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- [News](#)
 - [Local](#)
 - [Higher Education](#)
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 - [K-12 Education](#)
 - [State News](#)
 - [Business](#)
 - [Elections](#)
 - [Economy](#)
 - [Politics](#)
 - [Weather](#)
 - [Wires](#)
- [Sports](#)
 - [Mizzou Sports](#)
 - [Other Sports](#)
 - [Prep Sports](#)
 - [Pro Sports](#)
- [Opinion](#)
 - [Letters to the Editor](#)
 - [Local Columnists](#)
 - [Guest Commentaries](#)
- [Lifestyles](#)
 - [Arts](#)
 - [Faith](#)
 - [Features](#)
 - [Health](#)
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Les Bourgeois winery, Jonny Ver Planck distillery launch craft rum

Tuesday, April 29, 2014 | 6:50 p.m. CDT; updated 11:19 p.m. CDT, Tuesday, April 29, 2014
BY [Casey Nighbor](#)

COLUMBIA — Capt. Jack Sparrow might be more inclined to visit mid-Missouri after Thursday.

Les Bourgeois winery in Rocheport is partnering with local distiller Jonny Ver Planck to launch Planck & Anchor Distillers, a new line of gin and vodka and a variety of rums, the fictional pirate's drink of choice. The craft line's first product, white rum, will be available starting Thursday at the winery's Blufftop Bistro.

The line will be available at the bistro and tasting room first and will later be available in local restaurants and bars. The creators hope to expand into retail in the future, Les Bourgeois marketing strategist Tia Stratman said.

"I'm excited about the whole thing," Les Bourgeois winemaker Jacob Holman said. "It's a new thing that we can offer as a local product with a lot of possibilities."

Wineries are an easy partnership for distillers because they already have a lot of the equipment and only need to add equipment for distillation. The vineyard installed two small stills in a portion of an old wine production facility.

The creation of any alcohol begins with fermentation. But to create hard alcohol, such as rum, vodka or gin, it must be distilled to concentrate the alcohol.

For years, Ver Planck looked for a partnership that would allow him to launch a distillate brand before settling on Les Bourgeois.

The Jefferson City man began distilling after living in Belize. He began with vodka but soon concentrated on making rum. For Ver Planck, his love of distilling derives from his love of music and his other career as a sound engineer.

"It's a lot like mixing music," he said. "Making slight little touches that change the whole thing to fine tune it and making it better each time."

Supervising editor is [Elise Schmelzer](#).

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 - [Business](#) •
 - [Elections](#) •
 - [Other](#) •
 - [Economy](#) •
 - [Editors' Picks](#) •
 - [Environment](#) •
 - [Politics](#) •
 - [Weather](#)
- [Sports](#)
 - [Mizzou Sports](#) •
 - [National Sports](#) •
 - [Other local sports](#) •
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 - [Prep Sports](#) •
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 - [Pro Sports](#) •
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 - [Winter Olympics 2014](#)
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 - [Local Columnists](#) •
 - [Guest Commentaries](#) •
 - [Reader Opinions](#)
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 - [Arts](#) •
 - [Boone Life](#) •
 - [Faith](#) •
 - [Features](#) •
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