



REGISTERED DISTILLERY No. 209.

A Piece of the Past with an Eye on the Future: **Distillery No. 209**

Inspiration often strikes in the most unusual and unexpected places, and the late Leslie Rudd, founder of Distillery No. 209, knew this all too well. When he came across a stone hay barn in Napa Valley one fateful day, something written on its side in faded letters piqued his interest. After learning the site was once home to a former St. Helena distillery that in 1882 had acquired the 209th permit of its kind in the U.S., Rudd was inspired to open Distillery No. 209—now located on Pier 50 in San Francisco—in 2005.

Following Rudd's passing last year, Distillery No. 209 was acquired by Vintage Wine Estates (VWE) in November 2018. CEO Pat Roney intends to carry on the vision of his longtime business partner and friend in producing artisan spirits, and Distillery No. 209 gins have joined the growing VWE portfolio of bespoke expressions, including Straight Edge Bourbon Whiskey, Slaughter House American Whiskey, Whip Saw Rye, and Partner Vermouth.

Using the largest copper pot alembic still on the West Coast (the still was custom-crafted in Scotland), the distilling team is led by Master Distiller and "Ginerator" Arne Hillesland. Their flagship expression, **No. 209 Gin (\$30)**, incorporates 11 botanicals from four continents, including juniper and bergamot orange from Italy, lemon peel from Spain, cardamom pods from Guatemala, cassia bark from Indonesia, and coriander seeds from Romania.

Utilizing the flagship expression as a base, the distillery also produces a line of barrel-reserve gins. The **Sauvignon Blanc Barrel Reserve Gin (\$35)** rests for three to four months in casks previously filled with Rudd Mt. Veeder Estate Sauvignon Blanc, while the **Chardonnay Barrel Reserve Gin (\$35)** ages four to five months in Edge Hill Bacigalupi Chardonnay barrels. To add even more depth, the **Cabernet Sauvignon Barrel Reserve Gin (\$35)** picks up citrus-spice layers from the Rudd Oakville Estate Red casks it rests in for six to seven months. Future Barrel Reserve expressions will have access to barrels from VWE's extensive luxury portfolio, which includes Clos Pegase, Swanson, and Delectus, among many others.

Distillery No. 209 also distinguishes itself from competitors by producing **Kosher-for-Passover Vodka and Gin (\$33)**, both of which are certified kosher for Passover by the Orthodox Union. Since kosher dietary law prohibits leavened grains and the consumption of spirits fermented with grains during the holiday, the spirits are made with sugarcane and substitute bay leaves for cardamom seeds.

Tasting Notes

Distillery No. 209 Gin 5 X D Following breathtaking aromas of tangerine, lilac, and vanilla toffee, the palate is sweetened by candied blue-floral notes as juniper gets kissed by spearmint for a refreshing wash on the palate. This flavor profile is highly original. **95**—*M.M.*

Distillery No. 209 Barrel Reserve Gin Finished in Sauvignon barrels, this 92-proof spirit has a medium toast and a light golden-copper hue. Clove and cinnamon season mango on the nose as flavors of mandarin orange and pepper cascade on the tongue. There's a mild echo of juniper and apricot on the finish. **94**—*M.M.*

Distillery No. 209 Chardonnay Barrel Reserve Gin Perfumed peach pie warms the senses as pepper accents coffee bean-kissed mocha and toasted oak. This 92-proof spirit is finished in Chardonnay barrels. **93**—*M.M.*

Distillery No. 209 Cabernet Sauvignon Barrel Reserve Gin This expression finishes in Cabernet Sauvignon barrels. Sensuous scents of mango, sandalwood, and caramel precede the pink peppercorns that temper the sweetness on the palate. Notes of cassis come through, creating a profile that's fittingly reminiscent of a red wine. **94**—*M.M.*



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