

Distillery ^{modern} Age

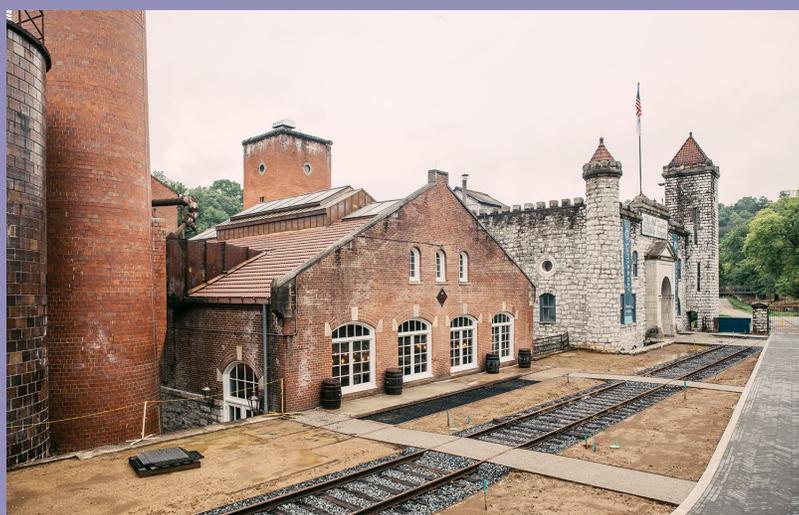


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Castle & Key Opens in Kentucky

Castle & Key, the newly restored distillery that once operated under the Old Taylor name, re-opened on September 19. The Millville, Ky.-based facility was built in 1887 by Colonel Edmund Haynes Taylor, Jr., and it became renowned for its European-style, castle-like architecture. In 1972, it shuttered amid hard times in the bourbon industry and fell into disrepair. Then in 2014, investors Will Arvin and Wesley Murry acquired the 113-acre site and embarked on a four-year restoration project, rechristening the distillery as Castle & Key.



Castle & Key offers visitors what it calls “an immersive distillery experience,” which includes cocktail classes, botanical and historical tours and live music as well as whiskey tastings when the whiskeys have aged. Production first restarted in 2016, and the distillery is making bourbon, rye, gin and vodka under the direction of Master Distiller Marianne Eaves. Restoration Release Gin and Restoration Release Vodka are currently sold in Kentucky and Tennessee, and the bourbon and rye are still aging.

The distillery’s notable features include an extensive garden, a restored gazebo and a limestone spring covered by a Victorian-style rotunda, in addition to the castle itself. Some botanicals for Castle & Key’s gin are harvested from its own gardens. The company is also working with a local farmer to grow a strain of heirloom white corn similar to a corn strain that would have been used at Old Taylor Distillery a century ago.

Castle & Key Restoration Release Gin (53% ABV) uses seven Kentucky-native botanicals plus juniper and a mash bill of 63% yellow corn, 20% rye and 20% malted barley. Castle & Key is planning to produce four expressions of Castle & Key Gin including two seasonal expressions of estate-grown botanical gin, one each for spring and fall. A 750-ml bottle sells for about \$25.

Castle & Key Restoration Release Vodka (40%) uses a mash bill of 73% white corn, 10% rye and 17% malted barley. A 750-ml bottle sells for about \$23.

Castle & Key Bourbon & Wheat Bourbon (53.5%) were created after Eaves had a 1917 bottle of Old Taylor analyzed by a lab in Danville, Ky. That recipe used white corn and lots of barley. Castle & Key’s two yeasts are sourced from

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Global Brandy Shows Promise

*Special to Modern Distillery Age by Adam Zdan-Michajlowicz
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A glance at the global top-line figures gives the impression that non-Cognac brandy is long past its heyday. The category hasn’t registered volume growth since 2013 and achieved a CAGR of -1.8% between 2012 and 2017. It shed almost 16.5 million nine-liter cases in the process, reaching a total of 171.6 million cases. One key factor in the category’s demise stems from image problems. Non-Cognac brandy continues to lose out to trendier categories and products perceived as more prestigious.

However, looking beyond the numbers there are positive developments. The continued recovery of the category in the CIS region, and a return to growth in Africa and the Middle East, all provide some positive news. Nevertheless, it is the re-emergence of the premium-and-above segments in the U.S. — bolstered by an innovative craft segment — that truly inspires hope for non-Cognac brandy elsewhere.

A Global Overview

Overall, non-Cognac brandy volumes fell by almost 3.3 million cases between 2016 and 2017. Bucking this decline, total volumes in the CIS region grew by just under 700,000 cases. The continuation of growth in the CIS is being fueled predominantly by Russia, the third-largest market for non-Cognac brandy. Here the ever-increasing minimum retail price of vodka in the market is closing the gap between the two categories, convincing many consumers to “trade up” to the nearest-priced brown spirit, which is perceived as being more prestigious.

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Diageo Sells 19 Spirits Brands to Focus on the High-End

Diageo has agreed to sell 19 brands to Sazerac Co. for \$550 million in order focus its efforts on its high-end spirits.

The brands included in the transaction are Seagram’s VO, Seagram’s 83, Seagram’s Five Star, Myers’s, Parrot Bay, Romana Sambuca, Popov, Yukon Jack, Goldschlager, Stirrings, The Club, Scoresby, Black Haus, Peligroso, Relska, Grind, Piehole, Booth’s and John Begg.

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