01 / ORIGINS & PEOPLE

A name worth bringing back.



An old Kentucky name returned through a new distillery. Peerless connects Henry Kraver’s Henderson whiskey business with his descendants’ Louisville revival, then gives that inheritance a distinctive modern voice: sweet mash, low barrel-entry proof and whiskey bottled at barrel strength.

1889 heritage. 2015 production restart. Henderson was the old home; Louisville is the modern one. The distinction is essential to understanding Peerless. [1,2]

Henry Kraver built the historical business after acquiring the Worsham operation. His great-grandson Corky Taylor and Corky’s son Carson later brought the family name back with a new distillery and whiskey they made themselves. [1,5]

The modern production story also belongs to its team. Caleb Kilburn helped establish the revived process and received the master-distiller title in 2018. Later release announcements credit John Wadell with tasting and selection and Nick Klee with distilling and batching. These are dated credits, not a single current staff roster. [6,11,13]

02 / HISTORY & PLACES

Two homes. A renewed craft.

1881 · Before the Kraver chapter
Worsham and Johnston begin the Henderson operation that makes the first Peerless whiskey.

1889 · Henry Kraver takes ownership
Kraver acquires the Worsham business. His investment defines the historic Peerless family chapter.

1917 · Production stops
Wartime grain conservation ends distilling; national Prohibition later extends the interruption.

2014 · Building the Louisville revival
Corky and Carson Taylor begin restoring the building for a new distillery; the original DSP number is recovered.

March–June 2015 · Whiskey returns to the barrel
The first barrel is filled March 4. The public grand opening follows June 3.

May 2017 · Rye reaches the public
The revived producer releases its first aged rye whiskey. A new distillery can finally be judged by its whiskey.

June 22, 2019 · Bourbon makes its return
Four-year-old bourbon debuts after the 2015 restart. The release brings the family revival into a second major whiskey category.

September 2021 · Double Oak becomes deliberate
A technique first used to save whiskey from leaking barrels becomes a curated bourbon release, selecting barrels for another encounter with fresh oak.

April 2026 · A decade in the barrel
Henry Kraver's Old Reserve debuts as Peerless's first ten-year whiskey. The May release retrospective confirms Batch 1 reached visitors at the distillery.



Henderson
The historic business and Kraver family chapter. Its closure separates it from the modern distillery. [1–3]

Louisville
120 North 10th Street is the production and visitor home. The restored urban site anchors the revival. [5,13]

Henry County
A separate maturation location appears in the company's 2018 warehouse opening record. It is not a second distilling address. [2]

Chronology sources: [2–5,9,13,14]. The complete website preserves the longer illustrated timeline and research qualifications.

03 / WHISKEY & STORIES

Grain, oak and patient choices.

The production signature

Fresh grain and water for sweet mash, a Vendome copper column, 107-proof barrel entry in the 2019 bourbon announcement, barrel-strength bottling and no chill filtration. Entry proof and bottle proof describe different moments. [5–8,16–18]



Three ways to explore Peerless

Start with small-batch bourbon and rye. Compare a single barrel to appreciate selection. Then explore Double Oak, High Rye or Toasted to see how a second barrel, a changed grain recipe or a different wood treatment creates another direction. [9–11,16–18]

A rescue became a release

Peerless says Double Oak began with whiskey moved out of leaking barrels. Intentional selection turned that practical remedy into a defining expression. The ten-year Henry Kraver’s Old Reserve adds another chapter: a decade of modern maturation, not surviving nineteenth-century stock. [9,13–15]

Linked sources · Complete research notes and qualifications appear in the full profile.

1. The Peerless story
2. Official historical timeline
3. History comes full circle
4. The return of Peerless rye, 2017
5. First bourbon in 102 years, 2019
6. Caleb Kilburn appointment, 2018
7. The Peerless still
8. Peerless and Kelvin Cooperage
9. Double Oak announcement, 2021
10. High Rye Bourbon
11. Toasted Bourbon Batch 1, 2024
12. The Peerless team
13. Ten-year bourbon announcement, 2026
14. Ten-year release retrospective, May 2026
15. Henry Kraver’s Old Reserve
16. Small Batch Bourbon
17. Small Batch Rye
18. Single Barrel Bourbon