

DRINKING

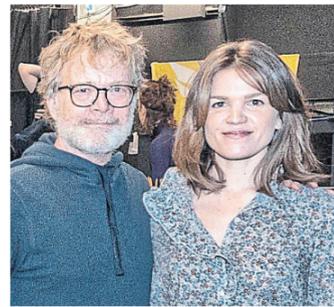
Sober thoughts

Ten ways to help adjust to Canada's new stricter alcohol guidelines C2

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After devastating fire, Coal Mine relaunches in its new space C5



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SPIRITS *of the* WEST

A small B.C. distillery's big win at the Canadian Whisky Awards could spotlight craft distilleries across the country



CHRISTINE SISMONDO CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST

When Palm Trees & a Tropical Breeze was named Canadian Whisky of the Year at the 13th annual Canadian Whisky Awards in Victoria, B.C., nobody was more surprised than the people who make it.

"To say we were caught off guard would be a huge understatement," said James Lester, one of the three owners of Sons of Vancouver, the seven-year-old North Shore distillery responsible for this exceptionally fruity, tropical and spicy 100 per cent rye whisky with a distinct hit of coconut and banana, presumably from time spent in Caribbean rum barrels. "I'm embarrassed about this, but we didn't even go to the awards show," he said.

"We were planning to come, but we just weren't on the ball and, by the time we looked, we couldn't get tickets to any of the other events at the Victoria Whisky Festival," added head distiller Jenna Diublado, referring to the event where the awards (an independent entity) are announced every year. "But once we heard that we won, we hopped on the first ferry over."

Of course, they had no expectation of winning, given that the top prize has never gone to a distillery this small or this young. Palm Trees, itself, is only three years old.

Last year, a special release from Crown Royal won. The year before, it

SEE WHISKY, C4

Max Smith, left, James Lester and Jenna Diubaldo of Sons of Vancouver distillery.

DARRYL DYCK
FOR THE
TORONTO STAR

Just spin the wheel and stop trying to go viral



VINAY MENON
OPINION

Was it Aristotle or Kant who mouthed off about the philosophy of categorization?

I can't remember. But I'd love to watch "Wheel of Fortune" with either gent, just to pick their epistemological brains. Take a recent moment from the game show that

started in 1975, the year of — get ready to buy a vowel — "J*WS," "THR*LLA *N MAN*LA" AND "W*TERG*TE."

The closing category was, "Fun & Games." The contestant was "Ben from California."

The puzzle was more elusive than "Nicomachean Ethics."

Here is what Ben from California was working with: "TA*N*A **C***."

My first thought was... "Tainting a woodchuck?"

Ben from California squinted at the board run by that ageless smokeshow Vanna White.

"Taunt a chuck guy... Chance guy? No, there's no 'C.' Wacky guy? TAUNTA WACKYGUY?"

Nope. Sorry, Ben from California. The answer was: "TAKING A QUICK JOG."

"Oh, that was so unclose," quipped host Pat Sajak. "Yeah, you just didn't have the letters."

Maybe. Or did the letters he had not match the category?

As Ben from California shot back: "See, I don't consider jogging 'Fun & Games.'"

The exchange — it ended with Ben from California giving an awkward thumbs up to the audience — made headlines this week after the show's Instagram posted the clip and added, "He has a point."

He certainly does. As the first comment on the show's Instagram post noted: "Finally! A contestant finally speaks out about the an-

SEE MENON, C4

No, 'Wheel of Fortune,' jogging is not 'Fun & Games.' Ben from California deserves a redo