

# You Can Make Vodka Out of Anything, These Bottles Prove It

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Published on 2/6/2018 at 4:40 PM



Courtesy of Black Cow Pure Milk Vodka

Vodka is one of the most diverse spirits on the planet—it can be the base of everything from a fruity punch to a meaty, savory Bloody Mary. And one reason is because, unlike whiskey, which must be made from fermented grain, or rum, which must be made from sugarcane, vodka is one of the only spirits with a definition that has nothing to do with what is used to make it. The real distinguishing feature of vodka is that it's filtered or treated with charcoal. And while most vodkas tend to be made from wheat, potatoes or corn, because of the vagaries of the definition, vodka can be made from almost anything. And we're not just talking about unfortunate, strange flavors added at the end of the process like bacon or whatever they put in frosting vodka. We're talking about the main ingredients used from the beginning. Don't believe us? Check out these bottlings.

## **Black Cow Vodka**

*Main Ingredient: Milk*

The Black Cow Distillery on England's southern coast produces a vodka distilled from 100-percent whole milk. To make it, the distillers separate the curds from the whey of the milk, fermenting the whey into a sort of beer, which they then distill in vodka. The result is a smooth, round spirit. You can actually get some of the creaminess that comes from its base ingredient.

## **Figenza**

*Main Ingredient: Figs*

Even though it's distilled six times, Figenza manages to keep some of its subtle fig flavor if you sip it neat. It's still relatively new, and the bottle looks like something you might find on the table at a sorority mixer, but don't let that fool you: This is no flavored gimmick. It continues a centuries-long tradition out of making spirits from fruit.

## **Tuthilltown Indigenous Apple Vodka**

*Main Ingredient: Apples*

New York and New England have become hotbeds for the resurgence of hard cider, but people can only drink so much of it. So the Tuthilltown distillery in Gardiner, New York, distills some of the cider into vodka. The distiller is adamant that no flavors of any kind are added to the vodka, so whatever you taste comes straight from the original apples.

## **Fair Vodka**

*Main Ingredient: Quinoa*

It's not just a superfood anymore. South American quinoa is the main ingredient in this vodka from the Fair spirits brand, which is focused on making sustainable beverages. If you're looking for something that is truly neutral, quinoa vodkas might not be for you as they tend to be a little spicier than their wheat or corn cousins.

## **Blk Eye Vodka**

*Main Ingredient: Black-Eyed Peas*

In Texas, a former farmer turned a flagging crop of black-eyed peas into a spirit almost on a whim. As Trey Nickels said in a press release from his distillery, “We knew that black-eyed peas were loaded with the starch necessary to make the fermented mash that can be turned into liquor. We just needed to prove it.” And now he has. His Blk Eye Distillery makes nothing but black-eyed pea vodka.

## **Vermont Gold Vodka**

*Main Ingredient: Maple Syrup*

It’s not strange to think of making vodka from maple syrup—it is, after all, just straight sugar. But it isn’t common. Technically, Vermont Spirits makes this vodka from maple sap, not syrup (they probably don’t want to accidentally end up on the wrong end of the maple syrup mafia), but nevertheless, this is a sweet turn for the otherwise neutral spirit.