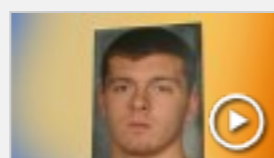


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# Bottoms Up in Mormon County

Utah's Newly-Relaxed Liquor Law Has Spurred a Boom in Craft Beers and Whisky

BY SCOTT MAYEROWITZ  
 PARK CITY, Utah  
 Feb. 1, 2010

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Utah isn't exactly the first place that comes to mind if you're seeking a good drink.



Utah isn't exactly the first place that comes to mind when seeking a good drink. But thanks in part... 

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But thanks in part to a recent loosening of the state's liquor laws there is a burgeoning booze business in the state where the majority of residents are non-drinking Mormons.

To see this boom, look no further than an old house and stable at the edge of Park City's ski slopes that has now become Utah's first distillery since 1870. It also happens to be ski-in, ski-out, making it -- according to its owner -- the only such facility in the world.

"Every state has weird drinking laws. Utah just gets a bum rap because the predominant religion of our population doesn't drink. But you can certainly get a drink," said David Perkins, proprietor of the

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**High West Distillery.** "I probably do more selling of Utah than I do selling of our spirits when I travel just because people don't understand Utah."

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Last year, the state legislature updated Utah's liquor laws. The most noticeable change was the elimination of the 40-plus-year old "private club" provision that forced people to complete a membership application when they visited bars. Anybody could purchase a temporary membership, but there was a fee -- basically a small cover charge -- and at the very least a perception of hassle.

"It is good for the state," Perkins said. "You don't want to turn your customers away."

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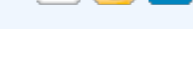
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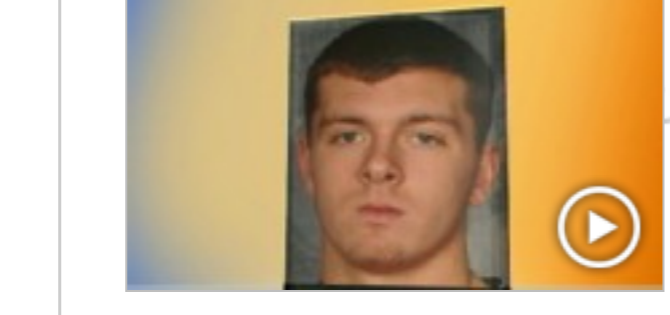
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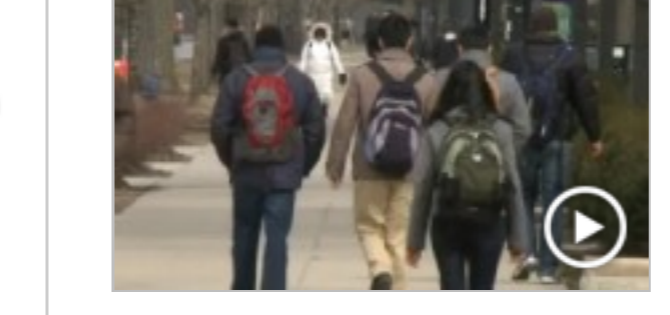
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