

# Distillery modern Age



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## Luckenbach Road Whiskey Distillery

Frontier Spirits in Texas, the company behind Pura Vida Tequila, will build its new whiskey distillery campus “deep in the heart of Texas.”

The state-of-the-art Luckenbach Road Whiskey Distillery facility in Fredericksburg, Texas, produces Luckenbach Road Whiskey (44% ABV; about \$40 for a 750-ml bottle), a whiskey based with a tradition and history dating back over a century. There will be a tasting room upon completion of the facility.



While the distillery itself will be new, the family behind it has roots that date back to the area to 1718. That’s the year when the ninth great-grandparents of Frontier Spirits’ chairman and founder, Stewart Lawrence Skloss, first moved from Spain to an area that would later become Central Texas.

Skloss’s family roots in the alcohol business date back to 1851 when his third great-grandfather, Heinrich “Henry” Ochs, immigrated to Fredericksburg from Germany. Ochs quickly became one of the town’s first teachers, and later a County Clerk and founder of the Buckhorn Saloon in Fredericksburg. The saloon, which served the family’s beer and whiskey recipes, was one of the first in the area, and it became a popular watering hole that can be read about in history books today.

Now, 170 years later, the same whiskey recipe will become the centerpiece of a new, 28,000-square-foot facility, tasting room and country store called Little Peach. Situated on 117 acres that the Skloss family has been assembling for quite some time, the land has room to expand and offer additional amenities in the future.

Skloss and his wife, Kaitlyn Callaluga Skloss, have been working for the past five years to deliver a farm-to-bottle experience at Luckenbach Road Whiskey Distillery. They first began acquiring the land in 2017, establishing Frontier Spirits LLC that same year, which was incorporated and registered with the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) and the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC) in 2018. In parallel, the distillery has been working closely with Texas A&M University Department of Soil and Crop Sciences to maximize and develop crops specific to the site’s climate and growing conditions.

“Caring about what’s in the bottle begins with caring about what’s outside of it,” said Skloss. “We know everything about our operation must be top-notch, from the people that join our team to the way we grow our grains.”

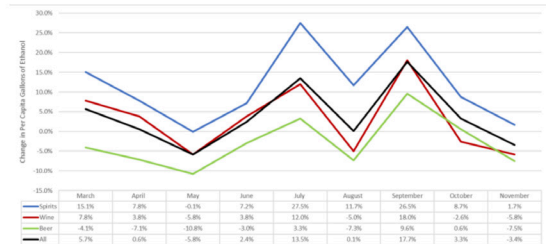
Together, experts and representatives with Luckenbach Road Whiskey Distillery are creating and cultivating blue, Indian, purple, red and yellow corns, along with wheat, barley and rye — all of which will be used to make the brand’s whiskey. Luckenbach Road Whiskey began tastings in 2019 and

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## Trend of Increased Alcohol Consumption Held Steady as Pandemic Dragged On, New Survey Results Show

A second wave of results from a study conducted by RTI International (Research Triangle Park in North Carolina), a nonprofit research institute, has found that increases in alcohol consumption observed at the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, including excessive consumption, were sustained through at least November 2020.

Changes in On-premise and Off-premise Per Capita Sales in March-November 2020 compared to prior 3-year Averages



Source: NIAAA Alcohol Epidemiologic Data System Surveillance Report COVID-19.

Compared with February 2020, alcohol consumption in November 2020 was 39% higher, according to the new data, in terms of drinks per month. The first wave of the survey, conducted last

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## Senate Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act Passes in Senate

Statement by Chris Swonger, President & CEO, Distilled Spirits Council and Responsibility.org:

“The members of the Senate are to be commended for their support of the important traffic safety measures aimed at impaired driving that were included in the legislation.

“Impaired driving is 100% preventable, and installing advanced prevention technology in new vehicles will bring our nation one step closer to ridding our highways of these dangerous drivers.

“Efforts to design vehicles that prevent impaired driving have been underway for more than a decade, and this legislation will finally make it a reality resulting in more than 9,000 lives saved each year.

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# Luckenbach Road Whiskey Distillery

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has continuously refined its flavor until the bottling of what it calls its “perfect whiskey” began earlier this year.



Leading the distilling is Jason “Rev” Brand, who has been making whiskey for more than ten years. He comes from a long line of whiskey makers and brings his collective experiences to his new role as Managing Director and Head Distiller for Luckenbach Road Whiskey Distillery. Brand considers making whiskey “an art form,” and he is keen on the German-made distillation equipment the company is using to produce its whiskey.

“You’ve got to dance with it,” Brand said of the whiskey distillation process. “You’ve got to move with it. And for that, you’ve got to have a great core group of people.”

Brand will initially hire roughly 50 people. A U.S. Army veteran and Purple Heart recipient, Brand said that former members of the military will receive priority in the hiring process.

“When I read what old newspapers and historical books have to say about my ancestors, it’s clear they left a profound legacy of good spirit, good cheer, good deeds and good products,” Skloss said. “I can’t think of a more compelling legacy to uphold as we prepare to open Luckenbach Road Whiskey Distillery’s doors.”

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# Increased Alcohol Consumption

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year and sponsored by RTI, examined changes between February and April 2020 and revealed an increase of 36% in that timeframe.

The proportion of people exceeding drinking guidelines increased 27% between February and April 2020, per the first wave of the survey, and that increase jumped to 39% between February and November 2020, according to the follow-up survey. Binge drinking saw an increase of 26% between February and April 2020, with a further increase to 30% between February and November 2020.

“Our study shows that people didn’t just increase their alcohol consumption for a month or two at the beginning of the pandemic — the trend held for nearly the entire year,” said Carolina Barbosa, Ph.D., a health economist at RTI. “Increases in alcohol consumption have been associated with natural disasters and other large-scale events that induce stress and anxiety, and a pandemic certainly fits that description.”

The new results show the largest increases in consumption between February and November 2020 were among Black and Hispanic women (173% and 148% increases, respectively), Black men (173%), men who selected something other than White, Black or Hispanic for their race/ethnicity (209%) and women with children under age five in the household (323%).

More women reported exceeding recommended drinking guidelines than men between April and November 2020, aligning with the first wave of survey data that showed the pandemic disproportionately affected women’s drinking habits.

“Women are more likely to use alcohol to cope with stress, depression and anxiety, and all these are a natural response to the Covid-19 pandemic,” said Barbosa. “Alcohol consumption among women has been on the uptick for past two decades, and our study suggests the pandemic may only exacerbate that trend.”

Compared with February 2020, the proportion of Black people drinking above recommended guidelines — that is, no more than four drinks per day and 14 drinks per week for men and no more than three drinks per day and seven drinks per week for women and people over age 65 — increased by 140% by April and was six times higher in November.

Additionally, there was an increase in proportion of respondents with mental health issues who reported drinking to cope with stress or tension, which increased from 5% in February to 15% in November. Average consumption among this set of respondents also increased by almost half a drink per day.

“Policymakers should be prepared to respond to the public health consequences of such a sudden, sustained increase in alcohol consumption,” added Barbosa. “I would also encourage them to consider lessons learned from the pandemic. For example, relaxing regulations during the pandemic to allow curbside pick-up and extending privileges for home alcohol deliveries may have contributed to increased consumption, and now some of these relaxed regulations are being permanently adopted.”

The follow-up survey was sponsored by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and re-surveyed respondents who participated in the first wave.

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# Senate Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act Passes in Senate

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“Crash risks increase exponentially when drivers are impaired from multiple substances, and this issue is a growing problem for states. Preliminary NHTSA data show a rise in total traffic deaths during the pandemic, including impaired driving fatalities. Enacting the traffic safety measures included in this bill is the aggressive action needed to end impaired driving. We urge the House to join the Senate in passing this life-saving legislation.”

## Background

The Senate Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act includes strong provisions to address impaired driving including:

- Advanced Impaired Driving Prevention Technology. This will be a multi-year federal rulemaking process to put technology on new vehicles that would prevent a drunk driver from driving impaired but would be unobtrusive to the safe, sober driver. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration will be tasked with testing technologies, determining feasibility and proceeding to implementation.
- Expanded state efforts to address multiple substance impaired driving through innovative programs and technology to identify, monitor and treat impaired drivers.
- Language to expand the number of states that qualify for incentive grant funding with the passage of effective ignition interlock laws.

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# Senate Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act Passes in Senate

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- A GAO study to improve national reporting of impaired driving arrest and citation data into federal databases.
- Expanded states efforts to collect timely and accurate data on crash information, including electronic crash reporting systems that allow accurate real or near-real-time access.
- Public education efforts on cannabis-impaired driving prevention.
- Data collection efforts for expanded drug testing among impaired drivers.
- Research on cannabis-impaired driving.

The Act is supported by Responsibility.org, DISCUS, MADD, AAA, Beer Institute, Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA), National District Attorneys Association, National Safety Council, National Sheriffs Association, SADD, the Coalition for Cannabis Policy Education and Regulation (CPEAR) and the National Alliance to Stop Impaired Driving (NASID).

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# Beam Suntory & The Boston Beer Company Partnership

Beam Suntory and The Boston Beer Company have formed a long-term, strategic partnership to extend select iconic brands into some of the fastest-growing beverage alcohol segments. Through this partnership, the two plan to release products that bring Beam Suntory's Sauza tequila brand further into ready-to-drink beverages (RTDs), and The Boston Beer Company's Truly Hard Seltzer into bottled spirits.

The first new products resulting from this partnership will be available off-premise by mid-2022, with plans to expand across more key brands in the future.

"Our industry is rapidly evolving, and consumers are looking for new and exciting options that suit a wide variety of occasions, and we couldn't be happier to have found the perfect partner to extend our brands into the spirits category," said Dave Burwick, CEO of The Boston Beer Co. "Beam Suntory shares our pioneering, entrepreneurial spirit, and the obsession with delivering

high-quality products. This unique, win-win collaboration opens a new frontier for our industry-leading Truly Hard Seltzer brand as we expand into bottled spirits, and also allows us to bring a great tequila brand into our best-in-class wholesaler network."



Boston Beer's existing portfolio includes industry-leading brands such as Samuel Adams and Dogfish Head beer, Truly Hard Seltzer, Twisted Tea Hard Iced Tea and Angry Orchard Hard Cider. As part of this partnership, the company plans to expand Truly Hard Seltzer, the fastest growing hard seltzer on the market, into bottled spirits and will benefit from Beam Suntory's distilling expertise and robust distribution network.

Already an RTD leader in Japan, Australia and Germany leveraging brands like Jim Beam, Canadian Club and -196°, Beam Suntory is "turbo-charging" its fast-growing-U.S. RTD business, building on the acquisition of On The Rocks premium cocktails and the release of Hornitos seltzers and the Jim Beam Highball. As part of this collaboration, Beam Suntory's Sauza tequila brand will expand into additional RTD formats by leveraging Boston Beer's expertise, production capabilities and distribution footprint.

"We are each tapping opportunities in adjacent categories by unleashing our shared creativity and respective distribution strengths in spaces that resonate with consumers," said Albert Baladi, Beam Suntory President and CEO. "We're expanding the reach of loved, iconic brands that have tremendous equity, credibility and consumer loyalty. Beam Suntory and Boston Beer understand brand building, and as pioneers in premium spirits and craft beer, our combined possibilities are limitless."

# Absinthia's Bottled Spirits Completes Acquisition of Nickel Dime Syrups

Absinthia's Bottled Spirits in California, a woman-owned artisan beverage company, has completed the acquisition of Nickel Dime Syrups, a portfolio of craft cocktail syrups made in California from all-natural ingredients. The purchase was finalized on August 1. Terms were not disclosed.



J. Absinthia Vermut

"Nickel Dime Syrups were first created by professional bartender Jared Hirsch to bring sophistication, craft and flavor to any cocktail program," said J. Absinthia Vermut, founder and creator of Absinthia's Bottled Spirits. "I believed in their tremendous potential at that time, and I am excited to take them to the next level."

Absinthia's Bottled Spirits makes Blanche and Verte, as well as a soon-to-be-released Barrel-Aged Absinthe made from biodynamic grapes and distilled with organic herbs.

"The liquor business has been shaken and stirred by Covid," added Vermut. "This has created tremendous opportunities for Nickel Dime Syrups both in giving home mixologists quality cocktail options to enjoy with friends while helping bar programs get back up to speed with mixes that deliver sophisticated sips that can be simply and quickly made."

Nickel Dime Syrups are alcohol-free, gluten-free and contain about 100 calories per two-ounce serving. They include:

Caged Heat Cocktail Syrup — made with tamarind, cardamom and ghost pepper

Fairy Dust Cocktail Syrup — made with fennel, anise and wormwood

Cherry Bomb Cocktail Syrup — made with cherry, coffee and cacao

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## Absinthia's Bottled Spirits Completes Acquisition of Nickel Dime Syrups

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Crimson Smoke Cocktail Syrup — made with smoked tea, cranberry and honey

Nickel Dime Cocktail Syrups are available nationwide in 15-ounce bottles for about \$20, a mini sample pack for about \$30, a four-bottle variety pack for about \$76 or cases for about \$228.

## Mast-Jägermeister Pledges \$340K Supporting Women Professionals in Spirits & Wine

Mast-Jägermeister US will invest \$340,000 over the next six years to bolster a new scholarship, FLOurish. The brainchild of Dream Big Darling and The Millinger Group, FLOurish will mentor emerging women leaders in spirits and wine through personalized assessments, insights, coaching and mentorship.

The inspiration behind FLOurish is longtime HR executive, Florence Pramberger, who mentored the founder and president of The Millinger Group, Rona Millinger, throughout her career. After Pramberger lost her battle with cancer last year, Millinger decided to create a professional development program in her memory.

"I wanted to continue giving what Florence no longer can: coaching, development and guidance for women looking to contribute, progress and advance in work and personal lives," said Millinger.

Through her research and development, Millinger was introduced to Amanda Wittstrom-Higgins, founder of Dream Big Darling (DBD), a non-profit dedicated to fostering the success of women in spirits and wine through education, life enhancement, mentorship and professional retreats.

"I'm a big proponent of women supporting women, which is why I started Dream Big Darling," said Wittstrom-Higgins. "When I heard Rona and FLOrence's story, I was inspired. Together, we developed a powerful program to help women

identify their strengths and accelerate their professional success, something I wish I had access to early in my career."



Pramberger spent the last eight years of her career with Mast-Jägermeister US, so when news of FLOurish reached executives at the company, they were immediately onboard

"When word got back to us that our darling Flomeister had inspired such a wonderful cause, we knew we had to be involved," said Jeff Popkin, CEO of Mast-Jägermeister US. "I especially love how personal these scholarships are, as mentoring is an integral part of the program. I will personally donate my time and resources to the mentoring portion of FLOurish scholarships."

Through the contribution of Mast-Jägermeister US, an additional 85 women will benefit from this program over the next six years. FLOurish was originally open to five women per year thanks to DBD and The Millinger Group.

"This injection of funds will allow FLOurish to really blossom, added Wittstrom-Higgins. "By elevating 85 women, we are actually elevating hundreds of women as our graduates flourish and bring other women along. We couldn't be happier Mast-Jägermeister decided to come onboard, and we look forward to working closely with them in the years to come."

"Every woman is unique in their strengths and skills, therefore each individual will receive a personalized program through the FLOurish Scholarship," said Millinger. "However, our goal is universal, female guidance and empowerment in the work force. I hope Florence can see the good she has inspired."



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## Beam Little Book Chapter 5: "The Invitation"

Little Book Chapter 5: "The Invitation" (58.4% ABV) is the fifth release in Beam's Little Book Whiskey series.



It features two-year-old Kentucky straight bourbon, three-year-old malted 100% rye, five-year-old Kentucky straight bourbon and 15-year-old Kentucky straight bourbon.

A 750-ml bottle sells for about \$125.

## Monaco Cocktails Mai Tai RTD

Atomic Brands in Illinois has extended the Monaco Cocktails RTD line with Mai Tai (9.0% ABV), combining light and dark rum with orange curaçao.



A 12-ounce can sells for about \$2.50-\$3.

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## American Liquor Co. Vodka

American Liquor Co. in Michigan has released its first spirit, Vodka (40% ABV), claiming to be the first four-crop vodka blend made from locally-grown winter wheat, light rye, Rio Grande potato and white corn.



Each ingredient is distilled locally by a select handful of distilleries in the Midwest, then married by industry veteran and Master Blender, Chris Montana.

The wheat vodka comes from Middle West Spirits in Columbus, Ohio, and Stumpy Spirits in Columbia, Illinois; the corn vodka from Yahara Bay in Fitchburg, Wisconsin; the rye vodkas from Grand Traverse Distillery in Traverse City, Michigan, and Valentine Distilling in Ferndale, Michigan; and the potato vodka from Proof Artisan Distillers in Fargo, North Dakota. Blending and bottling are done at Temperance Distilling in Temperance, Michigan.

A 750-ml bottle sells for about \$30.

## Barrell Bourbon Batch 030

Barrell Craft Spirits in Kentucky has released Barrell Bourbon Batch 030 (58.66% ABV), a blend of straight bourbon whiskeys (5-, 6-, 9-, 10-, 11- and 15-year old barrels) distilled and aged in Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana and Wyoming and bottled at cask strength.



A 750-ml bottle sells for about \$90.



## 2021 Parker's Heritage Collection 11-Year-Old Heavy Char Wheat Whiskey

Heaven Hill Distillery in Kentucky has released the 2021 limited edition release of Parker's Heritage Collection 11-Year-Old Heavy Char Wheat Whiskey (61% ABV).



This edition continues the series of heavy char releases, exploring how a more intense char allows the liquid to penetrate deeper into each barrel stave and the effects on the resulting flavor. Comprised of 75 barrels charred for one minute and 30 seconds (Level 5), as opposed to the traditional 40-second char (Level 3) for Heaven Hill, Wheat Whiskey reached peak maturation after 11 years on the sixth floor of Rickhouse Y.

The heavy char allowed Heaven Hill's traditional Wheat Whiskey mashbill of 51% wheat, 37% corn and 12% malted barley to interact more with the oak.

This release is only the second time the Wheat Whiskey mashbill has been featured in the Parker's Heritage Collection, with the first released in 2014 as an Original Batch Cask Strength.

A 750-ml bottle sells for about \$140.



## Código 1530 13-Year-Old Añejo Tequila

Código 1530 has released a 13-year-old Añejo (40% ABV) aged in French Cognac casks for six months longer than the brand's regular Añejo.



A 750-ml bottle sells for about \$3,300, and only 350 bottles are available globally.

## El Mayor Tequila Extra Añejo Sherry Cask Aged

In September, Luxco in Illinois will release El Mayor Tequila Extra Añejo Sherry Cask Aged (40% ABV), which aged for 38 months in sherry casks at Destiladora González Lux in Mexico.



A 750-ml bottle sells for about \$130, and approximately 5,000 bottles will be available.

## Ogden's Own Madam Pattirini Gin & Tonic and Porter's Whiskey Soda RTDs

Ogden's Own in Utah has extended its canned cocktail line with Madam Pattirini Gin & Tonic and Porter's Whiskey Soda (both 7.0% ABV).



A 355-ml can of each sells for about \$4.

## Hpnotiq Freeze Pop

Heaven Hill Brands in Kentucky has released Hpnotiq Freeze Pop (6.0% ABV) in the Hpnotiq Liqueur line. It's made as a frozen RTD from Hpnotiq Liqueur along with French cognac.



A carton of ten pops sells for about \$20.



## Modern Distillery Age Tasting Panel

In this week's tasting panel, we have notes on three RTD cocktails, a honey/bourbon liqueur and three vodkas.

*All spirits are tasted blind. The panelists know only the style and ABV. The notes are a distillation of the panelists' comments.*

The panelists vary with each panel but often include: Tom Jensen (Millstone Spirits), Dave Schmier (Independent Spirits Expo), David Talbot (Ultimate Beverage Challenge), John Henry (El Buho Mezcal), John Heffernan (Senior Master of Whisky), Renzo Kian-Kubota (Harry's Wine & Liquor Market), Frank Whitman (food & drinks writer), Linda Kavanagh (MaxEx PR), Paul Zocco (Zok's Homebrewing & Winemaking Supplies), Ernie Adamo (spirits lover), Steve DeFrank (spirits lover), Dave Sokoloff (spirits lover), Phil Simpson (Asbury Park Distilling), Thomas Henry Strenk (drinks writer), Melissa Dowling (Editor of *Cheers*), Kyle Swartz (Managing Editor of *Beverage Dynamics*, *Cheers* & *StateWays*), Michael Anstendig (*Modern Distillery Age*) and Gregg Glaser (Publisher/Editor of *Modern Distillery Age*).

### Ohza RTDs – 5.0%

**Simple Stiff Beverages, Cambridge, Mass.**

~\$10 for a four-pack of 12-ounce cans; ~\$18 for an eight-pack

#### Classic Mimosa

A hazy pale orange color with a tart citrus aroma. Sweet and tart citrus in the taste. A light body with soft carbonation.

#### Mango Mimosa

A hazy pale mango color with an aroma of mango sweetness. Sweet mango in the taste with some tartness. A light body with soft carbonation.

#### Classic Bellini

A hazy peach color with an aroma of fresh peaches. Sweet and tart peach flavor; the peach skins come through nicely. A light body with soft carbonation.



### Bärenjäger Honey & Bourbon Liqueur, 35%

**Teucke & Koenig Bärenfangfabrik, Rintelin, Germany, ~\$30**

**Imported by Marussia Beverages; a blend of honey liqueur infused with bourbon**

Amber with an aroma of bourbon, honey, vanilla, flowers and oak. In the taste are honey, cinnamon, other spices and light bourbon. A full, viscous body. Finishes spicy and warm.



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## Dirty Devil Vodka, 42%

St. Lucifer Spirits Quebec, Canada, ~\$28  
Imported by St. Lucifer Spirits;  
distilled from non-GMO corn & hyper-oxygenated water

Clear with an aroma of a classic vodka; slightly sweet, some spice and alcohol. Sweet, spicy and a bit salty in the taste. A medium body. Finishes rich with spices, caraway and alcohol warmth.



## Timberline Vodka, 40%

Hood River Distillers, Hood River, Ore., ~\$25  
distilled with from grain & 14 varieties of non-GMO Pacific Northwest apples

Clear with a soft aroma of sweetness and alcohol. Slightly sweet in the taste with flowers, fruit, spices and alcohol warmth. A medium body. Finishes with sweetness, spices and flowers.



## ROSA Vodka, 40%

Distilled in Bulgaria & bottled by Rose City Distilling, Portland, Ore., ~\$30  
Imported by Manamira LLC; distilled from corn and made with Bulgarian Damascena roses

Clear with an aroma of sweet flowers. Lots of rose flavor in the taste plus white pepper, other spices and some tannins. A slightly viscous body. Finishes dry with tannins, white pepper and a pithiness.



The Modern Distillery Age Tasting Panel meets once or twice a month. Samples are sent by distillers and importers and are tasted blind. Samples can be sent to:  
Modern Distillery Age  
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# Tasting Events & Competitions



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