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



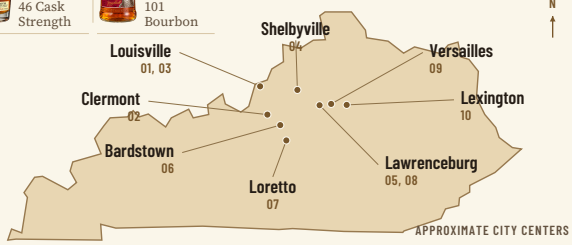
10 90 proof
Town Branch
Lexington
Straight Bourbon

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.



APPROXIMATE CITY CENTERS

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	NOSE AND TASTE		FINISH
Clear	SMOKE	Char, ash, campfire	Acidic
White wine	WOOD	Oak, cedar, toast	Citrusy
Pale straw	FRUIT	Orange, apple, peach, cherry	Creamy
Light gold	FLORAL	Wildflower, orange blossom	Dry
Pale amber	GREEN	Cut grass, mint, eucalyptus	Fresh
Burnt amber	CEREAL	Malt, bran, toasted grain	Long
Polished copper	NUTS	Almond, walnut, hazelnut	Mellow
Auburn	SPICE	Cinnamon, clove, nutmeg	Oily
Mahogany	HERBAL	Basil, rosemary, pepper	Smoky
Burnt umber	SWEET	Vanilla, caramel, brown sugar	Spicy
Old oak	BAKERY	Cake, custard, marshmallow	Strong
Brown sherry	HONEYED	Honey, toffee, butterscotch	Sweet
Treacle	COCOA	Cocoa nib, dark chocolate	Velvety

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