

WRIGHTSVILLE BEACH


Message in a Bottle

Blue Shark Vodka's handcrafted bottles reflect the beauty of the company's namesake sharks while supporting research to protect them.

Mark Bloomquist became fascinated by the concept of a ship in a bottle during his time as a Navy officer. It was also during this time that he discovered his love for blue sharks, which he encountered while on dives. "They're beautiful and docile," he says. "They're the gentle giants of the undersea world."

When he came up with the idea for his Wrightsville Beach-based Blue Shark Vodka — the entrepreneur's fourth business after leaving the service — he was inspired to create something intriguing that combined the two concepts. It took several prototypes to get the bottles just right, but eventually, he landed on the perfect design: a glass blue shark swimming above coral, with a glass bottle blown around it. Bloomquist donates a portion of his proceeds to the Atlantic Shark Institute, whose research efforts help ensure that sharks can continue their important role in keeping ocean ecosystems in balance. — *Rebecca Woltz*

To learn more, visit bluesharkvodka.com.



Inspired by Mark Bloomquist's diving experiences, Blue Shark Vodka is a "crisp, clean" addition to cocktails like "Apple Shark Cider." Make it with two ounces of vodka, three ounces of apple cider, and one ounce of seltzer.