

MIXOLOGY

Northern Comfort
Created by Sam Feltz, Tröegs Cider House, Waterford

- 2 1/2 oz Vermont Ice Apple Cider Liqueur
- 1 oz Whiskey Straight Rye Whiskey
- 1/2 oz Sapling Maple Liqueur
- 1 or 2 drops of DeKuyper Hot Cinnamon (can be omitted, very hot)

Shake ingredients over ice hard enough to get a slightly frosty. Strain into cocktail glass, garnish with orange and cinnamon.



Written by Bill Burke

Give *the* Best of Vermont's Distillers & Crafters This Season

With the holiday season here and just weeks until Christmas and Hanukkah, the pressure is on — especially if your gift-giving list still has a few names to check off. After all, that sweater might not fit, and last year's fruitcake is still waiting to be opened.

A note to procrastinators: We've got you covered. Spirits (and glasses, barware and a wide range of related collectibles) can make the perfect gift. We visited a number of shops and distilleries and scoured the shelves of some of the state's best liquor agencies to create a list of gift ideas for the home mixologist. From the frugal to the extravagant, there's something for every taste.

Whether it's a collection of hard-to-find bourbons or a handcrafted glass from which to sip, there's a diverse category of presents that'll be cherished, or ensure you're the envy of any Yankee swap.

Mad River Distillers has put together a three-pack of spirits: Mad River Bourbon (using Vermont-grown corn), Revolution Rye (crafted with local and organic rye) and Maple Cask Rum. The Maple Cask Rum, in particular, will communicate a distinctly Vermont vibe. Mad River takes its First Run Rum, distilled from 100% demerara sugar, and then transfers it into barrels it trades with Al Wood, of Wood's Vermont Syrup Company, in Randolph. The result is a rum that's smooth, bright and rich. • madriverdistillers.com



A basket featuring all the ingredients to make a seasonal cocktail made with Vermont products is a spirited gift your hostess will enjoy and demonstrates your good taste this holiday season. Here's a recipe that combines three Vermont-made favorites.



Northern Comfort

- 2 ½ ounces Vermont Ice Apple Crème Liqueur
- 1 ounce WhistlePig Straight Rye Whiskey
- ½ ounce Sapling Vermont Maple Liqueur
- 1 drop of DeKuyper Hot Damn Cinnamon (optional)

Shake ingredients over ice hard enough so that drink becomes slightly frothy. Strain into rocks glass, garnish with fresh grated nutmeg or cinnamon and a lemon twist.

DRIVE HAMMERED GET NAILED



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MIXOLOGY: VERMONT-MADE GIFT IDEAS



The secret to a great cocktail is quite often in the details, and **SILO Distillery** has a line of artisanal products that can improve even the most carefully crafted concoction. The Windsor-based distillery produces three items, in particular, that'll impress your holiday guests: Sour Cherries in Syrup, infused with SILO Lavender Vodka; Pickled Onions, infused with SILO Vodka; and Olives & Red Peppers, infused with SILO Bourbon Whiskey. • silodistillery.com

You'll need something to sip from, so why not a handcrafted tumbler from Vermont-based **AO Glass**? One of the most innovative and sophisticated hot glass studios, housed in a converted manufacturing plant on Pine Street in Burlington, AO produces high-quality glass products, including top-notch barware. The hand-blown tumbler is smooth, substantial, holds approximately 10 ounces of liquid, and is imprinted on the bottom with the AO seal. The hand-blown Vermont Crystal glass is a little more ornate, each with a distinctive glass pattern that evokes the interplay between Vermont's mountains and waterways. • aoglass.com



PHOTOS BY BRIAN MACDONALD



Smuggler's Notch has the perfect sipper for guests arriving this time of year. The Smugglers' Notch Moroccan Rose and Grapefruit Vodka, launched as part of the Reserve Series in May, combines botanicals and pink grapefruit with its award-winning 95 point Wine Enthusiast vodka. Expect unexplored complexity in this completely unique offering, which uses no artificial flavors, sweeteners or sugar. smugglersnotchdistillery.com

And fans of this unique spirit can serve it from the **Smugglers' Notch Distillery** flask — stainless steel and wrapped in brown leather with the company's vintage logo stamped on it, comes in four or six-ounce sizes. smugglers-notch-distillery-online-store.myshopify.com



To experience the aromas and flavors of your favorite drink with a touch of elegance, try serving your spirits in the Ludlow whiskey set, produced by renowned glassblower **Simon Pearce**. Each crystal tasting glass features a gently tapered rim, which concentrates the aromas while sipping and swirling. The set consists of four glasses that come in a custom walnut base. • simonpearce.com



You want to sample some of the Northeast Kingdom's finest spirits, but you can't decide between two of St. Johnsbury Distillery's more interesting offerings: Pirate Dan's Vermont Rum and Dunc's Maple Rum. Fear not — the distillers at St. Johnsbury's have packaged the pair in the Rum Rum Rudolph Holiday Sampler. Get a bottle of each in this seasonal gift pack. There are recipes on the back of the package, too: The Rum Rum Rudolph Cocktail, The Rumhattan and Vermont Maple Russian.

Pirate Dan's Vermont Rum is a white rum (legend has it that it was discovered alongside the swashbuckler's vast treasure, though its true origin emanates from the only land-locked New England state, and the Dunc's Maple Rum — winner of a bronze medal at the San Francisco World Spirit competition and a silver and gold title at the American Distilling Institute — is a delicious combination of St. Johnsbury Distillery's renowned rum, and Vermont's signature flavor. Put it all together in a warming cocktail and they'll think of you on a chilly winter day. • stjdistillery.com

Maple Hot Toddy

courtesy St. Johnsbury Distillery

- 2 ounces Dunc's Maple Rum
- 2 ounces hot water
- 3 whole cloves
- Cinnamon stick
- Lemon wedge

Combine the rum, hot water, cloves and cinnamon stick in a mug, squeeze the lemon wedge into the drink and serve.



Always drink in moderation.

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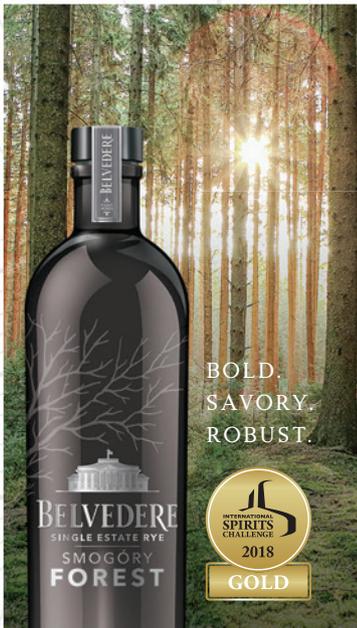


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MIXOLOGY: VERMONT-MADE GIFT IDEAS

WhistlePig has introduced a collectible tiki mug known as The Winston. The Shoreham distiller's signature spirit, its straight rye whiskey, will sit perfectly in this vessel, which is a conversation-starter thanks to the grinning porker that graces the outside of the mug. WhistlePig has even created a cocktail designed to go along with The Winston: the Sugar Shack. Combining WhistlePig Rye, its barrel-aged maple syrup and its barrel-aged bitters, the cocktail lends a kitschy, fun vibe to the proceedings while making the most of its Vermont roots. whistlepigwhiskey.com

Sugar Shack

courtesy whistlepigwhiskey.com

- 2 ounces WhistlePig 10-year, 100-proof Rye Whiskey
- ¾ ounce fresh lemon juice
- ½ ounce blackberry simple syrup

Shake and strain over pearl ice, garnish with star anise and an orchid flower, and serve.



- ¼ ounce pimento dram
- ¼ ounce WhistlePig Barrel-Aged Maple Syrup
- 2 dashes WhistlePig Barrel-Aged Maple Bitters



There's typically a buzz about **Caledonia Spirits'** offerings, but it can be difficult to choose between its classic Barr Hill Gin, and the groundbreaking and staggeringly popular Barr Hill Reserve Tom Cat Gin — a bolder expression aged in New American Oak barrels. Gin enthusiasts, then, will be happy with this gift pack that the skilled people on Gin Lane, in Montpelier, have put together. Not only does it contain the classic gin and the Tom Cat Gin, it also comes with a one pound jar of Caledonia Spirits raw honey. • caledoniaspirits.com

Still can't decide what's the perfect gift for someone on your list? For any spirits drinker who might be a little difficult to choose for, an **802 Spirits Gift Card** could be the answer. Available at all Vermont state liquor agency stores, an 802 Spirits gift card provides unlimited flexibility and the ability to shop, sample and discover new flavors and experiences. • 802spirits.com

