

# Rustic Spirits perfects the ready-made margarita

- Kerry J. Byrne Boston Herald
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*POUR IT ON: Vytas Makstutis shows off Rustic Spirits Margarita at his production facility in Weymouth. Staff photo by John Wilcox.*

Rustic Spirits offers delicious, beautifully balanced, open-and-pour margaritas from an unlikely source: a Lithuanian immigrant working out of a Weymouth industrial park.

“I’ve made a million margaritas, so you learn to do it right,” said Vytas Makstutis, a veteran Boston-area bartender who moved to the United States in 2000 and launched Rustic Spirits this year after a decade-long quest to bring the perfect margarita to the market.

Each 750-milliliter bottle of Rustic Spirits Margarita is a blend of fresh-squeezed lime juice, housemade orange liqueur and small-batch Weber blue highland agave tequila distilled under Makstutis’ watchful eye in Mexico and shipped in bulk to his Weymouth bottling plant. For you, the customer, there is no mixing involved. The margarita is already made, ready to pour over ice.

The project began as a labor of love a decade ago that quickly developed a cult following. Makstutis was mixing margaritas by hand in the basement of his Weymouth home, bottling it and sharing it with friends and neighbors. Those sweet-and-sour citrusy margaritas developed an organic buzz, and soon those friends and friends of friends were calling the mixologist-entrepreneur, demanding a taste of his margaritas.

“In those early years, I always smelled like citrus from squeezing so many buckets of limes,” said Makstutis. “I worked with margaritas, thought about margaritas and dreamed about margaritas. It took five years to perfect the recipe.”

His American Dream of bringing margaritas to the masses ran into the harsh reality of dealing with multilevel bureaucracy in two nations, Mexico and the United States, and in two languages, Spanish and English, neither of which he spoke before arriving in America. It delayed the project by several years, as the independent businessman fought to work through the legal and licensing channels of distilling tequila in Mexico, then shipping it to Massachusetts to be mixed, bottled and distributed.

The product finally hit the market this past spring and can now be found in nearly 100 package stores, as well as some restaurants, here in Massachusetts. Look for it at Luke's Liquors outlets across Southeastern Massachusetts, Blanchard's locations around the region and Kappy's in Norwell. You can sample Rustic Spirits Margarita on premise at Union Brewhouse and Sweet Lemons in Weymouth, and Four Square in Weymouth Landing.

Makstutis' grassroots effort to market the product continues today. Rustic Spirits remains largely a one-man operation, and he hosts tastings around Greater Boston almost every day. You can sample Rustic Spirits Margarita today at Leary's Fine Wine & Spirits in Newburyport, tomorrow at Highland Liquors in Holbrook and Saturday at Harborpoint Liquors in Dorchester or Bauer Wine & Spirits in the Back Bay. Makstutis, meanwhile, is finally realizing his American Dream.

"One of the biggest reasons you come to America is because it sounds so magical," said Makstutis. "But you learn quickly it's not magic, that you have to get up each day and make your own magic happen. If you're willing to work and to learn, there are no limits."

Rustic Spirits, 70 Finnell Drive, Weymouth,  
[www.rusticspirits.com](http://www.rusticspirits.com).