

BOURBON BABE

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Single Oak Project hits halfway mark



Later this month, the 12 bottles in the eighth round of **Buffalo Trace's Single Oak Project** will appear in stores, marking the halfway point of this ambitious experiment to find the **Holy Grail of bourbon**.

The project began in 1999, when Buffalo Trace hand-picked 96 trees with different wood grains and then divided them into a top and bottom piece, for 192 sections. Staves were created from each section and dried for either six months or 12 months. Then 192 barrels were made. They were given either a No. 3 or No. 4 char and filled with either wheat or rye recipe bourbon at two different proofs, 105 or 125. They are being aged in two warehouses - one with concrete floors and one with wooden floors. That's seven variables that are being employed, for a potential of 1,396 taste combinations.

Since 2011, Buffalo Trace has released a series of bottles from the experiment every three months. After tasting, a consumer can go online [here](#) and review a bottle, at which point all of its details are revealed.

Halfway through the experiment, **barrel No. 106** is at the top of the list, closely followed by **No. 97**. With two years to go, though, anything could happen. The numbers being released this month are 27, 28, 59, 60, 91, 92, 123, 124, 155, 156, 187 and 188. All have an entry proof of 105.

These bottles retail for about \$46. That's pretty steep for a 375ml bottle, so I'm guessing most of you aren't going to rush out and buy a complete set. Same here. So far, I've tasted just one, No. 78. It was pretty good, but with nothing to compare it to, I am not exactly immersed in this experiment.

I'd like to be, though. So here's an idea: I'd love to meet up with others in the Louisville area who've purchased different bottles for a **Single Oak Project Tasting Party**. If you're interested, drop me a message and we'll see what we can get organized.

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