

NEWS RELEASE

Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau



Rockford's Own Barnstormer Distillery, Fire Department Coffee Named to Enjoy Illinois's 2020 Illinois Made List

Latest Illinois Office of Tourism program designed to inspire and support local throughout the state

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ROCKFORD, IL – The Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau is pleased to share that the Illinois Office of Tourism recently announced 31 new small businesses, or 'makers,' have been recognized by the *Illinois Made program*. This program features makers, creators and artisans from across the state. Rockford's own **Fire Department Coffee** and **Barnstormer Distillery** are among a select group of Illinois makers to be chosen for this unique designation.

Fire Department Coffee is a veteran-owned business dedicated to providing great-tasting coffee to people everywhere. Every order is freshly roasted in Rockford, Illinois, by a dedicated team of firefighters, first responders and coffee connoisseurs. Inspired by the vital role that coffee plays in helping firefighters stay alert and energized through long shifts, Fire Department Coffee was founded in 2016. Along with providing a growing selection of incredible coffee they also support heroes in need through the Fire Department Coffee foundation. Ten percent of the proceeds are donated to help provide essential resources and assistance to first responders who have been injured on the job, mentally or physically, or who are facing other serious health challenges.

Barnstormer Distillery is Rockford's Hometown Craft Distillery. Their whiskey's, vodka's and rum are found at retailers, restaurants and bars locally. Their goal is to produce and offer for sale only great tasting and unique spirits. They source their ingredients locally whenever possible and also produce many agricultural products on the property to enhance the production and flavorings of their spirits and cocktails. The Barnstormer Distillery team produces their spirits using taste, smell and touch like craft should be, not a computer controlled and automated process. They believe that hands on approach and personal connection is key to making a great spirit.

"It's fantastic that Fire Department Coffee and Barnstormer Distillery in the Rockford region were both selected to be featured in the Illinois Office of Tourism's latest Illinois Made program. Always, but especially during these times it's so important to support local business owners," said Andrea Cook, RACVB Senior Manager of Marketing & Communications. "We are proud that these amazing local businesses are among several of the best makers our state has to offer."

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Illinois Made is an ongoing program that will highlight the depth and diversity of Illinois' makers, creators, and artisans. The program will continue to highlight new featured craftspeople throughout the state.

The latest set of makers includes (asterisks indicate women-owned businesses):

Chicago & Surrounding Areas Barnstormer Distillery - Rockford

Broken Brix Home Brew Shop - St. Charles

Danche Custom Guitars - Forest Park

Edgewater Candles - Chicago

Fire Department Coffee - Rockford

Flossmoor Station Restaurant & Brewery – Flossmoor

Funky Rooster Tattoo & Art Gallery - Elgin*

Gina's Italian Ice - Berwyn*

Hearth & Hammer General - Batavia*

Hollingworth Candies - Lockport*

Justice of the Pies - Chicago*

Kribi Coffee Air Roasters - Forest Park

Maple Leaf Coffee Roasters - Roselle*

MASHALLAH - Chicago*

Richardson Adventure Farm - Spring Grove*

Scratch Goods - Chicago*

Star Union Spirits - Peru

Sue Regis Glass Art - Joliet*

The Milk House - Pingree Grove*

Virtue Restaurant - Chicago

Wild Blossom Meadery - Chicago

Northwest & West Illinois

Kennay Farms Distilling - Rochelle*

Knox County Brewing - Galesburg*

Triple Dipples - Chillicothe

Village Bakery - Oregon

Central Illinois

Mad Goat Coffee – Danville

Rolling Lawns Farm - Greenville

The Chocolate Affair – Highland*

Southern Illinois

C's Bees Honey & More - Anna*

The Chocolate Factory - Golconda*

Pomona Winery - Pomona*

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"Our new class of makers is a remarkable reflection of the multicultural diversity found all around Illinois," said Karla Flannery, Deputy Director of the Illinois Office of Tourism. "We are honored to welcome such a talented group of makers that are destinations within their communities and we look forward to highlighting their craft, history and unique experience to locals and visitors alike."

Other local Rockford region makers who have received this designation are Rockford Art Deli, MainFraiM and Rockford Roasting Company.

Launched in 2016, Illinois Made spotlights the people, products and experiences authentic to Illinois and inspires residents and visitors to explore these iconic destinations when traveling the state, or in their own backyard. The program, which currently features over 175 makers, helps drive foot traffic into local businesses around the state. The Illinois Office of Tourism promotes Illinois Made makers through inclusion in trip itineraries, events, seasonal campaigns and the annual Illinois Made Holiday Gift Guide – encouraging consumers to support small businesses throughout the holiday shopping season– to be announced later this month.

The Illinois Office of Tourism (IOT) hosts a portal and encourages residents to nominate businesses for the Illinois Made program on a year-round basis. IOT reviews nominations and selects businesses based on the criteria for the program along with local business representation across the state. To view the Illinois Made criteria and nominate a business for the program, click here. For images of the new Illinois Made makers click here. To learn more about Illinois Made visit: EnjoyIllinois.com/IllinoisMade.

About the Illinois Office of Tourism:

In 2019, the Illinois Office of Tourism welcomed a record 120 million visitors from around the world, resulting in nearly \$43.1 billion in visitor spending and powering over 344,100 jobs statewide.

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Office of Tourism manages industry efforts that result in sustainable and significant economic and quality-of-life benefits for Illinois residents.

The mission of the RACVB is to drive quality of life and economic growth for our citizens through tourism marketing and destination development. www.gorockford.com

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