



## Sonat and Robert Birnecker

*Koval Distillery*

Considering all that this mom-and-pop distillery has accomplished in its brief existence (two years this spring), it's almost as if the Great Recession never happened.

In 2010 alone, Koval Distillery, a Ravenswood spirits-maker, garnered half a dozen awards, including gold medals from both the American Distilling Institute and Austria's lab-tested organic Destillata spirits competition. It launched Chicago's first aged whiskey since Prohibition, and collaborated with Naha

to produce the restaurant's premiere batch of house-blended brandy (in addition, the married co-owners, Robert and Sonat Birnecker, welcomed their second child, Rye).

"We're just happy that we're able to make great organic products and have a manufacturing business that can actually hire people," Sonat said. "We're revitalizing this tradition."

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**[koval-distillery.com](http://koval-distillery.com)**