



TENN SOUTH DISTILLERY

Tenn South began when Blair Butler, a radiologist, and Clayton Cutler, an engineer, decided they wanted to make quality whiskey. After a period of investigation, the duo bought 28 acres in Lynnville in 2011 and began to build their

distillery. They acquired state distillery license No. 12 and began production in 2013.

Tenn South makes three products: Clayton James Tennessee Whiskey, Big Machine Platinum Filtered Premium Vodka, and All Mighty 140 Shine. There's nothing sourced here and it's all good. They use local Giles County white corn and grind it themselves. Mashing, fermenting, distilling, barrel aging, and bottling are done right in the distillery. They have two main stills, a classic copper pot still with a stripping column, and a vodka column.



SHINE

Tenn South makes several different 'shines, but the original was the All-Purpose Shine (100 proof), a classic grain-and-cane 'shine. This 'shine is made using only Giles County white corn, sugar, and water. Just like old moonshiners, Tenn South says, "We don't cook the mash. We just mix it, let it ferment and distill it." They will leave it out in the sun which may take three to seven days depending on the ambient temperature. This is an easy drinking moonshine with cornbread, buttered popcorn, vanilla, and yellow cake flavors. The distillery also offers the All-Mighty 140 Shine, for those who like their 'shine a bit bigger, as well as Apple Pie and Peach Pie flavored versions.

BIG MACHINE PLATINUM VODKA

Big Machine Label Group President and CEO Scott Borchetta announced the launch of Big Machine Platinum Filtered Premium Vodka in 2017, making the music label's first noise in the spirits business. Big Machine Label Group is home to superstars such as Florida Georgia Line, Reba McEntire,

Rascal Flatts, Thomas Rhett, and Brantley Gilbert. “Over the past 11 years Big Machine has provided the soundtrack to millions of fans worldwide,” said Borchetta. “With the launch of Big Machine Premium Vodka, we are now offering a superior product that perfectly complements the music we take such great pride in.”

Big Machine Platinum Filtered Premium Vodka (80 proof) is an all-grain vodka that comes through a wild, space-aged, Fritz Lang-inspired vodka column with 25 plates and eight copper rings for cooling. It utilizes the popular Russian and Ukrainian method of Platinum filtration. The result is an incredibly smooth, excellent, and clean vodka.

ABERNATHY GIN

There’s also Abernathy New American Gin (86 proof) and Abernathy New American Barrel Reserve Gin (86 proof) available at the distillery. The New American Gin is a London Dry-style, very citrus forward and fragrant, made with nine botanicals including juniper, coriander, cassia, citrus peels, and pecans. The Barrel Reserve gin is aged in freshly emptied

“Clayton James Tennessee Whiskey” barrels. According to the company, “We also add a single Tennessee cherry stave and allow these flavors to mingle, enhancing some and minimizing others, for just a few months.”

CLAYTON JAMES TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Clayton James Tennessee Whiskey (90 proof) is made with a mash bill of 74% Elton white corn, 13% malted barley, and 13% hard red winter wheat. It is made in a pot still before going through the Lincoln County Process. Tenn South does that differently, instead of running their whiskey through a charcoal filter and risking stripping out some flavor, the spirit is stored in containers of sugar maple charcoal for about a week. “We allow our spirits to acquire a unique, sweet maple smokiness from the charcoal,” the distillery says. “This signature step serves to differentiate Clayton James Tennessee Whiskey from all other Tennessee Whiskeys.” Each batch is then barreled in one 53-gallon barrel, two 25-gallon barrels, and four 15-gallon barrels. The youngest barrel is written on the back label.

Meanwhile, some of the newest whiskey stocks are resting in 53-gallon cylindrical, heavily charred barrels that offer easier storage. Cutler has the barrels custom made for him in middle Tennessee and he received a patent for the design in August 2017. Clayton James remains one of my favorite Tennessee whiskeys.



Instead of a big rickhouse, Cutler chose to store his barrels in old 40-foot shipping containers which approximate the extreme temperatures present on the seventh floor of a traditional rickhouse. This serves to accelerate and enhance his whiskeys. It's hard to argue with the results which instantly catapult Clayton James into the conversation for best Tennessee whiskey on the market. This is an absolute winner with a beautiful mouthfeel, caramel, brown sugar, vanilla wafer, and baked apple notes, as well as a smooth, easy finish. Tenn South also offers the Clayton James Single Barrel Cask Strength (112 proof), which spends 36 months in heavily charred oak.

One thing was clear visiting this distillery: Tenn South is doing a lot of things right.



TENNESSEE LEGEND DISTILLERY

Nestled in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains, Tennessee Legend Distillery is a producer of moonshine, flavored whiskey, vodka, and cream liqueur. Nestled in the foothills of the Smoky Mountains. There are two locations in Sevierville, Tennessee: one on Winfield Dunn Parkway, and the other on Newport Highway. The Newport Highway location is the original distillery and tasting room which opened in

mid-2015 and the Winfield Dunn location is a satellite store. So far, they have a very loyal and growing following.

The Tennessee Legend Tennessee White Lightning Moonshine (100 proof) is an unaged corn whiskey without a lot of added sugar. This 'shine has a very serious following, as do the Grape and Blackberry offerings.

Tennessee Legend Vodka (80 proof) is a small batch spirit distilled six times and carbon-filtered to provide an extra smooth finish.

Tennessee Legend also offers a line of cream liqueurs for sipping. The Tennessee Legend Crème Brûlée (40 proof) is a popular one along with other flavors including Orange Creamsicle, Dirty Cream, and Root Beer Float (which is a combination of rum and neutral spirits).

Tennessee Legends Canebreak Bourbon Whiskey (85 proof) is a small batch whiskey aged in American oak charred barrels. A lovely, light bourbon and easy sipper that's perfect for cocktails.

Tennessee Legend Kingsnake Bourbon (90% proof) is made and barrel-aged in Sevierville, Tennessee. Small-batch

distilled and aged for two years in brand new American charred oak. Smooth with hints of caramel, cereal, oak, and vanilla.

Tennessee Legends Kingsnake Straight Bourbon Whiskey Single Barrel (120.2 proof) is aged for 2 years in new American charred oak barrels. Notes of caramel, sweet corn, oak, and vanilla.



TENNESSEE SHINE COMPANY



Tennessee Shine Company is a small-batch distiller of moonshine and whiskey with locations in Sevierville and Pigeon Forge. The company was established in 2015 and was formerly known as James Creek Distilling and Tennessee XXX. Their small-batch whiskeys start with corn and malted barley and are then stored in small barrels. They use a 250-gallon still to distill each batch of moonshine which features a family recipe that's been handed down through the generations. They even offer specialty flavors and seasonal limited editions to cater to their growing audience. Well-known for their 'shine, the distillery just recently released a line of flavored corn whiskey. They also carry Moon Pie 'shine.

Tennessee Shine Co. Small Batch Corn Whiskey (100 proof) is a quality, small-batch, un-aged corn whiskey that has earned an artisanal reputation. Notes of buttered popcorn and cornbread, as well as wafts of cotton candy and vanilla make this an excellent, basic 'shine.

The distillery also offers crowd-pleasing flavors such as Muscadine, Green Apple, Coffee, Honey-Do-Me, Small Batch

Rye, Caramel, Cream, Cinnamon, and the ever-popular fruity Tennessee Shine Co. Blue Houdini (50 proof).

The distillery also offers two straight whiskeys and some flavored whiskeys. Tennessee Shine Co. Southern Craft Corn Whiskey (100 proof) is a whiskey made with more than 51% corn and aged in American charred oak barrels. This is a light, creamed corn whiskey with nice hints of oak, spice, caramel, and vanilla. It's an easy drinking whiskey so if you're looking for something to take home to the serious whiskey drinker in your life, this is the one.

Other corn whiskey flavors include S'mores, Caramel, Cinnamon, and Espresso.

The Tennessee XXX Tennessee Straight Bourbon Whiskey (80 proof) has a classic bourbon mash bill with more than 51% corn. It's aged in new American charred oak barrels. Hints of caramel, apple, oak, and spice.



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UNCLE NEAREST DISTILLERY

Perhaps no new distillery's debut has received as much attention as Uncle Nearest. The distillery is named for the previously little known—but now celebrated—Nathan “Nearest” Green (c. 1820 – 1890). Born into slavery and emancipated after the Civil War, Green was a head stiller, commonly referred to now as a master distiller, who was the moving force behind the founding of Jack Daniel's. It was Green who taught distilling techniques to Jack Daniel, founder of the Jack Daniel Tennessee whiskey distillery. Green was hired as the first master distiller for Jack Daniel Distillery and he was the first Black master distiller on record in the United States. His contributions to whiskey were obscured by time, but he has become celebrated over the last decade.

The idea behind Uncle Nearest Distilling was simple – to pay tribute to the man who invented Tennessee whiskey.

Enter Fawn Weaver, bestselling author and entrepreneur, who first learned of Green's story in 2016 while on vacation in Singapore. Discovering Green's ghosted fate was “jarring,” she told the press. Green had been largely forgotten in the showdown of Daniel's showmanship. There was no question that Green's labor and technique were essential ingredients behind the world's most iconic brand and Weaver was determined to address it. Within a month, she was living in Lynchburg, Tennessee, and whiskey would never be the same. Collecting thousands of documents and interviewing Green's descendants drew a more well-rounded understanding of who Green was and what he accomplished. She made his story known.

Weaver decided she was going into the whiskey business in 2017 and on September 14, 2019, the welcome center of Uncle Nearest (as he was affectionately known by his family) opened their doors with Weaver as CEO. “What was amazing when I first started in the whiskey business is that I didn't realize that this was the first American spirit ever to commemorate an African-American. Ever. Can you imagine?

We've been here 400 years, and ours is the very first," said Weaver.

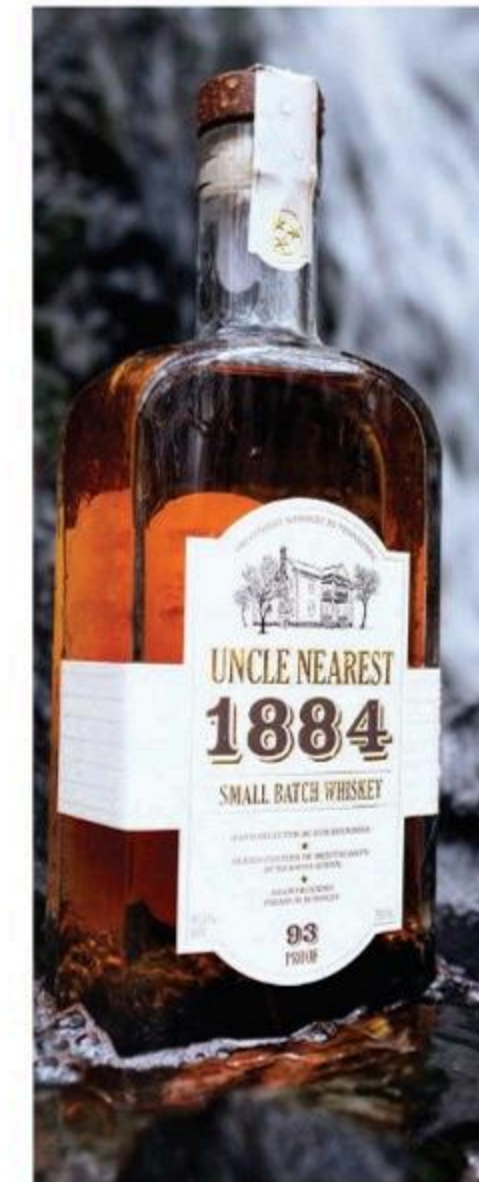
The new distillery is located in Shelbyville. "Every day, there are people that wanted to come out and visit the grounds—they didn't care whether or not we had an actual distillery," Weaver said. "So, we began really speeding up the process because of the number of requests of people coming. We wanted to be able to deliver something real to them."

Even more revolutionary, was the executive suite. Weaver assembled four incredible trail-blazing women at the helm of Uncle Nearest. It is the first major American spirit brand to have an all-female executive team. Alongside Weaver, Katharine Jerkens, the SVP of Global Sales, has overseen every aspect of growth from inception forward; Sherrie Moore, the Head of Whiskey Operations who, with over 35 years in the Tennessee whiskey industry, became the first woman to oversee operations for a major American whiskey brand in 2002; and Victoria Eady Butler, the first Black woman master blender of a major spirit brand.

With these powerhouse women leading the way, Uncle

Nearest Distillery is now the most awarded American whiskey owned by women in US history.

Uncle Nearest sources whiskey from multiple sources, mostly from Tennessee. At the same time, they are laying down as much whiskey as quickly as possible as they start providing their own stocks in a bottle. Currently, the distillery offers three whiskeys.





Uncle Nearest 1856 (100 proof) is a blend of premium-aged whiskeys between 8 and 14 years old. This elegant whiskey has a deep golden hue. On the nose, is pumpkin seeds, stone fruit, spice, and caramel corn. On the palate, sweet caramel and maple, and oatmeal raisin cookie. Vanilla and a hint of gingersnap linger for a long time.

Uncle Nearest 1884 Small Batch Whiskey (93 proof) is a small-batch blend of the whiskeys. Super smooth and mellow. It's rich and very pretty.

Uncle Nearest 1820 Premium Whiskey Aged 11 Years (117.2 proof) is a single barrel whiskey that's aged a minimum of 11 years. It has limited releases throughout the calendar and sells out quickly. It's impressive, big, robust, and flavorful.

Uncle Nearest was instantly a hit, both with the press and in sales. They have skyrocketed and their whiskeys have won dozens of gold medals with *Whisky Magazine* naming them Distillery of the Year in 2019. People will undoubtedly know who Uncle Nearest is from now on.

NEAREST & JACK ADVANCEMENT INITIATIVE

In June 2020, the Jack Daniel's Distillery and the Nearest Green Distillery announced the Nearest & Jack Advancement Initiative which is meant to further diversity within the American whiskey industry. Both companies are supporting it equally with an initial combined pledge of \$5 million to help create the Nearest Green School of Distilling, develop the Leadership Acceleration Program (LAP) for apprenticeships, and establish the Business Incubation Program (BIP) focused on providing expertise and resources to Black entrepreneurs entering the spirits industry. This joint initiative will be guided by an advisory board with members from both organizations.

Motlow State College, the fastest growing college in Tennessee, has worked with leaders from both companies for the past year to develop a curriculum for the Nearest Green School of Distilling. The STEM-based and employable skills focused program has passed Motlow

State requirements and is now awaiting approval from the Tennessee Board of Regents to begin moving toward accreditation by the institutions accrediting body SACSCOC. The certificate program may be offered as early as Fall 2021.

The Leadership Acceleration Program (LAP) will offer apprenticeships specifically to Black people already in the whiskey industry who have aspirations of becoming a head distiller, head of maturation, or production manager. The inaugural apprentices have already been identified and will begin shadowing at top distilleries throughout the country.

The third arm of the Nearest & Jack Advancement Initiative is the Business Incubation Program (BIP) that will offer Black entrepreneurs mentorships in all areas of the distilling business. They'll have access to top marketing firms, branding executives, and expanded distribution networks, as well as other assets and opportunities to grow their spirits businesses.

"Generally, when companies talk about the need to improve

diversity, few immediate action steps follow," said Fawn Weaver, CEO of Uncle Nearest Premium Whiskey. "Our group is different. We are doers and we all agreed to work together to improve diversity in our industry, specifically, a way to get African Americans into top positions within our industry. Nearest Green taught Jack Daniel how to make Tennessee whiskey and we're incredibly proud our companies are joining forces to further their legacies of excellence and to make distilling and the whiskey industry we love more diverse."

"Given our deep commitment to diversity and inclusion, I am thrilled we are coming together in this way today," said Lawson Whiting, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Brown-Forman Corporation, the parent company of Jack Daniel's. "This collaboration allows the extraordinary friendship of Nearest and Jack, and the hope they embodied during racially divided times in our country's history to help us advance the next generation of African American leaders in our industry."



FAWN WEAVER

FIRST BLACK WOMAN MASTER DISTILLER & CEO

Just listing the number of things Fawn Weaver has accomplished in her lifetime can leave you breathless. Most notably, she has authored three *USA Today* and *New York Times* bestselling books. Weaver also founded the blog HappyWivesClub.com and overnight, the blog exploded into an international online club with more than 1,000,000 members in more than 110 countries. Books, videos, and worldwide celebrity followed.

“For me, as an African American, it was mind-boggling,” she said. “We know that African Americans have been involved in so many brands over the centuries, but we’ve



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never been able to pinpoint to one and say: This person actually had a name and this person had a significant role.”

Her conversion from author to master distiller was an “Aha!” moment. She came to Lynchburg in the hopes of writing a book or making a documentary about Nearest Green. She began interviewing his descendants when suddenly, it happened. “After that, my focus shifted from a book and a movie being the big pieces of the story to that bottle sitting on the shelf. That’s what cements his legacy. Literally no other medium can make sure that a hundred years from now people will still know his name and his story. And so that’s where we shifted to not just building a brand for a bottle that is commemorative, but building a brand that is meant to last for every generation to come.”

Weaver has used her celebrity to help push the brand—and it doesn’t hurt that the whiskey is very good. She has been a tireless promoter and has made Uncle Nearest one of the fastest growing brands in the industry. And Uncle Nearest hasn’t even scratched the surface in terms of international

sales. Fortunately, Weaver is popular around the world and it’s just another challenge to keep this amazing woman going.

WHEELER’S RAID DISTILLERY

Founders Anthony Amico, Ryan Thomas, and Partner Brian Waller run Wheeler’s Raid Distillery. In 2016, Thomas wanted to take his passion for whiskey to the next level and Wheeler’s Raid was a fascinating battle. General Joseph Wheeler led his troops to intercept a wagon wheel supply line cutting through Nolensville, Tennessee. While raiding the wagon wheel supply line, soldiers learned that several of the wagons were stocked with whiskey! Wheeler’s Raid Distillery is meant to invoke this local history.

Thomas has been in technology for 23 years and has served as an executive in several large companies. Amico has been a restaurateur for more than 30 years and has owned, operated, and sold several successful restaurants

Waller, COO, was an investor, but was asked to come on to oversee product operations, including production, R&D, supply chain, and inventory management.

“We wanted to create a community like Jack Daniel’s and bring it to Nolensville,” Amico said. “I’ve been a resident of Nolensville for the last 10 years and I’ve got other businesses in Nolensville and this is just a tight-knit community that’s something special.”

The distillery is located in an industrial park in Nolensville, Tennessee. It has a large, spacious tasting room and bar with an easy and relaxed atmosphere. They have created a number of bottlings, some are extremely small batch and only available at the tasting room while others can be found through distribution in Tennessee and Kentucky.





Wheeler's Raid Original Blend 01 (100 proof) is a 3-4 year-old bourbon finished with hand selected double toasted American oak staves.

Wheeler's Raid Cask Strength 02 (118.4 proof) is a limited-availability small batch whiskey, with bottlings of 6 to 8 barrels of 5 to 6 year-old bourbon. Bottled at cask strength, it's spicy with some black cherry, vanilla, and hints of caramel, and a creamy finish.

Wheeler's Raid French Oak 03 (105 proof) is a blend of bourbons between 4 and 6 years old and hand finished with medium toast French oak staves. A hint of that dryness and a slight vanilla essence of the French oak at the finish. The distillery hopes to make this available year-round.

Wheeler's Raid Original Blend Rye 04 (90 proof) is a rye-blend and it will be a hand-selected set of 4 to 8 barrels per bottling. A high-rye rye in small batch with a Caribbean-style finish.

Wheeler's Raid Cask Strength Rye 05 (105.6 proof) is a limited availability whiskey, cask strength, hand-selected rye.

Wheeler's is making some impressive whiskeys and we're all looking forward to more from this small, quality house.



“Civilization begins
with distillation.”

—William Faulkner

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CONTRIBUTORS

Richard Thomas is the owner and managing editor of The Whiskey Reviewer.com. Thomas's opinions and advice on whiskey have appeared on ABC News, Discovery Channel programming, *Style* magazine, and elsewhere. He is the

author of *Port: Beginners Guide To Wine*, *American Whiskey*, and contributed to *The New Single Malt Whiskey*.

Emily West is a journalist who currently writes for *The Tennessean*. She covers spirits, business, and local news in the Nashville, Tennessee, region. She has written numerous features for other local newspapers and magazines in the region, as well.



IMAGE CREDITS



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