



2/26/2016

Wine Review: Intro to spirits

By: Ben Bodenstein

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Bib and Tucker Bourbon Whiskey (\$55)

Have you ever noticed that movie cowboys or detectives in the 1940s and '50s would always order bourbon, drink it right down in one gulp and then make an ugly face when finished?

A smooth bourbon that does not burn the throat is a rarity. The Bib and Tucker Bourbon Whiskey is such. This is a bourbon that reveals all of the flavors and beauties that a true champion should present and may even raise this whiskey to the heights only achieved by the best.

Masterson's 10-Year-Old Straight Rye Whisky (\$79)

If you think this rye whiskey was named after William "Bat" Masterson, you're right. His picture is on the front label. That however, is no reason to buy the product. Labels do not make the product - performance does.

This whisky also passed the nonthroat burning test and prominently displays all of the flavors and aromas a fine rye whiskey should. "Bat" would have been proud of this drink.

Uncle Val's Peppered Gin (\$39)

Let's begin by saying the "peppered" part of the name does not mean that Uncle Val's is loaded with black pepper. Rather, there is just enough to add greater flavor depth to this gin.

Gin is made by introducing juniper berries to distilled alcohol and allowing them to soak together until it achieves its distinctive flavor. With Uncle Val's, there is also red bell peppers and pimentos used in the infusion along with the black pepper. What results is a unique flavor that will add considerably more layers of flavor to a gin drink and will convert a gin and tonic into a warm weather delight.