

LOUISVILLE'S GUIDE TO STYLE

®

here & gone



The
GODDESSES
OF LOUISVILLE FOOD



Derby
style
issue



The Best bourbon
experiences
(for in-and-out-of-towners)



Winner's Circle
Party planning
with racing insiders
Anita Cauley
and Laurie Wolf



American Spirit
Classic looks
with a twist
at Maker's Mark



The bourbon experiences

Whether you're entertaining out-of-towners, or simply getting in touch with our Kentucky heritage, master bourbon taster and Louisville native Peggy Noe Stevens serves up some suggestions.

I'm a Kentucky girl, and Derby is woven into my Southern heritage ... as is bourbon. There are a myriad of ways to experience the festivities that surround the greatest two minutes in sports, but it seems as though it's the authentic traditions that I have enjoyed the most with my guests. Showing off Kentucky and celebrating our heritage and culture is like dissecting the steps on how to make the most perfect and proper mint julep; it is done with ceremony and pride.

Preparation is the key to a complete "Derby immersion." So, like most women, I plan the itinerary accordingly — Thursday through Sunday — to milk every essence of "Southern wow" for my guests. And, my version of Derby immersion always includes a taste and touch of bourbon. What can I say; I'm a bourbon woman (www.bourbenwomen.org), and I can't imagine any version of Derby week without a taste of our state's indigenous beverage and the gracious culture that has been established around it.

Below are some highlights of my favorite bourbon experiences, especially suited to Derby season entertaining, but certainly not limited to that!

1 **Hot Browns and Manhattans at The Brown hotel.** In 1926, The Brown hotel was a place to be for drinking, dancing and late-night revelry. Today, I carry on the tradition, enjoying the ceremonial Louisville Hot Brown with a Manhattan at brunchtime. Believe me, the savory bacon and Pecorino Romano pairs beautifully with the sweet-earthy flavors of the bourbon. And the bitters used in the Manhattan are like salt to the soup, adding just the slightest splash of harmony that surrounds your tongue. Although I can only eat one Hot Brown (totally filling), two Manhattans are required. The Brown serves more than 1,000 Hot Browns during Derby weekend and is happy that I contribute to that number.

2 **The 'Kentucky Show!' Preamble and Distillery Finale.** After two Manhattans at The Brown, it's the perfect time to watch the culture-packed "Kentucky Show!" which can bring a tear to your eye just like singing "My Old Kentucky Home" at the track. Bourbon certainly has its story in this show, and I like to use it as a preamble before we go on distillery tours throughout the region. I try and plan the time carefully, because the distilleries always have special hours of operation during Derby weekend due to special private events. Driving through beautiful Kentucky hills and valleys to make our way to the distilleries is a journey that brings "Kentucky Show!" to life. Up front and personal, bourbon tours surround you in the process and craft of Kentucky's native American spirit.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY WOODFORD RESERVE
AND BUFFALO TRACE DISTILLERIES





3 **My silver julep cups.** I carry in my own — and give them to my guests as gifts — on Derby Day. Before the big race, we order mint juleps with a side shot of bourbon — a drink that I affectionately call the “turbo-julep.” The silver chills the drink to perfection, and my guests love the elegance of holding the famed drink in an authentic julep cup while singing “My Old Kentucky Home.”

4 **Limestone Restaurant and Jack’s Lounge.** After a full day at the track, we slip into Limestone, or Jack’s (usually carrying my high heels in my hand and wearing my carefully packed flats). Once we’re settled into a cozy booth, it’s time for Jack’s Old-Fashions made by Joy Perine, or Limestone’s signature bourbon cocktails. If you’re not completely saturated in the bourbon experience, both restaurants have authentic Kentucky-bourbon inspired menus, using ingredients used are mostly sourced from Kentucky farmers and local purveyors. It’s the perfect, delicious end to the quintessential Kentucky day.

