

# CHILLED

RAISE YOUR SPIRITS

\*  
**SUMMER  
SUDS**

**ALL THINGS AGAVE  
SPECIAL TEQUILA  
& MEZCAL SECTION**

**BARTENDERS  
GET MIXING FOR  
MANHATTAN MONTH**

*Made in America*

**BLAKE  
SHELTON**

**AND SMITHWORKS VODKA  
STRAIGHT FROM THE HEARTLAND**







By Mathew Powers

Photos courtesy Motofish for Smithworks Vodka

# THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

SMITHWORKS VODKA AND

BLAKE SHELTON BOTTLE

AMERICA'S HEARTLAND



**Smithworks Vodka and music superstar Blake Shelton share a birthplace: the American Heartland.** Their passion for their home region is palpable, and it's resulted in an award-winning spirit.

"We set out across the Great Plains to source all ingredients locally and keep them within a day's drive from our Fort Smith, Arkansas, plant," said Troy Gorczyca, Smithworks Vodka brand director.

"It's made with corn from Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma, and water from Lake Fort Smith."

Distilled three times and charcoal filtered, Smithworks launched in March 2016 in Arkansas, Colorado, Missouri, Kansas, and Oklahoma. But just as crops grow in the prairie soils, Smithworks continues to expand.



# “SMITHWORKS IS MADE IN THE HEARTLAND.”

THAT'S WHERE I COME FROM;

THAT'S WHERE I STILL CALL HOME. REALLY, IT FEELS LIKE FAMILY. SMITHWORKS OPERATES LIKE ONE, AND I'VE LOVED BEING A PART OF THAT FROM THE BEGINNING.”

“It's incredibly exciting to see that the brand has more than doubled its market availability in the two years since launch. The brand can now be found in 13 states,” noted Gorczyca. And that's no surprise after winning a gold medal at the 2017 San Francisco World Spirits Competition.

Speaking of award-winning, Blake Shelton, the Oklahoma-born country music superstar and popular judge on *The Voice*, has been a part of Smithworks since its inception.

Gorczyca said, “Not only does he play a pivotal role in the development of the brand, but he also has an engaged fan base who have been excited about the brand since the beginning.” He added, “Being born and raised in the Heartland, we both value hard work while taking the time to appreciate life's simple pleasures.”

One only needs to look to the brand name to discover the importance for which the Heartland means to the distillers. Smithworks is named for the brand's Fort Smith, Arkansas, home, and the tractor icon signifies the hardworking American values it advocates.



Smithworks will introduce an app that will allow consumers to scan the bottle, and then Shelton will appear next to the Smithworks bottle and provide a fun message. Fans using the app will also have the opportunity to win merchandise signed by Shelton. **Download the Smithworks app at the Apple App Store or on Google Play.**

In fact, Gorczyca even suggests we drink the vodka in a way that oozes with Americana: “Smithworks has a remarkably smooth taste and clean finish, so it’s best enjoyed in simple mixed drinks, like lemonade or sweet tea.” Shelton added that he prefers to mix Smithworks with diet lemon-lime soda and a lime.

Smithworks also recognizes that it’s not alone in shedding light on its local community and region. Indeed, the entire craft philosophy, from beer to spirits, involves a “drink local” mantra. “American-made vodkas are seeing strong growth as consumers seek to support products made from quality ingredients that are produced in their communities, neighborhoods, and country,” explained Gorczyca.

The funny thing about the craft movement, including with vodka, involves its ability to take that dedication to a local community and region and market it nationally. The vodka serves as a vehicle through which to spread the Heartland culture, as well as the spirit itself.

“We believe that this has contributed to our growth and success. Consumers continue to reach out to us to ask where they can buy the product,” said Gorczyca. “We’re excited to continue sharing our award-winning vodka with new consumers via expansion to other markets in the coming year.”

Though the brand may expand, for Shelton and Smithworks, there’s no place like home.

## HERE’S WHAT BLAKE TOLD *CHILLED* ABOUT HIS LOVE FOR SMITHWORKS AND HIS AMERICAN HEARTLAND HOME.

### **Tell us about Smithworks Vodka and what inspired you to get involved with this vodka brand.**

I grew up in Ada, Oklahoma and was raised to value hard work, humility and an appreciation for the simple things that make life good... especially with good people. For me, Smithworks Vodka really embodies all of that. Smithworks was born and bred in the tradition of the Heartland, so its story hits home for me. Smithworks Vodka is 100% American-made, with corn from Kansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma, and water from Lake Fort Smith in Arkansas. Hearing all of that for the first time was what got me interested in joining the Smithworks family.

### **Have you always been a vodka fan?**

Oh, yeah! I’ve always been a vodka fan, so I wanted to find a brand of vodka that shared my values and cares about the things I do, and understands where I

come from. Being there from the beginning has been exciting. I’ve gotten to really watch fans relate to Smithworks’ story, just like I did, as it grows into new parts of the country.

### **What do you enjoy most about your experience with Smithworks Vodka so far?**

Smithworks is made in the Heartland. That’s where I come from; that’s where I still call home. Really, it feels like family. Smithworks operates like one, and I’ve loved being a part of that from the beginning.

### **How do you prefer to drink Smithworks?**

I like Smithworks with a little bit of diet lemon-lime soda and lime. It’s easy to make and tastes pretty damn good ... Perfect for hangin’ out at home with family or friends.