



## WHAT'S NEW IN KENTUCKY BOURBON

*Bourbon Events, Distillers, Expansions Enhance Guests' Experiences*

### **Distilleries**

**New distillery starts production in Springfield** - Potter-Jane Distilling Co. has opened a new \$50 million bourbon facility in Springfield, Kentucky. The 36,000-square-foot facility, located on a 153-acre property in Washington County, includes two rickhouses capable of storing 24,000 barrels each. While production is underway, the public will have to wait for a visitor experience, as a new visitor center is still under construction. [https://www.wdrb.com/news/business/potter-jane-distilling-co-launches-50m-bourbon-facility-in-springfield/article\\_c45a6728-8d74-4dc2-94ce-081962324369.html](https://www.wdrb.com/news/business/potter-jane-distilling-co-launches-50m-bourbon-facility-in-springfield/article_c45a6728-8d74-4dc2-94ce-081962324369.html)

**Distillery linked to musician Bob Dylan offers preview tours** - Heaven's Door Distillery, co-founded in a collaboration with Bob Dylan, is preparing to open its 160-acre campus in Pleasureville, Kentucky, offering "Before the Gate" preview tours. Though distilling since 2018, the facility is nearing completion and will feature a history village, two stillhouses, and an event venue. Dylan's involvement is integral to the brand, with the name referencing his music, his artwork featured on limited-edition bottles, and his gate designs pictured on the core releases. The \$45 tours include a tasting of four core products, with plans for more exclusive VIP experiences showcasing the distillery's six-year-old product. [https://www.madisoncourier.com/carroll\\_news\\_democrat/news/heavens-door-campus-revealed-before-the-gate-tours/article\\_30f043c7-827a-51e4-aacb-525aeefde243.html](https://www.madisoncourier.com/carroll_news_democrat/news/heavens-door-campus-revealed-before-the-gate-tours/article_30f043c7-827a-51e4-aacb-525aeefde243.html)

**Spirits producer buys "Castle" in West Louisville** - Von Payne Spirits, known for its gothic style, has acquired the 60,000-square-foot, historic Whiteside's Bakery Company building that resembles a castle. The landmark, located on West Broadway Street, will be restored as The Von Payne Castle: Distillery and Tasting Experience. Projected to open in late 2027, it will showcase the brand's alternative spirits, including its black currant infused whiskey, creating a unique destination on the Bourbon Trail and bringing new jobs and investment to the neighborhood. <https://www.fredminnick.com/2025/09/12/von-payne-spirits-buys-castle-in-west-louisville/>

**Heaven Hill Unveils \$200 Million Bardstown Distillery** - Heaven Hill, the world's largest privately held distillery, opened the \$200 million Heaven Hill Springs Distillery in Bardstown, Kentucky, on September 4. The new, state-of-the-art facility marks the company's return to Bardstown and began filling its first barrel in April. The new facility is the site of the new Heritage Rising Tour, which is a small-group experience begins at the Heaven Hill Bourbon Experience, includes transportation to the new distillery, behind-the-scenes access, and a guided tasting at the facility's signature bar. <https://www.kentucky.com/lexgoeat/bourbon/article311887450.html>

**Wenzel Distillery opens new facility in Covington** - Wenzel Distillery cut the ribbon on a brand-new distillery and tasting room in downtown Covington in July 2025. The new facility is the result of a \$6 million investment and is located in a revitalized 1916 Packard Auto building. The tasting room, dubbed The Proof Bar, is open to the public Wednesday through Saturday, 5 to 9 p.m. <https://www.wcpo.com/news/local-news/kenton-county/covington/wenzel-distillery-opens-new-location-in-historic-covington-building-as-city-focuses-on-revitalization>

**Midway welcomes new distillery and experience** - Bluegrass Distillers has officially opened its new \$8 million distillery at the historic Elkwood Farm in Midway, Kentucky. Founder Sam Rock began the brand in 2013 with a crockpot and self-financing, a story he shared at the grand opening. The new 62-acre property will allow the distillery, which started on the back of a local brewery, to grow its production and become a major destination for bourbon and rye whiskey. Elkwood Farm is open to the public until 5 p.m. daily. <https://www.distillerytrail.com/blog/bluegrass-distillers-cuts-the-ribbon-on-new-ground-to-glass-distillery-and-historic-mansion-on-62-acre-farm/>

**Army Veterans to open distillery in Somerset** - Horse Soldier Bourbon, founded by retired Green Berets, is opening a distillery in Somerset in July 2026, marking America's 250th anniversary. The \$200 million facility is being built on a 200-acre former golf course overlooking Lake Cumberland. It aims to create jobs and boost tourism, becoming a southern anchor of the Kentucky Bourbon Trail. The complex will feature a distillery, restaurant, event space, and family activities. <https://www.fox13news.com/news/horse-soldier-bourbon-open-kentucky-distillery>

**Rhythm River Distillery working to open distillery and tasting room** - Rhythm River Distillery in Henderson is scheduled to open in late 2025. This \$5 million project will transform the former Henderson Municipal Power & Light campus into a distillery and entertainment venue. It will feature a stillhouse, visitor center, cocktail bar, and barrel storage. The distillery will produce bourbon and rye whiskeys. <https://www.14news.com/2025/05/28/progress-being-made-new-distillery-henderson/>

## **Experiences**

**Two tasting rooms and a distillery set up shop in Cave City** – Two distilleries opened tasting rooms in Cave City in December 2025. Dueling Grounds Distillery, headquartered in Franklin, debuted The Barrel Room and MB Roland Distillery of Pembroke opened Cave Du Bourbon tasting experiences, respectively. Both rooms are located on Broadway Street, Cave Du Bourbon will be open Wednesday through Sunday, and the Barrel Room will be open Thursday through Sunday. Additionally, Cave City Distilling Company is building a full-scale craft distillery, which will open sometime in 2026. The facility will bring tours, tastings and production to the city. <https://www.wbko.com/2025/12/02/new-tasting-rooms-future-distillery-put-cave-city-bourbon-map/>

**Distillery opens Kentucky's only cigar lounge** - Larrikin Bourbon Co. has opened the Larrikin Cigar Lounge, making it Kentucky's only distillery with both a dedicated cigar lounge and a walk-in cigar humidor. The distillery, which is veteran-distilled and owned, styled the lounge to be "irreverently comfortable," avoiding a pretentious feel. The lounge allows visitors to enjoy bourbon and cigar pairings and adds to Larrikin's existing lineup of experiences, which include cocktail classes and private barrel picks. <https://craftspiritsmag.com/2025/10/21/larrikin-bourbon-co-opens-kentuckys-only-distillery-cigar-lounge/>

**Buffalo Trace launches Exclusive Barrel Tasting Tour** - In November, Buffalo Trace Distillery began offering members of the free Sazerac Barrel Select club a unique barrel-tasting experience. Guests will enter a hidden speakeasy and sample cask-strength Buffalo Trace Bourbon directly from three different barrels in historic warehouses, using a traditional copper "thief." The goal is to let more fans participate in the barrel selection process. At the tour's end, participants choose their favorite profile and immediately receive a take-home bottle from a sister barrel. <https://www.kentucky.com/lexgoeat/bourbon/article312531804.html>

**Bourbon club and distillery coming to downtown Lexington** - New Era Whiskey & Spirits is expanding its Lexington-based bourbon brand with plans for a micro distillery and a members-only bourbon club on Short Street in downtown Lexington. The main building will house the club, offering

members exclusive, cask-strength bourbon and rye releases from premium distillers. The adjacent micro distillery will produce gin and vodka and include a tasting room and gift shop. No opening date has been released. <https://www.kentucky.com/lexgoeat/bourbon/article312131218.html>

**Louisville Barrel Whiskey Co. coming to NuLu** - Nashville Barrel Co. is investing \$3 million to open the Louisville Barrel Whiskey Co. in NuLu, Louisville, by January 2026. The 3,200-square-foot facility on East Market Street will feature a tasting bar and bottle shop for whiskey experiences. CEO Michael Hinds called NuLu the "ideal location" to showcase their unique approach in the "bourbon capital of the world." The non-distilling producer is known for sourcing quality Kentucky barrels. <https://www.bizjournals.com/louisville/news/2025/05/21/kentucky-bourbon-festival-2025-upgrades-prasse.html>

**WhistlePig Distillery tasting room has grand opening in NuLu** - The WhistlePig Vault on Market Street opened for business in September 2025. The location is a historic bank building originally built in 1912. The venue will serve as a tasting room, cocktail bar, and retail space, featuring interactive activities like dip-your-own bottle waxing. The name, "The Vault," pays homage to the building's history, which once housed what was reportedly Kentucky's largest bank vault. <https://www.bourboncountry.com/news/whistlepig-whiskey-joins-bourbon-country-with-new-louisville-tasting-room/>

**Chicken Cock Whiskey opens new tasting room in NuLu** - Circa 1856, a new Chicken Cock Whiskey tasting room in Louisville's NuLu district. The 3,900-square-foot venue has been open since October 2025. It features two distinct areas: an upstairs tasting bar with whiskey flights and house cocktails, and a downstairs speakeasy focusing on other spirits. Management emphasizes that the spot is geared toward locals as a neighborhood bar, while also welcoming bourbon tourists. <https://www.bizjournals.com/louisville/news/2025/11/21/chicken-cock-whiskey-circa-1856-nulu-opening-2025.html>

**Green River Distilling Co. opens tasting room on Louisville's Whiskey Row** - Green River Distilling Co. has opened a new 4,400-square-foot tasting room on Louisville's Whiskey Row. The space features a horseshoe-shaped bar, a retail section with bottle engraving, and a hidden speakeasy. Visitors can enjoy walk-in tastings and a unique "Fill-Your-Spirits" experience, where they fill their own barrel-strength whiskey jug. This new location aims to make whiskey more approachable and solidifies Green River's presence in Louisville's bourbon scene. <https://www.fredminnick.com/2025/06/17/green-river-opens-louisville-tasting-room/>

**Pursuit Spirits opens tasting room on Whiskey Row** - Pursuit Spirits, opened a \$1.5 million bourbon experience on Whiskey Row in Louisville in August 2025. The 7,600 sq ft venue at 722 W. Main St. features a barrel-picking experience, tasting rooms, a cocktail lounge, and a podcast recording room. <https://www.wlky.com/article/pursuit-spirits-opens-venue-whiskey-row/65864861>

**RD1 Spirits opens brand new Lexington facility** - RD1 Spirits has officially relocated to its new facility, RD1 Distillery at The Commons as of May 2025. This \$4.8 million facility houses a research and development distillery, a bourbon bar, a speakeasy, and a gift shop, aiming to become a key attraction on the Kentucky Bourbon Trail. The new location offers immersive whiskey experiences daily and is expected to significantly boost local tourism. <https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/rd1-spirits-opens-immersive-brand-destination-distillery-in-lexington-ky-302454837.html>

**LF Heritage Distilling Co.'s debuts Tasting and Blending Barn** - LF Heritage Distilling Co. has opened its Tasting and Blending Barn in Georgetown, signifying the return of full-scale bourbon distillery operations to Scott County. This marks a new chapter in the region's bourbon heritage, known as the "Birthplace of Bourbon." The facility currently offers unique bourbon experiences that allows visitors to indulge in the distinct and precise flavor profiles that LF has to offer. <https://www.wboy.com/business/press-releases/ein-presswire/807499848/lf-heritage-distilling-co-s-tasting-and-blending-barn-opens-in-georgetown-kentucky/>

## **Hotels**

**Bourbon focused hotel opens in downtown Louisville** - Hotel Bourré Bonne has opened in Louisville's Whiskey Row. The hotel's design pays homage to Kentucky's rich bourbon heritage with deconstructed bourbon barrels adorning the lobby ceiling and bar. The hotel features a steakhouse on the ground floor as well as a rooftop cocktail bar. Both establishments feature a menu that pairs French cuisine with a wide array of Kentucky bourbons. Named as a playful nod to the French origins of Kentucky Bourbon, the hotel aims to offer an immersive experience for those exploring the Bourbon Trail. <https://www.hospitality-interiors.net/uncategorized/hotel-bourre-bonne-opens-in-louisville/>

**New Bourbon-Themed Hotel opens in Bardstown** - The Trail Hotel opened for business in May 2025 in Bardstown. This revamped 1970s roadside Holiday Inn offers a bourbon-centric experience with 95 rooms, five bars, a steakhouse, and a unique "Bourbon Butler" concierge service. Designed with a mid-century modern aesthetic, the hotel aims to enhance the visitor experience by providing convenient and immersive access to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail. It will serve as a central hub for guests exploring the region's burgeoning bourbon tourism. <https://www.distillerytrail.com/blog/the-napa-fication-of-the-kentucky-bourbon-trail-takes-a-huge-leap-forward-with-the-opening-of-the-trail-hotel/>

## **Other**

**Dark Arts Whiskey House joins KDA** - The Kentucky Distillers' Association welcomed Lexington's Dark Arts Whiskey House as its newest "Craft" level member. Dark Arts specializes in blending, re-barreling, and finishing Bourbon, Rye, and Single Malt whiskeys using unconventional techniques. Located on Manchester Street in Lexington, the distillery has filled 200 custom-blend barrels to date. The offers guided tours and tastings, Wednesday through Sunday. <https://www.thebourbonflight.com/kentucky-distillers-association-welcomes-lexingtons-dark-arts-whiskey-house-as-the-newest-member/>

**Third annual National Bourbon Week set for June 2026** - National Bourbon Week will return to Bardstown, Kentucky, the Bourbon Capital of the World, from June 14-21, 2026. The third annual celebration will feature a week of rare tastings, distillery-hosted dinners, limited-edition releases, and educational experiences. The event is a collaborative effort by Bardstown's distilleries, merchants, and hospitality partners to showcase the city's craftsmanship and hospitality. The highlight of the week will be the 23rd Annual Bourbon City Street Concert. <https://kybourbontrail.com/national-bourbon-week-returns-to-bardstown-for-third-annual-celebration-june-14-21-2026/>

**Kentucky Bourbon Trail Tourism Sets New Record** -The Kentucky Bourbon Trail achieved a new tourism record in 2024, welcoming 2.7 million visitors, marking the third consecutive year with over two million guests. Established in 1999 by the Kentucky Distillers' Association to promote bourbon tourism, the Trail attracts visitors from all over the world. The KDA launched a rebranding campaign and digital tools for the Trail's 25th anniversary to enhance trip planning. Now featuring 60 distilleries, the program significantly boosts Kentucky's local economy through visitor spending. <https://www.distillerytrail.com/blog/kentucky-bourbon-trail-tourism-sets-new-record-welcomes-2-7-visitors-from-around-the-world/>

**Oxmoor Bourbon Co. Joins Kentucky Bourbon Trail** – Louisville's Oxmoor Bourbon Co. has officially joined the Kentucky Bourbon Trail. This new partner offers a unique historical tour, interpreting the story of a Kentucky farm through three centuries of architecture and the lives of those who lived and worked on the land. Visitors can learn about the history of bourbon and discover forgotten figures who influenced bourbon laws, concluding with a tasting of their exclusive Oxmoor Bourbon Private Label. Tours are available Tuesdays through Saturdays by reservation. <https://whiskeyreviewer.com/2025/04/louisvilles-oxmoor-bourbon-co-joins-kentucky-bourbon-trail/>

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

###

Updated December 2025

