



2014: THE YEAR OF JIMMY RUSSELL

Bourbon Hall of Famer™ Jimmy Russell Celebrates Unprecedented 60 Years with Wild Turkey®; Longest-Tenured, Active Spirits Master Distiller in the World Sets New Bourbon Industry Benchmark

LAWRENCEBURG, KY (MARCH 10, 2014) – Bourbon Hall of Famer™ Jimmy Russell, Wild Turkey's® illustrious Master Distiller and the longest-tenured, active spirits Master Distiller in the world, celebrates 60 years of service with the distillery this year. Known among industry peers as the "Buddha of Bourbon" and the "Master Distiller's Master Distiller," Jimmy is a well-respected and highly-regarded titan of the Bourbon world, and a dedicated craftsman with an uncompromised approach to whiskey-making. To celebrate his achievements, a number of special events will take place throughout 2014, making this "The Year of Jimmy Russell."

Jimmy grew up less than five miles from the Wild Turkey distillery in Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, which employed both his father and wife Joretta. While keeping it all in the family, he eagerly learned the traditions and techniques of Bourbon craftsmanship and began working at Wild Turkey on September 10, 1954. That year, while future Baseball Hall of Famer Willie Mays was burning up the outfield, actress and sex symbol Marilyn Monroe was burning up the silver screen in movies like "The River of No Return." The top television show in 1954 was "I Love Lucy," the average US income was \$3,900 and a gallon of gas cost just 21 cents.

Jimmy's passion for Bourbon led him to study under whiskey luminaries, including Bill Hughes, Wild Turkey's second Master Distiller; and Ernest W. Ripy, Jr., great-nephew of distillery founder James Ripy and Wild Turkey's third Master Distiller. Jimmy recalls being taken under Bill's wing and learning everything about the business from the ground up. Under their collective tutelage, he learned how to make Bourbon the Wild Turkey way – using the deepest char, a high rye mash bill, GMO-free grains and aging the whiskey longer. With a bold, spicy flavor, Wild Turkey dares to be different – just like Jimmy, who has never compromised quality or integrity as a distiller – making him a true individual in the Bourbon community.

The Bourbon industry has evolved significantly over the past 60 years and Jimmy has witnessed it all. "I started working here in 1954 and things sure have changed! Back in my younger days, Bourbon was a southern gentleman's drink. It was seen as a prestige drink. Now, the whole world has discovered it. It has really grown into this huge market. People enjoy the flavor, the taste, all of it. It's funny how things happen," proclaimed Jimmy. Turning 80 in November, Jimmy has dedicated his life to making America's native spirit. When asked about his numerous accomplishments, he humbly responds, "I'm still trying to get better. All the time."

Among the many planned activities to celebrate Jimmy's legacy, Wild Turkey will open a new, state-of-the-art Visitor Center on April 15, which will also serve as a platform to kick off "The Year of Jimmy Russell" among his fellow Kentuckians. Both the Governor of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and Lawrenceburg's Mayor Edwina Baker will honor Jimmy and his contributions as a major force in propelling Bourbon culture around the world. The Visitor Center includes photos and memorabilia that serve as a time capsule of Jimmy's colorful life.

Additionally, Wild Turkey will release a commemorative Diamond Anniversary limited-edition Bourbon created by Jimmy's son, distilling partner and Bourbon Hall of Famer Eddie Russell. Diamond Anniversary will be available first at the Visitor Center starting in April, but will expand to key markets around the country this fall. Another tribute to Jimmy will come in the form of a documentary allowing fans both old and new to get a glimpse into the life of this legendary whiskey maker. Featuring family, friends and a flock of fellow Bourbon legends, the film will follow this iconic man as he goes about his business, making the best Bourbon in the world.

"Making Bourbon isn't easy. There is a lot to master. As soon as I learned one job, they put me on another." says Jimmy. From positions as Plant Manager and Bottling House Manager to Quality Control and finally the apex of his career as Master Distiller, Jimmy learned how to make Bourbon the right way – from the inside out and everything in between. No job was too small, no task too tedious. The Russell legacy at Wild Turkey continues with Jimmy's son Eddie, who joined Wild Turkey in 1981 and today serves as Distiller with his father. "The Bourbon business is a family affair," he continued.

Over the past 60 years, Jimmy has been responsible for the launches of a number of new Wild Turkey brands and expressions, such as Tradition, Tribute, 17-year-old Wild Turkey for Japan, Rare Breed, American Spirit, Kentucky Spirit and Russell's Reserve, which he co-created with Eddie. Jimmy broke new ground in 1976 with the first honeyed Bourbon, at the time called Wild Turkey Liqueur. Today, fans know that product better as American Honey. Jimmy is also responsible for making sure the legacy of Wild Turkey stays intact; overseeing the production of Wild Turkey 101, Wild Turkey's flagship brand. While waxing poetic about "aging techniques" and "grain selection," you can often find Jimmy enjoying his beloved Bourbon neat or with a touch of branch water.

Jimmy married his high school sweetheart Joretta the year before he started at the distillery. They have three children – Eddie, Mike and Kathy; six grandchildren; and one great grandchild. A true Kentuckian and avid sports fan, Jimmy is a lifelong supporter of local Anderson County High School athletic programs for girls and boys.

At A Glance: **Jimmy Russell**

- Wild Turkey Master Distiller
- 60 Year Whiskey Veteran, longest-tenured spirits Master Distiller in the industry
- At 80 years old, the oldest active spirits Master Distiller
- Kentucky Bourbon Hall of Fame™ member; inducted in 2000 (Jimmy and Eddie are the only active Father/Son members of the Hall of Fame)
- Creator of Rare Breed, Kentucky Spirit, American Spirit, American Honey, Tradition, Tribute, Wild Turkey 17-year-old for Japan and Co-Creator of Russell's Reserve
- Whiskey judge for the International Wine and Spirits Competition

- Anointed a Kentucky Colonel by three standing Commonwealth of Kentucky Governors, including former Governors Paul E. Patton and Ernie Fletcher, and current Governor Steve Beshear.

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About Campari America

Campari America is a wholly owned subsidiary of Davide Campari-Milano S.p.A. (Reuters CPRI.MI - Bloomberg CPR IM). At the heart of Campari America are two legends in the American spirits industry. The first, Skyy Spirits, was founded in San Francisco back in 1992 by the entrepreneur who invented iconic SKYY Vodka. The second is the world-famous Wild Turkey Distillery in Lawrenceburg, Kentucky, where they have been making the world's finest whiskies since the 1800's. Both companies were purchased by Davide Campari-Milano and together they form Campari America, which has built a portfolio unrivaled in its quality, innovation and style, making it a top choice among distributors, retailers and consumers. Campari America manages Gruppo Campari's portfolio in the US with such leading brands as SKYY® Vodka, SKYY Infusions®, Campari®, Aperol®, Wild Turkey® Straight Kentucky Bourbon, American Honey®, Russell's Reserve®, Glen Grant® Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Cabo Wabo® Tequila, Espolón® Tequila, Appleton® Estate Rum, Wray & Nephew® Rum, Coruba® Rum, Ouzo 12®, X-Rated® Fusion Liqueur®, Frangelico®, Cynar®, Carolans Irish Cream®, Irish Mist® Liqueur, Sagatiba® Cachaça and Jean-Marc XO Vodka®. Campari America is also the exclusive US distributor of Bulldog® Gin, Bowmore® Islay Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Auchentoshan® Lowland Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Glen Garioch® Highland Single Malt Scotch Whisky, McClelland's® Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Flor de Caña® Rum, Midori® Melon Liqueur, Hibiki® Whisky, Hakushu® Single Malt Whisky, and The Yamazaki® Single Malt Whisky.

Campari America is headquartered in San Francisco, California. More information on the company can be found at www.campariamerica.com, www.facebook.com/campariamerica, Twitter: @CampariAmerica and www.camparigroup.com. Please enjoy Campari America brands responsibly and in moderation.

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