

CELEBRATING SMALL-BATCH SPIRITS

COLORADO CRAFT

*edible* ASPEN.

DISTILLERY GUIDE

AND THE MODERN PIONEERS OF OUR CRAFT SPIRITS MOVEMENT



# CRAFT: \ 'kraft \

**noun:** a job or activity that involves a special skill

**verb:** to make something in a skillful way using your hands



## COLORADO RANKS SECOND NATIONWIDE FOR THE NUMBER OF DISTILLERIES

after Washington State, with over 70 licensed producers. Increasingly, there's a move to source Colorado crops—primarily from the Western Slope, San Luis Valley and Alamosa and Larimer Counties. The purity of our water supply is another reason distillers choose Colorado as a home base. Spirits—especially whiskey—have a long, if nefarious, history in the Centennial State, but from boomtowns to Prohibition to the present day, Coloradans have always found a way to keep the stills flowing. In this guide, we celebrate the modern pioneers of our craft spirits movement. **To learn more about Colorado spirits, visit [EdibleAspen.com](http://EdibleAspen.com).**

## WHAT IS GRAIN-TO-GLASS?

It's an unregulated term and the definition is in the mind of the distiller, but grain-to-glass has become synonymous with small-batch distilling—particularly whiskey. According to Andrew Faulkner, managing editor of *Distiller Magazine*, "It usually implies that the distillery mashed, fermented and distilled the grain or other base from which that spirit was made."

Grain-to-glass marketing is partly pushback to the global trend of distilleries purchasing bulk neutral grain spirits (NGS), despite it being the norm for most white spirits. Using NGS doesn't mean the resulting products are inferior, nor are grain-to-glass spirits always better. There are distilleries using NGS but because of their mastery at blending, maceration and aging, they produce excellent spirits. What matters is high-quality ingredients—just as with cooking.

It's often difficult for small farms to supply the demand of some distilleries and the cost of raw ingredients can be prohibitive. Some spirits require base ingredients that only grow in specific regions. Visit tasting rooms and ask questions to educate yourself as a consumer, and purchase what you enjoy.

## THE BITTER TRUTH

Colorado produces some of the best—and purest—bitters. Besides **DRAM Apothecary** (see listing), there's Denver's **Strongwater Spirits & Botanicals** for esoteric bitters and sipping vinegars made from ethically sourced ingredients. Boulder's **Cocktailpunk** makes bitters by macerating ingredients like Palisade peaches and cherries. Colorado distillers are also making bitter aperitifs and digestifs. Try **Leopold Bros. Three Pins Alpine Herbal Liqueur** or **Fernet Leopold Highland Amaro**; **Peak Spirits Distillery's CapRock Bitter**, a traditional Amaro from wine grapes, and **Spring44's Fortify Bitter Liqueur**.



**PEAK SPIRITS DISTILLERY** began distilling at Jack Rabbit Hill Farm in Hotchkiss, Colorado, in August 2005, just in time for the orchard harvest! Handcrafted by Lance and Anna Hanson, these small-batch, world famous CapRock Gin, Vodka and Brandies are made from the best organic and biodynamic fruit in the region, and cut back with naturally pure, soft water from the CapRock formation at 10,500 feet on Grand Mesa, just 20 miles from the farm. Ask for CapRock in fine restaurants and stores in major U.S. and European markets. For more information contact Anna Hanson, [anna@jackrabbithill.com](mailto:anna@jackrabbithill.com), or visit [PeakSpirits.com](http://PeakSpirits.com).

# COLORADO CRAFT DISTILLERIES

## BRECKENRIDGE DISTILLERY

TOURS :: 1925 Airport Rd., Breckenridge; 970.547.9759, [BreckenridgeDistillery.com](http://BreckenridgeDistillery.com)

TASTING ROOM :: 137 S. Main St., Breckenridge

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Continental Divide snowmelt, quality ingredients and skillful blending put this 9,600-foot distillery on the map; the award-winning high-rye bourbon is balanced and subtle.



## COLORADO GOLD DISTILLERY

1290 S. Grand Mesa Dr., Cedaredge; 970.856.2600, [ColoradoGoldDistillers.com](http://ColoradoGoldDistillers.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Acclaimed Straight Bourbon Whiskey, smooth-sipping Corn Whiskey, even a Colorado High Hemp Distilled Vodka—all filtered through billion-year-old basalt and produced in Colorado's orchard fruit epicenter.



## DANCING PINES DISTILLERY

1527 Taurus Ct. #110, Loveland; 970.635.3426, [DancingPinesDistillery.com](http://DancingPinesDistillery.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Heavenly liqueurs like Black Walnut and Cherry Tart; quality rums, especially the light-bodied, citrusy Spice version, which tastes like Christmas in the best possible way. Try it in eggnog.



## DEERHAMMER DISTILLING COMPANY

321 E. Main St., Buena Vista; 719.395.9464, [Deerhammer.com](http://Deerhammer.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: The excellent Downtime Single Malt Whiskey has notes of peat, leather and honey; Buena Vista Brandy is complex, with vanilla, spice and dark fruit. If you'd like to help with bottling, contact the distillery.



## DEVIL'S HEAD DISTILLERY

3296 S. Acoma St., Englewood; 720.668.8770, [DevilsHeadDistillery.com](http://DevilsHeadDistillery.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: This new distillery opened in September, and boasts Colorado-grown grains and a legit craft spirit ethos. Co-owner Ryan White is the state's only producer of aquavit, which he vapor-distills so it sings with hand-crushed aromatics like caraway, anise and dill.



## DRAM APOTHECARY

1010 Main St., Silver Plume; 720.608.0063, [DramApothecary.com](http://DramApothecary.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Exquisite locally wildcrafted bitters and cocktail syrups are vapor-distilled in small batches by founder Shae Whitney. Don't miss the excellent, old timey cocktails and tastings located in a 19th-century former bakery in this "living ghost town."



## GOLDEN MOON DISTILLERY

412 Violet St., Golden; 303.993.7174, [GoldenMoonDistillery.com](http://GoldenMoonDistillery.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Crème de Violette is difficult to source anywhere, but a well-made domestic version is a real treasure. Made with blue violet flowers and buds, minimal sugar and bottled at a higher proof than most, it's clean and delicate on the palate, not cloying.



## LEOPOLD BROS.

5285 Joliet St., Denver; [LeopoldBros.com](http://LeopoldBros.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Todd Leopold's masterful distilling (brother Scott oversees operations), an attention to detail and craftsmanship and an emphasis on sustainability. Colorado barley from the San Luis Valley is malted on-site; peaches are from the Western Slope. The Leopolds started distilling in Michigan and pay homage with an exemplary Cherry Whiskey and a Tart Cherry Liqueur.



## MARBLE DISTILLING COMPANY

150 Main St., Carbondale; 970.963.7008, [MarbleDistilling.com](http://MarbleDistilling.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: The above-and-beyond green construction and production methods and the stunning yule marble tasting room. Crystal River water and Colorado grains make for a superlatively pure vodka; the Moonlight Espresso liqueur is great in toddies and made from local Bonfire Coffee beans. Members of the private barrel club can age (and taste) their own whiskey in-house.



## MILE HIGH SPIRITS

2201 Lawrence St., Denver; 303.296.2226, [DrinkMileHighSpirits.com](http://DrinkMileHighSpirits.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Notes of honey, oak and toffee make the Fireside Bourbon an appealing sipper, and the Cuidado Tequila blended with filtered Rocky Mountain water is fruity, spicy and light on the palate. The distillery/tasting room, located in the Ballpark neighborhood, is one of the most packed-out bars in town (live music and expansive patio, to boot).



## MONTANYA DISTILLERS

TASTING ROOM AND TOURS :: 212 Elk Ave., Crested Butte; 970.799.3206, [MontanyaRum.com](http://MontanyaRum.com)

TASTING ROOM ONLY :: 1309 Green St., Silverton; 970.387.9904

WHY WE LOVE IT :: The buzzy scene at the CB tasting room/distillery/bar is reason enough, but killer cocktails made with Platino White, Oro Dark and the new Exclusiva (extra-aged and finished in port barrels from Cortez's Sutcliffe Vineyards) make this a must-visit destination.



## PEACH STREET DISTILLERS

144 S. Kluge Ave., Bldg. #2, Palisade; 970.464.1128, [PeachStreetDistillers.com](http://PeachStreetDistillers.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: The state's first legally made—and widely acclaimed—bourbon is augmented with Olathe corn and local grains; the result is smooth, with hints of caramel, vanilla, oak and spice. Get the limited, seasonal, Palisade-grown Pear-in-the-Bottle Brandy while it lasts—and don't miss the eclectic tasting room adorned with bizarre bric-a-brac if you're passing by on I-70.



## PEAK SPIRITS DISTILLERY AT JACK RABBIT HILL FARM

26567 North Rd., Hotchkiss; 970.361.4249, [PeakSpirits.com](http://PeakSpirits.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Winemakers Lance and Anna Hanson are from Colorado's old-school distilling movement. Their CapRock gin, made from whole apples, has garnered national acclaim, as well as their eaux de vies, made with local fruit. Their wine grapes are used in CapRock vodka, grappas and brandy, but it's still all about small batch and honoring the quality of the fruit and terroir.



## SPIRIT HOUND DISTILLERS

4196 Ute Hwy., Lyons; 303.823.5696, [SpiritHounds.com](http://SpiritHounds.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Gin made with foraged local juniper berries that are vapor-distilled for maximum aromatics and flavor (the result is surprisingly delicate with floral, citrus notes); whiskey made with barley grown, malted and peat-smoked in Alamosa before undergoing fermentation, distillation and aging at the distillery; the community vibe of a small-town indie business.



## SPRING 44 DISTILLING

505 W. 66th St., Loveland; 970.414.0744, [Spring44.com](http://Spring44.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: It's all about the water, sourced from an artesian spring in Buckhorn Canyon. Try the clean, subtly mineral signature vodka, a delicate vodka sweetened with local clover honey, or any of the three vapor-distilled gins.



## STRANAHAN'S COLORADO WHISKEY

200 S. Kalamath St., Denver; 303.296.7440, [Stranahans.com](http://Stranahans.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Co-founder/distiller Jess Graber and business partner George Stranahan established Colorado's first micro-distiller in 2004. In 2010, they sold the company but Stranahan's still uses Colorado water and barley, and the nationally known distillery boasts an Old West-style "whiskey lounge" for tastings and cocktails. Want to help with bottling? Sign up online.



## SUERTE TEQUILA

Boulder; 720.310.5825, [DrinkSuerte.com](http://DrinkSuerte.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: These award-winning spirits are from a Boulder importer—the only Colorado brand that owns a tequila distillery (Tequilera Simbolo, in Jalisco). Tequila is an Appellation of Origin product and by law must be made with Blue Weber agave in Jalisco and certain municipalities in four other states, using specific production methods. Try the Tequila Blanco, Reposado and Extra Añejo.



## 10TH MOUNTAIN WHISKEY & SPIRIT COMPANY



TASTING ROOM :: 286 Bridge St., Vail; 970.470.4215, [10thWhiskey.com](http://10thWhiskey.com)

TOURS :: 500 Trail Gulch Rd., Gypsum; 970.524.2580

WHY WE LOVE IT :: In addition to its ties to Colorado mountain town history (co-founder Christian Avignon's grandfather was in the 10th Division), there's that luscious bourbon with notes of vanilla and toasted nuts, and the silky, well-balanced Olathe corn Moonshine.



## WOOD'S HIGH MOUNTAIN DISTILLERY

144 W. 1st St., Salida; 719.207.4315, [WoodsDistillery.com](http://WoodsDistillery.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: Tenderfoot Whiskey seduces with hints of chocolate and smoke, while Alpine Rye evokes citrus, coffee and caramel, but it's the esoteric spirits that make this tasting room worth visiting. Beer aficionados will be intrigued by Mountain Hopped Gin distilled with Colorado hops and other botanicals; Fleur de Sureau is made with blossoms foraged in Salida.



## WOODY CREEK DISTILLERS

60 Sunset Dr., Basalt; 970.279.5110, [WoodyCreekDistillers.com](http://WoodyCreekDistillers.com)

WHY WE LOVE IT :: The award-winning potato vodka and Reserve Vodkas (made respectively with Rio Grande spuds and heirloom Strobrawa potatoes from co-founder Pat Scanlan's Woody Creek organic farm) yield white spirits with appealing viscosity and smooth, subtle fruitiness. Everything is Colorado-sourced and eminently sippable, but don't skip the excellent tasting room cocktails.



## PRODUCTS + SERVICES

W Whiskey

V Vodka

G Gin

R Rum

B Bitters

L Liqueurs

O Other

Wheat Glass Grain-to-Glass

Glass Tasting Room

Barrels Tours

Star Favorite Tasting Room

Gear Appointment Only Tasting

Clock Appointment Only Tours

## THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

FOR SUPPORTING COLORADO DISTILLERIES. THEIR SUPPORT HELPS TO ENSURE A THRIVING, AND INNOVATIVE, CRAFT SPIRITS COMMUNITY.



AMERICAN DISTILLING INSTITUTE

The **AMERICAN DISTILLING INSTITUTE** has been at the heart of the craft-distilling community since 2003. ADI has helped hundreds of distilleries get up and running, and hundreds more take their art and business to the next level through its conferences, workshops, publications and forum. *Distiller* magazine's circulation is 6,000 and ADI's newsletter reaches 7,000. The White Mule Press has published over 30 books on distilled spirits, and ADI's website sees more than 56,582 unique visits per year, with over a quarter-million page views. Join over 1,600 members of the distilling community who will come together at the Annual Conference and Vendor Expo in San Diego, April 4–7, 2016. **Distilling.com**



**WOODY CREEK DISTILLERS** is an award-winning, internationally acclaimed craft distillery located in the Roaring Fork Valley. Our spirits include a 100% potato vodka made from fresh potatoes we grow ourselves, winner of the Double Gold and Best Vodka at the San Francisco International Spirits Competition in 2015. We also distill a 100% rye mash whiskey using Colorado rye, as well as our newly released Woody Creek Gin. Of course, we use only pure Aspen Valley spring water to produce these world-class spirits, which are hand-crafted and batch-distilled. At Woody Creek Distillers we make every drop we sell. **WoodyCreekDistillers.com**



**APPLEJACK WINE & SPIRITS** has been serving Colorado for more than 50 years. Since its inception, Applejack has worked to ensure great selection and service at low prices. We are the best, most comprehensive retailer of wines and specialty liquors on the continent. We are known for our unique inventory of special and vintage wines, cognacs and Armagnacs as well as hundreds of single-malt and specialty scotches, vintage ports and hard-to-find imported wines. We proudly offer delivery to the Roaring Fork Valley. For complete delivery details and to order all your local favorites visit **Applejack.com**.

# OUR FAVORITE BAR PROGRAMS

We love a good imported spirit as much as the next guy, but the following restaurants and bars have won us over for their support of Colorado distilleries, combined with thoughtful, skillfully executed cocktail lists

that change with the seasons. In Aspen, check out **Justice Snow's**, **Jimmy's American Bar**,

**Grey Lady** and **Chefs Club**. In the Denver-Boulder area, we love

**Mercantile Dining & Provisions**,

**The Cooper Lounge**,

**The Kitchen, Williams**

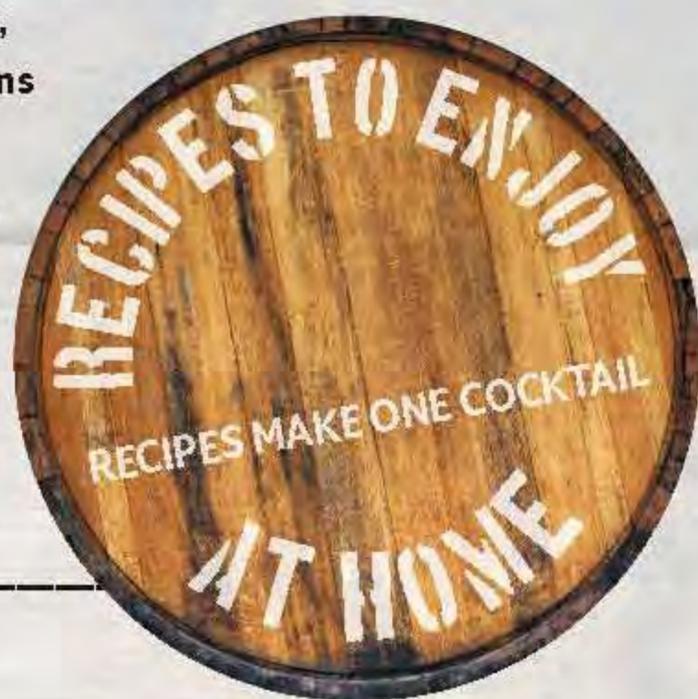
**& Graham, Acorn**,

**OAK at Fourteenth**,

**The Bitter Bar**

and **Frasca**

**Food & Wine**.



## SIX CHAIR

*By Kelley Slagle*

- 1½ ounces Breckenridge Bourbon
- ¾ ounce grapefruit juice
- ½ ounce Lillet Rouge
- ½ ounce St-Germain Elderflower Liqueur
- Rosemary sprig

Add first 4 ingredients to a cocktail shaker, add ice. Shake briefly to combine and chill. Strain over ice in rocks glass. Garnish with a rosemary sprig.

## WINTER'S DANCE

*By 10th Mountain Whiskey & Spirit Company*

- 1½ ounces Colorado Clear Mountain Moonshine
- ½ ounce pomegranate juice
- ½ ounce honey simple syrup
- ½ ounce Canton Ginger Liqueur
- Prosecco
- Pomegranate seeds

In the same order as above, add the first 4 ingredients to a champagne flute. Top with prosecco and garnish with 3–4 pomegranate seeds.

## HARVEST APPLE

*By Molly Briggs*

- 2 ounces Woody Creek Vodka
- 2 ounces apple cider or Simply Apple
- ¼ ounce pure maple syrup
- 2 dashes Angostura bitters
- Pumpkin pie spice

Add first 4 ingredients to a cocktail shaker, add ice. Shake and strain over ice in rocks glass. Sprinkle with pumpkin pie spice.

## PAT SAGE ACT

*By The Kitchen, Denver*

- 1 ounce CapRock Gin
- 2 tablespoons Strongwater Peach-Rose Shrub
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- 3 muddled sage leaves

Add all ingredients to a cocktail shaker, add ice. Shake and strain into a coupe glass. Garnish with a fresh sage leaf.

## COLORADO WINTER

*By Dante Reesman, Justice Snow's*

- 1½ ounces Dancing Pines Gin
- ½ ounce Leopold Bros. Three Pins Alpine
- ¼ ounce lemon juice
- 1 ounce green cardamom simple syrup
- 1 ounce egg whites
- Finely ground black pepper

Combine everything except pepper. Dry shake, wet shake, fill a coupe glass to the brim. Top with pepper. Use a blow torch to lightly toast the pepper.

