01 / ORIGINS & PEOPLE

# Dad’s Hat

Pennsylvania rye, with a family signature.

A family fedora connects a Monessen tavern with a modern Bristol distillery. Mountain Laurel Spirits built Dad’s Hat around a regional rye tradition, using a new company and new equipment to study an older whiskey vocabulary. [1,4,16]

**At a glance**
Company founded: 2010
Production: Bristol, Pennsylvania
Founders: Herman Mihalich and John Cooper
Signature: rye grain and malt [1,5,16]



## A memory becomes a working idea

Mihalich grew up above his family’s bar. His father’s hats became a personal emblem of care and workmanship. Cooper, a college friend, contributed decades of sales and marketing experience alongside Mihalich’s chemical-engineering background. [1,21]

## Revival without an invented lineage

The company dates to 2010. A contemporary announcement reports production in September 2011; a later producer feature looks back to making its trademark rye in 2012. These are distinct records, not one interchangeable founding date. [1-3]

Original watercolor interpretations are symbolic, not historical photographs or exact architectural reconstructions.

02 / HISTORY & PLACES

# A regional tradition returns to work.



**2010–2012** The company forms, production is reported at Grundy Commons, and the later brand account locates its early rye years. [1-3]

**2013 / 2015** The Classic Rye page records Good Food and ADI recognition, followed by Whisky Advocate’s Craft Whiskey of the Year award. [6]

**2017 / 2018** An Anchor Hocking feature documents the bottle-making relationship; a university Rosen rye harvest is intended for a trial whiskey. [10,11]

**2020 / 2021** An educational film explains the Rosen revival, while the Straight Rye page records ASCOT Gold recognition. [7,12]

**2024 / 2025** A PM Spirits Collab barrel wins the Best Single Barrel Pick competition; the 2025 bonded trade sheet specifies six years. [9,13]

# Three places, three different roles

Grundy Commons at 925 Canal Street is the production setting. The separate 131 Mill Street venue presents cocktails near the waterfront. Delaware Valley University’s Roth Center is the research connection behind the Rosen project. No second distillery is inferred. [11,12,14-16]

03 / WHISKEY & STORIES

# Follow the grain, then the edition.

The published recipe is 80% rye, 15% barley malt and 5% rye malt. The producer describes weeklong fermentation, two distillations and a pot still with a side column. Classic Rye’s quarter casks and Straight Rye’s longer maturation are distinct routes through oak. [5-7]



Vermouth and port finishes add separate cask histories. White Rye is unaged at 100 proof. Bonded Rye needs an edition check: its webpage says five years, while the 2025 sheet says six years at 100 proof. No universal changeover date is established. [8,9,17-19]

## Linked research sources

Checked October 20, 2026. Full qualifications accompany the website.


1. Founders and the family hat
2. Contemporary distillery announcement, September 2011
3. Craft spirits feature archive
4. Pennsylvania heritage
5. The production process
6. Classic Rye
7. Straight Rye
8. Bonded Rye product page
9. Bonded Rye 2025 trade sheet
10. Anchor Hocking partnership feature, October 2017
11. Rosen rye harvest, July 2018
12. Rosen revival video, July 2020
13. 2024 collaboration single-barrel award
14. Mill Street tasting-room announcement
15. Current Mill Street venue
16. Distillery address and mill setting
17. Vermouth Finish Rye
18. Port Wine Finish Rye
19. White Rye
20. Farm to Bottle producer film
21. Brand design case study