



FLAVIAR LAUNCHES SHAKMAT, AN ARMENIAN BRANDY
MADE IN COLLABORATION WITH ALEXIS OHANIAN

EMBARGOED UNTIL NOVEMBER 12TH 12:00 ET

New York, NY (November 12, 2018) – Flaviar and Alexis Ohanian are set to put Armenia back on the world spirits map with the launch of Shakmat, an Armenian brandy, made in collaboration with Reddit & Initialized Capital co-founder, Alexis Ohanian.

Flaviar is a community for spirits enthusiasts that offers members the chance to explore unique spirits and in recent years has started to create its own distinctive private bottlings.

Shakmat, which means ‘chess’ in Armenian, is an XO blended Armenian brandy that honors two of Armenia’s most beloved traditions: playing chess and enjoying Konyak (in Armenia, Armenian brandy is referred to as Konyak). With Shakmat, Flaviar and Ohanian aim to raise awareness of Armenian brandy and the country’s rich culture, while also giving something back to a country in need.

Ohanian, who is the Great Grandson of Armenians who fled the genocide, invested in Flaviar via Y Combinator and later took a personal stake in the business. He has longed to bring something from his homeland to America since his first visit to Armenia in 2010, when he lived there as a volunteer for Kiva. Commenting on the story behind the partnership, Ohanian said: “Everyone is talking about direct to consumer now, but the Flaviar team has been doing it for years, building a real community of consumers who are passionate about discovering new spirits. After seeing the launch of Flaviar’s first private label Son of a Peat, I chatted to Jugo & Grisa, the founders of Flaviar, about creating my own spirit.”

“Armenian brandy is something Armenians are really proud of, but outside of Armenia and the Armenian community, no one really knows it, which is a real shame—it’s legendary.”

“I worked with the Flaviar team to co-create our take on an Armenian brandy that celebrates Armenian tradition and also has world-class quality, so it can be enjoyed by an international audience. It all came together on our most recent 24-hour trip to Yerevan, Armenia, where we finalized the expression over tastings and food pairings. It was a whirlwind trip and a lot of fun, as you can see in the film.”



“Shakmat (chess) is a big deal in Armenia—it’s a compulsory part of the school curriculum,” adds Ohanian. “To be a great chess player, you need smart moves in the right moment, patience, knowledge, and resourcefulness. These are values that resonated with me, especially as an entrepreneur who looks for these qualities when I’m meeting with founders and determining if we at Initialized Capital should invest in their new venture.”

“Flaviar is a community for spirits enthusiasts who are interested in discovering unique spirits,” said Jugoslav Petkovic, Co-Founder of Flaviar. “We know most of our members will have never tried Armenian brandy, and we’re all about bringing flavor to the people, so it is exciting to be able to bring something new to the table for them. Armenia has conditions for growing the best produce, including grapes—we were fascinated with the quality and taste of the fruit and knew we could create something really special here and bring it to a new audience. Working with Alexis was great, he really gets the process of making a fine spirit, a bit like chess, you need skills, knowledge and resourcefulness, it’s about smart moves not quick moves. Crafting a spirit takes time.”

Shakmat is the newest addition to Flaviar’s growing portfolio of fine spirits and embodies their core principles of discovery, exploration and education. Grisa Soba, co-founder of Flaviar comments: “Every decision we made from the selection of grape varieties, distillation techniques, selection of distillates and the final blend was made to ensure Shakmat is a refined, sophisticated spirit which preserves DNA of an authentic Armenian brandy.”

Shakmat uses only indigenous red grape varieties and is produced using a continuous column still and a double distillation process using French alembic stills. Maturation occurs in casks made from the Caucasian oak, and imparts flavors of dried fruits, nuts and spices, think plums, raisins, walnuts and cloves, as well as enjoying rich molasses, tobacco and vanilla notes which are typical of a traditional Armenian Konyak.

A portion of the proceeds from Shakmat will go to the non-profit Armenia Tree Project (<https://www.armeniatree.org/en/>) for its reforestation initiative. The country’s forests have been severely depleted and Ohanian and Flaviar are proud to support this important initiative.

Served from the private bottlings created by Flaviar and Alexis, Shakmat is great for all types of occasions, served neat or in classic cognac cocktails like an Old Fashioned.

With a limited 2,400 bottles, Shakmat is a blended 23 year old XO brandy and sits at 40% ABV. Flaviar members can purchase a bottle at \$95 and non-members at \$110, and can be ordered at www.shakmatbrandy.com

To learn more about Flaviar and to become a member, visit www.Flaviar.com.



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About Flaviar – A members-only club for spirits enthusiasts:

Flaviar is a direct-to-consumer spirits club dedicated to providing education, discovery, and access to the world of fine spirits.

Born out of frustration of how inaccessible fine spirits are today, Flaviar offers its members unparalleled access, be it in the form of information on spirits and personalized recommendations, or in the liquid form, through their Tasting Boxes, private labels, exclusive bottlings, and live experiences.

Flaviar's membership is an annual fee of \$210. For more information and to sign up, visit www.flaviar.com.

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