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## **Long Road Distillers Named Aquavit Distillery of the Year at International Spirits Competition** *Grand Rapids Distillery Awarded Gold Medal, Top Honors for Long Road Old Aquavit in Berlin, Germany*

**Grand Rapids, Michigan** – Grand Rapids-based craft distillery, Long Road Distillers, has been awarded new honors, including being named USA Aquavit Distillery of the Year at the Berlin International Spirits Competition. The distillery's limited-release spirit, Long Road Old Aquavit, received a Gold Medal, besting a range of other spirits entered from around the world.

Over 400 spirits from more than 20 different countries were entered into the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Berlin International Spirits Competition. The double blind competition prides itself on a trade-only panel of judges from around Europe who evaluate spirits based on their category and price.

Long Road Old Aquavit, the barrel-aged version of the distillery's award winning Aquavit, was released last month with a limited number of cases available at the tasting room on Grand Rapids' West Side and in distribution throughout Michigan. The owners of Long Road say they've already begun producing more Old Aquavit for future releases.

"When we put our Aquavit in a few of our used whisky barrels over a year ago, we knew it was a pretty safe bet that the end result would be special," said Long Road co-owner, Jon O'Connor. "But as we tasted its progress over the course of 12 months, we were really surprised with the depth of flavors and rich complexity that the spirit developed."

Aquavit is a traditional Scandinavian spirit flavored with a variety of botanicals, similar to gin. However, rather than juniper being the predominant flavor, Aquavit requires that caraway or dill are the forward flavors. Long Road Aquavit incorporates caraway, fresh dill, dill seed, cumin, star anise, and a handful of other botanicals to offer a unique twist on the traditional favorite. The barrel-aged version, Long Road Old Aquavit, was barrel-aged in used Long Road Rye and Wheat Whisky barrels for over a year, providing subtly sweet notes of vanilla and a hint of rye spice, while rounding out the spirit with a rich body and mellow finish.

Just in the last few months, Long Road Aquavit has been named Best of Show and Best of Category at the American Craft Spirits Association Awards in Nashville, TN, and Best of Class and Best of Category at the American Distilling Institute's Annual Judging of Craft Spirits in Baltimore, MD. It has won similar honors in San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, Denver, and San Diego.

The Berlin competition offered a new testing ground for their Scandinavian-inspired spirit, particularly with its proximity to those more familiar with Aquavit.

"Aquavit is a well-known category throughout Europe," said Long Road co-owner, Kyle VanStrien. "We were excited to put our Aquavit up against the best, particularly in front of this esteemed panel of judges. We couldn't be more excited for our team with the results, and continue to be affirmed in our effort to create world-class spirits from locally sourced ingredients right here in Grand Rapids!"

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**About Long Road Distillers:**

Long Road Distillers was born from the belief that making world-class spirits means never taking shortcuts along the way. After becoming the first craft distillery in Grand Rapids, Michigan, Long Road Distillers formed relationships with local farmers to bring that mission to Grand Rapids' West Side neighborhood. Each spirit produced at Long Road Distillers is milled from locally sourced ingredients, fermented, and distilled on-site. The result is an uncompromised lineup of spirits including Vodka, Gin, Whisky and more. Their spirits, along with a handcrafted collection of cocktails and a wide variety of food can be enjoyed at their tasting room on Leonard Street. [www.LongRoadDistillers.com](http://www.LongRoadDistillers.com)

**About The Berlin International Spirits Competition:**

The Berlin International Spirits Competition is part of the International Beverage Competition Group, which also includes the New York International Spirits Competition and the Melbourne International Spirits Competition. The Berlin International Spirits Competition continues to grow in stature as the only international spirits competition where all the judges from around Europe judge the spirits by their category and actual price. The International Beverage Competition Group was founded by Adam Levy, the Alcohol Professor. [www.BerlinInternationalSpiritsCompetition.com](http://www.BerlinInternationalSpiritsCompetition.com)