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# For the Tasting: New Season, New Spirits

## Tasting notes on two distinctive whiskies and one powerful vodka

March 14, 2013 By Sara Kay

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The transition from winter to spring is a beautiful time for so many reasons. The sun is with us during the day for just a bit longer, flowers are starting to bloom again, and most importantly, new spirits are making their way into our hearts—and glasses! In this week's For the Tasting, I'll be reviewing a couple of new spirits that have recently come into The Spir.it office, and are most definitely worth writing home about.

Our round-up for this week consists of some really fantastic spirits. In the brown spirits category we have Tap 357 Canadian Maple Rye Whisky and Bully Boy American Straight Whiskey, and in the vodka category we have HOPHEAD Vodka. Pick up one or all of these spirits and don't be shy about letting us know what you think. Cheers!



Cocktails image via Shutterstock

**Tap 357 Canadian Maple Rye Whisky-** Right away there's some caramel-like sweetness on the nose, slightly burnt but not too heavy. Butterscotch and toffee are combined with some very subtle peach for a lovely aroma. The flavor of maple is rich and bright, and is a nice contrast to the slight smokiness of the whisky. The finale is smooth like molasses, and the flavor lingers long after. This is a little sweeter than what I'm used to when it comes to rye, but it's very enjoyable. Best enjoyed over ice or in a simpler cocktail.

**Bully Boy Distillers American Straight Whiskey-** Very strong alcoholic aroma. Notes of honey, maple syrup and apricot are present on the nose. Slightly acidic with a pleasant smokiness, this has a lot of body to it, and a sweetness on the finish that is very unexpected. A bit of nuttiness mixed with stone fruit. Light and citrusy, but with a hint of caramelization as well. A smooth finish that thankfully lingers in the mouth for a few minutes. I would enjoy this neat, perhaps with a twist of orange.

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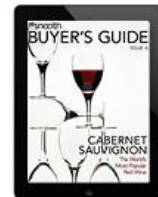


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**HOPHEAD Vodka**- Wow! The name of this vodka is no joke; the hops are very present on the nose. Very malty and yeasty, it also has distinct lighter notes—grass and straw with some lemon citrus as well. Creamy and hoppy in the mouth, very reminiscent of a light beer. This vodka is smooth and complex without the residual burn that most vodkas deliver. There's a hint of smokiness as well, which is surprising but not unwelcome. The freshness is fantastic, and the creamy, malty finish is enough without being too much. I can imagine drinking this as simply as possible: neat, with an ice cube or with just a drop or two of lemon juice.

Tags: vodka, blended whiskey, whiskey, Sara Kay, whisky, For the Tasting

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