vinetur

Sotol brings global attention to Chihuahua as travelers seek authentic Mexican spirits and experiences

The traditional desert spirit offers a unique taste of northern Mexico, drawing visitors to explore the region’s culture and landscapes

Thursday, July 3, 2025



Sotol, a traditional spirit from northern Mexico, is gaining international attention and putting the state of Chihuahua on the map for travelers interested in unique beverages and authentic experiences. While tequila and mezcal have long dominated the conversation about Mexican spirits, sotol is now emerging as a distinct alternative, rooted in centuries-old traditions and the rugged landscapes of the Chihuahuan Desert.

Unlike tequila and mezcal, which are made from agave plants in Jalisco and Oaxaca respectively, sotol is distilled from the Dasylirion plant, also known as “desert spoon.” This wild plant grows across the high plains and canyons of Chihuahua, where indigenous communities have been producing sotol for more than 800 years. The process predates European distillation methods, making sotol one of Mexico’s oldest spirits.

The flavor profile of sotol sets it apart from other Mexican spirits. It is known for its earthy and herbal notes, which reflect the arid environment where the Dasylirion plant thrives. Each bottle captures the essence of its origin, offering drinkers a taste that is deeply connected to the land. Julio Chávez, director of the Chihuahua Tourism Office, describes sotol as “a story in a glass,” emphasizing its role in representing tradition, sustainability, and regional pride.

As interest in authentic travel experiences grows, Chihuahua is attracting visitors eager to discover sotol at its source. Travelers can tour boutique distilleries, walk through wild fields of Dasylirion, and meet master sotoleros who maintain ancestral production techniques. Tastings often take place on-site, allowing guests to sample sotol in the very region where it is made. Many of these experiences are accessible from Chihuahua City, the state capital, which serves as a gateway to both cultural attractions and natural wonders.

Chihuahua offers more than just its signature spirit. The state is home to dramatic landscapes such as the Copper Canyon—larger and deeper than Arizona’s Grand Canyon—as well as vibrant colonial towns, Jesuit missions, and the culture of the Rarámuri indigenous people. Local cuisine features hearty northern dishes that pair well with sotol’s distinctive flavors.

The rise of sotol reflects a broader trend among travelers seeking destinations off the beaten path. For those interested in gastronomy, nature, or cultural heritage, Chihuahua provides an opportunity to experience a lesser-known side of Mexico. Sotol serves as both an introduction to this region’s history and a reason to explore its vast deserts and rich traditions.

Producers in Chihuahua are working to preserve sustainable harvesting practices for Dasylirion while expanding their reach to new markets abroad. As more bars and restaurants in the United States and beyond add sotol to their menus, awareness of this unique spirit continues to grow.

For travelers looking for something different from mainstream Mexican spirits or destinations, sotol offers a compelling reason to visit Chihuahua. The combination of history, landscape, and craftsmanship makes it an appealing choice for those seeking authenticity and adventure in their culinary journeys.