



## PERNOD RICARD NORTH AMERICA TO INVEST IN WEST VIRGINIA-BASED SMOOTH AMBLER

### *High-End Bourbons to Be Distributed by NY-Based Pernod Ricard USA*

NEW YORK, N.Y., December 8, 2016 -- NBV Investments Inc. ("NBVI"), a subsidiary of Austin Nichols & Co. Incorporated (d/b/a Pernod Ricard North America) and an affiliate of New York-based [Pernod Ricard USA](#) LLC, today announced that it has signed an agreement to take a majority stake in [Smooth Ambler Spirits Co.](#), the award-winning West Virginia distiller and producer of Smooth Ambler Contradiction Bourbon, Old Scout Single Barrel Bourbon and other high-end spirits. The transaction is currently subject to regulatory approval and is expected to close in early 2017.

Smooth Ambler Spirits Co., founded in 2009, is located in the Greenbrier Valley of West Virginia. It uses regional natural resources and ingredients to produce gins, vodkas, rums and whiskeys, including the Old Scout Single Barrel Bourbon, which was recognized recently as the "Best Single Barrel Bourbon in the World" at Whisky Magazine's 2016 World Whiskies Awards.

"We are very impressed by Smooth Ambler's successful track record, and we are excited to partner with that team as they continue to produce high quality American Whiskeys." said Jeff Agdern, President of NBVI.

“Smooth Ambler is committed to making great spirits, using the best American ingredients,” said John Little, Smooth Ambler’s Co-Founder and Head Distiller. “The investment from NBVI will enable us to introduce our premium craft spirits to many more consumers.” Smooth Ambler plans to increase production capacity and further expand its local team in West Virginia, Little said.

Under the terms of the transaction, John Little will assume the role of CEO and continue to operate the company with same culture and commitment to quality. John Foster will also remain as Director of Sales and Marketing.

Alexandre Ricard, Chairman and CEO of Pernod Ricard commented: “This investment illustrates perfectly our strategy of partnering with rising entrepreneurs sharing the same passion for authentic, high-quality brands. It represents a strong opportunity to enter the fast-growing, high-end bourbon market extending even more our fantastic portfolio of genuine brands in our number 1 market”.

#### **About Smooth Ambler Spirits Co.,**

Founded in 2009, Smooth Ambler Spirits Co. set out to produce fine artisan spirits by combining patient Appalachian know-how with the finest of American ingredients.

Located in the rural Greenbrier Valley of West Virginia, Smooth Ambler produces world-class spirits with state-of-the-art distillery equipment in conjunction with the natural resources of the region; high-valley mountain air, crisp, clean water, ideal temperature variations, and friendly folks. Complementing its exceptional line of WV-made Appalachian Spirits is that of their Artisan Merchant Bottled products. From time to time in the Smooth Ambler team’s travels they come across great spirits – not of their making, but of their liking – that might not otherwise be brought to market. In homage to the centuries-old Scotch & Irish practice of independent bottling, Smooth Ambler takes these exceptional products under their care and once in West Virginia, they are further cultivated and then bottled faithfully and honestly. The finest in Appalachian Whiskey & Spirits, Smooth Ambler is “The Spirit of WV”!

#### **About NBV Investments Inc.**

NBV Investments Inc. is a New York-based company whose aim is to invest and develop emerging brands in the US spirits and wine industry while preserving the entrepreneurial spirit and authentic brand story of its founders. The company is a subsidiary of Austin Nichols & Co., Incorporated and an affiliate of Pernod Ricard USA LLC.

#### **About Austin, Nichols & Co. Inc.**

Austin, Nichols & Co. Incorporated (d/b/a Pernod Ricard North America), is a Delaware-based holding company that is part of the Pernod Ricard family of companies.

#### **About Pernod Ricard USA**

Pernod Ricard USA is the premium spirits and wine company in the U.S., and the largest subsidiary of Paris, France-based Pernod Ricard SA.

The company’s leading spirits and wines include such prestigious brands as Absolut® Vodka, Chivas Regal® Scotch Whisky, The Glenlivet® Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Jameson® Irish Whiskey, Malibu®, Kahlúa® Liqueur, Beefeater® Gin, Seagram’s Extra Dry Gin®, Martell® Cognac, Hiram Walker® Liqueurs, Pernod®, Ricard® and Aviión™ Tequila; such superior wines as Jacob's Creek®, Kenwood® Vineyards and Brancott Estate®; and such exquisite champagnes

and sparkling wines as Perrier-Jouët® Champagne, G.H. Mumm™ Champagne and Mumm Napa® sparkling wines.

Pernod Ricard USA is based in New York, New York, and has roughly 850 employees across the country. Pernod Ricard USA urges all adults to consume its products responsibly and has an active campaign to promote responsible drinking. For more information on this, please visit:

[www.responsibility.org](http://www.responsibility.org).

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