

Q&A with U.S. craft distillers - Celebrating America's native spirit - Bourbon!

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In celebration of the uniquely American history of Bourbon, craft distilleries share their knowledge about their distilleries, as well as each one's inimitable Bourbon expressions.

When is a whiskey classified as Bourbon?

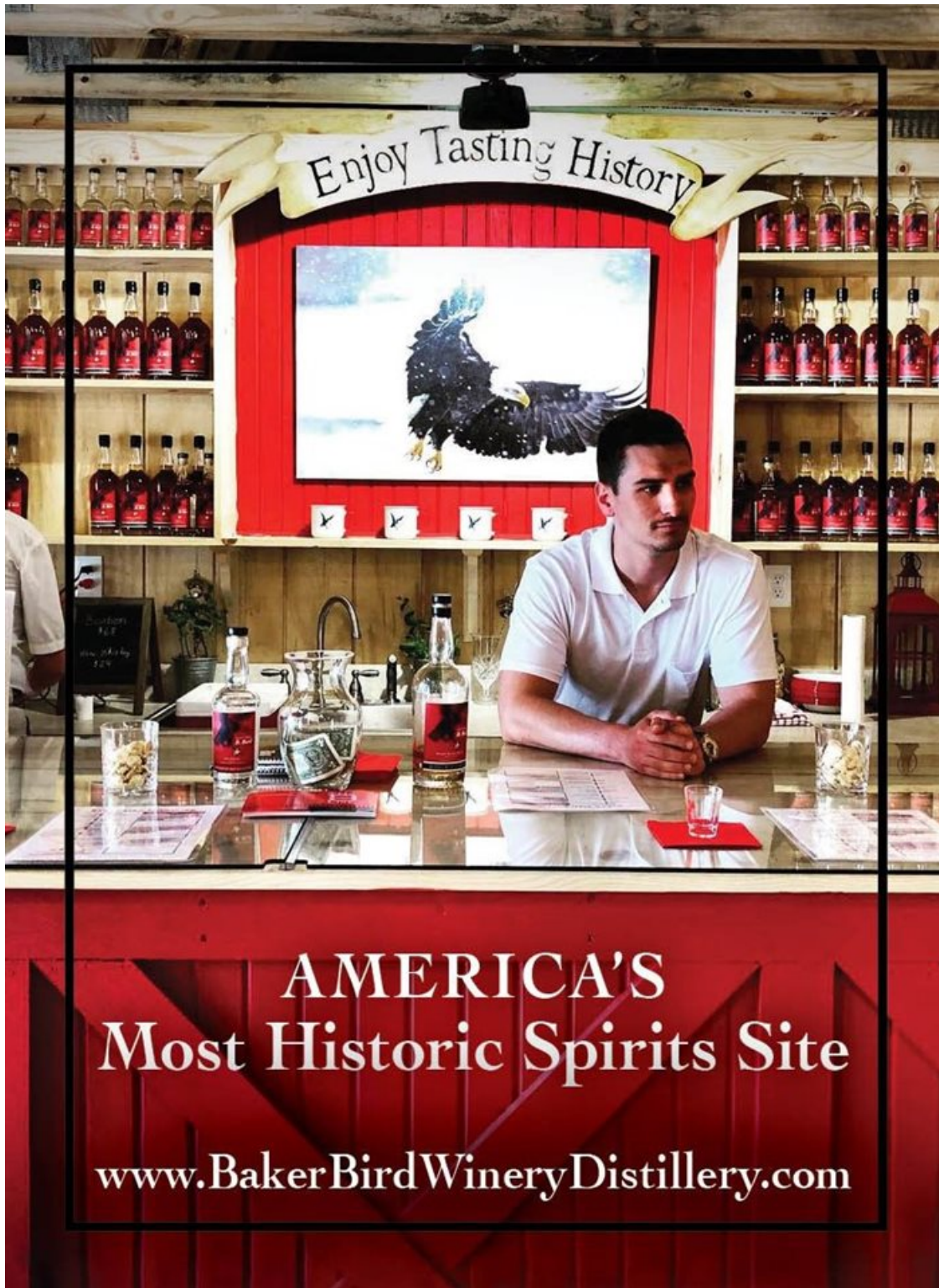
To be considered Bourbon, the spirit must be distilled in the United States, consist of at least 51% corn, aged in charred, new oak barrels, and contain no colouring or flavouring additives. Bourbon may be produced in any state in America. To be designated 'straight Bourbon whiskey', it must be aged in new charred oak barrels for at least two years.

Depending on the mash bill, distiller and ageing process, the flavour notes in various Bourbons will vary considerably. However, aficionados will often identify notes of cereal, vanilla, caramel and spice.

What makes bourbon special?

"The B-Bird Kentucky Statehood Bourbon is based on a recipe that is over 200 years old from one of the oldest bourbon distilling sites in Kentucky," comments Dinah Bird of B-Bird Distillery.





B-Bird Distillery

Stephen Gould, founder and master distiller of Golden Moon Distillery says, "Our bourbon is matured for at least six months in new heavy char American oak before finishing their maturation in French oak casks that previously held a California port-style wine. The whiskeys are bottled at 50% to provide an extra bit of heft to the whole affair."



Stephen Gould - Founder and master distiller of Golden Moon Distillery

What does your bourbon taste like?

Dinah Bird describes the B-Bird Kentucky Statehood Bourbon's flavour as a rye bourbon that has a touch of sweetness from the corn mash which is very smooth.



Gunfighter Golden Moon

The Gun Fighter American Double Cask Bourbon is described by Gould as having a unique smoothness and complexity coupled with a rye spiciness.

What is unique in the distillation process of your product?

Dinah Bird explains that the unique distillation process is all by hand with a 50 gallon still. “It is a craft bourbon based on locally grown corn in the Northern Kentucky area, which creates a classic bourbon flavour profile.”

On the other hand, Golden Moon uses Moravian 2-Row barley. “This particular strain of spring barley was brought into the United States by Coors Brewing in 1947. Coors is also located in Golden, Colorado,” explains Gould. “So, in a bit of Goliath helping David good will, small lots of this light, sweet malt will periodically make their way over to Golden Moon Distillery into its 1,600-bushel grain silo.



B-Bird Distillery

What is the best way to drink bourbon?

“Neat into a club glass with an ice cube, which really opens up the Bourbon” says Dinah Bird, Executive Bourbon Stewart and Wine & Food Pairing Professional at B-Bird Distillery.

What is your favourite bourbon cocktail?

Dinah Bird: The Bullfrog.

How to make it:

- Start with 20ml lime juice
- Combine with simple syrup and honey syrup into a goblet
- Top with water and stir
- Pour over a goblet with ice and sliced lime
- Add 40ml Kentucky Statehood Bourbon and stir well
- Garnish with a sprig of mint

Stephen Gould: Old Fashioned

How to make it:

- 44ml Bourbon
- 10ml Maple Syrup or simple syrup
- 4 Dashes Aromatic Bitters
- Garnish – Orange Zest
- Stir and strain into a rocks glass.

Bourbons in South Africa

A number of globally recognised American Whiskey brands are widely available in South Africa, including Jack Daniels,

Wild Turkey, Jim Beam, Makers Mark, Bulleit Bourbon, Woodford Reserve and Knob Creek.

The local market is growing as South Africans discover the variety, quality and versatility of Bourbons available. Building on the market initially created by globally recognised American Whiskey brands such as Jack Daniels, Wild Turkey, Jim Beam, and Bulleit Bourbon, growing numbers of small Bourbon producers, such as Whistling Andy, B-Bird, Flag Hill and Golden Moon distillery's Gunfighter Bourbon are also being well received in South Africa.

Whistling Andy – a Straight Bourbon Whiskey comprising 60% corn, 17.5% barley, 17.5% wheat and 5% rye, this award-winning and complex Bourbon is aged for three to four years.

B-Bird – B. Bird Distillery's young Bourbons recognise historic distillers who did not have time to age Bourbon. B. Bird's Straight Bourbon Whiskey, aged for two years, is described as fruity, with notes of ripe berries, dates, sweet corn, vanilla and oak.

Flag Hill – Flag Hill distillery's Straight Bourbon Whiskey is distilled and aged in New Hampshire, where ever-changing weather impacts the complexity of the spirit. It develops soft, warm notes of butterscotch and toffee, with layers of earthy flavours.

Gunfighter – Golden Moon Distillery's Gun Fighter American Bourbon - Double Cask is aged for a minimum six months in new American oak casks, and then finished in used French oak casks that previously held California port-style wine. This gives the whiskey a unique smoothness and complexity.

For recipes Follow [@usdistilledspiritssa](#) on Instagram and [@USwhiskeyZA](#) on Facebook.



Flag Hill - Bourbon

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