01 / ORIGINS & PEOPLE

Basil Hayden

An old Kentucky name, a modern invitation to explore.

Basil Hayden builds a wide conversation around an inviting first pour. Its flagship high-rye bourbon is bottled at 80 proof. [1] Grain changes, blending and borrowed barrels lead outward from that starting point.

Modern brand: established in 1992 within Booker Noe’s original Small Batch Collection. [2]



The name before the modern brand

Meredith Basil Hayden, Sr., supplies the historical inspiration. Older launch material calls his 1796 recipe a legend. [8] Booker Noe created the modern whiskey; the heritage story and the present business have different beginnings. [1]

Three generations, room to experiment

Booker Noe shaped the original Small Batch family. [3] Fred Noe oversees the Beam portfolio; Freddie Noe leads the separate Fred B. Noe Distillery. [5] Freddie’s Malted Rye extended his grandfather’s interest in changing expectations. [17]

Watercolors are symbolic interpretations, not exact buildings or documentary portraits.

02 / HISTORY & PLACES

A range that keeps opening doors



1992 / A modern starting point Basil Hayden joins Booker’s, Baker’s and Knob Creek in the original collection. [2]

2017 / Blending across origins Dark Rye combines Kentucky rye, Canadian rye and California port. [9]

2018 / Time becomes the headline The first 10 Year Old Bourbon retains the house’s 80-proof presentation. [11]

2021 / Toast Brown rice meets toasted wood. [14]

2026 / Another cask tradition Cognac Cask Reserve brings French oak into the signature bourbon’s story. [20]

Read the place by its role

Clermont is a shared Beam campus and brand home. [6] Boston is a separate distillery, closely tied to Booker’s working life. [4] For 2026, Beam announced a pause at its main Clermont plant while Boston and the craft distillery continued. [27]

The full website follows 14 individually illustrated milestones and the wider producer story.

03 / WHISKEY, STORIES & SOURCES

Follow grain, blend and barrel

Toast replaces rye with brown rice, then blends toasted-barrel-finished bourbon with another brown-rice portion. [14] Golden Rye uses entirely malted rye, also at 80 proof. [19]

Dark Rye includes port in the blend. [9] Cognac Cask Reserve uses casks with twenty to twenty-five years of prior Cognac service. That is not bourbon age. [20]



A barrel’s story can continue after the whiskey leaves. In 2024, El Tesoro released a reposado tequila aged in former Basil Hayden Toast casks. This is a connection through wood, across two distinct spirits. [18]

Research notes & linked sources

Researched October 15-16, 2026. Dates and specifications retain their release context. Sources distinguish brand heritage, production roles and individual expressions. Full chronology and qualifications appear in the website profile.

[1] Core bourbon
[2] Corporate heritage
[3] Beam family history
[4] Boston Batch account
[5] Freddie appointment
[6] Clermont visitor home
[7] Corporate parent
[8] First rye launch
[9] Dark Rye launch
[10] Two by Two
[11] 10 Year Bourbon debut
[12] Caribbean Reserve
[13] 10 Year Rye launch
[14] Toast launch
[15] Subtle Smoke launch
[16] Wine Cask launch
[17] Malted Rye launch
[18] El Tesoro casks
[19] Golden Rye
[20] Cognac Reserve launch
[21] Dark Rye current
[22] Toast current
[23] 10 Year Bourbon
[24] Cognac Reserve
[25] 10 Year Rye archive
[26] Cheese collaboration
[27] 2026 operating note
[28] Current brand range
[29] NC Golden Rye record