



AMERICAN BRANDY • AMERICAN RUM

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AMBRu publishes first working paper on American Brandy and American Rum

Recognition to Revenue opens a producer-led path to U.S. product identity — and a map people can actually find

ELLIJAY, Ga. (September 13, 2026) — The AMBRu Campaign today published Recognition to Revenue, its first working paper, authored by AMBRu co-founder Caroline Porsiel. The paper makes the case for recognizing American Brandy and American Rum as distinctive products of the United States — and for building a national trail so that recognition can be discovered, visited, and shared.

“We are not inventing a history. The history isn’t missing. The recognition is.”

In 1964, Congress recognized Bourbon as a distinctive American product. It did not invent Bourbon; it named what the country had already created. AMBRu argues that American brandy and American rum deserve the same kind of conversation — not as a taste contest, and not as a claim on brandy or rum worldwide, but as a question of what the words “American Brandy” and “American Rum” should mean.

The paper is explicit about method. AMBRu does not certify producers, and it will not write production rules for an entire industry from one desk. Formal definitions, if they come, should come from producers, not from a campaign office. The work is to put the question on the table first: What should “American” guarantee to the consumer? Where should the definition be strict? Where should distillers remain free to innovate?

ASK FIRST. AGREE NEXT. REGULATE LAST.

That sequence is the point. Recognition is not a shortcut around the field. It is the reason the field has to work through the questions in public — so that when rules are written, they are rules producers can stand behind.

Recognition to Revenue names the economic path AMBRu is organizing around:

RECOGNITION → DISCOVERY → VISITATION → ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

A category that cannot be named cannot be defended, taught, or toured at scale. A name with no map still sits on a shelf. The campaign’s companion idea — an American Brandy & Rum Trail — is framed as national infrastructure, not a single-state brand and not one company’s route. Orchards, vineyards, farms, cane country, ports, stills, small towns, and cities already hold the history. The map should too.

“AMBRu may have started the conversation. It cannot own the answer,” Porsiel said. “Distillers need to argue about the definitions. Historians need to correct the history. Farmers need a seat at the table. So do bartenders, retailers, tourism organizations, writers, and the people who buy the bottles. This paper is an invitation, not a petition.”

The test, the paper says, is not applause in a room. The test is whether the sentence survives the speaker.

The working paper is published for public comment at: <https://ambru.org/recognition-to-revenue/>

ABOUT AMBRU

AMBRu is a national campaign opening a producer-led path toward recognition of American Brandy and American Rum as distinctive products of the United States, and toward an American Brandy & Rum Trail connecting producers, places, history, and visitors across the country.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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