



NEWS



Cognac Continues Its Ascent

Cognac had another stellar year, growing 15.5 percent to 4.6 million cases in the United States - more than double its 1990 volume. Retailers affirm that the category is on fire. "Cognac has been increasing by 20 percent a year for us," says Bob Gibson, vice president and chief marketing officer at ABC Fine Wine & Spirits in Florida. The 1,335-unit retail chain does the bulk of its business in the "big three" Hennessy, Remy Martin and Courvoisier - but wine and spirits supervisor Atanas Netchkov aims to diversify the selection. "Brands like Hine, Hardy and Kott do well, but the percentage of sales is much smaller," he says. "Head of the business is in Hennessy VS, with some trading up to Remy Martin VSOP." [Read More](#)

Interview: K&L's Spirits Buyer David Driscoll Talks Scotch Whisky Trends

California retailer [K&L Wine Merchants](#) operates three stores in the Golden State, located in Redwood City, San Francisco and Hollywood. Traditionally known as a wine powerhouse, over the past decade K&L has seen its spirits grow from 3% of its revenue to the current 12% share. For the nine years, head spirits buyer David Driscoll has developed direct relationships with Scotch whisky distillers, bringing products from small-lot players into K&L's stores and cultivating a loyal customer base. S&D recently spoke with Driscoll about current Scotch whisky trends. [Read More](#)

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Discover Over 600 Italian Wines

On Feb. 6, the Italian Trade Commission will be holding a revamped edition of their annual VINO event in New York City at the stunning Spring Studios, showcasing extraordinary Italian wines from top to toe of the boot. Exclusively for trade and media, this day-long event will feature a press conference, three thought-provoking seminars and a grand tasting. Register online for free today! [Salute!](#)



MERCHANT SPOTLIGHT



Photo by Joseph Ferraro

Julio's Liquors Owner Ryan Maloney is the 2016 Market Watch Leaders Alumni Winner for "Best Marketing."

Ryan Maloney believes the key to retail success is treating people who visit his store not just as customers, but as fans. The owner of Julio's Liquors in Westborough, Massachusetts, aspires to a "try before you buy" philosophy and works closely with his staff to create that experience for shoppers. Customers can sample wine using the store's enomatic machines during regular operating hours and at its tasting events that are held several times a week. Julio's also hosts New England's largest annual whiskey(ly) Festival, and it offers a mobile application that allows people to snap a picture of the bottle they're drinking and order it from [Juliosliquors.com](#) with just a few clicks. [Read More](#)

NEW PRODUCT INTRODUCTIONS



Photo by: iStock/Elerium

Noteworthy Debuts

Gemma di Luna Moscato

Florida-based importers Elevation Brands launched a premium Italian sparkling wine this winter. Gemma di Luna Moscato (\$17 a 750-ml. bottle) is made with Moscato grapes from the Piemonte region and has nectarine, peach and apple flavors, with balanced acidity. The wine is now available nationwide. [Read More](#)

Les Dauphine Organic Côtes du Rhône Villages Rouge & Villages Puymeras Rouge

Rhône Valley producer Les Dauphins is launching two new wines in the U.S. market. Imported in 18 markets by Monsieur Torton Selection Ltd., Les Dauphine Organic Côtes du Rhône Villages Rouge (\$15 a 750-ml. bottle) is a blend of 60-percent Grenache, 30-percent Syrah, 5-percent Mourvèdre and 5-percent Carignan. Distributed in 15 states by Rume Ridge Wine Imports & Wholesale, the Côtes du Rhône Villages Puymeras Rouge (\$18) comprises 70-percent Grenache, 20-percent Syrah and 10-percent Mourvèdre. [Read More](#)

Woodford Reserve Celebrates its 20th Anniversary

Brown-Forman Corp.'s Woodford Reserve Bourbon had a lot to celebrate for its 20th anniversary this year. In 2015, the brand's volume rose 27.6 percent to 374,000 cases, according to Impact Databank. Woodford Reserve is one of the fastest-growing Bourbons on the market, with shipments nearly tripling over the past five years. "It's hard to believe we've gone from zero to over half a million cases globally in two decades," says master distiller Chris Morris, adding that the Woodford Reserve visitors center is the No. 3 destination on the Kentucky Bourbon Trail. Brown-Forman is launching a major packaging update across the Woodford Reserve line featuring new labels and a revamped look for the core range. [Read More](#)

WINE SPECTATOR CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS

Discover Wine Spectator's Top 100 Wines of 2016

Each year, Wine Spectator editors survey the wines reviewed over the previous 12 months and select the Top 100, based on quality, value, availability and endorsement. [Email us](#) today for the 2016 Top 100 Wines of the Year Poster.

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