



10TH ANNIVERSARY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON'S DISTILLERY RECONSTRUCTION

TOP DISTILLERS GATHER AT
MOUNT VERNON TO CRAFT
ANNIVERSARY RYE WHISKEY



Distillers from across the country recently fired up the stills at George Washington's Distillery to collaborate on a special rye whiskey in honor of the 10th anniversary of the historic distillery's reconstruction.



THE GEORGE WASHINGTON DISTILLERY RECONSTRUCTION

In 1797, George Washington's farm manager, James Anderson, convinced his employer that producing whiskey made from corn and rye grown on the estate would be a natural complement to his milling business. Washington was initially skeptical but soon granted permission to build the 2,250-square-foot distillery, making it among the largest whiskey distilleries in early America. By 1799, Washington produced 11,000 gallons of whiskey, worth the then-substantial sum of \$7,500. The distillery ceased operating in 1814 when the building burned.

Beginning in 2000, with a \$2.1 million grant from the Distilled Spirits Council and the Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America, Mount Vernon began the excavation and restoration of the distillery.

Steven T. Bashore, Director of Historic Trades at George Washington's Mount Vernon, added, "The reconstruction of George Washington's Whiskey Distillery was completed in 2007 by our team of skilled crafts-

men. Over the last decade we have had the opportunity to work with many talented distillers to create a variety of spirits using 18th-century methods. We are honored to once again collaborate with these masters on a special distillation. They have taught our team so much about producing fine whiskies and brandies."

RYE WHISKEY CATEGORY HAS GROWN RAPIDLY SINCE THE DISTILLERY RE-OPENING

Since 2009, rye whiskey volumes have grown 778 percent from 88,000 cases to nearly 775,000 in 2016. In value terms, that translates into a 900 percent jump in revenue from slightly more than \$15 million in supplier revenues in 2009 to nearly \$160 million in 2016. The Council projects rye whiskey growth to continue in the double digits through 2017 fueled by large suppliers such as Bulleit, Jim Beam and Wild Turkey, as well as many small producers that have sprung up since the reconstruction of George Washington's Distillery.

The reconstruction of George Washington's Whiskey Distillery was completed in 2007 by a team of very historically-skilled craftsmen. Over the last decade, Steven T. Bashore (Director of Historic Trades at George Washington's Mount Vernon) has worked with many talented distillers to create a variety of spirits using 18th-century methods.

"American rye whiskey is retaking its rightful place among the world's great distilled spirits, a place that was lost to Prohibition," said Distilled Spirits Council President and CEO Kraig R. Naasz. "The growth of rye whiskey has also benefitted American farmers, and underscores what George Washington knew, that producing distilled spirits is the essence of value-added agriculture."

In addition, at the request of the Council, the United States International Trade Commission (USITC) recently established a new export code for U.S. exports of bottled rye whiskey, a recognition of the re-emergence of American Rye Whiskey as a notable spirit not only in the United States but also abroad. The new export code will allow the U.S. government to track exports of "American Rye Whiskey," similar to how Bourbon exports are treated.

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TOP DISTILLERS GATHER AT MOUNT VERNON TO CRAFT ANNIVERSARY RYE WHISKEY



FRED NOE, JIM BEAM MASTER DISTILLER; STEVE BASHORE, DIRECTOR OF HISTORIC TRADES AT GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOUNT VERNON; AND ROBERT SHENK, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF VISITOR ENGAGEMENT AT GEORGE WASHINGTON'S MOUNT VERNON; LISTEN AS DISTILLED SPIRITS COUNCIL PRESIDENT AND CEO KRAIG R. NAASZ ADDRESSES ATTENDEES AT THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE GEORGE WASHINGTON'S DISTILLERY RECONSTRUCTION EVENT.

The event featured top American whiskey distillers, including:

Fred Noe, Jim Beam (KY)
Elizabeth McCall, Woodford Reserve (KY)
Wes and Kyle Henderson, Angel's Envy (KY)
Bruce Russell, Wild Turkey (KY)
Ted Huber, Starlight Distillery (IN)
Brett Carlile, Woodinville (WA)
Becky Harris, Catoctin Creek (VA)
Matt Hofmann, Westland Distillery (WA)
Gordon Working, MGP (IN)
Ewan Morgan, Diageo
Dave Pickerell, Hillrock/WhistlePig (NY/VT)
Steve Bashore, George Washington's Distillery (VA).

All the distillers involved in the collaborative effort signed the barrel the special 10th anniversary whiskey will be resting in.

PRODUCING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY AMERICAN RYE WHISKEY

The 10th Anniversary American Rye Whiskey distilling project was a two-day event sponsored by the Distilled Spirits Council and George Washington's Mount Vernon.

"George Washington was not only the father of our nation, but also the father of craft distilling," said Naasz. "Since the distillery re-opened to the public in 2007, more than 400,000 guests from around the world have visited the Distillery and Gristmill site. Preserving this special site, has shed light on the important role of distilling in our nation's history and has contributed to the revival of American rye whiskey."

Robert Shenk, Senior Vice President of Visitor Engagement at George Washington's Mount Vernon, said, "Most people know Washington the general and Washington our first president. But many more are still learning about Washington the Distiller. It is here, in this working distillery, that we can best share the surprising story of Washington the successful entrepreneur with all of our guests." ■

