



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
1 SEPTEMBER 2017

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XO ALAMBIC TO RELEASE SINGLE-MALT & ANCIENT-GRAINS WHISKIES

DAYTON, WASHINGTON ~ ~ ~ The XO Alambic craft distillery of Dayton, Washington, fresh from its ribbon-cutting and release of its XO brandy in mid-July, announces that a pair of whiskies are scheduled for release at the distillery on Friday, 3 November 2017.

Wholly owned by veteran winemaker and master distiller Rusty Figgins, XO Alambic's whisky bottlings were initially intended for his former distillery in Ellensburg, which created the famed *Gold Buckle Club* malt whisky, Washington's very first foray into the emerging American Single Malt Whiskey category. As a producer of this style of whisky, XO Alambic is seeking greater acknowledgment of the category by the federal agency which oversees standards of identity for all spirits produced in the United States, and is a founding signatory of the recently formed trade body, the American Single Malt Whiskey Commission (www.americansinglemaltwhiskey.org).

Upon his exit in 2012 from the partnership that owned The Ellensburg Distillery, and recognizing that this rare whisky is of a very special quality, Mr Figgins refused the generous cash offer for his 50% stake in the business and instead opted for 100% of all spirits maturing in the barrel – mostly fine brandies – some of which are at present eight years of age. Of that matured stock, only two barrels of whisky remained – an all-malt whisky and a five-grain whisky. “These single-barrel selections represent two of my earliest efforts as a whisky distiller,” Figgins said, “and they are in fact Washington's very first single-malt and five-grain expressions.”

XO Alambic shall release the single malt as *Whoop 'em Up Whisky* to pay homage to Whoopemup Hollow in south-eastern Washington. Settlers in this area were known for lavish dinner parties (reputedly featuring the best whiskies available in the Old West), cattle deals that were sealed with a gulp of whisky, and disputes that were settled not with gunshots but with shots of whisky. Whoop 'em Up Whisky is made from a mashbill of 85% Washington pale ale barley malt and 5% each of chocolate, crystal and caramel malts, resulting in a uniquely proportioned whisky.

The distillery will also release an ancient-grains whisky made from a mashbill of 50% rye, 10% spelt, 10% maize, 10% emmer and 20% sprouted barley. It is bottled under the *Scythe & Sheaf* label, a nod to the pre-mechanization manner of harvesting grain. Scythe & Sheaf® ancient-grains whisky and Whoop 'em Up® single-malt whisky are both slowly reduced to bottle strength with high-purity water from the distillery's deep aquifer, are filled by hand into an Old West-style bottle, corked and sealed with beeswax, and then the individual bottles are hand-labelled.

XO Alambic, launched in July 2017, is a Washington craft distillery whose most prominent feature is a 2000-litre Figgins Reciprocator™, a twin-kettle still that is the distiller's own invention. This innovation is in use at many locations across North America and is known for its energy efficiency and versatility, as well as its appealing design.

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