01 / ORIGINS & PEOPLE

A river, a still and time.



DRIFTLESS GLEN / BARABOO, WISCONSIN

Brian and Reneé Bemis describe breaking ground in 2012. Whiskey began entering oak in 2014; the restaurant, bar and gift shop welcomed guests in spring 2015. Those dates mark different stages of the same project. [2,4]

Reneé, an artist by trade, says the couple moved from silent partners to full ownership in 2015. Her account includes product ideas, marketing pictures and the chef’s specials. The distillery’s creative work reaches from the glass to the table. [3]

The whiskey program is made in Baraboo. The broader spirits family also includes French-origin brandy and Jalisco-distilled tequila with Wisconsin finishing. Reading those origins separately makes the local whiskey story more precise. [7,9]

02 / HISTORY & PLACES

Wisconsin, in its own time.

2012–2015
Groundbreaking leads to first fills and then a public restaurant and bar. The company and the visitor opening have separate dates. [2,4]

2017–2019
Straight bourbon enters the Heartland competition record. In 2019, 51 Rye earns a category win and Driftless Glen receives Best of Wisconsin. [5,6]

2022–2025
Barrel 7,000 is filled in February 2022. Hospitality reaches a decade from its spring 2015 beginning. [2,4,18]

2026
Older selections, a Madeira finish and the Art Series show how stock and cask choices keep developing. [8]



Water Street
The Baraboo River setting anchors the production and hospitality home at 300 Water Street. [1,10]

A regional name
“Driftless” refers to the absence of glacial drift. Nearby Devil’s Lake also records glacial activity: the Baraboo setting lies at a geological boundary. [16,17]

The rackhouse
The producer describes selecting individual rye barrels from its Wisconsin rackhouse. Barrel identity remains important as the whiskey matures. [12]

03 / WHISKEY & STORIES

Grain, copper and chosen oak.

The published bulk recipes offer a bourbon with corn, rye and malted barley, plus a rye with rye and malted barley. Custom recipes are also offered. These examples do not identify every historical barrel. [9]

Small-batch bourbon combines about twenty selected barrels. Ten-year bourbon and rye take the single-barrel path, with proof varying by barrel. Bourbon de Naranja explores a different vessel: orange-infused Spanish sherry casks. [11,13–15]



Read the vessel

A second cask adds a new production stage. Age, grain, strength and finishing each answer a different question. [13–15]

LINKED RESEARCH SOURCES

1. Official story and equipment
2. Founders’ interview / 2018
3. Reneé: ownership and creativity
4. 7,000th barrel / 2022
5. Heartland results / 2017
6. Heartland awards / 2019
7. Current spirits range
8. Dated distillery exclusives
9. Whiskey origin and bulk recipes
10. Dining and Water Street
11. Small-batch bourbon
12. Single-barrel rye / 96 proof
13. Ten-year cask-strength bourbon
14. Ten-year cask-strength rye
15. Bourbon de Naranja
16. DNR: Driftless Area geology
17. DNR: Baraboo Hills geology
18. Dated hospitality event / 2025

Research: October 19, 2026. Current equipment page says 44 feet; the 2018 interview says 42. Release dates without a year are not assigned one. Historical releases do not imply present stock. Original watercolors are symbolic.