



NEWS UPDATES

BUFFALO TRACE RELEASES BATCH #12 OF SINGLE OAK PROJECT BOURBONS

February 7, 2014 - 12 down, just four to go...as Buffalo Trace releases the latest batch in the Single Oak Project series of experimental Bourbons. The project started back in 1999 when the late Ronnie Eddins picked 96 oak trees from a Missouri forest, and will be completed in 2015 with the release of the final batch and the verdict from whiskey lovers on the best of the 192 different variations.

Batch #12 focuses primarily on the differences between wood from the top of a tree and the bottom. Each of the 96 trees produced a barrel from the top and bottom halves, and while the size of the wood grain and the choice of wheat or rye- dominant recipes also varied, all other variables in the 12- bottle batch remained the same. In a news release, Buffalo Trace Master Distiller Harlen Wheatley noted the ongoing debate over whether staves cut from the top or bottom of a tree really make a difference in the final whiskey.

"From top to bottom, the tree chemistry is quite different. The chemicals most affected by the tree structure are oak lignins and tannins. Oak lignins are composed of two building blocks, vanillin and syringaldehyde. Generally there is a higher composition of oak lignins in the bottom part of the tree which in turn delivers more vanilla. Tannins are generally higher in concentration in the top section of the tree versus the bottom; however, they also vary from inside out. The outer heartwood is generally higher in tannin concentration. As far as taste, most people know how the vanilla contributes to the flavor, but tannins are important for the development of esters, which sometimes deliver fruitiness or complexity to the overall composition."

This is one of the few times where tree location has been tested, since most barrels are made out of staves from several trees to ensure consistent flavor development during maturation – and because producing mass quantities of barrels using wood from a single tree would be economically unfeasible.

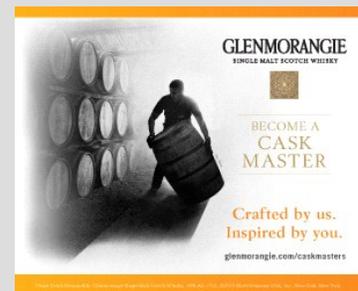
So far, the leading barrel in online voting is #82, with more than 4,000 online reviews of the 132 bottles released so far in the first 11 batches. Buffalo Trace plans to replicate the variables of the winning barrel to produce a permanent expression under the Single Oak Project label once the final batch is released next year.

Selected US retailers will receive cases later this month with one 375ml bottle of each of the 12 different barrels in the batch. The suggested retail price is \$46.35 per bottle.

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I'm sure we have a few folks from Hawaii around here...and I just got an email from a member of the US military who may be moving there soon...and is asking for help:

"Unofficial word right now is we are getting stationed in Hawaii with official orders coming sometime soon. So, I am wondering if you know any groups or organizations in Hawaii I can partner up with for whiskey stuff? Just looking for people to get together with to have tastings and general good time! Your help is greatly appreciated!"

Any suggestions?

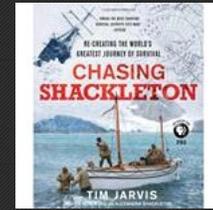
For the Shackleton fans out there...and I know you're out there...Tim Jarvis's new book on his expedition last year to recreate Shackleton's Antarctic expedition is out now. Tim had support from Whyte & Mackay for the mission, and I was able to interview him in October of 2012 before the expedition at the news conference to unveil the second edition of MacKInlay's Old Rare Highland Malt. You can hear the interview in Episode 395 of WhiskyCast in the archives at the web site.

(Note: this link takes you to the book's Amazon page in the WhiskyCast Bookstore powered by Amazon.com. Purchasing it through this link will generate a very small commission, while not affecting the price you pay. Full disclosure



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