



## LATEST ARTICLES BY CHILLED MAGAZINE | LOCALS

### LOCALS ▣ DISTILLERY PROFILE

A tribe of  
Bad-Ass  
Whiskey-  
soaked  
Scoundrels



**IRON SMOKE**  
Distillery

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Photography  
by Justin

By Mattie Prosen

WHILE SIPPING WHISKEY AND SMOKING RIBS IN 2011, MUSICIAN TOMMY BRUNETT HAD A FLASH OF INSPIRATION. "I CAME UP WITH AN IDEA COMBINING THOSE TWO GREAT AMERICAN PASTTIMES: GREAT BOURBON WHISKEY MAKING WITH AN ADDED SUBTLE HINT OF APPLEWOOD BARBECUE'S SMOKED GOODNESS." FROM THAT IDEA CAME IRON SMOKE DISTILLERY, WHICH BRUNETT, CO-FOUNDER STEVE BROWN AND ENTREPRENEUR TOM RIGGIO HAVE MOLDED INTO A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL AND AWARD-WINNING BRAND.

After being that butcher, Tommy and his partners took their winning recipe to distiller Eric Wescott and produced a few batches of Iron Smoke Applewood Smoked Bourbon Whiskey, which quickly sold out. After opening their doors in 2013, Brunett and Riggio have expanded the distillery multiple times and are operating a 20,000-square-foot facility (with Wescott as master distiller, earning high grades for their whiskeys and winning an abundance of medals including Double Gold at the North American Bourbon & Whiskey Competition and a 95.5 rating from Jim Murray's Whiskey Bible).

Part of what makes Iron Smoke's bourbon whiskey so good is that Brunett and Riggio refuse to cut corners.



Photo by  
Andy Prosen

"We believe to call yourself a craft distiller you have to hold yourself to a higher standard. Staying a label on someone else's product is not handcrafted," explained Riggio.

Iron Smoke Distillery is a certified small-batch, New York State farm distillery located along the historic Erie Canal in Fairport. Everything

is accomplished on-site, including crushing grains obtained from the nearby farms, aging whiskey in triple-charred-oak American white oak barrels, and refusing to use liquid from other sources. Moreover, to achieve the subtle applewood-smoked taste Iron Smoke relies on a goat smoker that Wescott and one of the farmers built.

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### LOCALS ▣ DISTILLERY PROFILE



Tommy Brunett and Tom Riggio, owners, Iron Smoke Distillery. Photo by Andy Prosen



such as an Old Fashioned, or something more imaginative. "Try a little Gutterbroke Stone's Maple Bacon in your Bloody Mary or some Apple Pie in your Margarita—we call it the **Bonita**, my go-to is the Reocomaker which is two parts Iron Smoke Bourbon to one part Bonita's Apple Pie and some bitters over ice," Brunett suggests. "It's change your life!"

But no matter how much the brand grows, Brunett and Riggio



Iron Smoke's success has created a path to release new products and labels. "In 2014, we introduced our line of premium-flavored whiskeys with the release of Gutterbroke Stone's Apple Pie Whiskey, which uses our very own unaged corn whiskey and fresh New York apple cider," says Brunett. "It tastes just like Grandpa's apple pie and is truly unique, delicious and artisan-crafted, so it certainly is not a moonshine, but more of a small-

batch, premium product." Iron Smoke's current line-up includes Straight Bourbon Whiskey, C&G Straight Strength Bourbon and Single Grain Sourwh. Under the Gutterbroke Stone's brand they produce Apple Pie Whiskey and Maple Bacon Whiskey.

The pureness of Iron Smoke's ingredients and variety of flavors make the whiskeys perfect for enjoying neat, in a classic cocktail

remains grounded. "Keeping the integrity of who we are and why we started that, being honest personally and professionally; creating jobs; supporting our community; staying on the path of controlled, sustainable growth, and keeping control in the bowls for our kids means everything to us," says Brunett. "It takes a village to make a bottle of whiskey, and we have a tribe of the local and us, whiskey-soaked scoundrels in the land."

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**IRON SMOKE**  
Distillery  
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