whiskey in the mix. Hot on its heels is its limited-edition release, a 100 percent American single malt finished in Oloroso sherry casks, which will hit the shelves this fall. And while Beam-Suntory would not comment on rumors to the same effect, it seems there may well be a Beam single malt in the works as well.

With bigger brands on board, that means more pressure to educate and define American single malt from a retail and on-premise perspective—something American single malt producers have been working at for a long time. The establishment of official standards of identity, when passed, means the trade will, at last, have clear product identification from which to position and promote it.

"To some extent, you have to see some clear, sustained profitability. I don't think it's right around the corner that big companies will buy up or create their own single malt, but in the long run I can see that, and it's where the TTB designation will help," says Clay Risen, a whiskey expert and author. "If the public recognizes it as a category, then they'll begin to ask for it, for sure. It will be par for the course." ■

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MEET THE NEW INDEPENDENT WHISKEY BOTTLERS

THESE U.S. PRODUCERS ARE ADAPTING A SCOTTISH PRACTICE TO MAKE WHISKEYS BY BLENDING BARRELS FROM SELECT CRAFT DISTILLERS

BY ROGER MORRIS

A new breed of American whiskey producer is copying a trusted page from Scotland's book of whisky-crafting traditions—they blend and bottle whiskeys that someone else has distilled.

Called independent bottlers, they search out the best and oldest barrels from both craft distillers and major producers across the U.S. and Canada, purchase them, and then create innovative blends, usually in small batches of a few hundred bottles. Some of these blends are made to become standard, repeatable brands, while others are simply one-off bottlings. And not all purchased barrels are bound for blending.

"We mainly do blends, but occasionally we will find a barrel that is particularly interesting—something unique—and earmark it to sell as a single barrel," says Joe Beatrice, the founder of Bar-

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF LOST LANTERN





rell Craft Spirits *[sic]*, an "independent blender" in Louisville, the heart of bourbon country.

In the way they are assembled, these new blended American whiskeys are similar to the Scotch blended malt whiskies, such as Johnnie Walker or Chivas Regal, which were dominant during the late 20th century before single malts began gaining market share.

Dave Schmier, the founder of Proof and Wood in New Canaan, Connecticut, says the practice of independent bottling also has historical roots in the U.S. "Before Prohibition, most of the bottlers along Whiskey Row in Louisville were not distillers—they bought barrels and blended them," he says.

A NEW ERA OF INDEPENDENT BOTTLER

When Vermont-based independent bottler Lost Lantern released its first vatted whiskey in 2020, it was a blend of barrels from six craft distillers—Balcones in Austin, Texas; Copperworks in Seattle; Santa Fe Spirits in Santa Fe, New Mexico; Triple Eight Distillery on Nantucket, Massachusetts; Westward Whiskey in Portland, Oregon; and Virginia Distillery Co. in Lovington, Virginia. "Our process is to first visit a promising distillery and choose barrels we like and take samples from them," says Adam Polonski, the cofounder of Lost Lantern. "When we get the samples home, we taste them again, then buy the barrels we want for blending." Because of their growing reputation and the costs involved, Lost Lantern's blended whiskeys often sell for more than $100 a bottle.

"Before Prohibition, most of the bottlers along Whiskey Row in Louisville were not distillers—they bought barrels and blended them."

– Dave Schmier, Proof and Wood

Independent bottlers also make an important semantic distinction between "blended whiskeys" and "whiskey blends." "A whiskey blend may legally have neutral spirits [unflavored alcohol] in it, while by blended whiskeys, we mean the same as blended malts with no neutral spirits," Beatrice explains.

Barrell Craft was one of the first of the new breed of indies. "I got the idea to make whiskey without going to the expense of building a distillery in 2012, and it took me more than a year to put things together," says Beatrice, a former internet entrepreneur. "We sold our first case in 2014." Today, he produces more than a million bottles annually, including blends finished in previously used barrels housing everything from pear brandy to sherry.

Lost Lantern took a similar path but, Polonski maintains, they had an added motivation. Polonski, a trade journalist, formed Lost Lantern with Nora Ganley-Roper because "there are so many really great craft producers out there who only sell locally," he says. "Lost Lantern can help give them national exposure," either by using their whiskeys in blends or selling single barrels.

Giving credit where credit is due to craft distillery partners is important, says Blake Riber, a whiskey blogger who founded Seelbach's in 2018 to sell online whiskeys made by both craft producers and independent bottlers—whom he calls "blenders." "Blenders are beginning to get some respect," he says, citing the practice some years ago for some distillers and bottlers to fake or not reveal their sources. "But today, blenders like Lost Lantern and Pursuit are very transparent in telling who distilled their whiskey."

Pursuit Spirits was founded in 2018 by hosts of the *Bourbon Pursuit* whiskey podcast, Ryan Cecil and Kenny Coleman, to bottle and sell single barrels from craft distillers to their built-in audience of whiskey lovers. But because a barrel may

OPPOSITE: Nora Ganley-Roper and Adam Polonski of Lost Lantern // ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Joe Beatrice of Barrell Craft Spirits // Kenny Coleman of Pursuit Spirits

PHOTO COURTESY OF BARRELL CRAFT / PHOTO COURTESY OF PURSUIT SPIRITS



"I got the idea to make whiskey without going to the expense of building a distillery in 2012, and it took me more than a year to put things together."

– Joe Beatrice, Barrell Craft Spirits

produce around 200 bottles or less, "A single barrel isn't scalable," Coleman notes. A blender, on the other hand, can produce hundreds of bottles by combining barrels, so Pursuit began blending as well.

Although independent bottlers don't distill whiskey, Beatrice says there is an art in blending it. Like others, he has built up a library of barrels, and he and his team "sit down and 'whiteboard' what we want in a blend, then we have lots of trials in the laboratory before coming up with what we will blend." But rather than dumping everything into the 6,000-gallon blending tank that Barrell Craft uses, they first assemble less than half according to formula, then slowly build up the rest in 10 percent increments, adjusting by taste as they go along.

EXPANDING A CRAFT DISTILLER'S NETWORK

Marketing strategies of the independents vary. Pursuit, Coleman says, originally planned to be "totally digital" in selling directly to podcast "patrons," but now also has sales through distributors. Lost Lantern put together an extensive retail network. "We don't actually sell directly to consumers, but we partner with online-focused retailers that, between them, can ship to around 40 states," says Polonski. A minority of independent bottles are sold through brick-and-mortar retailers.

So, what's in it for the craft distillers? Cash-strapped producers may need this upfront money. But Herman Mihalich, the founder and distiller at highly-rated Dad's Hat near Philadelphia, points out he can make more money bottling the barrel himself than by selling the same barrel to a blender.



ABOVE TOP: Dad's Hat Distillery // ABOVE: Herman Mihalich of Dad's Hat Distillery

However, like most craft distilleries, he sees an upside. "Lost Lantern contacted me last fall," says Mihalich, "and when they tasted barrels, they talked me into selling them two—one that was finished in a vermouth cask, which isn't all that common." He transferred the two barrels via food-grade containers to Lost Lantern to bottle, not as blends but as single barrels.

"I consider it a win-win situation," he adds. "I've been in the business 10 years, but this is still good publicity." Most of the handful of independent bottlers currently operating do extensive online promotion, and Mihalich took part in a virtual media presentation featuring his two barrels on Lost Lantern labels—188 bottles of Lost Lantern Dad's Hat rye for $90 per bottle and 119 bottles of Dad's Hat vermouth-finish rye for $120 each.

"Today's consumers are no longer scared of the idea of buying blended whiskey," concludes Schmier. "Now, they are increasingly asking us, 'What's next?'" ■

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF DAD'S HAT

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CESARI'S INNOVATIVE SPIRIT TAKES LIQUID FORM WITH JUSTO, A WINE THAT SHOWCASES THE ELUSIVE INTERSECTION OF CONCENTRATION AND LIGHTNESS

In Verona, a region where wines range from ethereal and crisp to powerfully rich, Cesari's Justo manages to land at the elusive intersection of concentration and lightness. Combining elements of Amarone with stainless steel fermentation and a focus on freshness, the wine has an ideal tension on the palate—exactly as its name suggests.

A combination of the English word *just* and the Italian word *giusto*, meaning right, Justo is an homage to finding Goldilocks-esque balance in the glass and loosely translates to "just right."

It's no surprise that the Cesari clan has mastered combining the rich, dense characteristics of Veronese reds with an uncommon vein of brightness: The family has been making wine in the region since 1936, when Gerardo Cesari set out to craft an Amarone to rival the world's best reds. Since that time, successive generations of Cesaris have helped the estate acquire prime vineyards and maintain the tradition of high-quality production. Cesari was one of the first Italian wines to be exported to five continents, and today the brand retains its strong global following—while utilizing over 100 hectares of pristine vineyards to keep elevating the estate's legacy.





Justo itself fuses regional winemaking traditions with an innovative edge, blending the native Corvina grape with Merlot to give the wine its "just right" texture. Harvested together in September, the grapes are dried in the traditional *apassimento* style for 20 days. This relatively short drying period concentrates their sugars and aromatic nuances to optimal levels, while maintaining the grapes' inherent freshness. Then, the grapes are fermented on their skins for 15 days before aging exclusively in stainless steel. The process serves to generate balance between lightness and concentration, resulting in a red wine with pure red fruit flavors that radiate from the glass. Its rare equilibrium likewise makes Justo a consistent crowd pleaser among both buyers and consumers.

Cesari has always been a leader in northern Italy. From aging their wines well beyond DOCG requirements to embracing single-vineyard wines before the trend was in vogue, the winery's forward-thinking energy is palpable. Today, Cesari is maintaining their commitment to excellence and innovation by embracing technology and sustainability across their vineyards and two wineries. With Justo, their innovative spirit takes form in a wine that's agile yet concentrated, and vibrantly reflects its home terroir. ■

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PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF CESARI JUSTO

JUST + GIUSTO = **JÙSTO**

[dʒʌst] + [giù_stò] = [dʒù_stò]

English: (adj) exactly *Italian: (adj) right or correct* = *"Just Right"*

JÙSTO

The name Justo comes from a combination of the English word Just and the Italian word Giusto – meaning Right. This wine is made in an appassimento style – the grapes are dried for a short period of time (about 20 days) thereby creating a wine that is "just right".





CESARI

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WHISKEY: WHAT'S NEW



FIELD TRIP

Islay's idyllic, white-sand Traigh Bhan beach is the inspiration behind the 92.4-proof Batch Four of **Ardbeg's** Traigh Bhan 19 Year Old, part of the brand's permanent portfolio. The latest installment of the single malt Scotch whisky, aged in a higher proportion of Oloroso sherry casks than earlier releases, has a spicy, herbal quality, layered with wood smoke, aniseed, and menthol.

SRP: $299.99 per 750-ml bottle

PACIFIC NORTHWEST TOUCH

Copperworks Distilling Company in Seattle, Washington, has simultaneously released two new, small-batch, 100-proof American single malt whiskeys spun from 100 percent malted barley and twice-distilled in Scottish copper pot stills. Release 044 marries various casks and unleashes citrus peel and pipe tobacco; Release 045, with its notes of honey and fig, highlights whiskey made from Fritz barley grown on a single farm in the Skagit Valley, balanced with a touch of another aged in a Manzanilla sherry cask for 60 months.



SRP: $69.99 per 750-ml bottle



AQUATIC JOURNEY

Trey Zoeller, the zany founder of **Jefferson's Bourbon**, once again illuminates the alchemy of aging whiskey on a boat with the 90-proof Voyage 29 Wheated. The newest addition to the Jefferson's Ocean: Aged at Sea collection, these casks of wheated bourbon traversed the world on a vessel, making their way from Savannah to the Indian Ocean and across the Pacific. Exposure to extreme heat and salty air elicits rich notes of vanilla and toasted caramel.

SRP: $79.99 per 750-ml bottle

THE FIFTH

Brown-Forman revived its **King of Kentucky** whiskey label in 2018, and to celebrate the five-year anniversary of the straight bourbon, has rolled out two new single-barrel expressions. The 130.6-proof 15-year-old bourbon, available in Kentucky, Illinois, and Ohio, has notes of dried fruit and sorghum, while the extremely limited-edition 18-year-old, found only in the Kentucky market, tastes of molasses and dark tea.

SRP: $249.99 (15-year-old) and $349.99 (18-year-old) per 750-ml bottle





POLITICALLY CHARGED

With midterm elections around the bend, Caskshare's U.S. debut of The Big Lie is well-timed. An irreverent reference to Donald Trump, the limited-edition bourbon is a follow-up to The Big Lie Scotch whisky, the U.K.'s ode to Boris Johnson, the recently resigned British prime minister. Although production details—including where the 95-proof whiskey was distilled, how long it was matured for, and in which type of casks—are playfully shrouded in mystery, the bottle is undoubtedly a cultural keepsake.

SRP: $80 per 750-ml bottle



GATHER AROUND

High West's Campfire is back for the season, melding Scotch, bourbon, and rye whiskeys aged between four and 15 years. The return of the 92-proof spirit, which fittingly culminates in a toasted marshmallow finish, coincides with the Park City, Utah, distillery's launch of Protect the West. This initiative will dedicate one million dollars to organizations fighting wildfires and climate change as well as conserving wildlife. First up: High West's $50,000 donation to the Wildland Firefighter Foundation and matching consumer donations of up to an additional $50,000.

SRP: $79.99 per 750-ml bottle

JUST PEACHY

Conjuring year-round summertime vibes, sweet, bright peach is the newest flavor from **Black Velvet**. Like its apple and toasted caramel iterations, the 70-proof Canadian whisky, made in Alberta from a blend of grains, works well in cocktails such as the breezy Canadian Peach Tea and Peach Lemonade Smash.

SRP: $10.99 per 750-ml bottle



GOING BANANAS



Ultimate Fighting Championship president Dana White is the cofounder of **Howler Head**, a versatile, natural banana-flavored Kentucky straight bourbon whiskey that satisfies in shot form as much as it does in a Manhattan. Crafted by Green River Distilling Co.'s master distiller, Jacob Call, the 80-proof spirit is distilled in a century-old, all-copper column still and aged for two years in American white oak casks toasted with #4 alligator char.

SRP: $29.99 per 750-ml bottle



BROAD APPEAL

Bill Karlson and John O'Mara founded **KO Distilling** in Manassas, Virginia, in 2013. Nearly a decade later, the entrepreneurs are ramping up distribution of their cast-strength (126-proof) Bare Knuckle High Rye Bourbon and four-year-old Distiller's Reserve bottled-in-bond straight bourbon and rye whiskeys (100-proof). After recent expansions into Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Minnesota, KO plans to enter the Missouri and Michigan markets later this year.

SRP: $69.99 to $74.99 per 750-ml bottle

EASY DRINKING

Slow & Low, from The Cooper Spirits Company, diversifies its ready-to-drink lineup of Rock & Rye and Coffee Old-Fashioned with a duo of breezy, new, 20-proof canned libations. Developed by Chad Solomon, the director of innovation, and Christy Pope, the senior brand manager, the two cocktails are Whiskey Sunshine, a riff on the Whiskey Collins that bolsters straight rye whiskey with lemon, yuzu, sweet orange, and Oro Blanco grapefruit, and the mule-like Whiskey Buck that pairs rye with real lemon juice and ginger beer.

SRP: $19.99 per four-pack of 200-ml cans







THE RETAILER'S GUIDE TO STORE DESIGN

HOW WINE AND SPIRITS RETAILERS CAN MAXIMIZE SPACE AND CRAFT AN AESTHETIC THAT FITS THEIR BRAND

BY ALIA AKKAM

When Ivy Mix, Conor McKee, and Piper Kristensen signed the lease for Fiasco! Wine and Spirits in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn, New York, the space "was a giant red box—not at all inviting," as Mix puts it. The ambitious proprietors handled the demolition themselves, ripping down drywall and unearthing swathes of alluring brick.

"I think we got pretty lucky," admits McKee, noting the prime "corner spot with lots of indirect sunlight and a barn full of retail-ready furniture from Ivy's mom." Its size is also a boon, he adds: "You can walk in with a stroller, your dog, a backpack, or all three, and not feel like you're going to knock everything over."

The smart design of a wine and spirits shop—equal parts welcoming, visually striking, and functional—is as crucial as the inventory, solidifying a brand's distinct identity while providing repeat customers with an attractive, efficient layout. Beverage Media spoke with a few retailers about their own successful approaches to design.

CAPTURING A SHOP'S PERSONALITY

Beyond selling bottles, the goal for the team at Fiasco! was to "serve as a beacon in the community," says Mix, and the design reflects that. "The space is big with a lot of light, which is quite different from the shoebox stores you see frequently in New York City," she says. "We have a large book collection and encourage people to come and sit on benches in our windows and read up." Between the rugs, wood tables, and presence of Monty, McKee's

PHOTOGRAPH BY ROB CULPEPPER





dog, “it really feels like you're at someone's home that happens to have a lot of booze,” McKee adds.

Brandon Loper, the co-owner of Golden Age Wine in Mountain Brook, Alabama, outside of Birmingham, also desired a transporting vibe to complement the James Beard-nominated shop and wine bar’s minimal intervention wines, and tapped his wife Amanda, a principal at the local office of David Baker Architects, to elicit one. “It's such a nice space to work and play,” he says. “We used reclaimed oak from a local cast-iron pipe company on the ceilings to connect to wine barrels and a concrete bar top that mimics one of our favorite fermentation vessels.”

BLURRING THE LINES

In many states, melding the on- and off-premise sectors is legal, but that combination poses logistical challenges that can be solved by savvy design. Consider Cork Wine Bar & Market in Washington, D.C., which expanded into Spring Valley in the northwest part of the capital in 2021. Located inside Pizzeria Paradiso (both spaces were designed by local firm Gronning Architects), it stands out from the restaurant with a white and gray color scheme that emphasizes the wine.

Likewise, in Houston, Goodnight Hospitality partnered with local architects Curtis & Windham and Studio Robert McKinley in New York on the design of Montrose Cheese & Wine. June Rodil, MS and Goodnight Hospitality partner and CEO, says that the retail-wine bar hybrid can sometimes be confusing for visitors, “so it was important for the initial impact of the space to be clear about what we can do and what we offer. Our philosophy is, if it’s not on the floor, people can’t buy it, so we try our hardest to have everything we can for guests to see.” An upside to the mere 700 available square feet? Views of the entire stock from practically any vantage point.

COPY MATTERS

The shelf talker is a handy, enlightening sales tool, but it can also reinforce design aesthetics. Orange Glou, a shop in Manhattan’s Lower East Side, specializes in orange wines, and founder Doreen Winkler’s vision for the design is complementary, mixing natural wood and white with bursts of orange neon. Likewise, Winkler adorns all bottles with orange tags bearing handwritten tasting notes and pairings. At Golden Age Wine, shelf talkers display just the producer, region, variety, and price via a slot designed by Loper’s wife that deftly integrates into the shelving. “We wanted to encourage customers to engage us, so we purposely do not have huge signs pointing to different sections or stacks highlighting wines on sale,” says Loper.

Knowledgeable staff members are also a draw at Montrose Cheese & Wine. “We knew we wanted to have a human experience, and with so little space, it would almost be awkward not to have a conversation and rely heavily on shelf talkers,” says Rodil.

But Diane Gross, the owner of Cork Wine Bar & Market, eager to help demystify wine, set up the store so that “consumers can explore without having to ask for help, especially if they don't want to,” she says. “Shelf talkers tell you what you are getting.”

Shelf talkers dreamed up by McKee are a playful art form that elevate the friendly neighborhood feel of Fiasco!. “He has a snappy wit that gives you a vivid idea of how a bottle will taste,” says Mix.

ORGANIZATION IS A PRIORITY

Rodil’s desire that customers see as many bottles as possible is a good starting point for the layout, “however, we have to be artful about how it's set up to maximize space and flow,” she says. For example, a feature wall puts the spotlight on seasonal wine and current allocations, and the top shelf is always stocked with June’s Rosé, “our number-one seller, so it means our regulars always go to it and naturally look through the featured selections,” Rodil elaborates. “It’s purposely placed that way so we don’t have stagnant features and can change our theme at least once a month.” More expensive selections are found in the back of the shop and large-format bottles, she adds, are placed at the very top “to give height to everything and the illusion of a bigger space.”

Winkler takes a different approach at Orange Glou, where her offerings are intentionally tightly edited. “Rather than being hit by hundreds of wines when you walk in, you can really take in what you see,” she points out. There is also a display devoted to the O.G. Wine Club, the precursor to the brick-and-mortar store, and a small fridge in front that showcases several cans. During the summer, this display of portable

OPPOSITE: Golden Age Wine in Mountain Brook, Alabama
ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Montrose Cheese & Wine in Houston, Texas // Cork Wine Bar & Market in Washington, D.C.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JULIE SOEFER / PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF CORK WINE BAR AND MARKET



Piquette wines came in handy for last-minute picnics and beach excursions, but Winkler says most customers seek out the bottles that line her plant-bedecked floating shelves, which required a design hack to install on a brick wall. "A special bracket had to be created to hold all this weight. We found something slim and light to use so it still looks great," says Winkler.

When it comes to organization of the wine categories themselves, strategies differ wildly—but should also be thought out. At Fiasco!, the wines are arranged "a bit like a wine list, but in a grid formation, divvied up by white, skin contact, rosé, red, sparkling, and then broken down left to right by geography and bottom to top by price," says McKee.

Inside the shotgun-style Golden Age Wine, red wines are laid out on the right side of the wall by region, grape variety, and body; everything else, from rosé and pét-nat to white Burgundy and fortified wines, is on the left. Old World wines get the lion's share of counter space at Cork Wine Bar & Market, categorized by region, but there are also special displays singling out the likes of New World picks and off-season rosé.

"Our back-end storage mirrors, as much as possible, our front-facing shelves so keeping products on the floor is easy to manage. Every nook and cranny is used."

– June Rodil, MS, Goodnight Hospitality

AMPLIFYING SPACE

For many big city shops, space is limited, but Winkler knew from the outset that she wanted Orange Glou to contain a dedicated storage section in the back for shipping materials and inventory and built the space into the shop's original design. For the Fiasco! owners, creating the back-of-house operations was a more spontaneous process; the discovery of arched doors in the basement prompted them to hire a contractor who used the doors to subdivide the once sprawling room to create an office in the back. Now, they are using it to help assemble products for the Fiasco! wine club, cocktail kits, and collaborative packages with the podcast *Ask Ronna*.

Short on space at Montrose Cheese & Wine, Rodil notes that high-volume or soon-to-retail bottles are case-stacked on dunnage racks and current releases are broken out of cases and stored on Lockwood shelves. "Our back-end storage mirrors, as much as possible, our front-facing shelves so keeping products on the floor is easy to manage. Every nook and cranny is used," she says.

Another pivotal part of any wine and spirits retail operation is its cold storage facilities. Cellars and fridges are fixtures, but how they are utilized is also key. Montrose Cheese & Wine stashes popular purchases in two upright coolers at the back of the store and a Wine Well cooling unit is reserved for more expensive or room temperature bottles in need of a quick chill. Most of Orange Glou's chilled wines are housed in an on-brand big orange Smeg.



ROOM FOR EXTRAS

Private tastings unfold in the newly opened Champagne room at Golden Age Wine, Thursday night tastings draw crowds at Fiasco!, and it's not uncommon for Montrose Cheese & Wine to throw parties with DJs and dueling raclette machines. With only 10 stools at the bar, however, Rodil and her team transformed a small breezeway between the building and the one next door into a bustling small patio for company happy hours and classes.

Along with demarcating the shop into retail and storage, Winkler was adamant there be a third zone for private events, classes, and weekly tastings at Orange Glou. "I was very keen on a tasting room, as I do not like the idea of just pulling up a table in the middle of the room," she explains, "or worse, a barrel." ■

ABOVE, LEFT TO RIGHT: Shelf talkers at Fiasco! Wine and Spirits in Brooklyn // O.G. Wine Club display at Orange Glou in New York

PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF FIASCO! / PHOTOGRAPH BY NINA SCHOLL

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