

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Jack Daniel's turns customers into ambassadors with high-end experiences

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Jack Daniel's' master distiller Jeff Arnett. Image credit: Jack Daniel's

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Experiential offerings are becoming an exceptionally important part of brands' strategies in appealing to the modern consumer, and Tennessee whiskey maker Jack Daniel's has learned to serve its most loyal clientele with a one-of-a-kind product and experience.

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Jack Daniel's Single Barrel Personal Collection allows individuals or groups to come to its distillery and pick out an entire barrel of its whiskey to be packaged in personalized bottles, which will only be delivered to those who purchased. The experience, priced at \$10,000, gives Jack Daniel's fans the chance to get up close and personal with the brand, while getting to take a piece of the distiller home with them.

"There are few spirits brands that allow you to tailor your whiskey to your exact taste preferences and deliver a fully personalized product, and we elevate our experience with the quality of our Single Barrel whiskey and the added benefits of being a true Friend of Jack," said Jeff Arnett, master distiller of **Jack Daniel's**.

In this Q&A, Mr. Arnett explains the heart behind the initiative and how it creates what it calls Friends of Jack Daniel's.

How does the Jack Daniel's Single Barrel Personal Collection attract affluent consumers?

The affluent consumer expects a luxurious, bespoke and seamless experience with every purchase.

Friends of Jack can visit us in Lynchburg where our expert distilling team and master tasters will lead a personal tasting and selection process. What makes the Single Barrel product line unique is no two single barrels are exactly alike.

The handcrafted white oak barrel, the conditions of the barrelhouse and the aging process of the whiskey all combine to create subtle nuances in the final yield. Once a customer selects a barrel, it is theirs and theirs alone.

We take great care to offer an opportunity where customers feel personally attended to and guided by our experts, while experiencing all that makes our product special the place, the people and the process.

The Personal Collection is an elite group. After all, not everyone can say that their Jack Daniel's is unlike anyone else's in the world.

How is this unique in the beverage industry?

This is Jack Daniel's your way. Each bottle is not only personally engraved, but the distillery will display a special plaque in the personal selection room in Lynchburg to commemorate your experience.

By purchasing the barrel, customers also receive high-quality commemorative gifts, including glassware, a decanter, an engraved barrelhead and more.



Mr. Arnett explains Jack Daniel's level of enthusiasm. Image credit: Jack Daniel's

What does the experience entail?

For buyers who choose to come make their selection in person, the experience starts with a personal tour of our Lynchburg distillery followed by a private tasting led by me or one of our master tasters. Guests then get to select their preferred barrel and claim it as their own.

Of course they also have the opportunity to explore Lynchburg, and we provide lunch at the famous Miss Mary Bobo's, where they can enjoy delicious family-style southern fare. The experience is really an insider's look at the whole process from beginning to end.

Guests not only get to taste their whiskey and see where their barrel has been aging, they get to experience how all the pieces come together to create a quality product. From there, we bottle, engrave and ship the product directly to the consumer.

What does the future hold for the Single Barrel Personal Collection?

We recently expanded to include our Single Barrel Rye as part of the Personal Collection.

Rye has been on the rise for whiskey fans in search of a spicier, bolder taste than more oak and pepper versus the caramel and vanilla of our traditional grain bill. We want fans of all types of whiskey to have the option to make a barrel their own.

We'll continue to expand and develop the program to make it top of mind for Jack Daniel's drinkers who are looking for that luxury experience and product.

How did this initiative come about?

The Personal Collection by-the-barrel program was originally launched in 1998, following the introduction of Jack Daniel's Single Barrel, the first iteration in the craft whiskey family.

We wanted to give Friends of Jack a truly tailored product designed to meet their specific tastes. Jack Daniel's has continued to expand on its crafted Single Barrel offerings, releasing Single Barrel, Barrel Proof in 2015 and, most recently, Single Barrel Rye in February 2016.

Our Single Barrel whiskey is our top-of-the-line offering, aged in the highest reaches of our barrelhouse, with only 1 percent of our total distillery production achieving this high mark. At Jack Daniel's we always want our friends and followers to feel a part of this special process, and what better way than to create an offering that is one-of-a-kind, making for a meaningful experience that shows how much care we put into making it the best we can.

How customizable is the experience?

We like to think of this as the most customizable experience a whiskey drinker can get, as guests get to ultimately explore a variety of taste profiles before determining their favorite and claiming their barrel.

Customers also have the option to make the experience a trip of the lifetime by coming to visit our Lynchburg distillery for their selection, or can have the experience brought to them by receiving tasting samples they can conveniently enjoy in their own home. For those looking for the expert opinion, we also offer the opportunity for customers to have myself and my team select a barrel we know they'll enjoy.

[View this post on Instagram](#)

Every drop of Jack Daniel's is handcrafted from what nature gave us. We think it's important to return the favor. We make sure the water stays pure. #JackDaniels

A post shared by Jack Daniel's (@jackdaniels_us) on Apr 22, 2019 at 8:54am PDT

Instagram post from Jack Daniel's

Does Jack Daniel's have any other luxury offerings or experiences in the works?

As noted, we just announced the expansion of our Personal Collection experience to include rye whiskey.

Last year we also released our critically acclaimed and limited edition Single Barrel Heritage Barrel.

Heritage Barrel was made by using heavily toasted, lightly charred barrels, similar to what was used in the 19th century. The whiskey is aged in the highest and hottest part of the barrelhouse to allow for beautiful blending of flavors.

The success we experienced launching this product inspired us to consider what other new ideas we can implement to add to our broad portfolio of whiskeys, so that Jack Daniel's can continue to have something to satisfy every taste.

Some other luxury offerings include Sinatra Select and No. 27 Gold.

Sinatra Select was made in honor of Frank Sinatra, who was not only a legendary musician but a legendary fan of Jack Daniel's. The whiskey is made in special, deep grooved barrels which expose the whiskey to extra layers of toasted oak, allowing the whiskey to develop a rich amber color, bold character and pleasant smokiness, punctuated by an incredibly smooth vanilla finish.

Jack Daniel's No. 27 Gold was first introduced in 2015 as a travel retail exclusive but launched more broadly in the U.S. market earlier this year. This whiskey is double mellowed and double barreled in maple barrels for a rich, warm finish.

The natural amber hue, along with a scent of toasted oak and honey, offer an intricate texture and taste, making this whiskey a very distinct luxury product.

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