

*Wine, Dine and Lifestyle in Vancouver  
and BC Wine Country*

# My VanCity

☰ Menu



## In conversation with Russell Stefan & Kevin Titcomb Phillips Fermentorium Distilling Co.

January 10, 2026 by Valerie van der Gracht

In conversation with Russell Stefan – Spirits Business Development & Community Lead  
and Kevin Titcomb, Master Distiller at Phillips Fermentorium Distilling Co.

I posed a few questions to Russell Stefan and Kevin Titcomb just ahead of the [Victoria Whisky Festival](#)  
which runs through Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup>, Friday the 16<sup>th</sup>, Saturday the 17<sup>th</sup> and Sunday the 18<sup>th</sup> of January

2026 at the 5-star Hotel Grand Pacific located on Victoria's beautiful Inner Harbour. *Note: A limited number of tickets still available*



Russell Stefan – Spirits Business Development & Community Lead



Kevin Titcomb Master Distiller at Phillips Fermentorium Distilling

*In Conversation with..*

*Do you ferment and distill all of the alcohol on-site?*

Yes

*Where do your grains and water come from?*

As a certified craft distillery in BC, we use 100% BC grown grains with the majority of our barley coming from Vancouver Island. We also malt all of our barley in-house which is unique for distilleries in Canada.

*What is the percentage of different grains for your whiskies?*

The majority of the whisky we produce is single malt whisky, so 100% malted barley. That said, we have also produced some one-off whiskies with varying grain bills, such as our Mixtape 02 whisky collaboration with The Strath Liquor Merchants here in Victoria, which is a 100% malted rye whisky.

*What type of stills do you use and why?*

We utilize two stills for producing our whisky. The first is a 1920's traditional copper pot still nicknamed "Old George." We use this for all of our 1st distillation or stripping runs. For the 2nd distillation, we use our other still, a German Mueller column still to create a lighter character new make whisky, or we use Old George again to create a heavier character new make whisky. These two spirit characters give us a ton of flexibility in developing finished whisky flavour profiles.

*What is the 'wood story' for your casks?*

The majority of our casks are first fill-bourbon, mostly from Heaven Hill. That being said, we also have a variety of ex-wine and ex-sherry casks with a couple off one-off odd-ball casks in our inventory as well. But what is unique to us is the amount of casks we have that were first-fill bourbon casks that we then aged Phillips beer in before emptying and refilling with whisky. These casks produce a complex flavour profile that we think is distinctly west coast!

*Do you add any colorings, flavourings, or other additives to your finished products?*

No

*What is the amount of spirit lost to evaporation during aging at your facility?*

The amount of spirit lost to evaporation can differ greatly for us, depending on where in our facility the cask are stored.

*What are the typical aroma and flavour profiles I can expect from your whisky?*

It depends on the whisky! Our Sanctuary Signature Edition has a bright, lively nose, reminiscent of Spring with flavours of honey and stone fruit with a peppery finish. Our Sanctuary Classic Edition has notes of toffee and baked apple on the nose with flavours of caramel and baking spices on the palate.

*Which of your expressions would you recommend for someone who enjoys peaty/smoky, sweet/caramel, or spicy?*

We don't have any peated whiskies at the moment, but both our Sanctuary Signature Edition and Sanctuary Classic Edition are approachable, well-rounded whiskies that would appeal to folks looking for sweet or spicy whiskies.

*How does adding a few drops of water affect this specific whisky?*

Since our whiskies are usually 42% ABV and are approachable on their own, we don't generally recommend adding water.

*How many bottles/cases do you produce per year?*

Our whisky program is relatively new to the market but we produced just over 1,000 cases (6,000 bottles) in 2025 and are hoping to build on that as we continue to grow our program.

*Do you have any new or experimental releases in the pipeline?*

We have lots of fun and exciting things in the whisky pipeline. At the Victoria Whisky Festival we will be showcasing 2 whiskies that have yet to be released to market – Our Sanctuary Classic Edition which is matured exclusively in first-fill bourbon casks, and our Sanctuary Red & White Edition which is matured exclusively in red and white wine casks. We have some other limited edition and single cask plans to come, and we are already planning the next edition of our "Mix Tape" series collaboration with our good friends at The Strath Liquor Merchants.

*What makes your spirit different or unique from others?*

There are a couple things that make us unique that we are quite proud of. First and foremost, we are one of the few distilleries that has an on-site malting plant. That means that all of our spirits are made from in-house malted grain that is then fermented and distilled on site. Additionally, the fact that our distillery is part of the Phillips Brewing Company lends a special character and charm to our production and as mentioned above, has given us access to casks that after being used to age beer, were then emptied and then refilled with our whisky or gin. This is truly unique and adds to both our story and the flavour of our whiskies!

Learn more about the Victoria Whisky Festival [here](#).

Tickets available at Strath Liquor Merchants located at 919 Douglas Street, Victoria, BC. No orders will be accepted by telephone. Limited tickets still available.

[Purchase tickets here.](#)



ABOUT THE FERMENTORIUM

Conceived by the minds at Phillips Brewing Company, the Fermentorium is a distilling house where unrestrained creativity and a hand-crafted approach shape unique recipes of all kinds.

It's a place where Old World craftsmanship meets modern techniques, as spirits are artisanally distilled in tandem on a classic 1920s British copper still affectionately christened 'Old George', and a modern German-built still.

Phillips Fermentorium

2010 Government St.

Victoria, BC V8T 4P1 Canada

📁 Drinks, Events

🔗 Fermentorium Distilling Co., Hotel Grand Pacific, Kevin Titcomb, Master Distiller, Russell Stefan, Spirits Business Development & Community Lead, Strath Liquor Merchants, Tickets, Victoria Whisky Festival, whisky, whisky tasting

< Qualicum Beach Cafe What's New This January

> VANCOUVER AQUARIUM LAUNCHES NEW PERMANENT EXHIBIT

Leave a Comment

Name \*

Email \*

Website

Post Comment

TRENDING