

Bourbon or Rye Whiskey



Bourbon and Rye are two types of whiskey that often get confused. Read our recent post about their differences.

Rye was originally very popular in the Pre-Prohibition era and held its own through the '30s. Bourbon production gained in popularity after this time, when sweeter, smoother styles caught the attention of many American imbibers. Rye recently has been "rediscovered" as an after-dinner drink and a main component of many classic and



modern cocktails. Below are the different rules for bourbon and rye production.

Regulations for Bourbon Production:

1. Must be made inside of the United States. One of the most common misconceptions about Bourbon is that it needs to be made in Bourbon County.
2. Must be at least 51% corn and 49% of the rest of it can be other grains.
3. Aged in new charred American Oak barrels.
4. Can't be distilled to an ABV higher than 80%.
5. When it enters the bottle, it must be at least 40% ABV.

Don't forget that 49% can be other grains, with the most common types being rye and wheat. As a general rule of thumb rye adds spice; wheat and corn add sweetness.

Bourbon must have a base of at least 51% corn.

Regulations for Rye Whiskey Production:

Many of the rules of rye production are similar but..

1. Must be 51% rye and the rest can be other grains.
2. Needs to be aged in brand new charred American Oak barrels.
3. The same upper limits apply for distillation apply as bourbon, not to exceed 80% ABV.
4. The same rules for entering barrels apply as well, not to exceed 62.5% ABV.

To be considered rye whiskey, it doesn't have to be produced in the U.S. Canada has a long standing tradition of using rye in its whiskey and has its own rules for production. There are no standards as far as the minimum rye content in Canadian Whiskey, or any regarding aging either. One of the only 100% rye whiskeys actually comes from Canada.

Bourbon & Rye Taste Differences:

Bourbon is fuller, richer, sometimes sweeter and has more concentrated notes of vanilla, baking spices and caramel. Rye is often drier and has more of a focus on the vegetal aspect. Canadian Rye is more mellow and light, with a hint of the rye spiciness. Taste test and see what you like best. Our team is split!