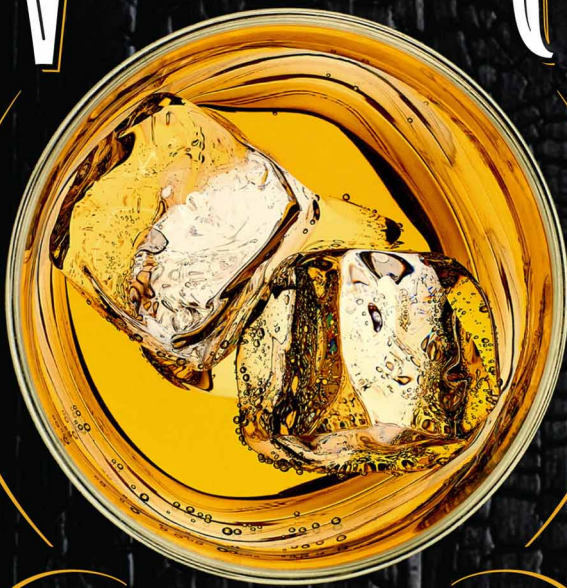


A FIELD GUIDE *to*  
WHISKY



An EXPERT COMPENDIUM  
*to TAKE your PASSION and*  
KNOWLEDGE *to the NEXT LEVEL*

HANS OFFRINGA



**“CIVILIZATION  
begins with  
DISTILLATION.”**

*WILLIAM FAULKNER*

# INTRODUCTION

**W**HISKY IS THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE THAT MOST likely originated in Ireland. Eventually the knowledge about distilling whisky spread to Scotland, which means that both countries are generally credited as the birthplace of the most complex drink in the world. Irish and Scottish distillers brought their knowledge with them when immigrating to the United States and Canada. In the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Japan more or less picked up the craft from Scotland. Today, whisky can be made anywhere in the world.

Whisky is made of grain, water, and yeast—but this is only the beginning of a long story. There are many different kinds of whisky, and although the basics are similar across the board, each country uses its own production methods.

The same general principle applies: grains contain starch, which can be converted into fermentable sugars with the help of enzymes. When you dissolve those sugars in warm water, let the mixture cool for a while, and then add yeast, you will get a liquid containing alcohol. The percentage of alcohol increases each time you heat the liquid up to a certain temperature. When the desired percentage is achieved, the distillate is poured into wooden casks and left to age until the end product is whisky ready for consumption. The minimum maturation times are different from country to country. By law, the ABV (alcohol by volume) percentage of the liquid must be at least 40 when the spirit is bottled as whisky.



## WHAT IS THE TAIL BOX?

**T**HE TAIL BOX IS THE EQUIVALENT OF THE SPIRIT safe in a single malt whisky distillery (see entry xxx).



THIS THUMPER BELONGS TO WILD TURKEY DISTILLERY IN LAWRENCEBURG, KENTUCKY.

THE DOUBLER AT FOUR ROSES USED FOR THE SECOND DISTILLATION.

IN FRONT OF FOUR ROSES' TAIL BOX STANDS A GLASS OF WHITE DOG

## WHAT ARE FAMOUS BOURBON BRANDS?

**P**ROHIBITION IN THE UNITED STATES, FROM 1920 to 1933, nearly killed the entire American whiskey industry. After repeal a small group, located mainly in Kentucky, started to rebuild the industry. Five among them currently produce the lion's share of Kentucky Bourbon. Some famous brands are Blanton's, Buffalo Trace, Elijah Craig, Four Roses, Heaven Hill, Jim Beam, Maker's Mark, Old Forester, Wild Turkey and Woodford Reserve. The last one mentioned is triple distilled in pot stills that were built in Scotland, which is a unique feature in the Bourbon industry.



THE STOPPER OF BLANTON'S SINGLE BARREL IS A RACEHORSE FIGURINE—A SYMBOL OF THE KENTUCKY DERBY, A RACE HELD ANNUALLY IN LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY ON THE FIRST SATURDAY IN MAY. THE HORSE FIGURINE COMES IN EIGHT DIFFERENT POSES. WHEN COMBINED THEY SHOW A RACEHORSE IN FULL STRIDE. THE HIND LEG OF THE HORSE IS ALWAYS ENGRAINED WITH ONE OF THE LETTERS SPELLING "BLANTON'S;" IT'S A REAL COLLECTORS' ITEM.

## WHAT ARE THE ORIGINS OF THE WORD WHISKY?

**T**HE WORD IS DERIVED FROM THE GAELIC *uisge beatha* (pronounced as “ooshkie bayha”), also written as “usquebaugh,” which is derived from the Latin expression *aqua vita* (water of life). The English were not proficient in Gaelic and turned it into “uisgy,” which was later morphed into whisky and whiskey.

## WHY IS WHISKY SPELLED WITH AND WITHOUT AN E?

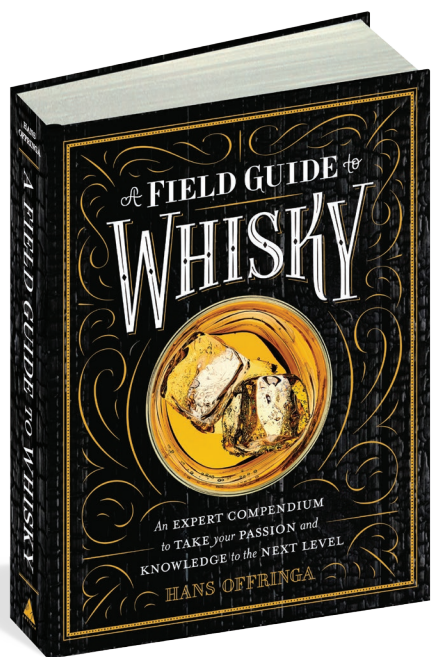
**I**N THE PAST, BOTH SPELLINGS WERE USED INTERCHANGEABLY. In time, the Irish and Americans chose *whiskey*, while the rest of the world, spearheaded by Scotland, chose *whisky*. But this is by no means a rule written in stone. For instance, Maker’s Mark and Old Forester, both produced in the United States., write their names without the *e*, and a distillery in the Netherlands, Horstman, puts *whiskey* on their label. Throughout this book *whisky* is used as the standard spelling, unless the entry is specifically about Irish or American whiskey.



**“What BUTTER  
and WHISKEY  
won’t cure, there is  
no cure for.”**

IRISH PROVERB





# A Field Guide to Whisky

## An Expert Compendium to Take Your Passion and Knowledge to the Next Level

HANS OFFRINGA

### MARKETING & PUBLICITY

- National feature coverage in food, men's, and lifestyle magazines
- Targeted media outreach timed to the Kentucky Derby
- Father's Day gift guide features
- Author appearances at food and whisky conferences, and by request

### JUNE 2017

230 color photographs

304 pages

6" x 8"

Paper-over-board

\$24.95 (\$35.00 CAN)

ISBN 978-1-57965-751-2

No. 85751

### COOKING/BEVERAGES



### Hundreds of insider tips, lists, trivia, and more for the whisky connoisseur

In *A Field Guide to Whisky*, internationally renowned whisky expert Hans Offringa explains everything modern whisky drinkers need to know about their favorite spirit. From the difference between scotch and bourbon to the ins and outs of current global trends in the whisky market, *A Field Guide to Whisky* has something to offer novices and seasoned whisky enthusiasts alike. Offringa takes readers on a tour of the largest whisky hubs in the world (in the United States, Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and Japan), explains how their distillation processes differ, and provides recommendations for the best bottles to buy from each country. He offers tips on tasting whisky (including what kind of glass to use, how to “nose” the liquor, even what whiskies pair best with chocolate!), how to buy whisky for both consumption and investing, and more. With 323 easily digestible entries, plus hundreds of color photographs and maps, this all-encompassing tome will make a whisky expert out of anyone.



**HANS OFFRINGA** is a Dutch author and international whisky expert. He holds many esteemed titles in the whisky world: Patron of the North Netherlands Whisky Festival, Honorary Scotsman, Honorary Member of the Caledonian Society of Charleston (SC), Keeper of the Quaich, and Kentucky Colonel. He is also the contributing editor for Europe for *Whisky Magazine* and a lecturer at the International Whisky School in Groningen, Netherlands. Offringa and his wife, Becky, are known as the Whisky Couple and have been judges at the Dutch Whisky Awards since its inception.

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