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**Goats, Hope, Roots, and Makers**

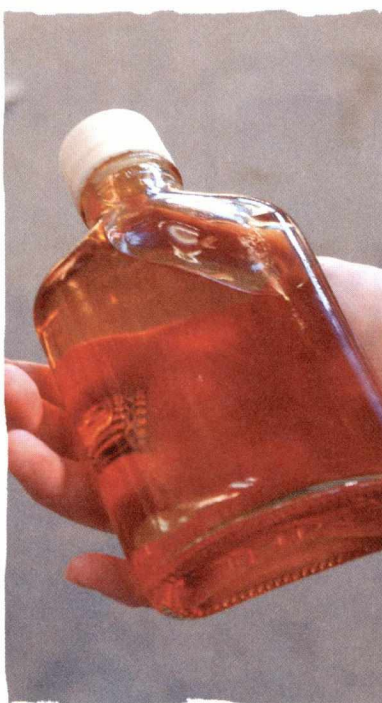
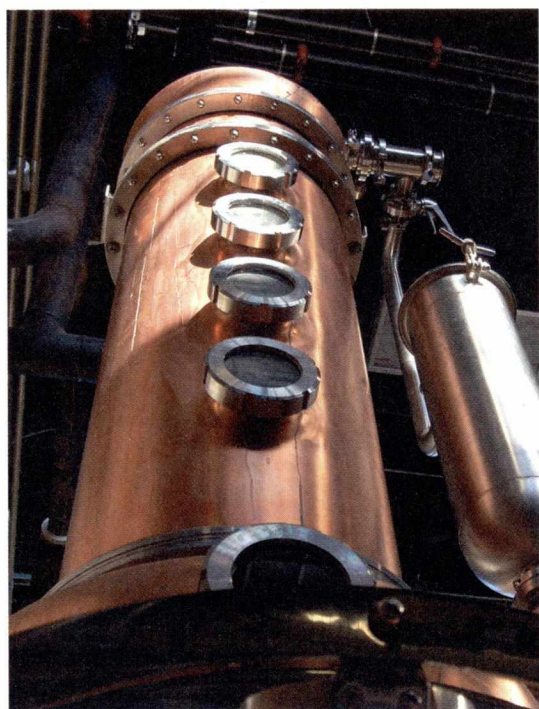






# Alex Castle

As the head distiller for Old Dominick Distillery — opening soon in Downtown Memphis — Alex Castle has a pretty great gig. Charged with developing spirits, she's the one who gets to direct the use of those beautiful copper stills to create vodka and eventually whiskey and bourbon. Balancing chemistry and artistry, Alex's work will be enjoyed in homes, restaurants, and bars all over town.



Photos by Melissa Petersen

**Describe your path to becoming a maker.** It all started when I was in high school; I was trying to figure out what I wanted to study in college, and my mom suggested chemical engineering. When I asked her what I could do with that type of degree, she said I could make beer or even make bourbon — seriously, it was the first profession out of her mouth. I was hooked. I was fortunate enough to do a co-op while in college with a company that was opening a distillery and was trained by a retired master distiller from Scotland. After applying to dozens of distilleries and spending a year making detergent, I was hired on at Wild Turkey in Kentucky and spent four years there learning the craft. When I was approached by D. Canale about an opportunity to help open and run Old Dominick in Memphis, I immediately packed my bags.

**What inspires your work?** I love that spirits always seem to bring people together and, no matter what language someone speaks, people understand a good spirit. The idea of people coming together and sharing stories while enjoying something that I made is why I do what I do. It's why I love this industry so much.

**Favorite thing about being a maker?** I've never been one to sit at a desk all day, so I definitely love the hands-on aspect of being a maker. But I also love the creativity that I can have when developing a new product.

**How does being a maker help you look at other artisan products?** When you spend an entire day producing enough distillate just to fill a few barrels and then have to wait several years to finally enjoy that product, you definitely learn to appreciate the work and effort that goes into anything artisanal.

**Outside of your work, do you "make" anything else?** I really enjoy making jewelry, though I don't do it as often as I would like.

**What is the most important lesson you've learned?** Patience. With spirits, you have to be patient. You can't rush the process at all. The whiskey will be ready when it's ready.

## Old Dominick Distillery

901-260-1220 • website is under construction  
Look for Old Dominick spirits starting in early 2017