



DUELING GROUNDS DISTILLERY

Franklin's Dueling Grounds Distillery is named for its local legendary historical site turned thoroughbred race park. In its heyday, The Dueling Grounds of Franklin saw more than 40 duels, the most famous of which took place on September 22, 1826, pitting Tennessee Representative Sam

Houston against General William A. White over one of Andrew Jackson's political appointments. Jackson advised the younger Houston to bite down on a bullet during the duel to improve his concentration and aim. The trick worked, as Houston hit White in the leg. Both men survived.

Dueling Grounds Distillery is owned by Marc Dottore, who also serves as master distiller. He claims that the distillery aims to produce "very small-batch ultra-premium bourbon using the best local ingredients. That means Estate Grown Grains from Walnut Grove Farm, all non-GMO, grown on one farm—by one farmer—in one season. I make a few thousand gallons a year from local ingredients to sell to local people and a few lucky ones who come through."

The distillery currently offers numerous products: Kentucky Clear is their white whiskey, which is quite good, and a quality Kentucky Apple Pie. They also offer a solid gin, and an excellent line of fruit liqueurs. Kentucky Clear is a quality white whiskey made from locally grown and milled Kentucky corn and wheat. Featuring notes of cornmeal, porridge, cornbread, and florals, with hints of butter. A

quality dram.

The uniquely handcrafted batches of Dueling Grounds, Linkumpinch Bourbon, are double-pot distilled, aged for four years in charred oak barrels, and embody grains of the region. Dueling Grounds have named their bourbon Linkumpinch for Linkumpinch Farm, where legendary duels took place. There is a Linkumpinch 4-Year-Old Single Barrel Cask (proof varies). This whiskey was aged for four years in char 3 new oak barrels. There's also the Linkumpinch Small Batch (100 proof) also aged in char 3 new oak barrels. Both whiskeys are nutty, with notes of pepper, vanilla, orange zest, caramel, cereal corn, and hints of tobacco, with a caramel and corn flavor that lingers nicely. Great quality products.

FOUR GATE WHISKEY COMPANY

Four Gate Whiskey Company is a small blending house located in Louisville. They started releasing whiskeys in

2019 in very limited, small batches. So much so, that their first two whiskeys never made it out of Kentucky before it was all sold. The company is co-owned by Bill Straub and Bob D'Antoni, and they release micro-batch bottlings.

Four Gates first 10 releases were all numbered, i.e. Release 1. The Kelvin Collaboration Batch 1; Release 2, Outer Loop Orbit; Release 3, Foundation, etc. They are wonderful blenders. They also do a fair amount of finishing, working very closely with Kelvin Cooperage.

According to the owners: "All of our releases, no matter the barrel finish we choose, must start with excellent whiskey. That's our #1 rule, and we won't compromise. It's the foundation of what we do."

In September 2020, they released Four Gate Rye Batch 7 River Kelvin Rye (113.2 proof), which was bottled using MGP-sourced straight rye. This was a high-rye rye, with a mash bill of 95% rye and 5% malted barley. The whiskey was 7 years old. Approximately 1,480 bottles were released.

There was also Tennessee Foundation Tennessee Straight Bourbon Whiskey (112.2 proof) with a mash bill of 84%

corn, 8% rye, and 8% malted barley. Straub and D'Antoni chose five barrels of the 10-year-old Tennessee Straight Bourbon. Only 800 bottles were released. "We knew when we released Batch 5 [Foundation] that there were so few bottles, our customers in Tennessee would likely miss out," said D'Antoni. "Our distributor in Tennessee asked us if we could do something else for markets outside of Kentucky, so we answered the call."

Macadamia nuts, chocolate, coffee, and rich leather on the nose. On the palate peanuts, oak, hints of cinnamon, and earthy tobacco. The nutty and earthy characteristics linger to a pleasant close.

Four Gate is getting lots of praise for such a little operation.



FOUR ROSES: AMERICA'S GREAT BOURBON RETURNS HOME



Back to
640

40 mins left in chapter

Page 191 of 640 • 32%

1 hrs 26 mins left in book

Four Roses is one of the hottest brands in Kentucky bourbon. But the history of the label is complicated. Throughout the 1930s, '40s, and '50s, Four Roses Kentucky Straight Bourbon was the bestselling of its kind in the United States. However, the label then all but disappeared from the domestic market for decades, while continuing to sell very well in Asian and other foreign markets. Happily, Four Roses has made a huge comeback in the United States, and is headed back to its rightful place among the country's top whiskeys.

It is said that when Paul Jones Jr., the founder of Four Roses, wrote to propose to his future wife, she replied that if her answer was "yes," she would wear a corsage of roses on her gown to the ball. Lo and behold, she did, and in doing so inspired the name of Four Roses Bourbon. Jones, a seasoned distiller, registered the name in 1888, and the Spanish Mission-style distillery in Lawrenceburg was erected between 1908 and 1910. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

In the 1940s, Seagram bought the brand, and by the late 1950s had decided to discontinue sale of Four Roses

Kentucky Straight Bourbon in the United States, choosing to use the label to push an inferior blended whiskey domestically. The real bourbon the distillery made was exported to Europe, Asia, and other international markets.

Four Roses Kentucky Bourbon was not available in the United States for more than two generations. That all changed in 2002 when Diageo purchased the brand, and then sold it to Kirin, Four Roses' Japanese distributor. Thanks to the lobbying of former master distiller Jim Rutledge, Kirin quickly cut the sale of blended whiskey in order to concentrate on producing quality bourbon, and returned the brand's Kentucky Straight Bourbon to the US market.

In September 2020, Four Roses offered a Limited Edition Small Batch. Non-chill filtered and bottled at a 111.4 proof, it featured four different hand-selected batches aged 12 to 19 years. These batches represent four of the distillery's ten distinct Bourbon recipes – a 12-year-old

Bourbon from the OBSV recipe, a 12-year-old OESV, a 16-year-old OESK, and a 19-year-old OBSK.

“Each batch in this year’s limited-edition bottling is an exceptional whiskey that could have stood on its own as a single barrel offering,” Elliott said. “But in this case the sum is even greater than the parts. Together, these bring a perfect balance of bright, vibrant flavors and aromas from the 12- and 16-year-old barrels combined with the oak tones and aged expressions from the 19-year-old batch.”

Four Roses special releases are always an event, and this one did not disappoint. Fantastic!

Today, the distillery is receiving major accolades, thanks to the releases from former master distiller Jim Rutledge. The distillery is not only getting a complete and total upgrade and rebuild, the brand is also being polished. Old antique bottles from the glory days of the '40s and '50s are

being reintroduced in retro packaging, and new high-end expressions are a huge hit with the press.

To celebrate Jim Rutledge’s 40th Anniversary as master distiller, the brand released a limited unfiltered/uncut edition of bourbon in September 2007(1,442 bottles). It was an instant success. A 120th anniversary brand edition was released a year later to still more raves and insane demand. This was followed by the 2008 release of the Four Roses Marriage Collection. These small releases instantly re-established Four Roses’ prominence.

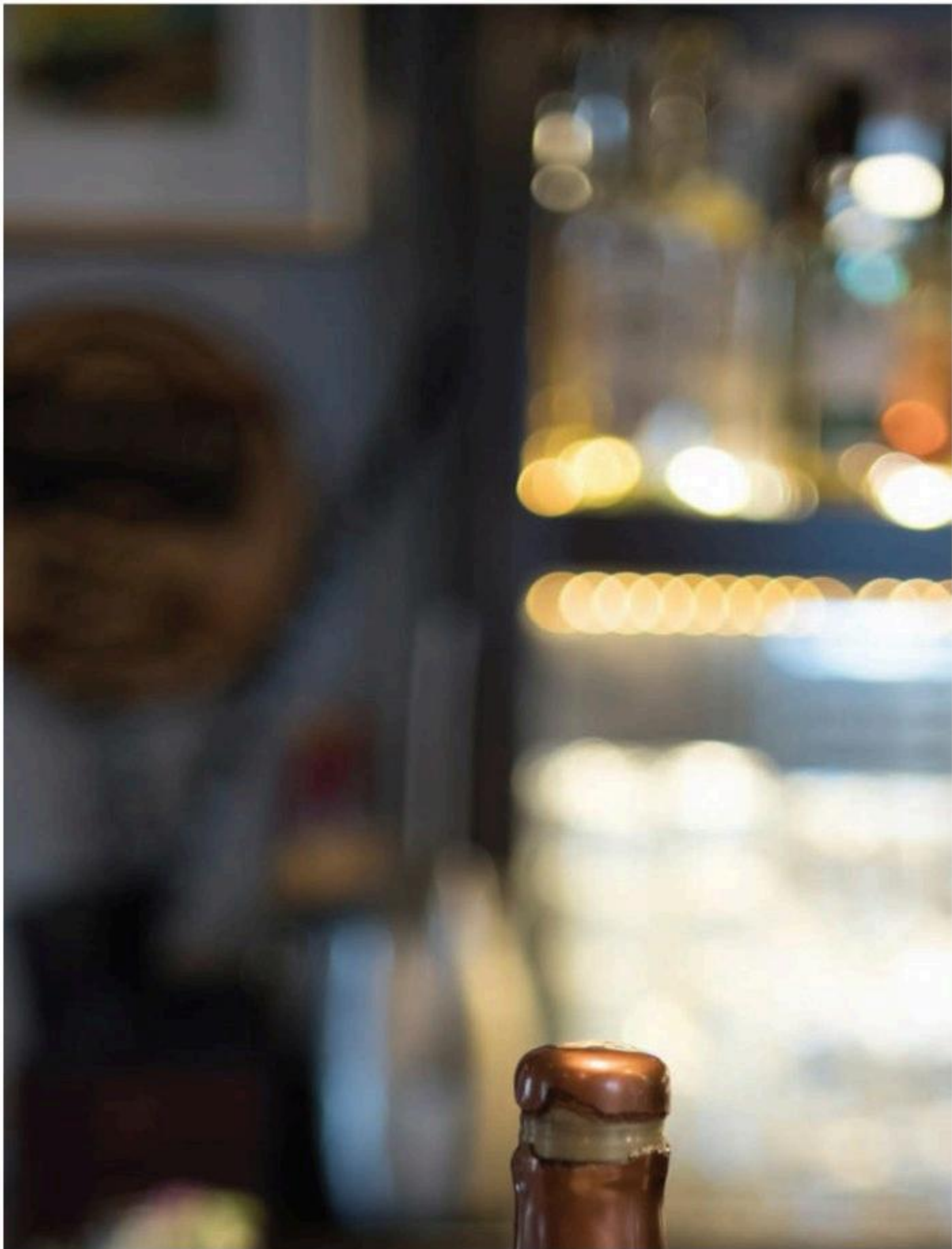
Four Roses master distiller Brent Elliott uses two mash bills that are mixed and matched with five yeast strains to produce their Kentucky bourbon. That makes for ten different bourbons. The standard Yellow Label is made from an even blend of all ten. It’s aged for six to seven-and-a-half years, is bottled at 80 proof, and is a light, smooth, easily drinkable bourbon. The Four Roses Small Batch contains only four of the recipes (Obsk, Oesk, Obso, and Oeso) and is bottled at 90 proof. It’s a bigger, richer, and darker whiskey than the Yellow and offers what locals call the “Kentucky



Hug,” a distinctive, overwhelming sensation of flavor and warmth. The Four Roses Single Barrel uses only one recipe (Obsv) and is aged eight-and-a-half to nine years in oak. It’s bottled at 100 proof. Elliott Select Single Barrel uses one recipe (Oesk) and spends 14 years in oak. It’s bottled at 113 proof, and is approximately cask strength. The Single Barrel is a big, big whiskey with lots to offer. Be aware, cask-strength fans—this is most definitely a whiskey worth seeking out.

Elliott is probably one of the most promising master distillers in the entire region. He is taking on a project few distillers ever get the chance to, and using this opportunity to create some spectacular bourbons. His single barrel releases and his meticulous attention to recipes and pairings reveal the promise to become one of the great distillers of all-time. In other words, Four Roses is back.





Back to
640

42 mins left in chapter

Page 195 of 640 • 32%

1 hrs 32 mins left in book

BRENT ELLIOTT

BOURBON'S

NEWEST STAR!

Brent Elliott has got to be one of the most confident people you will ever meet. Four Roses Distillery is one of the mythical names in the bourbon business, and Elliott was named master distiller in September 2015. He succeeded Bourbon Hall of Fame member and legendary distiller Jim Rutledge, and is also the spokesperson for the brand in the wake of brand ambassador Al Young's semi-retirement. Following that duo is an incredible task. And Elliott was also tapped to lead Four Roses on a massive \$65 million expansion at a time when bourbon has never been hotter.

No pressure whatsoever.

But he can handle it. Elliott, one of the newest and hottest master distillers in Kentucky, is without a doubt the driving force behind the Four Roses renaissance. And it's not just this author's opinion. It's the industry's. His new whiskeys received the coveted "America's Best Kentucky Bourbon" award from Whisky Magazine's World Whiskies Awards.

Since Elliott took over, the accolades have not stopped. And sales for the recent releases of its high-end expressions have been through the roof. A special release day in July 2017 attracted a line almost a half-mile long, filled with people eager to buy a bottle. Vehicles parked along the sides of the road ranged from rusted-out old pickup trucks to Cadillacs, BMWs, and Mercedes-Benz. And even at \$150 per bottle, there were enthusiasts and collectors walking out with half-cases, or more.

Elliott earned a degree in chemistry from the University of Kentucky, and early on, his only understanding of bourbon came from imbibing too much. But in 2005, an opportunity to work for the distillery as a chemist opened

the door for this brash young superstar. As the industry boomed, his opportunities just kept growing.

“We grew rapidly,” Elliott told industry insider Tim Knittel. “So there were always opportunities to go out and learn new aspects of everything from production to pitching in with events, or marketing, or whatever it might be.”

Elliott also had a chance to work side-by-side with Jim Rutledge, which he recognizes as a great learning experience. “When I see Jim interact with the public, I immediately recognize the magic that endears him to people. He takes the time to listen and talk to anyone, anytime . . . As master distiller, Jim has always been eager to share his valuable knowledge.” And there are some fun memories, as well. “Jim and I have a nice history of karaoke duets of Johnny Cash songs at Four Roses Christmas parties. Jim is really good at hitting the low notes. I’m not sure about me,” Elliot said.

In 2020, Elliott was awarded Master Distiller of the Year by *Whisky Magazine*.

FRESH BOURBON DISTILLING Co.

Fresh Bourbon Distilling is one of the newest and most exciting stories in Kentucky whiskey. Founded by Lexington natives Sean and Tia Edwards, Fresh Bourbon Distilling Co. was registered in 2017 with the aim of creating a “premier, African American-owned Bourbon brand.” The company released its first whiskey in 2020, and has plans to open their new distillery in 2021 in downtown Lexington, despite construction delays brought on by COVID-19.

The 35,000-square-foot site will be located near the Distillery District. The plant will produce several bourbons and other whiskeys. It will feature an event space, tours, and guided tastings. The production facility will also create approximately twenty-five jobs. In December 2019 the Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority (KEDFA) approved a 10-year performance-based deal with Fresh Bourbon Distilling through the Kentucky Business Investment Program. The plant has an estimated cost of \$5.4 million.

“Bourbon is a mainstay of Kentucky’s economy, and I am thrilled to see this step toward greater inclusivity in this iconic industry,” Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear announced. “Creating opportunities for all Kentuckians is essential.”

“Our aspirations and dreams are to be a world-recognized brand,” said Sean. “The ideal for us is to be one of the top bourbon brands produced.” Sean is the president of S & D Construction Management of Lexington, which specializes in commercial and industrial construction.

Fresh Bourbon Distilling Co. is the first Black-owned bourbon distillery in Central Kentucky. The first bottlings were produced from the Edwards’ own custom recipe under a contract with Hartfield & Co. in Paris, Kentucky. Hartfield & Co, is one of the hottest small boutique bourbon producers in the country.

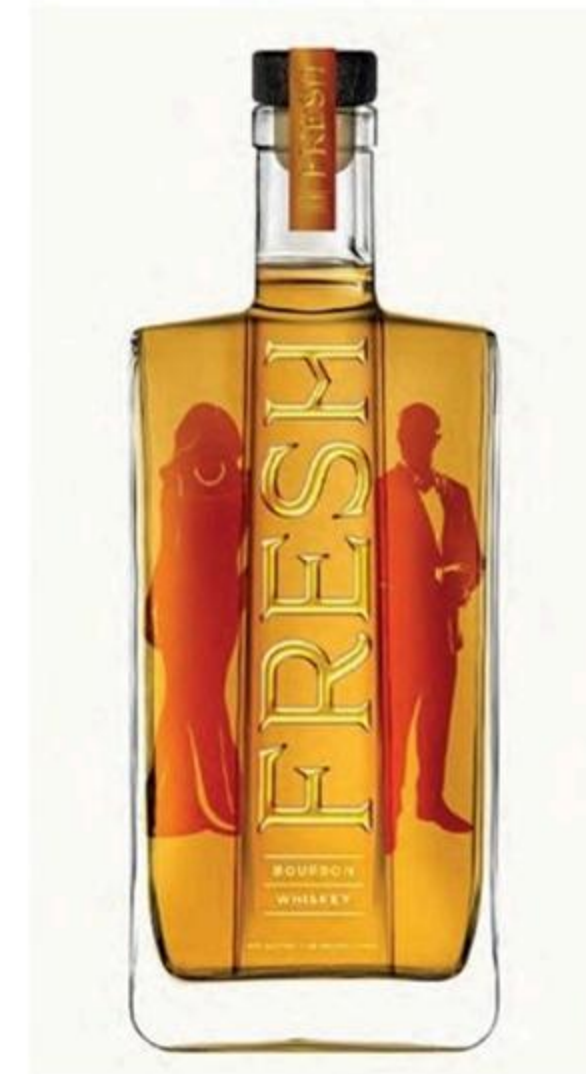
“For nearly three years, we have been diligently developing an authentic and unique bourbon and spirits line. We chose not to buy bourbon from someone else and just place our name on a bottle. We have been very intentional and deliberate in crafting our spirits, from the

mash bills up,” stated Sean.

The second batch will arrive on store shelves in 2021. Fresh Bourbon Distilling Co. has secured distribution, and will initially launch in five states.

“The story sells the first bottle, but what’s in it will sell the second bottle,” said Sean.

“And the one after that,” added Tia. “This is history in a bottle.”





GLENNS CREEK DISTILLING

In December 2013, Neil Craig and David Meier bought the remains of the Old Crow Distillery, which had been abandoned for more than 30 years. They plan to slowly, step-by-loving-step, refurbish the old distillery.

According to the owners, “The road ahead to restore and preserve these great buildings is a long one, but one that everybody at the distillery is willing to undertake. We reuse and repurpose items salvaged from the old buildings, and almost all of the work done to clean up the distilling building has been done by us. We have also designed and built nearly all the equipment we use during the cooking of the mash, fermentation, and distillation process. To make a truly handcrafted bourbon we wanted to make the entire process hand-crafted and custom to our distillery.”

The distillery sells a number of products: OCD #5 Bourbon, Prohibition Kentucky Rum, Ryskey Rye Whiskey,

and Stave + Barrel. Ryskey Rye Whiskey is a very good sourced rye whiskey that is 95% rye, and packs plenty of spice and flavor. The Stave + Barrel is also sourced, and is another solid, high-rye bourbon.

Hamilton’s Spirit is an unaged corn and cane spirit. Hamilton Dark is made from grain spirit and cane sugar. A lighter style of bourbon with a slightly sweeter, more mild finish. Millville Malt is a peated whiskey. Café Ole is a bourbon made with the same mash bill as their OCD #5 bourbon with an addition of a heavily toasted barley malt. It boasts notes of chocolate and mocha. The Prohibition Kentucky Rum (58.5% ABV) is made the old-fashioned way, from fermented molasses, and is distilled on site. It’s got some lovely hints of burnt sugar and caramel, as well as cotton candy.





But the most important label in the portfolio is Glenns Creek Distilling OCD #5 Bourbon (53.8% ABV). This pot-still bourbon, which is made onsite in small quantities, has a unique story behind it. While rummaging through the wreckage of the old plant, it turned out that Old Crow fermenter #5 had been sealed all these years. When Craig and Meier discovered this, they took samples and grew a

cultured yeast that might harken back to the original yeasts the distillery used more than a century ago. Whether it was in fact an older yeast or a wild yeast, the point was that it was site-specific.

OCD #5 (which stands for Old Crow Distilling fermenter #5) is made and aged onsite in 53-gallon new charred American oak barrels that feature three different oaks and have extra staves inserted in them. The most recent expressions released were aged for approximately six months or longer. The bourbon is sold at full-barrel strength from a single barrel, and is definitely worth seeking out!

Their newest bourbon release is ¡Cuervito Vivo! This is a single barrel nano batch bourbon. Glenns Creek's vision for this expression was to recreate the top shelf bourbon once produced on the grounds where they operate today. They had the benefit of the insight of the last supervisor to manage this distillery. Glenn's Creek is inching closer to gaining a much bigger, well deserved reputation.



GOODWOOD BREWERY

Ted Mitzlaff is the CEO of Goodwood Brewery. The group behind the brewery comprises some of Louisville's longest-serving brewing veterans, running production breweries there since 2001. The philosophy of Goodwood is in barrel aged beers. "At Goodwood, we've come to believe that what's good for bourbon is even better for beer. Our extra steps are

an homage to this region's distilling legacy and to those old barrels out there that still have so much flavor left to give." All Goodwood beers are wood-seasoned on poplar, oak, ash, and other woods, or in reclaimed oak casks once used to house wine, brandy, and local bourbon.

The brewery has proved immensely popular. They have two locations in Kentucky, one in Louisville and the other in Frankfort. You will also see the Goodwood name on many whiskey shelves, as they believe in collaboration projects with different distilleries. And then there are three whiskeys that bear their name.

Goodwood Stout Barrel Finish Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey (90 proof) was aged in charred white oak American barrels for 12 years, before a three-month catnap in Goodwood's award-winning Bourbon Barrel Stout barrels. The whiskey is available in both 5- and 12-year-old expressions.

Goodwood Honey Ale Barrel Finish Kentucky Straight

Bourbon Whiskey (90 proof) is aged 5 years in charred American white oak barrels, then finished in Goodwood's award-winning honey ale brandy barrels.

There is also is a collaboration between Bardstown and Goodwood, as part of the distiller's Collaborative Series. A limited release, Bardstown Bourbon Company Goodwood Brewing Company Walnut Brown Ale is an exceptional high-proof 9-year-old Tennessee straight bourbon whiskey aged in Goodwood walnut brown ale casks for 18 months. "This spirit is very complex, with a layered pairing of walnut, toffee, oak, biscuit and malt notes," said Bardstown's Nick Smith. "The subtle finish of ale really enhances this one-of-a-kind pour."

All of these bourbons have received critical praise, and Goodwood remains an innovative collaborator to be reckoned with in the distilling world.





GREEN RIVER DISTILLING

J. W. McCulloch began making Green River whiskey in 1885. Advertising for the brand included the slogan “Green River – The Whiskey Without A Headache.” Green River Whiskey was presented with a grand prize at the Leige Exposition in Belgium in 1905. However, in 1918, a fire ignited after



hours and burned through the distillery. All the whiskey, and almost all of the buildings, were completely lost. The fire ultimately proved to be the fatal blow to the Green River Distillery.

In 1936, the property was sold to the Kentucky Sour Mash Distilling Company. The company went bankrupt shortly after rebuilding the facility. Three years later, the Medley family purchased the facility and formed Medley Distilling Company. Over the next 70 years the distillery changed hands a few more times, but Medley family members remained in various management roles.

In 2014, the Terressentia Corporation, led by Simon Burch, purchased the distillery and began renovations. Ron Call, a master distiller with 40 years of experience at Jim Beam Brands and Florida Caribbean Distillers, was tapped to consult on the project. Ron's son, Jacob Call, was brought in to oversee the extensive renovation and, ultimately, manage distillery operations under the O. Z. Tyler name. The distillery opened for production in 2016 and began laying down whiskey for barrel aging. Ron passed the master

distiller torch to Jacob, and in 2018 the distillery was declared a heritage member of the official Kentucky Bourbon Trail and its western most point, reviving the historic distilling history of Owensboro. Finally, in 2020, with the support of J. W. McCulloch's great-grandson, the distillery was restored to its original name, Green River Distilling Co.

Green River is currently one of the top-ten largest privately owned distillers, providing contract brewing and bulk spirits while also producing their own line of whiskeys. Green River now produces close to 100,000 barrels of bourbon yearly. Green River actually ships bulk bourbon all around the world as part of their wholesale business. Many popular brands are produced at Green River. Their own Green River Bourbon will be released in 2021.



Back to
640

40 mins left in chapter

Page 324 of 640 • 34%

1 hrs 30 mins left in book



JOHN & RON & JACOB CALL A LEGACY

John Call made his name with the Jim Beam brands back in the day. His son Ron Call is a legendary figure in the distilling world. In Ron's 42-year career in distilled spirits, he helped develop Jim Beam Black Label with his mentor the late Booker Noe. He left Beam after 16 years, and moved to Florida Caribbean Distillers where he was instrumental in developing the Cruzan Rum line and other lines as master blender and, later, master distiller. Ron was instrumental—along with his son Jacob—in developing the renovation and operating plan for the Green River Distillery.

A third-generation master distiller, Jacob knows something about the business. Jacob is a seventh-generation Kentuckian (born and raised in Bardstown). He graduated from Murray State University with a degree in business administration. He started his career in banking, rising in the ranks to COO before eventually succumbing to fate and legacy.

Jacob cut his teeth at Florida Caribbean Distillers, which he joined in 2007. He held various senior management positions in purchasing, bulk sales, and distillery operations.

Jacob joined Terressentia (Green River's parent company) in late 2014 to oversee the renovations. As master distiller, he oversees all aspects of whiskey production and warehousing for the facility. His whiskeys are gaining in reputation and popularity. The Call family tradition lives on. But with his recent successes, it certainly seems like it's Jacob's star turn!

BRADSHAW

Drafted number one overall in the NFL 1970 draft, Terry Bradshaw had one of the most iconic and prolific careers in the history of the league, resulting in four Super Bowl championships. Today, Bradshaw is one of the iconic football analysts on television. Bradshaw also focuses his resources on philanthropic tasks such as funding projects to bring solar powered wells to struggling communities in East Africa. "There is something quintessentially American about bourbon," said Bradshaw. "There's just nothing better than a fireplace, two fingers of bourbon, a great cigar, and Pavarotti playing in the background. I've always appreciated a good bourbon, and now I'll be enjoying my own!"

The whiskey is a collaboration between Green River Distilling and Silver Screen Bottling Company. Bradshaw Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey 103.8 proof has a mash bill of 70% corn, 21% rye, and 9% malted barley. The whiskey has garnered excellent reviews in the press.





QUARTER HORSE

Quarter Horse Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey (92 proof) is a brand produced at Green River Distilling. It is designed to be an easy drinking bourbon, with interesting notes of strawberry, gingerbread, honey, caramel, orange zest, and cereal. Ginger and black pepper on the back. Quarter Horse is aged using O.Z. Tyler's patented TerraPURE machinery. Oak staves are secured inside the machine, in an effort to help create traditional bourbon flavor. The machinery is designed to reduce the barrel aging process. The claim is that in 12 hours the ultrasonic exposure simulates four years in the barrel. A unique product.

DUKE

John Wayne, also known as The Duke, was a Hollywood legend. A famous actor, he was also an avid fisherman, horseman, hunter, and adventurer. He was also a fan of American and Scotch whiskies. He was often quoted as saying that if he was going to have a drink, "It had better be a good one."

The Wayne family has carried over his love of fine brown spirits to a line of excellent bourbons made in Kentucky. A collaboration between Founder Chris Radomski and Green River Distilling, they have released three whiskies.

Duke Kentucky Straight Bourbon (88 proof) is the flagship expression. The idea is that this whiskey honors the tasting notes and profile preferred by John Wayne himself, using his extensive, original tasting notes from 1962 and his private collection as the inspiration for flavor and aromatics. The mash bill is 75% American dent corn, 13% rye, and 12% sixth-row barley. Distilled and aged in small batches in Kentucky, it's aged five years in heavily charred new American Oak barrels. Caramel, cherry, toasted nuts, and spice. It's very smooth and drinkable.

Duke Grand Cru Kentucky Reserve Bourbon is a 9-year-old Kentucky Straight Bourbon finished in used wine oak casks. Classic French oak barrels that housed big red wines from Napa Valley wines like St. Helena, Howell Mountain, and Rutherford. A much higher expression spirit, aimed at connoisseurs. A much more bourbon as cognac experience.

Lots of stone fruit, hints of orange zest, honey, and caramel. Duke Grand Cru Double Barrel Rye is a formidable entry into the fast rising rye market. This rye marries the classic and powerful flavors of aged Kentucky rye with French Oak Grand Cru wine barrels. This is a big rye, with a mash bill of 95% rye and 5% malted barley. After aging in new French oak, it is then moved to rest in a second French oak wine barrel that has rested both world-class wines and the Duke Grand Cru. This secondary finish absolutely rounds out the whiskey, giving it a velvety finish.

YELLOW BANKS

Yellow Banks is a collaboration between Green River Distilling and the Kentucky Corn Growers Association (KyCorn). This grassroots organization, founded in 1982, represents the interests of more than 6,000 corn farmers in the Commonwealth by improving markets and demand, strengthening consumer trust for products and practices, investing in research for economically and environmentally sustainable production, and advancing leadership and

membership to provide a voice for Kentucky Corn Grower. KyCorn is an official state affiliate of the National Corn Growers Association. Their logo is on the label. A portion of the profits go toward corn research. It is a Kentucky Proud product. The distillery uses 800,000 bushels of Kentucky corn each year in its whiskey. “It has a very smooth, sweet flavor,” Call said. The whiskey was released in November 2020.

WINCHESTER

Another Green River collaboration, Winchester Bourbon. Winchester Straight Bourbon is aged in new charred American oak barrels the “old fashioned” way for at least two years. The Winchester brand also sells an Extra Smooth Bourbon and a Rye Whiskey. Sold in select stores.





HARTFIELD & Co.:

BRINGING BOURBON BACK

TO BOURBON COUNTY

It's almost impossible not to fall in love with Hartfield. Maybe it's the cool yet unassuming location? Maybe it's its sense of nostalgia and design? Maybe because history is in its corner? Or maybe it's just the really great whiskey!





Back to
640

39 mins left in chapter

Page 324 of 640 • 35%

1 hrs 28 mins left in book



First off, Hartfield is located in Paris, Kentucky. Now, that alone makes them not only quirky, but cool. But then you need to know that Paris is in Bourbon County. And what you also need to know is that it is the only distiller of bourbon in Bourbon County. That's right. With all the bourbon being made in Kentucky, none of it has been made in Bourbon County since 1911. Hartfield brought bourbon distilling

back to Bourbon County.

Formerly known as the Gentleman (it had to give up that name in a spurious legal dispute), Hartfield is named for one of the owners' ancestors, who also distilled bourbon in Bourbon County before Prohibition wiped out the industry. "Hartfield & Co. is named after a branch of Andrew [Buchanan's] family that stretches all the way back to 1700s Germany," the distillery claims. "The Hartfield family left the motherland and settled into modern day Pennsylvania and Ohio with a very pioneering portion making its way to Green County, Kentucky. There they founded a distillery which ran for 20 to 25 years upon which it ended in an unfortunate fire."

Hartfield was founded by Andrew Buchanan and his wife Larissa in 2014. Both were design and marketing professionals before being drawn into the craft distilling world. They are assisted by Jeremy Coffey. Their distillery is located in an old, turn-of-the-century feed building from 1911 that was a Chevrolet dealership in the 1920s and later an antiques warehouse. The tasting room is studded with



old, late 19th-century pharmacy counters, display cabinets, and a counter. The whiskey is packaged in old-fashioned apothecary bottles with labels that look like something from an ancient pharmacy.

The one thing you instantly like about the Buchanans and Coffey is that they let the beer ferment longer than most. They are striving to bring out the brandy, cognac, apple, and pear notes in their product. Formerly made in 26- or 100-gallon stills, and now in a 500-gallon one, the sweet nectar is worth searching out. Their goal is not to let the wood overpower their product, but rather have the wood complement it. While other distillers would either argue with this or give lip service to it, this trio is a slave to it. Each small batch is aged in small, 5-gallon American oak barrels. They use Minnesota oak, which Andrew will tell you is sugar rich.





Like most small distilleries, small barrels allow more liquid-to-wood contact. Whiskey can thus be pushed out faster. But here is where Hartfield differs from the world. It doesn't want its whiskey to be in the wood too long. It all sounds a bit screwy, but the proof of its philosophy is in the glass.

Since their founding, they've continued to grow carefully. They are now even contract distilling for a few small fellow artisan distillers. They've worked with Second Sight Distilling and, most notably, Fresh Bourbon Distilling Co., among others.

Hartfield was included in the revolutionary and fascinating bottling of Corn Trooper 2020 United Craft Bourbon, which blended bourbon whiskeys from seven small craft distillers into one bourbon. Hartfield was one of those distillers paired alongside such nationally known crafters as Balcones, Kings County, Breckenridge, and OOLA. Pretty heady company.

Even bigger news? Their bottles have started to pop up in liquor stores throughout the region. In small quantities they are in some of the largest distributors in Kentucky, and can be found in a dozen states. Couldn't be happier for these folks, who are making some of the best small, boutique craft spirits in the region.

The impressive Hartfield White Whiskey is made from the same mash bill as its bourbon, but it has an incredibly

large flavor! One could easily close their eyes and think they were drinking a more mature whiskey. It truly is amazing. One of the two or three best white whiskeys in America.





The Hartfield Bourbon has a mash bill of 62% corn, 19% rye, and 19% barley. It's aged for 5½ months in small, 5-gallon charred barrels of new Minnesota white oak. The whiskey has the qualities of Highlands scotch, featuring pears and apples, but also has lovely notes of caramel. This is a big craft bourbon. Chocolatey and impressive.

Hartfield Wheated Bourbon is 80% corn and 20% malted wheat, and has a big nose of butter toffee and caramel. The Single Malt is 100% barley and very impressive. It was aged in a used bourbon barrel, like all good single malts are, for six months, and displays an unmistakable nose of chocolate, brown sugar, and caramel, but also contains fig, pear, and apple notes, with a hint of smoke.

The Hartfield American Whiskey is 62% corn, 28% rye, and 10% barley. It also does two rums, an aged and a non-aged version. The non-aged was incredible (not what you might expect to hear from me—the browner, the better). Kettle corn in a glass, with sugar, molasses, and impressive butter notes. The aged rum was just as good, aged for three months in used rum barrels.

Hartfield released its first single malt whiskey in 2020. Hartfield & Co. American Single Malt Whiskey (122.7 proof) is distilled from 100% malted barley. As single malt laws declare in Scotland, the whiskey was aged in ex-bourbon barrels (from the same distillery) before ultimately being bottled. It is barrel strength and was received very well.

Hartfield & Co. is as pretty in the bottle as it is in your glass. This is small-batch craft distilling at its best. Hartfield is the real thing. Given the quality of the hooch, the beauty of the design, and the upstart sentiment, it is hard not to root for this company. Other local spirit professionals are watching Hartfield intensely, and it is sure to experience a wild ride. If it can hold on, this new iteration of Hartfield should be around for more than 25 years.



HEAVEN HILL DISTILLERIES

Heaven Hill Distilleries is located in Bardstown, Kentucky. It has its own remarkable story, as well as being home to some of the most impressive names in the whiskey business. Among the general public, even those who drink whiskey, it is perhaps the least known and best-selling distillery in the state. But to insiders, it is an American treasure.

To give you just a measure of how amazing this place is, you need to understand that Heaven Hill is the seventh-largest seller of spirits in America. Heaven Hill also warehouses the second-largest cache of bourbon whiskey in the world. The distillery has 54 rickhouses in all. Heaven Hill is also the largest independent family-owned-and -operated distiller and seller of spirits in the United States. And to top it off, of all the liquor giants, it is the only large, completely family-owned distillery headquartered in Kentucky.

Heaven Hill was established in 1935 by a group of investors that included famed distiller Joseph L. Beam (first cousin of Jim Beam), a member of the Shapira family,

and several others. Over the intervening years, the Shapira brothers slowly bought out the other investors. The five brothers – Ed, Gary, George, David, and Mose – were a tight-knit group who gathered every Sunday at their mother's house with their families. As the children played, the men reviewed the previous week's events, and planned out the next week. Since then, the Shapiras have always owned Heaven Hill, and a Beam was the master distiller until just recently.



The first master distiller was Joseph L. Beam. His son Harry succeeded him. Earl Beam (son of Park Beam, brother of Jim) then took over the distilling responsibilities. Earl was followed by master distillers Parker Beam and his son, Craig Beam.

Another key to the distillery's success was traveling salesman Harry Homel, who signed up distributors and created relationships that far outlasted his tenure with the company. His deals and agreements made Heaven Hill a national powerhouse.

Originally named the "Old Heavenhill Springs" distillery, the organization was focused around bourbon, and established such classic brands as Evan Williams and Elijah Craig. During the downturn in the sale of brown spirits, the company expanded by purchasing other brands, and built a list of gins, malt whiskey, vodkas, and other drinks.

The column still at Heaven Hill is approximately six storeys high. Even with all the whiskeys being double distilled, this behemoth allows Heaven Hill to produce 20,000 gallons a day.

Heaven Hill uses two barrel manufacturers to supply 90% of its needs—McGinnis Wood Products Co. Inc. in Cuba, Missouri, and Independent Stave Company in Lebanon, Missouri. It also buys from Kentucky Cooperage in Lebanon, Missouri.



“I have never in my
life seen a Kentuckian
who didn’t have a gun,
a pack of cards, and
a jug of whiskey.”

—Andrew Jackson



In 2020 Heaven Hill celebrated 85 years of distilling with the release of the limited edition Heaven Hill 85th Anniversary 13-Year-Old Single Barrel Kentucky Straight

Bourbon Whiskey (107 proof), which was barrel filled on December 13, 2006, and bottled on December 13, 2019, as a nod to the December 13 date that the distillery filled their first barrel of bourbon in 1935. The bourbon was aged 13 years in Rickhouse G and bottled without chill filtration at 107 proof to commemorate Heaven Hill's original barrel entry proof.

“Perseverance is a hallmark of Heaven Hill's history, and a value resonating across the industry this year,” said President Max L. Shapira. “Our steadfast commitment to quality and an enduring legacy continues to guide Heaven Hill's path forward. We look forward to lifting America's spirit for the next 85 years, as we have since 1935.”

BOURBON HERITAGE CENTER

Heaven Hill built a new, lavish welcome center at its Bardstown location: a gleaming glass, steel, and oak building. At the new center, an immensely informative (even for the moderately knowledgeable) self-guided tour not only tells you about Heaven Hill, Elijah Craig, Evan Williams,

and others, but also about bourbon in general. The center also offers two distinct experiences. The Mash Bill Tour takes visitors through Warehouse Y, explains how bourbon is made, and ends with a tasting of three whiskeys. The Connoisseur Tour is a more in-depth tasting experience, shepherding visitors across four whiskeys, where the intricacies of tasting bourbon are explored.

Several times a year the center offers special events, tastings of new releases, book signings, and talks. So be sure to keep tabs on them.



FIRE!

On November 7, 1996, a fire started in one of the aging warehouses at Heaven Hill and eventually spread to a second warehouse and the manufacturing facility. More than 90,000 barrels burst into flames, and a river of flammable, volatile bourbon wound its way through the various lots, destroying the buildings and vehicles in its path.



The Bardstown Fire Department's First Assistant Fire Chief Anthony Mattingly said, "When the metal siding on Warehouse I disintegrated, it sent an 80-foot wall of flames into the air . . . high winds pushed much of the fire shooting toward Warehouse J low to the ground. Firefighters were forced to abandon the second warehouse when the tar roof ignited and, inside, fire began spreading beneath the single wooden staircase that gave firefighters access to the upper floors. The warehouse went from 10 percent involvement to 90 percent involvement in less than three minutes. When that fire started laying down on the ground, it was really a run-for-your-life situation.

"The combined heat from the two burning warehouses made it impossible to save the next closest warehouse downwind, Warehouse K. Firefighters pulled back to protect the other hilltop warehouses nearby. As Warehouse I collapsed, crushed barrels inside sent burning alcohol flowing downhill, spreading fire to Warehouses C and D below it."

The first warehouse was gone in 15 minutes once the

whiskey itself caught fire. It took 150 firefighters from 25 fire companies to tame the massive blaze. Seven warehouses were lost in four hours, as well as the distillery. More than 90,000 barrels of bourbon were lost, approximately 2% of the world's bourbon stores. The subsequent explosions could be felt and seen for miles. According to witnesses, "Flames leapt hundreds of feet into the air and lit the sky throughout the night. Witnesses reported seeing whiskey barrels explode and rocket across the sky like shooting stars . . . a two-mile long stretch of the creek that supplied process water to the distillery was set ablaze for a brief time."

Buoyed by distilling neighbors Jim Beam and Brown-Forman, Heaven Hill was able to honor its contracts and keep its supply chain going until it could get its new Bernheim distillery in Louisville up to speed. Fermenting, mashing, and distilling now takes place at the new distillery, while aging, bottling, and shipping still occur in Bardstown.

It was the worst American distillery fire in modern memory.



THE “WHISKEY PROFESSOR,” HEAVEN HILL’S AMERICAN BRAND AMBASSADOR

There are few people in any industry who will make you feel more comfortable, more quickly, than Bernie Lubbers. A former singer and comedian, Lubbers is confident and sure. His sense of humor and easy demeanor are disarming, but don’t let the cocksure act fool you. Originally from Louisville, Lubbers graduated with a B.A. in business from the University of Kentucky. Lubbers knows a lot about bourbon and the bourbon industry. He also knows everyone. And everyone claims to know him. Lubbers is a past winner of the “Global Ambassador of the Year” award in *Whisky Magazine*’s “Icons of Whisky” presentation, is cited in numerous trade publications, and has served as judge at whiskey competitions.

BERNIE LUBBERS

On average, Lubbers has been known to travel more than 100,000 miles a year preaching the gospel of bourbon and American whiskey. Affectionately known as “The Whiskey Professor,” Lubbers authored the 2011 book *Bourbon Whiskey—Our Native Spirit*, which has now seen three editions, and received endorsements from people as well-known in the industry as Jim Meehan, the popular mixologist and creator of PDT. Before being named brand ambassador for Heaven Hill, Lubbers spent seven years in the supplier tier, implementing special training and educational programs with consumers and the trade. Before working for Heaven Hill he worked for Beam/Suntory.

Steve Feller, vice president of North American sales for Heaven Hill Distilleries, said of Lubbers, “Having someone of his knowledge and reputation in the market to educate consumers and engage both on- and off-premise trade will be a great asset as we continue to grow our portfolio of world-renowned American whiskeys.”

During our tour, Lubbers took us to Warehouse Y for a tasting of 18-year-old bourbon. Filled with charming

stories and funny gags, Lubbers also dispensed a ton of knowledge. One gets the impression that Lubbers could keep conversation from lagging at any sort of event, and would have some tidbit of knowledge that no one else at the table knew.

My favorite fact from our tour was an introduction to the word “kreel.” These are strategically placed all around a rickhouse, and dropped through holes drilled into all seven floors. When a rickhouse starts to lean, the kreel begins to touch one of the sides of the drilled hole. If this happens, then the whole rickhouse is improperly balanced and may be in danger of collapsing from the unevenly distributed weight.

Another fun fact provided by Lubbers was the “money end” of a barrel. This is the side that all the information is written on, including the date of filling and the initials that mark the mash bill.



Back to
640

35 mins left in chapter

Page 324 of 640 • 38%

1 hrs 25 mins left in book



EVAN WILLIAMS

Of all the brands in the Heaven Hill portfolio, none is bigger than Evan Williams. It is one of the world's bestselling bourbons. This bourbon is named after Welsh immigrant Evan Williams; in 1783, after crossing the Atlantic, he settled in an area now known as Louisville. He founded Kentucky's first commercial distillery, an achievement now commemorated with a plaque. Several whiskey historians have challenged the veracity of these claims, but nothing concrete has ever been produced to name another claimant.

Evan Williams is the second bestselling brand of Kentucky straight bourbon in the world, only behind Jim Beam. It comes in a number of variants, including white label, black label, single barrel, and 23-year-old expressions. The best one of these is without a doubt the nine-year-old Evan Williams Single Barrel Vintage Bourbon sealed with black wax. Not only is it a great value, it is among one of the best single barrel offerings in the industry. This is a bottle to keep around for special occasions to share with friends and family. Once, when I was at a whiskey event with several

famous whiskey writers, we sat around expressing our wonder at how well this bourbon compared with everything else we were tasting. A must-have for any collection.

THE EVAN WILLIAMS EXPERIENCE LOUISVILLE

Located in downtown Louisville's historic Whiskey Row is the fantastic multi-storied tasting room, educational center, and entertainment space named The Evan Williams Experience.

It offers traditional tours and tastings, but there's so much more. The Experience also has events throughout the year, including bourbon and cigar nights, food pairing dinners, Derby Day and Mint Julep parties, and special releases. There is also the Speakeasy Experience, where it offers craft cocktails using its numerous brands. It also features its Sweet & Neat experience—a bourbon and chocolate tasting. It even has rooms to rent—its Warehouse J Loft for large events, the Speakeasy Lounge, and the Black

Label Room for business meetings and tastings.

And, of course, there's a shop that offers merchandise as well as unique bottlings and labels. It's a fantastic place to visit if you ever find yourself in downtown Louisville.

ELIJAH CRAIG

Elijah Craig Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey was named for the Reverend Elijah Craig, a Baptist preacher and educator from a part of Virginia that later became Kentucky. Around 1789 the minister established a distillery in Fayette County. Whiskey experts doubt the claim that Elijah invented bourbon, but acknowledge he was a verifiable character. They say that he may have been making whiskey, but it was probably not bourbon. Regardless, Elijah Craig has been a solid, long-established premium brand whose stature continues to improve.

Elijah Craig Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey is only released in either "Small Batch" or age statement "Single Barrel" bottlings. The Small Batch bottling is a blending of 8- and 12-year-old bourbons (although if you find a bottle

predating 2016, the age statement will be 12-years-old). The Small Batch is released in a 94-proof bottling. The Single Barrel is an uncut whiskey that ranges from 128 to 142 proof. Elijah Craig regularly releases a 12-year-old, 18-year-old, and a 23-year-old expression.

According to Heaven Hill: “From an aging inventory of 1.1 million barrels, the second largest American Whiskey holdings in the world, master distillers Craig Beam and Denny Potter select only barrels that have rested at low storage, and then further choose only those that meet their strict nosing and taste criteria. While taste nuances will vary slightly from one barrel to the other, as they should in a single barrel offering, in general they have been selected for complex, multi-layered taste profiles that balance the 18 years in new charred oak with sweet and spicy grain notes.”

Interestingly, Elijah Craig bourbon barrels are used by Goose Island Brewery to make its famous Bourbon County Imperial Stout.



The consensus about Elijah Craig among whiskey writers is crystal clear. The 18-year-old and 23-year-old expressions are the go-to bottles. They display the classic notes of caramel, toffee, vanilla, and raisin, as well as ethereal notes

of stone fruit with baked apple and pear and fig, all of which are layered with a slight sweetness and a hint of spice.

In 2020 Elijah Craig Beer Barrel Finish was released in partnership with Goose Island Beer Company. The whiskey was aged in barrels that stored both bourbon and beer, and was a collaboration project between Heaven Hill Distillery master distiller Conor O'Driscoll, Goose Island brewmaster Keith Gabbett, Goose Island Research & Development Brewing Manager Mike Siegel, and Mike Smith, Goose Island Senior Brand Manager.

Only three barrels were used to finish this bourbon, originally beginning their life as a new, #3 charred oak aging Heaven Hill's traditional bourbon mash bill. The freshly emptied barrels then traveled to Chicago to eventually age the award-winning Goose Island Bourbon County Stout released on Black Friday 2018. The barrels then returned to Kentucky for a third life to finish for 10 months to become fully matured Elijah Craig Small Batch.

A unique experience, and a collaboration worth watching.

OLD FITZGERALD

Originally produced in 1870 for rail and steamship lines and private clubs, Old Fitzgerald was eventually released commercially around 1900. Pappy Van Winkle eventually bought the brand for \$10,000, and introduced wheat into its mash bill after Prohibition. Heaven Hill purchased the distillery and the brand in 1992.

Old Fitzgerald is one of those storied brands. Many a whiskey writer has shrugged his or her shoulders at the mention of it, but no writer I have ever known has walked away from a vertical tasting of old and new Old Fitzgerald without being in absolute awe.



very, very old Old Fitzgerald. The oldest bottle was dated 1951. The usually skeptical Ury has been unable to let go of his memory of that tasting, saying, “And so it was, almost undoubtedly the greatest bourbon tasting I’ll ever have the pleasure to attend.”



There are four current bottlings of Old Fitzgerald: Prime, Bottled-in-Bond, 1849, and Very Special Old Fitzgerald 12 Years Old. Steven Ury once attended a Los Angeles Whisky Tasting Society vertical tasting of seven different, and dusty,



No question the Very Special Old Fitzgerald 12 Years Old is the go-to bottle of this label—if you can find it.

In September 2020, Heaven Hill Distillery announced the release of the Fall 2020 edition of Old Fitzgerald Bottled-in-Bond Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey at 14-years-old. Comprised of barrels produced in 2005 and bottled in 2020, it was bottled in an ornate decanter. This edition's tax strip disclosed when the liquid was produced and bottled. This 2020 edition of Old Fitzgerald Bottled-in-Bond Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey is the first 14-year-old of the nationally released series and features bourbon pulled from different rickhouses, at different floors, and on different production dates.

LARCENY

This brand was also named after John E. Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald was actually not a distiller, as Pappy Van Winkle's autobiography later revealed. Fitzgerald was a bonded treasury agent. In the old days, just like in Scotland, treasury agents were the only ones with keys to bourbon warehouses

and spirit safes.

According to Heaven Hill, Fitzgerald had a very select palate that demanded fine, long-aged bourbon. On days when no one was around, Fitzgerald would find “honey barrels” and slowly drain them. These were jokingly called “Fitzgerald Barrels.” The Larceny brand was named for this act of theft.

Larceny Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey is aged six years in new American oak, and is a wheated bourbon that contains 68% corn, 20% wheat, and 12% malted barley. This high-corn, high-wheat recipe offers both softness and sweetness, and produces wonderful, highly coveted bourbon.

MELLOW CORN

Mellow Corn Kentucky Straight Corn Whiskey is one of the few official corn whiskeys on the market. To qualify as a straight corn whiskey, the mash bill needs to be at least 81% corn and aged in new charred American white oak barrels.

Acclaimed whiskey authority Jim Murray wrote of corn whiskey: “If you are a true student of whiskey, your education is a long way from being complete until you have mastered this particularly charming form.” Corn whiskey was the popular spirit that formed the later backbone of bourbon. Mellow Corn is an easy drinking spirit, smooth and light, with lots of vanilla, baked apple, and yellow cake. A lovely, easy, simple dram.

PIKESVILLE

Pikesville Straight Rye Whiskey (110 proof) was first distilled in 1895. But it was originally made in Maryland as part of that state’s once-booming rye industry. The brand was lost after Prohibition. A lighter, less expensive version—The White Label—was taken off the market in 2016. But dusties can still be found. This 110-proof expression with a retro label is a classic Baltimore rye (37% corn, 51% rye, 12% malted barley) aged for six years in new #3 char American oak. Pikesville is now made in Kentucky, but the location doesn’t seem to matter—this continues to be a go-to rye.



RITTENHOUSE

Though Heaven Hill has kept the old Philadelphia brand alive (the liquor was named for the city's famed Rittenhouse Square), the whiskey inside is actually a Baltimore rye (meaning more of a blend, allowing for more corn). Rittenhouse has the same mash bill as Pikesville, but the whiskey is not aged as long. It is one of only two bottled-in-bond ryes in the United States, meaning it was made at the same distillery, in the same season, aged at least four years, and bottled at 100 proof (50% ABV). Like Pikesville, this is a softer, sweeter rye, but it is lighter on wood and alcohol than Pikesville. And, oh, yeah—it's quite a lovely dram!



BERNHEIM ORIGINAL

Bernheim Original Kentucky Straight Wheat Whiskey Small Batch (90 proof) is a wheat whiskey named for Isaac Wolfe Bernheim, a German immigrant who worked as a traveling salesman. By 1888 Bernheim had moved to Louisville and was the founder of I. W. Harper brand of bourbon whiskey. Bernheim's distillery and distribution business was so successful that he helped coalesce the distilling industry in Louisville. Bernheim was also very involved in the community life of the city, and he established a 14,000-acre arboretum in Bullitt County. Bernheim sold the business

after Prohibition (it had been one of only 10 liquor licenses to retain the right to make whiskey for medicinal purposes during the Great Experiment).

Introduced in 2005, Bernheim has been incorrectly called a wheated bourbon by many food and spirits writers. It is not a bourbon. It is a wheat whiskey with a mash bill of 37% corn, 51% wheat, and 12% malted barley, and it is aged seven years in new #3 char American white oak barrels. The bottled small batches are from dumps of 100 or less select barrels. Bernheim Straight Wheat Whiskey was named Pioneer Whiskey of the Year by *Whisky Advocate* the year it was released, and has gone on to win countless awards since then.

GEORGIA MOON CORN WHISKEY

Shine On Georgia Moon Corn Whiskey is the best-selling corn whiskey in the United States. Georgia Moon is authentic American corn whiskey, with a mash bill of at least 81% corn, and is rested in new American oak barrels—both uncharred and used charred. The company also introduced

two new flavored moonshines—peach and lemonade.

HENRY MCKENNA

Henry McKenna Single Barrel Bottled-in-Bond 10-Year-Old Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey was named for distilling pioneer Henry McKenna, who was born in Ireland and came to America at the age of 19. By 1855 he had taken a share in a partnership to mill flour in Fairfield, Kentucky, and quickly became appalled by the waste of milling. He set up a still behind the mill and soon founded a distillery. He claimed that all his whiskey was aged no less than three years. Business was so good that the company moved its offices to Louisville in 1880. McKenna died in 1893, and one of his sons carried on the business until 1940, when the family sold lock, stock, and barrel to Seagram.

Henry McKenna carries the standard Heaven Hill mash bill of 78% corn, 10% rye, and 12% malted barley, and is aged 10 years in new #3 and #4 char American white oak barrels. This single barrel release is bottled-in-bond.



“I’ve got a whole lot to live up to with my father and grandfather. I’ve got a lot of weight on my shoulders.”

PARKER’S HERITAGE

Parker’s Heritage collection is a series of rare, limited-edition whiskey selected by master distiller Parker Beam. The first was a cask strength bourbon released in 2007. In 2008, it released a 27-year-old bourbon, and other editions have been a wheated bourbon, a cognac-finished expression, a malt

whiskey, a 24-year-old bourbon bottled-in-bond, and an 11-year-old, single barrel bourbon.

Many of these offerings were selected by a man who spent more than 50 years in the distilling business. Parker Beam began working at Heaven Hill in 1950, and oversaw one of the largest stocks of bourbon in the world. “Beam’s pedigree as a bourbon maker was impeccable. As a grandnephew of Jim Beam, Parker Beam was born into a family that traces its whiskey-making roots in Kentucky to 1795, when Jacob Beam set up his first still. Park Beam, Parker’s grandfather and namesake, was Jim Beam’s brother,” reported the Associated Press in 2017.

“If you were a Beam, you sort of were destined to follow in the footsteps of either your father, grandfathers, cousins, or uncles,” Parker Beam said in an earlier interview with The Associated Press. “I’ve got a whole lot to live up to with my father and grandfather. I’ve got a lot of weight on my shoulders.”

“In his case, he lived up to and exceeded the burden of having the most famous name in bourbon,” said Bill Samuels

Jr., the retired master distiller of Maker’s Mark, who referred to his friend as “one of the good guys.”

Parker died in January 2017, at the age of 75, after losing his fight with ALS. Parker Beam had the title of Master Distiller Emeritus at Heaven Hill at the time of his death. His son Craig was master distiller, but took time off, moving to a consultancy role in 2014, in order to spend more time with his father and family in the face of the illness.

Parker was known for his wry sense of humor and down-to-earth demeanor. When one whiskey writer described some very exotic flavors in one of the whiskeys he had bottled, Parker shrugged, smiled, and said, “I didn’t put any of the shit in there.”

The 11th edition of Parker’s Heritage was released in 2017. It was an 11-year-old, single barrel bourbon (122 proof). And in honor of Parker, Heaven Hill now donates a portion of the proceeds from each bottle sold to ALS charities.



JEPHTHA CREED

Jeptha Creed is a family-run business. It is owned and run by Joyce, Bruce, Hunter, and Autumn Nethery. Joyce, the matriarch, has two degrees in chemical engineering from the University of Louisville, and worked for 15 years as a process engineer. Her husband Bruce is a farmer with an entrepreneurial bent, having long operated a dairy farm in Shelby County. Autumn, Joyce and Bruce's daughter, spent a school year in Edinburgh, Scotland, learning brewing and distilling at Heriot-Watt University, while Joyce took a refresher course at Distilling Epicenter. Son Hunter is still a student who does blacksmithing and a little bit of everything else. They founded their distillery in 2016.

"Creed is more of a value statement," Joyce told the *Louisville Insider*. "We're going to stand by the heritage statement and authenticity in our product. Our creed is we use old-fashioned methods to meet modern tastes, and we

are honest and authentic about everything that'll go into our spirits."

According to the Insider, "Perhaps what most sets Jeptha Creed apart from the others will be their use of open-pollinated, non-GMO heirloom Bloody Butcher corn the family has been growing since 1845. When dry, the corn has a deep red color and is often used as decorations in the fall."

Jeptha Creek makes a moonshine with a grain bill that is built on a four-grain barley mash, and features the family's unique corn. It also makes flavored versions—blackberry, apple pie, and Louisville lemonade. Jeptha Creek Vodka is heirloom Bloody Butcher corn used in a classic bourbon mash and made using vodka yeast that supplies hints of apple and cake batter. Jeptha Creed also released an Unaged Corn Whiskey (80 proof) that was exceptional. Everything this distillery does is great, but the hype machine was cranked up for Jeptha Creed Bloody Butcher's Creed Bourbon (100 proof). A small, limited run was released in 2019.



Back to
640

32 mins left in chapter

Page 324 of 640 • 40%

1 hrs 22 mins left in book



Back to
640

32 mins left in chapter

Page 324 of 640 • 40%

1 hrs 22 mins left in book



JIM BEAM



If there is a first family of bourbon, it is the Beam family. There are no less than three or four distilleries that boast a Beam family connection. The name and the family have been synonymous with bourbon for more than 200 years.

“The first Boehm in Kentucky was Johannes Jacob Boehm, who arrived in Kentucky in 1787 or 1788. He preferred to be called Jacob Boehm and later Jacob Beam,” wrote Frank Prial in the New York Times. Jacob had been a farmer, and sold his first barrels of corn whiskey sometime around 1795. The whiskey more or less resembled the bourbon we drink today.

His distillery came to be known as Old Tub, and the whiskey came to be known as Old Jake Beam Sour Mash.

When Jacob turned 60, or thereabouts, David Beam took over the day-to-day operation of the family business—at the age of only 18. He magnified the business substantially, expanding its distribution by leaps and bounds. In 1854, the year of his father’s death, David M. Beam relocated the distillery to Nelson County. With increased access to railroads, the brand became bigger than ever before. James Beauregard Beam guided the business just before and long after Prohibition. In 1933, he rebuilt the distillery close to his Bardstown home in Clermont.

In 1935, with Harry L. Homel, Oliver Jacobson, H. Blum, and Jeremiah Beam, the James B. Beam Distilling Company was established. The brand was now “Jim Beam Bourbon” bearing the slogan “None Genuine Without My Signature,” and Jim’s scrawl. T. Jeremiah Beam, who had begun his apprenticeship in 1913, later ascended to master distiller at the Clermont distillery.

The grandson of Jim Beam, Frederick Booker Noe II, known simply as Booker Noe, was master distiller at the Jim Beam Distillery for more than 40 years.

“Mr. Noe, who attended the University of Kentucky, joined the company in 1950 as an assistant distiller, though he had helped out around the distillery since he was a teenager,” wrote Prial. “At 6-foot-4, Mr. Noe was a commanding figure. He retired in 1992 and spent the rest of his life traveling and fishing around the world and acting as an ambassador for Jim Beam, playing host at bourbon tastings and entertaining audiences with reminiscences and anecdotes. At home in Kentucky, he was the host of parties and dinners featuring his own bourbon, of course, and Kentucky hams, which he cured in a backyard smokehouse.”

Booker was among a handful of people who helped revive interest in bourbon during the heyday of gin and vodka. In 1987, after Blanton’s had been a success, Noe released Booker’s, Beam’s first uncut, straight-from-the-barrel bourbon. It was the first of the whiskeys released in a portfolio now known as its “Small Batch Bourbon

Collection.”

In 2007, Booker’s son, Frederick Booker Noe, became the seventh master distiller at Jim Beam.

“None Genuine Without My Signature”





FIRE!

In 2003, 19,000 barrels of Jim Beam bourbon were destroyed when a Jim Beam rickhouse caught fire. As the fire consumed the warehouse the bourbon flames rose more than 100 feet into the air. Bourbon, flaming like lava as it sought lower ground, eventually washed into a nearby creek, killing an estimated 19,000 fish.

Jim Beam has been sold around the world for many generations. Jim Beam and Suntory, the major Japanese whiskey producer, enjoyed a reciprocal relationship, whereby they distributed whiskey for each other in their respective markets. This symbiotic relationship culminated in a 2016 merger, wherein Suntory bought Beam.

Beam reached 14 million barrels in 2016. It produces approximately 300,000 barrels per year. Most of the barrels are new #4 char, also known as “alligator skin,” American

white oak. The distillery has 22 fermenters that produce 45,000 gallons each of distiller's beer, and the column still is six storeys high. Warehouse D, the oldest rickhouse at the distillery, holds approximately 20,000 barrels. But as it has grown, so have the sizes of its warehouses, with most of its rickhouses holding about 50,000 barrels each, and the newest ones holding approximately 60,000 barrels each. Almost all of Jim Beam's bourbons have a similar mash bill: 75% corn, 13% rye, and 12% malted barley.

It has two bottling lines, and can expect as much as 9,000 cases a day from its best line, which can reach speeds of up to 300 bottles per minute! Jim Beam is not only sold in all 50 states, it is currently sold in more than 125 countries around the world.

Highlights from the extensive Jim Beam lineup are difficult to parse out. It has a series of flavored and spiced bourbons that have been a huge hit. But a narrower interpretation keeps us toward the classics. Simply put, one of the best whiskeys it produces is the Jim Beam Single Barrel. While it has no age statement on the bottle, we know

the whiskey is aged between four and seven years, is chill-filtered, and weighs in at 95 proof. The next star in the Jim Beam portfolio is the Jim Beam Double Oak, which is first aged in charred American white oak barrels, and then poured out and re-casked in #4 char new American oak barrels for additional aging. This second go-round produces a big, intense, bold whiskey that is aged four years sold and sold at 86 proof. Jim Beam Black is sold at 86 proof. It used to be aged for eight years (aged six years for export markets), and though it no longer carries an age statement, it's still a very, very solid whiskey.

Two specialty items from the Beam lineup include Jim Beam Signature Craft whiskey, which is finished in rare Spanish brandy casks. This 12-year-old bourbon is bottled at 86 proof.

The other is Jim Beam Distiller's Masterpiece, which, according to the company, "is Fred Noe's magnum opus. After hand-selecting extra-aged bourbons that were aging in the optimal positions of his rickhouse, Noe finished the bourbon in Pedro Ximénez sherry casks."

“This bourbon expression from Jim Beam is the most exclusive, highest quality offering within the family,” says no less an authority than Noe himself. Take his word for it—this is a rich, opulent, decadent bourbon.

Jim Beam Straight Rye Whiskey is the company’s entry into the rye market. This is definitely a Baltimore-styled rye (55% rye, 35% corn, 10% malt), with big notes of spice and caramel, and a sweetness that offers a softer, smoother experience. This iconic green label rye is aged four years in oak and is sold at 90 proof.

Jim Beam also released the Alberta Rye Dark Batch 90 Proof (45% ABV), which is a blend of Canadian rye, bourbon, and sherry. Another “dark rye” entry in the industry, this is a caramel bomb with a complex flavor and spiciness all its own. It’s a winner.

The Small Batch Bourbon Collection is a portfolio of Beam’s premium craft-styled bourbons. This group includes such prestigious, limited-edition brands as Knob Creek, Booker’s, Basil Hayden’s, and Baker’s. This is a very special group.





BAKER'S

Introduced in the early 1990s, this fine bourbon was named for Baker Beam, grandnephew of the legendary Jim Beam. Baker's is distilled at a lower proof and barrel-aged in small batches, allowing the bourbon to pull more flavor from the barrel. According to the company, this bourbon is "aged seven years and bottled at 107 proof; utilizes a special strain of jug yeast, which results in a silky-smooth texture and consistent taste from batch to batch."

"We pull barrels from throughout the warehouses where

they are aged—including the top floors—to create a well-balanced bourbon with robust flavors and that signature silky-smooth finish that Baker's is known for," Baker Beam told the *Bourbonr* blog. "Baker's Bourbon is inspired by my personal preference."

BASIL HAYDEN'S

Also introduced in the early 1990s, Meredith Basil Hayden Sr. Bourbon was named for the distiller whose family eventually bottled the iconic brand Old Grand-dad. This high-rye bourbon has incredible spice, and is also the lowest alcohol of the four classic bourbons in the Beam Small Batch Collection. Unlike many of the other bourbons in its lineup, Basil Hayden's mash bill is unique: 63% corn, 27% rye, and 10% malted barley.

Basil Hayden's Dark Rye 80 Proof (40% ABV) is a new, big, complex, rich, intense, high-rye blend of Kentucky straight-rye whiskey mixed with Canadian rye whiskey and port. It was first released in 2017 and is an absolute must-have, one-of-a-kind experience.