

The
BARBELL LOGIC
Fall Whiskey Hunting Guide





FALL WHISKEY HUNTING

Fall is the time for hoodies, comfort food, lifting meets every other weekend, and whiskey, making it one of our favorite times of the year. A lot of the big allocated whiskey releases happen in the fall. The current state of the whiskey market in the U.S. means that you can find great whiskey on the shelves in any decent liquor store. The craft distillery boom and high-demand, high-distribution has yielded new, fun whiskeys and enough options to make whiskey hunting a fulfilling hobby for newbies and connoisseurs alike. However, with the advantage of long histories and refined processes, the big distilleries still dominate the market when it comes to high-end bourbons and ryes. Every year, they release limited numbers of bottles of their best juices, allocated to stores all over the United States. The majority of these releases are occurring right now. Though many of us will never even see some of these bottles, the limited-release, high-demand allocated whiskeys add some excitement to your year-round whiskey scavenger hunt.

We discuss some fall whiskeys to add to your list. You might not get your hopes up for some of these bottles. Others, however, just require timing and a good eye.

MATT'S WHISKEY HUNTING TIP #3



BIG GROCERY STORES LIKE COSTCO AND SAM'S CLUB DO NOT HOLD THEIR STOCK BACK IN THE WAREHOUSE. IF THEY HAVE ALLOCATED BOTTLES, YOU ARE LIKELY TO FIND THEM ON THE SHELF OR BEHIND A COUNTER.

FALL RELEASES TO HUNT

Below are some of the most sought after and rewarding fall releases from big distilleries. Some are overhyped, but getting your hands on one of these bottles is worth stalking your local stores, bothering the managers, and perhaps bribing a distributor for inside information. Note, however, that some sellers will mark these finds up to exorbitant, black-market-level prices. You shouldn't pay more than \$200 for any of the bottles listed below.

BUFFALO TRACE ANTIQUE COLLECTION

Released in September this year. The BTAC is one of the most sought after allocated releases. Get to know the dealers at your smaller local shops, and they might just put you on their list when they receive one of these typically excellent whiskeys.

- Sazerac Rye 18 Year
- Thomas H. Handy Sazerac Rye
- Eagle Rare 17 Year Old
- William Larue Weller
- George T. Stagg

MATT'S WHISKEY HUNTING TIP #3



THESE BOTTLES WON'T BE SITTING OUT ON THE SHELF. GO TO YOUR LIQUOR STORE AND PUT THREE OR FOUR BOTTLES OF GOOD WHISKEY IN YOUR CART. THEN STRIKE UP A CONVERSATION WITH THE MANAGER OF THE STORE. SHOW THEM THAT YOU ARE ALREADY ABOUT TO SPEND DECENT MONEY ON GOOD WHISKEYS IN THEIR STORE. BE NICE. THEN ASK THE MANAGER FOR ONE SPECIFIC BOTTLE OF ALLOCATED WHISKEY. DON'T HAND THEM A LIST AND DON'T ASK FOR 23-YEAR-OLD PAPPY, THEY'LL LAUGH AT YOU. BUT, IF YOU ASK FOR THOMAS H. HANDY, OLD FORESTER BIRTHDAY BOURBON, WELLER "RED" (WELLER 107) OR "BLACK" (WELLER 12), YOU MIGHT GET LUCKY.

HIGH WEST A MIDWINTER'S NIGHT DRAM ACT 7

The tastes of Christmas, distilled and bottled to keep you warm through the cold winter nights. High West's Rendezvous Rye finished in French oak port barrels. This is a limited release every year and one of the best finds for the holiday season.

LITTLE BOOK CHAPTER 3, "THE ROAD HOME"

Blended bourbons are uncommon and somewhat taboo. Jim Beam distillery is changing that with the annual "Little Book" series of blended whiskeys. This year is Beam's third installment, called "Chapter 3: The Road Home." The Little Book series is unusual in that Beam publishes the bourbons that make up the blend. This year's release is a blend of 9-year-old Knob Creek Bourbon, 9-year-old Basil Hayden's Bourbon, 11-year-old Booker's Bourbon, and 12-year-old Baker's Bourbon.



PAPPY VAN WINKLE COLLECTION

The Buffalo Trace Distillery has just announced the imminent release of the Van Winkle collection. Low yields from barrels due to evaporation and the insane popularity of these bottles make them nearly impossible to find by just walking into a local store. The Van Winkle Collection includes the following releases:

- Old Rip Van Winkle Handmade Bourbon 10-Year-Old
- Old Rip Van Winkle Special Reserve Bourbon 12-Year-Old
- Old Rip Van Winkle Family Reserve Rye 13-Year-Old
- Pappy Van Winkle's Family Reserve Bourbon 15-Year-Old
- Pappy Van Winkle's Family Reserve Bourbon 20-Year-Old
- Pappy Van Winkle's Family Reserve Bourbon 23-Year-Old



— OLD FORRESTER BIRTHDAY BOURBON — (19TH YEAR)

Released in September, the 2019 Birthday Bourbon is the 19th annual release of the series that celebrates the Brown-Forman founder's birthday. This year's release has received exceptionally good reviews so far.

— WILD TURKEY MASTER'S KEEP CORNERSTONE RYE

This is the latest release in Wild Turkey's Master's Keep series and the first rye in the series...barely. The rye percentage for this juice is 50%. Anything in the Master's Keep series is generally a good find.

— WELLER FULL PROOF —

Weller 12 is a great find every year. But this year, Buffalo Trace released Weller Full Proof Bourbon: a high proof, non-chill filtered bourbon and new annual release from the distillery. Finding a bottle at the recommended price of \$50 might be the new unicorn of bourbon hunting.

LESS HARD TO FIND BUYS

Don't care about the rare finds and just want to buy some good whiskey? The bottles below are a little more prevalent than the limited releases above, typically won't leave you broke, and are some of the best sipping whiskeys around.

MATT'S WHISKEY HUNTING TIP #3



FIND A RURAL, MOM AND POP STORE THAT HAS BEEN OPEN FOREVER AND START LOOKING FOR THE BOTTLES WITH DUST ON THEM THAT LOOK LIKE THEY'VE BEEN SITTING ON THE SHELF FOR 20 YEARS. YOU MIGHT FIND SOMETHING LIKE A JW DANT, OLD GRAND DAD, OR OLD TAYLOR. WHISKEY JUST DOESN'T TASTE LIKE THESE ANYMORE, AND OFTEN COMING IN AT UNDER \$20, THESE ARE GREAT BUYS.

OTHER GREAT FINDS THAT MATT RECOMMENDS:

- Any Willet rye
- Smooth Ambler Single Barrel 10 year
bourbon
- Smooth Ambler Old Scout Rye
- Stagg Jr.
- Elijah Craig Barrel Proof
- Old Forrester

