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This Ain't No Moonshine

It might sound like a cop out to sell un-aged whiskey for an aged whiskey price, but micro distilleries like [Death's Door Spirits](#) in Wisconsin and [Tuthilltown Spirits](#) in New York aren't just bottling their whiskey before they age it to make a quick buck. They're making it taste good and stand on its own. And it's paying off, with white whiskey cocktails showing up at places like [Nopa](#) in San Francisco, where it's used in a variation on the [Manhattan](#) and [Rye House](#) in New York City, where it's infused with apples.



"With white whiskey you can really taste the base grain whether it's barley, rye, or corn," says Tad Carducci, co-founder of the cocktail consultancy [The Tippling Brothers](#). "People that are hardcore bourbon or rye drinkers, I often expect to laugh at it, but I've encountered a lot of people that really like it because you are tasting this raw product, an absolute distillation of grain."

Don't confuse it with vodka just because they are both clear: White whiskey is far from a neutral spirit. It's distilled to a considerably lower proof than vodka is when it's made, explains Gable Erenzo, distiller at Tuthilltown, which means it's left with a lot more "impurities." But that's a good thing, says Brian Ellison of Death's Door: "Impurities mean flavor. Impurity is this erroneous term. It's not less pure, it just has flavor."

Carducci has used white whiskey to create an "albino" old fashioned, a twist on the classic drink made with Death's Door white whiskey and grapefruit, and subbed it for gin to create variations on the Tom Collins. He's even taken the Tuthilltown 100-percent corn version, and made a variation on a daisy with it, garnished with fresh corn kernels.

There are currently only a handful of distilleries bottling and selling white whiskey, but it's starting to pick up, says Erenzo. The [Death's Door version](#) is made with hard red winter wheat and a little malted barley. The wheat really comes through—it's soft and creamy, with a very long grain finish. [Tuthilltown's](#) is all corn, and has a sweeter flavor because of it. Then there is [Wasmund's](#), made with two-thirds rye and one third barley, which gives it a spicy, peppery flavor.

Try white whiskey for yourself with these recipes that riff on classic cocktails: the old-fashioned, the Manhattan, and the daisy:

Albino Old-Fashioned

Courtesy of Tad Carducci, Tippling Brothers

2 ounces Death's Door White Whiskey



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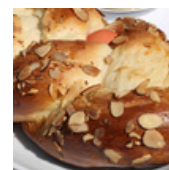
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- 1/2 ounce simple syrup
- 2 brandied cherries
- 1 chunk grapefruit, 1.5" x 1.5"
- 2 dashes Angostura bitters

Muddle cherries and grapefruit in the bottom of an old-fashioned glass. Add remaining ingredients and ice and stir until well chilled.

White Whiskey Manhattan

Courtesy of Neyah White at NOPA

- 1.5 ounce Death's Door White Whisky
- 1/2 ounce Dolin Blanc Vermouth
- 1/2 ounce Benedictine
- 6 drops Bitter Truth orange bitters

Add all ingredients to an ice-filled bar glass. Stir gently, to blend ingredients and chill. Strain into a chilled coupe glass. Top with a dash of seasonal eau de vie for additional aromatics.

Silver Queen Daisy

Courtesy of Tad Carducci, Tippling Brothers

- 2 ounces Tuthilltown Corn Whiskey
- 3/4 ounce [Dimmi Liqueur](#) (St. Germain can be substituted)
- 1 ounce lemon juice
- 1/4 ounce grenadine
- 2 dashes orange bitters

Shake all ingredients and strain into chilled cocktail glass. Garnish with fresh white corn, sliced off the ear.


Posted on Monday, April 5th, 2010 by [Roxanne Webber](#) in [New Finds](#) | 1 Comment
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Koval Distillery in Chicago has a whole line of white grain spirits – rye whiskey, wheat, oat, even spelt. They're a pretty small operation and only a year old, but if you can get their products where you live, they're definitely worth a try! <http://www.koval-distillery.com/>

 [captainberlin](#) April 5, 2010 at 11:19 pm

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