

VINEPAIR

14 Celebrities Making Big Bucks Off Booze

words: CHARELL STAR



Your favorite stars have been really getting into alcohol these days – in a good way. From reality TV personalities to A-list actors to award-winning musicians, celebs are partnering with new and well-known wine and spirit companies and even starting some refreshing brands of their own. If you're looking for an excuse to raise a glass, why not toast these top celebrities turning booze into big business?

JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE



Editorial credit: Andrew Sells/Sherman / Shutterstock.com

Superstar Justin Timberlake has sung songs about drinking Jack Daniels, but he chose tequila as his spirit of choice when it came to doing business. Timberlake launched 901 Tequila in 2009 and partnered with Beam Inc. in 2014 to launch a premium-priced version called "Suaza 901." The tequila is made from weber blue agave and is triple distilled to make it smooth enough to drink straight, without salt or lime. Suaza 901 runs around \$30 and is classy enough to enjoy with a suit and tie.

ARNOLD PALMER

The late golf legend Arnold Palmer is probably better known for his signature lemonade and ice tea drink than his foray into being an adult beverage spokesperson. Part of the reason for this is Palmer never actually made any money for promoting his love of Ketel One Vodka. The relationship between the icon and the Nolet family — the owners of the vodka — began at a birthday party where they all became friends. Over the years, the brand has donated money to various charities that Palmer supported, even commissioning a commemorative bottle featuring the golfer's face and signature to honor him. Not that you need a reason to enjoy a drink, but that is a good one. Ketel One retails for around \$28.

DREW BARRYMORE



The Wedding Singer starlet clearly knows every party is more fun with wine, which is why she launched Barrymore Wines in collaboration with Carmel Road Winery in 2011. Barrymore offers a Pinot Noir blend, Pinot Grigio and Red that range from \$23 to \$25. The wines are perfect to pair with your favorite meal or Drew Barrymore rom-com movie.

CELO GREEN



Editorial credit: Kathy Haskins / Shutterstock.com

Traditional celebrations may call for popping a bottle of Champagne, but Grammy-winning singer-songwriter CeLo Green is probably reaching for sake instead. Green became a part-owner and spokesperson for Ty Ku Sake & Spirits in 2012. Imported from Japan, the five-variant line ranges from \$12 to \$40 and has become one of the fastest-selling sakes in the U.S.

FERGIE AND PITBULL

What do you drink after a sold-out show? Apparently, it's a low-calorie vodka if you're a mega-star like Fergie or Pitbull. The chart-toppers are spokespeople and part owners of the 80-calorie-per-shot Voi Vodka. Made organically from French wheat, the vodka is \$25 and available in original and fruit flavors like Mango Coconut, Vanilla Pear, and Raspberry Cocoa.

CHRIS "LUDACRIS" BRIDGES



Editorial credit: Kathy Haskins / Shutterstock.com

For some celebrities, working as a spokesperson for someone else's liquor brand doesn't quite cut it, so they create their own. That's just what the Fast & Furious star Ludacris did in 2009 when he released Conjure Cognac in partnership with cognac house Birkedal Hartmann. The rapper and actor took his responsibility to deliver a smooth taste so seriously that he was involved in the cognac's blending. Conjure Cognac retails for \$40.

NICK JONAS AND JOE JONAS



Editorial credit: Steve A. Sherman/istock.com

Creating a new wine and spirits line is only one way celebrities are cashing in our love for spirits. Some A-listers are also going the high-tech route. Nick and Joe Jonas — you know, 2/3 of the Jonas Brothers — are investors in the alcohol on-demand delivery service Saucey. Customers can order a wide selection of beer, wine, spirits, and mixers via the app and have it delivered in 30 minutes. This may be the first celebrity app you actually need in your phone.

CHAZZ PALMINTERI

For actor and producer Chazz Palminteri, launching a vodka was a chance to honor his heritage. The star of A Bronx Tale is the creator of the world's first Sicilian vodka, Bivi, which is made from Sicilian semolina, wheat, and water. Bivi, which means "to drink," is sold in the U.S. for \$35 and is totally the right way to upgrade your favorite martini. Or better yet, order it in The Sicilian Martini at the star's NYC restaurant — Chazz Palminteri Ristorante Italiano — the next time you're in New York City.

BETHENNY FRANKEL

No one can feign shock that a Real Housewife reality star would start her own liquor company. The surprise is that Bethenny Frankel is actually killing the game with her low-calorie Skinnygirl Cocktails line. Frankel, who started with a single product — Skinnygirl Margarita — has quickly expanded to a full line of drinks that include Skinnygirl Vodka, Skinnygirl Ready-to-Serve Cocktails, and Skinnygirl The Wine Collection. Her brand is so popular that it was acquired by alcohol company Beam Inc. in March 2011 for between \$60 and \$100 million. Looks like more reality stars should start mixing drinks instead of throwing them.

DAVID BECKHAM

Retired soccer icon and model David Beckham has a knack for making things look cool. That's probably why the bottle for his Haig Club, a single-grain Scotch whisky, is shaped like a cologne bottle and blue. Released in 2014 in partnership with spirit distributor Diageo, the whisky features notes of toffee and vanilla and runs about \$60. Taste reviews of Haig Club have been mixed, so you may want to blend it like Beckham into a cocktail.

DAN AYKROYD

Can a Ghostbuster release a "premium" vodka in skull-shaped glass bottle and be taken seriously? If that Ghostbuster is Dan Aykroyd, then the answer is, yes. The actor and writer launched the no-additives Crystal Head Vodka in 2008, winning several Best Vodka gold medals and awards over the years. The vodka is priced at \$48 and filtered through Herkimer diamond crystals to give it a pure taste.

BRAD PITT AND ANGELINA JOLIE

Bradgelina may be over but it would be sacrilege not to acknowledge one of their greatest marital feats — creating one of the best rosés in the world (according to Wine Spectator anyway). Miraval is made on the soon-to-be-ex-couple's French estate and includes white variants as well as its famous pink-hued sister. You can try a bottle of the refreshing summer staple for \$20 or maybe snatch up the entire vine producing vineyard in the divorce fire sale. After all, when you find a good bottle of wine, you should keep extras on hand.

GEORGE CLOONEY AND CINDY CRAWFORD



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Put two of the sexiest people in the world in a room together and apparently you get an amazing tequila. Technically, Casamigos tequila was created by George Clooney and Cindy Crawford's husband, Rande Gerber, but the swile model has been featured in the brand's ad campaigns. Disappointed by the tequila options on the market, Clooney and Gerber launched their own in 2013 and it has quickly become one of the fastest-selling tequilas on the market. Casamigos, which translates to "house of friends," comes in three varieties: Blanco, Reposado, and Anejo, and ranges from \$40 to \$60.

DIDDY



Editorial credit: August Panchild / Shutterstock.com

Diddy (a.k.a. Sean Combs) did so well in the spirits market that he decided to double down. After partnering with Diageo and increasing sales of its Ciroc Vodka from 80,000 cases to nearly two million a year, the company and mogul purchased tequila brand DeLeon in 2014, hoping to repeat his success. Ciroc vodka retails for around \$30 and is made from grapes. It's now available in several flavors, as well as the original variant. DeLeon features five variants in its collection: Platinum, Reposado, Diamante, Extra Anejo, and Leona, which range from \$60 to \$850.

Disclosure: Diageo is one of several investors in VinePair