



WHAT'S NEW IN KENTUCKY BOURBON

Bourbon Events, Distillers, Expansions Enhance Guests' Experiences

Distilleries

Bardstown Bourbon Company completes expansion — Bardstown Bourbon Company has completed a \$28.7 million expansion, increasing its annual capacity to 18 million proof gallons. The expansion includes new stills, fermentation tanks, bottling facilities, and warehouses. This growth allows Bardstown Bourbon to support its own brands and contract distilling partners. The company is also committed to sustainability, implementing energy-saving measures and reducing its environmental impact.

<https://www.thespiritsbusiness.com/2024/10/bardstown-bourbon-co-completes-expansion/>

James B. Beam Distilling celebrates 230 years — James B. Beam Distillery in Clermont, Kentucky, is celebrating 90 years of distilling. The distillery, with a rich history dating back 230 years, produces iconic brands like Jim Beam, Basil Hayden's, Knob Creek, Booker's, and Little Book. The distillery has recently focused on enhancing the visitor experience with a new restaurant, the Fred B. Noe Distillery, and immersive tours. Beyond its products, Beam is committed to community engagement, supporting local industries and creating jobs. <https://www.lex18.com/news/covering-kentucky/more-than-230-years-of-history-bottled-at-james-b-beam-distilling-company>

New Distillery to open next to Kentucky Castle — Saga Spirits Group is building a \$92.5 million distillery in Woodford County, Kentucky, near the Kentucky Castle. The distillery will include a visitor center, tasting rooms, lodging, a restaurant, retail space, and event venues. The project is expected to create 89 jobs and boost the local economy. Saga Spirits, led by Wes Henderson, co-founder of Angel's Envy, aims to make the new distillery a destination for bourbon enthusiasts and contribute to the region's rich bourbon heritage. <https://www.yahoo.com/news/distillery-coming-near-kentucky-castle-114500284.html>

Lawrenceburg Bourbon Company rebrands as Larrikin — Greg and Katie Keeley, owners of the former Lawrenceburg Bourbon Co., have relaunched as Larrikin Bourbon Co., a nod to Greg's Australian heritage. "Larrikin" refers to a non-conformist, a spirit the Keeleys aim to bring to Kentucky bourbon. <https://craftspiritsmag.com/2024/11/05/kentucky-distillery-rebrands-as-larrikin-distilling-co/>

Green River set to open tasting room in Louisville — Owensboro based Green River Distilling Co. is opening a tasting room on Louisville's Main Street in mid-2025. The 4,400-square-foot space will feature a tasting bar, retail shop, lounge, speakeasy, and performance stage. This addition to the city's growing bourbon scene highlights the distillery's rich history and commitment to sharing the spirit of Kentucky.

Old Commonwealth Distillery reviving historic buildings that once produced iconic Kentucky bourbons — An abandoned distillery in Anderson County, Kentucky, once home to renowned brands like Van Winkle, is being revived as Old Commonwealth Distillery. The new owners are restoring the historic site and planning to produce bourbon, honoring the region's rich history and creating jobs for local residents. The owners' goal is to be included on the Bourbon Trail by spring 2025.

https://www.wdrb.com/news/business/new-distillery-reviving-historic-buildings-that-once-produced-iconic-kentucky-bourbons/article_9da905c2-6b26-11ef-aa2c-37c3e20dd3a9.html

Makers Mark begins massive expansion project — Maker's Mark is expanding its distillery with a \$18.5 million project creating jobs and enhancing visitor experiences. The expansion includes new facilities for food, drinks, education, and a bourbon library. This project is expected to generate a positive economic impact and attract tourists from outside Kentucky. https://www.pmg-ky2.com/springfield/news/makers-mark-approved-for-18-5-million-expansion/article_74e8658d-a712-50c1-a188-bd3cfd95c366.html

Henderson Distilling Co. to open in downtown Henderson – In September 2024, state and local officials broke ground on a new bourbon distillery in downtown Henderson. Henderson Distilling owners plan to rehabilitate the former Henderson Municipal Power & Light campus in downtown Henderson as part of this project, revitalizing two longstanding facilities in the community. They also will construct a new building on the campus, with barrels stored in a renovated building on the property and a visitor center located in a 7,000-s.f. structure facing Main Street. The operation will include a full-production distillery, tourism and retail space, and is expected to open in early 2025. <https://www.lanereport.com/176866/2024/09/henderson-distilling-co-breaks-ground-on-5m-startup-distillery/>

Whiskey Thief Distilling Co. Opens Louisville Location – Whiskey Thief Distilling, formerly Three Boys Distillery, has opened a new location in the NuLu section of Louisville. The new facility opened in October 2024, the Frankfort based distillery offers its signature straight from the barrel tastings as well as a cocktail bar, indoor and outdoor seating, private event space and a retail area. <https://www.wlky.com/article/first-look-whiskey-thief-nulu-tasting-room/62568995>
<https://www.lanereport.com/175997/2024/08/whiskey-thief-distilling-company-to-expand-signature-single-barrel-tasting-thieving-experience-into-louisville/>

Augusta Distillery nears completion on new distillery – Augusta Distillery in Bracken County has nearly completed the renovation of an existing 45,000-square-foot-building, formerly home to the F.A. Neider Co. in Augusta. The company has spent more than \$45 million to build a state-of-the-art distillery, guest experience and event center in downtown Augusta. The facility is on track to be operational by late 2024. <https://commonwealth-of-ky.muckrack.com/link/gNxtSd/kentucky-distillery-in-final-final-stretch-of-achieving-full-production> <https://www.distillerytrail.com/blog/augusta-distillery-announces-new-23-million-distillery-and-event-center-in-kentucky/>

Garrard County Distilling Co. fills first barrels in new facility – For the first time since the 1800s, Garrard County is producing bourbon. As of January 2024, Garrard County Distilling filled its first barrels in its new facility that is just beginning of a \$250 million project. GCD, which is owned by Atlanta based spirits producer Staghorn, sits on a 210-acre site that will be home to 50,000-square-foot distillery and two rickhouses, with plans for up to 24 aging warehouses by 2030. A visitor center with a tasting room and restaurant is scheduled to open by the end of 2024. <https://spectrumnews1.com/ky/louisville/news/2024/01/17/garrard-county-distilling-company-opening>
<https://www.lex18.com/spotlight-series/spotlight-on-lancaster-garrard-county-distilling-kentuckys-largest-all-new-independent-distillery>

J. Mattingly 1845 Distillery opens in Frankfort – A new bourbon distillery has opened up shop in Frankfort, just across the street from the Buffalo Trace campus. J. Mattingly is a 23,000 square feet facility that includes a gift shop, tasting bar, small pot still and a custom bourbon blending experience. Tours, tastings and experiences are offered Monday through Saturday. <https://www.thedrinksreport.com/news/2023/19199-j-mattingly-1845-distillery-opens-in-frankfort-ky.html>

New Distillery Coming to Cynthiana via Barrel House Distilling Co. – The Lexington based Barrel House Distilling Co. is planning to expand their production facility 30-miles north into Cynthiana. In addition to distilling bourbon and various other spirits, the \$1.8 million project will yield an event space capable of hosting up to 100 guests. The new location, which is set to open in late 2024, will be a stop on the Moonshine Trail and Kentucky Bourbon Trail respectively. <https://www.gobourbon.com/new-distillery->

[coming-to-cynthiana-ky-via-barrel-house-distilling-co/
https://www.kentucky.com/lexgoeat/bourbon/article282530568.html](https://www.kentucky.com/lexgoeat/bourbon/article282530568.html)

Brothers Wright Distilling to build \$38 million distillery – will age bourbon underground in Appalachian coal mine – Brothers Wright distilling unveiled plans to build a distillery and visitors center in Pike County. The facility will be located near the West Virginia border on the Tug Fork tributary of the Big Sandy River. The 12,000-square-foot project will feature a distillery, rick house, welcome center, museum and restaurant. The project is expected to be finished by late 2024. <https://www.distillerytrail.com/blog/brothers-wright-distilling-to-build-38-million-distillery-will-age-bourbon-underground-in-appalachian-coal-mine-renderings/>

Central Kentucky dads look to open Black-owned distillery – Two fathers in Garrard County plan to open a Black-owned distillery on a plot of land once owned by a local Ku Klux Klan leader. The distillery owners aim to bring tourism to the county and to inspire others to be attentive and loving fathers. The distillery is slated to open in 2025. <https://spectrumnews1.com/ky/louisville/news/2023/09/25/daad-distilling-company>

Experiences

Heaven Hill Opens New Eatery: Five Brothers Bar & Kitchen — Heaven Hill has opened the Five Brothers Bar & Kitchen, a new restaurant paying tribute to the five Shapira brothers who founded the company in 1935. Located upstairs in the Heaven Hill Bourbon Experience in Bardstown, KY, the restaurant offers lunch and dinner featuring Southern cuisine with a modern twist. The menu highlights include fried chicken sandwiches, grilled cheese, and unique dishes like the Fluffernutter and Max's Garden Sandwich. The restaurant's warm atmosphere and delicious food make it a must-visit for locals and tourists alike. <https://www.fredminnick.com/2024/09/09/heaven-hill-opens-new-eatery-five-brothers-bar-kitchen/>

Elijah Craig opens speakeasy in KFC YUM Center — The KFC Yum Center has unveiled a new premium space: the Elijah Craig Speakeasy. This stylish bar offers a luxurious setting for pre-game or halftime cocktails. The space features a marble bar and wood accents, showcasing the elegance of Elijah Craig bourbon. The signature Elijah Craig Small Batch Old Fashioned and a classic Manhattan are among the featured cocktails. <https://www.bizjournals.com/louisville/news/2024/10/08/speakeasy-yum-center.html>

New Bourbon initiative highlights Western Kentucky distilleries — The "Wild West of Kentucky Bourbon" campaign highlights Western Kentucky's distilleries. Six distilleries are participating, offering tours, tastings, and unique experiences. The campaign aims to increase tourism to the region and provide alternative options for bourbon enthusiasts after the Kentucky Bourbon Trail Passport and Field Guide retire in 2025. Souvenir cards and a video series will promote the initiative. Participating distilleries include Casey Jones Distillery (Hopkinsville, KY), Dueling Grounds Distillery (Franklin, KY), Green River Distilling Company (Owensboro, KY), MB Roland Distillery (Pembroke, KY), The Bard Distillery (Graham, KY) and Henderson Distilling (Coming soon to Henderson, KY). <https://www.wnky.com/bourbon-campaign-launches-showcases-the-rich-history-of-distilleries/>

B-Line bourbon experience adds two new stops — The B-Line, a bourbon experience in Northern Kentucky, welcomes Jerry's Jug House (Newport) and Greyhound Tavern (Ft. Mitchell) to its roster. This brings the total to 27 stops across Covington, Newport, and other Kentucky towns. The B-Line offers access to distilleries, bars, and restaurants focused on Kentucky bourbon culture, fostering tourism and economic growth in the region. <https://www.citybeat.com/food-drink/two-northern-kentucky-establishments-join-the-b-line-18240575>

Scotch Whisky Bottler to open bourbon facility in Waddy — Independent bottler, The Perfect Fifth, has announced plans to build two 20,000-square-foot warehouses and an additional 2,000-square-foot building that will house a bottling line and an experimental pot still. In addition, a third facility, in the vicinity of 5,000 to 6,000 square feet, will be built to house a barrel picking experience/tasting room. No time frame has been given, but the company has further plans to build a barley malting and bourbon distillery respectively. <https://www.bizjournals.com/louisville/news/2024/11/12/the-perfect-fifth-bourbon-campus-waddy-2024.html>

Rabbit Hole Distillery moves forward with NuLu expansion plan – Rabbit Hole Distillery plans to expand its facilities in Louisville, Kentucky. The distillery will take over the entire block it occupies on East Jefferson Street. Most of the buildings on the block will be demolished. The expansion will allow for easier access for trucks and eliminate truck idling on the street. The company also plans to create tasting rooms and retail spaces. <https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/realestate/rabbit-hole-now-one-step-closer-to-expanding-its-nulu-campus/ar-AA1st2T6?ocid=finance-verthp-feeds>

Casey Jones Distillery Launches Mash Maker's Experience – As a way to start off Bourbon Heritage Month, Casey Jones Distillery in Hopkinsville launched a new experience that allows guests to learn about the characteristics of each of the ingredients in bourbon and how each of them impact the production process. Each tour runs approximately 45 minutes and can accommodate up to 20 guests per group. <https://www.fredminnick.com/2024/08/26/casey-jones-distillery-launches-mash-makers-experience/>

Log Still Distillery opens high-end restaurant in downtown Louisville - Log Still Distillery celebrated the grand opening of its restaurant and tasting room experience, Monks Road Boiler House, on Whiskey Row in downtown Louisville. Named after the distillery's flagship line of bourbons and gins, Monk's Road Boiler House embodies the rich history and craftsmanship of Log Still Distillery, providing guests with an immersive and nostalgic dining experience. <https://www.leoweekly.com/louisville/a-new-chophouse-from-well-known-distillery-is-now-open-on-louisvilles-whiskey-row/Slideshow/16592190>

James B. Beam Distilling Co. introduces new visitor experiences and event schedule – James B. Beam Distilling Co., located in Clermont, announced that it was adding new visitor experiences as well as expanding on the distillery's events calendar. New offerings include brand-specific experiences, tastings, and a limited series "Behind The Beam" events for an inside look into whiskey making. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/the-james-b-beam-distilling-co-announces-new-visitor-experiences-and-events-calendar-302166313.html>

Wild Turkey Names New Visitor Center after its legendary master distiller – Wild Turkey has opened the Jimmy Russell Wild Turkey Experience, a newly remodeled visitor center, named for legendary master distiller Jimmy Russell. The 12,000-square-foot space features a new gift shop, tasting room, and bar, as well as an outdoor deck that offers views of the Kentucky River. A lounge called Generations, named for the three generations of the Russell family who work at Wild Turkey, is focused on mixology. <https://whiskyadvocate.com/Wild-Turkey-s-New-Visitor-Center#:~:text=Wild%20Turkey%20has%20opened%20the,views%20of%20the%20Kentucky%20River.>

Limestone Branch Distillery expands barrel program and opens new tasting lodge for barrel picks – Limestone Branch Distillery in Lebanon, Kentucky, has opened the Stephen B. Beam Tasting Lodge, a new 1,250 square-foot tasting space dedicated to its expanded barrel program. The lodge is named after Limestone Branch Distillery's founder and pays homage to his love of Yellowstone National Park. <https://kybourbon.com/industry-news/limestone-branch-distillery-expands-barrel-program-and-opens-new-tasting-lodge-for-barrel-picks/>

Buffalo Trace Distillery opens whiskey experience in London - Buffalo Trace Distillery debuted the Buffalo Trace Distillery London in May 2024, marking its first overseas location. Situated in Covent Garden, the American whiskey experience showcases the brand's renowned products and offers guided tastings, and insight into the distillery's rich history. Guests can choose from two tasting experiences:

"Taste of the Trace" or "Tradition & Change." The renovated 2,000-square-foot space will also feature a retail store with exclusive merchandise. Reservations are required for tastings, and walk-ins will be accommodated on a first-come, first-served basis. This expansion aims to introduce American whiskey enthusiasts to Buffalo Trace's offerings in the heart of London.

<https://www.tastingtable.com/1589271/buffalo-trace-distillery-london-review/>

<https://www.thebourbonflight.com/buffalo-trace-distillery-is-going-across-the-pond/>

RD1 Spirits plans \$4.8m Kentucky distillery – RD1 Distillery is building the new anchor facility in the Lexington entertainment district known as The Commons. The new facility is scheduled to open in early 2025. It will be more than double the size of RD1's current location and will allow it to produce its own bourbon. Spanning 10,215 square feet, the new site will more than double the size of RD1's current tasting room and gift shop on Manchester Road, Lexington. The site will include an 800-gallon pot still, a 175-gallon pot still, a 750-gallon fermenter and a 1,000-gallon mash cooker.

<https://www.thespiritsbusiness.com/2024/01/rd1-spirits-plans-4-8m-kentucky-distillery/>

<https://www.lanereport.com/175629/2024/08/rd1-spirits-creates-rd-master-distiller-role/>

New Riff Distillery completes \$3 million renovation, unveils new rooftop bar – New Riff Distilling in Newport unveiled its newly renovated Aquifer tasting room and rooftop cocktail bar that gives guests an unimpeded view of the Cincinnati skyline. The renovation also included an overhaul of the first-floor gift shop, welcoming station, and pre-tour waiting area. <https://www.wcpo.com/money/local-business-news/new-riff-completes-3-million-distillery-renovation-unveils-new-rooftop-bar>

Pursuit Spirits launches immersive distillery tours in Clifton – Pursuit Spirits has begun giving tours of its Distillery located in Louisville's Clifton neighborhood, on the corner of Mellwood and Frankfort avenues. There are two types of tours available; one that consists of a tasting, barrel pick and fill your own bottle and one that goes in depth on pursuit's small-batch bourbon and its unique flavor profile.

Additionally, the distillery will open a visitor experience on Main Street in downtown Louisville in March 2025. <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/life/food/spirits/bourbon/2023/12/08/pursuit-spirits-opens-clifton-distillery-with-immersive-tours-tastings/71816576007/>

<https://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/2024/09/04/whiskey-row-pursuit-spirits-bourbon-experience-under-construction/74876613007/>

Hotels

First ever Bourbon-Infused Hotel coming to Bardstown —The Trail Hotel, a luxury bourbon-infused hotel, is set to open in Bardstown, Kentucky in spring 2025. This historic property offers 95 rooms, suites, a restaurant, multiple bars, and a pool. With direct access to Kentucky's Bourbon Trail, the hotel caters to both leisure travelers and business groups seeking unique experiences and meeting facilities.

<https://www.pridejourneys.com/post/world-s-first-bourbon-infused-luxury-hotel-coming-to-kentucky>

Hotel in the heart of bourbon country lets guests sleep in a bourbon barrel – A unique hotel has opened for business in Lawrenceburg. Bourbon Barrel Retreats offers a one-of-a-kind barrel accommodation. With everything you'd need. A king bed, Private bathroom, kitchenette, and heat/air. Access to the common space with firepits, grills, hammocks, and more. <https://www.lex18.com/news/how-would-you-like-to-spend-the-night-in-a-bourbon-barrel>

Other

Dates set for 2025 Kentucky Bourbon Festival — The Kentucky Bourbon Festival, celebrating its 34th year, is set for September 5-7, 2025, in Bardstown. This sold-out annual event, attracting global bourbon

enthusiasts, offers immersive experiences, tastings, and educational opportunities. The festival, presented by The Koetter Group, is a significant economic driver for the region, showcasing the best of Kentucky bourbon. <https://www.fredminnick.com/2024/09/19/kentucky-bourbon-festival-announces-2025-dates/>

First Bourbon & Belonging Pride Celebration held in Kentucky - Bourbon & Belonging, Kentucky's first queer bourbon festival, showcased the inclusive spirit of the state's bourbon industry. The event, spanning multiple cities and days, featured distillery tours, drag brunches, and historical tours. It highlighted queer individuals and businesses within the industry, proving that bourbon is for everyone. The festival's success demonstrated Kentucky's commitment to inclusivity and its potential as a welcoming destination for the LGBTQ+ community. The second annual Bourbon & Belonging is scheduled for October 2025. <https://www.insidehook.com/food-travel/kentucky-queer-bourbon-week-pride>

ShelbyKY Tourism Secures Federal Trademark for Your Bourbon Destination® - ShelbyKY Tourism has secured a federal trademark for "Your Bourbon Destination." This designation solidifies ShelbyKY's position as a premier bourbon destination, contributing to the local economy with over \$91 million in 2023. The trademark highlights the region's unique bourbon heritage, including world-class distilleries like Bulleit and Jeptha Creed. ShelbyKY Tourism is committed to promoting bourbon-related experiences, including distillery tours, horse farms, local cuisine, and outdoor activities. https://www.pmg-ky1.com/sentinel_news/shelbyky-tourism-secures-federal-trademark-for-your-bourbon-destination/article_278f0405-5eae-50c0-acba-d339c3a023a2.html

Kentucky Distillers Association Welcomes Four New Distilleries – Four new distilleries have been added to the Kentucky Distillers Association's rolls. Lexington's Bespoken Spirits, Chicken Cock Whiskey, based in Bardstown, was added in September and Extended Stave in Lawrenceburg and LF Heritage Distillery Company in Scott County both joined the non-profit trade group during summer 2024. <https://www.whiskyintelligence.com/2024/09/kentucky-distillers-association-welcomes-bespoken-spirits-as-newest-member-bourbon-whiskey-news/> <https://kybourbon.com/industry-news/kentucky-distillers-association-welcomes-chicken-cock-whiskey-as-newest-member/> <https://craftspiritsmag.com/2024/08/27/kda-welcomes-lf-heritage-distillery-co-as-newest-member/> <https://www.fredminnick.com/2024/07/18/extended-stave-named-as-latest-kda-member/> <https://kybourbon.com/industry-news/kentucky-distillers-association-welcomes-lf-heritage-distillery-co-as-newest-member/>

Kentucky Bourbon Trail Celebrates 25th Anniversary with a new look – The Kentucky Bourbon Trail celebrated its 25th year of educating visitors on the art and science behind the United States' only native spirit in June 2024. Going forward the KBT will combine the 28 smaller distilleries from the Kentucky Bourbon Trail Craft Tour with the 18 members on the KBT in order to help trail visitors better plan their trips. <https://kybourbon.com/industry-news/kentucky-bourbon-trail-celebrates-25th-anniversary-and-ushers-in-adventurous-new-era-of-bourbon-tourism/> <https://apnews.com/article/kentucky-bourbon-trail-whiskey-tour-distilleries-c1fd5ec625d0fadf33acae565adfac41>

New recycling program at Bulleit Distillery aims to improve sustainability – Bulleit Frontier Whiskey launched "Don't Trash Glass" program in Kentucky to boost glass recycling rates. This initiative collaborates with businesses and residents to collect used glass bottles. Kentucky has a low glass recycling rate (15%) compared to the national average (31.3%). Bulleit hopes this program will improve environmental sustainability. <https://www.thebourbonflight.com/bulleit-announces-first-glass-recycling-program-at-its-distillery/>

Kentucky Bourbon Industry officials report a robust economic impact — Kentucky's bourbon industry is flourishing in 2024. With over 100 distilleries and record production, it's a major economic driver. Consumers are seeking premium offerings and innovative flavors. Sustainability and technology are shaping the future, with a focus on reducing environmental impact and enhancing production processes. While challenges like supply chain issues and tourism capacity exist, the industry's strong foundation and global demand position it for continued growth.

<https://www.thebourbonflight.com/tradition-meets-innovation-the-state-of-the-bourbon-industry-in-kentucky-in-2024/>

Moonshine Trail looks to get tourists' eyes on eastern Kentucky through local history, culture – [The Moonshine Trail](#) celebrates the cultural and historical value of moonshine in Kentucky. The Trail involves seven distilleries and four other landmarks across eastern Kentucky. They're organizing the trail to try and get the eyes of tourists exploring the hills and hollers of the region.

<https://www.wkms.org/business-economy/2023-11-16/moonshine-trail-looks-to-get-tourists-eyes-on-eastern-kentucky-through-local-history-culture>

Click [HERE](#) for a full list of experiences, tours, classes and events to experience Bourbon in Kentucky.

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