

Lovingston-based Virginia Distillery Company won the Whisky Magazine title **Best American Single Malt Whisky** for their Virginia Highland Malt.

## ABOUT VIRGINIA DISTILLED SPIRITS

Virginia is home to over 60 licensed distilleries (and growing). The Commonwealth is also home to the titles of <u>World's Best Bourbon</u> AND <u>Best American Single Malt Whisky</u> as rated by the World Whiskies Awards, presented by *Whisky Magazine!* 

Whether you fancy whiskey (i.e., bourbon, rye, single malt, moonshine) gin, brandy, rum or vodka – we've got you covered! We also produce several lesser known spirits such as aquavit, pastis, absinthe, and various flavored liqueurs!

Our distilleries span across the Commonwealth; from the mountains to the shores, and the hills and the hollers. We invite you to visit our distilleries, where you can experience the production process firsthand from "farm to bottle/grains to glass," and often meet our award-winning distillers.

Supporting Virginia spirits doesn't just support our local economies, but local farmers as well. Many Virginia-based distillers rely on Virginia agriculture to support the production of their spirits. In addition, Virginia distillers often rely on other Virginia agriculture producers through sourcing finishing components for their products (e.g., used wine, cider and beer barrels).



The World Whiskies Awards celebrates the best whiskies from across the globe, as ranked by Whisky Magazine. A. Smith Bowman Distillery in Fredericksburg, Virginia won World's Best Bourbon for their John J. Bowman, Single Barrel Straight Bourbon Whisky. This is the second consecutive year that the distillery has been recognized by Whisky Magazine.



#### THE HISTORY





Virginia is the birthplace of American spirits! Our stories are rich and layered, and we're proud of our heritage. It all began with Virginia colonist George Thorpe, the progenitor of all corn-made moonshine and bourbon whiskey. Thorpe is credited with the distillation of America's first batch of corn-made whiskey at Berkeley Plantation in 1620.

#### **ADDITIONAL FUN FACTS ABOUT OUR HISTORY**

- Bourbon County, Kentucky, used to be in Virginia, until it petitioned to separate from Virginia, which was approved by the Virginia House of Delegates in the late 1700s.
- Elijah Craig, a Baptist preacher from Orange County, Virginia, is often credited with creating the first bourbon in the late 1700s. He was the first person to age whiskey in charred oak casks, a process that gives the bourbon its reddish color and unique taste.
- In 1797, George Washington began commercial distilling at the urging of his Scottish farm manager, James Anderson, who had experience distilling grain in Scotland and Virginia. Anderson successfully petitioned Washington that Mount Vernon's crops, combined with the large merchant gristmill and the abundant water supply, would make the distillery a profitable venture. As a result, the largest whiskey distillery in the nation at that time was created.
- The Great Moonshine Conspiracy Trial of 1935 resulted in the indictment of 80 people involved in the illegal production and distribution of moonshine whisky in Virginia. Franklin County, Virginia, produced the highest volume of illegal liquor in the U.S., informally referred to as "The Moonshine Capital of the World." During the Prohibition Era, more sugar was imported to Franklin County alone than New York City.
- A. Smith Bowman began to make bourbon in Fairfax County in 1935. From 1935 until some point in the 1950s, Bowman was the only legal whiskey distillery in Virginia.
- Belmont Farm Distillery becomes a licensed distillery in Culpeper, Virginia, in 1988, and is the first craft distillery in the country for the modern spirits industry.

To access a detailed timeline of events for Virginia distillers from 1620 to today, visit our History page.

#### THE PLACE

Virginia's latitude spans roughly 39.5°N to 36.5°S, and 76°W to 83.5°W. We're located right next to the Atlantic Ocean, which renders a maritime climate for the eastern side of the state (anything east of the Blue Ridge). Due to distance from the ocean, elevation, and other factors, the mountainous areas west of the Blue Ridge are considered continental.

Most of Virginia is humid in the spring and summer. The falls are cool, and our winters tend to experience a significant amount of snowfall especially in central and western Virginia. In addition, there is a large range in the diurnal temperature.

#### THIS CREATES A SENSE OF PLACE FOR OUR SPIRITS FOR SEVERAL REASONS:

The Virginia humidity, heat, and change in temperatures daily and year-round help to extract all the wonderful characteristics imparted by barrel maturation.

• We're able to grow many of the raw materials (corn, wheat, barley, rye) used in the production of our distilled Virginia spirits. In Virginia, we take pride in the fact that you can enjoy a Virginia spirit from grain to glass, and from farm to bottle.

#### **VIRGINIA CLIMATE AVERAGES**









SOURCE: Current Results Weather and Science Facts www.currentresults.com



#### **OUR COMMUNITY OF** VIRGINIA DISTILLERS FACTS AND FIGURES



Chuck and Jeanette Miller own and operate Belmont Farm Distillery in Lovington, Virginia, which is the oldest craft distillery in the country.

Virginia distillers are dynamic and experienced. Many were born and raised in Virginia, while others bring their expertise from all around the world to share their "spirit" and knowhow. They range in age (our youngest distiller is 24 and our oldest is 81) and sex, as we have several female distillers that are leading the way for high-quality spirits production.

#### **SPIRITS DISTILLED IN VIRGINIA**

- 38 of 63 produce barrel-matured whiskey/whisky/rye/bourbon/single malt
- 25 of 63 produce moonshine, or white whiskey
- 25 of 63 produce gin
- 18 of 63 produce rum
- 16 of 63 produce vodka
- 10 of 63 produce brandy
- 9 of 63 produce other (e.g., various liqueurs, aquavit, absinthe, etc.)

#### ANNUAL RETAIL SALES FOR VIRGINIA **DISTILLED SPIRITS IN VIRGINIA**

(per Virginia ABC; Does Not Include Sales Out of State)

- FY2017 Total Virginia Spirits Sales: \$7,254,887 (or a 20.8% growth over FY2016, or 209.8% growth since 2013)
- FY2015 Total Virginia Spirits Sales \$4,903,790 (63.9% growth over FY2014, or 109.4% since 2013)
- FY2014 Total Virginia Spirits Sales: \$2,990,504 (27.7% growth over FY2013)
- FY2013 Total Virginia Spirits Sales: \$2,341,504



#### **NATIONAL TRENDS/OTHER STATES**

- The U.S. has approximately 1,589 licensed distilleries (cited by the American Craft Spirits Council)
- Virginia has 63 licensed distilleries (cited by Virginia ABC)
- Kentucky has approximately 52 licensed distilleries (cited by the KY Distillers Association)
- Tennessee has approximately 55 licensed distilleries (cited by the TN Distillers Guild)

### THE ECONOMIC AND REGULATORY ANALYSIS OF VIRGINIA'S DISTILLED SPIRITS INDUSTRY



The full report, The Economic and Regulatory Analysis of Virginia's Distilled Spirits Industry, is available here.

#### **OVERVIEW**

The Economic Report measured the following facets of Virginia's distilled spirits industry:

- Job Creation
- Capital Investments
- Agriculture
- Tourism
- Spirits Sales Revenue
- Taxes Paid & Revenue Generated
- Sustainability Efforts
- Impact on Local Communities

#### **HIGH-LEVEL STATS**

- The Virginia distilled spirits industry's impact on the Virginia economy in 2017 is valued at \$163,045,778.
- Virginia distilleries will spend \$85,755,333 in capital investment in the next three years. This represents a 27% increase in spending over the past three years.
- Virginia distilleries supports 1,477 full-time equivalent jobs, paying wages of \$60,349,535, as of 2017. This represents a 51% increase in employment and a 69% increase in wages from 2016.
- Virginia distilleries attracted 296,741 unique visitors in 2017.
- Nearly 70% of all grain and agricultural products used in the production of Virginia distilled spirits are sourced from Virginia.
- Virginia distilleries sold spirits valued at \$14,473,272 in 2017. This includes both in-state and out of state sales.



## ECONOMICS OF PRODUCING AND SELLING DISTILLED SPIRITS IN VIRGINIA

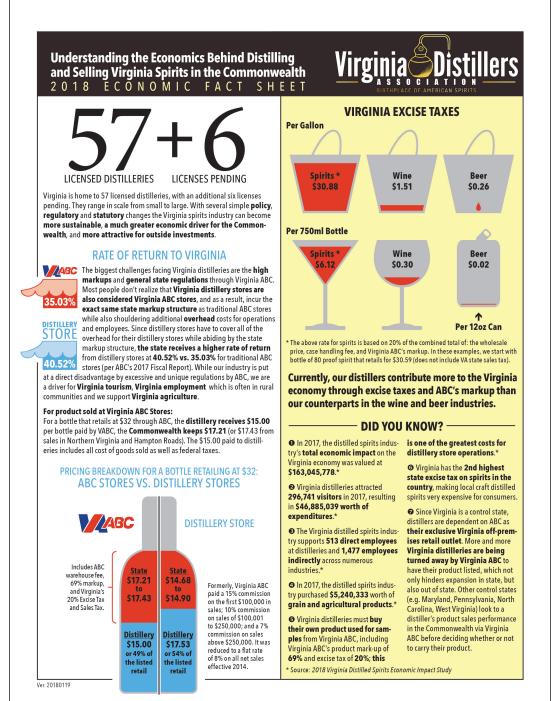


Logo of the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC). Virginia is a Control State which means the state serves as our sole wholesaler and retailer in the Commonwealth. This presents some unusual dynamics for producing and selling spirits in Virginia.

Please see our educational overview titled the <u>Understanding the</u>
<u>Economics Behind Distilling and</u>
<u>Selling Virginia Spirits in the</u>
<u>Commonwealth</u> under the <u>Advocacy</u> section of our website.

The **Advocacy** section of the Virginia Distillers Association website contains documents such as *Understanding the Economics Behind Distilling and Selling Virginia Spirits in the Commonwealth*, at right.





#### VIRGINIA DISTILLERS ASSOCIATION

#### **LEADERSHIP THAT MATTERS**



**PRESIDENT** 

Gareth Moore CEO Virginia Distillery Company



**VICE-PRESIDENT** 

Will Dawson Owner/Distiller Boar Creek Whiskey



**SECRETARY/TREASURER** 

Kristi Croton
Partner
James River Distillery



**BOARD MEMBER** 

Scott Harris
Co-Owner of Catoctin
Creek Distilling Company



**BOARD MEMBER** 

Bill Karlson Partner KO Distilling



#### **WHO WE ARE**

Founded by members of the Virginia spirits distilled industry in 2016, the Virginia Distillers Association is a 501(c)6 nonprofit focused on improving the regulatory, legislative and promotional environments for Virginia distillers.

Our Mission is simply stated: To provide economic growth and educational opportunities for the Virginia spirits industry.

The Virginia Distillers Association Board of Directors is comprised of a group of volunteer peers who represent the interests of all Virginia distillers. Our Board of Directors sit on the VDA Board for two-year terms. VDA Executive Committee Members include our President, Vice-President and Secretary/Treasurer.

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#### **EXPERIENCE THAT MATTERS**

Amy Ciarametaro is the Virginia Distillers Association Executive Director. She brings forth experience managing marketing, public relations and trade initiatives on behalf of the Virginia wine industry for almost 10 years. Amy understands many of the dynamics at the state level, and the importance of having a central organization to initiate industry collaboration for legislation, marketing and education.

**Curtis Coleburn** handles the Virginia Distillers Association **Government Affairs**. Curtis served as the Chief Operating Officer of Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control for over 20 years, presiding over the agency and its 300+ stores statewide. Curtis has extensive knowledge of the regulatory environment, manufacturing, distribution and sales of alcoholic beverages in the Commonwealth. Curtis took first steps at industry-wide legislative advocacy for Virginia spirits producers in 2015.

Recognizing the need for supporting Virginia burgeoning craft spirits industry, Amy and Curtis worked in unison with industry leaders to establish and build the fundamental structure of the Virginia Distillers Association, and they have been managing the organization since its formalization in June 2016.

#### Members. We're Growing...FAST!

Click **HERE** to access a current list of Virginia Distillers Association member distilleries.

Click <u>HERE</u> to access a current list of Virginia Distillers Association associate members (suppliers and service providers).







#### **ADVOCACY**

Virginia's distillers are flag bearers of local tourism, local jobs (which are often in rural communities), local agriculture and stewards of our nation's heritage. Much of the work we do is geared towards educating the consuming public and our legislators about the dispirit treatment of Virginia's craft distillers in the regulatory and legislative environments. In addition, we focus on addressing the unique and excessive state and federal-imposed policy and tax burdens that ultimately make Virginia craft spirits considerably less accessible to consumers.

Please visit the **Advocacy** section of our website to learn more about the current issues that affect our constituency the most, and for information on our current legislative agenda.

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#### **CONTACTS, SOCIAL & PHOTOGRAPHY**



#### Instagram

instagram.com/ vaspirits



#### **Facebook**

facebook.com/ vaspirits



#### **Twitter**

twitter.com/ vaspirits



#### YouTube

(enjoy our *Meet Virginia Makers* video series)

#### NEED INFORMATION? JUST REACH OUT – WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!

#### For media inquiries, and general business, contact:

Amy Ciarametaro
Virginia Distillers Association
Executive Director
amy@vadistillersassociation.org

#### For regulatory, legislative and legal inquiries, contact:

Curtis Coleburn Virginia Distillers Association Government Affairs curtis@vadistillersassociation.org

#### **Photography**

Please contact Amy Ciarametaro at <a href="mailto:amy@vadistillersassociation.org">amy@vadistillersassociation.org</a> for photographs to accompany your story. She will provide high resolution professional photography. Please credit the Virginia Distillers Association for any imagery used.



Follow along! We're on social media! Use the **#VaSpirits** hashtag for all your Virginia spirits social media posts!

Also, because September is Virginia Spirits Month (as proclaimed by our governor!) is near and dear to us, we encourage you to use the hashtag **#VaSpiritsMonth** throughout the month!

#### WHAT'S NEW IN THE VIRGINIA SPIRITS INDUSTRY!

#### **MEET VIRGINIA MAKERS VIDEO SERIES ON YOUTUBE**

The Virginia Distillers Association recently launched a mini-series on YouTube called *Meet Virginia Makers*, featuring 22 videos profiling our industry's most compelling spirits producers. Each spirits maker shares stories of enthusiasm for their individual businesses and the Commonwealth. The series provides a personal understanding and overview of those that we consider to be stewards of the Virginia distilled spirits industry's past, present, and future. Please visit our website or YouTube channel for more information on the *Meet Virginia Makers* mini-series.



#### **VIRTUAL VIRGINIA SPIRITS TRAIL ON VIRGINIASPIRITS.ORG**

We recently launched the <u>Virtual Virginia Spirits Trail</u> on our website, VirginiaSpirits.org. The Virtual Virginia Spirits Trail will help you plan your adventures to Virginia's distilleries. You can sort the Virtual Trail by region and by category of spirits produced by our distilleries. So if you only want to visit distilleries in Central Virginia that produce whiskey, you can filter the Virtual Trail accordingly. The Virtual Trail also has geolocation functionality, which means you can find the closest Virginia distillery in a jiffy.



#### WHAT'S NEW IN THE VIRGINIA SPIRITS INDUSTRY!



#### VIRGINIA SPIRITS COCKTAIL DATABASE ON VIRGINIASPIRITS.ORG

Virginia's best cocktails and libations are made with Virginia's best spirits! The Virginia Distillers Association recently launched an **Online Cocktail Recipe Database** on VirginiaSpirits.org. Submissions for all cocktail recipes are made by bartenders, mixologists, Virginia distillers and consumer enthusiasts.

Visitors to the cocktail database can search for recipes by:

#### **CLASSIC COCKTAILS**

- Martini recipes
- Bloody Mary recipes
- Manhattan recipes
- Margarita recipes
- Daiquiri recipes
- Punch recipes
- Other recipes

#### **VIRGINIA SPIRITS TYPE**

- Vodka cocktails
- Whiskey/Whisky/Bourbon/ Rye cocktails
- Gin cocktails
- Brandy cocktails
- Rum cocktails
- Shots
- Other spirits cocktails

#### THEME

- Classic cocktail recipes
- Holiday cocktails
- Spring cocktails
- Frozen cocktails and blended drinks
- Hot alcoholic drinks
- Tiki cocktail recipes and tropical drinks



Visit the Virginia Distillers Association's Online Cocktail Recipe
Database on VirginiaSpirits.org!

