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## Next Generation of Distillers Shine at GADF

PORTLAND, OR, Oct. 14, 2008 – Nearly 1,300 spirits enthusiasts sampled the finest creations of America's new breed of craft distillers at the 4th Annual Great American Distillers Festival held Aug. 23 and 24 in Portland, the Mecca of craft distilling.

Nearly 30 craft distillers – from as close as right around the corner to as far away as Freeport, Maine—brought their tastiest vodkas, rums, gins, whiskeys, brandies and other spirits for two days of sampling, seminars and informal interaction with the distillers at the historic Gerding Theater in the Pearl District. More than 50 micro-distilled products were available.

Attendees also tasted many of the featured spirits in cocktails designed by the distillers themselves and saw how some of Oregon's most talented bartenders used the spirits during the second Mixmaster Mixology Contest sponsored by the Oregon Bartenders Guild, Rogue Spirits and Imbibe Magazine.

Twenty bartenders started the two-day competition, each mixing their own creations using any of the spirits featured in the festival. The top four mixologists made the finals, where they had to create a cocktail using a surprise ingredient—in this case one of four Loft Liqueurs. Jamie MacBain of Portland's Park Kitchen shook, stirred and strained his way to the top price of \$1,000. Blair Roberts of Acadia claimed second place and a \$500 check from Loft Liqueurs. Third place bartended Chris Churilla of Cloud 9 in Corvallis did not walk away empty-handed, thanks to booze bloggers the Munat Brothers, who pooled the cash they had leftover from the weekend to hand him a cash prize of \$77.77.

Bill Owens, president of the American Distillers Institute presented a snapshot of the state of the craft distilling movement and his vision of its future in a Saturday afternoon presentation. His view? Whiskey and other “brown spirits” are the coming trend.

Cocktail expert Robert Hess presented a spirited history of the cocktail to start Sunday's seminars. Other presentations explored the history of rum, new distilling technology and the resurrection of absinthe.

The Oregon Liquor Control Commission and federal Department of Treasury Tax and Trade Bureau also provided speakers to discuss regulatory issues with distillers and would-be distillers.

The festivities lasted a full week with an opening reception at the Rogue Distillery & Public House, a tasting of barley-based whiskeys and beer and two nights of cocktail events pairing participating distillers with local bartenders. There was even an infusion demonstration at the Pearl District Farmer's Market. Distillers and members of local and national press were treated to a tour of several of the Portland area's eight craft distilleries. Writers from The Portland Mercury, Beer Northwest, Imbibe Magazine, Celebrator Beer News and several freelancers tasted the best of local spirits on an all-day bus tour.



Sponsors for the 4th Annual Great American Distillers Festival included: Rogue Spirits, PDX Magazine, Imbibe Magazine, Portland Tribune and the Portland Development Commission. Festival partners included the Portland Center Stage, Oregon Bartenders Guild and the Oregon Distillers Guild.