Beverage Journal
MARCH 2019
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Is There An Impact on Beverage Alcohol Sales From The Legalization of Recreational Marijuana?

According to a new Distilled Spirits Council study, “there is no impact on spirits sales from legalized recreational marijuana.” Distilled spirits sales have not been negatively impacted in the three states that have had legalized recreational marijuana retail sales the longest, according to the study.

This new in-depth analysis, utilizing state-level alcohol tax receipts and actual alcohol shipment data, examined per capita alcohol sales in Colorado, Washington state and Oregon for the two years prior to recreational marijuana legalization and up to 3-4 years post-legalization.

“Simply put, the data show there has been no impact on spirits sales from recreational marijuana legalization,” said Distilled Spirits Council Chief Economist David Ozgo, noting that examining tax data and actual shipments provides the most accurate insight into what is happening in the marketplace.

“We now have four years of retail recreational marijuana sales history in Colorado and Washington state, and three years in Oregon, and each of these markets remain robust for spirits sales,” Ozgo added. He also noted that overall alcohol sales mirror national trends and there is no pattern of declining spirits sales in any of the markets analyzed.

“We did this study because there is a lot of misinformation circulating about the impact of recreational marijuana legalization on distilled spirits and the wider alcohol market,” Ozgo said.

The analysis shows that in the three states, per capita spirits sales increased between 3.6 to 7.6 percent since recreational marijuana legalization went into effect. (Colorado up 7.6 percent; Washington state up 5.4 percent; and, Oregon up 3.6 percent).

Additionally, there was no evidence that legal recreational marijuana has impacted total per capita alcohol sales. According to the data:

- In the three states, per capita beer sales declined between -2.3 to -3.6 percent, but Ozgo noted this is consistent with the national trend in beer sales and is not isolated to just those states that have legalized marijuana sales. (Colorado down -3.6 percent; Washington state down -2.3 percent; and, Oregon down -3.6 percent);
- In the three states, per capita wine sales were mixed. (Colorado up 3.2 percent; Washington state down -3.1 percent; and, Oregon up 0.7 percent);
- In the three states, per capita total beverage alcohol sales (spirits, wine and beer) were roughly flat. These results are consistent with the national trend. (Colorado up 1.7 percent; Washington state down -0.2 percent; and, Oregon down -0.5 percent)

While the Distilled Spirits Council has taken no position on whether states should legalize recreational use of marijuana, it has established marijuana policy principles that it urges state officials to consider if they pursue legalization of the product.

“If states contemplate marijuana legalization, we urge lawmakers to ensure they fully consider comparable taxes and regulation, strong road safety measures and social responsibility standards when they examine the issue,” said Distilled Spirits Council President & CEO Chris Swonger. “The spirits industry has long been a leader in traffic safety and personal responsibility through the Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, and we are proud of the historic downward trends in both underage drinking and drunk driving.”

For more info visit www.distilledspirits.org.

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1. **GLENMORANGIE ‘ALLTA’**
Marking the 10th anniversary of their Private Edition series, Glenmorangie Allta is the first single malt whisky made using wild yeast growing on the distillery’s own barley. Inspired by a story told by the late writer Michael Jackson, Glenmorangie’s Dr. Bill Lumsden used samples of Cadboll barley grown near the Glenmorangie distillery to cultivate yeasts used in fermentation. Once distilled, the whisky rested in ex-bourbon barrels, mostly second-fill, to highlight the fruity character given by the yeast. 102.4 proof.

**SRP:** $99


2. **GREENHOOK GINSMITHS GIN & TONIC CANS**
Cans continue to crop up in different sectors. This RTD Gin & Tonic was inspired by a distiller’s concern about the quality and consistency of mixed drinks. Their new canned G&T is made using proprietary tonic water (with real quinine), citrus flavors, cane sugar and their own Greenhook Ginsmiths Gin; blended in a ratio of 1 part gin to 2½ parts tonic, then carbonated. Best over ice with a lime wedge. 24 proof.

**SRP:** $21.99/four-pack of 200ml cans

[greenhookgin.com](http://greenhookgin.com) / [terlatowines.com](http://terlatowines.com)

3. **RISATA SPARKLING ROSÉ**
With rosé continuing to stand strong as a category and bubbly gaining in popularity as well, Prestige Beverage Group is tapping both hot tickets with a new Risata Sparkling Rosé. Aromas of strawberry, raspberry and floral notes lead into a fruity palate of 11% ABV and persistent bubbles. The new bubbly joins Risata Moscato d’Asti, Prosecco, IL Rosso, Brachetto d’Acqui, Pink Moscato and Red Moscato.

**SRP:** $16.99

[risatawines.com](http://risatawines.com) | [prestigebegovgroup.com](http://prestigebegovgroup.com)

4. **ZAYA GRAN RESERVA RUM**
Zaya Gran Reserva Rum of Trinidad and Tobago has a new package with a revised age statement. Now in a slimmer bottle, with a longer neck and a cork closure, Zaya Gran Reserva is a blend of rums aged up to 16 years. The palate offers notes of vanilla, caramel, cocoa and banana. Ideal for sipping or in tiki-style cocktails. The bottle also honors Trinidad and Tobago as the “Land of the Hummingbird” via a medallion imprinted in the glass. 80 proof.

**SRP:** $29.99

[infiniumspirits.com](http://infiniumspirits.com)

5. **‘BAROSSA INK’ SHIRAZ & CABERNET SAUVIGNON**
Accolade Wines North America is introducing Barossa Ink to the U.S. Produced by the team at Grant Burge in South Australia, the two Barossa Ink releases showcase the area’s hallmark Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon grapes, with an added twist. During the final stages of winemaking, concentrated Petit Verdot is added, boosting the tannins, color and depth in the wines. Delivering on the name, the resulting Shiraz and Cabernet are rich, concentrated and dark.

**SRP:** $15.99

[accolade-wines.com](http://accolade-wines.com)

6. **McQUEEN AND THE VIOLET FOG GIN**
McQueen and the Violet Fog Gin arrives featuring an ambitious 21 different botanicals, and the claim that at least six are found in no other gin. Adding to its exotic ID: it is made in Brazil, using a sugarcane base and both maceration and vapor infusion. Its botanicals are global (basil from India, star anise from Vietnam, and more) and local (açaí). And the name, inspired by a mysterious poem, is detailed on the back label. 80 proof.

**SRP:** $39.99

[sovereignbrands.com](http://sovereignbrands.com)
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7. SVEDKA ROSÉ VODKA
Svedka Rosé is the vodka brand’s answer to the popular wine trend, targeting rosé-all-day fans as well as adventurous vodka consumers. Made with 5% rosé wine, it features a fruity palate of strawberry and pineapple complemented by notes of hibiscus. Svedka Rosé rolled out in February, supported by marketing with cheeky taglines such as “Vodka with a Wine Fetish” and “Not Wine, Not Sorry.” This is the first Svedka flavor introduced in clear glass, showcasing the popular pink hue. 60 proof; multiple sizes.

SRP: $12.99/750ml
svedka.com

8. BOULARD VSOP BOURBON CASK FINISH CALVADOS
Palm Bay International has added Calvados Boulard’s VSOP Bourbon Cask Finish to their current Spirit France portfolio. A very limited release, the VSOP Bourbon Cask Finish is the first expression in Boulard’s new 12 Barrel Collection, showcasing innovation in finishing the classic French apple brandy. After resting in bourbon casks, this Calvados has a buttery nose with nuances of smoke and crème brûlée; generous on the palate, with layers of honey, baked apple and maple.

SRP: $55
calvados-boulard.com | palmbay.com

9. SAMUEL CHARLES WINES
Bolstered by the success of their Samuel Charles North Coast Cabernet, Quintessential Wines is extending the brand with a single-vineyard Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and a Sauvignon Blanc from California’s High Valley appellation, both made by renowned Napa winemaker Robert Pepi. The 2017 Oak Knoll Cabernet is sourced from the Mayacamas benchlands. The 2018 Sauvignon Blanc was fermented in stainless steel with partial sur lies aging to add richness.

SRP: Cabernet $79.99 | Sauv Blanc $24.99
quintessentialwines.com

10. GANCIA SPARKLING WINES
Gancia Sparkling Wines, founded in 1850, has revamped their packaging and introduced a new marketing platform, “drink beauty,” which aims to appeal to Millennial consumers. The new packaging strikes a balance of simplicity, color and elegance; and the new platform includes point-of-sale materials, the re-launch of the brand’s social media channels, a fashion-themed event series and a trade print campaign. The Gancia sparkling line includes Prosecco, Rosé Brut, Asti, Moscato d’Asti and Moscato Rosé.

SRP: $12.99 roust.com | gancia.it

11. ‘MILLE1’ 2017 GARDA ROSSO RED BLEND
Dalla Terra Winery Direct is introducing Mille1, a partnership between the Veronese Bertola family and Edoardo Freddi. The first wine from Miller1 is Garda Rosso, a lively red blend of Corvina, Rebo and Merlot, sourced from estate vineyards amid the hills around Lake Garda a near Verona. Mille1, which translates to 1,001, describes the length of Italy in miles from North to South and is depicted on the label with an image of a classic Italian red coupe.

SRP: $19.99 dallaterra.com

12. STRONGBOW 100-CAL SLIM CANS
Strongbow is dovetailing hard cider’s increasing popularity with the age-old favorite pastime of calorie-watching. Strongbow Hard Cider 100-Cal Slim Can variety pack features three easy-drinking offerings with just 100 calories: brand new Dry Pear, a subtly-sweet pear-apple cider with a light, dry finish; Rosé Apple, a semi-dry apple-pear cider with a touch of red-flesh apple; and Original Dry, the recently relaunched fan favorite offering a refreshing dry finish.

SRP: $12.99
roust.com | strongbow.com
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SYMINGTON
Family Estates
Tim Miller has gone from being a successful oilman to the owner of National Premium Beer. But he doesn’t really see it as that big of a leap. During a recent interview with the Beverage Journal, he remarked, “I tell people, ‘It’s the same thing! We’re using the same kind of practices we used in the oil business, and I’m still delivering liquid. It’s just in a can or a bottle and not in a truck’.”

Miller was indeed the third generation to head his family’s oil business, joining right after college and running it until 2001. Working at his grandfather’s company over the years, he developed an appreciation for vintage advertising, signage, and fuel pumps. After Miller sold the company, he became a Realtor with Benson & Mangold in Easton, Md. But his interest in antiques and old signs persisted. One day in 2002, he saw some vintage beer signs in an antique store and thought, “Wouldn’t it be cool to bring back an old beer brand?”

But it wasn’t until eight years later, when a Wall Street Journal ad touted an old brand auction in New York City, that he decided to climb that particular mountain.

One of several beer brands up for bid was National Premium, an old Maryland beer originally marketed as the upscale version of National Bohemian (i.e., “Natty Bo”). What he purchased that day were basically the words “National Premium Beer.” He would soon add the trademark, then the original formula with help from brewer Ray Klimovitz. Miller then connected with Fordham & Dominion Brewing Company in Dover, Del. After speaking with CEO Jim Lutz, he contracted with the company as his brewery, Jack Ehmann as his brewmaster, and together they relaunched National Premium Beer just prior to Memorial Day in 2012.

Nearly seven years later, Miller is in the
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early stages of self distributing. "We've been doing self distribution now for about two months," he confirmed, during our chat in mid-January, "and we've really been connecting with our customers, the stores, the restaurants. We still have distributors in some parts of the state, and we're very, very happy with them. And, sure, I could always go out and talk to a store operator or owner all I wanted. But I couldn't really sell them anything. I'd just hope that everything went through after I left, which it usually did. But it's just nice to have direct sales feedback from what you're doing."

Along the way, the former oilman has come to learn a lot about the beverage some call "suds," others call "brewskie," and still others call a "cold one." He remarked, "People love beer! They love talking about it. They love drinking it. They love hearing stories about it. I've found they want to know everything they can about National Premium. The questions and stories keep coming, too. I'll get, 'Oh, my grandfather was a pipe fitter at the original brewery.' There's always some kind of connection."

He remembers being immediately attracted to the colors of the National Premium label, specifically purple for the Baltimore Ravens and orange for the Orioles. "There's a lot of heritage with that crest and the classic look of it," he said. "And there is the nostalgia factor. We have the classic beer taste (Pilsener) that might remind you of a beer you stole a sip from your dad or your grandfather. It's crisp, clean, and satisfying."

Over the years, he has expanded his company with the addition of the old "Wild Goose Brewery" assets and subsequently re-released Wild Goose Snow Goose and Wild Goose IPA. But it's his re-launch of National Premium that continues to garner the most attention.

He stated, "At its peak, the Wild Goose brands were in 13 states, and National Premium was a global brand. I think it was everywhere except the Middle East. We've been out for seven years in May. We've done Delaware and some other areas, but for now we're focused on Maryland."

Looking ahead, in addition to stepping up self-distribution, Miller is eagerly anticipating the new canned version of National Premium beer becoming available. He concluded, "The brewery in Dover that makes National Premium just got a canning line. They've done a couple runs of it. So, maybe by mid- to late April, it'll all be ready. We're really excited about getting cans. Pools, boats, golf carts - National Premium will become even more of a warm weather, summertime kind of beer."

For more info, call 410-310-3553 or email tmiller@nationalpremiumbeer.com.
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SAKE’S SUPER SECRET
STAYING FRESH FOR WEEKS, SAKE’S REAL CALLING IS BY-THE-GLASS
BY JEFF CIOLETTI

Wine and spirits are notorious for long-held beliefs that deserve debunking—some of them seemingly over and over. Here is one that does not get enough exposure: Sake is “rice wine.” No, no, no. Let’s set the record straight: Sake is not in any way, shape or form a wine—most glaringly because it’s made from grain, not fruit.

And in the case of the “sake = rice wine” myth, it is not just a semantic argument. The distinction underlines a fundamental difference in how the product can be stored and served. In short, sake lasts longer. Way longer.

So, beverage managers needn’t worry if they’re not able to sell a bottle’s worth of sake pours in the space of a week. And not embracing sake as its own beverage is keeping many licensed sellers from realizing its potential. An on-premise account can keep generating revenue from an open bottle of sake long after the point you would have to dump out an unfinished wine bottle.

“Unfortunately, a lot of distributors don’t know this” says Marcus Pakiser, Young’s Market Company’s Portland, Oregon-based Vice President of the sake category for the Northwest. One of Pakiser’s most effective tactics is to bring to accounts several bottles of a sake, each having been open a bit longer. “I taste them on a few different samples,” he says. “This is good, this has been open for a month, this one’s been open for a month and a half. I make sure I bring ones that have been open for quite some time to see for themselves.

Better Portions
In a city like Portland where sake thrives, bars and restaurants offer single servings of most of their brands. But Portland is the exception. Typically, even in large metropolitan markets, restaurants may have one or two house sakes by the glass and the rest in 720- or 300-ml bottles. Those bottles can give many guests sticker shock, especially if they’re not sake connoisseurs (most aren’t) and merely sake-curious (most are). A 720-ml bottle of a junmai daiginjo sake often can run upwards of $70 on-premise.
Each year in May the world’s foremost wine authors, educators, buyers, and journalists, led by F. Paul Pacult, convene to judge wine, sake and cider entries from all over the world. Recognition includes:

- The coveted UWC Chairman’s Trophy, awarded to the top scoring product in major categories.
- Additional accolades are awarded for:
  - Finalist
  - Great Value
  - Tried & True Award
- Products are scored on the retailer and consumer friendly 100-point scale.
- Comprehensive tasting notes provided for all entries scoring 85-points and higher.

Top-scorers are included in monthly editions of Beverage Media and in the annual Ultimate Guide send to trade buyers throughout the country.

**ENTRY DETAILS:** ultimate-beverage.com/uwc2019enter

**QUESTIONS:** info@ultimate-beverage.com or 1-347-878-6551

**DEADLINE:** APRIL 17, 2019
“It’s kind of stating the obvious, but make sure the staff is educating and tasting it as much as possible.”

- Monica Lee

With bottle prices potentially daunting, the best way to get guests to try sake—especially if they are unfamiliar with it—is to offer it by the glass. Guests will be more inclined to spring for bottles to share with their drinking/dining companions if they’ve already enjoyed a low-risk glass of the stuff. And it’s more likely to drive subsequent sales of the same brands off-premise.

**Flexibility Helps**

Pakiser notes that it’s more economical for servers to pour single servings from the large, 1.8-liter sake bottles and save the 720s for full-bottle sales. Though it’s common and perfectly acceptable to serve sake in wine glasses, Pakiser steers his customers away from that practice—mainly as a pricing strategy.

“You want to keep your price point [per glass] between $8 and $12, pouring four ounces into a glass,” he says. “If you put four ounces into a wine glass, it looks like you’re ripping the customer off. A rocks glass or a tumbler or something like that holds four ounces more comfortably.”

Glassware is clearly flexible, however. Washington, D.C.’s Daikaya offers 5.5-ounce pours from their extensive sake list in wine glasses and Beverage Director Monica Lee says there haven’t been any issues with it. Also benefiting Daikaya: written material that helps educate and put guests at ease.

Beefing up Daikaya’s sake book was one of Lee’s first orders of business when she took over as last May. “It used to be a one-page, folded booklet, front-and-back with no tasting notes, no distinguishing descriptions—it was just here’s the name of the sake and here’s the price,” she says. “People who don’t know anything about sake look at it and think, ‘this is literally a different language for me. Since we have so many sake, we provide descriptions for all of them and that seems to help sell a lot more sake.’

Education is even more critical for staff. “It’s kind of stating the obvious, but make sure the staff is educating and tasting it as much as possible,” says Lee. “I encourage people behind the bar to taste as much as possible. The more you know, the better you can talk about it and the more confident everyone’s going to be in selling it.”

Jeff Cioletti, a certified Kikisakeshi (sake sommelier), is the author of the just released SakePedia, A Non-Traditional Guide to Japan’s Traditional Drink (Turner; paperback, 304 pages, $16.99). The book is an excellent resource covering how sake is made, general sake types, specific producers and bottlings, and sake’s remarkable history, from B.C. to current day.

**BE SAKE SMART**

* ► **Fear Not Spoilage.** Unlike wine, sake can last for weeks after opening; you can offer several by the glass without worrying about waste.
* ► **Show & Tell.** Displays of sake bottles spur curiosity—and small samples can be worth 1,000 words of description (no matter how good your printed materials are).
* ► **Sample Size.** Sake by the glass (especially in smaller portions) mitigates the sometimes-high bottle prices, and makes trial less risky for guests.

More than a third of Japan’s sake production now comes to the U.S.
With 17 different varietals, Crane Lake Cellars has a wine for every occasion

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with all the new distilleries, brands and line extensions emerging from Ireland, whiskey retailers have an unprecedented array of choices that show no sign of narrowing. Accordingly, the proverbial Irish eyes are still smilling broadly at this vibrant sector. Powered by Irish whiskey’s inherently smooth style and the swelling popularity centered on a handful of powerful, widely available brands, the category is not just small and mighty—it is expanding dramatically in breadth.

Take two recent additions stretching what Irish whiskey can be: Dingle and The Sexton. Dingle produces distinct small-batch single malt releases—the third finished in ex-bourbon and Port barrels. The Sexton arrives as an especially young (four years old) malt whiskey meant for category novices and cocktail makers.

After decades of relying on the light and fruity blended triple-distilled spirit that predominates, Irish styles are exploding. Single malts and pure pot still expressions, of course, but also grain whiskey, double distilled variants, peated malts and extended aging and finishing in non-traditional barrels—rum, marsala, or exotic woods like acacia. There’s even an Irish rye now.

Just about everything good that is happening in whiskey overall is happening with exuberance in the Irish sector.

“There are some great opportunities in innovation,” says Colum Egan, Master Distiller of Bushmills. “There are a lot of consumers who have been drinking Irish whiskey for some time who looking for something new and innovative within the category. Most of us are coming out with different and new expressions that appeal to different sectors of the market.” Bushmills jumped in two years ago with Red Bush, aged in ex-bourbon barrels rather than a mix of those and Sherry casks.

Egan recently ended his chairmanship of the Irish Whiskey Association, and says ensuring that traditional techniques and understanding were available to new entrants—about 20+ distilleries now operate, up from four in 2014, with as many as 20 in development—was the reason the group was founded.

THE FIELD THICKENS
Major producers are tickled in general with the competition. “It is great for the category, for the growth of Irish whiskey in the U.S. and for the consumer,” says Sona Bajaria, Vice President, High End Irish Whiskey, Pernod Ricard USA. “At Midleton we have an open-door policy. We want to maintain the quality and integrity of Irish whiskey and as such offer our support and expertise to these distilleries in their set-up phases.”

The basis for optimism is strong: Irish whiskey remains one of the fastest-growing categories. Sales internationally are predicted to hit 13 million cases by 2020, up from 10 million in 2017.
Recent Nielsen reports put Irish at an annual 12% growth rate here with Ultra-Premium Irish up 7.4%. “We predict the category will continue to grow rapidly as consumers explore new innovations,” says Bajaria.

On the flip side, younger brands are certainly aware—and appreciative—of the way that Pernod Ricard’s Jameson in particular has popularized Irish whiskey, setting the table, so to speak, for new entries.

NEW & DIFFERENT

Launched in 1999, Bernard and Rosemary Walsh scored in Ireland with their ready-to-drink Irish coffee, which became the Hot Irishman, and cream liqueurs years before developing two distinct Irish whiskies. In 2007 they launched The Irishman; Writers’ Tears Copper Pot debuted here in 2015.

The Teeling family had been in the whiskey business since 1782, but brothers Jack and Stephen have the family name in the spotlight by experimenting with diverse barrel finishes; releasing a rare “single grain” whiskey; and opening the first new distillery in Dublin in 125 years in 2015.

Lambay Irish Whiskey is a crossover project between the House of Camus and the Baring Family’s Revelstoke Trust. Lambay Small Batch Blend is malted barley and grain whiskies, blended, triple distilled and matured in bourbon barrels with a Cognac cask finish. Lambay Single Malt is unpeated, triple distilled and finished in Cognac casks that have been exposed to the sea air and maritime winds on Lambay Island.

But no new entry in Irish whiskey has come close to the impact of that latest new name: Proper No. Twelve. Created by mixed martial arts champion Conor McGregor, Proper No. Twelve sold out its initial run last fall in less than one month. A blend of Irish grain and single malt whiskey, Proper No. Twelve pays homage to Crumlin, aka Dublin 12, the neighborhood where McGregor was born and raised and which is known for its rich soil and pure spring water.

EMERALD ROAD AHEAD

Most industry watchers expect robust growth to continue. “I see Irish whiskey still only scratching the surface of consumer interest in the U.S.,” says Powers Brand Leader Ken Reilly. “Irish whiskey only represents 6% to 8% of the U.S. whiskey market, well behind American and Scotch whiskey. The challenge for all non-Jameson brands is to overcome the lack of understanding of Irish whiskey as a distinct subset of whiskey, and to reinforce the unique profile that Irish whiskey offers the drinker.”

“With several Irish whiskies already bringing to market limited releases, other innovations and special bottlings will likely become a mainstay as the category grows,” says Slane Irish Whiskey co-founder Alex Conyngham. “There will be challenges resulting from increased competition in the marketplace, although this will encourage brands to further differentiate through innovation and flavor profile, which means more choice for consumers.”

EYE ON AMERICAN TASTES

The U.S. market has been dominated by Jameson with Tullamore and Bushmills the most prominent other brands. But the popular style has its limits, says Jack Teeling, Managing Director of Teeling Whiskey Company. “Shifting consumer tastes are driving the segmentation with consumer and trade interests in more unique and interesting Irish whiskey.”

“As the Irish shelves are already not nearly as crowded as more established sectors like single malts and bourbon, the playing field has a wide open and level feel to it, which spurs innovations—like Tullamore D.E.W. Cider Cask Finish and Jameson Black Barrel—as well as newcomers like Slane (2015) and Proper No.Twelve (2018).”
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OF FINE IRISH WHISKIES

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PLEASE ENJOY RESPONSIBLY
Others are eagerly looking to expand the palate. “We always strive to be at the forefront of trends in the industry,” says Conor Neville, Brand Manager, Tullamore D.E.W. “Innovations such as Caribbean Rum Cask and Cider Cask were two of our most recent successful launches. Because of their popularity, we’ve incorporated Rum Cask into our permanent portfolio and have reintroduced Cider Cask for a second fall season,”

Some distilleries focus on particular areas of tinkering. Teeling not only explores finishes, but tweaks its yeast mix and malt selection. Slane uses three types of casks, one a heavily toasted and medium char virgin oak cask, unusual in Irish whiskey.

Jameson has had success with Caskmates done in exchange with craft brewers, notably Caskmates Stout and Caskmates IPA. “With Jameson Caskmates, we have seen the power of crossing over categories by tapping into consumers’ love of craft beer,” says Jameson’s VP of Marketing, Paul Di Vito.

For the high-end Pernod brands, finishing techniques, like Redbreast Lustau, and Red Spot, launching in the U.S. in early spring, are significant. Recently, The Spot Range experimented with the releases of Green Spot Château Léoville Barton and Green Spot Chateau Montelena, the first single pot still Irish to be finished in wine casks.

And if consumers respond to the new iterations, the flood will continue. “Trying out different woods and flavor profiles wouldn’t make sense if the market wasn’t open to it,” says The Sexton’s Master Blender, Alex Thomas. “The consumer wants something different and for me as a blender that’s a dream come true.”

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**IRISH WHISKEY**

The popularity of Irish whiskey as a smooth, easy-drinking spirit has set the stage for more serious expressions, such as Pernod Ricard’s single pot still Redbreast. // Killbeggan is even offering an Irish rye whiskey. // Bushmills is supporting Red Bush with aggressive online content and social media marketing.

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The Irish range is rich in cultural and historical connections that can make for succinct, interesting selling points:

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**The Temple Bar**

Fresh from Dublin, The Temple Bar Whiskey carries the name power of Ireland’s most famous bar (180 years young). The Temple Bar owner Tom Cleary makes three bonded whiskies: an original triple-distilled Signature Blend; and 10- and 12-Year-Olds followed.

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**West Cork**

One of the few distillers in Ireland to boast actual Irish ownership, West Cork uses exclusively Irish barley as well as fresh local spring water. Their specialty is charred-cask finish whiskey.

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**Slane**

The name Slane is familiar to rock ’n roll fans, thanks to the world-famous Slane Castle Concert series, founded in 1981. Slane Irish Whiskey was created by Brown-Forman and the Conyngham family of Slane, whose roots in the Irish village date back over three centuries.

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**Writers’ Tears**

This bottling by Walsh Whiskey, which also produces The Irishman, honors the 19th century Irish novelists, poets and playwrights (George Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde and James Joyce, to name a few) who drew inspiration at local pubs from their favorite whiskey.

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**Knappogue Castle**

Anchored by a picturesque 15th-century castle, Knappogue Castle has emerged as Ireland’s leading supplier of bourbon-barreled, age-statement single malts, with expressions of 12, 14 and 16 years; complemented by the value-priced Clontarf label recalling the historic battle of 1014.

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**John L. Sullivan**

Conor McGregor is not the only Irish pugilist with a whiskey label… Boston-based M.S. Walker reintroduced John L. Sullivan Irish Whiskey, named after the legendary boxer and Boston native.

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**The Dead Rabbit**

Sean Muldoon and Jack McGarry, co-founders of the award-winning bar The Dead Rabbit, teamed up with Master Distiller Darryl McNally of The Dublin Liberties Distillery to create a namesake five-year-old blended Irish whiskey.

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**The Quiet Man**

For the first Irish whiskey bottled in Derry in nearly 100 years, local distiller Ciaran Mulgrew combines hand-selected whiskies, finished in first-fill bourbon barrels for sweet and spicy notes.
FUN STARTS WITH FLAVOR

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Is Champagne drying up? Not in volume, but in terms of added sugar, the answer seems to be yes. Exports of Champagne were up 9.1% in 2017, according to the Comité Champagne, but exports of Extra Brut and Brut Nature—the very driest of Champagne types, based on sugar level—grew much faster, clocking in at 35.4% by volume. Despite our reputation for drinking sweet, much of that ultra-dry bubbly is coming to the U.S., Champagne's number one market in value terms. Whether it's labeled Brut Nature, non-dosé, or zero-dosage, dry sparkling wine is having a moment.

Laurent-Perrier was the first House to produce the style, debuting the wine at the Eiffel Tower in 1889 in response to the English market’s demand for drier Champagne. Michelle DeFeo, President of Champagne Laurent-Perrier USA, has seen sales of their Ultra Brut in the U.S. triple in the past five years. Increasing numbers of grower-producers have joined them, and even some of the other big houses have gotten in on the act. Roederer, for example, introduced its first Brut Nature in collaboration with artist Philippe Starck in 2014. And late last year Champagne Bruno Paillard introduced “Dosage: Zéro” a multi-vintage blend that marks the first addition to the house’s focused portfolio in over a decade.

Dry Roots in the ’70s
Bernard de Nonancourt of Laurent-Perrier lobbied for an official Brut Nature designation in the 1970s. DeFeo says Nonancourt intended the term to indicate sugar wasn’t added at any point during production—no chaptalization, juice or juice concentrate for the second fermentation, and no dosage—but the term today, not just in Champagne but for traditional-method bubbly throughout the EU, indicates only a very low amount of sugar in the final product: 0-3 grams per liter. Laurent-Perrier and some other producers such as Domaine de la Taille aux Loups in the Loire, with their “Triple Zero” Montlouis Petillant, hold to Nonancourt’s...
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stricter definition. “Non dosé” is a perhaps more explicit indication that no sugar was added after riddling, albeit reserved for back labels in most cases.

In Italy, the Prosecco DOC doesn’t yet permit the Brut Nature designation on labels, but Luca Giavi, President of the Prosecco DOC Consortium, expects that to change. “This is an increasingly growing trend for our Denomination, led by male consumers that are drinking more Prosecco DOC than ever.”

Selling Dry Goods
Mary Catherine Edmondson, Beverage Director at San Francisco’s The Riddler, says many guests are looking for a drier wine, but they don’t necessarily ask for Brut Nature by name; it’s a hand-sell based on their expressed preference. Notes Edmondson: “I think that people who are into non-dosé wines fit into that broader category of guests who are interested in where their wine came from and how it was made.”

Author Peter Liem believes, “Fans of so-called ‘natural wine’ generally embrace non-dosé Champagne as much for philosophical reasons as anything else. Since it’s sugar, it’s often seen as an unwanted or artificial additive.”

It’s likely that the growth of zero dosage wines isn’t driven purely by market factors. “A big factor in Champagne right now is that they’re able to get riper grapes as a combination of climatic changes but also tremendous viticultural advances,” says Doug Polaner of importer Polaner Selections, whose portfolio includes Larmandier-Bernier, Pascal Agrapart and several other Champagne producers making zero dosage wines. He says Thierry Laherte of Laherte Frères told him that in the 1980s “you had to add 12 grams of sugar, otherwise it would be completely unpalatable. That whole dynamic has changed.”

Other regions have always had this advantage. Carlo Moser has been producing a zero dosage sparkling wine since 2011 at his family’s Moser winery in northern Italy. “The Trentodoc area is marked by limestone soils and a temperate climate which are key to good ripening of our grapes compared to higher latitudes. We can get structure and smoothness naturally, so higher dosages are not as necessary as in other sparkling wine areas.”

A growing number of his neighbors are adding the zero dosage wine to their range—there are now 25 labels. “This style allows the minerality to shine through without interference, and the flavors from lees-aging are also enhanced,” Moser describes.

Trentodoc is only one example. Polaner points out that non-dosé is happening elsewhere in France, too. Chidaine, for one, makes a Brut Nature traditional method bubbly in the south of France.

Teachability Factor
On the positive side, the geographic multiplicity resulting from Brut Nature being used across the EU presents teachable moments, says Edmondson: “These Brut Nature wines are opportunities for people who might not like Cava or Prosecco or Franciacorta because of a bad experience in the past to taste a dry, refined version and realize, ‘Wow, I didn’t know Cava could taste this way.’” Similarly, Edmondson says zero dosage rosé sparkling wines often offer guests “a more vinous, mineral-driven experience without sacrificing those red fruit characteristics and beautiful pink color.”

Like rosé wine more generally, zero dosage could become a victim of its own popularity, with quality suffering as demand grows. DeFeo says some producers are making non-dosé Champagnes merely to satisfy the trend, often using the same cuvée for both a Brut and Brut Nature version, which leads to a lot of mediocre examples.

Liem agrees: “The best non-dosé wines are usually made from blends created specifically for that purpose.” Not every bubbly should, or could, be as good with no dosage. “Frankly, I think that the good non-dosé Champagnes, the ones really worth drinking, are drunk because they’re good wines, not because they’re non-dosé,” he reasons.

Important Doug Polaner has seen climate change become a factor. // Champagne Laurent-Perrier Pinot Noir. // At San Francisco’s The Riddler, many guests are seeking dry sparkling wine but do not know to ask for Brut Nature.
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Shhh… Is this Greece’s best-kept secret? This plethora of well-made wine from unusual grape varieties and regions is particularly advantageous for small, independent retailers looking for ways to stand out from the average superstore. Creative selections give guests a reason to return. “We carry a lot of unusual grapes,” says Jed Boyar, the buyer at Dandelion Wine Shop in Brooklyn, NY. Not only can these wines draw in customers, but the more personal, hands-on sales approach—one that the big stores just can’t offer—is the key to moving these unfamiliar items as well as developing a rapport with the customer. “The only way you can turn someone on to something new is to communicate with them,” Boyar adds. “When you do help them discover a new region or a new grape, now you’ve really added to that relationship with that person.” Because they lack the recognition of international varieties, these under-the-radar wines are typically less expensive as well, giving the consumer better value for their money.

While there are offbeat grapes and regions worth discovering across all wine styles, from friendly to funky, these six varieties from Europe are early standouts. Delicious and characterful, they showcase just how much value there is in stepping outside the box.

And from a merchant’s standpoint, unusual grapes such as these can benefit from the same type of selling points that tend to be applied to more familiar wines:

ASSYRTIKO
Smoky and savory, Assyrtiko is certainly a distinctive variety. But the character of this Greek grape is as tied to the variety itself as it is to the place in which it is grown. Assyrtiko most famously sings in the windy, island vineyards of Santorini, where old vines, volcanic soil and sea mists add layers of texture and flavor to these lip-smacking white wines. The rising popularity of this grape has nudged

While the allure of European wine often centers on imagery of vineyards and estates, such as seen here at Livio Felluga in Friuli-Venezia Giulia, the ascent of New World wines ushered in the Era of the Grape. In short, Americans (still) commonly think about wines by grape first. So when selling wines of unusual origin or pedigree, it makes sense to key on grapes first, then place, technique or special aspect.

There’s a veritable wine-buying renaissance happening in the U.S. Though international grapes still dominate the shelves, interspersed are under-the-radar varieties and regions hailing from Croatia to Uruguay and everywhere in between. At the same time, consumers are becoming more adventurous with their wine drinking, looking to merchants for guidance in their thirst for discovery.

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more mainland Greek producers to plant Assyrtiko vines as well.

“The best Assyrtiko wines aren’t cheap,” Boyar says, “but they have a minerality and dexterity with certain foods that’s really only matched by Chablis.” Typically retailing for $20 to $30, Assyrtiko is often powerful, but high acidity and salty, citrus-driven flavors make it versatile and refreshing.

**FRIULANO**

If much of Italy is known for producing food-friendly reds, the northeastern region of Friuli-Venezia Giulia specializes in some of the country’s best white wines. While Friuli’s vineyards contain quite a few international varieties, it really shines with offbeat or local grapes, like its trademark Friulano.

Friulano tends to be round and mildly aromatic, with traces of almond, sea salt and stone fruit. Some choose to age Friulano in oak, thinking it adds depth and complexity, but others believe that practice overwhelms the grape’s natural flavors. Most of these wines retail for $15 to $30.

**NERELLO MASCALESE**

Sicily is hot right now as U.S. wine lovers have noticed the renewed energy and quality of the island’s wines. No area is more buzzed-about than the Etna DOC in eastern Sicily, where the vineyards on and around the live volcano Mount Etna produce wines with incredible finesse, nuance and depth.

Lively and well-structured, Nerello Mascalese is the signature red grape of this volcanic wine region, either bottled varietally or blended with its fleshier sibling, Nerello Cappuccio. Depending on the elevation at which it is grown, the wines can be robust and fruit-forward or delicate and layered, with distinct minerality. Retailing at $20 to $45 per bottle, with the finest options reaching $90, Nerello Mascalese isn’t the most budget-friendly of these unusual grapes, but considering that it is often likened to the Nebbiolos of Piedmont and the Pinot Noirs of Burgundy, it still offers great value.

**MENCÍA**

In contrast to the full-bodied, often oaked red wines found in most of Spain, the northwestern corner of the country offers fresher, more Atlantic-influenced styles of wine. While most of these are white wines, Mencía has caught the attention of many U.S. wine professionals for its characterful reds.

Primarily found in the dramatic vineyards of Ribeira Sacra and Bierzo, the best Mencía wines are poised and energetic, with unexpected concentration. Averaging between $15 and $30 at retail, Mencía can range from approachable and fruit-forward, with mixed red and black fruit, to elegant, savory and long-lived. A good balance of structure and acidity, with spicy, herbal accents, is reminiscent of good Pinot Noir.

**TOURIGA NACIONAL**

Portugal has over 250 local grape varieties, but if there’s only one to know, it’s Touriga Nacional. This is the country’s signature grape, producing deeply-colored, intense red wines. In fact, Touriga Nacional is the core variety used to make Port, but in recent years, it has garnered attention for its still wines as well.

“It is a grape that is grown all over Portugal,” says Blanche Orbe, Managing Director for Wine in Motion USA, which has four varietal Touriga Nationals in its portfolio. “It keeps the same name, but not the same profile. In the Dão, it is elegant; in the Douro, it is powerful.” Typically full in body, Touriga Nacional often affords ripe black fruit notes with fresh herbs and violets, and sweet spice from oak aging is often present. At $15 to $25, it is a great alternative for Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot or Malbec lovers.

**ZWEIGELT**

A crossing of St. Laurent and Blaufränkisch, Zweigelt is now the most widely planted grape in Austria. Most of these wines are light to medium-bodied and fresh, with tart raspberry and cherry flavors and a touch of spice.

Driven by snappy acidity, Zweigelt tends to be a thirst-quenching wine with more lift than the average red. It is excellent when chilled, and since it averages between $15 and $25, it is an excellent option for summer parties.
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While most of the attention in Cocktail World lands on bars and restaurants pushing the limits or carving out narrow niches, the vast majority of operations that serve drinks have a myriad of concerns beyond drink-making. Given that and increased customer knowledge and expectations, what is the average bar and restaurant to do to up their cocktail game?

If you ask consultant and author Kim Haasarud of Liquid Architecture, for clients that are relatively new to craft cocktails, keeping it simple but better is the right approach. “Those simple, three-ingredient cocktails are really in fashion right now and there are so many really good spirits out there. You can make some pretty great drinks using simple ingredients,” she says. Drinks like Manhattans and Old Fashioneds score very high on most drink menu surveys, she notes, and any number of tweaks—adding a dash of Chartreuse to a Margarita, or an amaro to spice up a Whiskey Sour, or using split bases, like bourbon with Cognac or tequila with mezcal—can smartly customize standard recipes.

A Visit to Tweakville
As limited drink menus with perhaps a dozen cocktails have become common, non-craft bars can easily take advantage of the trend by creating a list of classics with special tweaks. Among those three-ingredient classics, Haasarud suggests that the broad range of vermouths and amaros well-priced and with a wide flavor palate allow an operator to tweak drinks like Negronis and Manhattans. For example,

“WITH BATCHING, YOU CAN HAVE VERY COMPLEX COCKTAILS THAT CAN BE CREATED IN THREE STEPS.”

– KIM HAASARUD

The Bee Hive is a classic Bee’s Knee’s cocktail with Yellow Chartreuse adding another layer of flavor and complexity.
It’s time to eliminate your blind spot in the independent channel.

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Insights from the Independent Channel
3x3insights.com/bevmedia
suggests menuing a Negroni three ways, changing the gin and sweet vermouth brands to craft something unusual.

Another easy change: tap into the wide selection of adult sodas available to improve the Highball game in Palomas or Cuba Libres, for example.

Some upgrades are even more basic, but can easily create a higher-level cocktail game, says David Commer of Commer Beverage Consulting. “Ingredients are the big thing, like fresh lemon and lime, and other better ingredients like fresh juices. One of the things I struggle with in consulting with newer beverage operators is they want to pick wings off butterflies to make drinks with and it doesn’t have to be that complicated,” he says.

Simple Does It
Fresh juices and house-made simple syrups with flavor tweaks can move complex drinks into the realm of possibility for the average bar, Coomer says. “Infusing syrups is a good way to get cool flavors done in advance so that drink assembly is simpler—things like rosemary lemon sour or hibiscus tea-infused vodka.” For restaurant-first operators, prep cooks accustomed to measuring and mixing can easily take on pre-batching and ingredient assembly, putting the tasks in professional hands.

Both agree that from mixing ingredients together for speed scratch it is a short hop to batching drinks in advance. “For clients that are high volume, they should definitely consider batching. This is something the pros are doing at some of the top mixology bars in the nation and with this you can have very complex cocktails that can be created in three steps,” says Haasarud.

Speed scratch and batching also help create a level of consistency that is hard to achieve in the average bar with a varying level of bartender skill and experience.

For one client, Omni Hotels, Haasarud added smaller versions of new cocktails as shots. “They are like small tastes that allow a group to come in and instead of ordering a round of Kamikazes they can have some of the new cocktails in shot form. It allows guests to be more experimental at a lower cost—$5 rather than $15. It’s an easier way to sell cocktails and helps guests be exploratory,” she says.

First and foremost, though, is better training, says Haasarud. “If you’re going to invest anything in your program, don’t invest in a huge amount of spirits a bartender doesn’t know how to use, invest in training so they know how to shake and stir a cocktail properly.”

“I STRUGGLE WITH NEWER BEVERAGE OPERATORS [WHO] WANT TO PICK WINGS OFF BUTTERFLIES TO MAKE DRINKS WITH. IT DOESN’T HAVE TO BE THAT COMPLICATED.”

– DAVID COMMER
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While the wine industry grows more global in scope every vintage, the wines of Spain continue to be led by Rioja, a region famous for its classic reds based on Tempranillo. In January of this year, New Jersey-based Opici Wines made a strong move to bolster their Spanish Collection by adding El Coto de Rioja, producer of the number one crianza in Spain amid a focused, well-priced portfolio.

“As a leader in Rioja, El Coto’s heritage and authenticity stood out to me first and foremost,” says Don Opici, Managing Director, commenting on the partnership. “A dedicated team of artisans overseeing four single estates, continued investment to ensure quality and consistency, and exceptional value from this region sets El Coto apart.”

Founded in 1970 and based in Oyón, El Coto came of age during the era when Rioja rose to international prominence. Moreover, the bodega has continually modernized and advanced their portfolio. Today, with widely admired red, white, and rosé expressions, El Coto is the leading Rioja and the top-selling Spanish wine in Europe. With 2,000 acres of estate vineyards located in three subzones (Rioja Alta, Rioja Baja and Rioja Alavesa), the brand is poised to elevate its profile and broaden distribution in the U.S.

Victor Fuentes, International General Manager of brand owner Grupo Baron de Ley, owner of El Coto, explains, “As one of the largest winegrowers within Rioja, El Coto is able to ensure the best possible product reaches the consumer. It’s all about quality and consistency with each vintage, starting in the vineyards with the best practices.”

Classic Meets Contemporary
Innovation complements tradition at El Coto. For example, while the bodega’s portfolio is anchored by the classic, crowd-pleasing Crianza, in 2010 El Coto began planting the new varieties allowed by the Regulatory Council. They have also been progressive in white wine, in 2017 adding a facility at their Finca Carbonera vineyard for immediate processing of the Viura grapes in the vineyard. At the high end, their extensive cellars of Reserva and Gran Reserva wines are complemented by the single-vineyard Coto Real project that brings modern interpretation to high-quality wines. Retail pricing for the collection ranges from $10.99 to $57.99, delivering value from top to bottom.

While El Coto is not new to the U.S., the brand is being rejuvenated at an ideal time. Not only is Opici Wines preparing a multi-faceted marketing program, both on- and off-premise, a new Rioja promotion is kicking off in February. “The alignment with Wines of Rioja is significant as they continue to champion this important wine region,” notes Amanda Panicali, Brand Manager. “Consumer and trade education about all that Rioja has to offer is paramount. Timing is perfect, as we are launching the brand nationally.” Initiatives on tap include tasting activations, high profile events and consumer facing mobile engagements.

Both in their own promotion and coordinating with Wines of Rioja, it’s useful to remember that while El Coto represents one of the region’s largest producers, the firm’s focus has remained 100% on their region and all that it represents. After all, that’s why the bodega’s full name is El Coto de Rioja.
“You can only be the leading winegrower in Rioja when you discern each grape from your vineyard”
This January, The Winebow Group made public its long-in-the-works decision to unify all of its distribution houses across the U.S. under the Winebow name and to introduce a new logo.

The rebranding and unification under a single name makes sense for a company that has grown substantially in recent years while continuing to operate under a collection of corporate identities. Most significantly, when Winebow merged with The Vintner Group in 2014, it brought together two complementary companies (the former focused more on imports, the latter on distribution), both of which were founded in 1980 and whose growth over the ensuing decades helped foster America’s blossoming fine wine culture. Today, Winebow’s national distribution platform comprises 22 markets that cover 70% of the wine consumption in the U.S.

Winebow’s growth evolution put it in an “unparalleled position as a national importer and distributor focused on fine wine and spirits,” explains Dean Ferrell, who was tapped as President & CEO of The Winebow Group in 2018. “As we look to the future, it is time that we update our identity in a way that underscores our commitment and capabilities. Our unification with the Winebow name clarifies how our shared expertise and extended reach—as one team—is advantageous to our employees, customers and suppliers.”

**What Will Change—And What Won’t**

Winebow currently has distribution houses in CT, MA, NJ, NY, OR, PA, RI and Washington, DC. The Country Vintner (DE, MD, NC, SO, VA), Grape Beginnings (MN), The Henry Wine Group (CA), Noble Wines (WA), Purple Feet Wines (WI), Quality Wine & Spirits (GA), Stacole Fine Wines (FL), and Vintage Wines (IL) will rebrand as Winebow while maintaining current offices and warehouses.

In Washington, DC, the company’s two distribution houses, The Country Vintner and Winebow, will both rebrand as Winebow but remain two separate divisions. Matthew Tucker, Senior Vice President, Mid-Atlantic, will continue to oversee sales and report to Arjun Dewan, Executive Vice President, Wholesale East.

In New York and New Jersey, Martin Scott Wines and Winebow distribution houses will also combine as Winebow, merging portfolios and sales teams. Francois Rousseau, Vice President, New York, and Sean Woods, Vice President, New Jersey, have been promoted to oversee sales in the two states. Meanwhile, Tony Gonzalez has been promoted to Senior Vice President, Portfolio Management Northeast. And Erle Martin, based in Benicia, California, will continue to oversee the midwestern and western states as Executive Vice President, Wholesale West.

Winebow Imports’ four national import divisions—Craft + Estate, LLS (Leonardo LoCascio Selections), MundoVino and Negociants USA—will also now share the Winebow moniker and logo. Each division will, however, continue to focus on different regions and retain separate sales and marketing teams.

As the company embraces the new national identity, Dean Ferrell assures that customers can expect to see Winebow’s same “passion, expertise and commitment to exceptional service.” The difference now is a matter of unity—already in practice, and now official.
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FINE WINE + SPIRITS
Hunter Douglas is the bar manager at Hank’s Oyster Bar Dupont Circle and just-opened Hank’s Cocktail Bar, part of the Washington, D.C.-based Jamie Leeds Restaurant Group.

BEVERAGE MEDIA GROUP: How does Hank’s Cocktail Bar, an industry hangout that originated in Petworth and is soon to re-open in Dupont Circle, differ from the oyster bar, where guests eat lobster deviled eggs and sip libations like the I Dream of Pralines (pecan-cinnamon-infused bourbon, Licor 43, burnt sugar, ginger/orange bitters)?

HUNTER DOUGLAS: Hank’s Cocktail Bar is our playground and a space to dive into some of the District’s most exciting beverages, but both concepts share the philosophy of JL Restaurant Group by featuring the use of fresh produce and seasonal ingredients. Customers leave having experienced consistently well-made cocktails to fit their mood, and there is an opportunity to play and be overly adventurous, enjoy a slight variation of your favorite or stick to what you know and love in either place.

BMG: There are now four locations of Hank’s Oyster Bar. How has the group’s beverage vision evolved along with the growth of the JL Restaurant Group portfolio?

HD: JL Restaurant Group establishments now have regionally-recognized bar programs that are built on the success of our past initiatives. The aim is to be playful while remaining grounded in classics. For example, a few of the new menu categories at Hank’s Cocktail Bar are “We Invented the Remix,” “Beertails” and “Size Matters.” We’re serious about our cocktails, but want the atmosphere to be comfortable, social and a D.C. must-visit.

BMG: Eco-friendly measures are thankfully becoming more prevalent behind the bar these days. How are you responding to this shift?

HD: We’re currently focusing on developing and implementing sustainable practices. I want to move beyond simply making cordials and adjusting acid in old juices to reconfiguring how we view everything from water usage to the products we carry to utilizing waste. One of the cocktails on the new menu, She Who Lives in a Shell, uses recycled oyster shells that are shucked during service and washed to infuse dry vermouth with a briny, mineral flavor.

• Upshur Street Familia
An unlisted ingredient in this cocktail is progress. Or perhaps nostalgia. Upshur Street was the previous location of Hank’s Cocktail Bar, which relocated to the second floor of the Hank’s Oyster Bar near Dupont Circle.

Ingredients:
1 ¼ oz Lunazul Tequila Blanco
¾ oz PAMA Pomegranate Liqueur
1 oz fresh Pineapple Juice
½ oz Lemon Juice
½ oz Ginger Syrup*
1 oz Dry Cider (Austin Eastciders Original recommended)
¾ oz Angostura Bitters

Method: Build all ingredients, except bitters, in tin and shake. Pour over a footed highball filled with crushed ice. Garnish with Angostura Bitters, an orchid, and dehydrated lemon.

*Ginger Syrup: Peel ginger and blend with equal parts sugar and water by weight. Strain and refrigerate.
DISTRIBUTED BY INTERBALT: (855)SANTERO OR (301)793.1818

SANTERO

[Image of various bottles of Santero wine]
This black French-American hybrid grape is known for its ability to make simple, tasty wines. Rougeon produces medium-sized compact clusters. Its grape vines are hardy, but production can be erratic at times, causing its yields to come as often as twice a year or as few as every two years.

Like all other grapes, Rougeon is susceptible to disease. The two highest disease exposures this grape could suffer from are downy mildew and powdery mildew. These diseases have the potential to reduce vine growth, yield, quality, and winter hardiness, especially because the Rougeon grows in tight clusters. Other disease susceptibilities are black rot and botrytis as well as some sensitivity to sulfur.

Rougeon also produces a beautiful red color and is often mixed to make a blended wine. However, it has also been used to make port wines. Rougeon grape is often blended with grapes such as Chambourcin and Baco Noir. Erik Bandzak, of Aliceanna Winery chose this grape due to its deep red color and very dry taste. “Most winemakers use this grape to make port-style wines, but I believe it has a great taste on its own,” said Bandzak.

Bandzak maintains that his use of the grape has little to no downsides. “While most winemakers dislike it because of its inconsistent yields, I have been able to source enough from the farm for the last 10 years to make the smaller amounts I require,” said Bandzak. “I have found it to be consistent in taste and color.”

Romano Winery, founded by Joseph and Jo-Ann Romano, also uses Rougeon in its wines. The founders say that Rougeon boasts “a black cherry aroma leads to a medium-bodied red with a deliciously sweet finish.” The label suggests enjoying with red meat, ripe cheeses or good conversation.

Joe Romano spoke highly of the Rougeon grape. “One of the reasons that I selected Rougeon was because Rougeon wine was not widely available as a varietal as it is typically used in blending for its color,” said Romano. He was looking for a wine that would stand out, and he found the dark red color and aroma attractive and thought as a sweet wine—also atypical for this grape—it would be very interesting. “In the end, the wine turned out to be everything I hoped for, and it’s great with chocolate!”

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**GLENMORANGIE AND LA CUCHARA PROMOTE AUTISM RESEARCH**

Glenmorangie sampled their prestigious portfolio at La Cuchara during a charitable fundraiser raising money for autism research. Guests enjoyed interacting with the Glenmorangie specialist, Brigid McAteer, and sampling the different marques.

**SONOMA-CUTRER WINE EVENT AT THE BYGONE**

Guests recently gathered at The Bygone in Baltimore for an intimate Sonoma-Cutrer wine event hosted by Nina Markowitz, Brown Forman’s Northeast Division Wine Manager.
FIRE IN ICE
Diageo and Moët Hennessy
where recently at the "Fire In Ice"
Festival in Downtown Frederick.
The streets of Fredrick were filled
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ice bars/luges and fire! Guests
enjoyed the Belvedere,
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Ron Meehan, RNDC Chesapeake Division Manager; recently received National recognition from Jackson Family Wines as a top La Crema performer. Ron is pictured with Liz Kitterman, Jackson Family Wines Regional Manager.

BACARDI AT JACK ROSE DINING SALOON

Josue Gonzales of Washington DC is a Bacardi Legacy semi-finalist. His cocktail, Alegria, recently took center stage at Jack Rose Dining Saloon.

MARC MONDAVI VISITS MARKET

Marc and Janice Mondavi, of C. Mondavi & Family, recently visited the Southern Glazers Wine and Spirits Baltimore offices.

Pictured are Janice Mondavi; Rachel Kirk, SGWS; and Marc Mondavi, owner C. Mondavi & Family.