



WHAT'S NEW IN KENTUCKY BOURBON

Bourbon Events, Distillers, Expansions Enhance Guests' Experiences

Distilleries

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>

Heaven Hill Fills First Barrel at New Distillery Heaven Hill Distillery has begun production at its new Springs Distillery in Bardstown, Kentucky, marking a significant return to its original home almost three decades the original facility was destroyed in a fire. This \$200 million project will initially produce 150,000 barrels annually, with future capacity to expand to 450,000 barrels. Distillation will also continue at the Bernheim Distillery, ensuring continued high-volume production for the brand.

<https://www.thespiritsbusiness.com/2025/04/heaven-hill-fills-first-barrel-at-new-distillery/>

Rhythm River Distillery working to open distillery and tasting room - Rhythm River Distillery in Henderson is scheduled to open by the end of fall 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/>

Barrel House Distilling Co. to open production facility and event space in Cynthiana – 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 30-acre property is expected to open in phases through 2025. The new location, which is under construction does not have an opening date, will be a

stop on the Moonshine Trail and Kentucky Bourbon Trail respectively. <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/life/food/spirits/bourbon/2025/01/07/new-bourbon-projects-experiences-opening-in-kentucky-in-2025/77086625007/>

Experiences

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/>

Chicken Cock Whiskey to open tasting room in Nulu - Chicken Cock Whiskey, which opened a tasting room in Bardstown last year, is expanding to a second location in Louisville's NuLu neighborhood. The new bar will be at 821 E. Market Street, the former home of Gertie's Whiskey Bar. The 2,400-square-foot venue is double the size of the Bardstown location, Circa 1856, and will be a brand and hospitality space. This expansion makes Chicken Cock the first non-distilling producer to have tasting rooms in both Bardstown and Louisville. Dates for the opening of the proposed room are still to be determined. https://www.bizjournals.com/louisville/news/2025/07/08/bourbon-brand-nulu-tasting-room-chicken-cock-2025.html?utm_source=sy&utm_medium=ptr&utm_campaign=trendcontent&utm_content=lo2024

Pursuit Spirits opens tasting room in 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>

Makers Mark features Chihuly sculptures on distillery grounds - Maker's Mark Distillery is hosting a special summer and fall exhibit by world-renowned glass artist Dale Chihuly. The brightly colored glass sculptures are displayed across the distillery grounds, from the visitor's center to the rick houses and limestone cellar. Viewing the artwork is a unique experience, with pieces appearing differently depending on the time of day and lighting. The exhibit combines the craftsmanship of Chihuly's art with the beauty of the historic distillery. <https://whiskeynetwork.net/2025/08/makers-mark-chihuly-exhibit-shines-bright-in-loretto/>

James B. Beam Distilling announces upcoming bourbon tastings and experiences – James B. Beam Distilling has updated its events calendar for the rest of 2025. Headquartered in Clairmont for the last nine decades, the distillery is planning to host a variety of immersive experiences that dive into the distillery's history like "Noe The Craft: 230 Years of Beam Legacy" or culinary events like "Smoke + Oak: A Bourbon and BBQ Feastival" that feature seasonal barbecue and pours of rare bourbons. <https://www.fredminnick.com/2025/04/25/beam-distilling-releases-schedule-of-2025-events/>

WhistlePig distillery to open tasting room in Louisville - WhistlePig, will open its first Kentucky location, the WhistlePig PiggyBank, on East Market Street in the NuLu neighborhood in late August 2025. This tasting room, formerly a bank, will feature a bar, an outdoor patio with a fire pit, and a retail area. It will offer by-appointment-only tasting experiences, including custom cocktails. Leaning into its banking history, the old vault will display rare whiskeys. <https://www.courier-journal.com/story/life/food/spirits/bourbon/2025/05/29/whistlepig-to-open-new-whiskey-tasting-room-in-nulu-in-2025/83724722007/>

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, with plans for the full distillery to be operational by late 2025. LF Heritage Distilling Co. focuses on crafting bourbons with distinct and precise flavor profiles, aiming to provide an authentic Kentucky bourbon experience. <https://www.wboy.com/business/press-releases/ein-presswire/807499848/lf-heritage-distilling-co-s-tasting-and-blending-barn-opens-in-georgetown-kentucky/>

Kentucky Artisan Distillery opens tasting experience- Kentucky Artisan Distillery in Crestwood opened the Clubhouse Barrel Tasting Experience to the public on January 31. The Clubhouse menu includes a variety of KAD wheated, rye, and single malt whiskeys. Open Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sundays from noon to 5 p.m. Tickets are \$30 per person, and visitors can also fill their own bottle straight from their favorite barrel. <https://craftspiritsmag.com/2025/01/29/kentucky-artisan-distillery-opens-tasting-experience/>

Buzzards Roosts debuts new visitor experience on Whiskey Row - Buzzard's Roost on Whiskey Row in Louisville offers new bourbon experiences, including a rooftop bar and a renovated tasting room. This expansion enhances visitor engagement, providing immersive and educational opportunities. The brand focuses on innovative finishing techniques, offering unique flavor profiles. The new experiences aim to attract both bourbon enthusiasts and newcomers. <https://www.thebourbonflight.com/buzzards-roost-on-whiskey-row-launches-new-experiences/>

Louisville to host a slew of bourbon events in 2025 – 2025 is a big year for bourbon events in Louisville. From June through the end of the year, the Derby city will host nine events and festivals, offering diverse experiences for enthusiasts. Highlights include the Kentucky Derby Festival, Bourbon & Beyond, and the Louisville Bourbon & Brews festival. These events showcase the city's rich bourbon heritage, attracting visitors with tastings, tours, and live entertainment. Louisville solidifies its position as a premier bourbon destination with these varied and engaging experiences. <https://www.visitusa.org.uk/news/newsstory.aspx?pname=More-than-a-Dozen-Bourbon-Events-and-Festivals-in-Louisville-in-2025&newsid=8016>

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

2025 Kentucky Bourbon Festival to debut new layout and experiences - The Kentucky Bourbon Festival (KBF) is evolving into a premier industry event, akin to CES, with 61 distilleries and 200 brands. A major change involves elevating culinary and cocktail experiences in the "great tent" with shorter, interactive sessions led by chefs like Dallas McGarity and Nokee Bucayu. This year's festival is set for September 5-7 in Bardstown. <https://www.bizjournals.com/louisville/news/2025/05/21/kentucky-bourbon-festival-2025-upgrades-prasse.html>

Bourbon & Belonging Pride Celebration returns - Bourbon & Belonging, Kentucky's first queer bourbon festival, showcases the inclusive spirit of the state's bourbon industry. The event, spanning multiple cities and days, features distillery tours, drag brunches, and historical tours. It highlights queer individuals and businesses within the industry, proving that bourbon is for everyone. The festival's success demonstrates 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 3-5. <https://nkytribune.com/2025/06/queer-kentucky-announces-return-of-bourbon-belonging-for-second-year-october-3-5/>

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.

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