

# GETTING into Michigan's Seasonal SPIRIT



BY DIANNA STAMPFLER

**W**hiskey, vodka and gin...oh my! Distillers around the state are refining their craft and producing an eclectic menu of beverages just perfect for holiday sipping, indulging and gift giving.

Why not blend a bit of Michigan vodka into the mix of cranberry-flavored gelato, drizzle a bit of Michigan-made rum icing over your favorite dessert or even poach pears with rum and serve with mascarpone for a delicious Michigan spiced-fruit treat.

Consider dressing up your next Michigan martini with a cinnamon stick or candy cane to get your guests in a festive mood. Warm up on a cold winter night by adding a touch of locally-made barrel whiskey and fresh whip cream for a Michigan spin on Irish coffee. Or, transform your traditional eggnog with a local spirit to make it extra special. A variety of other drink recipes can be found in the following pages.

Michigan spirits also make great gifts for many on your holiday shopping list. Wrap up Valentine Vodka with McClure's Pickle Brine, Spicy Bloody Mary Mix and Spicy Pickles for a Detroit-themed gift pack. Or, pick up the Valentine Vodka's 200ml mini-bottle for a treasured stocking stuffer.

A four-pack from Hard Luck Candy Vodka makes a fun and colorful gift with sweet tasting flavors such as Red Fish, Root Beer Barrel, Lemon Drop and Orange Dream.

For the connoisseur on your list who has everything, Black Star Farm's "Pear in a Bottle" eau de vie is a unique gift as well as a conversation piece. Made from Bartlett pears (ripened inside the bottle), this clear brandy represents the pure essence of fermented fruit with a powerful aroma and an elegant aftertaste.

Have a traveler to buy for? Plan a getaway weekend for the spirit



lover on your holiday list. Both New Holland Brewing in Holland and Grand Traverse Distillery in Traverse City offer distillery tours for a sneak peek into this artistic process. Even Michigan State University offers a two-day artisan distilling workshop for those looking to expand their knowledge of this growing industry.

More than a half dozen other distillery operations exist now throughout Michigan, several within just a short drive of each other in the southwest part of the state including the new Journeyman distillery in Three Oaks, Round Barn Winery (makers of DiVine Vodka) in Baroda, Big Cedar Distilling (creators of Incentive Vodka) in Sturgis and St. Julian Winery (home of Grey Heron Vodka) in Paw Paw.

Northern United Brewing Company crafts its Civilized Spirits on the Old Mission Peninsula in Traverse City, Uncle John's Fruithouse Winery has developed a vodka made from apples and Ugly Dog Distilling operates its tasting room in Chelsea.

Luckily for consumers, many of these local products have been picked up by area retail outlets, restaurants and bars eager to embrace the "Made in Michigan" philosophy. Others offer select spirits exclusively at their respective tasting rooms, making for a great day of touring (much like one does while visiting the state's wineries and breweries).

So, as the holidays approach, share the spirit of the season by raising your glass and saying "Cheers to Michigan!"

Dianna Stampfler is the creator of [www.SpiritsOfMichigan.com](http://www.SpiritsOfMichigan.com), a blog dedicated to Michigan's growing distilling industry.



## Cinnister Hot Chocolate

Recipe Courtesy Incentive Vodka

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ounces Incentive Vodka's Cinnister (cinnamon liquor)
- 8 ounce cup of hot chocolate

DIRECTIONS

Pour in a heat proof mug and enjoy. Garnish with cinnamon sticks and whip cream.



## Lake Michigan Storm

RECIPE COURTESY INCENTIVE VODKA

INGREDIENTS

- 7 ounces Castaway Spiced Rum (which is sold in our tasting room)
- 10 ounces of Coke
- 1 ounce of freshly squeezed lime juice

DIRECTIONS

Pour over ice in a tall glass and stir gently. Slice of lime as a garnish.



## Eggnog Martini

RECIPE COURTESY INCENTIVE VODKA

INGREDIENTS

- 1 ounce Incentive Vodka's Coffee Liquor
- 3 ounces eggnog
- sprinkle of nutmeg

DIRECTIONS

Mix in a glass and pour and serve in a martini glass. Garnish with nutmeg.

## Holiday Rum Punch

RECIPE COURTESY NEW HOLLAND ARTISAN SPIRITS

SEE OPPOSITE PAGE

INGREDIENTS

- 3 medium oranges, sliced
- 2 tablespoons whole cloves
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1/2 gallon apple cider
- 2 cups Michigan Amber Rum
- 4 dashes bitters (orange bitters if possible)

DIRECTIONS

In a medium saucepan, heat oranges, cloves, cinnamon and cider. Once hot, but not boiling, cover and remove from heat and steep for 30 minutes. Strain into punch bowl, add rum and bitters. Garnish with fresh orange slices and cinnamon sticks. Optional additions/substitutions include fresh ground nutmeg, blood oranges, allspice, maple syrup.

## Michigan Mistletoe

RECIPE COURTESY INCENTIVE VODKA

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup Castaway Silver Rum (which we sell in our tasting room)
- fresh ginger
- 2 cups of cranberry juice

DIRECTIONS

Pour rum in a pitcher. Add a thinly-sliced piece of peeled ginger. Muddle with handle of wooden spoon; this releases the juices of the ginger. Stir in 2 cups of very cold cranberry juice. Serve in martini glasses. Rim the glasses with sugar and enjoy.

## Santa's Little Helper

RECIPE COURTESY GRAND TRAVERSE DISTILLERY

INGREDIENTS

- 2 ounces Grand Traverse True North Rye Vodka
- 1 tablespoon of apple/cinnamon jam or preserves
- 1/2 ounce of fresh-squeezed lemon Juice
- 1 small cinnamon stick (garnish)

DIRECTIONS

Shake ingredients for at least 10 seconds. Strain into an ice-filled old fashioned glass. Garnish with cinnamon stick (swizzle stick).



## The Aspen

RECIPE COURTESY Nicholas Brancaleone

Cocktail Chef Valentine Distilling Co., Detroit

DIRECTIONS

Lightly muddle fresh peppermint in glass. Lace glass with dark chocolate and caramel, add 2 ounces vodka (Valentine Vodka) and fill with hot coffee. Top with fresh whipping cream, sprinkle with cinnamon, 3 coffee beans and a peppermint sprig.

# MICHIGAN DISTILLERS

## **Civilized Spirits**

[www.nubco.net/civilized-spirits](http://www.nubco.net/civilized-spirits)

## **Ghost Vodka**

[ghostvodkadetroit@gmail.com](mailto:ghostvodkadetroit@gmail.com)

## **Grand Traverse Distillery**

[www.grandtraversedistillery.com](http://www.grandtraversedistillery.com)

## **Hard Luck Vodka**

[www.hardluckvodka.com](http://www.hardluckvodka.com)

## **Incentive Vodka**

[www.incentivevodka.com](http://www.incentivevodka.com)

## **Journeyman Distillery**

[www.journeymandistillery.com](http://www.journeymandistillery.com)

## **New Holland Artisan Spirits**

[www.newhollandbrew.com](http://www.newhollandbrew.com)

## **Round Barn Winery – DiVine Vodka**

[www.divinevodka.com](http://www.divinevodka.com)

## **St. Julian Winery – Grey Heron Vodka**

[www.stjulian.com](http://www.stjulian.com)

## **Ugly Dog Distillery**

[www.uglydogvodka.com](http://www.uglydogvodka.com)

## **Uncle John's Fruithouse Winery**

[www.ujcidermill.com](http://www.ujcidermill.com)

## **Valentine Vodka**

[www.valentinevodka.com](http://www.valentinevodka.com)

## **MSU Artisan Distilling Program**

[www.artisandistilling.org](http://www.artisandistilling.org)

## **Spirits of Michigan**

[www.spiritsofmichigan.com](http://www.spiritsofmichigan.com)



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