



Spirit Works Distillery FAQ's

When was Spirit Works Distillery founded and where is it located?

Spirit Works Distillery is a grain-to-glass distillery founded by Timo and Ashby Marshall in 2012, located at The Barlow in downtown Sebastopol, CA (West Sonoma County).

Who is the Distiller?

Krystal Goulart is our amazing Head Distiller and she heads up distilling and product development at Spirit Works Distillery. Krystal, an apprentice to Ashby (owner and original Head Distiller) since she first started with the company in 2017, comes from wine and brings incredible distillation instincts and palate for craft spirits. Krystal, and previously Ashby, are part of the small but growing community of women at the helm of a still in the overall industry. Sometimes they even let Timo run the still.

What craft spirits does Spirit Works produce?

Spirit Works Distillery distills artisan Vodka, Gin, Sloe Gin, Barrel Gin, and - all over four years of age - Straight Wheat, Straight Rye and Four Grain Bourbon Whiskies using the grain to glass method which allows us to create a truly premium product. You can read more about all of them [here](#).

Where does Spirit Works source ingredients for its spirits?

Spirit Works Distillery sources organic and local ingredients as often as possible. The predominant grain base for most of the spirits is organic Hard Red Winter Wheat, and organic White Corn (for the Bourbon), and are both grown in California. Spirit Works strives to support local sources and also use the highest quality, non-GMO, organic ingredients in all the spirits. The distillery does however, out of lack of supply in the U.S., import the organic sloe berries from a small family farm in Bulgaria.

What's the idea behind the "grain to glass" philosophy?

The 'grain to glass' philosophy means that the distillery brings in whole grain – like organic, California-grown Hard Red Winter Wheat – which are milled, mashed, fermented, distilled, and bottled entirely on site at the distillery. This commitment to process is also supporting California's incredible farming community. Within these steps the team has control over the entire process, from the consistency of the mash to the pH and brix of the fermentation, which ultimately create complex flavor characteristics.

By preserving the unique flavor of the raw ingredients, spirits are created with character that can be appreciated straight or can really add something special to a cocktail.

What kind of still do you use, and how does it influence what you make?

The still is a copper Hybrid Pot Still handmade to some very intentional specifications by CARL Distilleries, Germany's oldest still producers. With this still, Ashby designed a beautiful machine that combines a very traditional style with modern engineering, which enables the distillery to produce spirits with exceptional precision and control. The still is referred to as a hybrid because of the different ways in which it can be configured, allowing us to distill using multiple techniques. It is made up essentially of a 1,000 liter copper pot still (the main chamber) and has two columns set up alongside it called rectifying columns. The first, shorter column has 5 rectification plates and the second column has 21 rectification plates (and is 26 feet high!). The shorter column is used in a proprietary heads cutting process for the whiskies. When using the taller column, alcohol is forced to higher and higher proof as it travels through each successive plate, creating a neutral spirit at just over 190 proof or 95% ABV. This tall column is what makes the grain to glass process possible – and how we are able to maintain the unique characteristics of the wheat throughout the entire distillation.

What is interesting or unique about Spirit Works Distillery?

Spirit Works Distillery strives every day to maintain its core principles of environmental stewardship, transparency in the grain-to-glass process, commitment to creating high quality spirits, and creating and a safe and supportive working atmosphere for the incredible team here. The distillery never takes shortcuts, like using small barrels, adding flavorings or color, or really using anything other than organic grain, water, yeast, organic botanicals, and organic sloe berries. We are currently the only distillery making a traditional Sloe Gin in the USA. One additional unique point (and point of pride) about Spirit Works Distillery is that the Lead Distiller has always been a woman. Relatively few distilleries in the US have a female distiller at the helm. Finally, as described above, the grain to glass method is core to the business and allows full monitoring and control of every aspect of the production process.

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