

For Immediate Release
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MAINE DISTILLERIES ANNOUNCES MAINE MIXOLOGIST WINNERS OF ITS 2nd ANNUAL COLD RIVER BARTENDERS BASH

Freeport, Maine – Gin trumped vodka at the 2nd Annual Cold River Bartenders Bash, according to partners at Maine Distilleries. The company shared results of its sold-out February 28th mixology competition today, with Old Port Sea Grill's bartender Leah Chamberlin topping the list of 20 competitors with her Cold River Gin "Cucumber Martini."

Second-place honors went to Roxanne Dragon of Hugo's who earned high marks for her "Gin Ginger Fizz," while 50 Local's James Ferguson took third for his "The Local Greyhound" cocktail. All three awards, decided by attendees' "People's Choice" votes, came with cash prizes for the winners (\$500, \$300 and \$200, respectively).

Also of interest were results of the event's "Experts' Pick" vote, a separate vote cast by attending Maine bartenders, who named Vignola's "Provincial" cocktail the winner. The concoction, a spin on the French countryside created by Vignola bartenders Scott Doherty and Guy Streitburger, featured Cold River Gin, Domaine de Canton Ginger Liqueur, and simple syrup infused with lavender flowers.

The evening's "Most Outrageous Cocktail" vote went to Havana South barkeep Eddie Costales for his popular "The Scorned Woman" cocktail, featuring haba ero, jalape o, and serrano chili peppers, and passion fruit pur e.



Guests cheer the winning entries at the 2nd Annual Cold River Bartenders Bash, held February 28th at Portland's Ocean Gateway. Over 500 guests attended the event. (Photo courtesy Ted Axelrod)



Old Port Sea Grill's Leah Chamberlin at work on her winning "Cucumber Martini" cocktail entry. (Photo courtesy Ted Axelrod)

More than 500 guests attended the Bash held at Portland's Ocean Gateway, which featured the talents of 20 Maine mixologists, live rock and blues music by the Ken Grimsley Band, and gourmet fare by Aurora Provisions. Portland restaurant veteran and *Maine* magazine contributor Joe Ricchio acted as emcee.

"A tremendous amount of care and attention to detail went into every cocktail entry," noted Dick Grotton, President and CEO of the Maine Restaurant Association. "Every participating bartender and their restaurants were 100 percent behind the project, and that really wound up being clearly evident in the quality of entries throughout the evening."

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On March 11th, over \$2,000 raised from the event will be donated to Share Our Strength Maine's "Cooking Matters to Maine" program. Cooking Matters to Maine, a nutrition education program benefiting hundreds of families throughout the state, features the talents of numerous Maine chefs and nutritionists who teach healthy cooking techniques and how to stretch families' grocery store dollars.

The 2nd Annual Cold River Bartenders Bash was generously sponsored by *Maine* magazine, the Maine Restaurant Association, the Greater Portland Convention & Visitors Bureau, Maine Beverage Company, Bow Street Distributors, RSVP Discount Beverage and Better Bread Company.

About Maine Distilleries, LLC (www.mainedistilleries.com)

Founded in 2005, Maine Distilleries, located in Freeport, Maine, is the brainchild of four talented Maine entrepreneurs: Donnie Thibodeau, who owns Green Thumb Farms in Fryeburg, ME; his brother, Lee Thibodeau, a neurosurgeon in Portland, ME; Bob Harkins, a former Sunday River ski executive from Paris, ME; and Chris Dowe, Head Distiller, from New Gloucester, ME. Known for their distinct nose and satin-smooth finish, the company's gluten-free vodkas and gin are hand-crafted and batch-distilled in a copper pot still, using water from Maine's Cold River Aquifer and farm-fresh Maine potatoes.

Maine Distilleries, which produces solely Cold River Vodka, Cold River Blueberry Vodka, and Cold River Gin, is the only "ground-to-glass" distillery in the nation, where the company controls every aspect of production from the planting of the potatoes to final bottling. The company's award-winning Classic and Blueberry Vodkas currently are available at major markets, restaurants, and fine spirits retailers in 26 states, the District of Columbia, western Canada and London. Cold River Gin launched in August 2010 with a presence in seven northeast and southeast states, and the District of Columbia.

For more information, visit www.mainedistilleries.com or call (207) 865-4828.

To schedule an interview with Bob Harkins, Director of Sales and Marketing at Maine Distilleries, or Head Distiller Chris Dowe, contact Jen Beltz at (207) 699-5502 or jen@frontburnerpr.com.

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