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Keeping the Industry Informed

FEATURING

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Liquor*

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ALBERTA
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EDITOR'S NOTES

by Joyce Hayne



Alberta's economy is continuing to recover. The economy is forecast to grow 2.7% this year and employment growth is forecast at 2%. As the price of oil increases, so do the opportunities in the oil sands, but on the flip side your cost of goods is increasing as fuel surcharges have been implemented by Connect Logistics. There are also other increasing costs of doing business such as minimum wage hikes, so operators need to work smarter.

That's where Liquor Retailer aims to help you with strategies to help you improve operations, marketing and staffing. In this issue, we review POS systems, liquor storage, trending cocktails and staff retention. Let us know what other issues you're facing and we'll be happy to cover them in future issues.

We look forward to hearing from you.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 3-13 Canmore Uncorked Canmore
www.canmoreuncorked.com/

May 4-5 Calgary International BeerFest Stampede Park
www.albertabeerfestivals.com/events-services/calgary-international-beerfest-2/

May 12 Horde at the Hive - Mead Competition Chinook Honey Company & Chinook Arch Meadery
www.chinookhoney.com/event/horde-at-the-hive-mead-competition/

June 1-2 Edmonton Craft Beer Festival Edmonton Expo Centre
www.albertabeerfestivals.com/events-services/edmonton-craft-beer-festival/

June 11 Indulgence 2018 Delta Edmonton South
www.indulgenceedmonton.ca/

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ALSA'S MESSAGE

by Ivonne Martinez



The first quarter of 2018 brought a boycott, cannabis, and 25 years of liquor retailing to our industry. The BC wine boycott, although short-lived, did impact many of our members. Some stores stood to lose as much as 10% of sales due to the boycott and our association actively advocated to the Alberta government for a speedy resolution to this provincial dispute. We are glad to be back to the open liquor system that has made our model the envy of the country.

Regulations for cannabis retailing were released by the Alberta government last month. Our association was pleased to see that many aspects of the cannabis regulations mirror liquor retailing regulations. Separation of business, inducements, cross-marketing, and background checks are a few of the similarities with cannabis licensing. However, due to the illicit and illegal aspects of cannabis, licensing will require extensive

financial checks for owners and operators. ALSA will continue to support our members as they enter into this new market. Stay tuned for more information, but in the meantime we are here to answer questions and help members navigate through this new licensing process.

And finally, this year marks the 25th anniversary of Alberta's model of liquor retailing. With 1,500 liquor stores, 25,000 liquor products, and over 100 new Alberta Manufacturer Licences issued last year, Alberta shows no signs of slowing down. You will see our commemorative logo—25 Years and Growing—in all new materials as we ramp up to our conference in September. We will be sending a save-the-date notice in the next few weeks. This celebration is one you will not want to miss.

Looking forward to working with you this year.

UPCOMING ISSUE

Summer 2018

Buying Strategies – Review ideas to save money when purchasing liquor and supplies.

Beer & Food Pairing – Learn which beer styles complement various food groups.

Preventing Fraud – Review best practices to prevent fraud including skimming of credit/debit card data.

Selling Techniques – Design programs and systems to encourage staff to upsell.

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5 TRENDING COCKTAILS

STOCK UP ON BARTENDER SUPPLIES

by Joanne Sasvari

The next big trend in cocktails? Shaking 'em up at home. So say the experts at Diageo World Class, the planet's biggest, most prestigious cocktail competition.

As the event wrapped up last August in Mexico City, with Vancouver's Kaitlynn Stewart beating 10,000 competitors to become the first Canadian crowned World's Best Bartender, World Class judge and Diageo Reserve's Global Cocktalian Lauren Mote said: "We want more 'armchair mixologists' to have the courage to explore what's possible and create their own signature serves in the kitchen. Next year we expect just that—people experimenting with cocktails at home."

Smart retailers will take note and start stocking the spirits and other ingredients home bartenders need—and, if they have the space, the tools, glassware, garnishes, and books too.

Wondering where to start? Right here, with all you need for five classic cocktail styles.

Bittered Slings

The original cocktail, according to the definition first printed in 1806, was spirits, sugar, water, and bitters—what was then called "a bittered sling" or what you might know as an Old Fashioned. It's just one of a number of classic strong and stirred drinks, including the Sazerac and Vieux Carré, that have become fashionable all over again. The essentials here are brown spirits and bitters. It is, after all, the bitters that make a cocktail a cocktail and not a highball or a punch; they are a sure sign of someone serious about the craft.



The key here is quality ingredients and the proper tools. And that means a mixing glass as, regardless of what James Bond might say, spirit-only drinks like these should always be stirred, not shaken, to control dilution and keep the liquid crystal clear.

Stock up: Gin, vodka, whisky, sweet and dry vermouth, orange and aromatic bitters, cocktail olives, good quality brandied or Amarena cherries

Tools and glassware: Mixing glasses, bar spoons, jiggers, julep strainers, Hawthorne strainers, cocktail (martini) glasses, Nick & Nora glasses, cocktail picks

The Italians

Bitterness in cocktails works to whet the appetite and aid digestion, and no one understands that better than the food-obsessed Italians. While many cultures make digestive bitters, no other makes so many of them, or so many variations. These herbal concoctions find their way into elegant, all-grown-up cocktails like the Negroni, Boulevardier or even the refreshing spritz made with Aperol, the sweeter sibling to

Stock up: Whisky (rye, bourbon, blended), brandy, sweet vermouth, aromatic bitters (Angostura, Bittered Sling, Scrappy's, Peychaud's), absinthe, Bénédictine

Tools and glassware: Mixing glasses, bar spoons, jiggers, muddlers, julep strainers, Old Fashioned glasses, silicone molds for ice spheres and cubes

Martinis & Manhattans

What could be more elegant than a stemmed martini glass holding a chilled, spirit-forward cocktail? The Martini and the Manhattan are two classics that never go out of style. If a home bartender knows only one drink, it should be one of these and preferably both.

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bitter, red Campari. Many of these can be built right in the glass, for the utmost in simplicity.

Stock up: Gin, bourbon and prosecco as well as a wide range of Italian amaros—bittersweet herbal liqueurs—such as Campari, Aperol, Averna, Cocchi, Montenegro, Fernet Branca, and Cynar

Tools and glassware: Old Fashioned and Collins glasses, wine glasses, champagne flutes

Tools and glassware: Cocktail shakers, Hawthorne and tea strainers, jiggers, citrus juicers, channel knives, Collins glasses, cocktail coupes

Tropical Drinks

Borne on a tropical breeze are the easy-to-drink, rum-based cocktails from the Caribbean, such as the Mojito and Piña Colada as well as the boozier South Pacific-themed tiki drinks that originated in California

WHAT COULD BE MORE ELEGANT THAN A STEMMED MARTINI GLASS HOLDING A CHILLED, SPIRIT-FORWARD COCKTAIL?

Sours

The sours are a massive family of drinks that are not necessarily sour, but typically have a citrus component. They include such well-known cocktails as the Margarita, Sidecar, and Cosmopolitan as well as lesser-known classics like the Clover Club and Aviation. Because these drinks are made with fruit juice and often egg whites as well, they are shaken vigorously with ice for speedy chilling and dilution. They should have a good balance of sweet, strong and tart flavours, and can be lengthened with soda water or sparkling wine, as in a Tom Collins or French 75.

Stock up: All the base spirits, plus liqueurs, especially Cointreau, and quality sodas such as Fentiman's or Fever-Tree

in the mid-20th century. While the Mojito is a mainstream fave, tiki drinks like the Mai Tai, Navy Grog, Zombie, and various punches have a passionate cult following. So does tiki's so-kitschy-it's-cool glassware and other accoutrements inspired by Polynesian culture as well as arcane ingredients and compelling back stories.

Stock up: Rum, liqueurs and syrups, especially the almond syrup known as orgeat, which is essential for Mai Tais, as well as falernum, gomme, and tropical fruit flavours

Tools and glassware: Muddlers, tiki mugs, punch bowls, swizzle sticks, fancy straws, cocktail umbrellas, fun party napkins

BAR BOOKS

The Bar Book by Jeffrey Morgenthaler. Those new to cocktails could have no better guide to the basics than the genial and informative *Playboy* columnist.

Meehan's Bartender Manual by Jim Meehan. Everything a home or professional bartender needs to know, by one of the world's most influential contemporary bartenders.

The Savoy Cocktail Book by Harry Craddock. The classic, written by the head bartender at London's Savoy Hotel back in the 1930s.

The Craft of the Cocktail and/or *The Essential Cocktail* by Dale Degroff. "King Cocktail" is credited with leading the revival of the cocktail back in the 1990s, and his two books are still indispensable guides for how to do it right.

Imbibe! Updated and Revised Edition by David Wondrich. The world's greatest cocktail historian tells the tale of "Professor" Jerry Thomas, the first celebrity bartender, who back in the 1860s changed the way the world would drink.

The Drunken Botanist by Amy Stewart. This is for the passionate cocktail nerd who wants to know exactly what plants are used in every drink.

Death & Co: Modern Classic Cocktails by David Kaplan and *The PDT Cocktail Book* by Jim Meehan. These books from two of the world's most innovative cocktail bars are for the ambitious bartender unafraid to tackle a challenge.

Smuggler's Cove: Exotic Cocktails, Rum, and the Cult of Tiki by Martin Cate and Rebecca Cate. These recipes are for those who love their drinks rum-based and tropical flavoured.

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KEEPING YOUR STAFF

RETENTION STRATEGIES THAT WORK

by Veronica Lyver

We all know the competition for finding good employees has become increasingly difficult. This makes it more important than ever to keep the good ones we already have. Focusing on ways to motivate and engage your staff is key to successful employee retention.

10 LIQUOR RETAILER

Back in 1990, Professor William Kahn held in-depth interviews with employees. He found that for an employee to feel engaged, they had to:

- Feel that their work was meaningful and made a difference
- Feel valued, trusted, and respected
- Feel secure and self-confident

In other words, the more an employee feels part of a community, the more likely it is that they are engaged with what they do. It seems quite simple, but it's surprisingly easy and common to overlook these factors. The changes to the job market, especially within the retail and service industries, makes the need for effective employee engagement strategies even more imperative. Here are some proven strategies to consider for your business.

Encourage and Reward Feedback

Employees thrive on the opportunity to not just work for the business, but also contribute to its success. Your front-line workers often know the intricacies of the business intimately. Allow them to speak up. Offer an incentive for any implemented idea that impacts a key business driver—scheduling (labour costs), sales promotions (increased revenue), or even how to decrease expenses (saving you money). The reward doesn't have to be anything extravagant. A gift certificate for dinner and a movie or perhaps a nice bottle of their favourite wine might be enough.

Sometimes the smallest changes can make a significant difference for a business. Allow staff to feel like they are making that difference. You may be surprised by the ideas that come forward.



Celebrate Teamwork

It's always important to get together and celebrate teamwork. As part of this celebration you could arrange a night of wine and spirit tasting. Suppliers may offer to help you with the location, supplies, or even facilitating a

knowledge session. Your employees get out for a night of fun and team building. You will want to make sure everyone gets home safely, so arrange for group transportation or taxi vouchers to reduce any risk of liability.

Offer Education

To keep your employees growing, you could offer wine, beer, or spirits training and certification. There are many wine courses offered online. Engage your employees while on shift by encouraging them to complete this training during quiet periods. Building additional knowledge will allow your employees to feel secure and confident in providing recommendations to customers. They also bring that knowledge into their personal lives, which may ignite a passion for even more education.

Develop Leadership

One other way to increase employee engagement is to offer a development plan for employees you see have leadership potential. Management trainee programs often focus on both on-the-job and academic learning. Providing trainees with a strong knowledge base of operations combined with intense leadership training proves to be an excellent development plan. If it is all mapped out and budgeted for ahead of time, everyone can commit to the program and know what's in store for them.

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Show Respect in the Workplace

Now let's turn our attention to an increasingly hot topic in the workplace. *Wikipedia* defines respect as a positive feeling or action shown towards someone or something considered essential or held in high esteem or regard; it conveys a sense of admiration for good or valuable qualities; and it is also the process of honouring someone by exhibiting care, concern, or consideration for their needs or feelings.

Showing respect in the workplace from an employer's perspective can manifest in many ways. One area of concern that is common in many workplaces is workplace bullying and harassment. You may think this isn't happening in your workplace, but some form of disrespectful, controlling behaviour may very well be happening at any level of the organization. Some statistics show up to 50% of workers have experienced bullying and harassment in the workplace. Having regular communication with your employees and providing an open-door policy will help. Create a safe environment for employees to feel comfortable coming forward with concerns.

EMPLOYEES THRIVE ON THE OPPORTUNITY TO NOT JUST WORK FOR THE BUSINESS, BUT ALSO CONTRIBUTE TO ITS SUCCESS.

Many provinces have already introduced legislation on bullying in the workplace. Take the lead and create your policy detailing what a respectful workplace looks like and what it doesn't. Define bullying, harassment, and discrimination and outline what employees should do if they experience or witness it. And lastly, clearly define the consequences of such behaviour. Ensure all employees are familiar with this policy, and ask them to sign acknowledging they have read, understand, and been given the opportunity to ask questions. If a complaint comes forward, be as objective as possible and place yourself outside the situation so you can see all angles of the situation. A Respectful Workplace Policy demonstrates your intention to create a positive workplace filled with respect and care for all.

Safety First

Another area that is held in high regard by employees is workplace safety. Let's use robbery as an example. Do you have training and drills on what to do in case of an emergency such as a robbery? Consider hiring a professional to come and speak with the team on what to do when faced with such a situation. Many retired police officers now offer this type of training on a consultant basis. Ask yourself, what precautions do I have in place? Then, create a training manual for new employees so they are aware of every measure to keep themselves safe.

Business Retreat

One last consideration for you to ponder is taking the leaders in your organization on a learning outing or retreat. Many large cities such as Edmonton or Calgary have various business and motivational speakers available throughout the year who can offer inspiration and positivity as you strive to create continued business growth with your team. An event like this allows your leaders to feel like they're an important part of the bigger picture, and their new knowledge and skills transfer back into your business. Your employees may even find some of their new knowledge can be adapted into their personal lives. Win-win situations create great momentum.

Employees stay where they feel appreciated, respected, and see themselves growing and developing. Providing these opportunities will increase the likelihood of them not only remaining on the team, but also bragging about where they work. It may all be as simple as remembering "your vibe attracts your tribe".

Veronica Lyver is a Partner with HR West Consulting. As a Human Resources and Labour Relations Consultant, she works with clients across Alberta and BC through both HR West Consulting (hrwest.ca) and Hospitality Industrial Relations (hirbc.com).

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WINE REPORT

by William Bincoletto

Grapes Less Told

Grapes are the ultimate essential compound to wine. While we may be familiar with a few dozen grape names, let us remember that in the vitis vinifera category alone there are over 5,000 identified varieties. However, when you include vitis riparia, vitis lambrusca, human developed crosses (cross between two grapes in the same species), and hybrids (cross between two different species of vine), we reach the outstanding figure of close to 10,000 wine grape varieties.

However, as we all know; grape varieties may come and go. Some have disappeared completely due to natural disasters (I wonder how many native grapes have disappeared due to phylloxera). Some simply became too uninteresting to continue planting. Some, thought lost, have thankfully re-emerged, due to human perseverance. And others, while known locally or regionally, have become internationally accepted and admired by restaurateurs and wine lovers alike. In the wine world, the meaning of obscurity can change quickly.

One look at the Old World tells you all you need to know. There are over 600 native grapes in Spain, 1,000 in Italy and over 200 in Greece. And what about Croatia, Georgia, Lebanon, and others? It staggers the mind.

So here are a few fascinating unknown, or rather less known, grapes for you to discover.

Italy

Recantina - Recantina was a very favoured, established, and respected grape in the area of Treviso for over four centuries—until Napoleon arrived that is. Arriving in northern Italy, he was adamant to introduce French varieties to the area, and whatever was the respected and admired regional grape was to be ripped out and replanted with French. Recantina became the main target. Thought totally lost for centuries, only a few plants survived thanks to the work of viticulturists at the Conegliano Research Center. Then Joe Giusti (a Canadian-raised successful entrepreneur) of Societa Agricola Giusti del Col was the first to decide to plant an experimental plot and see what would develop. He loves to tell the story of how unimpressed he was at first, only to be told by his chief winemaker, Mirco Pozzobon, to be patient. After 14 months of wine slowly aging in oak barrels, a magical thing happened. "It was like a miracle, with aromas of fresh violets, and on the palate it was fruity and spicy, with a note of white pepper in the finish," Joe often repeats. His first vintage of 2004 sold in Canada in a heartbeat. His latest vintage, 2014, is absolutely delicious (92 points by me).

Pecorino - Anything to do with the Pecorino cheese you ask? Well yes, if you know that "pecora" means sheep and that this indigenous grape and sugar-rich variety was so dubbed because of its sweet appeal to woolly creatures.

The story of the re-emergence of pecorino is rather fascinating. Pecorino, like so many indigenous grapes, was in danger of totally disappearing, so when Guido Cocci Grifoni, a producer in the Marche and an avid regional historian, came across the name, he quickly became fascinated. In 1982, the hunt for Pecorino took him to the hamlet of Pescara and a farmer named Cafini, who had been tending a vineyard 1,000 metres above sea level.

Cocci Grifoni quickly grafted cuttings from the property onto about 100 rootstocks at a vineyard in nearby Offida, now a key appellation for some of the best Pecorino wines. Today the variety has spread to Abruzzo, Umbria, Tuscany, and Liguria. It even spawned its own book, "*The Rediscovery of Pecorino*", published in 2009.

In Alberta there are 15 Pecorino producers including the pioneering Cocci Grifoni.

Spain

Mencia - This is a regional grape that is mainly found in Bierzo. What makes Mencia special is that it has the ability to age and offers rich aromas in the glass. You will taste a subtle crushed gravel or granite-like minerality in the texture, which often contributes to its black peppery taste (in Portugal it's known as Jaen). If you love Pinot Noir and other aromatic reds, then Mencia is something worth investigating.

We are now seeing a good number of examples in the Alberta market.

Greece - Though they've been around for four millennia, Greek wines are still overlooked today. Therefore their grapes remain undiscovered to most. Following are my favourites:

Assyrtiko - This grape is the source of mineral, bone-dry, citrus-edged white wines. On the isle of Santorini, Assyrtiko and other vines are tied into a basket shape to protect the fruit against the continuous wind.

Xinomavro - The grape is from Náooussa in Macedonia, the heart of Xinomavro. This red has floral and spice aromas, firm tannins, and vibrant fruit.

Other Countries

Other grapes worth noticing and available in Alberta are Saperavi from Georgia, Bogdanusa from Croatia, Obaideh and Merwah from Lebanon.

Remember to discover, experiment, and always taste! The book *Wine Grapes* by Jancis Robinson, Julia Harding and José Vouillamoz is essential reading.

Buffalo Trail Liquor

by Mark Glenning



At the intersection of Highways 12 and 41 lies Consort, a village with a population of around 700 people. Its primary industries are farming, ranching and oil production, so it's no surprise that folks there may enjoy a beer or a glass of wine after a hard day. Buffalo Trail Liquor, which has been serving the village for only a year, has brought them a customer experience above and beyond what they may have expected.



Owned and operated by husband and wife team Eric and Justine Comeau, Buffalo Trail Liquor can trace its beginnings to a life-threatening accident. In August of 2010, Eric was driving to Red Deer when another vehicle flew through a stop sign at an intersection and T-boned him at highway speed. It left Eric in a coma for two weeks, and in hospital for over four months.

Getting Family Support

At the time, Eric was working in the oilfield for Production Control Services Canada. He got his job back after he had recovered, but the workload was too much for his still-healing body. He realized that it was time for a change in direction, and his first step was to move back home to be with his family.

After Eric's move home and a few more years in the oilfield he was ready for a break from the industry.

Why did he and his wife open a liquor store? Justine explains, "We looked at the dynamics of the town and what was needed. We knew we wanted to stay here. There was a need for a few different businesses in town, and we looked at all the options. We decided that a liquor store was more suitable for us as we could run it ourselves. It was just a better fit for us all around. My mom owns a liquor store not far from here, and I guess we both had an interest in it."

The couple's family would prove to be a vital part in getting Buffalo Trail Liquor off the ground. Both Justine's mother and Eric's were willing to share their experience as business owners and were able to guide them when they started out, and Justine's father built the store with his own hands.

Justine recounts, "My dad and his crew build custom homes in this area so we approached him with the idea of this liquor store and he was all over it. He did everything from the initial drawings to the finished product. It was great because we were able to incorporate a couple of things in the store that we would never have been able to otherwise. Our countertops are the pews from the old St Andrew's Catholic Church in town that my granddad had kept in his shed. Dad's family built the first sawn wood building in the district, and he actually stripped the wood from it and put it in our store as an accent wall. These cedar walls are over 110 years old and it was a great way to bring a little history into our building."

What's Style without Substance?

The store certainly has a boutique feel, from the buffalo logo inlaid in the floor to its most unique feature: a growler bar. The store has

a selection of local beers on tap, and customers can buy a glass jug to fill up and take home. When they've finished, they can bring it back to refill. The ever-changing selection means that there's always something new to try out. "According to our inspector we were the first liquor store in rural Alberta to have a growler bar," Eric shares, "and we try to bring in as many local beers as we can. We have a great selection in our cooler, but this is my way of bringing in Alberta product so people can try new things. Customers really like the idea."

Giving customers the opportunity to try new things is close to Eric and Justine's hearts. Justine describes how during one week they brought in 18 new wines to fill a wine rack that her father had built—naturally—and it's this willingness to take a risk with different products that is winning over customers.

"WE LOOKED AT THE DYNAMICS OF THE TOWN AND WHAT WAS NEEDED. WE KNEW WE WANTED TO STAY HERE."



Given that the couple grew up in Consort and have a lot of friends, it's no surprise that they've had a lot of support from the community. They've been more than willing to give back to their community by sponsoring local sports teams, a golf club, rodeo, and the community service clubs.

What does the future hold for Buffalo Trail Liquor? Justine is coy and doesn't want to spoil the surprise, but she hinted that they are looking to expand the growler concept into other products. It's been an exciting year for the couple—as well as getting the store off the ground, they wed. Although they would like to explore new opportunities when Buffalo Trail Liquor is self-sufficient and self-staffed, they're happy to get the chance, at long last, to enjoy their honeymoon. 🍷

SADD

2017 Liquor Bag Design Contest Winner

Portia-Grade 11

W. R. Myers High School



drive safe. drive sober.



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LIQUOR BAG CAMPAIGN

by Mel Priestley

Stop by a liquor store on the May long weekend and you just might take home the artwork of an Alberta student: a paper liquor bag with a hand-drawn design highlighting the dangers of impaired driving.

"When it comes to impaired driving, the information is clear," says Eric Baich, Director of Social Responsibility with the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission (AGLC). "There's no one in the province who isn't aware that they shouldn't drive while impaired. So the question then is, if everyone knows this, why does the behaviour continue?"

These liquor bags are a creative way of addressing this ongoing problem. Now in its sixth year, the annual liquor bag campaign is a partnership between Students Against Drinking and Driving (SADD Alberta) and the AGLC. More than 65,000 students from kindergarten to grade 12 throughout Alberta participated by creating and drawing their own message on liquor bags against drinking and driving. Schools submit their top designs and winners are chosen from each of the three school categories (elementary, junior high, and high school). One grand prize winner is selected and will have their design printed on one million bags, which will be distributed to participating liquor stores for the May long weekend.

Part of what makes the bags so effective is that they are designed by kids. "When youth speak, it's coming from the heart," says Baich. "It's an unfiltered, real and honest approach. When you think of messages that come from adults, they can be polished and planned out, whereas kids often just say what they truly think and feel—and it's very powerful."



Liquor Bag Design Contest Winner

Portia Miller, Grade 11

W.R. Myers High School, Taber

"I wanted this piece to invoke emotion but also be something interesting to look at. The image shows the appeal of a good time and the loss of good decision making with the influence of substance. For the most part I wanted people to see this and say, 'Yikes, that could be me.'"

"My inspiration for the rave half of the image was both the appeal for a good time and the loss of good decision making with the influence of other people and substances. The other half was the consequence—regret is how I like to describe it. The subject looks to have his whole world crashing in on him."

The road to preparing the bags for the May long weekend actually begins before Christmas. Teachers in participating schools distribute the liquor bags designed by students to select liquor stores in their community to remind patrons not to drink and drive during the Christmas season. Arthur Lee, Provincial Community Liaison with SADD Alberta, notes that's another reason why the bags have such a great impact.

"At the top of each bag the students write which school they are from," Lee explains. "So, as people are going and shopping at their favourite liquor store, they see that the message is from a student from their local school just up the road. It then hits them a little bit closer to home, as it's not a marketing campaign from corporate headquarters in the US."

The campaign has grown steadily since its inception in 2012. This year, 299 schools participated across the province, up from only 59 in the first year. Lee notes that the campaign is particularly popular in outlying and rural communities.

The bags have certainly been noticed by the communities that receive them. Lee remarks that last year they even received a letter from a Calgary resident, thanking them for sharing this important message. They've also started a social media campaign on Instagram using the hashtag #SADDbag, sharing some of the designs that students have created.

Students have free creative licence over their designs and Lee says it's always intriguing to see what they come up with. "The students have some very good messages and every year we're surprised at the creativity, ideas and messages that the students come up with," he says. "The winning bag has a great design, a powerful message that evokes an emotion and it's easy to understand and relate to."

The SADD liquor bag campaign not only reinforces the dangers of impaired driving to the adults who receive the bags, but it also promotes the message to future generations who will have known about this for years before they can legally drive a car or buy alcohol.

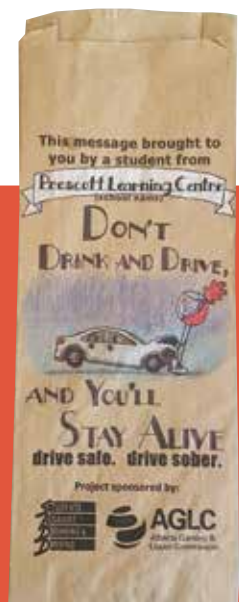
"We can educate students before they get their driver's licence, so when they go for their driver's exams, they're not getting the message just as they're doing their test; they've known about it for years," says Lee.

Baich agrees, noting that the campaign is a great way for the AGLC to promote its message of responsible drinking amongst existing legal drinkers and to influence future ones as well.

"Every year there's a new group of 18-year-olds that become legal drinkers in Alberta," says Baich. "If you think of those 18-year-olds, you hope they've learned the skills to make decisions and set limits, especially when it comes to alcohol."

"It also plants a seed in the minds of all the young people who are involved. The schools have important discussions that are valuable in the growth and maturation of their students," Baich continues. "Ideally they'll put those tools to use so when alcohol comes into their lives, they'll make good decisions and not drive while impaired."

For more information about the SADD Liquor Bag campaign or to have SADD visit your school, visit saddalberta.com.



Category 1 Winner
Ashlynn, Grade 6
Prescott Learning Centre,
Spruce Grove

"Impaired driving causes thousands of deaths every year in Canada, and it's not always just the driver who is killed. I don't think anyone should have to suffer the pain of losing a loved one or someone close because of impaired driving."



Category 2 Winner
Tyra, Grade 9
Leduc Jr High School,
Leduc

"One mistake can be life changing, one moment is all it takes. A shattered body, person or family can never be the same. People should know! Just don't drink and drive!"



Category 3 Winner
Mattea, Grade 10
George McDougall High School,
Airdrie

"If you aren't afraid of losing your license then what would scare you? I hope that when people see my bag design they will think twice before getting behind the wheel, even if it stops just one person. The cost can be far greater than anyone bargained for."



STORING LIQUOR

FASHION OR FUNCTION?

by Ron Scott

For a retailer, proper care and storage of wine, spirits, and beer is of the utmost importance. It stands to reason that storage options should take into consideration a few key factors. First, the product should be kept clean and visible to customers, and second, it must be done in such a manner as to prolong the shelf life of these products for as long as possible.

Many storage and display options exist for a retailer in terms of both form and function. While many retailers focus tremendously on aesthetics in order to match their décor or interior design, it's also necessary that a store owner not sacrifice functionality for this purpose.

Shelves for bottles containing wine, spirits or beer must be structurally sound. If an entire shelving unit collapses under the weight of heavy bottles, it will cost you a great amount of money. Having an experienced and licensed carpenter build and maintain these shelving units is an excellent way to ensure their structural integrity and safety. If you prefer to purchase shelving units that are factory built or pre-assembled, be sure to familiarize yourself with the specifications—specifically the weight rating—so that you do not overload them.

When it comes to wine, many retailers prefer a storage/display unit that displays a bottle on top for the customer to pick up, read, and examine, with the remainder of the bottles stacked below it safely. Units are also available that can be used to display every single bottle in a horizontal fashion. For rare and more expensive vintages, there is a wide variety of climate-controlled cabinets that allow a retailer to preserve the bottles indefinitely, and these are available in sizes ranging from small to large, which store hundreds of bottles.

Store owners can choose from a great number of vendors that carry liquor storage options. These units may store and display bottles either vertically or horizontally and vary in the materials and finishes used, which means that they afford a retailer the option of selecting a material or finish that best suits the décor; whether that be wood or metal, etc.

These different storage and racking options also offer the ability to separate rows of bottles, or even separate bottles individually. This ultimately affects how the bottles shift or move when being stocked by staff or picked up by customers, thus greatly reducing the potential for breakage, and thereby potentially saving the retailer a tremendous amount of annual expense due to shrinkage.

Beer Storage Has Changed

For beer storage, proper temperature controls are paramount. Not long ago, most beer available in stores around the province—and even the country—was pasteurized.



today is unpasteurized and unfiltered, and as such, has a much shorter shelf life. This means that retailers must ensure that these beers are kept cold at all times, whether in cans, kegs, or bottles, to give the customer the best experience possible by preserving the freshness of the product and the flavour profile that the brewer has intended. Oxidation is a natural reaction that occurs in the beer over time and it's going to be exacerbated by poor storage conditions.

If your store contains a growler bar for filling and selling fresh draught beer, there are many factors to consider. Your keg room should have refrigeration to keep the kegs of beer at a constant temperature at all times. But, that's not all. It's also necessary to keep the beer cold all the way from the keg to the tap. A glycol chiller system may be required for this, particularly in the case of longer beer lines, where the beer travels a greater distance from the keg to the tap, giving it a greater potential to increase in temperature along the way. Glycol cooler options will ensure your product stays cold and fresh all the way from the keg room to the tap, so that your customers are always satisfied with the poured product. 🍷

FOR RARE AND MORE EXPENSIVE VINTAGES, THERE IS A WIDE VARIETY OF CLIMATE-CONTROLLED CABINETS.

This meant that it didn't require refrigeration to maintain a long shelf life. Refrigeration was a courtesy that retailers afforded their

consumers so that these beverages were ready to enjoy immediately. This is no longer the case. The vast majority of craft beer sold



LIQUOR SALES TRENDS

WHOLESALE SALES IN HL WITH % CHANGE OVER 2016/17
DECEMBER 2017 TO FEBRUARY 2018

		<i>% change</i>
108,948	→ Beer*	-3.88
109,371	→ Wine	5.79
34,920	→ Coolers	14.98
11,703	→ Cider	1.39
1,887	→ Gin	16.00
10,433	→ Rum	-5.75
18,065	→ Vodka	3.91
16,302	→ Whisky	-0.79
8,805	→ Liqueur	2.94
1,027	→ Tequila	-0.89

*Beer sales stats are through Connect Logistics only
Source: Connect Logistics

WHAT'S *New?*

by Marina Lecian

Wine

Bread & Butter Chardonnay 2016 Named after the delectable aromas and flavours of freshly baked bread and butter, this Chardonnay has rich notes of vanilla bean and almond, reminiscent of crême brûlée. Creamy custard notes are balanced with tropical fruit flavours and minerality. The finish is long and creamy. 750ml \$14.97 whsl +797093

Chateau de Berne Emotion Rosé 2017 This blend of Cinsault and Grenache Noir delivers notes of summer fruit, red berries, strawberry, and fresh raspberry aromas and flavours. Well balanced, fresh and round on the palate, with a pleasant, lasting finish. 750ml \$14.01 whsl +800693

B.R. Cohn Silver Label Cabernet Sauvignon 2016 A bold, rich Cabernet with aromas of cassis, black cherry, mint, and violet combine with a bouquet of aged oak, anise, and warm vanilla. Lush, cherry and caramel flavours accented with clove and wrapped in smooth tannins with a long, juicy finish. 750ml \$22.02 whsl +800184

Circus Malbec Rosé 2017 is an Argentinian wine bursting with beauty and freshness. This well-structured wine boasts lavish cherries, ripe raspberries, and strawberries on the nose and in the mouth, with a stylish and crisp finish. 750ml \$10.50 whsl +798790

Beer

Beer League Lager 500ml Single Can is a Best-In-Class craft beer with a refreshing, easy-drinking flavour. Case of 24. 500ml \$2.07 whsl +802184

RTD

Dos Locos Lime Tequila is made with real tequila. It has a vibrant lime flavour with underlying agave and ginger notes. It's cloudy with a pale yellow colour and its aroma has hints of lime, citrus, spice, and agave with underlying floral notes. Sweet and light-bodied with balanced acidity, it has a refreshing level of carbonation and a smooth tequila finish. 440ml can \$2.83 whsl +149245

Dos Locos Tequila Sunrise, made with tequila, features bright orange flavours, and has a smooth tequila finish. Case of 4. 440ml can \$2.83 whsl +802105

Vodka Mudshake Root Beer Float This is a classic soda shop experience. It has a root beer front palate with moderate sarsaparilla notes and a creamy, smooth finish. Case of 4. 270ml \$10.41 whsl +801157

Spirits

Walsh Distillery The Irishman Single Malt Whiskey displays aromas of ripe, luscious peach, dried apricot, and tropical fruits. Hints of orange blossom and vanilla fudge lead to flavours of vanilla sweetness, granola, toasted almonds and honey, a little oak, apricots, and a cocoa finish. Slight maltiness and sweet oak flavours linger pleasantly on the palate. 700ml \$43.91 whsl +799987



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First Trax Brown Ale (4.2% alc./vol. 100% MALT BEER 102 ml)



PICK THE RIGHT POS SYSTEM

WHAT DO YOU NEED IT TO DO?

by Rebecca Hardin

Point of Sale Systems (POS) need to be critically evaluated prior to making a commitment. While a POS's fundamental purpose is to allow businesses to record sales transactions and manage inventory, new features with evolving technology need to be considered to drive consistent future growth. POS systems have now been optimized to streamline staff hours, detail inventory, and project purchases. A business owner must consider his business model and how he needs the POS to work within his business.

Take the time to consider important questions about the POS: Will it meet the business's needs now and in the future? Does it have remote capabilities? Can it adapt to industry trends like direct to consumer (DTC) ordering and purchasing on LTO? Will it support loyalty rewards? What other features does my business need from a POS, other than being able to record a sale? Does the system have CRM and DTC marketing? Are they cloud-based or are in-house servers needed? Will it efficiently help my staff with inventory? Does the POS company offer continued support and education?

Following is a list of the top four Alberta POS companies. While not every one of their features have been noted below, each have been tried, tested, and reviewed. All these companies have great track records and are willing to supply demonstrations and education to prospective clients. Let this guide help you determine the best fit for your company when you are selecting your next POS.

Barnet POS

www.barnetpos.com

Reporting - Real-time reporting allows for easy export to Excel, Word or pdf. Automatic sales reporting goes direct to inbox. The reporting in this system is amazing. If there is a report needed for analytics, it can be found in this POS.

Ease of Inventory - Traditional scan guns or iPads can be used for inventory. POs and receiving are available online via each vendor to further streamline the process and mitigate human error.

Added Features - Loyalty rewards, cloud-based technologies, client portal, cannabis ready, real-time agent information, vendor integration to obtain up-to-date inventory information.

User Friendliness - User friendly for individuals with computer knowledge. One can easily find her way around. There are manuals available to help with staff training.

Can it grow with you? - Yes. Lane terminals have connectivity and work via a back office PC. Remote access is available and the cloud-based platform via an online portal can integrate easily with ecommerce website. Customized options are also available to meet client needs.



Customer support and training - Monthly maintenance package available for a low monthly fee. Regular email updates/information and downloads for LTOs. Support is readily available.

Cost - \$\$\$ One-time fee for hardware and software. Most companies purchase the monthly support subscription to ensure systems stay current and help is accessible.

This POS company is intuitive and forward-thinking. They will customize a package for each company they are working with. They are truly focused on the future and growing alongside the companies they are working with. This is the Tilly system in the lineup that is cannabis-ready.

CLR Concepts

www.clearpos.com

Reporting - Very powerful reporting functions. All the data of a store can be captured with this system. While the reports don't come out as pretty when comparing other POS systems, a retail owner can truly forecast the needs of their business with this POS.

Ease of Inventory - This system was built with inventory in mind. It's easy to use and gets the job done with accuracy and ease under this established platform.

Added Features - It has some features such as loyalty rewards, online ordering via Connect Logistics and BDL and integrated payment systems. There are key components for on-premise establishments too, which weren't reviewed here.

User Friendliness - Employees report this system is easy to use once the on-site training has been done.

Can it grow with you? - Yes. Additional lanes can be added and linked into a head office PC to allow for central reporting and efficiencies.

Customer support and training - This company is known for its response time and customer support. It's fast, reliable and to the point. Customer service is exceptional when comparing to other POS providers. Troubleshooting is via telephone, remote dial-in or onsite.

Cost - \$\$\$ The price point is in line with other providers. One-time fee for hardware/software and back office is needed.

This system was clearly designed with inventory and reporting in mind. Customer service is their focus, and this really comes out when consulting with companies that use this system.

GlobalTill

www.globaltill.com

Reporting - This system has been built with employees in mind. Reporting is diverse and adaptable. It's visually impressive and anyone reading the screen can quickly determine the numbers and needs of the store.

Ease of Inventory - Adjustments are easy. Repacking has been accounted for to ensure count accuracy. Human error has all but been eliminated with the adaption of POs, receiving into inventory, and the real-time connection to vendors such as Liquor Connect and the visual of real-time inventory for customers.

Added Features - Loyalty rewards, ecommerce platforms, licensee to licensee sale carts, apps for both customers and ownership. The features appear to be endless, including

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- POS
- Inventory Control
- Customer Loyalty
- Integration with BDL, Connect Logistics, LDB, Core-Mark, LCBO
- Wholesale Prices and LTOs Download
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direct SMS messaging when a product comes back in-stock from Liquor Connect. Cannabis is coming soon.

User Friendliness - The look and feel of the system allows for a new employee to start working in the system after a brief 20-minute training session.

Can it grow with you? - Yes. With the cloud-based technology, a one-off store owner or multi-national chain would find this system meets every need. It's robust and efficient. It has attributes to work with and grow a company.

Customer support and training - Set up and training is very quick. Response times to calls/emails is also very quick.

Cost - \$\$ This system has a monthly subscription. This relatively cost-effective system doesn't require a lot of cash up front for implementation. Plus, system updates occur weekly because of the cloud technology.

This company is fairly new when compared to the others, having only been in business since 2014. However, it has proven to be a real contender in comparison to established companies. With the cloud-based system, it will work anywhere there is an Internet

connection. Owners can select the hardware of their choice—tablets, Macs or PCs—almost all are compatible. The growth potential of this system is really what shined through. It will allow an organization to maximize all revenue options such as delivery and on-premise licensee-to-licensee sales or wholesaling.

Profitek POS Solutions

www.profittek.com

Reporting - Extremely in-depth reporting functions and data accessibility.

Ease of Inventory - Centralized purchasing capabilities, PO and ordering ease. Requires team to have an in-depth knowledge of the system and its functionalities.

Added Features - Loyalty rewards, labour scheduling, accounting, gift card management, online retail capable, pricing control, and real-time inventory look up.

User Friendliness - This system requires in-depth training and education, both from the back-office perspective and from a new employee perspective, to ensure its many components are utilized to their maximum capability.

Can it grow with you? - Yes. This company can customize and create what a retail store requires.

Customer support and training - Exceptional capabilities of support. There is a training facility and call centre for support as well as hardware and software support.

Cost - \$\$\$ The price point is in line with other providers. One-time fee for hardware/software and back office is needed. Ongoing fees for service and customization.

This system was founded and built for on-premise licensed establishments. One of the oldest companies in our comparison, they have hard-working systems that can definitely get the job done effectively. While they do function for retailers, they are not focused on the specifics of liquor retailing so new trend setting features don't appear to be readily available without customization. ■

Rebecca Hardin is the owner of the consulting firm, Hospitality Solutions Inc, specializing in liquor and cannabis licensing along with retailing in the provinces of Alberta and BC.

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SPIRIT *Spotlight*

by Shaun Layton

Awesome Aperitifs

During Aperitivo Hour, when the day's work is done but the sun is still shining, squares and terraces all over Europe are bustling with imbibers. Throughout Europe, dinner is late—very late—sometimes past nine or ten o'clock. Lunch to some is the biggest meal of the day, so around five or six o'clock, it's time for a refreshing drink and maybe a nibble or two. In this article, we will focus on my three favourite countries in the world for food and drink: Spain, Italy, and France. The citizens of these countries know how to indulge and enjoy life and its surroundings, yet Spain, Italy and France each have different, but familiar traditions when it comes to afternoon drinking. All include food as well as drink, all include low-proof beverages, and all tend to happen outside in between lunch and dinner.

Vermouth

In Spain, vermouth is all the rage these days. The name originates from the term for wormwood, which is a staple ingredient in this fortified wine. Vermouth is made by infusing a base wine with a bounty of herbs, botanicals, and spices. Alcohol is also added to up the proof, and sometimes caramel is added for colour. Vermouth has been hot for a while with the cocktail trend, but now people are drinking it on its own in crowded tapas bars all over Barcelona and Madrid. Just add ice, a slice of orange, and an olive. Vermouth is a wine so keep it in the fridge, where it will keep for up to a month. Some quality vermouths that are always in my fridge and available in BC are El Bandarra from Barcelona, Spain, Cocchi Torino from Asti, Italy, and Dolin Dry from Chambéry, France. Locally, Odd Society Distillery makes a lovely, bitter sweet vermouth.

Amaro

In Italy, it's all about the bitter, or "amaro" as they say. Amari come in many levels of bitterness. A bitter is derived from a base spirit, and like vermouth, is packed with different herbs and botanicals. There is the light and fruity Aperol, the bitter orange-laced Campari, or the fruity and

bitter Amaro Montenegro. Fernet is another bitter that is popular among bartenders, although heavy bitters are best savoured after a big meal, as all the botanicals aid digestion. Try the new Fernet from Gancia, a great producer from Piedmont. The most popular way to drink amaro in Italy is in a Spritz. Take a wine glass full of ice, add one part bitter, 2 parts club soda, and 3 parts Prosecco. Add a slice of orange, and you're off to the races. Aperol Spritz is by far the mainstay on terraces throughout Rome and Florence, but if you want to try something new, go for a Cynar Spritz. Cynar is a bitter made primarily from artichokes, and you'll see the artichoke labelled bottle on any decent cocktail bar around the world. If you are lucky enough to be in Italy during artichoke season, order them fried and enjoy with a Spritz. Bitterhouse is a local line of bitters made in Delta at G&W Distillery. They have three types: Rubato, Daman, and Ladame. Try a Rubato Spritz for your next new cocktail.

Pastis

In France, it's all about Pastis. Pastis is an anise-flavoured spirit hailing from the south of France. It is deceptively high proof, so mix carefully. Crowds in beach towns all over Provence will sip this cloudy tippie while taking in the sun and the Mediterranean. Since it is so high in alcohol, bartenders will mix one part Pastis to five or six parts water. Make sure the water is cold, and watch the cocktail louche, the magic that happens when water is added. Voila! A reaction with the water turns the clear liquid into a cloudy thing of beauty. Beware—those who don't like licorice won't be keen. Freshly shucked oysters or steak tartar are great friends with a glass of Pastis. Iconic brands like Pernod and Ricard dominate the options available on our shelves, as no local brands have yet to turn up. Maybe this is a shameless cry for help!

Low-proof drinking has now caught on in North America, as people are more conscious of the level of alcohol they are taking in. Aperitivo is the answer. So next time someone orders a Manhattan, suggest just the vermouth.

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Awards

2018 Canadian Artisan Spirit Competition

Canadian Artisan Spirit of the Year	Sheringham Distillery Akvavit	Sheringham Distillery
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Aged Gin	Cowichan Copper Gin	Merridale Cidery & Distillery
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Akvavit	Sheringham Distillery Akvavit	Sheringham Distillery
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Amaro or Vermouth	Mia Amata	Odd Society Spirits
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Brandy or Eau de Vie	Ironworks Aged Pear Eau de Vie	Ironworks Distillery
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Gin	Empress 1908 Gin	Victoria Distillers
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Infused Vodka	Wayward Order-Depth Charge	Wayward Distillation House
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Liqueur	Raspberry Liqueur	Barrelling Tide Distillery
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Rum	Bluenose Rum	Ironworks Distillery
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Vodka	Junction 56 Vodka	Junction 56 Distillery
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Whisky	Single Malt Whisky	Odd Society Spirits
Gold Medal & Best in Class-White Spirits	Unaged RYE-Port Finish	RAW Distillery
Gold Medal & Best in Class-Young Whisky	Glen Saanich	De Vine Wines & Spirits

Calgary Winefest 2018 People's Choice Awards

Best Sparkling Wine	Gigglewater Prosecco DOC NV	Italy
Best Rosé	Roscato Rosé Dolce NV	Italy
Best White Under \$20	Tommasi Family Estates Tenuta Caseo Moscato 2015	Italy
Best White Over \$20	Bread & Butter Chardonnay	USA
Best Red Under \$20	Bostavan Bastardo 2016	Moldova
Best Red \$20-\$30	Cline Family Cellars Ancient Vines Zinfandel 2015	USA
	Atrévete Reserve Barrel Aged 20 Months 2011	Spain
Best Red Over \$30	Purcari Negru 2013	Moldova
Best Other Under \$25	WineBeer	Chile
Best Other Over \$25	Therapy Vineyards Freudified	Canada

Edmonton Winefest 2018 People's Choice Awards

Best Sparkling Wine:	Gigglewater Prosecco DOC NV	Italy
Best Rosé:	Dirty Laundry Vineyard Hush Blush 2017	Canada
Best White Under \$20:	Cavit Collection Moscato 2016	Italy
Best White Over \$20:	Play Estate Winery Moscato 2016	Canada
Best Red Under \$20:	Bostavan Bastardo 2016	Moldova
Best Red \$20-\$30:	Mondavi Private Selection Bourbon Barrels Cabernet Sauvignon 2015	USA
Best Red Over \$30:	Purcari Negru 2013	Moldova
Best Other Under \$25:	WineBeer	Chile
Best Other Over \$25:	Adega de Favaio Moscatel Favaito	Portugal

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2018 Alberta Beer Awards

Gold-Patio Beer	Crisp Pils	Jasper Brewing Company
Gold-Amber/Dark Hoppy Sessionable Beer	East Lake Amber	Fitzsimmons Brewing Company
Gold-German/Czech Style Pilsner	License to Pil	Wild Rose Brewery
Gold-Farmhouse Beer	Mango Saison	4th Meridian Brewing Company
Gold-Light Hoppy Sessionable Beer	Plainsbreaker	Banded Peak Brewing Company
Gold-Brown Beer	Last Post Brown Ale	Origin Brewing and Malting Co.
Gold-Stout	Tamarack	Grain Bin Brewing Company
Gold-Barrel-Aged Beer	Tequila Barrel Aged Barley Wine	Grizzly Paw Brewing Company
Gold-Extra Strong Beer	KGB Imperial Stout	Elbeck Brews
Gold-Amber Beer	OKT	Blind Enthusiasm Brewing Company
Gold-Canadian Cereal Ale	Papa Bear Prairie Ale	Half Hitch Brewing Company
Gold-Wheat Beer	ZuS	Blind Enthusiasm Brewing Company
Gold-Fruit Beer	Main Squeeze	Alley Kat Brewing Company
Gold-Spiced Beer	Barrel Aged Imperial Stout w/Coconut	Troubled Monk Brewery
Gold-Pale Ale/Bitter	Forward Progress	Annex Ales
Gold-Other Flavoured Beer	Batch #500	Last Best Brewing Company
Gold-Sour Beer	Oak Aged Flemish Red	Big Rock Brewery
Gold-Belgain Ales	Belgian Dip	Tool Shed Brewing
Gold-Double IPA	Argyll Dragon	Alley Kat Brewing Company
Gold-Other Strong Hoppy Beer	Acme Red	Blind Enthusiasm Brewing Company
Gold-IPA	This Must Be The IPA	Cold Garden Beverage Company
Gold-Trendy Beer of the Year	New England Pale Ale	Blindman Brewing
Gold-Best of Show	Last Post Brown Ale	Origin Brewing and Malting Co
Gold-Brewery of the Year	Blind Enthusiasm Brewing Company	

New ALSA Members

ALSA welcomes the following new members:

Brooks Safeway, Brooks

SIPS Liquor Co-op WSB, Airdrie

Slave Lake Liquor Store, Bonnyville

Anniversaries

Spirit Hills Honey Winery celebrates their 5th anniversary this year.

The Alberta Liquor Store Association (ALSA) celebrates 25 years of private liquor retailing in Alberta.

Celebrating 25 years of the Alberta Model



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Beer Notes

CRAVING WARMER DAYS AND FRUITY BEERS

by Kirk Bodnar

I think many people would agree that we have experienced a tough winter this year in Alberta. With the record snowfalls and consistently frigid temperatures, it could be expected that people are longing for hot temperatures and craving summertime drinks on a sunny rooftop patio. Though there are many beer styles that would be suitable for warm weather patio sipping, there are few categories that invoke visions of summertime quite like fruit beers.

Fruit beers are as vast and varied as the different varieties of fruit that exist from the far-reaching corners of the world. By now, people have pretty much tried to make a beer with every kind of fruit out there—sometimes successfully, and at other times very much unsuccessfully. It is not always as simple as merely throwing a bunch of fruit into a beer, although in some cases, it *is* just that simple. In other instances, the brewing (or fruiting) techniques are far more technical, and even verge on being just a little bit magical.

In its simplest form, a fruit beer is just that: a beer with fruit added—either by adding fruit extract, fruit juice, or perhaps simply fruit flavouring. Now, in this case, simple doesn't necessarily mean "simplistic" in terms of flavour or even quality, although it is true that some of the lesser examples can be a bit



overwhelming with a lingering or even cloying sweetness. There are many beers available in our market that are excellent examples of the style and feature fresh fruit flavour without overpowering the underlying malt character that forms the backbone of the beer—a true sign of a wonderfully crafted fruit beer in my humble opinion.

Edmonton's Alleykat Brewing Company has, for years now, been producing an excellent example of a fruited beer that expertly expresses its fruit character without losing the focus of the fact that it is a beer first. Aprikat

(CSPC 901108) is an American Style Wheat Ale with added natural apricot extract. It is able to find balance between fruit and malt and is crisp and refreshing without letting sweetness take over.

Another style of fruited beers that has been gaining popularity lately is Radlers. A Radler, in Bavaria, refers to a cyclist—and the beer style that shares this name could indeed be enjoyed by a cyclist. It is generally a lighter beer that is made up of at least 50% fruit juice—often grapefruit or even lemonade—thus it's very low in alcohol and very refreshing. Many

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breweries have been releasing Radlers in recent years, especially as a summer seasonal. Two excellent examples from the "old world" are Schöffelhofer Grapefruit Radler (CSPC 763946) and Stiegl Grapefruit Radler (CSPC 334052). The Schöffelhofer Radler is based on a filtered German Wheat Ale, while the Stiegl Radler features a light German-Style Lager base. Both feature grapefruit juice, are very refreshing, and the low alcohol levels will allow you to get home without crashing your bicycle.

Another category of beer that commonly features fruit additions is sour beer. Sours are very popular these days, with many craft breweries trying their hand at the various iterations of the style, but for those new to sour beers, the whole sour moniker can be a bit off-putting. By no means does sour refer to a bad or infected beer. Instead, one could think of a sour beer as being tart and refreshing, like a lovely lemonade. What could possibly represent summertime better than that?

Belgian Lambic beers are sour beers that often feature fruit. Rather than adding fruit extracts

or artificial flavourings, the classic examples of the style are often fermented or conditioned with whole fruit added directly to the wooden casks. Cherries (Kriek) and Raspberries (Framboise) are common choices for fruited Lambic beers; the fruit element often rounding out the sourness of the beer. Though the fruit does add a subtle sweetness to the beer, it also adds a complementary tartness from the fruit. Belgian Breweries Boon and Oud Beersel are two Lambic producers who have been producing their sour ales in the traditional manner for decades. Boon Framboise (CSPC 720909) And Oud Beersel Kriek (CSPC 763149) are both excellent examples of the style where the fruit adds a refreshingly tart complexity rather than outright sweetness.

Whether you prefer your fruit beers sweet and juicy, or tart and refreshing, there is likely a fruit beer out there to suit most palates. Even though warm weather may still seem far out of reach, it may be a great time to start thinking of those warm afternoons on a patio, sipping on a delicious fruit beer.

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AGLC REPORT

Applauding Alberta's Unique Liquor Model

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the creation of Alberta's liquor model. Over the years, the AGLC, retailers, manufacturers, and agents have worked to ensure Albertans have access to unparalleled selection, convenience and responsible customer service.

Our liquor model has seen tremendous success in the last 25 years. Throughout 2018, together with you, the AGLC will celebrate this achievement as well as the continued growth and innovation in this thriving industry.

Applying to be a Cannabis Retailer in Alberta

For over 20 years, the AGLC has been trusted by Albertans to regulate gaming and liquor. As we take on the responsibility for the regulation and distribution of cannabis, we will continue to be a leader in ensuring the integrity of the industry, the education of consumers, and the benefit of Albertans.

Recently, the Alberta Government and the AGLC announced the regulations and processes that will govern private cannabis retail in Alberta. In order to sell cannabis in Alberta, all interested businesses, organizations, and individuals must have a retail cannabis store licence.

To become a retail cannabis store licensee, applicants will need to download and complete a Retail Cannabis Store application package from aglc.ca/cannabis. A complete list of all cannabis retail store licence requirements are included in the package and in the *Retail Cannabis Store Handbook*. As of March 6, the AGLC is accepting applications.

As part of the application process, the AGLC will conduct a thorough personal and financial background check on all applicants, associates, and key employees of the applicant. While a comprehensive background

check is not required to obtain a liquor store licence, it is essential for the licensing of cannabis retailers to prevent criminal interests from operating, associating with, or having a financial interest in cannabis retail sales in Alberta.

Additionally, as with liquor licences, municipal approval is required before the AGLC will issue a Retail Cannabis Store licence.

Due to the in-depth process required to ensure that only reputable persons are granted a licence, the time required to process an application varies on a case-by-case basis; however, applicants should expect an approximate processing time of two to four months.

Furthermore, to work in Alberta's retail cannabis industry, prospective workers must be recognized by the AGLC as a Qualified Cannabis Worker. To become a Qualified Cannabis Worker, individuals must complete the AGLC's mandatory online SellSafe Cannabis Staff Training program and submit a criminal record check along with their application to the AGLC. These requirements will ensure workers are proactively trained on how to sell cannabis responsibly. The SellSafe program and the Qualified Cannabis Worker application forms will be available May 1, 2018 at sellsafe.aglc.ca.

All these requirements demonstrate our commitment to keeping cannabis out of the hands of children and youth; protecting public health; promoting safety on roads, in workplaces and in public spaces; limiting the illegal cannabis market; and continuing to offer choices Albertans can trust.

For now, cannabis remains illegal unless expressly authorized. Continue to visit aglc.ca/cannabis and alberta.ca/cannabis often to receive the most up-to-date information.

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