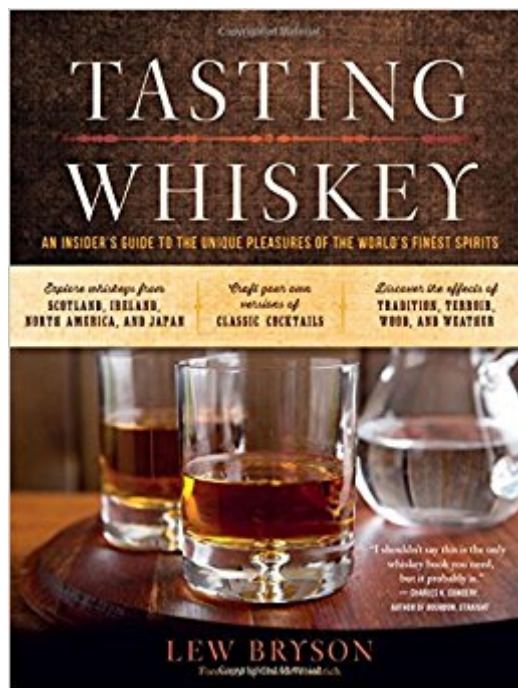




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# Tasting Whiskey: An Insider's Guide To The Unique Pleasures Of The World's Finest Spirits



## Synopsis

Pour a stiff drink and crack open this comprehensive guide to everything there is to know about the world's greatest whiskeys. Exploring the traditions behind bourbon, Scotch, Irish, and even Japanese whiskey, you'll discover how unique flavors are created through variations of ingredients and different distilling techniques. With advice on how to collect, age, and serve whiskey, as well as suggestions for proven food pairings, you'll be inspired to share your knowledge and invite your friends over for a delicious whiskey tasting party.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

2015 IACP Food Writing/Cookbooks award nominee in the Wine, Beer, and Spirits category "Takes on the whiskey world in down-and-dirty details, from production to tasting. With maps, infographics and flavor profiles for iconic bottlings, alongside Bryson's smart, straightforward text, Tasting Whiskey is both accessible to novices and compelling for the expert." —*Wine & Spirits* "Whether you're a novice drinker or a malt connoisseur, Bryson has something to teach you — and you'll enjoy every word." —*Clay Risen*, author of *American Whiskey, Bourbon and Rye* "An instant whiskey classic that will make all whiskey geeks smarter than their friends." —*Fred Minnick*, author of *Whiskey Women* "I shouldn't say this is the only whiskey book you need but it probably is." —*Charles K. Cowdery*, author of *Bourbon, Straight*

"Whether you're a novice drinker or a malt connoisseur, Bryson has something to teach you and you'll enjoy every word." (Clay Risen, author of *American Whiskey, Bourbon and Rye*) "An instant whiskey classic that will make all whiskey geeks smarter than their friends." (Fred Minnick, author of *Whiskey Women*) "I shouldn't say this is the only whiskey book you need but it probably is." (Charles K. Cowdery, author of *Bourbon, Straight*)

On the front cover of Lew Bryson's *Tasting Whiskey*, there's a quote from the whiskey writer Charles Cowdery: "I shouldn't say this is the only whiskey book you need, but it probably is." I don't know if I'd go so far, but I will say this much: this is the book you want and need if you're just starting out in whiskey. Bryson maps the major styles of whiskey, from bourbon to rye to Canadian, from Irish to Scotch to Japanese, and from craft to the various world whiskeys, from growing markets such as India and Taiwan. He describes what sets the various styles apart from one another; so, for example, he details the grains that are in each style, the barrels it's aged in, the climates and warehouses that hold it, and the length of time its aged. Scotch, for example, is made primarily or exclusively from malted barley; it's aged in used barrels (normally bourbon, but with some sherry and other wine casks tossed in for additional flavor); it ages in a cooler climate that enables longer aging; and it can age for up to 30 years or more without getting too woody. Bourbon, conversely, is made primarily from corn, with other grains in the mix to add accent flavors; it ages in new oak barrels that impart more woodiness than do scotch's used barrels; it ages in a warmer climate that ages it more rapidly than Scotland's cooler climate; and therefore, it usually reaches its peak at roughly 10-12 years. Each individual style is different, and Bryson masterfully explains how those differences affect the flavors of the finished product. Every whiskey drinker starts somewhere. I started with bourbon and moved to scotch and then rye and on to other styles. When I started drinking scotch, I couldn't begin to understand what made it unique until I started reading books that helped me puzzle it all out. *Tasting Whiskey* is such a book. Its other strength is the infographics that Bryson uses to illustrate some rather complicated concepts. I write about whiskey, and so I know that it's not always easy to describe, in words, the effects of barrel aging, or how barrel placement in a warehouse affects how quickly or slowly the whiskey ages. Bryson's infographics demonstrate these concepts concisely and thoroughly. After describing the major styles, Bryson then provides advice on how to drink the stuff, in an enjoyable chapter on water, ice, and cocktails. Is it okay to drink your whiskey with a bit of water? Bryson tells you. On the rocks or neat? He has some answers for that as well. Cocktails? Of course! What I enjoyed about this chapter was how conversational and story-oriented it was. No recipes at all, just a description of how to make a damn

good Manhattan or Old Fashioned. If you're new to whiskey, and you need a friendly guide to the topic, Bryson's book is for you. But if you've been around the block a few times, you'll still find this book to be enjoyable and useful. I learned quite a bit from it.

TASTING WHISKEY is a most phenomenal and interesting book. I got a fabulous education reading it. I was fortunate to meet Lew Bryson at a whiskey dinner which he organized and conducted at the Bulls Head Pub in Lititz, PA shortly after I had bought his book. Needless to say I was very excited to know he would be there! Tasting Whiskey is extremely well-researched and detailed. It was one of the most enjoyable books I have read in quite some time. His personal stories and experiences are just nonstop and funny! It was entertaining from beginning to end, and I savored every moment I sat down with it. I believe at times I would only read just a few pages so as to make it last longer. Many times I laughed out loud! The book is very well illustrated with most interesting photographs throughout as well! I am not an experienced whiskey drinker by any means but have occasionally enjoyed a good aged Scotch or Irish whisky for quite a few years; usually preferring the older Scotch whiskeys because they were supposedly "better" ones. I learned from reading TW to not be a 'whiskey snob' and just drink the more expensive old, more aged ones, but to keep an open mind and experience the many other less expensive and younger ones out there. Just two nights ago I tried a fairly new whiskey from Ireland from West Cork Distilleries; a relatively inexpensive blended whisky (not the 10 year single malt) and it was quite good! The bartender opened a brand new bottle for me. At Lew's whiskey dinner which I attended, all 5 pairings with the food were with American Bourbons and whiskeys. They were all delicious!! The whiskey making process is most complicated, and I now have a much more appreciation and understanding about the many aspects of the making, blending, storage, evaporation, whiskey strengths, barrel sizes, the effects of weather & temperature, collecting, making cocktails and on and on. I truly don't think there is much more you could fit in to a book about whiskey. Lew has been around the country and the world tasting fabulous whiskeys and meeting and getting to know distillers. It's a history book, a technical book and a story book! Anyone who has any interest in whiskey should not be without this book! Congratulations Lew Bryson!!!

I've been finding myself in situations where Scotch is served lately, and felt at a disadvantage. This book gave me the background, history and understanding I wanted. The writing is clear and entertaining.... It's like being taught by a favorite uncle. It's probably a great book for non-beginners, too. It goes into considerable depth about all 5 whiskey countries: their history, distilling process,

and characteristics. I was never bored, and will refer to this book into the future. Highly recommend!

For anyone who wishes to learn about naked whiskey (and whisky) in all their splendor. Originally I started reading the Kindle version but then I ended up with the hard copy too because I realized this is a great book to have out on a table. It's thorough, unpretentious, fun to read and browse, and extremely informative. You get a sense of commonalities and differences that distinguish whiskies as well as the history (which turns out to be surprisingly short) that gives us the very high complexity, diversity, and richness that whiskey lovers can enjoy around the world today. The treatment is as specific as an academic study, yet Mr. Benson's personality and writing style are so engaging that you feel like you're getting a personal distillery tour. You learn about techniques and factors that affect the product. When you are done, you can make a strategy for exploring what's available so you can find your favorites. (Hint: What you will like the best might not be the oldest or most expensive.) What a terrific resource!

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