

Grey Goose (vodka)

Grey Goose is a brand of vodka produced in France. It was created in the 1990s by Sidney Frank, who sold it in 2004 to Bacardi. The *Maitre de Chai* for Grey Goose is François Thibault, who developed the original recipe for the vodka in Cognac, France.

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Company history

Grey Goose was created by Sidney Frank Importing Co (SFIC). Sidney Frank, founder/CEO of the company, developed the idea in the summer of 1996. The idea for Grey Goose was to develop a luxury vodka for the American marketplace. SFIC partnered with cognac producer François Thibault (a French *Maitre de Chai*, or, Cellar Master) in France in order to transition his skills from cognac to vodka production.

The company selected France due to the country's culinary history and to differentiate itself from other vodkas produced in Eastern Europe. The water used to produce the vodka came from natural springs in France filtered through Champagne limestone, and made with locally produced French wheat. The company also developed its distinctive smoked glass bottle featuring French geese in flight, and delivered its product in wooden crates similar to wine.^{[1][2][3]}

In 1998 Grey Goose was named the best-tasting vodka in the world by the Beverage Testing Institute.^[2] The company was eventually sold to Bacardi for US \$2.2 billion in August 2004. That year Grey Goose was the best-selling premium brand vodka in the United States.^[1] The company sold more than 1.5 million cases that year.^{[4][5]}

Economist Thomas J. Stanley discusses Grey Goose in his book *Stop Acting Rich* (2009).^[6] Based on extensive research and surveys, Stanley describes Grey Goose as a favorite beverage of Americans he terms "aspirationals" "(i.e., "those who wish to act rich",^[7] regardless of actual income or wealth, and thus spend large amounts of income on status items). Grey Goose costs up to four or five times more than most competing vodka brands and did not reach the top 10 in a 2005 taste test of vodka brands published in *The New York Times*,^[8] yet has still seen "explosive sales growth"^[9] in a few short years due in large part to it being perceived as a drink of the economic elite—even more so than items like Rolex wristwatches or Mercedes Benz automobiles.

Product description

The wheat used in the creation of Grey Goose vodka is grown in Picardy, France. Distilled in the same region, north and east of Paris, the distillate is then sent to Cognac, France, where it is blended with spring water and bottled. The wheat used in Grey Goose is soft winter wheat, sown in October and harvested in August, which provides it with four additional months of growth in comparison to summer wheat. The wheat sold to Grey Goose is categorized as "superior bread-making wheat", and wheat that is soft.

Enzymes are used to break down the carbohydrates into fermentable sugars. The fermentation takes place continuously over six cascading tanks, producing a 20-proof beer. The wash is then distilled into spirit using a five-step process. The water used in the vodka comes from a natural spring 150 meters (500 feet) below the blending facility in Cognac, which is lined with limestone, providing calcium-rich spring water. That water is then filtered to remove impurities. After the filtration the vodka is bottled in a plant dedicated solely to bottling Grey Goose. Grey Goose vodka is bottled with a replaceable cork rather than a screw-top cap.^{[10][11]}

Flavours

Grey Goose is the first vodka to be produced in the *Maitre de Chai* tradition, which allows aromas to be produced in the distillation process specific to Grey Goose vodka. It is made from 100% French ingredients, including flavored versions of the vodka. For instance, Grey Goose La Poire was the result of Thibault's relationship with a Parisian pastry chef, whose pear tarte inspired the recipe for the new vodka flavor.^[12]

Grey Goose Le Citron is a lemon-flavored vodka. Grey Goose Cherry Noir is a black cherry-flavored vodka, Grey Goose L'Orange is an orange-flavored vodka, and the now-retired Grey Goose La Vanille tasted of vanilla, with hints of cinnamon and caramel.^[13] Grey Goose Le Melon, the latest flavored expression released in Summer 2014 is made with Cavaillon melons from the Provence region of France.^[14] Thibault has stated that Grey Goose does not plan to expand its number of flavored vodkas extensively, in order to not deviate from the original taste.^[11] The company has sponsored Grey Goose Taste by Appointment events in which personal mixologists attempt to match Grey Goose cocktails to the taste profiles of patrons at upscale establishments.^[15]

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External links

- Grey Goose website (http://www.greygoose.com/)
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Grey Goose	
	
Type	Vodka
Manufacturer	Bacardi
Country of origin	France
Introduced	1997 in United States
Alcohol by volume	40%
Proof (US)	80
Variants	L'Orange, Le Citron, La Poire, Cherry Noir, Le Melon
Related products	List of vodkas
Website	Grey Goose (http://www.greygoose.com)

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