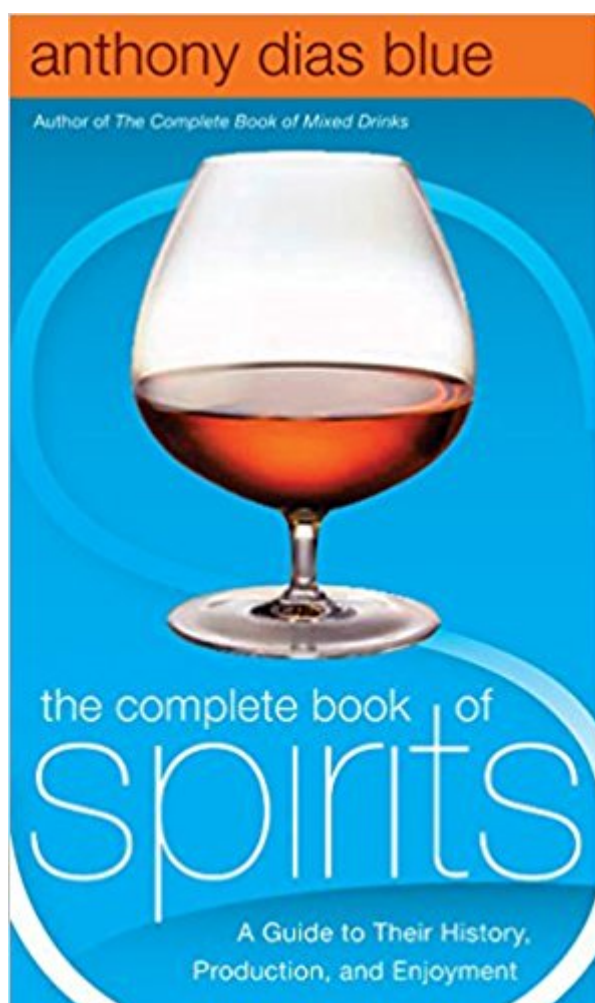


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# The Complete Book Of Spirits: A Guide To Their History, Production, And Enjoyment (Drinking Guides)



## Synopsis

An indispensable follow-up to his classic Complete Book of Mixed Drinks, Anthony Dias Blue presents The Complete Book of Spirits, a comprehensive collection of history, lore, and tasting tips, along with recipes for select cocktails. Here, in one concise and easy-to-use volume, is all the information a consumer needs to shop, mix, and sip like a spirits expert. From bathtub gin to mojito madness, Blue brings the dynamic history of the spirits industry alive, demonstrating that spirit making is not only one of mankind's oldest pursuits but also perhaps its most colorful. In ten captivating chapters, readers are treated to everything they ever wanted to know about their favorite liquors, including vodka, aquavit, tequila, and whiskey. Blue also provides step-by-step instructions on how to host spirit tastings to educate your palate and to help you and your friends discover your favorite brands and blends. For every chapter and every spirit, there is also a handy tasting-notes section, with Blue's expert comments and his favorites, along with price points. If you've ever wondered about the difference between potato and wheat vodkas, or between mescal and tequila or American and Irish whiskeys, or what makes single malt Scotch so desirable, look no further. With Anthony Dias Blue, America's leading wine and spirits expert, and The Complete Book of Spirits as your guides, you will take your enjoyment to a new level.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Many bartending guides provide scant information about drink ingredients themselves. So a Mai Tai

calls for rum; what kind? If you're mixing a Vodka Tonic, how should the vodka smell? Why does a Bombay Sling require bitters? (And what are bitters, anyway?) Blue, who is Bon Appétit's wine and spirits editor, intelligently answers these questions and others in this full analysis of libations other than beer and wine. He covers vodka, aquavit, gin, rum, tequila, scotch and Irish whiskey, North American whiskey, brandy, liqueurs and bitters, addressing what each spirit is made of, how it's made, its history, the various flavors that exist and even the numerous brands available. Blue's historical outlines of each spirit are fascinating; for example, in the chapter on vodka, he tells the saga of the Smirnov (later changed to Smirnoff) family and their exile from Russia to Paris. But with the history comes up-to-the-minute information on popular beverages like the mojito, a rum drink that's currently "one of the hottest drinks on the club scene." Although the guide isn't lighthearted, it's casual enough to inspire page-flipping and informal perusal. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Anthony Dias Blue is the author of several books, including *The Complete Book of Mixed Drinks* and *American Wine: A Comprehensive Guide*. For twenty years he has been Wine and Spirits editor of Bon Appétit. His reviews have appeared in magazines and newspapers across the country, including *Wine Spectator*, *Robb Report*, *epicurious.com*, *American Way*, and *Decanter*. Mr. Blue's *Lifestyle Minute* is broadcast several times daily on CBS radio. He lives in California.

Besides waiting for a newer addition, there are some frustrations with this book. Editing seems to be a bit sloppy, manifesting in few simple errors and mixups. When it came to discussing the spirits themselves, some mistakes were present regarding classifications, and some common styles and distillation methods were left out. Moreover, I'm a bit disappointed that there was not a chapter devoted to absinthe. Other than those points, I think it is a great all-around reference book that deserves a spot in any spirit-lover's library. So far, I have not found a book this comprehensive regarding spirits as a whole.

I'm a bartender (among other things) and spirits enthusiast. This book is the basic text for selecting the best possible value in spirits that are common enough to find in most mega-stores. Dias Blue doesn't venture into esoteric selections that are insanely expensive and difficult to come by. This book is not for the pretentious mixologist. It will, however, be more than adequate for educating the working barman on the selections behind him. Nothing helps the upsell like knowing the rough

differences in taste profiles and characteristics of the most commonly used spirits on the top-shelf. Instead of using the most expensive as the yard-stick of measuring quality, I can now ask questions about my customers' taste and make solid recommendations that they'll enjoy (not to mention reasons why they should stray from the well). This keeps my customers spending more money on both their drinks and my tips, and it keeps my customers coming to me instead of my coworkers. This book has also come in handy for building a versatile, inexpensive and high quality bar at home and given me lessons on how to organize verticle tastings of spirits I am unfamiliar with. This helps me trust my own palate instead of magazine reviews or tatted jackass mixologists with big belt-buckles and stupid haircuts that are only bartending because it pays the bills until they can find a job in finance. If you're bartender: educate yourself and don't suck at your job, don't overpour, don't blindly recommend the most expensive selection and understand that the only people that respect the term "mixologist" are idiots.

Pleased with purchased.

Very informative book. Had to purchase as the "textbook" for a college class on distilled spirits. The author makes it an easy read even in some of the historical parts that could get boring. His depth of information on the tasting notes is always interesting each chapter.

Purchased the book because I hope to purchase a package store in the very near future of course, one have to brush up on the types of spirits that are available. I find the book to be great only because I know little about liquors and want to know more. I understand Vodka and Rum because I drink these two products and the authors assessment are on the money. I will have to purchase many more books in the near future to do a lot more tasting. The other reviewers are in the liquor business and if they say the book is a must have than why not.

If you are interested in the history of spirits and a critique of current labels, this is a great reference that is easy to read. This history covered seems to be well researched.

Great book on spirits. Gives the history and distilling techniques used to make them, how to tell them apart, and even rates a lot of them at the end of each chapter. Very interesting and easy to read.

This book has all the information I was looking for including ratings of each type of spirit by cost and profile.

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