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American Whiskeys

Winter Warmers

Stave off the season's chill with these small-batch sips

BY SHAUN TOLSON

THE LATE DAVE PICKERELL, who died in November, rose to prominence in the spirits world as the master distiller at Maker's Mark for 14 years. In early October, Pickerell credited the skyrocketing popularity of American whiskey to three trends among U.S. drinkers: the move from no taste to taste; the move from sweet to savory, which explains why rye whiskey is growing at a faster pace; and the move to drink less, but drink better. These three new limited-edition American whiskeys embody the best work of some of the country's foremost whiskey specialists and take "drinking better" to the next level.



Four Roses 130th Anniversary

Every year, Four Roses' master distiller Brent Elliott peruses the Lawrenceburg, Ky., distillery's whiskey reserves, selecting choice barrels from three or four of the brand's bourbon recipes to create a special small-batch whiskey. The latest assemblage, released last fall, includes bourbons with high- and low-rye mash bills, as well as whiskeys that impart noticeable mint and ripe fruit notes. It also features liquid from a batch of 16-year-old barrels that add, as Elliott says, "an elegant, aged-oak character." The robust blend delivers a remarkably long finish. **Details:** \$140/750 mL **More info:** fourrosesbourbon.com

Westland Garryana 3|1

Westland Distillery's Native Oak Series showcases the distinctive flavors imparted by casks made of Quercus Garryana, a rare species of white oak found in the Pacific Northwest. This latest installment from the Seattle distillery combines a series of vattings and cask finishes that integrated Garryana barrels at different stages over the course of several years. It features a texture and viscosity that master distiller Matt Hofmann describes as soft and velvety. "It's hard to tell where the flavors from the Garryana end and the flavors from the malt and fermentation begin," Hofmann says. **Details:** \$150/750 mL **More info:** westlanddistillery.com

WhistlePig Boss Hog V, the Spirit of Mauve

The DNA of WhistlePig's latest Boss Hog release, a 13-year-old rye whiskey finished in Calvados barrels, is a marriage made in whiskey heaven. The rye delivers notes of cinnamon, clove, and anise, while the whiskey's extensive time spent aging in American oak adds caramel, vanilla, and butterscotch flavors. Then, the spirit's Calvados finish introduces hints of crisp apples. "At the top of your palate, the whiskey's warm sense of apple moves down and the spice notes move up, and it just collapses into grandma's apple pie," Pickerell said. **Details:** \$500/750 mL **More info:** whistlepigwhiskey.com