

Alberta Liquor Store Association Trade Show { by Heather Kingston }

Photos by Ellen Schoed



Photos by Anderson Behavios

ALSA's Spring Trade Show and Convention was the ultimate in connecting and in sampling new product. Some of the offerings included:

En Sante Wines has used fruits like cherries, Saskatoons and raspberries to produce a line of Alberta-produced "Certified Organic" fruit wines. Bright, fresh wines with a hint of sweetness.

Organic Wine Connection offered "Seduction" and "Soie de Bourgogne" [silk of Burgundy] – great organic wines for people sensitive to sulphites.

Shine Wines drew a crowd with wines from China. Noble Dragon White and Red are as captivating on the outside label as they are on the inside.

Agua Loca poured on premium tequila new to Alberta. The Cava Don Anastacio Reposado and the Anejo are smooth sippers. Also sampled was La Minerva Tangerine Liqueur. As good as it sounds!

Berta Brothers Imports Fat Ass Tequila: a serious spirit. The Blanco is smooth on the palate.

Liber Group Inc. poured Seven Year Juan Santos Cafe Rum. Evocative of the Caribbean, this is a slightly sweet, coffee-infused pleasure. Unique, great with ice cream.

Diageo has new summer beverages in stores now. Smirnoff Ice Light has 60% less calories. The sucralose used has no aftertaste. Delicious!

Gold Medal poured a very unusual peated Irish Whisky. The Irish typically do not use peat. The treatment is subtle and triple distillation makes it smooth.

Highwood Distillery showcased their new Ceilis Cream Cappuccino. Over ice, it transforms into an adult milkshake!

Diamond Estates poured Trader Vic's Macadamia Nut Liqueur. Watch for toasty, nutty richness with a background sweetness.

Scottish and Newcastle surprised the crowd with summer-in-a-glass Bulmers, an Apple Cider. Because this cider is not chill-filtered, it retains more flavour, with a taste that is reminiscent of tart apples.


Grizzly Paw Brewing Company is back in the Connect Logistics listings after \$250,000.00 in renovations. Grumpy Bear Honey Wheat has 30 kilos of honey per 1,000 litres. The honey is not overt, but provides a great backdrop. Rutting Elk is a roasted malt Scottish style. Both are outstanding.

Alchil Inc. is livening up Chilean Pisco, a brandy, by bottling it as premixed Pina Colodas. This more approachable Pisco is perfect for summer.

David Herman and Son Ltd. has yet another stunning Vincent Van Gogh Vodka. Double Espresso, Double Caffeine will keep your eyes wide open!

Diamond Estates sampled the UV Vodka. This is an ultra-smooth premium vodka: very popular with the ALSA members.

Charton Hobbs is now carrying Frangelico Liqueur, Irish Mist and Tullamore Whisky.

Having this showing was a great way to remind everyone where the products are available. 

renegade rum { by Heather Kingston }

On January 28th, Freehouse Wine and Spirits hosted a trade tasting of Renegade Rums from the Bruichladdich Distillery.

Renegade Rum, Jamaica Hampden 2000 (8 Year) is a creative, finely-crafted rum. Made in Jamaica and matured in American oak casks originally used to mature American rye whisky, there is additional maturation in Chateau Climens wine casks. Those casks are laid down in whisky warehouses beside the sea loch, Loch Indaal at the Bruichladdich Distillery. The resulting flavor is much like a single malt whisky with a curious rum twist. There are some tangy salt notes, with a pleasing caramel base: the most interesting spirit

to come across my palate in quite some time.

Now to the Renegade Rum, Barbados Black Rock 2000 (8 year). This unique, super premium rum will raise your eyebrows. This Barbados rum has been matured in American oak casks originally used to mature American rye whisky. Further maturation has been done in Port casks. The additional time spent in the Bruichladdich warehouse by the sea supplements the flavours. The rum has a sweet influence from the Port cask and a smoky nuance in the background. Sip on their own, or use as a base for a Mojito cocktail. 