



A NEW *Ranch* *Water* POURS *into Town*

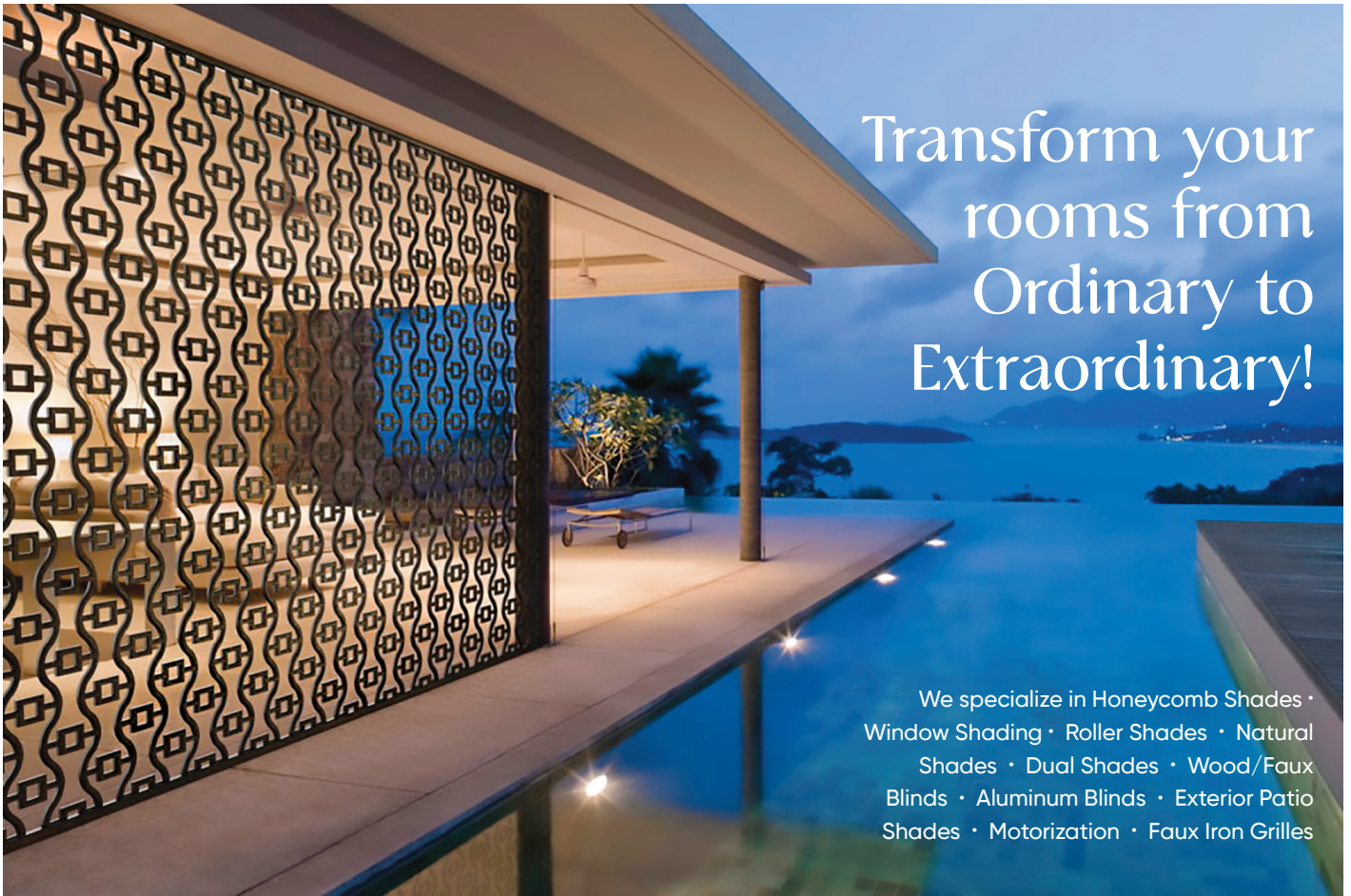
Ten-percent alcohol, 100-percent
blue agave bliss **By Cindy Brzostowski**

When the pandemic hit, it changed people's lives in countless ways, and for Royce Itschner, Adam Love and Dub Sutherland—the cofounders of Epic Western Cocktail Co.—it gave them the time they needed to think... about ranch water.

During gatherings with family and friends, Itschner, Love and Sutherland took on the role of bartenders, fulfilling requests for their version of the ranch water cocktail: two shots of 100-percent Blue Agave Tequila, real lime, mineral water and a dash of salt. During one drink-making session in 2019, they wondered why there wasn't a ready-to-drink product on the market that tasted like theirs.

After speaking with a friend in the spirits industry, they learned that if they wanted to produce canned ranch water with pure tequila, not mixto (tequila made with sugars rather than agave), it would need to be distilled, canned and packaged in Mexico and then exported to the U.S. to be ready for store shelves.

With that in mind, they put the idea on the back burner. Then, the pandemic hit, and they had a lot more time to figure out the logistics and make some calls. Eventually, they found a family-owned distillery in Jalisco, Mexico, that >>



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dates back to 1905—and conveniently has a well on its property from which they could also source mineral water.

Fast-forward to this past summer when Epic Western launched their canned ranch water. “The process of actually getting the product on shelves has taken a lot longer than if we had cut corners and made our product in the U.S.,” says Love. “But we have a great team both in the States and in Mexico, all working relentlessly to make this dream into a reality.”

Aside from using 100-percent Blue Agave Tequila, another big difference between Epic Western’s product and other canned ranch waters you’ll find on shelves is that the former comes in at 10% ABV (alcohol content), giving you quite a hit in one 12-ounce can. “Our recipe mirrors the same homemade cocktail we make for our friends and family, but now it is convenient, ready to drink and tastes right every time,” says Sutherland.

Epic Western recently secured the title of “Official Ranch Water of the Texas Exes,” a particular source of pride because both Love and Sutherland are University of Texas alumni. So, what does Itschner, a Texas Tech Red Raider, think?

“While I don’t have the Exes title, I am becoming more

ingrained in the culture of the Texas Exes daily,” he says. “The way that UT invested in creating an organization that so deeply supports and uplifts its alumni is a really special thing.”

This partnership means that you’ll be seeing Epic Western’s ranch water at Texas Exes tailgates and at bars in DKR-Texas Memorial Stadium. The ranch water can also be found at liquor stores and all six of Austin’s Tacodelis, so you can wash your Frontera Fundido chicken taco down with ranch water now.

“We wanted to give people everywhere a taste of our Texas heritage through our ranch water,” Love says. “We can’t be everywhere at once making our signature cocktail, so we wanted to make it available to everyone.”

The cofounders recommend enjoying their ranch water ice-cold. “Personally, we like it just as is—take it out of your fridge and head to your back porch, and you’re good to go,” says Sutherland. “Unlike the differences you’ll experience from bartender to bartender, Epic Western is right every time.”

Learn more at epicwestern.com