

ARTS

## Wilderton Botanical Spirit Brings New Life To Non-Alcoholic Beverages

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*Writing about all things dance music, food and wine.*

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Wilderton Botanical Spirit. WILDERTON BOTANICAL SPIRIT

[Wilderton Botanical Spirit](#) is bringing new life to non-alcoholic spirits. The spirits are rooted in raw botanicals crafted by hand in the Pacific Northwest.

The company's fragrant Lustre expression is a take on the All That Lustres cocktail recipe that includes Pellegrino Chinotto as a mixer. Wilderton's version creates a sparkly and slightly bittersweet non-alcoholic spritzer.

Their latest release, the Bittersweet Aperitivo, boasts a fragrant blend of grapefruit, orange blossom and Italian lemon that is married with heady undertones of sandalwood and punctuated with bitters from gentian and a tinge of wormwood. Lending a subtle wine-like note and counterpoise to these aromatics and herbs is Chardonnay grape juice, which offers a hint of sweetness.

Wilderton, co-founded by Brad Whiting and Seth O'Malley, takes a new approach to botanical spirits. The products are handcrafted by lead distiller O'Malley, whose expertise in tea making, perfumery, culinary application and alcoholic craft spirits informs the zero ABV liquid's elegant flavors and intoxicating aromas. Wilderton utilizes generative distillation for their spirits, which begins as water, thus making it so there is zero alcohol to be removed from the liquid during the process.

According to Whiting, Wildereton is not seeking to make non-alcoholic gin, rum or whiskey. He and O'Malley came from the alcoholic industry and have "a lot of reverence" for those existing alcoholic categories. "In this non-alcoholic space, [we] thought it deserved something that had the same inspirations and some of the same production process of spirits, [one] that could produce liquids that would boldly and proudly stand on their own—not necessarily needing to or trying to copy an existing type of spirit," Whiting adds.

O'Malley says that Wilderton's take is an unprecedented and innovative approach, thus creating a new category that boats new types of flavors due to their use of botanicals.



Wilderton Botanical Spirit's Earthen. WILDERTON BOTANICAL SPIRIT

Whiting notes that the company doesn't use artificial flavors, which is one thing that many non-alcoholic companies use. "Our belief is that non-alcoholic spirits should be held in the same regard as their alcoholic brethren, so we are highly transparent and highly diligent that we make everything from scratch."

When distilling their products, which O'Malley says doesn't require alcohol, they take herbs, spices and raw botanicals to make a sort of "tea" that's a water-based extract. For example, if the label says there are roses in the ingredients, then dried roses are used.

When it comes to the boom in sober curiosity, health and wellness, Whiting says that Wildereton proves alcohol doesn't have to be the rubric for all social interactions. "People are interested in what they're putting in their body. They want to get up in the morning and go to yoga or take care of their kid," he says. "To us, alcohol isn't bad. [O'Malley] and I love a good alcoholic cocktail, but we wanted to bring forward something that played that same cocktail occasion, when we, frankly were looking for something that didn't have the arguably negative effects that alcohol brings with it."

Wilderton is available nationally and is also on the cocktail menus of some of the country's top bars and restaurants, including the PNW's Takibi and Suckerpunch. In New York City, it is available at Hidden Leaf, Pebble Bar and Raines Law Room, while in San Francisco it can be found at Trick Dog and more. Wilderton is available for purchase online nationwide. It is also seen in major retailers and specialty shops in New York City such as Boisson, Sechey Minus Moonshine and Spirited Away, and in Los Angeles at Boisson, The New Bar and Soft Spirits. It can be found in San Francisco at the newest Boisson location.