

The image is a screenshot of the Drinkhacker.com website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for WHISKEY, RUM, TEQUILA, VODKA, GIN, WINE, BRANDY, BEER, LIQUEURS, and AND MORE. To the right of the navigation bar are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, RSS, and Email. Below the navigation bar is a large circular logo for DRINKHACKER.COM with the tagline 'THE ESSENTIAL BLOG FOR THE DISCRIMINATING DRINKER'. The background of the website is a dark wood texture with a glass of whiskey in the foreground. The main content area is titled 'Review: Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Bourbon Round Fourteen' and is dated September 18, 2014, by Christopher Null. The review text describes the bourbon as a series of 192 bourbons made in a slightly different style, with 168 down and 24 to go. It includes a list of links for previous rounds (Round One through Round Thirteen) and a section for Round 14, which features whiskeys aged in barrels made from the bottom half of the tree. The review also mentions two standouts: Barrel #2 and Barrel #34. The overall winners for the series are Barrel #82 and #83. The review concludes with complete thoughts on round 14, highlighting Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #2 as a classic with depth of flavor and Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #12 as a foresty whiskey with solid oak notes.

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Review: Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Bourbon Round Fourteen

Posted on September 18, 2014 by Christopher Null | [Leave a comment](#)

We're near the end of Buffalo Trace's exhaustive (and exhausting) Single Oak Project, a series of 192 bourbons all made in a slightly different style — an attempt to find the whole grail of whiskeydom. With this round, we've got 168 down, 24 to go. Home stretch!

Need a primer on the Project? Here's our past coverage to date:

- [Round One](#) (including all the basics of the approach to this series)
- [Round Two](#)
- [Round Three](#)
- [Round Four](#)
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Round 14 features whiskeys all aged in barrels made from the bottom half of the tree, put in barrel at 125 proof, and aged in a wooden-floor warehouse. Variables include char level, stave seasoning, wood grain, and of course recipe (rye vs. wheat). We've seen iterations on these variables in the past; at this point, the project is mainly about cleaning up what's left in the lineup.

Two whiskeys — the classically structured Barrel #2 and the Stagg-like Barrel #34 stood out in an otherwise fair but unremarkable field. Nothing in this round was particularly *unlikable*, except perhaps the unbalanced Barrel #172. The overall winners so far (based on popular vote) are Barrel #82 and #83. I graded them both at a B+.

Complete thoughts on round 14 follow.

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #2 – Classic, with lots of depth of flavor. Touches of sandalwood, honey, and walnuts all meld together into a well-integrated, creamy, and lightly spiced (yet lengthy) finish. It goes down almost too easy, offering all the classic bourbon notes with every sip. Easily the best of this round. **A** (rye, 125 entry proof, level 6 seasoning, tight grain, wooden ricks, #3 char, bottom half of tree)

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #12 – Foresty — with eucalyptus and solid oak notes. The hearty body melds chewy wood with some modest fruit notes. A bit ashy on the finish. **B** (rye, 125 entry proof, level 12 seasoning, tight grain, wooden ricks, #4 char, bottom half of tree)

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Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #34 – Bold up front, with a rich, chocolaty nose. It all follows through to the body, with a rounded, almost malty character that pushes through to a racy, brown sugar-infused finish studded with cloves, cinnamon, and cayenne. **A** (wheat, 125 entry proof, level 6 seasoning, tight grain, wooden ricks, #3 char, bottom half of tree)

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #44 – Dessert time! Marshmallows and light nuts on the nose. The body is all silky caramel and nougat, until some wood-driven astringency arrives on the finish. Slow start, but it builds to a delightful middle and an agreeable, balanced end. **A-** (wheat, 125 entry proof, level 12 seasoning, tight grain, wooden ricks, #4 char, bottom half of tree)

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #66 – Blazing with heat and big wood character, it's hard to catch much nuance on the nose. The body however reveals some surprises: Spicy rye character at its core, with touches of baking spices blended with red pepper. Big and bold, it's loaded with lumberyard notes that really hang on. **B+** (rye, 125 entry proof, level 6 seasoning, average grain, wooden ricks, #3 char, bottom half of tree)

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #76 – Racy with both baking spices and more savory ones — think red pepper, thyme, sage, and pine needles. Lots going on here that's unusual for bourbon, but it's not a whiskey without some charms — so Old World in its austerity, herbaciousness, and restraint. **B+** (rye, 125 entry proof, level 12 seasoning, average grain, wooden ricks, #4 char, bottom half of tree)

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #98 – Indistinct, alcohol-redolent nose, but the body is bursting with fruit. Orange and cherry notes play with dark brown sugar tones, and some cinnamon red hots on the finish. A fine whiskey; too bad the nose isn't there to finish the job. **B+** (wheat, 125 entry proof, level 6 seasoning, average grain, wooden ricks, #3 char, bottom half of tree)

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #108 – Intriguing on the nose, this whiskey strongly exudes cherry cola notes, with underpinnings of oak. The body is moderate and a bit more scattered. The cherry's not here, but the cola notes are big, along with some tea leaf, heavy charred wood, licorice, cardamom, and a touch of cloves. **B+** (wheat, 125 entry proof, level 12 seasoning, average grain, wooden ricks, #4 char, bottom half of tree)

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #130 – Unusual notes of lemon and wood here — think Pledge, but in a way you might drink — at least on the nose. The body is more indistinct in its citrus focus, drinking hot while offering ample notes of wood oil and cloves on the back end. **B** (rye, 125 entry proof, level 6 seasoning, coarse grain, wooden ricks, #3 char, bottom half of tree)

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #140 – Traditional: vanilla, caramel, wood. This could be any rack bourbon, but it's classy and refined — a darker, woodier, coal-fired, more cigars-in-the-back-room bourbon than most of the comparably fruity expressions you get in the SOP. **B+** (rye, 125 entry proof, level 12 seasoning, coarse grain, wooden ricks, #4 char, bottom half of tree)

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #162 – Mild menthol on the nose leads in to a very easygoing palate. The body on this one is liquid caramel from front to back, spiked with cloves. Strangely, a bit of barnyard character emerges on the nose after some time in the glass, dulling what is otherwise a pleasant, anywhiskey experience. **B** (wheat, 125 entry proof, level 6 seasoning, coarse grain, wooden ricks, #3 char, bottom half of tree)

Buffalo Trace Distillery Single Oak Project Barrel #172 – Not an incredible level of character here. The nose is filled more with raw alcohol than anything else, the body is a fiery experience that finishes with smoke and brimstone. Not the Project's best. **B-** (wheat, 125 entry proof, level 12 seasoning, coarse grain, wooden ricks, #4 char, bottom half of tree)

\$46 each (375ml bottle) / singleoakproject.com

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