



Module 1 – Spirits, Wine and Beer Basics

The Basics of Alcohol Beverages

Let's Understand Wine and Beer First

We don't know when people first started making alcoholic beverages, though we do know it happened long before people started writing books and keeping records about such matters. It's a natural process that takes place even when humans aren't involved. Wine, for one, can more or less make itself: If grapes are squashed into a container, their broken skins yield juice. Yeast, tiny creatures that live all around us, immediately begin consuming the sugars in the grape juice and convert that to alcohol. Leave grape juice alone for a few days and yeast will turn it into wine.

Beer is a bit more complicated, but we have proof that humans were making it at least 5,000 years ago. Sure, harvested grain could be turned into bread, but the baked good might only last a few weeks. Somewhere along the line people figured out that beer kept longer than bread. Both, interestingly enough, are created by yeasts: For bread, grind up the grains, make a dough and watch the yeasts make that dough rise. For beer, make the grains warm and wet so they start to sprout (grains are seeds, right?), roast them, grind them and add a lot of water to the mix. The sprouting makes the grains create sugar so the yeasts have something to work with. They ferment the sugar and voila—we have a kind of beer.

As yeasts turn sugar into alcohol (this is what we mean when we say “ferment”), they create carbon dioxide. That carbon dioxide is responsible for the bubbles in a mug of beer or in a glass of Champagne.

Beer 101

All beers are made in the manner described above, though most breweries don't actually take the time to sprout grains (all that preamble included). Instead they buy malt, which is what we call the grain that has been sprouted, roasted and ground.

Beer making is based on that grain, yeast and water. But we left out one very important component: hops. The hop itself is a little flower that people have been adding to their beers for centuries. Some use a lot of hops and some use a pinch. Either approach can make a big difference in the flavor profile and style of every beer on the market.

Types of Beer

Most people separate beers into two big categories: ales and lagers. What makes them different is a pretty small thing (literally): the kind of yeast used.

Ales: This style of beer is the product of how people first brewed beer: put the grainy soup into a big container and let the yeasts do their job. Yeasts need oxygen to work so fermentation happens at the top of the soup, where the air is. Most small breweries make ales, which usually have a lot of flavor derived from the grain used.

Lagers: This type of beer was created a few centuries ago. Instead of hanging out at the top of the soup, the yeasts that create lagers work at a slower pace at the bottom of the container. They tend to create a beer that is cleaner and lighter than ales and tastes less like the grain it was made from. The big breweries (Budweiser and Coors come to mind) make this kind of beer.

Craft Beer: You will hear this term often and it simply describes breweries that are smaller than the big, famous names. Some craft breweries have gotten very successful (think: Sam Adams) and have grown so large that the term “craft” might seem misplaced. But craft breweries like to make many different varieties and flavors of beers, while the big lager brewers tend to offer only a few types, sometimes just the marquee brand and its light version.

Imported Beer: These are brands that are traditionally brewed in other countries, even though some of them now have U.S. breweries that make the beer. Nonetheless, names like Heineken and Corona are associated with their countries of origin (the Netherlands and Mexico, respectively), whereas the big lager producers gained their fame in the U.S.

Fermentation 101

Not only can brewers change grains, yeasts or the amount of hops they use, but they can also make small tweaks like changing the temperature at which fermentation works. (Ales tend to use warmer fermentations; lagers happen at cooler temperatures.)

Color: If you want to make a so-called “dark beer,” roast the grains until they turn, well, dark. The darker grains will give the beer a darker color.

Aging: While all beer goes through a resting period, some craft breweries are now aging their beers in bourbon barrels or other containers. As you can imagine, the beer tends to pick up some flavor from those barrels.

Beer Brands: Most of the big beer brands are lagers, which means they tend to be lighter and milder than the ales that many craft brewers tend to produce.

Domestic Lagers: The famous names, such as Budweiser, Miller and Coors, are all lagers.

Import Lagers: The best-known imported brands, such as Heineken and Corona, are also lagers.

Craft and Regional Beers: Most regional breweries tend to be small and are often called craft breweries simply because of their size. The craft-brewery industry has a strong presence in the on-premise sector (restaurants, bars, hotels), but it's still smaller overall than many would assume, making up around 12 percent of all beers sold in the U.S.

Wine 101

While beer is made from grain, wine is made from fruit—and almost always from grapes. Wine is a lot simpler to make than beer since you don't need to sprout or roast grains. Take ripe, sweet grapes. Squash them. Let the yeasts take over. (Sometimes they need a little push: Most wineries actually add their own yeasts to hurry the process along.)

Basic Types of Wine

You can change the color and flavor of a wine by using different grapes. The skins from red grapes, for instance, give us red wine. But there are a few other things that can be done along the way.

Red Wine: In this case, the grape juice and the grape skins soak together for a few days or even a few weeks. There isn't only color in those red-grape skins—there's flavor, too.

White Wine: White wine is normally made from white grapes, but almost all red grapes have clear juice. The color comes from the skins. That's why you can have something called White Zinfandel even though Zinfandel is a red grape. The grapes are squished and the juice is poured into another container, away from the skins.

Rosé Wine: In this case, somebody squashes up red grapes and waits a few hours before separating out the juice. Just a bit of red color shows up in the wine, which makes it sort of pink.

Sparkling Wine: Remember we said that yeasts cause carbon dioxide bubbles to form? Most winemakers let those bubbles float away into the air (not many people want a bubbly red wine). Champagne or sparkling wine is made in closed containers that keep the bubbles from dissipating. Fizzy or sparkling wine is dependent on bubbles.

Fortified Wine: You will see a few fortified wines behind the bar; port, sherry and vermouth are the main types. Each is a wine that has had a high-proof spirit (think of it as grape-based vodka) mixed in to boost alcoholic strength. So while most white, red and sparkling wines are anywhere from 12 percent to 15 percent alcohol, a fortified wine is closer to 18 percent to 20 percent alcohol. Handle with care!

Wine Making

We've explained how sparkling wine gets its fizz and how red wine gets its color. But some red grapes are darker in color than others and each grape has its own set of flavors and aromas.

Grapes: There are thousands of different kinds of grapes that are used to make wine. No one expects you to know more than a dozen or so, but being familiar with their names will help you explain what they taste like to your guests.

Color: Not all red grapes look alike—some are darker than others. A darker grape like Cabernet Sauvignon tends to make darker wine than, say, a Pinot Noir grape, which is lighter in color.

Aroma: Each grape has its own set of aromas. Cabernet Sauvignon smells like black cherries, while Pinot Noir smells like red cherries or even strawberries. No one has added those fruits to the wine. The grapes naturally have those flavors.

Flavor: Flavors and smells are closely related, but some grapes have much more of the former than others. Sauvignon Blanc, for instance, tends to have an herbal flavor and aroma, which can be very intense.

Price: When people think of an expensive wine, they expect it to be more flavorful and more aromatic than a less-expensive choice. This is normally true.

Fermentation: Yeasts ferment the juice from squashed grapes into wine. One way you can change the flavors a bit is by fermenting the wine inside an oak barrel instead of the usual stainless steel tank. People have been using oak for centuries, but we associate barrel fermentation mostly with Chardonnay, a white grape that really takes to the toasty, spicy flavors that an oak barrel imparts.

Aging: Many robust red wines are aged for a year or two inside oak barrels, a process that adds aroma, flavor and texture. Similarly to Chardonnay, those flavors and aromas are best described as toasty or spicy.

Specific Types of Wine

Knowing the name of the grape that a wine is made from should help you determine how it will smell and taste. Here is a helpful list.

There are 6 grape varieties known as the “Noble Grapes.” Chardonnay, Riesling, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon & Merlot.

Red Wine

Pinot Noir: This grape tends to be lighter in color than Cabernet or Merlot and it has a red-fruits aroma (red cherries, strawberries, raspberries).

Merlot: Most people find Merlot to be softer and milder than Cabernet, but with similar flavors. It can smell a bit herbal and have occasional hints of blueberry.

Syrah: This is generally a rich wine with plenty of black-cherry flavors and a distinct taste of black pepper.

Malbec: One of the most popular grapes, this has very rich blackberry and even boysenberry flavors.

Cabernet Sauvignon: This features black cherry, blackberries, black pepper and even the smell of cedar at times.

Zinfandel: A rich and powerful red wine that can be made into a sweet rosé wine, too (see below), this tastes more like red fruits than black fruits—and often has a raisin character.

Red Blends: These are becoming increasingly popular. Since they contain more than one grape, they display lots of different flavors.

White Wine

Pinot Grigio: Made famous in Italy, this is always light and crisp with apple and lemon flavors.

Riesling: Most people think of this as a sweet wine, which is often the case. It can be dry, too, but it usually smells like sweet fruits (peaches, apricots), apples and occasionally flowers.

Moscato: This is usually sold as a sweet wine and always has a wonderfully floral aroma.

Sauvignon Blanc: This is a light, crisp, tangy wine that often smells a bit herbal.

Chardonnay: Chardonnays don't need to be aged in a barrel, but they usually display the toasty, spicy notes of one. They also often smell buttery.

Rosé Wine

Pinot Noir, Grenache, Mourvedre and Zinfandel are the most popular rosé grape varieties. Rosé can range from dry to sweet.

Sparkling Wine

Champagne: A region noted for its limestone and chalk soils, the Champagne region of France is the most famous sparkling wine-producing region in the world—so famous that some brands in California still use the term “Champagne” for their sparkling wines. But most producers outside of France simply call their products sparkling wine.

Other Sparkling Wines: You may hear about other popular sparkling wines around the world. Italy makes one called prosecco and Spain has one called cava.

Fortified Wine

Vermouth: The vermouth—either sweet or dry—that is used in Manhattans, Rob Roys and even some Martinis is actually a fortified wine with added herbs for flavor.

Port: Named after its home country of Portugal, port is a sweet, fortified wine with lots of black-fruit and raisin flavors.

Sherry: Sherry is traditionally from Spain and is much less fruity than port. It tends to have caramel, toffee and even butterscotch flavors.

New World Wines vs. Old World Wines

Wine educators tend to focus on the New World (any place colonized by Europeans) and the Old World (Europe, the Mediterranean basin and the Near and Middle East).

New World Countries and Regions

Argentina

Argentina has a long history as a wine producer. At various times, the country has been the world's thirstiest drinker, too. But consumption has declined precipitously during the last 20 years, which forced Argentina to focus on exports courtesy of the Malbec grape. Big, ripe and fruity, Malbec has exploded in popularity, but its rise mirrors the decline of Australia's Shiraz. Most Malbec is grown in the elevated Mendoza region, near the foothills of the lofty Andes Mountain ranges.

Australia

Australia is a vast country with a relatively small population that is, nonetheless, wild about its wines. They produce some of the world's best Shiraz and Chardonnay along with a host of other varieties suited to the diverse climate of Australia.

There are thousands of Australian wineries and many are not making Shiraz. (The list of high quality wines is prodigious, though the world hasn't noticed yet.) The coastal wine regions of Australia are betting things are about to improve.

Chile

Few Americans are aware that a large percentage of their off-season produce and fruit is grown in Chile, and the country has been just as focused on producing lots of reasonably priced wine, too. Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon have been the biggest successes so far. White wines are beginning to gain attention as they improve in quality. But the Chileans are trying to figure out how to change their market position, eager to be known for more than value wines. The next few years may bring a change in their fortunes.

New Zealand

Of all the wine-producing countries in the world, New Zealand receives the highest per-bottle price for their products, which is no small achievement. Since the mid-1980s, Kiwis have redefined Sauvignon Blanc with their iteration of the wine: a profoundly herbaceous white. But just as Australia relied solely upon the Shiraz grape, there is concern that New Zealand has no backup plan for when the world tires of its particular style of Sauvignon Blanc. Time will tell.

South Africa

Though relatively new to American wine drinkers, South Africa has been producing quality wine for more than three centuries. No single grape, style or region dominates, but South African whites have been more successful in the United States than South African reds. Chardonnay, Chenin Blanc and New Zealand-like Sauvignon Blancs have prospered; among the reds, Cabernets and Merlots can be somewhat herbal and earthy in style. Rhone varieties are more consistent and seem to be in the ascendant.

United States

Wine is made in all 50 states. But the West Coast dominates the trade, with California accounting for the greatest percentage by a sizable margin. Washington State is gaining market share, particularly for red wines of excellent value, though the state makes every sort of wine from many different grapes. Oregon has hitched its star to Pinot Noir; many consider it a worthy competitor to Burgundy. Pinot Gris and Chardonnay are increasing in quality and sales strength, too.

New York State and Michigan make what could reasonably be considered the top Rieslings in the country. The middle and southeastern portions of the U.S. rely upon hybrid grapes—these are genetic crossings between the Eurasian vinifera grapevine and any of the two-dozen native American grapevines. These hybrids survive the brutal winters and torrid summers, as well as the native bugs that bedevil vinifera grapevines.

California's vineyards encompass all but a bit of its northern coast. The interior, too, sees a vast swath of vines, particularly in the massive Central Valley, where grapevines sit alongside tomatoes, asparagus, bell peppers and all other manner of produce. But with some notable exceptions, most of California's top wines are grown near the Pacific Ocean. The waters off the coast are frigid and create cooling winds and fogs during much of the growing season, which are the principle reasons that California has succeeded in the wine game.

Old World Countries and Regions

Austria

Austria's primary grape is called Grüner Veltliner—a pungent and tangy white wine that can be light and refreshing or relatively powerful and long lasting.

France

France has been the emblem of all that is great in wine throughout the last couple of centuries. And while numerous other countries compete with the country for tops in wine

quality, France sits as the uncontested leader when it comes to excellence in all styles of wine.

- Alsace: Germany has controlled this region often throughout its history, so the bottles look Germanic and the grapes seem so, too. Gewürztraminer, Riesling, Sylvaner, Muscat, Pinot Gris—it's all about the white wines, which can be light and refreshing or dense, rich, powerful and long lasting.
- Bordeaux: The list of famous châteaux in Bordeaux is long and its history stretches for centuries. But most people don't realize that the most widely planted grape in the region is Merlot—far more than Cabernet Sauvignon. Though the famous names are absurdly expensive, most of the wines among Bordeaux's 10,000 different labels are far less pricey.

The 5 First Growths (Premiers Crus) of Bordeaux are:

- Chateau Lafite Rothschild (1855 Classification)
- Chateau Latour (1855 Classification)
- Chateau Margaux (1855 Classification)
- Chateau Haut Brion (1855 Classification)
- Chateau Mouton Rothschild (1973 classification change)

About 15 percent of all Bordeaux is white wine, made from Sauvignon Blanc often mixed with Sémillon. There is a small amount of dessert wine made from these two grapes, which hail from the sub regions of Sauternes and Barsac.

Yet it's the famous red wines that keep Bordeaux front and center for some wine drinkers, most of who are older and more traditional buyers of wine. Younger drinkers show less inclination to treat Bordeaux with respect and the Bordelais producers are just waking up to this threatening situation. They are convinced that their wines are supreme, but they need to get to work in order to retain that perceived dominance.

- Burgundy: This tightly defined region is best known for expensive Pinot Noir and Chardonnay. Beaujolais, whose region sits within Burgundy, is made from the Gamay grape and is generally fruity and tangy. The region also makes less expensive wines, but the prices have risen so precipitously over the last two decades that virtually nothing in Burgundy is cheap anymore.

Burgundy also encompasses the Chablis region, offering a steely, tart Chardonnay wine whose name was stolen decades ago to sell cheap white wine to Americans. True Chablis is an age-worthy, bracing choice.

At the top end you'll find bottles that many believe exhibit wine's greatest and most elegant expressions. But at the current prices, only millionaires may get to find out if that's true or not.

- Champagne: As noted elsewhere in this text, Champagne is a place that makes a very famous sparkling wine. Other areas make sparkling wine, too. But the Champagne method involves putting a thin wine into a bottle with yeast and sugar and letting the yeast consume the sugar to create carbon-dioxide bubbles. That's the origin of the sparkle.

The Champagne region is comprised of limestone and chalk—soils that seem to give a racy tartness that adds to the complexity of bubbly. But the greater part of Champagne's unique character comes from long-aging *sur lie*, a term that describes wines in which yeasts die (once they have created carbon dioxide) and begin to desiccate inside the bottle over a number of years. Their decay results in aromas of vanilla, toast, biscuit and even cheese and mushrooms.

- Languedoc-Roussillon: This vast region makes more wine than all of California. Some of it is quite good and some of it is pedestrian. Every kind of grape imaginable is grown here.
- Loire Valley: The Loire, the longest river in France, harbors a number of successful wines: Sauvignon Blanc is tops in the eastern portion, particularly in regions such as Sancerre and Pouilly Fumé. In the middle part of the valley, Chenin Blanc is used to make dry wines, sparkling wines, slightly sweet wines and intense dessert wines. Cabernet Franc is also used to produce tangy, dusty reds.

At the mouth of the river, near the town of Nantes, a grape called Melon is used to make Muscadet. These wines were once very popular in the U.S. and may be getting some attention today. Muscadet is racy, mild and in some ways more like tart beer than wine.

- Rhône Valley: This large region in southern France is more like two areas: The northern part is primarily planted with Syrah (the Aussies call that grape Shiraz) and the southern part is populated with more than two dozen different grapes, though Grenache dominates and is the best known among them. In the north, Syrah can be bottled as other names of locations, such as Hermitage and Côte-Rôtie. The Northern Rhône also has white wines made from the Viognier, Roussanne and Marsanne grapes.

The Southern Rhône is a broad and diverse area, but its top sites (like Châteauneuf-du-Pape and Gigondas) rely upon Grenache blended with other grapes. A small amount of (usually) bland white wine is also produced.

Germany

Riesling is king in Germany, though other grapes are grown. German Riesling is famous for its sweet white wines, though it surprises most people to learn that the Germans drink far more dry German Riesling than the sweet versions. There is no shame in loving the fruitier or sweeter Rieslings: Most of the world's wine writers consider it to be one of the greatest of whites.

Germany's wine labels are famously arcane. They offer categories of ripeness, but most people interpret these terms—Kabinett, Spätlese, Auslese, Beerenauslese, Trockenbeerenauslese and Eiswein (in ascending order of grape ripeness)—as guides to a wine's sweetness. If a label includes the solitary word "trocken" (which means "dry"), its wine will be dry even if it is considered Kabinett, Spätlese or Auslese. Confused yet? Welcome to the world of German wine labels.

Greece

The cradle of winemaking (and civilization) began making quality wines only recently, but its offerings—and its world sales—are definitely growing.

Portugal

Portugal's most famous wines—port and Madeira, in particular—are fortified. Port is grown in the hot Douro Valley, where about three-dozen legal grapes are grown, but Touriga Nacional is the one that gets all the press. Vintage dated ports can last for decades; cheaper types should be consumed within a few weeks after opening.

The island of Madeira grows five or so grapes to supply its fortified wines: Sercial and Verdelho are usually made into off-dry wines; Bual, Malmsey and Tinta Negra Mole produce very sweet fortified wines.

Portugal's table wines are growing in popularity, but remain fairly marginal in North America.

Spain

Spain has its own famous fortified wine, sherry, which can be sweet or dry. Its table wines are better known: Rioja is the region with the longest history as an export product. It can be smoky, earthy, spicy, fruity and everything in between.

The region known as Priorat makes powerfully fruity, almost wildly intense red wines. Not far away, near the beautiful city of Barcelona, most of the country's popular sparkling wine called cava is made.

One of Spain's best known exports, Albariño, is a white grape and wine grown at the other end of the country in the northwest.

Spirits: Now Let's Cook It Up

We introduced you to beers and wines first because spirits are really nothing more than lightly boiled (we say distilled) beers or wines. Think of it this way: A distilled spirit is a more concentrated version of the beverage you began with.

How do you make spirits? Distillation is based upon a very simple principle: alcohol turns to vapor at a lower temperature than water does. Distillers collect that alcohol vapor through a tube that leads to another container called a condenser. It cools there and condenses back into a liquid.

Distillation is the basic principle of separating alcohol from water and is based on the fact that alcohol turns into vapor at a lower temperature than water does.

Flavoring

Distillers have been flavoring spirits for centuries. Our most popular flavored spirits are flavored vodkas, but look at any back bar and you'll see brands like Cointreau (flavored with oranges), Myers's Dark Rum (flavored with spices) and Malibu (flavored with fruits and coconut). But many other spirits, such as whiskies, have achieved all their flavors from base ingredients and barrel aging.

Types of Spirits

Un-aged: Spirits such as vodka, gin, rum and tequila go directly from the still and straight (more or less) into the bottle. Because they are typically distilled to higher proofs and already possess the desired body and flavor profile, they don't need the additional flavors that aging provides to demonstrate complexity. With a little light filtration (OK, sometimes heavy filtration), they are good to go!

Aged: Some spirits—bourbon, Scotch whisky, Irish whiskey, Canadian whisky, cognac, aged rum, tequila—are traditionally aged in oak barrels. The effects of aging a spirit in oak can have a positive influence on the character and flavor of the spirit, not to mention the color.

Distillation 101

The goal of distillation is to concentrate the alcohol of an alcohol beverage, such as a wine or a beer. The wine or beer is warmed to about 173 degrees Fahrenheit, at which point the alcohol begins to vaporize. The goal is to separate the alcohol from the water in the beverage. Since water boils at 212 degrees Fahrenheit, keeping the temperature lower will allow the alcohol to vaporize alone.

In a traditional pot still, vapor rises to the top of the still and rolls down a pipe (often called the lyne arm) that directs it into a cooling vessel or condenser. As it cools, it turns back into a liquid, but now it's more concentrated than before. It is also colorless.

Here's one important point: not all the vapor is good. Since different alcohols evaporate at different temperatures, distillers will collect the first 5 percent or 10 percent or 15 percent of vapor—we call that the "heads"—and either throw it out or add it back to the beer or wine they started with. Then they redistill it. The same may be done with the last 10 percent or so of vapor—we call that part the "tails." The real goal of a distiller is to keep the middle portion—the "heart"—of the spirit.

Distillers may take their spirits through multiple distillations in an effort to improve and concentrate flavors. But the number of times that a spirit is distilled is less important than

the cleanliness and character of the raw ingredients—and the distiller's willingness to separate the heart from the heads and the tails.

Pot Stills vs. Continuous Stills

Two basic stills are in use: pot stills and continuous stills (sometimes called column stills). Pot stills have been around for at least a few thousand years; continuous stills were invented in the early 19th century.

The pot still is just what it sounds like: a big pot with a heat source underneath it. The distiller fills it with wine or beer and then tries to keep the temperature well below 212 degrees Fahrenheit, until he or she has drawn out as much spirit as possible. Classic spirits like cognac, single malt Scotch, single-pot-still Irish whiskeys and some rums and tequilas are still made in pot stills. Each distillation will increase the alcoholic strength of the wine or beer, but, in order to get to something close to pure alcohol, many distillations would be required over the course of four or five days.

The continuous still was invented to solve that problem. It is essentially like many pot stills stacked on top of each other. Inside each pot, or chamber, beer and vapor bounces around, with the beer flowing down into the next chamber below and the alcohol vapor flowing up to the top. Some of these continuous stills are many yards tall and may contain hundreds of individual chambers. A few runs through this type of still results in nearly pure alcohol coming out of the condenser. This is the still used for making vodka, gin and most whiskies.

MODULE 2 – White Spirits

Vodka

What makes some vodkas great? Vodka quality is based on the quality of the raw ingredients and the quality of distillation. Some distillers use specially selected wheat, for instance, and some use leftover, moldy grain. (Imagine that.) It is important to note that the quality of a vodka has nothing to do with the number of times it has been distilled.

Vodka is a nearly neutral spirit distilled many times to achieve smoothness. It can be distilled from virtually any grain—or anything else, for that matter. It's usually bottled at about 40 percent alcohol by volume (we call that 80-proof), but some serious vodkas have higher proofs. Though Absolut's flavored vodkas are bottled at 80-proof, they are the exception that proves the rule: most flavored vodkas are bottled at 70-proof. Seriousness is not their intent, but good flavor is certainly the goal, if not always the reality.

The U.S. government defines vodka as being "...without distinctive character, aroma, taste, or color...", yet many premium and super-premium vodkas are, in fact, highly individual, flavorful and distinctive. Though vodka is a subtle spirit, if you put two of them next to each other and smell each alternately, you will very likely notice that they smell different. Sometimes it's the base ingredient(s) utilized. But quite often the quality of the distillation makes the difference. Quality of distillation is built chiefly upon the notion of a selective distillation process, whereby the heads and the tails are removed (see "Distillation 101" if you've forgotten this part) and either tossed out or mixed with the beer for the next distillation.

The rocket ship-size column stills used to distill vodka could easily dispel the claims that a vodka is better because it's distilled more times than its competitor. Each column still holds 50, 80 or even a hundred chambers, each like a little pot still itself. After bouncing around those chambers once, twice, three or more times, how much has the vodka been distilled? A whole lot.

But the world of vodka is getting complicated. Small-scale distillers eagerly embrace the spirit's ability to move to market quickly, without the muss and fuss of barrel aging. Some of those show more rawness and rusticity. Even successful distillers like Absolut have chosen to turn back the clock: Elyx, which is distilled in a copper still dating back to 1921, has one master distiller managing the entire process from start to finish. But many, if not most, start-ups buy spirit from large producers like MGP (Midwest Grain Products, where most of the nation's rye whiskey is made). They depend on such sources, and may distill or rectify a product an additional time to claim it as their own. None to date use the Absolut method of single-source grain, water and spirit.

Ingredients: The overwhelming majority of vodkas are produced from grains, in particular barley, wheat (both summer and winter varieties), corn (maize), millet, oats and rye. You might have heard that potatoes are the original source of vodka. Some vodkas

are produced from potatoes, especially in Poland and in the states of Idaho, Pennsylvania and Maine. But you can use just about anything to make the spirit: sugarcane, beetroot, apples, pumpkins, carrots, whey and even onions.

The base materials are first made into a mash, a soupy mix of water, yeast and grain or vegetable matter. The mash is fermented into a low-alcohol liquid, normally between 6 percent and 11 percent alcohol. Let's just call that beer.

Process: The beer (OK, the fermented mash) is distilled in continuous or column stills until the alcohol level reaches something near 96.4 percent, whereupon it's considered neutral grain spirit (ethyl alcohol), or NGS for short.

Currently, only a smattering of premium and super-premium vodkas are distilled in the very, very old-school batch process of small, labor-intensive copper pot stills. Column stills ensure copious volumes of pure, high-alcohol spirit that can be quickly filtered, bottled and placed into the marketplace within weeks. Vodka is a reliable moneymaker for distillers because there is no time wasted with wood maturation or long storage in warehouses.

Aging and Maturation: Vodkas are rarely aged in wood barrels (though it happens occasionally in Eastern Europe). Wood maturation or aging of any kind, in fact, undercuts the premise of vodka: fresh, clean, un-aged spirit.

Filtration: Unlike the number of times a vodka is distilled, filtration can have a real effect on a spirit's character. Charcoal filtering, the most prevalent, imparts a hint of sweet smokiness—a sooty quality. Quartz, minerals, rocks, sand, silver, platinum and even cloth or fiber panels are used and can change the character of a vodka, as weird as that sounds. But we've seen it work.

Many vodka producers will make much out of their filtration process. Certain materials may remove specific undesirable characteristics, though some producers believe that good things might be removed along with the bad. Absolut, for instance, uses only a light cellulose (cloth) filtration, convinced that anything more draconian would strip the spirit of some of its best attributes. It's worth noting that Absolut uses no additives, either; many vodkas on the market resort to finishing their spirits with sugar, glycerin or citric acid. Needless to say, this is not how Absolut works.

Flavored Vodkas: These differ from gin in that there are no botanical flavorings added to them. Flavored vodkas have specific fruit, bean, vegetable or spice flavorings thrown in (orange, raspberry, vanilla, lemon, pepper, coffee, chocolate, cucumber, tomato, orange, pomegranate), not the delicately intricate botanical mixtures found in gin. There are, however, vodkas from Eastern Europe and Russia that are flavored with grass.

The U.S. market consumes 60 percent of all flavored vodkas sold. And vodkas have been flavored with myriad additives since the Middle Ages so they are hardly newfangled concoctions. Flavoring was done in ancient times to mask the deficiencies of early distillation, covering up nastiness in a raw spirit.

Flavoring is added through any number of techniques. The cheapest method entails buying artificial flavoring from a chemist and dumping it in. Such “compounding,” as it is called, can be easy to spot: most compounders (those chemists) will add sugar to their flavoring, making the end result distinctly sweet. Other practices include infusion or maceration, in which the flavors are soaked in water or alcohol and then added to the spirit. Others will distill the vodka with the flavoring ingredients, much in the manner of high-quality gin distillation. But again, sugar can help tie the flavors together and many, if not most, flavored vodkas have some sweetness. Absolut is an outlier in that none of its flavored vodkas contain added sugar—a point that becomes important when making a cocktail. Using a sweetened vodka in a classic recipe that is based on a dry vodka may require an adjustment.

The most typical kinds of flavored vodkas employ fruit essences, namely lemon, lime, orange, raspberry, strawberry, peach, black currant, pineapple, tangerine, pear and cranberry. Other contemporary flavorings include vanilla, coffee, cinnamon, chili pepper, grass and chocolate. Many of these flavored gems are every bit as high quality as their unflavored siblings.

History: The word “vodka” is said to have derived from the Russian and Polish term *zhizenennia voda*, which translates to “water of life.” Though the evidence is unclear, some historians believe that vodka, in primitive form, was available sporadically in northern Europe and Russia as far back as the 14th century. Interestingly, the word vodka doesn’t show up until the late 18th century. Before that, the word “okowita” (“water of life” or “aquavit”) was used, as well as other local terms.

But vodka was slow to take hold in North America. Gin, bourbon, blended American whiskey and Scotch whisky were the spirits of choice from the end of Prohibition (1933) up to the mid-1960s. In the 1950s, the producers of domestically made (Connecticut), but Russian sounding, Smirnoff vodka started an aggressive advertising and marketing campaign that used celebrities touting the phrase “Smirnoff Leaves You Breathless,” implying that, as opposed to other popular spirits like brandy, gin and whiskey, vodka didn’t leave the scent of alcohol on one’s breath.

Heublein, Smirnoff’s parent company, also pushed vodka as a key and revolutionary cocktail ingredient in mixed drinks, such as the Moscow Mule, the Screwdriver, the Vodka Gimlet and the Vodkatini. Vodka continues to be a highly favored base ingredient for cocktails today, though it should be pointed out that gin is making measurable gains with many influential mixologists in pivotal metropolitan areas.

In 1967, vodka surpassed gin in case sales in the U.S. marketplace for the first time in history. In 1976, it overtook North American blended whiskey (Seagram’s VO and Seagram’s 7 Crown, in particular, which had held the No. 1 and No. 2 spots for decades) and became the leading spirits segment in categorical sales.

In 1979, the introduction of Sweden’s Absolut vodka marked the beginning of the “premium spirits” era in North America and much of the world. More than its distinctive

apothecary style bottle, Absolut's impeccable quality sparked a revolution in high-quality spirits that drives sales to this day.

Vodka is the accepted No. 1 spirits category worldwide, accounting for more than one out of every four bottles of distilled spirits sold for a total of 520 million cases annually. Vodka is wildly popular for two reasons. First, it can be made anywhere from virtually anything for not a lot of money and—if marketed right—can return substantial margins on investment.

Second, no other spirit mixes as well in a wide array of cocktails as vodka. Since its attributes are so subtle, it complements scores of ingredients. More cocktails have vodka as their base spirit than any other type of distillate. In short, production volume, net revenues earned and applications of the product work to vodka's advantage more than any other category of distillate.

Vodka wasn't an ingredient that American bartenders used regularly—or even offered—until the 1950s. It quickly became a spirit of choice as consumers gravitated toward its light, mild character. By 1976, it was the No. 1 spirit in the U.S. and remains so today.

A Summary

While too-cool-for-school hipsters take pleasure in reporting on the death of vodka, there's one small problem: the spirit is, in fact, alive and kicking. Vodka accounts for a whopping 34 percent of all spirits sold in America. That's worth repeating: 34 percent. And, yes, while the category has absorbed some well-deserved criticism recently about the flurry of insipid bakery and candy shop-inspired flavorings that were inexplicably popular over the last few years, the worst of that infestation is over.

Vodka's crazy increases in the global market may be slowing, but it still accounts for 520 million cases sold per year, which equates to 200 bottles consumed each second and almost a quarter of all spirits sold in the world.

Now it's time to get back to what brought vodka to the top: serious unflavored vodkas, in particular those in the high-end arena (up 3.2 percent in 2013, with increases leveling in 2014) and traditional flavored varieties, such as those flavored or infused with citrus, berry, coffee or spices. Another fast-developing vodka story swirls around the high-end and super-premium vodkas like Grey Goose VX (\$75), which is a marriage of vodka and year-old Cognac (in truth, it's eau-de-vie and not fully aged cognac); Stolichnaya Elit (\$60); and Absolut Elyx (\$55)—a hyper-localized product with terroir as its guiding principle. The idea here is a worthy one since such vodkas have real pedigree and that is a good story. Watch for an increased emphasis on gluten-free vodkas, too.

Long story short, vodka remains the big dog in the spirits yard and will remain so for the foreseeable future. When distilled with precision, it is a remarkable, stylish addition to a lifestyle that includes fine distillates and their first mates, cocktails. As always, genuine appreciation always dawns in the light of responsible use and moderation.

Cocktails: Because of its neutral aroma and flavor profile, vodka can be found in a wide variety of cocktails. But because it's only been popular in the U.S. for 60 or 70 years, it's rarely an ingredient in historic or classic cocktails. Still, the Martini—the most classic of them all and once mixed exclusively with gin and vermouth—is now likelier to be made with vodka.

Popular Cocktails: Martini, Bloody Mary, Moscow Mule

Gin

Some people seem to have an attitude when it comes to gin. Maybe they had a bad experience once. But gin has a cocktail history as long or longer than any other spirit. And it isn't any stronger or more powerful than other spirits, at least generally speaking. So if gin made you crazy once, you probably just had too much of it.

Gin is neutral spirit that has been flavored or re-distilled with the addition of natural flavorings, also known as botanicals, with juniper berries as the predominant flavor. Juniper berries impart a piney, citrusy, peppery aroma. That aroma may put some people off, but gin was the No. 1 spirit of choice for Americans for decades and it shows up in an inordinately large percentage of classic drinks, since it was dominant during the original era of cocktails.

Gin's flavoring is rarely limited to juniper. Coriander is a crucial botanical, or flavoring element (bark, spice, flower, herb, seed, root, or such). Among the brand descriptions below you'll find examples of typical botanical recipes. But EU (European Union) regulations require that juniper is a dominant flavoring element.

Ingredients: The word “gin” is a shortening (and mispronunciation) of genever, a Dutch term that means juniper. Juniper berries had been used for centuries as a medicine and the Dutch made a spirit in which those berries were either soaked or distilled. Today, distillers will likely use many other botanicals (or flavorings), such as coriander, lemon peel, grapefruit peel, angelica, orris root and lots of other things you've never heard of. Each brings specific character to the spirit: juniper is distinctive and coriander offers an herbal, peppery character, as well as (perhaps surprisingly) citrus notes.

Licorice adds its usual herbal/floral scent along with an earthy element. Angelica is earthy, too, though the flowers have floral elements and the root has a sweet character. Orris root acts as a binder and is frequently used in perfumes for the same purpose. Possible botanicals comprise a nearly endless list, but fruits, teas, spices, nuts and herbs are likely candidates.

Process: Most gin distillers start with a neutral spirit, such as vodka, that has been distilled in continuous stills and then re-distill the spirit in a modified pot still. Many producers, such as Beefeater, use a traditional pot still to make their gin. Botanicals are placed in the still, along with the neutral spirit, and allowed to steep for a period of time before the stills fire up. The alcohol is then condensed and collected with the flavor of the botanicals now present in the spirit. Some producers use vapor infusion to flavor gin.

This would involve the use of a type of still called a Carterhead still, in which a basket full of botanicals is placed at the top, which allows alcohol vapors to pass through it, picking up some of the flavors of the botanicals before condensing. Distillers of inexpensive gin will simply buy premade flavor essences or essential oils and dump them directly into a spirit, but those gins can't be labeled London Dry Gin. The EU defines simple gin as a "juniper-flavored spirit drink produced by flavoring organoleptically suitable ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin with juniper berries." The minimum alcohol level is 37.5 percent and, interestingly, only "natural and/or nature-identical flavoring substances" can be used.

The EU says that distilled gin is a "juniper-flavored spirit drink produced exclusively by redistilling organoleptically suitable ethyl alcohol of agricultural origin of an appropriate quality with an initial alcoholic strength of at least 96% volume in stills traditionally used for gin, in the presence of juniper berries and of other natural botanicals provided that the juniper taste is predominant." Again, the minimum alcohol level is 37.5 percent.

The top category London Gin has limits on methanol (maximum .005 percent) and requires that all flavors are "introduced exclusively through the re-distillation in traditional stills of ethyl alcohol in the presence of all the natural plant materials used." It has to come off the still at a minimum of 70 percent alcohol, be bottled at a minimum 37.5 percent alcohol and can't contain sweetening beyond .01 percent of the volume, nor any colorants. It can be labeled London Gin or London Dry Gin.

Most gin producers purchase neutral grain spirit to use as a base for making gin. Some will rectify the spirit an additional time, intent upon cleaning up something they deem unworthy. The base spirit for both Beefeater and Plymouth gin is made from wheat.

As has been true for centuries, inexpensive gins are compounded, meaning artificial or purchased flavoring ingredients are added. The traditional method is pot-still distillation (or, really, re-distillation) with the botanicals in the still. Some lighter-style gins, such as Bombay Sapphire, make much of their use of gin baskets to separate the heated liquid from the botanicals. They're located along the lyne arm so that only vapor comes into contact with them and, like in a moonshiner's slobber box, the vapors pass into the botanicals on their way to the condenser.

The Carterhead still used to make Hendrick's gin also adopts a position above and not within the still, though the brand also utilizes a very small Bennett still, in which botanicals steep for 24 hours (sound familiar?). Then the distillates from the two processes are blended together along with cucumber and rose-petal essences. What separates this from standard compounding is that the juniper is traditionally infused, though the cucumber and roses are not.

Though there was a time when steaming botanicals rather than distilling them sounded more natural (much like steaming a vegetable versus cooking it), today we understand that it is a method that produces a lighter extraction, which might be appropriate for some styles of gin and not for others.

Aging and Maturation: Gin is not usually aged, but it can be—and there are a few smaller producers out there that have done just that. You may also occasionally run into an aged spirit labeled genever, a very traditional gin style from Holland, where gin was first born.

Styles of Gin: The European Union has set labeling standards that the rest of the world is generally following: If a spirit is labeled merely Gin, it will have been compounded, or will have had a solution of flavoring dumped into its otherwise neutral base spirit. If the spirit is labeled Distilled Gin, juniper flavoring will have been added solely through distillation with juniper berries, although other flavorings may be added post-distillation. The top style, London Gin (or London Dry Gin), has strict limits on purity and requires that all flavorings are “introduced exclusively through the re-distillation of botanicals in traditional stills...in the presence of all the natural plant materials used.” It needn’t be made in London.

Plymouth Gin is produced at Black Friars Distillery, exactly as it has been done since 1793. Its style is slightly softer and milder than typical London Dry Gin. Genever was mentioned above: It’s usually slightly sweet (sometimes more than slightly) and displays less of a pungent juniper element than London Dry Gin. Distinctly sweet Old Tom Gin falls somewhere between genever and London Dry Gin.

History: We associate gin with traditional England. The British initially called the stuff Dutch Courage, certain that it was the source of Dutch fearlessness in battle during the Peninsular Wars. The Brits started distilling it themselves and, since their rendition was drier than the traditionally sweet Dutch original, it was called London Dry Gin. That is the style we drink today, with the evergreen-tree aromas of juniper, the citrus kick of lemon and orange peel and (occasionally) a plethora of other botanicals (such as almonds, cardamom, licorice and angelica root) to give it aroma and flavor.

As the Crown allowed ordinary Brits to distill their own sort of ginever, a fully-fledged epidemic launched, with attendant human misery. That the worst of the Industrial Revolution—child labor, slum dwelling, depression, poverty—fueled gin addiction is often forgotten. Between heavy handed law enforcement and onerous taxation, it took decades to quell the scourge. Large-scale, corporate distillation prevailed, due to policy, economics and the new and efficient continuous stills of the early 19th century.

Despite the fact that the old stuff was always sweetened, the continuous-still style was called London Dry Gin, as it was indeed dry. That’s the gin people drink today, with the evergreen-tree aromas of juniper along with the citrus of lemon and lime and sometimes a dozen or more botanicals to give it aroma and flavor.

During the heyday of the first Golden Age of Cocktails (the late 19th and early 20th centuries), gin was the country’s most popular white spirit. It’s the original spirit of that era’s cocktails, too: the Martini, the Rickey and the Tom Collins. But vodka took over in the ’60s and ’70s and has never allowed gin to make a comeback. Today, however, it’s experiencing a resurgence, as bartenders rediscover their roots.

The Numerous Styles of Gin: As noted above, there is more than mere gin to consider. The EU acknowledges Gin and Distilled Gin (which allows the use of added flavoring ingredients), while London Distilled Gin, or London Distilled Dry Gin, requires that botanicals must be re-distilled in a pot still and are all-natural plant materials. (Despite its name, the gin needn't necessarily come from London.)

American gins aren't required to follow the EU rules, but American distillers follow the regulations anyway—perhaps out of respect, or because they have plans to sell their gins in Europe.

While distillers speak of (and, in some cases, label their gin as) Old Tom Gin, aside from a bit of barrel age and some overt sweetness, there isn't any regulated style to the variation. It could be made anywhere.

Meanwhile, genever/genièvre/jenever must be made in the Netherlands or in Belgium and is considered a PDO (Protected Designation of Origin), with its own sets of rules and regulations. Hollands Gin or Schiedam Gin are historical terms you may hear (the town of Schiedam once boasted hundreds of distilleries), but those are not PDOs.

There are currently nine other PDOs for gin in the EU: two from Germany, one each from Spain and Lithuania and five from Slovakia. Until mid-2015, Plymouth Gin was required to be made in the town of Plymouth, England.

Cocktails: The Gin and Tonic is a British invention, more or less intended to protect soldiers from malaria while they were on duty in India. It tastes good, too. For traditionalists, gin is the spirit that belongs in a Martini or a Collins.

Popular Cocktails: Martini, Tom Collins, French 75

Rum

Because rum is made from the sugarcane plant, it can often smell sweet—like banana, pineapple, vanilla and marshmallow. Some popular rum brands will sweeten their rum, but many of them aren't sweet at all. There is, however, a centuries-long history of sweetened and flavored rums.

Rum is a spirit distilled, usually, from molasses drawn from the juice of the sugarcane plant. Styles of rum are all over the place: Brands like Bacardi are light and clear, almost like a vodka. Brands like Myers's Dark are, well, dark, as well as spicy and slightly sweet. Some are clearly aged in oak and some are not. There are also many flavored rums entering the marketplace, generally competing with flavored vodkas.

Place of Origin: Rum is made in most nations (more than 70) where sugarcane is cultivated, most prominently Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti, Martinique, Guadeloupe, Marie-Galante, Barbados, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Panama, Venezuela, the Philippines, India, Java and the Dominican Republic.

Color: Rum can be white (colorless), lightly colored, amber or dark. Most very dark rums are colored with caramel or other coloring agents, though some gain their hue from extended oak aging.

Ingredients: Most rums are made from molasses bought from sugar manufacturers. Sugarcane juice is squeezed from the sugarcane stalk and then whirled in a large centrifuge, which collects the sugar and leaves molasses as a less-pure, but still very sweet, by-product. A few rums will distill all of the juice from the plant and not just the molasses, but most are content to use the less-expensive molasses.

Process: Distillers will dilute molasses with water and then ferment it, ending up with alcohol levels more or less the same as those of strong beers. It is then distilled into a spirit, either in pot stills (which produces a handful of intense rums) or in continuous stills (which results in something close to 98 percent of all rums found behind the bar).

Aging and Maturation: White rums are usually not aged in oak barrels, but if you see just a slight golden color it might indicate a bit of barrel aging. Dark or aged rums are matured for a few years or more, when they pick up some color from the wood, before being blended with caramel coloring to darken them even more. These may be sweet, or spicy, or both. There is a category called golden rum that is always sweetened up.

Styles of Rum: Just as corn can be used to make vodka, bourbon or gin, sugarcane is capable of producing myriad styles of spirit. Light rum is a broad category of generally un-aged spirits (Bacardi Light is barrel aged and then filtered to remove any color.) The style is associated with Cuba and Puerto Rico, but anywhere sugarcane spirit is made, a lighter style is always a possibility. Different regions have become known for certain styles: For generations, Jamaica has offered a dark and sometimes funky style of rum. Spiced and flavored rums, such as Myers's or Malibu, have a long heritage throughout the Caribbean. Haiti makes somewhat pungent rums made not from molasses, but from juice pressed directly from sugarcane.

Pressed sugarcane juice generally yields a more flavorful style of rum than that made from molasses, the by-product of separating raw sugar from cane juice. Some of those flavors can be pretty (think flowers) or unusual (think vegetables or meat). Each to his or her own, but we like the funky stuff a lot. Rhum agricole is a rum spirit made in this fashion. It's a product of the French Caribbean islands, such as Martinique, Marie-Galante and Guadeloupe.

Brazil grows so much sugarcane that the Brazilians are quite content to utilize cane juice instead of molasses; more of the country's cane crop is utilized for fuel or drink than for raw-sugar production. Cachaça, Brazil's national spirit, is a rum distilled directly from sugarcane juice and varies from pungent and funky (we told you how spirit made from the juice can be) to mild and rather neutral (at best).

History: As far as archeologists are able to determine, the very first spirit ever made on a large scale was distilled from sugarcane all the way back in 400 B.C. or so. After that, the record is fuzzy. But maybe that's how the record gets when people are drinking. Anyway,

we don't see evidence of distillation on that scale for another thousand years and by that time people are using their regular beer or sake as the base for spirits, not sugarcane.

When the conquistadors arrived in the Western Hemisphere, they found it much easier to distill the sugarcane and to slake their thirsts with the beer. To this day, rum is associated with the Caribbean islands or South America or even the pirates that once plundered those coasts. Cachaça is unique to Brazil.

Sugarcane is a perennial grass that grows in tropical and subtropical climates. It seems to originate in modern-day New Guinea, but is now grown worldwide. It was a particularly important raw material that supported the slave trade between Europe and the Western Hemisphere, so many people associate it primarily with the Caribbean and South America.

Alexander the Great described seeing it in present-day India and archaeological digs recently unearthed a large-scale distillation operation in the northern area of what is now Pakistan. The clay stills found there have been carbon dated to 250 B.C., rendering our notions of how distillation was invented by Irish monks in the 12th century badly out of whack with reality.

But we don't know with any certainty who decided to distill molasses (the by-product of sugar production) in the Western Hemisphere, though necessity, as they say, is the mother of invention. Our first record is in 1651, on the island of Barbados, which is still the source of several classic Caribbean rums. The vast slave machinery was often used to pick sugarcane, a dirty and difficult job, with each field offering between two and six harvests per year. Rudimentary mills and vast pots for boiling sludge, all supported by unpaid and miserable labor (either slaves or indentured servants), cropped up on virtually every Caribbean island and across the lowlands of South America. The sugar created filled the bellies of Europeans and satiated a new craving that hadn't previously been fed so readily. Until someone hit on the idea of distilling the molasses by-product, most producers were dumping it into the ocean.

But once they got the hang of it, people realized that distilling molasses into rumblution or rumbustion or kill-devil was pretty easy, providing not only a new source of revenue, but also a product that wouldn't go bad no matter how hot the sun or how long the sea voyage. By the 1600s, navies were reliant upon it. A daily tot of "grog" was a feature of sea life for a British sailor until the early 1960s.

We have learned to associate specific islands or countries with certain styles of rum, but it's important to understand that there is nothing about any of these places that necessitates such associations. It's more a matter of the production habits of each country and that is often based simply upon what the prevailing technology was when each became active in the distilling business. Barbados is still associated with a rich style of molasses-based rum, which often spends more than a few years in oak barrels. Jamaican rum is assumed to be of a pungent and dark style. The Jamaicans utilized dunder (fermenting molasses) to kick-start their fermentations and mixing it with new molasses made for a decidedly funky brew. Puerto Rico and Cuba arrived a bit later to the party.

By the mid to late 19th century, distillers were using continuous stills and some had learned how to use charcoal filtration to remove some of the earthier aromas from their rums. To this day, Puerto Rican and Cuban rums are assumed to be cleaner and more elegant than their near neighbors.

The French Caribbean islands, like Martinique, didn't remain part of the international sugar trade, especially following the successful slave revolt on Haiti. Their French ex-masters created sugar-beet factories in France to replace lost sources. Those islands, as a result, learned to distill straight from sugarcane juice, eschewing the step of first removing the sugar. The islands that belong to France, as well as present-day Haiti, make a more vegetal and earthy style of rum as a result. Those made from juice are called rum agricole.

Brazil, with its vast sugarcane resources, makes its rum in the same fashion, though Brazilians call theirs cachaça and age some of it in native woods that can make their aromas even more vegetal.

Cocktails: Since many white rums are fairly neutral in the manner of vodka, it's not surprising that they can be used almost exactly in any drink that contains vodka. And while we associate white rum with cocktails like the Cuba Libre, that drink can be pretty wild when made with dark rum instead. Flavored rums have tried to follow as closely behind flavored vodkas as possible.

But aged or dark rums have their own dedicated cocktails, some with names intended to evoke their island pasts—Zombie, Rum Punch, Mai Tai—or that have specific South American origins, like the Daiquiri, the Caipirinha or the Cuba Libre.

Popular Cocktails: Daiquiri, Mojito

Tequila and Mezcal

The agave plant from which tequila is made is *not* a cactus. Get that idea out of your mind for good. It is actually a member of the lily family and just happens to have spikes on its leaves. As long as we're busting myths: Mezcal does not require a worm. Yes, there was once a mezcal brand that sold its bottles with a worm inside as a marketing ploy, but it was nothing more than that.]

Tequila is a spirit distilled from the juice of the agave plant. It's the base for the Margarita—the most popular cocktail in the U.S. for nearly two decades. There are hundreds of agave sub-types, but in order for a spirit to be called tequila it must be made from blue agave, or tequilana Weber azul. You'll see "Distilled from 100% Blue Agave" on the side of the best bottles of tequila. Mezcal, tequila's cousin, is made from agave, too, but from a dozen of the 300 or so other types of the plant.

Tequila is required to be distilled from agave plants within five Mexican states: Jalisco, Guanajuato, Tamaulipas, Nayarit and Michoacán. Mezcal is regionally delimited to the states of Oaxaca, Guerrero, Durango, San Luis Potosí, Zacatecas, Guanajuato, Michoacán

and Tamaulipas. There are other Mexican spirits that have legally designated areas of production, as well. They include bacanora (from Sonora) and raicilla (from around Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco and Nayarit).

Place of Origin:

Tequila: Jalisco, Guanajuato, Tamaulipas, Nayarit and Michoacán.

Mezcal: Oaxaca, Guerrero, Durango, San Luis Potosí, Zacatecas, Guanajuato, Michoacán and Tamaulipas.

Other agave spirits: Bacanora from Sonora; raicilla, which hails from around Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco and Nayarit; tuxca, from around Tuxcacuesco, Jalisco; comiteco, from Comitán, Chiapas; and sotol from Chihuahua.

Ingredients: Agave juice, drawn from cooked and crushed agave hearts, is fermented into a kind of beer (also known as pulque) that is then distilled, often in pot stills or in small hybrid pot/continuous stills. In cheaper products, cane and/or neutral spirits are included. If labeled correctly, these are called mixto tequilas, but some very inexpensive American-made products eschew any pretense of legality.

Process: Agave plants are harvested, their spiky leaves cut off to reveal something that resembles a pineapple. The *jimadores* harvest these *piñas* (Spanish for “pineapple”) by hand; it’s a highly regarded skill that is often passed down from generation to generation. The agave hearts need to be cooked in order to give up their juice in a way that allows for distillation. Traditionalists bake agave hearts in brick ovens called *hornos*; large-scale distillers use big steamers or autoclaves. Tequila is usually distilled twice. A silver tequila, for instance, may go more or less straight to the bottle, with just a bit of dilution to get the strength down to 80-proof.

Mezcal is treated much the same, except the agave hearts are traditionally baked in a stone pit over several days and the leaves are thrown into the pit to add (literal) fuel to the fire. The result is a smoky character, as you would expect from something baked alongside a clump of burning green leaves.

Aging and Maturation: There are six basic styles of tequila. First is a category called mixto, or spirits distilled from a mix of sugars with a 51-percent minimum of that mix comprised of agave sugars. This type of tequila may be made into any of the other following categories, or the producer may choose to make a higher-quality spirit only from agave juice. Each of the aged-tequila categories has a required minimum amount of time spent aging in barrels, though silver and gold tequilas don’t require any aging.

The other categories are:

- Plata (silver) or blanco (white), which must be bottled within 60 days.

- Joven abocado is a young tequila sweetened and flavored with caramel. It is always considered a mixto and is sometimes called gold.
- Reposado (rested), which is aged two to 11 months in oak.
- Añejo, which is aged for one year or more in small oak barrels.
- Extra aged is the oldest category, in which the youngest tequila in any blend must be at least three years old and must be aged in oak barrels no larger than 600 liters.

History: The agave, or maguey, plant has occupied a central place in Mexican life for thousands of years, providing materials used for clothing, lodging and medicine, as well as a drink called pulque, a kind of beer made from its juice. As with most ancient distillation, there is no inventor, but a tradition that dates back so far as to deny us any clarity. The stills that have been used for centuries are often very rudimentary and nearly pre-industrial, some of them made from clay. Those stills remain in use for mezcal production; tequila has become such an international success that more efficient means have been adopted for generating the spirit.

As a result, the differences between mezcal and tequila production give us an opportunity to see how it may have been before tequila became a cause célèbre for enterprising Texans during Prohibition and Hollywood stars—and before the Margarita took its place as the most popular cocktail in America. Tequila makers grow agave plants from “pups” that grow off the mother plant, which has resulted in a worrisome lack of genetic diversity in the agave fields. Mezcal magueys (the Zapotec word for agave) are usually collected in the wild, and the vanguard of mixology enthuses over the sub-types that are increasingly being bottled on their own, such as tobala, arroqueno and espadin.

Once the hearts are harvested, tequila producers bake them in brick ovens, though larger-scale producers have abandoned that step and use stainless steel steamers for quicker cooking. The cooked hearts are shredded and pulped for their juice, which is then fermented in tanks before being piped into copper stills. Mezcal producers still roast their maguey hearts using palenques, stone pits into which the hearts are rolled with rocks heated over fires and then covered with maguey fronds, straw mats and dirt. The hearts will roast for days—sometimes more than a week—inside these baking pits.

In all likelihood, it was both the Chinese and the Spanish who taught distillation to the Mexicans. The Spanish occupied Mexico during centuries of plunder and pillage, which gave way from a time of semi-peaceful rule to eventual independence. But history tells us that the Spanish were distilling rum down in South America—the work of colonial rule requires alcohol, it would seem.

Tequila was hardly consumed outside of its native lands until Prohibition, when many Americans discovered how easy it was to sneak spirits over the border. Tequila was a relatively rare find behind the bar even into the 1960s, consumed either as a shot with salt and lime or within the hallucinogenic layers of a Tequila Sunrise. The ascension of the Margarita tracks alongside the rise of Mexican restaurants from poor, simple taco shacks to bright and shiny Tex-Mex chains and beyond. Today, any restaurant worth its salt has

a Margarita program. And the interplay of the concoction's sweet, salt and sour tanginess delivers complexity and refreshment like few other cocktails can.

Cocktails: The Margarita is queen of the cocktail scene, though the Daiquiri has tried to steal her crown a few times over the years. Few drinks are as simple to make and as complex as a Margarita, but there are other tequila-based cocktails, such as the Paloma and the Tequila Sunrise. Mezcal can be substituted in any tequila cocktail, though its smoky, even ashy aromas are pretty intense. Handle with care.

Popular Cocktails: Margarita, Paloma

MODULE 3 – Brown Spirits and Liqueurs

Whiskey is a generic term for any spirit distilled from grain that has been aged in barrels. Exact grain formulas, distillation practices and aging requirements all vary from whiskey to whisky, so we'll cover each major category below. But one matter of note: The Canadians and the Scots spell the word "whisky" and the Americans and the Irish add an "e"—"whiskey." There are only a few exceptions.

North American Whisk(e)y: Bourbon

Bourbon can be made and aged anywhere in the U.S.A. and has, at various times, been made in Pennsylvania, Vermont, Indiana, Kansas and, yes, Kentucky. But, interestingly enough, up until recently there were no active distilleries in Bourbon County, Kentucky. The name is mostly historical and refers to a process, not a place.

Bourbon is a spirit primarily made of corn and distilled and aged in America. It matures in new, charred oak containers (if put in a used barrel, it becomes simply "American whiskey").

Ingredients: Whiskies use a soup of various grains to make the basic beer to be distilled. Bourbon typically includes about three-quarters corn in its mix, though the law only requires 51 percent. As a result, a sweet corn note makes its way into the aroma and the flavor of bourbon, though the barrel makes a much larger impression on the final taste. The additional grains used generally contribute certain characteristics: wheat is viewed as a milder component, rye is often described as peppery and austere and barley's most common purpose (it usually makes up about 10 percent of the mix) is to provide enzymes to hasten starch conversion and fermentation.

Process: While there have been a few exceptions over the decades, most bourbon is the product of continuous stills. But whereas a vodka distiller seeks to create a neutral spirit by distilling it many times in a continuous still, bourbon distillers do not. They want to retain flavor and aroma from the original materials used.

Aging and Maturation: Bourbon is aged in new, charred American oak barrels. After two years in oak, it becomes "straight" bourbon; at under four years, it has to say how long it has been aged on the bottle. (If a four-year-old bourbon is bottled at 50% abv and it was all distilled in the same place during the same season, it becomes "bonded.") Most major-distillery bourbons are at least four years old, and these days we're seeing bourbons sold with eight, ten, 18 or even 21 years of aging.

Bourbons are usually aged in open warehouses, without heating in the winter or cooling in the summer. The lack of temperature control allows the spirit to expand and contract inside the barrel during its years of aging. This is one of a distiller's main goals because it increases the amount of flavor and aroma that the spirit extracts from the charred barrels.

History: Settlers have made spirit since the early colonization of the Americas. It was, as always, a matter of survival: Grain and bread would only last so long and even beer went bad eventually during the torrid American summers. But spirit lived virtually forever. Most grain-growing communities had rudimentary stills and it was far easier to move a few barrels of whiskey from backwoods Kentucky to the populous cities in the East than it was to shuttle many bushels of grain.

America's interior river network made things easier. Many farmers would send their barrels of spirits down the Ohio or the Cuyahoga rivers or, famously, down the Mississippi to New Orleans, where the popular spirit was consumed on a main drag with the same famous name: Bourbon Street.

But Prohibition virtually destroyed the bourbon industry. Few families were able to re-launch their distilleries once it ended; even Bourbon County, Kentucky, was forced to close its only distillery. Drinkers gravitated toward Canadian whisky, which has always been milder and less intense than bourbon. But the last decade has seen a complete turnaround for the spirit. Certain brands, such as Pappy Van Winkle, are sold for hundreds or even thousands of dollars a bottle.

Cocktails: Bars in the 19th century were awash in whiskey, just as they were in gin, but cognac, rum and even genever made strong showings, as well. The Whiskey Mint Julep, the Old Fashioned, the Sazerac and the Whiskey Sour were very common so it's fascinating that they have stayed so relevant (the Whiskey Sour as the John Collins). The Manhattan is bigger than ever; it first appeared around the turn of the last century.

Popular Cocktails: Mint Julep, Manhattan, Old Fashioned, Whiskey Sour

North American Whisk(e)y: Tennessee Whiskey

The most famous American whiskey is Jack Daniels and, at least outside of the U.S., many people think it's a bourbon. It's actually a Tennessee whiskey.

Tennessee whiskey is, like bourbon, a spirit distilled and aged in America, made primarily of corn and aged in new charred oak containers for at least two years. But unlike bourbon, it has to come from a defined place: within the state of Tennessee. And it is supposed to be charcoal filtered in what is called the Lincoln County Process (we explain it below).

Ingredients: The recipe for Tennessee whiskey is essentially the same as that of bourbon: corn based, distilled so as not to remove all of its raw flavors, aged in barrels. But Tennessee whiskey rules define its corn content more precisely: from 51 percent to 79 percent, supplemented with rye or wheat and malted barley.

Process: At the moment, all Tennessee whiskey is the product of continuous stills. The Lincoln County Process involves dripping the spirit through a vat of maple charcoal nuggets ten feet deep, but it's not an ironclad requirement.

Aging and Maturation: Tennessee whiskey is aged in new charred American oak barrels for a minimum of two years. However, most distillers age it for at least four years (if it's anything less, the label needs to say so). The whiskies are aged in open warehouses, just like bourbon.

Cocktails: Much the same as bourbon.

North American Whisk(e)y: Rye Whiskey

Rye whiskey can be made and aged anywhere in the U.S.A. Some Canadian distilleries will often refer to their whiskies as rye, despite the fact that most of them are, confusingly, made from corn. Some myths die slowly. Canadian whiskies like Lot 40 and Wiser's are, nonetheless, based on rye grains.

Rye whiskey is a spirit distilled and aged in America and is primarily made from rye. It is aged in new charred oak barrels for at least two years.

Ingredients: Rye whiskey typically uses about two-thirds rye in its mix. The rest is corn, with a smattering of barley mash. Rye whiskey has less of the sweet corn character that bourbon displays, replacing it with a more peppery note. Rye's legal minimum is 51 percent rye, supplemented with corn and 5 percent to 15 percent malted barley, which aids fermentation.

Process: Rye is usually the product of continuous stills.

Aging and Maturation: Rye whiskey is aged in new charred American oak barrels for a minimum of two years. However, most distillers age it for at least four years (if it's anything less, the label needs to say so). Rye whiskies and bourbons are aged alongside each other in open warehouses, without heating in the winter or cooling in the summer.

History: Though North America provides a diverse historical landscape for spirits, many early North American distilled spirits were rye based. Why? The grain grew well (often to the point of a surplus) and settlers from northern and central Europe liked it very much.

In their new homelands—Pennsylvania, New York, eastern Kentucky, Virginia—rye thrived. But in present day western Kentucky and Tennessee, “Indian” corn grew better, even if it was (for a time) deemed fit only for animals. After the Whiskey Rebellion of 1791, many rye distillers left for Canada or joined the scene behind Indian lines in western Kentucky. They adopted corn, while distillers like George Washington began blending the two grains.

Corn-based whiskey slowly overwhelmed rye and by the late 20th century rye was nearly forgotten. Thankfully, the cocktail renaissance inevitably led to a rediscovery of the crucial whiskey and today rye is seeing growth of between 35 percent and 100 percent per year. While rye-whiskey sales are still small by Canadian- or American-whisky

standards, this explosive growth shows no sign of abating and will, for the foreseeable future, be limited more by supply than demand.

Cocktails: Much the same as bourbon.

North American Whisk(e)y: Other American Whiskeys

- **Corn whiskey** is made from a mash bill containing at least 80 percent corn.
- **Blended whiskeys** can be made from any of the above, mixed with at least 50 percent (and usually much more) neutral grain spirits and distilled to 190-proof or higher.

North American Whisk(e)y: Canadian Whisky

While Canadians like to call their whiskies “rye whiskies,” in truth, few of them actually are. Even when they are labeled rye whiskey, they may not, in fact, be based on rye. But because the whiskies used are distilled and aged separately before being blended together, a small percentage of rye whiskey is often added to season the spirit.

Canadian whisky is a spirit distilled and aged in Canada, primarily made from corn and aged in oak containers for at least three years. Unlike the barrels used to produce bourbon, rye and Tennessee whiskies, those used for Canadian whiskies need not be new—and rarely are. Like distillers from around the world do, Canadians buy America’s used barrels on the cheap. Pretty smart.

Ingredients: Most Canadian whiskies are corn-based, though a handful of brands are beginning to distill rye-based whiskies. Historically, Canadian whisky is more than half grain whisky, which is to say more than half of the whisky is based on spirits distilled to near-vodka purity and then aged in barrels for a minimum of three years. The remainder is akin to American straight whiskey.

Process: Canadian whisky is usually the product of continuous stills. But unlike those making bourbon, Tennessee whiskey and rye, distillers will soften their whiskies by adding at least half neutral grain spirit (just think of it as vodka) to make their products less intense. By doing so, they create what we call a blended spirit: one made up of straight whisky (similar to our bourbon) and a mild, more neutral spirit that has also been aged in oak barrels. What all this means is that Canadian whisky is a softer, milder spirit than bourbon.

The tradition of Canadian whisky producers is to distill and age each of their whiskies isolated by grain, so ryes are kept separate from corn-, wheat- or barley based whiskies. Only then do the distillers blend their whiskies together to achieve a chosen style and character.

Aging and Maturation: Canadian whisky is generally aged in used American oak barrels for a minimum of three years. Some longer-aged whiskies are making it to the market and they can be delicious.

History: Early distilling in Canada dates back to the late 1700s (Quebec City, in 1769, being the first), though the industry was many times smaller than the one in America, much as the population sizes differed. Practices mirrored those to the south, as British loyalists abandoned the newly created United States. But by the mid-nineteenth century Canada was adopting a larger, more technical process, as its distillers learned their trade in industrial England, rather than from central Europe or the wilds of Scotland or Ireland.

The country produced barley malt whisky for its primary export market (Great Britain), but America's Civil War provided an opening for their other major whisky style distilled from corn, rye and/or wheat. Molson, Corby, Hiram Walker (who was a U.S. citizen) and Gooderham & Worts (its Toronto-based distillery closed in the 1960s) were likely inspired by the newfound success of blended Scotch whisky. By the beginning of the 20th century, what we consider Canadian whisky today was set: a neutral grain spirit blended with flavoring whiskies that results in a comparatively light, well-aged whisky.

These whiskies might have remained only moderately successful export products but for American Prohibition. Hiram Walker's Canadian Club, Seagram's and G&W Special by Gooderham & Worts became mainstays for wealthy American drinkers. The second year of the Great Experiment saw increases of 400 percent in export sales—most of those delivered via the Great Lakes or a (recently discovered) pipeline across the Detroit River. In worldwide export markets, the suddenly unavailable U.S. whiskeys were soon replaced by brands like Canadian Club, Corby Royal Reserve and J.P. Wiser's Old Rye.

Following repeal, Canadian whisky ensconced itself firmly in the market and its signature milder, gentler style assured its dominance for much of the 20th century and beyond. In 2013, 16.5 million cases of Canadian whisky were sold versus 18 million of bourbon, rye and Tennessee whiskey.

Today, there are eight main distilleries making Canadian rye, as the whisky is known in Canada. It's important to understand that the name is traditional rather than descriptive: It's entirely possible—and indeed common—for a Canadian whisky made from 100 percent corn to be labeled rye.

The Hiram Walker & Sons distillery in Windsor, Ontario, (across the river from Detroit) is the largest distiller in North America and is owned by Pernod Ricard. It makes J.P. Wiser's and Corby whiskies, among others, for Pernod Ricard and contract distills Canadian Club for Beam Suntory. Also located in Ontario? Brown-Forman's Collingwood distillery, home of Canadian Mist and Collingwood whisky, and Campari's Kittling Ridge distillery, where Forty Creek is made. Diageo makes Crown Royal and several other brands at distilleries at Gimli, Winnipeg, and Valleyfield, Quebec. There are three distilleries in Alberta: Beam-Suntory's Alberta Distillers in Calgary, home of Alberta Premium and a few other brands; Constellation Brands' Palliser distillery in Lethbridge, home of Black Velvet; and the small Highwood plant in High River, which

makes a variety of niche brands. Beyond these, there are a number of micro-distilleries making malt and other international styles of whisky.

The majority of Canadian whiskies are crafted traditionally: A base of 100 percent corn is distilled in large column stills to 94.5 percent alcohol by volume and aged in used American oak barrels for three years or more. J.P. Wiser's Red Letter whisky is a fascinating example: It is a pure base whisky aged in a new bourbon barrel for ten years.

Most Canadian whiskies are blends of a base whisky and flavoring whiskies, of which there are variants: rye whiskies that may be 100 percent rye, or blends of rye, corn and barley malt, much like U.S.-manufactured rye whiskies. Flavoring whiskies are essentially the same as U.S. straight whiskies, with the mash bills varying, but the distillation halting at 65 percent alcohol by volume so the distillate carries significant flavor. Some, like J.P. Wiser's and Corby, use a combination of pot stills and column stills.

These flavoring whiskies also include corn whiskies, wheat whiskies and barley whiskies. Few are bottled on their own, though that seems to be an area of some international interest.

Distillers blend a large proportion of base whisky with one or more flavoring whiskies. Cheaper products use nothing in the blend that is older than the minimum. But more expensive blends, such as the J.P. Wiser's 18-Year-Old, blends multiple, well-aged flavoring whiskies together and then mixes them with a much smaller portion of base whiskey, which is also aged well.

Because of Canada's liberal rules regarding blending, the Canadian industry is often maligned for introducing additions to its whiskies. The rules allow up to 9.09 percent neutral spirits made from American oranges or wines. The Canadian Food and Drug Act of 1983, allows the addition of caramel and flavor additions of wine or a distilled spirit aged at least two years in small barrels. This means that formerly legal prune juice is now forbidden, though prune wine, as well as sherry and brandy, is legal.

After years of basically ignoring it, Canadian distillers are beginning to pay attention to the premiumisation trend, led by figures such as Don Livermore, master blender at the Hiram Walker distillery for J.P. Wiser's, and Crown Royal's master blender Andy MacKay.

Cocktails: Much the same as bourbon.

British Isles Whisk(e)y: Scotch

Scotch whisky is a spirit distilled and aged in Scotland, generally made from barley and corn and aged in used oak containers for at least three years. The categories of Scotch—blended Scotch whisky, single malt whisky, blended malt whisky, grain whisky—are defined by ingredients and distillation.

- **Blended Scotch Whisky:** As with Canadian whisky, blended Scotch whiskies are a blend of intense whiskies (the Scots call them single malt whiskies) and milder neutral grain spirits. The addition of this vodka-like neutral spirit makes blended Scotch whiskies gentler than single malt whiskies would be on their own. This category accounts for more than 90 percent of all Scotches produced.
- **Single Malt Whisky:** These are made only from malted barley, distilled only in pot stills (and in a single season) and must come from a single distillery.
- **Blended Malt Whisky:** Previously known as vatted malts, these whiskies are comprised entirely of barley malt whiskies. So think of it as if someone bought single malt whiskies from several different distilleries and blended them together. Because that is how it is done.
- **Grain Whisky:** These can be any grain but are generally corn-based whiskies that are distilled in column stills to a very high proof, just as vodkas are.

Process: The most important difference between Scotch whisky and every other whisky concerns the barley that is used for their best offerings. The rest of the world uses gas fires to roast grain. The Scots have used peat (compressed vegetation) as fuel for thousands of years. Not surprisingly, it gives off a smokiness that one would expect of vegetation dug up out of the damp ground. This smokiness carries through in the whiskies.

Aging and Maturation: Scotch whisky, in all its iterations, is generally aged in used American oak barrels (though barrels that have contained sherry wine are much valued for the fruity notes they add). Regardless, the whisky must be aged for a minimum of three years, though most well-known whiskies are aged for far longer. Most drinkers assume that a 21-year-old Scotch must be better than an 18-year-old whisky, which is better than a 12-year-old whisky and so forth. But it's not necessarily so. As in all these matters, it's subjective—smart and discerning palates will disagree.

Regions: Drinkers will separate out single malt whiskies by region of origin because whiskies seem to take on different aromas and flavors depending on where in Scotland they are aged, but it's important to note that virtually all distillers buy their ingredients from the same sources. So the only differentials are the place where the whisky is aged and the water used to mix with the grain for distillation.

For instance, whiskies matured on the island of Islay, off the west coast of Scotland, have a lot of smokiness. This is partly due to proximity to the ocean. It is also due to the greater amount of peaty smoke that is absorbed by the barley grains used there. So when you hear someone talk about Islay single malt, or a single malt from any of the other islands, know that they are usually after a smokier Scotch. But even more single malt Scotch whiskies are from a region known as the Highlands and typically display less smokiness. Connoisseurs will talk of a floral element in Highlands whiskies that comes from the heather flowers that dot the landscape.

Our program ascribes to a simple delineation between inland whiskies and maritime whiskies. But Scotch was traditionally divided into five regions—*islands*, *Campbeltown*, *Speyside*, the *Highlands*, the *Lowlands*—each with its own distinct styles of single malt. **History:** Distillation was practiced for centuries in Scotland but its position as subordinate to the English Crown meant in practice that the Scots were not allowed to sell it outside their homeland until the early 19th century. After the adoption of the continuous still, Blended Scotch Whisky became more and more common, being the most popular whisky category globally throughout the 20th century.

Just as wine was the alcohol beverage of choice in grape-growing climes, beer was a daily drink for people in more northern, colder environments. If you have enough extra beer, it's only a matter of time before it's distilled (beer goes bad eventually, but spirit lives virtually forever). We can't tell you definitively who started distilling, but there's plenty of reason to believe that the Scots learned the practice from the Irish (don't repeat that to any Scotch distillers—they'll deny it all). But dating back to the 15th century, we have proof of small-scale distilling, though the Scots' British masters prevented them from commercializing it. However, the Crown, realizing the tax-revenue possibilities, began to offer licenses to Scotch distillers in 1824 and everything changed.

But for a time, Scotch whisky meant Single Malt Whisky, and the most famous and, in the U.S., the most successful is The Glenlivet. Its remarkable story is based not only upon its consistent success from its founding in 1824, but upon founder George Smith's ability to negotiate the shoals as he transformed what would appear to be a highly regarded but illegal, unlicensed operation to one of the first legally licensed distilleries in its area.

George Smith, whose distillery The Glenlivet is a pioneer as a legal distiller, as well as an early benchmark for high-quality single malt whisky. The Glenlivet name was co-opted by others who appended it to their own labels in hopes of consumer confusion and improved sales. Smith fought them and his early adoption of legal licensing helped him prevail. It's why the name of the distillery is The Glenlivet (with that all-important "the") and not merely Glenlivet.

By the mid-19th century, continuous stills were popping up in the Lowlands. Most cranked out neutral grain spirit to support the powerful London-based gin industry. But an enterprising merchant named Andrew Usher hit upon the idea of blending this relatively flavorless spirit with genuine malt whisky, thus lowering the costs, as well as the intensity, of the new blended whisky. It was a hit on both scores. Many merchants (grocers, really) followed. You know their names: Dewar, Chivas, Walker and Ballantine, among others. But the success of this new category was not assured. Battles between single malt whisky producers and blended whisky bottlers ended only around the turn of the last century, when London's High Court ruled in favor of the bottlers. If the whisky was made in Scotland, it was Scotch whisky.

Blended Scotch whisky accounts for about 90 percent of all Scotch whisky today. Its milder character clearly appeals to a wider segment of the population than the powerful saltiness of most single malt whiskies.

In short, maritime whiskies have more smokiness and saltiness to them, while inland whiskies exhibit the more floral, spicy character of heather flowers and honey that comes from, well, inland. But these are rough approximations without clear-cut causal connections. In truth, many maritime whiskies are not so salty and smoky because they are aged near the ocean. (In fact, a fair number of Islay whiskies aren't aged near the sea at all, but you didn't read that here.) It actually has to do with the way their malted barley is prepared: heavily smoked, using burning peat (wet, compressed vegetation). The malt itself is smokier before it even hits the still.

Chivas Regal, the most prestigious premium blended whisky in the world, sets its foundation as 1801. James Chivas (and later his brother Alexander) took over an existing grocer and purveyor of spirits in the 1840s, after having worked for the company for years. James established a sterling reputation with the Royal house; Queen Victoria's frequent visits to nearby Balmoral Estate were always stocked and even managed by Chivas; hence, the label's reference to the whisky's past connection to the Crown.

Like other purveyors and grocers of the time, Chivas blended less intense and expensive grain whiskies with single malt whiskies to create a stylish and affordable Scotch whisky. In 1909, a new blend called Chivas Regal was created and it has been a success ever since, managed from the 1940s until Pernod Ricard's purchase in 2000, by the legendary Sam Bronfman and Seagram Company.

Cocktails: The Rob Roy is basically a Manhattan made with Scotch instead of bourbon. The Blood and Sand is the world's least-appetizing-sounding cocktail, but it's a very tasty use of Scotch. In general, only blended Scotch is used in drinks. Single malt whiskies are for sipping.

Popular Cocktails: Rob Roy, Blood and Sand

British Isles Whisk(e)y: Ireland

Irish whiskey distillers have been using both malted and un-malted barley for years. It's part of the (true) legend of Irish whiskey that distillers adopted un-malted barley in order to fool the British taxman; the British Crown had been foiled in its attempts to collect all the taxes due it for distillation. Thinking to outsmart the Irish, a new tax was levied upon malted barley in the belief that even illegal distillers would have to buy barley that was ready to ferment (the meaning of "malted"). But the Irish simply bought raw barley and used a little legally purchased malted barley to kick-start the un-malted stuff into full fermentation.

Irish whiskey is a spirit distilled and aged in Ireland, based on malted and un-malted barley and (often) corn and aged in used oak barrels for at least three years.

Categories:

- **Pot-still whiskey** is made from any combination of malted and un-malted barley, distilled in traditional copper pot stills. **Single-pot-still Irish whisky** is the same

sort of whiskey, but it's produced at just one distillery rather than being blended from more than one distillery. Midleton has been producing pot still whiskey since 1825.

- **Grain Irish whiskey** is typically produced from corn and malted barley and is distilled on a column still multiple times. As a lighter and milder whiskey, it is a core component in any blended whiskey.
- **Malt Irish whiskey** is a single malt whiskey made from malted barley and distilled in a pot still. Single malt whiskey is produced at just one distillery.
- **Blended Irish whiskey** is a combination of two or more styles of whiskey (grain, pot-still or malt whiskey).

Ingredients: Irish whisky is often described as being triple distilled from barley in pot stills, and some of it is. But the Irish use corn, wheat, barley (what have you) just as often. Some of the barley may be malted and some might not. Bushmills and Cooley, two of the foremost operating distilleries in Ireland, make single-malt whiskey. Some of the latter's is made with peated malt in the Scotch style. But Irish whiskey is almost always free of the smoky, briny character of peat.

The rules are a bit looser than some might wish them to be, but quality is uppermost as Irish whiskey returns from the dark night it endured through the 20th century. The rules simply ask that the distillate "in such a way that [it] has an aroma and flavor derived from the materials used."

Process: The Irish use continuous stills as frequently as pot stills. Moreover, most of their pot stills are so colossal in size that they act like continuous stills, with spirit vapor banging around inside, cooling off to slide back down to the bubbling beer at the bottom and doing so many times before the vapor finally gets all the way to the top and condenses into spirit. Then it happens all over again. The result is often a milder, gentler spirit than the single malt Scotch whiskies made across the Channel. Though there are two Irelands today (the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland), both make their whiskies the same way.

Aging and Maturation: Irish whiskey is generally aged in used American oak barrels, though barrels that have contained sherry are highly valued for the fruity notes they add to whisky.

History: Distillation was practiced for centuries in Ireland, but its position as a vassal to the English Crown kept Irish whiskey a local product until the mid-19th century, when the British populace embraced it as an alternative to gin. Were it not for the Easter Rebellion of 1914–1915, when the Irish rose up to throw off the British yoke (and did so even as English doughboys were dying in the trenches of World War I), it might still be very popular in England.

The Irish immediately looked to the U.S. to take up the slack; after all, plenty of their kin had fled there during the potato famine. But America was engaged in its strange Noble Experiment (i.e., Prohibition) and Ireland failed to find a market to replace England's thirsty public. By the 1980s, only two whiskey companies were still bottling.

Everything changed in the last ten years, as North American consumers (chiefly) were attracted to the soft, gentle, even slightly mossy character of great Irish whiskey, led by Jameson. With the market engaged, producers are empowered to go back to their books (and warehouses) and come back with some of the great whiskeys of yore. Some of these are single malts and some come in various aged versions, slumbering in former port, sherry or madeira barrels. Some utilize both malted and un-malted barley, though most brands also have corn in their mash bills. Both pot stills and continuous stills are used widely.

For the last five years, Irish whiskey has been the fastest-growing spirit in the U.S. market, roughly doubling in size during that time. Super and ultra-premium whiskeys are the fastest-developing segment within the total whiskey market, growing—like Irish whiskey—20 percent annually.

That is not its sole success. Irish whiskey has been the spark igniting the consumption of brown spirits among the young and women. The spirits landscape is undergoing momentous change and Irish whiskey is helping to lead the charge.

Cocktails: The most famous Irish whiskey drink is Irish Coffee, which has been around for about a century. But Irish whiskey (softer, milder) is a very adaptable spirit. Try it as a substitute in a Manhattan.

Brandy and Cognac

The word **brandy** derives from *brandewijn*, the Dutch word for “burnt wine,” and is used to describe anything distilled from fermented fruit juice. As a category, this encompasses some of the most famous distillates in the world (cognac, calvados) and some of the most obscure (pisco, the apricot brandy barack palinka).

Cognac is not merely a style of spirit. It's a specific place in southwestern France that produces the world's most famous brandy.

Cognac is a type of brandy, which is a distillate made from wine and aged in barrels. Specifically, cognac is a brandy distilled in the French region of Cognac, made from grapes grown in that region and aged there in French oak barrels.

Ingredients: Wine, made primarily from a grape called Ugni Blanc, which is grown in the region of Cognac in southwestern France. The Italians make a wine from the same grape, but they call it Trebbiano. It must be aged at least two years in French oak barrels.

Process: Pot stills are used exclusively in Cognac and the spirits are distilled twice in them.

Where Cognac is Grown: The Cognac region is comprised of six demarcated vineyard districts that fan out in roughly concentric circles from the core district of Grande Champagne. They are:

- Grande Champagne: Produces light, acidic white wines that are ideal for brandy distillation. They require long periods of oak aging to fully develop.
- Petite Champagne: Cradles the Grande Champagne district. Its soil is less calcareous (chalky) than Grande Champagne and, as a result, its brandies are not as elegant or long-lived as those from their exalted neighbor.
- Borderies: The smallest Cognac district in topographical size. Its brandies are nutty, creamy and can offer violets on the nose. Martell Cordon Bleu is famously based on old Borderies cognacs.
- Fins Bois, Bons Bois, Bois à Terroir: The remaining three demarcated districts generally fall away in quality.

Aging and Maturation: Cognac must be aged in French oak barrels for two years, but it has specific categories that require minimum aging times:

- V.S. (Very Special) and Three-Star cognacs are aged in French oak casks for at least two years.
- V.S.O.P. (Very Superior Old Pale), Reserve and Five-Star cognacs are aged in French oak casks for at least four years.
- X.O. (Extra Old), Napoleon, Extra and Hors d'Age cognacs are aged in French oak casks for at least six years.

In truth, most cognacs are blends of differing-aged brandies and the youngest brandy in the blend designates its category. Some XO cognacs may have 50-year-old cognac in them. The oak used is only French, mostly from the region.

History: Brandy has been made for centuries anywhere wine is made. But the brandy of Cognac was quickly recognized for its superior ability to age, the result of high acidity in its grapes. The region has been considered the benchmark for brandies worldwide for hundreds of years. It still is today.

Martell Cognac is one of the greats and is the No. 1 producer of prestige cognac worldwide. Martell was established almost 300 years ago and retains a strong reputation for its great tradition and excellent quality to this day. The Martell style relies on grapes from the Borderies sub-region, with accents provided by Grand Champagne, Petite Champagne and Fins Bois grapes. This style has been maintained by seven generations of head tasters from the same family, providing consistency that is nearly unparalleled in the world of alcohol beverages.

Cocktails: While most people think cognac is just for sipping, it can function very well in a cocktail. And some famous cocktails, such as the Julep, got their start as a cognac drink. The Sidecar is another delicious example.

Popular Cocktails: Sidecar

Liqueurs

History: There are thousands of different liqueurs, most of them low- or lower-alcohol products designed to emphasize a particular flavor. Some are modern inventions, but many reflect the centuries-long use of alcohol's preservative properties. They once existed to give long life to a particular fruit, plant, leaf, flower, root or other element of nature that was believed to have healthful, medicinal and even religious properties.

Today we associate most of these liqueurs with sweet drinks that are consumed either as ingredients in a cocktail, or as bracing or soothing drinks on their own.

Methods of Adding Flavors: There are four methods for flavoring a spirit, all of which haven't changed much over the last 400 or 500 years.

Compounding: A liqueur made of a sugar solution combined with concentrated flavorings is added to the base alcohol.

Infusion: Flavorings (fruits and/or herbs) steep in a liquid prior to distillation. The resultant drink will probably be fairly light in flavoring aromas.

Percolation: Flavorings are placed inside the still to flavor the distillate. This process can capture very intense or very ethereal aromas and flavors.

Maceration: A distilled spirit steeps with flavorings for a period of time, often weeks. This may not capture more delicate aromas, but it certainly grabs the strong and often bitter flavors of a fruit or an herb.

MODULE 4 – Service Management and Bartending Essentials

Defining Great Service

Bartender celebrity worship may be the newest social phenomenon, but bartenders and their colleagues should never forget that hospitality is their primary purpose and goal. The best drink in the world won't make up for rudeness and a friendly, compassionate demeanor can remedy any difficult situation.

The highest calling for a true hospitality professional is to provide kind and respectful service. Everything else (though important) is secondary.

Welcoming

Great service is based on the ability to make customers feel comfortable and welcome. All guests should be greeted with enthusiasm and respect when they enter an establishment. A thoughtful greeting sets the tone for everything that happens after it. For some that means addressing a patron by name—though that is less important than the attitude with which a customer is welcomed. The first person a guest sees or speaks to should be friendly, available, tuned in, mindful and willing to look them in the eye. This sort of personable touch is fundamental not only to a memorable bar experience, but also to human relations.

Interactions and Service

Each and every guest is different. Some want to talk and some don't. Some are in a hurry and some aren't. A great hospitality professional is always learning about people. Be observant and adjust your own behaviors to your guests. Remember that you and your colleagues are hosts—and a first-rate host puts everyone at ease no matter who they are or what sort of mood they're in.

Think of any guest's arrival at the bar as the beginning of a great experience. Sure, you start with a hello and a welcome and probably something to drink. But what comes next? Something to eat, right? Help your guests find exactly what they are looking for at the bar and be there when they're ready to move on to the next thing, whether it's another glass, a burger, a cup of coffee, dessert or even the check.

While every service employee is a person with a distinct personality and not merely an employee, great hospitality demands that customers are treated as they would like to be treated and not according to preordained regulations. House rules guide interactions between guests and employees, but top-notch service allows for appropriate flexibility. Yes, beverage service is supposed to happen from the customer's right side and requires an employee to pour with his or her right hand. But if that means an elbow ends up in someone's face, switch hands or switch sides.

Some customers are in a hurry and don't want to make small talk. Some guests would love nothing better than to pick your brain about everything that sits behind the bar or comes out of the kitchen. Every guest deserves to be treated in a customized way. It's not that you need to hide your personality. Just remember that the unspoken agreement with a guest in a hospitality setting is that his or her needs come first.

When handing a drink or a dish to a guest, try to take a moment to place it carefully and respectfully in front of them, letting your pride in what you are serving them show through. You should, after all, believe in what you are doing. If you don't, you might not be working in the right establishment.

Collecting Payment and Saying Thank You

Bear in mind that most customers have already decided to leave when they ask for the check. Be prompt about dropping the bill, if requested, and make sure to observe if they use a credit card or cash for payment immediately. Act quickly if so. If not, give them more time.

But just as a proper greeting creates an ideal impression of an experience to come, a warm and sincere thanks at the end of a guest's time with you can leave an equally lasting mark. Be grateful for every guest's patronage and wish each one well.

How Great Drinks Happen

The best bartender in the world can't create great cocktails without quality ingredients and essential equipment. Employees may not be able to guide all purchasing decisions, but they can give management respectful and accurate feedback and give a professional opinion about the available products.

Knowledge and Demeanor

A good bartender should know the tasks, products, materials and equipment required for the job. The basics of mixology are no longer mysterious. Recipes are easy to find, information is readily available on the Internet and from fellow bar professionals and there are many more products on the market than there were only a few years ago. At the very least, a staff must be up on all the choices available in-house, as well as when and why to suggest them. A bartender who knows a range of cocktails and spirits and takes pride in his or her work can win over a tentative guest, which makes for a richer experience.

A great bartender is almost (almost) like a chef in that he or she takes raw ingredients and fashions them into something delicious. But in order to make a tasty drink, you need to know what your ingredients taste like. Guess how that lime with the browned peel or that shriveled-up mint leaf taste? Vermouth, for example, is a wine, which gets old and unappealing if it's been open for weeks. Smell your ingredients; taste them when appropriate. Make sure you know their status.

Fruit should be in good condition. Remember that their flavors (and the amount of juice you get out of them) vary with the seasons. When limes get very tart, you may need a touch more bar syrup to balance your drinks. And don't be afraid to visit the kitchen. What does the chef have cooking? Sometimes those ingredients—fruits, herbs, spices—can be used at the bar, too.

A bartender's education should not stop with the most common ingredients. Background (lore, history) about products and cocktails gives staff the tools they need to provide a guest with a unique experience. Beyond that, the best bartenders are a source of information on the day's events (sports, general news, etc.) and an encyclopedia of where to dine, to drink and to see and be seen.

Great service is manifest in a bartender's ability to understand customers' needs, wants and likes and (perhaps most essentially) when he or she is able to *like* the customers, too. It might be difficult at times. But, at a minimum, customers of all types help pay the bills and deserve to be treated warmly.

Safe Practices, Smart Practices

Bar employees offer food and drinks for customer consumption. Just as kitchen-staff members are expected to adhere to safe and sanitary practices, bar personnel must also follow those practices to the letter.

Great bars are filled with smart and efficient operators. The physical layout of the bar and the specific actions of each employee keep the entire organism functioning at peak efficiency. Achieving cleanliness and order ought to be everyone's goal.

Meanwhile, proper technique is a matter of learning and of experience. The videos provided in this BarStarts program will show you the best practices of great bartenders when it comes to measuring, stirring, shaking, pouring, straining and the like.

Handling Complaints

The true heart of any business is exposed when a customer has a complaint. Employees should always bear in mind that most customers don't complain until after they leave an establishment. So handling a vocal and immediate complaint is the very minimum that should be expected of a service-oriented business.

The rules are quite simple: Employees (or management) should listen intently and respectfully to a guest's grievance. They should do so with empathy. Each establishment will have its own plan in place, but it is a smart practice to repeat the complaint and to demonstrate to the guest that you understand and accept it, clarifying any necessary matters. After that, apologize—and then solve the problem.

Pairing Beverages with Food

Just as many of us know that beer pair nicely with chips or how red wine goes well with steak, it is important thing to remember that guests often have specific preferences about what they want to drink or eat. (They are human, after all.) Rather than tell someone they ought to drink this or that, make them feel happy and comfortable for choosing the drink they prefer. However, each time you learn something about how food and drink interact, you may be able to use that information to help guests find new combinations to love.

But we should remember that pairing food and drink is personal. Don't let someone else tell you what you like, and please don't be that person either. Nobody likes food and drink bullies. Telling someone they should choose a particular dish or drink because they're supposed to go together doesn't make much sense unless they already like that particular food or drink. If people are eating steak and you tell them they're supposed to have red wine with that, what happens if they don't like red wine? People should drink what they like.

Food Components

There are perhaps millions of different aromas, but there seem to be only a dozen or so "tastes". The ones most people think about are the following:

- **Sweet:** pretty self-explanatory, right? Everybody knows about sweet stuff and most people really like sweet things, though not everyone. If your guest is eating something sweet, unless their drink is also sweet, that drink will seem sour or watery. Sweetness tends to overpower many other flavors.
- **Sour:** We try to not to use the word "sour" when words like "tart", "crisp" or "refreshing" mean pretty much the same thing and sound a lot better. Drinks that have a lot of acidity or tartness to them (drinks with lemon or lime juice in them, usually) can make fried foods taste lighter and less oily.
- **Salt:** Salt and sour tend to cancel each out but in a good way. Tart drinks pair up well with salty foods and each one makes the other taste better.
- **Bitter:** Most people say they don't like bitter things, but both coffee and chocolate have bitterness to them, as do most nuts. So a little bit of bitterness is something a lot of people like. Interestingly, salty foods will cancel out some of the bitterness. That's why some people like salty foods with whiskies that tend to pick up a bit of bitterness from their time spent aging in barrels.
- **Umami:** A savory sensation that's best demonstrated by things such as parmesan cheese, soy sauce and shiitake mushrooms.

Drink Components

Just as foods have sweet, sour, salt and bitter components to them, so do many drinks. Many classic cocktails find ways to balance all those elements together. A Margarita has the sweetness of sweetened lime juice and of the Triple Sec or Cointreau, the sourness of the limes, and the saltiness of the salt on the rim of the glass. It's an amazing combination. When you're making your drinks, try to imagine how you are balancing different tastes together. You're probably more experienced at this than you think.

Wine's Role

Fascinatingly, wines typically share many of the same flavors as in classic cocktails: sweetness (the fruitiness in the wine or even residual sugar), tartness (grape juice is naturally tart), spiciness (grapes like Gewurztraminer or Syrah are naturally spicy; barrels add baking spice flavors and aromas) and bitterness: grape skins and barrels add notes of bitterness and astringency.

Most importantly, bear in mind that for too long wine has been known for its snootiness and for a bullying attitude towards what people should or shouldn't drink. Everyone's palate is different; that's why we like different foods. The same goes for wines. We're supposed to like different things. And so we do.

How Beverages and Food Interact

But it's interesting that certain foods and drinks have traditionally been served together; there must be something about the way they interact.

Salty foods – what works and why – Salt makes everything taste better, and it also tends to make fried foods taste less oily. That's one reason we like salt on our fries. Interestingly, tart or crisp wines taste really good with salty things.

Fried foods– what works and why – here again, a tart or crisp drink (think Margarita or white wine) can make the fried dish taste less oily and for most people that makes it taste better.

Proteins– what works and why – When people assume that red wine and steak go together, it's partly because proteins and fats are powerful flavors. If you have a lot of flavor in a drink (like in a whisky or a red wine) the steak won't overwhelm the flavor of the drink and vice versa.

Sweet foods– what works and why – A tart or crisp wine or drink seems even more tart when it's tasted alongside something sweet. Typically, we like to drink sweet things when we're eating sweets.

Creating Signature Beverages

Many bartenders get a charge out of making up new drinks. It's fun. But instead of just throwing stuff against a wall to see what sticks, take a thoughtful approach to creating signature cocktails.

- **Substitutions:** The easiest way to make a new drink is to substitute something that's already found in a classic cocktail. If a certain drink uses lime juice, think about swapping in a mix of lemon and grapefruit juices. Or instead of using dry vermouth, add some sweet vermouth instead.
- **Following Models:** The classic model of a balanced cocktail is: sweet, sour, spirit, spice, ice. When you make a new cocktail, challenge yourself to include something from each of those five categories, a few of which overlap (sweet vermouth is both sweet and spicy; Cointreau is both sweet and sour).

Bartending Definitions

- Muddler – a wooden or metal rod used to pulverize delicate or fragrant ingredients that are used in certain cocktails, such as the mint used in a Mojito
- Mixing glass – the cylindrical glass vessel that is used to help chill and dilute stirred cocktails
- Bar spoon – a long metal spoon that is used to stir cocktails, as well as measure small quantities of liquids or scoop out garnishes, like maraschino cherries
- Jiggers – measuring tools required to pour exact proportions of spirits and other liquids when building a cocktail
- Julep strainer – modeled after a sugar sifter, the Julep Strainer is used to separate the ingredients of a stirred cocktail from the ice used in a mixing glass
- Hawthorne strainer – the type of strainer used to separate the ingredients of a shaken cocktail from the ice used in a Boston Shaker
- Juicer – a small hand press used to extract fresh juices from lemons, limes and other citrus fruits
- Ice – a crucial element needed in the creation of a great cocktail. Not only does ice bring down the temperature of a drink, it also adds dilution which reduces its alcoholic strength and helps the liquids to bind together.
- Simple syrup – in basic terms, sugar dissolved in water. Simple syrup is used to add a balance of sweetness to otherwise bitter and acidic cocktails.

- Garnish – A decoration or enhancement used to enrich the appearance of a cocktail. The best garnishes not only enhance the look of a good drink, but also play a role in the taste and flavor as well.

Cocktail Recipes

A quick note on proof: for tax reasons, in many countries some of the spirits that are generally available are significantly lower in proof than the brands for which these drinks were originally created: traditional cocktail-strength gins tend to be at around 47% alcohol, while American whiskeys were traditionally bottled at 45 to 50%. Some drinks will be more sensitive to this variance than others. In extreme cases, you might want to experiment with techniques to get around that, such as replacing the simple syrup in Sours with superfine sugar stirred directly into the citrus juice or using extra-cold, hard ice to reduce dilution.

Also, Pernod Ricard would like to remind you that, while the following cocktails use varying quantities of alcohol, a typical serving of distilled spirits is 1½ oz./45 ml, at 40 percent alcohol by volume.

Bloody Mary

Ingredients:

1½ oz. Absolut Vodka
2 dashes of Worcestershire sauce
4 dashes Tabasco sauce
Pinch of salt and pepper
¼ oz. fresh lemon juice
4 oz. tomato juice

Preparation:

Combine all ingredients in mixing glass with ice and roll back and forth between another mixing glass to incorporate and chill. Strain into an iced goblet or highball glass and garnish with a lemon wedge.

Collins -Tom, John, Vodka

Ingredients:

1½ oz. Beefeater Gin
¾ oz. fresh lemon juice
¾ oz. simple syrup
Club soda

Preparation:

Shake gin, lemon and simple syrup with ice until cold and strain over ice into a highball glass and top with soda. Garnish with a cherry and orange slice. For a Vodka Collins, replace the gin with Absolut Vodka. For a John Collins, use bourbon whiskey.

Cosmopolitan

Ingredients:

1½ oz. Absolut Citron Vodka
¾ oz. Cointreau
¼ oz. fresh lime juice
1 oz. Ocean Spray Cranberry Juice

Preparation:

Combine all ingredients with ice and shake until cold. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass and garnish with an orange peel

Daiquiri

Ingredients:

1½ oz. white rum
¾ oz. simple syrup
¾ oz. fresh lime juice

Preparation:

Shake all ingredients with ice and strain into a small cocktail glass and garnish with a lime wheel

Irish Coffee

Ingredients:

1½ oz. Jameson Irish Whiskey
1 oz. simple or brown sugar syrup (equal parts of water or brown sugar, dissolved)
4 oz. brewed coffee
Lightly whipped unsweetened cream

Preparation:

Combine whiskey, coffee and syrup in an Irish coffee glass. Ladle a 25mm thick of cream on top

Long Island Iced Tea

Ingredients:

½ oz. Absolut Vodka
½ oz. Beefeater Gin
½ oz. Light Rum
½ oz. Altos Plata
¾ oz. fresh lemon juice
½ oz. simple syrup
½ oz. Triple Sec
1 oz. cola

Preparation:

Combine in mixing tin, fill with ice and shake. Strain into highball glass with ice and top with cola and garnish with a lemon wedge

Manhattan

Ingredients:

2 oz. Lot 40 Canadian Rye whisky

1 oz. sweet vermouth

2-3 dashes of Angostura bitters or orange bitters

Preparation:

Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass with ice and stir until cold. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass and garnish with a maraschino cherry or a twist.

Margarita

Ingredients:

2 oz. Altos Plata or Tequila Avión Silver

$\frac{3}{4}$ oz. fresh lime juice

$\frac{1}{2}$ oz. agave nectar

Preparation:

Shake all ingredients with ice until cold. Strain over fresh ice in a salt-rimmed rocks glass and garnish with a lime wedge.

Martini (Vodka)

Ingredients:

2½ oz. Absolut Vodka

$\frac{1}{4}$ oz. dry vermouth

Preparation:

Stir all ingredients with ice until very cold. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass and garnish with olives or a lemon twist.

Mojito

Ingredients:

1½ oz. light rum

$\frac{3}{4}$ oz. fresh lime juice

$\frac{3}{4}$ oz. simple syrup

1 mint sprig and 4 mint leaves

1 oz. soda

Preparation:

In a mixing glass, muddle mint leaves with simple syrup. Add lime juice and rum and fill with ice. Shake vigorously and strain over fresh ice into a highball glass. Top with soda and garnish with a fresh mint sprig.

Moscow Mule

Ingredients:

2 oz. Absolut Vodka

½ oz. fresh lime juice

3 oz. ginger beer

Preparation:

Combine all ingredients in a copper mug with ice, stir gently and garnish with a lime wedge.

Negroni

Ingredients:

1 oz. Beefeater London Dry Gin

1 oz. Campari

1 oz. Italian sweet vermouth

Preparation:

Combine all ingredients over ice in a rocks glass and stir. Garnish with an orange peel or orange slice.

Old Fashioned

Ingredients:

2 oz. Lot 40 Canadian Rye whisky

2 -3 dashes of Angostura bitters

1 sugar cube

Splash of club soda

Preparation:

In a rocks glass, muddle the sugar and the Angostura bitters in a splash of soda (about a barspoon, no more) until the sugar is dissolved, forming a syrup in the bottom of the glass. Add the whisky and the ice and stir. Garnish with a fresh twist of an orange peel.

Rob Roy

Ingredients:

2 oz. Chivas Regal Blended Scotch

1 oz. Italian sweet vermouth

2 to 3 dashes of Angostura bitters

Preparation:

Pour all ingredients over ice in a mixing glass and stir as you would a Martini. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with a cherry or a twist

White Russian

Ingredients:

1 oz. Kahlua

2 oz. Absolut Vodka

1 oz. cream

Preparation:

Mix all ingredients in a mixing glass, shake and strain over ice into a rocks glass.

Furthering Your Education

From here on out you can learn from every bartender and guest with whom you come into contact. But there are programs out there that can teach you even more: Pernod Ricard USA and BAR (Beverage Alcohol Resource) www.beveragealcoholresource.com) offer the BarSmarts program, which, as you might have guessed, is a more demanding version of this BarStarts curriculum. The U.S. Bartenders' Guild (www.usbg.org) has a series of examinations, as well.

BarStarts Glossary

Absinthe: A distillate steeped with or rectified with several herbal and botanical ingredients, including wormwood oil, which was responsible for the nearly worldwide ban on the production of absinthe, when it was determined that it contained thujone, a strong drug that causes epileptic- type seizures when taken in large quantities. There is scientific agreement today that absinthe's high proof (130°) was more problematic than the chemicals in the herbal ingredients in their tiny amounts.

Agave: A large plant indigenous to South and Central America that looks like a cross between a giant pineapple and a cactus. The plant is actually a member of the lily family. There are hundreds of varieties of agave, cultivated and wild. The Weber Blue Agave is used to make tequila.

Akvavit, Akavit, Aquavit: Grain-based spirit made in Scandinavian countries, flavored with different herbs, the most common of which are caraway and fennel.

Alembic or Alembic still: The pot still, thought to have originated in China and brought to the West by the Moors, who introduced it to continental Europe on the Iberian Peninsula. The root of the word is the Arabic for "still", al-inbiq.

Ale: A beer made with yeast that work on the top of the mash during fermentation. Ale is the oldest style of beer, usually served fresh without aging.

Amaretto: Almond and apricot-flavored liqueur, originally made in Italy, but now made in other countries as well.

Amaro: A category of Italian liqueurs made with bitter herbs, usually served after a meal as a digestivo.

Angostura bitters: First created in 1824 as a stomach tonic for Bolivar's jungle-weary troops. Originally produced in the town of Angostura in Venezuela, but today in Port of Spain, Trinidad. The formula for Angostura is secret, but the top flavor notes are cinnamon, allspice, and clove, 45% alcohol.

Anisette: A liqueur made in many countries (but originally France) that is flavored with aniseed.

Aperitif: Any drink before the main meal to stimulate the palate. This can encompass anything from wine and cocktails to Champagne.

Armagnac: French brandy from southern France. Either double distilled in pot stills or single distilled in a small continuous still, armagnac is considered a stronger style than cognac. There are three regions in Armagnac as defined by the AOC, Bas Armagnac (the best), Tenareze and Haut Armagnac.

Blended Scotch Whisky: A blend of single-malt whiskies (pot still/100-percent malted barley) and mixed-grain whisky (continuous still/corn or wheat) made in Scotland. The whiskies are aged separately, then blended and married for several months in casks before being reduced to bottling strength. With a couple of exceptions, blended Scotch whisky is the best choice for cocktails.

Blended Straight Whiskey: A blend of 100 percent straight whiskeys of the same type, i.e. Rye bourbon, or corn from different distillers or from different seasons within one distillery.

Blended Whiskey: A minimum of 20 percent straight whiskeys at 100 proof that are blended with neutral grain whiskey or light whiskey.

Blue Agave Tequila: 100 percent Blue Agave tequila is distilled from the fermented sugars of the Weber Blue Agave plant only, and must be bottled in Mexico. Like all tequila, 100 percent Blue Agave tequila can be aged or unaged. Agave plants take eight to ten years to mature to the point where they can be used for tequila production, so the tequila made from 100 percent Agave is more expensive to produce than mixto, or blended tequila.

Boston Shaker: A two-piece cocktail shaker comprised of a mixing glass and a slightly larger metal mixing cup that fits over it.

Bourbon: American whiskey made from a mash of between 51 and 80 percent corn (a small amount of barley, with either rye or wheat may be used), aged at least two years in new charred oak barrels.

Brandy: Distilled spirit derived from fermented fruit, usually aged in barrels.

Cachaça: A sugarcane spirit made in Brazil, usually distilled from fresh cut cane and bottled without oak aging. The Caipirinha is the most famous cocktail made with cachaça.

Calvados: An aged brandy made from up to 48 different apples (and even a few pears) in the Normandy region of France. The finest calvados is double distilled in a pot still in the Pays d'Auge district, then aged for a minimum of six years.

Cassis or Crème de Cassis: A liqueur made from black currants that is classic in a drink called a Kir, in which a small amount of cassis is added to a glass of white table wine. The Kir Royale is the same drink made with Champagne instead.

Coffee Liqueurs: Made around the world, usually bottled between 25 and 30 percent alcohol, two well-known brands are Kahlua and Tia Maria.

Continuous or Patent Still: The two-column still that was invented in the 1820s by Robert Stein and Aeneas Coffey.

Cordials: Sweet liqueurs flavored with fruits, herbs, botanicals and spices. Most cordials are under 35 percent alcohol with some notable exceptions, such as Chartreuse (80 proof).

Curaçao: A liqueur first made from small bitter Curaçao oranges; now made in many countries, it comes in white, orange, and blue—the color being the only difference.

Distillation: The process of separating parts of a liquid mixture through evaporation and condensation. Distillation is used to produce concentrated beverage alcohol, called ethanol.

Eau-de-Vie: French for “water of life,” but more specifically, a type of brandy made from fermented mash of fruit; only rarely aged in oak barrels. Eau de vie has evolved to be defined as a group of unaged digestif brandies made from stone fruits and other fruits like raspberries and strawberries.

Ethyl Alcohol: Beverage alcohol produced by the fermentation of a sugar solution. the wine in a process, called estufagem, where aging warehouses are heated to over a hundred degrees to simulate the heat in the hold of a sailing vessel.

Extra Añejo Tequila: A tequila that has been aged for at least three years in small oak barrels; production standards are tightly controlled by the government.

Fermentation: A process that converts sugar into heat, carbon dioxide gas and ethyl alcohol. A microorganism, called yeast, accomplishes this change.

Fortified Wines: Wines with added alcohol, such as port, vermouth, Madeira, and sherry.

Frappé: Drink served over snow or crushed ice.

Genever (also known as junever, genievre, jenever, jeniever, peket or in England as Geneva, Hollands or Holland gin): The juniper-flavored and strongly alcoholic traditional liquor made from malt wine in the Netherlands, Belgium and Northern France (Nord département), from which gin evolved. It first appears in the historical record in Germany at the end of the 1400s.

Gin: Grain spirit flavored with botanicals, specifically genièvre or juniper, and other flavors, including coriander, lemon peel, fennel, cassia, anise, almond, gingerroot, orange peel, angelica and others.

Ginger Beer: A spicy soft drink, usually carbonated, made from gingerroot; originated in Jamaica.

Grappa: Spirit made from the left over skins, seeds and stems left over after grapes are pressed for wine. Grappa is usually unaged.

Grenadine: Sweet red syrup used in alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks. The original flavor base was pomegranate, but many brands use artificial flavor.

Infusion: A method used in the production of fruit liqueurs, where fruit and other flavors are steeped in brandy for any extended time. After infusion, the mixture is strained, lowered to bottle proof with water, sweetened with sugar syrup and bottled.

Irish Whiskey: A triple-distilled whiskey from Ireland, and a blend of pot-stilled malt whiskey, pot stillled unmalted barley whiskey, and column-stilled grain whiskey. The malt used for Irish whiskey is usually not kilned or toasted with peat, so there is no smoky quality.

Julep: A historically popular American drink that has evolved into a bourbon drink mixed with fresh mint and sugar, served in a frosted silver cup over shaved ice.

Madeira: Fortified wine from the Portuguese island of Madeira, these are reputed to be among the longest-lived wines in the world, lasting well over a hundred years in some cases. Madeira seemed to improve in the steaming holds of sailing ships during long voyages. Today many Madeira makers re-create this cooking of the wine in a process, called estufagem, where aging warehouses are heated to over a hundred degrees to simulate the heat in the hold of a sailing vessel.

Maraschino Liqueur: A sweet, clear liqueur made from marasca cherries and cherry pits. Maraschino was a popular ingredient in early punches (especially champagne punches) and cocktails; it is almost never drunk straight.

Marsala: A fortified wine from Marsala, Sicily, in which a base wine is made and concentrates of boiled-down wine and grape juice mixed with spirits are blended into the wine. Most are aged in solera style systems.

Mash: A sweet and soupy blend of water and grains, prior to its fermentation by yeasts, into something like beer.

Mezcal: The general category of which tequila is a subcategory. To be clearer, all tequila is mezcal but all mezcal is not tequila. Mezcal is made primarily in Oaxaca, Mexico, from the espadin species of agave, and it has a smoky quality from the slow baking of the agave piña in clay ovens over hot rocks.

Mixto: A tequila variety that consists of at least 51 percent blue agave, but also contains sugars from cane or other sources.

Muddler: A wooden tool shaped like the grinding tool of a mortar and pestle used to mash fruit and herbs with sugar or liqueur in the bottom of a bar mixing glass. This technique is essential for making Old-Fashioneds and Caipirinhas.

Old-Fashioned Glass: Holds 8 to 10 ounces of liquid and is often referred to as the “rocks” glass.

Orange Bitters: Alcohol-based bitters flavored with orange peel and other botanicals, it was a popular cocktail additive prior to Prohibition and was an ingredient in the first Dry Martini at the Knickerbocker Hotel, but was dropped in later recipes.

Orgeat Syrup: A milky, sweet almond syrup used extensively in baking. Orgeat is the often forgotten ingredient in Victor Bergeron’s classic Mai Tai cocktail.

Ouzo: Greek anise-flavored liqueur.

Peychaud’s Bitters: Antoine Peychaud of New Orleans created an all-purpose flavoring and health tonic in 1793 from herbs and Caribbean spices that is believed to be the first commercial bitters in the Americas.

Port: Fortified wine from the Douro Valley of Portugal; comes in several styles, including vintage, vintage character, ruby, tawny and white. The grape varieties are numerous including Touriga Nacional, Bastardo, Tinta Francesa, Tinta Cao and Souzao.

Proof: The alcoholic strength of a liquor, expressed by a number that is twice the percentage by volume of alcohol present. So, for example if a product is 80 proof it is 40% alcohol.

Punch: A five-ingredient drink made with sweet, sour, strong (spirits), spicy and weak (water) ingredients. Originated in India and popular in Colonial America and all over eighteenth century Europe.

Rhum/Rum: Made from molasses, sugarcane juice or syrup, it was first produced in Barbados and Jamaica, traditionally double distilled. Rhum Agricole, made in the French-speaking Caribbean islands, is made from sugarcane juice, not molasses.

Rye: Whiskey aged for two years, with 51 percent or more rye in the mashbill.

Sake: Japanese beer (the Japanese call it wine, but it’s made from grain, not grapes) made from fermented rice and usually sold at 18 percent alcohol or slightly higher.

Sambuca: Anise-based licorice-flavored Italian after-dinner liqueur often taken with coffee.

Sangria: A beverage originating in Spain made with red wine, sugar and fruits; garnished with fresh fruits and berries. There are lots of recipes to make sangria, but there should always be red wine and fruits.

Schnapps: A Scandinavian and German term for strong, colorless spirits, it is also used slang for any strong spirit. Today schnapps is a popular category of low-end fruit and spice spirits made by many different companies.

Sherry: Spanish fortified wine from the province of Cadiz. Sherry is made in two basic types: Fino (always dry) and Oloroso (usually sweet and aged). Fino sherry has a long second fermentation during which a yeast scum known as flor grows on top of the wine, adding flavor and protecting the wine from oxygen. All sherry is fermented dry; most oloroso sherry is sweetened with Pedro Ximenez, a very sweet (mostly) unfermented grape juice. Sherry is also often blended and aged by the solera system, a process of blending young wine with older wine to achieve complexity in a shorter period of time.

Shooters: One-oz. shots of cocktails or straight spirits like Jagermeister that are downed in one gulp. Shooters are illegal in some states where the law prohibits serving more than one beverage at a time to a guest.

Simple Syrup: Syrup made from mixing equal parts sugar and water.

Single-Malt Whisky: A 100 percent malted barley-based spirit produced in copper pot stills by a single distillery in Scotland. Bottled straight or used as a blending agent in Blended Scotch.

Sloe Gin: A misnomer for a liqueur made from wild plums called sloe berries. It is not a style of gin. Plymouth Sloe Gin is the quintessential example of the liqueur genre.

Sours: Cocktails made with a strong, sweet, and a sour ingredient. Those ingredients can vary widely from one sour to the next, but the proportions should remain the same. The proportions that appeal to the widest audience are one part sour to one part sweet to two parts strong.

Straight Whiskey: Any whiskey made with at least 51 percent of any single grain in the mashbill, and distilled to not more than 160 proof.

Tequila: Produced in Mexico, derived from the Agave plant. There are four categories of aging of tequila: Blanco or silver is bottled after resting in stainless tanks for up to sixty days. Reposado is rested but in any size of wood container for sixty days to a year, and añejo is aged a minimum of one year in oak barrels. Extra Añejo is aged in oak barrels for a minimum of three years. Gold tequila is typically colored with caramel, but not aged.

Tonic Water: A carbonated water that historically contains quinine and sugar. Contemporary examples usually have no quinine but contain other similarly bitter flavors.

Triple Sec: A liqueur made from the Curaçao oranges, produced in many countries. Triple sec is mostly a mixer and, unlike Cointreau, is almost never taken straight.

Vermouth: Fortified and flavored wine made in sweet or dry styles, used in cocktails and as an apéritif. The word originated from the German word for the wormwood plant, wermuth.

Vodka: From voda, the Russian word for “water,” vodka is distilled from grain and sometimes potatoes, and is mostly tasteless and odorless.

VS, VSOP, XO brandies: Very Special, and Very Superior Old Pale, and Extra Old are designations used in Cognac and Armagnac (and other brandy regions) to indicate minimum aging for their brandies. The actual ages for the three designations vary from region to region.

Wort: Cereal grain that has been malted (or sprouted) and has converted many of its starches into sugars. Beer makers will typically roast the grain to stop the malting, and then cook it with water so that the sugar-rich grain soup, the wort, is ready to be fermented.

Whiskey/Whisky: From the Gaelic word, uisge beatha, meaning “water of life,” whiskey is made from grain that is ground into grist, then cooked with water to release starches. Malt is added to convert the starch into sugar, and then yeast to begin the fermentation process. The low- proof liquid after fermentation is called beer, and after distillation becomes whiskey.

Responsible Service

Acceptable Standards of Serving Alcohol, Provided by TIPS

Pernod Ricard USA and BAR LLC encourage all BarStarts participants to read the following TIPS Guidelines to responsible service. The TIPS (Training for Intervention ProcedureS) program is designed to teach acceptable standards of practice for serving alcohol. You can obtain TIPS certification by attending an instructor-led session, becoming certified as a TIPS trainer (enabling you to train other people) or completing the online eTIPS course. For more information on any of these options, visit TIPS online at www.gettips.com or call 800-438-8477. BarSmarts people are responsible people!

Responsible Service Overview

As a bartender, you have an important job. Your guests count on you to help them enjoy themselves and have a good time. Your managers rely on you to help make your establishment popular and profitable. You may think these are conflicting priorities, but they don't have to be once you understand how alcohol affects your guests and the legal responsibilities you have to prevent alcohol-related tragedies. Through the TIPS course, you will learn:

- How alcohol affects your guests.
- Steps to prevent underage drinking.
- Intervention strategies for preventing problems.
- Your legal responsibilities as an alcohol server.
- Reasonable efforts to protect you and your establishment.
- The importance and benefits of becoming certified in a responsible alcohol service program.

How Alcohol Affects Your Guests

Consuming alcohol has both physical and mental effects on your guests. Part of your job is to monitor your guests' consumption and watch for any visible signs of intoxication. Your best tool for assessing a guest's level of intoxication is Behavioral Cues. There are four cues to watch for that can tell you whether someone is or is becoming intoxicated.

1. Inhibitions – Becoming talkative and relaxed, or displaying a notable change in behavior, can indicate lowered inhibitions.
2. Judgment – Behaving inappropriately, annoying others or increasing the rate of drinking are examples of poor judgment.
3. Reactions – Glassy, unfocused eyes, talking and moving slowly or having difficulty with small motor skills demonstrate slowed reactions.
4. Coordination – Stumbling or swaying, dropping things and passing out are all signs of a loss of coordination.

The Behavioral Cues occur progressively as guests consume more alcohol. But people are affected by alcohol at different rates. This is due to the impact of Intoxication Rate

Factors, which can help you determine how quickly someone is likely to become impaired.

1. Size – Smaller people are sometimes affected more quickly than larger people.
2. Gender – Women tend to become impaired faster because they are smaller and have a higher percentage of body fat, which does not absorb alcohol.
3. Rate of Consumption – The faster someone drinks, the more quickly he or she will become impaired.
4. Strength of the Drink – Each drink contains a different amount of pure alcohol, which causes intoxication.
5. Food – Eating before drinking alcohol can slow the absorption of alcohol into the bloodstream.
6. Drug Use – Alcohol is a drug, and can interact unpredictably with other drugs, including over-the-counter, prescription and illegal drugs.

Intoxication Rate Factors impact how quickly a guest's Blood Alcohol Content, or BAC, will rise. BAC is the legal measurement of the amount of alcohol in a person's blood. In most areas, the legal limit for driving is a BAC of .08. As a bartender, it is impossible for you to determine a guest's BAC. But there are some important guidelines to remember:

- The more alcohol a person consumes, the higher the BAC level will be.
- A guest's BAC level can be different each time he or she drinks.
- The higher the BAC level, the more behavioral cues you are likely to see.
- Time is the only thing that can lower a guest's BAC level. Cold showers, food and coffee will not have an impact.

Steps to Prevent Underage Drinking

In addition to not serving alcohol to intoxicated guests, you also need to prevent alcohol service to underage guests. In the United States, the legal age to consume alcohol in all states is twenty-one. As a bartender, you can prevent underage drinking by always checking ID for your guests, and watching for Underage Warning Signs.

1. Always Check ID:
 - a. Ask each guest to present a valid form of ID.
 - b. Check the ID thoroughly, including the date of birth, expiration date, photo and physical description and issuing authority.
 - c. Look for any signs that the ID has been tampered with or altered.
 - d. When you have doubts, either ask for a second form of ID or refuse to serve.
2. Watch for Underage Warning Signs: Guests who are underage may exhibit any of the following behaviors:
 - a. Seem nervous and move around frequently.
 - b. Be in the restroom when the group orders for him or her.
 - c. Come to the bar to order drinks for a table full of people.
 - d. Get upset when asked for ID.

Intervention Strategies

Once you have assessed your guest's intoxication level and whether he or she is underage, the next step is to respond effectively. The following Intervention Guidelines can help you resolve situations with guests without creating confrontations that escalate into bigger problems.

1. Decide on an appropriate response based on your guest's behavioral cues. Be sure your response to the situation is proportionate to the circumstances.
2. Make clear statements and speak directly to the point. Don't make the guest figure out what you are trying to say.
3. Use "I" statements. "You" statements can make the guest feel judged, threatened and defensive.
4. Do not judge or threaten your guests. Treat everyone with respect and courtesy, no matter what the situation.
5. Give the guest a reason for your actions. Otherwise, a guest may feel that you are singling him or her out and acting arbitrarily.
6. Provide good customer service and use indirect strategies when appropriate. Sometimes enlisting the help of a guest's friend or suggesting a non-alcoholic alternative is all that's needed to resolve a potentially confrontational situation.

Legal Responsibilities as a Bartender

Many bartenders and servers don't realize that they can be held personally liable in the event of an alcohol related tragedy. You have a responsibility to ensure that the following people are not served alcohol in your establishment:

- Anyone under the legal age for purchasing or consuming alcohol.
- Anyone who is showing signs of visible intoxication (the Behavioral Cues).
- Anyone whom you have reason to believe is purchasing alcohol for another guest who is underage. Knowingly providing alcohol to any of these types of guests is illegal and can mean penalties for you, your manager and your establishment. You can be arrested, fined, sued and even spend time in jail if convicted. You can protect yourself from legal liability by using Reasonable Efforts.

Reasonable Efforts

Reasonable efforts are steps you take to prevent guests from becoming intoxicated in the first place, to withhold alcohol from underage guests or those buying for underage guests, and to intervene if a guest does become visibly intoxicated. One of the most important Reasonable Efforts you can make is to obtain certification in a responsible alcohol service training program, such as the TIPS program. TIPS can teach you the skills and strategies you need to protect yourself, your guests and your establishment from alcohol-related tragedies and liability.

Additional Reasonable Efforts you can use include:

- Offering food.
- Providing alternate transportation.
- Cutting-off a guest.

- Calling the police.
- Measuring drinks.
- Checking IDs.
- Serving water or soda on the house.
- Enlisting the help of the guest's friends.

Another important tool to use to protect yourself and your establishment is Documentation. Good documentation can demonstrate an ongoing commitment to responsible alcohol service, as well as provide important information in the event that an alcohol-related situation does occur.

The TIPS Program - Responsible Alcohol Service Training

This section has provided a good overview about many important tools and concepts for ensuring that you only serve alcohol legally and responsibly. But there is a lot more information you need to successfully implement these strategies and protect yourself. Certification in TIPS provides you with the following benefits:

- A certification card from the largest and most widely recognized national responsible alcohol-service-training program.
- Reduced exposure for liquor liability lawsuits and penalties due to alcohol violations.
- Training by a certified instructor in how to successfully implement the tools, skills and knowledge introduced here to protect yourself and your customers from alcohol-related tragedies.

You can obtain TIPS certification by attending an instructor-led session, becoming certified as a TIPS trainer (enabling you to train other people) or completing the online eTIPS course. For more information on any of these options, visit TIPS online at www.gettips.com or call 800-438-8477.