

AMERICAN EXCEPTIONALISM

Rhapsody compares classic spirits with their stateside counterparts to see which version—original or Made in the USA—wins out

STORY *Giacco Furino*

GLOBAL ORIGINALS

MADE IN AMERICA

VERDICT

WHISKY



GLENFIDDICH 12 YEAR OLD Dufftown, Scotland

The world's best-selling whisky hails from the coastal Speyside region, where seaside ingredients imbue it with a caramel sweetness and a slight beachy crispness.

DEFIANT WHISKY

Golden Valley, North Carolina

While most single malts age for a decade or more, Defiant shaves years off the distillation time by floating pieces of charred American white oak directly in its liquor.



Defiant. The white oak lends the drink a bold, peppery finish that evokes the smoky and spicy barbecue of its native North Carolina.

VODKA



CHOPIN RYE VODKA

South Podlasie, Poland

Distilled with purified well water from deep within the Polish countryside, this quintessential vodka tastes brisk, light and uncomplicated.

PENN 1681 RYE VODKA

Philadelphia

As opposed to Chopin's lighter, nearly invisible rye presence, Penn 1681 doesn't hide its big Pennsylvania rye flavor, which hits the drinker with strong cereal notes.



Chopin. While we love Penn 1681, the Chopin tastes as clean and clear as the windswept Polish fields where its grain grows.

SAKE



MANOTSURU "FOUR DIAMONDS"

Niigata, Japan

Made with local rice and soft water from the Ko-sado Mountains, Manotsuru is an archetypal Japanese sake, with tropical fruit undertones and a quiet, warm finish.

SAKEONE G SAKÉ

Forest Grove, Oregon

This sake skips an important step in the distilling process—dilution—making it feel brashly American. Japanese subtlety is tossed out the window in favor of a hot, noisy pour.



Manotsuru. The Japanese brewer provides a complex, multilayered drinking experience that holds your attention without grabbing for it.

VERMOUTH



PUNT E MES

Milan

Punt e Mes shines like its summery place of birth, where the sun-soaked wine is fortified with strong notes of orange zest and hints of warm toffee.

VYA SWEET VERMOUTH

Madera, California

Though Vya uses global botanicals like lavender and cinnamon, its base of bold orange muscat grapes gives it a silky texture and sweet flavor native to those California vines.



Vya. Added to a rye Manhattan, the West Coast grapes imbue the cocktail with honeyed and bitter flavors, completely transforming the drink.

GIN



BOMBAY SAPPHIRE

Hampshire, England

Though Bombay employs ingredients from around the globe—lemons from Murcia and almonds from Spain—it maintains a British air by tasting subtle, precise and perfectly balanced.

WATERLOO GIN

Austin

There's nothing light or subtle about this gin, which boasts appropriately big-flavored Texas juniper berries and an odd, wonderfully Southern ingredient: pecans.



Waterloo. We want to taste the spirit in a gin and tonic, and there's no way this gin, with its assertive Lone Star State flavor, is getting lost in the mix.