



## Trace's Single Oak Project release due



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Whiskies usually are the product of tasting by a very small inner circle. In the case of Buffalo Trace Distillery's [Single Oak Project Bourbon](#), that circle is huge.

The favorite wheat recipe bourbons that are part of the project are aged in barrels made from wood harvested from the top half of oak trees, with barrel #61 and barrel #127 leading the way.

Nearly 1,000 whiskey fans have participated by tasting and rating online their Single Oak Project Bourbon. Drinkers in New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago and San Francisco have submitted the most feedback, but the company says it has received reviews from people in 31 countries.

The third release in the series will go public in November. Participants will be asked to explore three important variables that affect the bourbon taste: recipe, grain size, and entry proof.

Some of the bottles contain bourbon made with rye and others with wheat. The barrels themselves were made from different trees, each with varying degrees of thickness to their wood grain, from fine to average to very coarse.

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"We can now finally taste the difference in whiskies at two separate entry proofs," said Harlen Wheatley, master distiller. "There has been much debate about entry proof, so we're very curious to see the results."

As with the other two releases, Buffalo Trace hopes consumers can continue to rate each whiskey they taste [online](#). After reviewing a bottle online, consumers will be given the aging details and provenance of the barrel. They can interact with others who also reviewed the barrel and compare their reviews.

The Single Oak Project is part of research Buffalo Trace Distillery started in 1999 by selecting 96 trees with different wood grains, then dividing them into a top and bottom piece, yielding 192 unique sections. From there, staves were created from each section and were air dried for either 6 months or 12 months. After all the staves were air dried, a single barrel was created from each tree section, resulting in 192 total barrels.

These barrels were given either a number three or a number four char and then filled with either wheat or rye recipe bourbon. The barrels were filled at two different proofs, 105 and 125 proof. In addition, two different warehouses were used, one with wooden ricks and one with concrete floors.

In this process, Buffalo Trace came up with a potential of 1,396 tasting combinations from these 192 barrels.

The Single Oak Project Bourbon is being released in a series every three months over the next four years until all 192 barrels have been released.

All releases will be packaged in a 375ml bottle. Suggested retail pricing per bottle is \$46.35.

At the conclusion of the Single Oak Project, the Distillery plans to take the top rated barrel based on online consumer feedback, make more of that product and launch it under the Single Oak Project nameplate.

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Bill Dowd is a New Yorker who is an international wine and spirits judge and a print and online journalist/editor who has been covering the...

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