DISTILLATE

The Hidden History of Cocktails, Spirits & Drink Culture

Hosted by Shawn Spitaleri | Produced by The Alchemist's Bar | press@thealchemistsbar.com

About the Show

Distillate is a narrative podcast about the history, science, culture, and human stakes behind what people drink. Not technique. Not recipes. The actual story — the people, the chemistry, the politics, the accidents, and the moments in history where what was in the glass reflected something larger about the world.

Rum built an empire on the back of slavery and molasses waste. Gin brought 18th-century London to its knees before it became a symbol of craft and refinement. Coffee didn't just wake people up — it reorganized how they thought, and built the institutions of the Enlightenment in the process. Season 1 — ten episodes — is complete. Season 2 returns fall 2026.

By the Numbers

950+	18	10	97.13%	39,045
All-Time Downloads	Countries	Season 1 Episodes	Ad Completion Rate	Unique Listeners Reached

Top Markets: United States (76%) · United Kingdom (5%) · Canada (4%) · Brazil (3%)

Platforms: Apple Podcasts (47%) · Spotify (17%) · Amazon Music (7%) · Castbox (7%)

Device: 85% Mobile · 5% Desktop

Between Seasons — The Deep Dive Series

Between Season 1 and Season 2, Distillate has kept new episodes moving with six Deep Dive installments — short-form explorations of a single ingredient, released through the hiatus. Four are live: Hops, Allspice, Sassafras, and Cochineal. Each has matched or outperformed the one before it.

Momentum: Cochineal (September 1, 2026) is the strongest opener yet — 31 downloads in its first week, +29.17% ahead of the prior episode's pace at the same point.

Press & Recognition

> "*One of the best narrative podcasts to show up in podcast feeds in a while.*"
>
> **— Frank Racioppi, Ear Worthy**

> "*Narrative audio accomplishes something wholly different from other formats. It puts the listener directly into a moment without a visual to guide them.*"
>
> **— Shawn Spitaleri, quoted in Forbes — "Narrative Podcasts Have Found Their Niche...Can They Thrive There?" July 2026**

Also featured by: Podcast Delivery (social media feature, July 2026)

Guest Appearances: Stories and Strategies (PR podcast) — "Turn Small Talk Over Drinks into Your Best Public Relations Tool," hosted by Doug Downs, September 2026

Season 1 — Complete

Ten episodes. Each one follows a single drink, ingredient, or moment to where it breaks open into something larger.

01. The First Industrial Drink: Rum, Slavery, and the Making of the Atlantic World
02. Gin Lane: History of Gin, the Gin Craze, and the Birth of the Modern Spirits Industry
03. 8,000 Years in Clay: Georgia, the Qvevri, and the Archaeology of Orange Wine
04. The Thinking Drink: Coffee, the Coffeehouse, and the Birth of the Enlightenment
05. Before Distillation: Pulque, Mezcal, and the Colonial Transformation of Agave
06. What Three Dashes Do: Bitters, Angostura, and the Chemistry of the Cocktail
07. What Temperance Actually Wanted: Prohibition, Coca-Cola, and the Birth of the Soft Drink Industry
08. The Invisible Ingredient: Burton-on-Trent, Brewing Water Chemistry, and the Birth of the IPA
09. The Champagne Myth: Dom Pérignon, the History of Sparkling Wine, and the Invention of French Luxury
10. The Ice Trade: Frederic Tudor, Thoreau, and the Invention of Refrigeration

Sponsorship

Distillate is open to sponsorship partnerships that align with the show's editorial identity. Every sponsor mention is host-read and editorially coherent — no product placement that doesn't belong in the glass.

Ideal partners: Craft spirits brands · Specialty bitters and cocktail ingredients · Coffee roasters · Wine importers · Bar tools and glassware · Drinks media and publishers

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Distillate is a production of The Alchemist's Bar / Obscura Meridian Co.