



Spirits



Descriptions



American Blended Whiskey

*A note on spelling: American and Irish distillers spell the word whiskey with an "e," while their Scotch, Canadian, and Japanese peers spell whisky without the "e."

Blended Whiskey is a blend of one or more straight whiskies (bourbon or rye) blended with neutral spirits. Due to the varying proportions of the neutral spirits, the taste and quality of these blended whiskies vary greatly.

Canadian Whisky

Canadian Whisky is made primarily from corn or wheat with a supplement of rye, barley, or barley malt. Unlike bourbons, they are aged primarily in used oak barrels for a minimum of three years. Bulk Canadian Whiskies are usually shipped in barrels to their destination country where they are then bottled. These bulk whiskies are usually bottled at 40% (80 proof) alcohol by volume.



Bonded Whiskey

A 100 proof bourbon from a single distillery that was produced in a single season and then aged for at least four years in a government "bonded" warehouse.



Irish Whiskey

Irish Whiskey is produced in Ireland and is a blend of malt and grain whiskey. It is slightly lighter in body than Scotch Whiskey.



Scotch Whisky

Scotch Whisky is a whisky produced in Scotland from barley malts and aged in oak barrels to smooth the rough palate of the raw spirit.

Blended Scotch Whisky

Blended Scotch Whisky is a Scotch Whisky that requires a mix of dozens of different malt whiskies to be combined with grain whisky in order to create a desired blend.

Single Malt

Single Malt is a Scotch Whisky that is produced from a single region and distillery.

The Highlands

The Highlands are a region of Scotland that produces a broad spectrum of styles of whisky. It is generally aromatic, smooth and medium-bodied, with palates that range from lushly complex to floral delicacy. The sub-regions of the Highlands include Speyside, the Orkney Isles, and the Western Islands.

The Lowlands

The Lowlands are the southern region of Scotland that produces whiskies which are light-bodied, relatively sweet, and delicate

Islay

Islay is an island off Scotland's west coast. Traditional Islay whiskies are intensely smoky and pungent in character, with distinctive iodine or medicinal tang that is said to come from the sea salt that permeates the local peat that is used to dry the barley malt.



Straight Whiskey

Straight Whiskey is an unblended whisky that contains no neutral spirit. Bourbon and Rye Whiskey are considered to be Straight Whiskies.

Bourbon Whiskey

Bourbon is a North American Whiskey that must contain a minimum of 51% corn, be produced in the United States, be distilled at less than 80% (or 160 proof) alcohol by volume, and be aged in new charred barrels for a minimum of two years.

Small Batch Bourbon

Small Batch Bourbons are bourbons that are bottled from a small group of specially selected barrels that are then blended together.

Single Barrel Bourbon

Single Barrel Bourbon is bourbon made from one specifically chosen cask.



Rye Whiskey

Rye Whiskey is America's first indigenous whiskey style. It is produced from rye. This whiskey is now used for blending in order to give other whiskeys more character and backbone.



Brandy

Brandy is distilled from fermented grape juice that is aged in wooden casks (normally oak) which colors it, mellows the palate, and adds additional aromas and flavors.

California Brandy

Contemporary California Brandies are made primarily from table grape varieties such as Thompson Seedless and Flame Tokay. They are aged for two to twelve years in used American oak (used oak is utilized to limit the woodiness in the palate).

Cognac

Cognac is the best known type of brandy in the world; a benchmark by which all other brandies are judged. And while all Cognac is considered brandy not all brandies are considered Cognac. A Cognac is a blend of different brandies from different vintages coming out of the Cognac region in France. The Cognac region is located on the west central Atlantic coast of France, just north of Bordeaux. The industry has adopted the following accepted terms to differentiate Cognacs. It is important to note that these terms have no legal status and each Cognac shipper uses them according to their own criteria. V.S. means Very Superior, and requires a minimum of two years aging in the cask. V.S.O.P. means Very Superior Old Pale, and requires a minimum of four years aging in the cask. X.O. means Extra Old, and requires a minimum of six years aging in the cask.



Gin

Gin is a white spirit produced by juniper berries and so-called botanicals (a varied assortment of as many as 15 herbs and spices). The spirit base of gin is primarily grain (usually wheat or rye) which results in a light-bodied spirit.

London Dry Gin

London Dry Gin is the most dominant English style of gin. As a style it lends itself particularly well to mixing and is the most common gin sold in the United States.



Liqueurs

Cordials, schnapps, anise, and bitters are terms that cover a wide variety of types of spirits. What they all share in common, is that they are sweet and flavor infused spirits that are categorized according to their flavoring agent.



Schnapps

Schnapps is a general term used for an assortment of white and flavored spirits that originated in the northern countries of Scandinavia and Germany. Schnapps can be made from grain, potatoes, or molasses and can be flavored with virtually anything (root beer, peach, and watermelon to name a few).



Rum

Rum is produced by fermenting sugar and water. Most rum is made from molasses which is over 50% sugar, and also contains significant amounts of minerals and other trace elements which contribute to the final flavor. The largest producers of rum are the Caribbean island, Barbados, Cuba, Jamaica, and Puerto Rico.

White Rum

White Rum is generally lighter bodied rum, primarily used as a mixer and to blend with fruit flavors.

Black Rum

Black Rum is heavier, darker rum, with a buttery flavor. It is distilled in simple pot stills before being blended and aged in white oak barrels for five to seven years.

Golden/Amber Rum

Golden/Amber Rums are traditionally full-bodied, rich, caramel dominated rums that are frequently aged in oak for an extended period of time. The richest of these rums are consumed straight up.

Spiced Rum

Spiced Rum can be white, amber, or dark rum infused with spices and other fruit flavors.

Añejo

Añejos are age dated rums coming from different vintages or batches which are mixed together to insure a continuity of flavor within specific brands.



Tequila

Tequila is made by distilling the fermented juice of agave plants in Mexico. By Mexican law, tequila can be made only from one particular type of agave, the blue agave, and can be produced only in a specifically designated geographic area, primarily the state of Jalisco in west-central Mexico.

Silver/Blanco

Silver/Blanco is a clear tequila with very little (no more than 60 days in stainless steel tanks), or no aging. It is best suited for mixing and blending into fruit-based drinks.

Gold

Gold is un-aged silver tequila that has been colored and flavored with caramel.

Reposado

Reposado is the Spanish word for "rested". This tequila is aged in wooden tanks or casks for a legal minimum period of at least two months, with the better quality brands spending three to nine months in wood. Reposado tequilas are the best-selling and most common tequila sold.

Añejo

Añejo is the Spanish word for "old". This tequila is aged in wooden barrels (usually old bourbon barrels) for a minimum of twelve months. The best quality Añejos are aged eighteen months to three years.



Mezcal

Mezcal is a country cousin to tequila. Mezcal can be made from a variety of agave plants (the most common of which is the espadin agave), and can be produced virtually anywhere in Mexico. The famous "worm," that is found in some bottles of Mezcal, is actually the larva of one of two moths that live on the agave plant. The reason for adding the worm to the bottles of Mezcal is obscure, but one story is that the worm serves as proof of high proof and quality. It is said, that if the worm remains intact in the bottle, the percentage of alcohol in the spirit is high enough to preserve the pickled worm.

Vodka

Vodka is the dominant distilled spirit of Eastern Europe and the United States. This spirit is made by fermenting and then distilling the simple sugars from a mash of pale grain or vegetal matter. Vodka can and is produced from grain, potatoes, molasses, beets, and a variety of other plants. Rye and wheat are the most common grains used to produce vodka. Vodka has been distilled and defined for many years as a "neutral spirit" without distinctive character, aroma, or taste. It is, however, extremely popular due to its versatility as a mixer and the addition of flavored vodkas into the market. Some vodka flavors include raspberry, orange, and lemon.

