



DISTILLER'S CUT  
MEDIA GROUP

# MONONGAHELA RYE WHISKEY

*Understanding how changes to the control-state model affect your brand's success in the Monongahela Whiskey sub-category*

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# What is Monongahela Rye?

Monongahela Rye Whiskey is a type of rye whiskey that is named after the Monongahela River in Western Pennsylvania, where the whiskey was originally produced in the 18th and 19th centuries. It is known for its spicy and bold flavor profile and is often used in classic cocktails such as the Manhattan and Old Fashioned.

[Monongahela Whiskey will continue to be a hot trend in 2023.](#)

Customers living in Pennsylvania, those across the United States and international drinkers expanding from growing bourbon sales will help the categories be one of the fastest-growing sub-segments within whiskey.

There is an increasing interest in small-batch, craft-distilled spirits, as well as a renewed appreciation for traditional whiskey styles such as Monongahela Rye. Some whiskey producers in the state are also experimenting with using local grains and other ingredients to create unique and flavorful whiskies.

The whiskey and distilled spirits industry is currently experiencing strong growth, with increasing demand for high-quality, premium spirits. Production capacity has also been expanding in recent years to meet this demand. In terms of innovation, many producers are experimenting with new techniques and ingredients to create unique and diverse products.

However, being in a control state like Pennsylvania can present challenges for whiskey producers, as the state government controls the distribution and sale of spirits. This can make it difficult for small and independent producers to get their products to market and can limit their ability to compete with larger, established producers. Additionally, the state-run liquor stores can also limit the variety of products available to consumers.

[Let our team of experts guide your brand's strategy to take advantage of these key trends.](#)

It's worth noting that Monongahela Rye Whiskey is a term that refers to a style of Rye Whiskey that was made in the Monongahela River Valley of Pennsylvania in the 18th and 19th century. While the term is not geographically protected, authentically engaging with an increasingly knowledgeable customer base means your product should take steps to authentically reflect a true representation of the style.

Some consumer trends for customers in the world of whiskey include:

**Interest in craft and small-batch spirits:** Many consumers are interested in supporting small and independent producers, and are willing to pay a premium for high-quality, unique and locally-made products.

**Appreciation for traditional whiskey styles:** There is a renewed appreciation for traditional whiskey styles such as Monongahela Rye, which is known for its spicy and bold flavor profile.

**Interest in locally-sourced ingredients:** Some consumers are interested in supporting local agriculture and are looking for whiskey made from locally-sourced grains and other ingredients.

**Interest in diverse and unique whiskey varieties:** Many consumers are looking for new and exciting whiskey varieties, such as flavored whiskeys and cask-finished whiskies.

**Knowledge and education:** Many consumers are looking to learn more about whiskey, its history, and the production process, and are interested in attending tastings and other educational events.

[Our experts have launched brands in control states including Pennsylvania and Virginia, and have both experience and networks in key interstate and international distribution channels.](#)

The three-tiered system of alcohol distribution in the United States is a system in which alcohol producers sell their products to a distributor, who then sells the products to retailers or licensed establishments. This system is designed to prevent monopolies, prevent illegal sales and to ensure proper regulation of the sale of alcoholic beverages. However, the system can also present some challenges for producers, including:

**Limited access to market:** Smaller, independent producers may have difficulty getting their products to market due to the limited number of distributors and retailers.

**Lack of control over pricing and distribution:** Producers may not have control over the prices at which their products are sold, or the way in which their products are marketed and distributed.

**Limited ability to build brand awareness:** Producers may have difficulty building brand awareness and loyalty among consumers, as their products may be sold alongside those of larger, more established producers.

We can help guide your launch and growth strategies by:

- Establishing relationships with key players in the state, such as the state liquor board, distributors, and retailers.
- Building a strong brand and reputation, and differentiating your product from the competition.
- Educating consumers and building awareness about your product through tastings, events, and other marketing efforts.
- Working with the state liquor board to get your product listed and placed in the state-run liquor stores.
- Being prepared to navigate the state's regulations, taxes and fees that can be different from other states.