

DINING & WINE | FOOD STUFF

## Beer Turns to Whiskey

By FLORENCE FABRICANT OCT. 16, 2012

Richard Stabile, an electrical engineer, has been making vodka on the North Shore of Suffolk County for the last four years. His Long Island Spirits is the first distillery to open on the Island since Prohibition. Now, in the handsome 100-year-old stone-and-shingle horse barn that houses his distillery, he is also making a whiskey and a brandy. Though he starts his vodka from raw materials (local potatoes that are cooked and mashed), for the base of his whiskey he uses a strong beer, Old Howling Bastard, made by Blue Point Brewing in Patchogue on the South Shore.

The whiskey goes through double distillation in pot stills and is matured in American oak barrels for a year. During aging, the whiskey, which comes from the still at 160 proof, is brought down to a drinkable 95 proof (47.5 percent alcohol) by adding filtered water. The result, named Pine Barrens for a natural area of pine, oak and wetlands in central Suffolk County, is spicy yet smooth, with notes of herbs and brine, and has a slightly sweet finish. Mr. Stabile also makes a mellow brandy by distilling chardonnay from Sherwood House, a local winery.

*Pine Barrens Whisky comes in 375 milliliter bottles and is sold at Long Island Spirits, 2182 Sound Avenue, Baiting Hollow, N.Y., for \$45; and in Manhattan at Astor Wines & Spirits, \$43.99, and at Winfield Flynn for \$48.99. Sherwood House XO Brandy is also \$45 for 375 milliliters and is sold at the distillery and at Sherwood House in Jamesport, N.Y.*

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