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Good Taste

by **J. Rentilly**[Share](#) |

Tired of below-average beverages, comedy legend [Dan Aykroyd](#) set out to make a better brand of vodka.

Cool cats get nine lives, and they don't get much cooler than Dan Aykroyd, who has lived what seems like a thousand lives. From changing the face of comedy as a founding member of [Saturday Night Live](#) to bringing blues music to the mainstream and, now, launching Crystal Head Vodka — a high-end pure spirit earning worldwide praise from connoisseurs, mixologists and casual drinkers alike — Aykroyd has truly done it all. We talked to the 60-year-old Renaissance man about his latest venture and his next big-screen project.

American Way: What motivated you to enter the spirits business?

Dan Aykroyd: The insights probably stop at 10 shots of vodka, but, yes, I like the occasional screwdriver and I was looking for a vodka that provided a blank canvas, a pure spirit, to work with. Couldn't find one. Had to make it.

AW: How is Crystal Head different from other vodkas?

DA: Most vodkas don't really taste like vodka. They have these additives that first, disguise and mask the flavor of the alcohol; second, produce a viscous, oily, front-of-the-mouth feel, which is very artificial; and third, add a sweetness. So we decided to take a shot, so to speak, and change the industry. It's not what we put in Crystal Head Vodka; it's what we don't put in it.

AW: So far, so good, right?

DA: We're a Double Gold award winner in the World Spirits Competition. We've sold 2 million bottles. We're on a mission to

Drink Up

Dan Aykroyd shares how he prefers to enjoy his Crystal Head Vodka.

The Crystal Driver

Ingredients:

2 ounces Crystal Head Vodka
2 to 3 ounces freshly squeezed tangerine or clementine juice

Directions:

visit every bar in [America](#) because once people have tried us, they don't go back. We're offering people a pure, unadulterated spirit, which is probably a good metaphor for what people today are craving.

AW: No matter what you've accomplished in this life, you seem intent on following your bliss wherever it takes you.

DA: [Laughs] It's true. I'm having so much fun. It's enlightening. It's creative. And it's all about relationships. When you make a movie, you meet 150 people for four months, you fall in love, and then you have to leave and you hardly ever see them again. In this industry, you're seeing the same people all the time. They become friends. In my career, I've put some good visuals in people's eyes. I've put some good sounds in their ears. Now I get to actually place something on people's tongues. I've done a whole assault on all of your senses.

AW: How does your work in the spirits industry compare to your work in film and television?

DA: You certainly have more control [with spirits]. As [filmmaker] Bob Zemeckis says, in the film business, you show up with your vision in mind and then take nine steps backward because you have to be practical and you have to be collaborative. Filmmaking is a series of compromises, and the results are often less than perfect. With Crystal Head, there is no compromise.

AW: That said, we're looking forward to seeing you return to the big screen this summer in *The Campaign*, with [Will Ferrell](#) and Zach Galifianakis.

DA: America's going to be so happy to see this movie. All of this election stuff going on — this movie completely nails that. I only go out the door for movies that I really love, and I went quickly when I got this call. I'll get up for superstars doing great work.



Add Crystal Head Vodka into a cocktail glass filled with ice. Slowly pour in the freshly squeezed fruit juice. Garnish with a blood-orange slice.

AW: You're a living legend, enjoying success in more realms than most of us can even imagine. Any words of wisdom?

DA: As long as everything's in moderation, we don't draw any blood, and we remain considerate of others and compassionate to those who are less fortunate, then we're doing all right. And we should have fun when we can get it.

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