

## TASTING THROUGH THE MANHATTAN COCKTAIL CLASSIC

BY [KEVIN GRAY](#) | MAY 13, 2014 | [0 COMMENTS](#)

This past weekend we expended much time and energy in the [Manhattan Cocktail Classic](#) tasting rooms. It was filled with some familiar faces and plenty of new ones, as we moved from table to table to sample the goods. There were dozens of memorable bottles on display – too many to count, in fact – and certainly too many to drink and then remember to jot down adequate notes.

But below: a handful of new-to-newish brands and spirits that caught our attention.



### Sonoma County Distilling Company

Founded in 2010, the Sonoma County Distilling Company is currently offering three products: a 100% rye whiskey, a wheat whiskey and a bourbon. Every ounce of production is handled in-house, from the mashing and fermentation of grains, alembic pot distillation, small barrel aging and packaging. Their young whiskeys really showcase the grains they're composed of. All three expressions proved interesting and flavorful, but the rye in particular was something to remember.

[sonomacountydistilling.com](http://sonomacountydistilling.com)

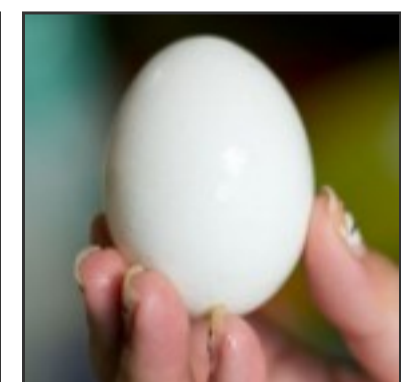
### Old Spirits Company

This interesting concept from Mr. Edgar Harden is curating old booze from around the globe. He's not working with distilleries; instead, he's buying up forgotten cases from old restaurants and liquor cabinets. The result is an impressive collection of spirits spanning the last few decades. In the tasting room, Edgar poured us a negroni composed of 1958 Beefeater, 1960s Campari and 1960s Martini & Rossi vermouth. It was rich, complex and generally delightful.

[oldspiritscompany.com](http://oldspiritscompany.com)



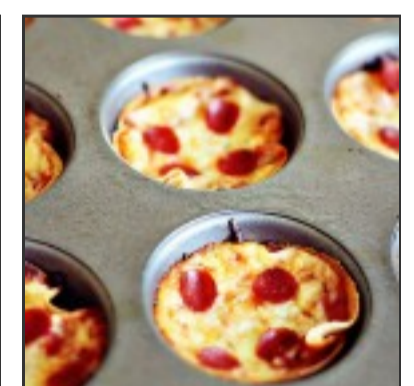

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## Thomas Tew Rum

This made-in-America rum hails from Rhode Island. It's crafted by the Newport Distilling Company which, when it opened in 2006, became the first legal distillery in the state since 1872. The first batches of Thomas Tew Rum were released two years later, and now it's being distributed in many markets across the country. The rum itself is mellow and flavorful with a nose of sweet tea and oak. It's pleasantly sweet, but not overly so, with flavors of vanilla, molasses and spice.

[thomastewrums.com](http://thomastewrums.com)

## Trianon Tequila

Based in Tennessee, the guys behind Trianon are sourcing their tequila from a small family distillery in Amatitán, Jalisco. They've got three expressions – blanco, reposado and anejo – and they've created some innovative packaging with a stackable tower of 375ml bottles. The tequila itself is smooth and easy going, with a flavor profile of front-and-center agave.

[tequilatrianon.com](http://tequilatrianon.com)

## Mezcal Union

Mezcal Unión is produced and distilled in San Baltazar, in the state of Oaxaca. It is made with two different types of agave – Espadín and Cirial – if you're counting. It's well-balanced and very clean tasting, with flavors of grassy vegetation, fruit, mild pepper and smoke.

[mezcalunion.com](http://mezcalunion.com)

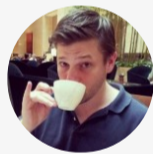
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