



HOW TO CONDUCT A WHISKEY TASTING

STEP ONE: COLOR

Ask your guests to examine the glass against a white background (tablecloth, napkin, or the tasting mat), or toward a natural source of light.

Have them look for a rich amber color and view for clarity and highlights.

In general, a lighter colored bourbon has matured for fewer years than a darker colored bourbon. If a barrel has a very dark char level, even a young bourbon may have a rich color.

Do note that some whiskeys add coloring to reach a target color.



Peggy Noe Stevens – Master Taster

STEP TWO: AROMA

Aroma is responsible for 75% of your flavor perception. Invite your guests to rest the glass under, or to the side of their nose, pulling the glass to and from. Ask them to be aware of the flavors such as spice, fruit, sweet, earthy. Participants can add a drop or two of water to release fruit notes and reveal hidden aromatics.

KEEP IN MIND: When conducting a whiskey tasting, tulip shaped glasses such as Glencairn or small wine glasses are preferred, as their shape better presents the whiskey's aromas and flavors.

STEP THREE: FLAVOR AND MOUTHFEEL

Ask your guests to take a small amount of bourbon to rest on their tongue. Mentioned that some whiskey will coat their tongue. Others may seem thin. This is the “mouthfeel.” Have your guests blow air out of their mouth to break down the alcohol and get to the core of the flavors.

STEP FOUR: FINISH

The finish, or “after taste,” may be dry and sweet, or spicy and bold. Invite guests to allow the finish to linger as if the liquid is still in their mouth. Note that the longer it lingers, the better the quality.