THE THELEN RESERVE

# BOURBON KNOWLEDGE

A BOURBON PRIMER

## What to Know About Bourbon




**NEW CHARRED OAK**
American whiskey

**51% CORN MINIMUM**

Corn must make up at least 51% of the grain. Rye, wheat and malted barley are common partners.



**IN THE GLASS**

Vanilla, oak and caramel are familiar starting points. Try it neat, over ice or stirred into a cocktail.



**Old Fashioned**
Sugar and bitters frame the whiskey.



**Manhattan**
Sweet vermouth adds depth to a stirred pour.

GRAIN TO GLASS

## Bourbon

### 1 The Mash

Enzymes free sugars from cooked grain. Yeast turns them into alcohol.





### 2 Distillation



In a pot still, vapor rises and condenses into clear spirit. Maximum 160 proof.

**3 AGE**



Fill new charred oak.

**4 BOTTLE**



At 80 proof or more.

**5 DRINK**



Pour, nose and sip.

WOOD, AIR AND TIME

## Bourbon Barrel Aging

**Heat**
Warm spirit expands into the oak.



**Oak extract**
Toasted oak lends color and vanilla notes.

**WARM PHASE**

**Time**
Wood and spirit react over time.



**Air**
Oxygen enters in small amounts.

**MATURATION**

**Cooling**
Cool spirit contracts and moves back.



**Angel's share**
Water and alcohol slowly evaporate.

**COOL PHASE**

CYCLE REPEATS

CLASSIC

## Bourbon

COCKTAILS & SERVES



**Bourbon neat**
Bourbon alone. Room temperature.



**Old Fashioned**
Sugar, bitters, orange peel.



**Bourbon Sour**
Lemon juice, simple syrup.



**On the rocks**
Bourbon over fresh ice.



**Milk Punch**
Milk, sugar, nutmeg.



**Sazerac**
Bitters, sugar, absinthe rinse.



**Bourbon & Cola**
Bourbon, cola, ice.



**Hot Toddy**
Hot water, honey, lemon.



**Manhattan**
Sweet vermouth, aromatic bitters.



**Kentucky Mule**
Ginger beer, fresh lime.



**Mint Julep**
Mint, sugar, crushed ice.



**Brown Derby**
Grapefruit, honey syrup.



**01** 86.6 proof
**Angel's Envy**
Louisville
Port cask finish



**02** 100 proof
**Jim Beam**
Clermont
Knob Creek 12



**03** 86.6 proof
**Evan Williams**
Louisville
Single Barrel



**04** 104 proof
**Bulleit**
Shelbyville
Single Barrel



**05** 100 proof
**Four Roses**
Lawrenceburg
Single Barrel



**06** 100 proof
**Heaven Hill**
Bardstown
Bottled-in-Bond



**07** 110.2 proof
**Maker's Mark**
Loretto
46 Cask Strength



**08** 101 proof
**Wild Turkey**
Lawrenceburg
101 Bourbon



**09** 90.4 proof
**Woodford Reserve**
Versailles
Distiller's Select



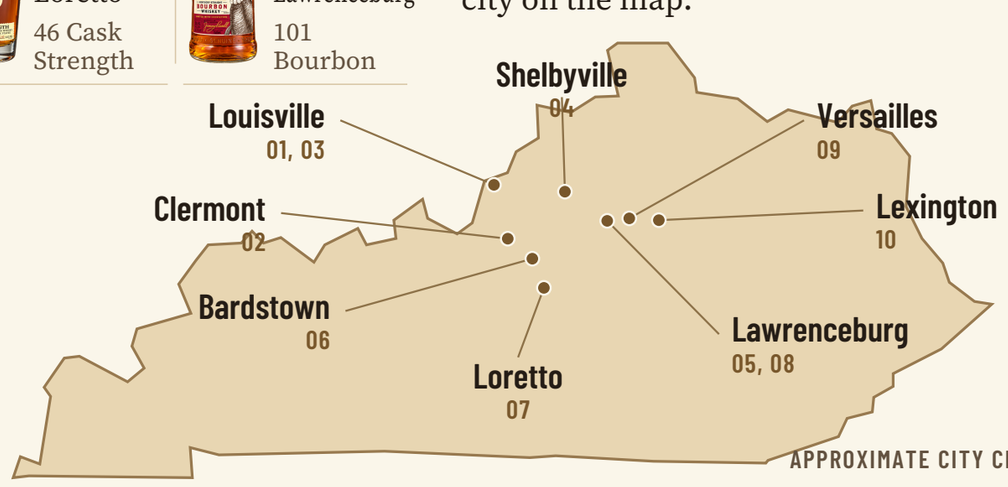
**10** 90 proof
**Town Branch**
Lexington
Straight Bourbon

Proofs refer to the bottles shown.

A FIELD DIRECTORY

## Kentucky Bourbon Distilleries

Ten Kentucky distillery and visitor sites. Match the number beside a bottle to its city on the map.




# BOURBON

A GUIDE TO AMERICA'S NATIVE SPIRIT

FROM THE TASTING TABLE

## Bourbon Tasting Guide

### WHAT IS BOURBON?

- Made in the United States.
- At least 51% corn in the mash.
- Distilled at 160 proof or less.
- Into new charred oak at 125 proof or less.
- At least 80 proof. No added flavor or color.
- Straight bourbon ages at least two years.

**HOW MUCH?**

Try a half-ounce pour with room to swirl.

**SHOULD I ADD WATER?**

Taste neat. Add water a few drops at a time and smell again.

### FIVE STEPS TO TASTING

**01 Appearance**
Tilt the glass against white paper. Look at the hue and clarity.

**02 Nose**
Lift the glass slowly. Sniff gently and name the first aroma you notice.

**03 Taste**
Take a small sip. Notice sweetness, spice and the texture across your tongue.

**04 Finish**
After the sip, notice which flavors linger and how long they last.

**05 Complexity**
Take a second sip. Which notes emerge, linger or fade as the glass rests?

### APPEARANCE

- Clear
- White wine
- Pale straw
- Light gold
- Pale amber
- Burnt amber
- Polished copper
- Auburn
- Mahogany
- Burnt umber
- Old oak
- Brown sherry
- Treacle

### NOSE AND TASTE

| | |
|---|---|
| SMOKE | Char, ash, campfire |
| WOOD | Oak, cedar, toast |
| FRUIT | Orange, apple, peach, cherry |
| FLORAL | Wildflower, orange blossom |
| GREEN | Cut grass, mint, eucalyptus |
| CEREAL | Malt, bran, toasted grain |
| NUTS | Almond, walnut, hazelnut |
| SPICE | Cinnamon, clove, nutmeg |
| HERBAL | Basil, rosemary, pepper |
| SWEET | Vanilla, caramel, brown sugar |
| BAKERY | Cake, custard, marshmallow |
| HONEYED | Honey, toffee, butterscotch |
| COCOA | Cocoa nib, dark chocolate |

### FINISH

Acidic
Citrusy
Creamy
Dry
Fresh
Long
Mellow
Oily
Smoky
Spicy
Strong
Sweet
Velvety

Clear is the new-make reference. Color alone cannot tell you age.