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From America, With Love: New Vodkas
from Minnesota to Florida

Distillers from Minnesota to Florida are making artisanal vodkas with homegrown ingredients like organic corn and maple sap. Here are four worth inviting into the liquor cabinet.

Enterprising American distillers are taking a spirit long associated with Eastern Europe—more specifically, with burly, bundled-up men drinking it by the tankard—and turning it into a homegrown favorite.

They're making vodka that's true to its regional origins and emphasizing the use of local ingredients for flavorings or as the spirit's base. (Contrary to popular belief, vodka can be made from just about anything that's fermentable, from potatoes to wheat to maple sap.) We tasted our way through four brands that are starting to show up on liquor store shelves.

Two things to keep in mind: 1) Availability varies from state to state; many of these and other American vodkas can also be purchased through such online retailers as klwines.com and astorwines.com, depending on your local shipping laws. 2) Creative cocktails are tempting, but for the most part, we preferred these vodkas straight—Russian-style.

F. Martin Ramin for The Wall Street Journal



Vermont Gold

The back story: Maple sap is the New England equivalent of liquid gold, so why not a handmade vodka derived from sap?

The taste: A luxurious mouthfeel and an underpinning of sweetness; it's like buttered pancakes with Vermont maple syrup in alcoholic form.

To drink: Solo over ice, and preferably with brunch. \$42 for a 750ml bottle (375ml bottle is pictured), vermontspirits.com

—Charles Passy