01 / ORIGINS & PEOPLE

A family’s long view

Five brothers brought a retailer's patience to Kentucky whiskey. Founded in Bardstown in 1935, Heaven Hill's story links family ownership, recovery and a return to distilling in its hometown. [1,3]



1935 / BARDSTOWN / FAMILY OWNED

The name connects to William Heavenhill, owner of the original site. Mose, George, Gary, David and Ed Shapira supplied the commercial roots; Joe and Harry Beam helped establish the early whiskey-making practice. [1,3]

Retail patience, whiskey time

The family bought out its partners in 1937. The first barrel, filled December 13, 1935, had to wait before it could earn its keep. The 1939 bonded release turned that patience into a production promise. [1,10]

The people carrying it forward

Earl and Parker Beam helped shape the distilling legacy. Conor O'Driscoll joined as master distiller in 2019. Jodie Filiatreau leads artisanal distilling on Whiskey Row. Kate and Allan Latts became co-presidents in 2022; Max Shapira is executive chairman. [1,2,9]



02 / HISTORY & PLACES

Loss, recovery, return



1935 / 1939

First barrel, then the first bonded release.



1957 / 1986

Evan Williams and Elijah Craig launch.



1996 / 1999

Fire destroys the original plant; Bernheim is acquired.



2004 / 2013

Bardstown and Louisville visitor experiences open.



2024 / 2025

Grain to Glass launches; distilling returns to Bardstown.

Production is not the same as place identity

Bernheim is the Louisville production base acquired in 1999. New Heaven Hill Springs filled its first barrel April 7, 2025, before the September 4 grand opening. The Bourbon Experience, Whiskey Row artisanal site, warehouse network and corporate office each have distinct roles. [1,2,4,5,11,18]

03 / WHISKEY & STORIES

Many paths to flavor

Rye-recipe and wheated bourbons sit beside rye, wheat and corn whiskeys. Larceny and Old Fitzgerald are wheated bourbons; Bernheim Original is wheat whiskey. The category and the expression both matter. [8,12,13]



A seed-to-sip identity

Grain to Glass began in 2024 with bourbon, wheated bourbon and rye. Beck's Hybrids and Peterson Farms connect agricultural choices to the label. The announced 2026 Year of Wheat explores traditional maturation, French oak and extra aging. [6,16]

Tradition leaves room for a new recipe

The 2026 Double Mash is nine-year, 100-proof bourbon combining two-thirds rye-recipe and one-third wheated bourbon. Parker's Heritage changes annually; the 2026 twentieth edition is a fourteen-year bourbon tribute to Parker Beam. [14,17]

The survivor in the refrigerator

Heaven Hill's account recalls its proprietary yeast surviving the 1996 fire in a refrigerator. Competitors helped keep whiskey production moving during recovery. The culture connects the old distillery to the next chapter. [1,20,21]

Read further / linked primary sources

[1] Distilleries & history
[2] Corporate timeline
[3] Shapira family
[4] 2025 first barrel
[5] Springs grand opening
[6] Grain to Glass launch
[8] Whiskey portfolio
[9] Whiskey makers
[10] Bottled-in-bond
[11] Warehouse landscape
[12] Larceny
[13] Bernheim wheat whiskey
[14] Parker’s Heritage
[16] 2026 Year of Wheat
[17] Double Mash
[18] Corporate office
[20] Charlie Downs recollection
[21] Fire anniversary