

The Art of Distillation

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According to legend (Wikipedia), the famous Black Forest cherry brandy, Kirsch, was first distilled in Elgersweier (see first gallery). The spirits distiller is the most common type of distillation apparatus in the Ortenau area. The rotary evaporator is the most common distillation apparatus in research laboratories and in the Tango Club. Originally it was operated with an electrical heating bath, a water-cooled condenser and glass filter pump. Over the centuries, this form of directly running perfectly good drinking water into the sewage system has been one of the reasons why the Black Forest trout and North Sea salmon have not had a chance to see each other alive.

The Huber company's first contribution to water preservation was the ROTOSTAT, which is filed with the German patent office and was awarded the Baden-Württemberg price for innovation. It is the only unit that can evacuate and regulate the temperature by heating and cooling at the same time. During distillation, both processes are needed simultaneously. Looking at it from a technical viewpoint, the Rotostat is a rotary evaporator. From an historical viewpoint however, it is a Trojan horse that went unnoticed by the pursuers of the Tango's predecessor.

Interestingly, it is also the microelectronic predecessor of the Tango. Half a year after winning the innovation prize, TPO, a technology park, was established in Offenburg, and one of its first founders received one of his first assignments to develop the first microprocessor-based controller for the Huber company's Rotostat (Z80).

Thermodynamics and microelectronics – in that order – it takes two to tango. 20 years later, the Offenburg daily newspaper calls this „a promotional concept with irrefutable success“.

[Thermodynamic Artwork] [The Art of Distillation] [It's Magic] [In Tango Veritas] [Electronic Artwork] [Big Eyes]
[Pride of Creation] [A Legend] [What an Affront] [Godfather] [Is it the Tango's Fault?] [A Round Tango] [Brrrrrrrrrrrrr!!!]
[Tango Nuevo] [Petite Fleur]



That's what you get. In late 1986, Baden-Württemberg's Minister of Economics, Dr. Herzog, coughed up the Dr.-Rudolf-Eberle-prize and the head of the state's department for industry and trade, Dr. Reuss, made sure that this innovation prize got passed on to the right hands.



Opening of Offenburg's Technology Park in 1987

Using ROTOSTAT as an example, Hermann Decke (TPO) explained to Baden-Württemberg's Prime Minister, Lothar Späth, that the innovation prize had not been wasted and how he imagined Huber's electronic future.

This was not only the technology park's starting signal; it was a signal on the laboratory thermostats' prevailing electronics that its time was up. There is just no denying, it was Huber who first introduced contemporary microelectronics and not some later self-proclaimed inventors. The 1980 (retroactive) digital slide-in module (3 stations further on) was like a gift from the skies. Overnight, Plug & Play technology, which came in from the cold, could retrofit a 15 year old Huber thermostat with the most modern automatic temperature control engineering techniques. The accomplishment of the century. BASF has taken advantage of it more than a thousand times.

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