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**CRAFT DISTILLERIES REVIVE PENNSYLVANIA'S PRE-PROHIBITION TRADITION**  
*After A Nearly 100-Year Absence, Small-Batch Distilling Has Returned To The Philadelphia Area*

**PHILADELPHIA, September 14, 2018** – Craft distilleries in the Philadelphia region are helping to restore Pennsylvania to its once-prominent place in the national distilling conversation. Until Prohibition wiped out the state's industry, Pennsylvania housed the country's densest cluster of homespun and commercial whiskey producers.

In 2011, Pennsylvania passed reforms that allowed distillers to offer tours, samples and onsite sales. These new laws opened up the craft to would-be distillers who now proudly produce and sell small-batch spirits in and around Philadelphia. In a sign of the industry's maturation, the [Philadelphia Distillery Trail](#) keeps a running tally and map of the select regional makers, to promote visitation and sampling.

Here's a look at some of the region's distilling pioneers:

**Philadelphia:**

- **Federal Distilling** – The clear nectar of the gods is the specialty at this Kensington must-visit. A tribute to the rich history of Philadelphia, Federal's signature Stateside Urbancraft Vodka is the main attraction. Tours and tastings take place Wednesday through Saturday. 1700 N. Hancock Street, [statesidevodka.com](http://statesidevodka.com)
- **Naoj & Mot** – Launched as a distraction for a mother grieving her deceased son, this South Philly distillery has been producing the Pollyodd line of Italian liqueurs since 2012. Though the distillery itself is closed to the public, Joan Verratti, the state's first licensed female distiller, runs a vibrant tasting room where she pours five natural cream-based and five water-based spirits—Limoncello and the like—using locally sourced ingredients. 1908 E. Passyunk Avenue, (215) 271-1161, [pollyodd.com](http://pollyodd.com)
- **New Liberty Distillery** – This sought-after Kensington distillery has earned numerous medals for its whiskey varieties from the American Craft Spirits Association. Saturdays and Sundays mean tours of New Liberty's rustic space—circa 1906 horse stables—after which guests can head upstairs to the third-floor bar and lounge for a tasting, an expertly prepared whiskey cocktail or both. Hours will soon expand to Wednesdays-Sundays. Crane Arts, 1431 N. Cadwallader Street, (267) 928-4650, [newlibertydistillery.com](http://newlibertydistillery.com)

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- **Philadelphia Distilling** – An old Fishtown factory houses Philly’s first post-Prohibition distillery, which employs hand-hammered copper stills and Hall-Woodford wooden fermentation vessels to create batches of Bluecoat American Dry Gin, Bluecoat Barrel Finished Gin, Vieux Carré Absinthe, Penn 1681 Vodka and THE BAY Seasoned Vodka (with traditional Chesapeake Bay seasonings). The distillery offers a full bar and restaurant with an outdoor patio, a “Best of Philly” award-winning tasting room and retail store. 25 E. Allen Street, (215) 671-0346, [philadelphiadistilling.com](http://philadelphiadistilling.com)
- **Red Brick Craft Distillery** – Founded via crowd-funding, this Kensington distillery produces three small-batch whiskeys and Simple Shine, a clear sugar-wash rum. Tours and tastings take place by reservation on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. 2628 Martha Street, (267) 603-3790, [redbrickcraftdistillery.com](http://redbrickcraftdistillery.com)
- **Rowhouse Spirits** – A small shed on the property of Philadelphia Brewing Company (PBC)—not, as the name would suggest, a rowhome—is where former PBC brewer/owner Dean Browne perfects his craft. Rowhouse makes very small batch gin (lauded by *Philadelphia* magazine as “Best of Philly”), traditionally Scandinavian Nordic Akvavit, Poitín Irish-style moonshine made from 100% barley malts, and Bear Trap herbal liqueur, which tastes like anise and is made from 19 fresh organic botanicals. Tastings at the 1,200-square-foot space take place Thursday through Saturday. 2440 Frankford Avenue, (267) 825-7332, [rowhousespirits.us](http://rowhousespirits.us)
- **W.P. Palmer Distilling Co.** – This Manayunk distillery takes a historical approach to its sole spirit: gin. Handcrafted in a copper-pot still, Palmer’s Liberty Gin is made with a traditional 18<sup>th</sup>-century Dutch recipe that calls for rich botanicals, citrus and spices. Open Saturdays for tastings and tours. 376 Shurs Lane, Building A, (215) 588-5108, [palmerdistilling.com](http://palmerdistilling.com)

#### **Bucks County:**

- **Hewn Spirits** – This small batch Bucks County operation sources grains locally, distills them in a handmade copper pot still and ages them in old, reclaimed rare-wood barrels. Among Hewn’s products: Shipmate Rum, Dark Hollow Pennsylvania Bourbon, Red Barn Rye Whiskey, Reclamation American Single Malt Whiskey, Denali Vodka and New Moon Moonshine. Distillery tours and tastings daily (with advance booking) in Pipersville, next door to the Bucks County Brewery. The Peddler’s Village bar and tasting room are open daily. Both locations host monthly events and live music Fridays and Saturdays. 31 Appletree Lane, Pipersville, (215) 766-7711; Routes 202 & 263, Store #42, Lahaska, [hewnspirits.com](http://hewnspirits.com)
- **Mountain Laurel Spirits** – Named after owner Herman Mihalich’s father’s favored fashion accessory, Dad’s Hat rye whiskeys have won multiple awards worldwide and carry a strong sense of history. Mihalich employs a recipe that harkens to 18<sup>th</sup>-century days when Pennsylvania farmers used their surplus rye grain to distill the homemade whiskey that later turned the commonwealth into the world’s chief producer of this type of spirit. Most Saturday afternoons, visitors can get a lesson in the modern and historical production methods from Mihalich or co-founder John Cooper, and then sample the final product. Reservations required. 925 Canal Street, Building #4, Bristol, (215) 781-8300, [dadshatrye.com](http://dadshatrye.com)

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**Chester County:**

- **Bluebird Distilling** – Chester County’s first post-Prohibition distillery uses all-natural ingredients to produce a broad selection of products, including white whiskey, rum, gin, vodka, plus four-grain bourbon and rye—five of which medaled at the 2017 and 2018 American Craft Spirits Awards, and one of which (Bluebird American Wheat Whiskey) took first at the 2018 Philadelphia American Whiskey Convention. At Bluebird’s self-proclaimed “urban steampunk” saloon, bartenders mix cocktails with fresh-squeezed juices and ingredients made from scratch. Bluebird also has a sleek satellite tasting room in Center City and will open a full craft cocktail bar at the new Bourse Marketplace in Old City in fall 2018. 100 Bridge Street, Phoenixville, (610) 933-7827; 27 S. 17<sup>th</sup> Street, [bluebirddistilling.com](http://bluebirddistilling.com)

**Montgomery County:**

- **Manatawny Still Works** – On banks of the Manatawny Creek—in the language of Native American Lenape, “manatawny” means “the place we meet to drink”—this Pottstown distiller makes Keystone Whiskey, Odd Fellows No. 214 Gin, J. Potts Whiskey and other small-batch whiskeys, T. Rutter Rum and Three Bitches Wheat Vodka. An antiques-filled tasting room is open Thursday through Sunday for cocktails and spirit flights (adding a food truck on Fridays and live music on Saturday evenings); tours take place on weekends. There’s also a tasting room on South Philly’s East Passyunk Avenue. 320 Circle of Progress Drive, #104, Pottstown, (484) 624-8271; 1603 E. Passyunk Avenue, (267) 519-2917, [manatawnystillworks.com](http://manatawnystillworks.com)
- **Mermaid Spirits Distillery** – Research scientist David Johnston produces Forbidden Drive Vodka and Martinique-style and full-flavored Xaymaca-style rums at this family-run distillery where his wife, Dr. Edna Ramirez, and their two kids also pitch in. 2052 County Line Road, Huntingdon Valley, (215) 355-5304, [mermaidspirits.com](http://mermaidspirits.com)
- **Five Saints Distilling and International Spirits** – Dedicated to owner John George’s father and the four men who served as father figures to George, Five Saints opened in 2016 in the Historic Humane Engine #1 Firehouse. The venue doubles as a firehouse museum and a distillery that specializes in small-batch spirits such as slow-distilled vodka, extra-distilled white whiskey, savory Tuscan-style gin and blood orange liqueur, with more spirits to be introduced soon. Five Saints offers tours, tastings, retail and events. 129 E. Main Street, Norristown, (610) 279-5364, [fivesaintsdistilling.com](http://fivesaintsdistilling.com)
- **Boardroom Spirits Distillery** – Headquartered in Lansdale, this family-owned sustainable distillery uses local ingredients in their naturally flavored Fresh line of vodkas, rum, gin, triple sec and root vegetable-based specialty spirits such as beet and carrot and pure vodka. Visitors can enjoy Boardroom’s cocktail lounge Thursday through Sunday and book tours through their website. Local food trucks are on hand on “Foodie Fridays,” and local caterers serve pop-up dinners on Saturdays. 575 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Lansdale, (267) 642-9961, [boardroomsprits.com](http://boardroomsprits.com)

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*Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of [visitphilly.com/mediacenter](http://visitphilly.com/mediacenter).*