01 / THE PRODUCER

Backbone Bourbon Company

A point of view, built barrel by barrel.



The decisive sample

In their 2016 letter, founders Bill Kennedy and Nolan Smith recall considering whether to reduce a 114.9-proof sample. An invited taster finished the remaining whiskey and urged them to keep its strength. The anecdote captures their starting conviction: the barrel was already offering something worth preserving. [S18]

An independent producer’s craft

Selection can be as consequential as production. Backbone Uncut’s product sheet describes ten-barrel batches, minimal filtration and no water added before bottling. Those choices form a recognizable approach even when individual batches differ. [S16]

The place to begin

The company’s current contact address is 6429 Guion Road, Indianapolis. Its official single-barrel program places in-person tastings in the same city. This is a documented company and tasting connection, not a claim that Backbone operates its own whiskey distillery. [S11, S10]

Read beyond the name

The portfolio includes bourbon, rye and blended whiskey. A product family helps you find a style; the exact label tells you which release you have. Origin, age, finish and proof should travel with that specific bottle. [S14]

02 / HISTORY & GEOGRAPHY

A journey through the barrels

Dates distinguish launches, documented editions and today’s program.

December 2010*

The anniversary account dates the first Uncut batch to this month. Other official pages give later early-sales dates. [S2, S3]

2011

Bone Snapper launches. Its official sheet describes a young, 108-proof Lawrenceburg rye. [S4]

2014

Formal company formation and distribution beyond Indiana follow the early brands. [S18]

2016

Old Bones 10 Year Reserve creates a home for selected mature bourbon. [S5]

2017

A Scotland trip inspires Auld Blow-In, subsequently documented as fourteen-year Port Dundas grain whisky. [S6]

By autumn 2019

Bone Snapper X-Ray is documented in a dated review reproduced on the brand’s reserve-rye sheet. [S7]

By summer 2021

The fifteen-year Old Bones bourbon appears in the official record. Its later Batch 2 sheet names Frankfort distillation. [S8]

2022 batch

Decade Down combines five-to-seven-year bourbon with a partial sherry finish. Its name marks the brand’s anniversary. [S2]

April 2024

Backbone announces Old Bones 9K, a ten-year bourbon sourced in Bardstown, Kentucky. [S9]

Checked October 2026

The single-barrel program offers bourbon, rye, wheat and finishing-cask choices, including Indianapolis tastings. [S10]



*First-sale chronology is not fully reconciled. “By” dates establish documented existence, not launch dates. Distillation locations belong to specific releases; Indianapolis identifies the company connection.

03 / WHISKEY & CHARACTER

The decisions behind the pour

Build a blend

The Forge combines bourbon, rye and older light whiskey at 110 proof. Prime offers another blended approach at 104 proof. These are constructed whiskeys with several components, not one universal mash bill. [S13, S12]

Finish with precision

Old Bones Rye Batch 1 documents an apera finish for twenty percent of the blend. Big Bash takes finishing further: its first batch page describes over ninety percent of the whiskey spending six months to two years in finishing casks. [S17, S20]



Taste decides the moment

Almost Old Bones was bottled at nine years because the producer believed the barrels were ready, even though its usual Old Bones threshold was ten. Its name makes a small joke out of a meaningful judgment: another birthday is not the only measure of readiness. [S19]

PRIMARY SOURCES & FURTHER READING

S1 Company history
S2 Decade Down
S3 Trade: early-date conflict
S4 Bone Snapper sheet
S5 Old Bones 10 Year
S6 Auld Blow-In sheet
S7 Bone Snapper X-Ray sheet
S8 Old Bones 15 Year sheet
S9 April 2024 announcement
S10 Single Barrel Program
S11 Current company contact
S12 Prime blend sheet
S13 The Forge blend sheet
S14 Product families
S15 Bone Dry Gin sheet
S16 Uncut production sheet
S17 Old Bones Rye sheet
S18 Founders' 2016 letter
S19 Almost Old Bones sheet
S20 Big Bash

Research checked October 18, 2026. Batch specifications are documented examples, not promises for every release. Original illustrations are symbolic interpretations.