

ULTIMATE BEVERAGE CHALLENGE



2018

ULTIMATE SPIRITS CHALLENGE

SHAKING IT UP—AGAIN

category. All **Gins** in USC 2018 were tasted in a Dry Martini; **Blanco and Reposado Tequilas** in a *Soul Train*; **Añejo Tequilas** in an *Old Fashioned Añejo*; **Mezcal** in *Last Word Dos*; **Bourbon Whiskeys** in a *Gold Rush*; **Canadian and Rye Whiskeys** in an *Old Fashioned*; **Irish Whiskey & World Whiskey** in *The Copywriter*; **Scotch & Japanese Whisky** in a *Rob Roy*; **Grape Brandy and Cognac** in a *Sidecar*; **Calvados and Apple Brandy** in a *Nassau Street Cocktail*; **Pisco** in a *Chilcano*; **Vodka** in a *Flame of Love*; **Rums** in a *Papa Doble*; **Baijiu & Shochu** in an *Asian Sour*.

Each cocktail was evaluated blind individually with a glass of its base spirit ingredient poured neat next to it for reference. Cocktails were scored on a 1-to-5 star scale, with 2½ to 3 stars being hailed as **Delicious**, 3½ to 4 stars as **Very Delicious**, and 4½ to 5 stars as **Drop Dead Delicious**.

Said USC Judging Director **F. Paul Pacult**, "By methodically assessing the mixability factor of spirits as part of USC we've embellished the analytical data that we supply for suppliers and their marketing teams. Spirits, after all, aren't only consumed neat. To have expert analysis by mixology superstars such as *Jacques Bezuidenhout, Tad Carducci, Dale DeGross, Meaghan Dorman, Tyler Hudgens, Don Lee, Jennifer Simonetti-Bryan, Joaquin Simo, Tim Cooper, Charlotte Voisey, Jillian Vose* and more on both straight enjoyment AND how that spirit performs in a cocktail is highly advantageous to brands and consumers. As the only major spirits competition in North America to include mixability evaluations as part of the entry fee, USC's findings provide marketers with valuable insights as to how their spirits perform in classic cocktails. What's not to love?"



The over-the-shoulder shaking was piston-like and the clanking of ice cubes was deafening at the UBC Evaluation Center in Hawthorne, NY this past March as Ultimate Spirits Challenge (USC) 2018 swung into full-scale cocktail judging mode. For the fourth year in a row, USC's super-star judging panels tested hundreds of spirits in appropriate classic cocktails to further embellish the data for spirits producers and marketers.

To ensure impartiality, the identical recipe was painstakingly measured, including dilution, in milliliters for each cocktail by world-class professional bartenders, led by Leo DeGross, Troy Clarke and Sean Kenyon, in every suitable

ULTIMATE SPIRITS CHALLENGE...NO SHORTCUTS. JUST HONEST, IMPARTIAL JUDGING.



RESULTS FOR SPIRITS SCORED 4 ½ TO 5 STARS, RATED AS DROP DEAD DELICIOUS:

BAIJIU/KAOLIANG—ASIAN SOUR

- 5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Jian Nan Chun Baijiu
 - Premium Kinmen Red Dragon Kaoliang

- 4.5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Kinmen Pure Wheat Kaoliang
 - TTL Yushan Taiwan Cellaring 58% Kaoliang

BRANDY/APPLE & CALVADOS—NASSAU STREET

- 4.5 Stars ★★★★★**
- E&J Distillers Apple American Brandy

BRANDY/ARMAGNAC & COGNAC & GRAPE-BASED—SIDECAR

- 5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Agnesi 1799 Great Women Spirits by Francis Ford Coppola 5 Years Old American Brandy
 - Christian Brothers Sacred Bond Bottled In Bond American Brandy
 - Stone Castle Vineyards and Winery Verak XO 10 Years Old European Brandy

- 4.5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Camus Borderies VSOP Cognac
 - Maison Gautier VS Cognac

GIN—DRY MARTINI

- 5 Stars ★★★★★**
- No. 3 London Dry Gin
 - Nouaison by G'Vine Gin
 - Plymouth Navy Strength Gin

- 4.5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Citadelle London Dry Gin
 - Fifty Pounds London Dry Gin

RUM—PASA DOBLE

- 5 Stars ★★★★★**
- The Real McCoy Limited Edition Virgin Oak Bourbon Cask 10 Years Old Rum

SHOCHU—ASIAN SOUR

- 4.5 Stars ★★★★★**
- iichiko BLŪ Shochu
 - iichiko Special 5 Years Old Shochu

TEQUILA/BLANCO & REPOSADO—SOUL TRAIN

- 4.5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Corazon de Agave Blanco Tequila
 - Revolucion Silver Tequila
 - Siete Leguas Reposado Tequila

VODKA—FLAME OF LOVE

- 4.5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Kalak Single Malt Vodka
 - LiV Vodka
 - The Countess Walewska Great Women Spirits by Francis Ford Coppola Vodka

WHISKEY/BOURBON—GOLD RUSH

- 5 Stars ★★★★★**
- 1792 Full Proof Kentucky Straight Bourbon
 - Hudson Baby Bourbon
 - Larceny Kentucky Straight Bourbon
 - Stagg Jr. Kentucky Straight Bourbon
 - William Wolf Bourbon

- 4.5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Elijah Craig Small Batch Bourbon
 - John J. Bowman Single Barrel Virginia Straight Bourbon
 - Old Forester Statesman Kentucky Straight Bourbon
 - Woodford Reserve Double Oaked Bourbon

WHISK(EY)/IRISH & WORLD—THE COPYWRITER

- 5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Blenders Pride Indian Blended Whisky

- 4.5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Jameson Crested Blended Irish Whiskey
 - Paddy Blended Irish Whiskey
 - West Cork Distillers Glengarriff Series Bog Oak Charred Cask Single Malt Irish Whiskey

WHISKY/JAPANESE & SCOTCH—ROB ROY

- 5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Arran 10 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky

- 4.5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Glenmorangie The Original 10 Years Old Highland Single Malt Scotch Whisky
 - Suntory TOKI Blended Japanese Whisky
 - The Glenlivet Founder's Reserve Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky

WHISKEY/RYE—OLD FASHIONED

- 5 Stars ★★★★★**
- Woodford Reserve Kentucky Straight Rye Whiskey



For a complete list of 2018 results, go to ultimate-beverage.com/usc2018results
For Ultimate Spirits Challenge cocktail recommendations go to ultimate-beverage.com/usc2018cocktails