

## INTRODUCTION

# The Accidental Activist

*Craft Distilling* is written for anyone who is interested in the fascinating hobby and art of distilling liquor. Specifically, it is aimed at those who want to make really good-quality spirits, not just cheap or fast booze. Finally, *Craft Distilling* makes the case for pursuing this hobby legally, with emphasis on the United States and Canada.

Most of the current laws around distillery licensing and taxes in America date back at least to the repeal of Prohibition in 1933; some go back as far as the Civil War in the 1860s. A lot has changed since then. Since 1978, in the US we have been allowed to make large quantities of beer and wine at home with no licensing or oversight at all. The government says there are two issues that make distilled liquor production different: safety concerns and tax revenues. I will be addressing both these issues in detail in *Craft Distilling*.

In addition, I propose a solution that makes it possible for hobby distillers to pursue their craft legally, while effectively addressing the concerns of the government. It's clear that the system as it is today is unfair to people like me, who want to make liquor legally but not commercially.

We ought to be having fun with this! Part of my dream is to see the “craft” back in craft distilling. This means, among other things, embracing small-scale distilling at home. There is a lot of history to back up the importance of home distillation as part of a healthy economy. I hope you will ask yourself honestly why you are

interested in distilling; “because I can get away with it” or “because it’s easier” shouldn’t be the reasons to make liquor illegally. Read on: I think you’ll agree that there’s a lot to be said for making liquor legally at home.

Cheers!