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Bourbon's Backroads: A Journey through Kentucky's Distilling Landscape.

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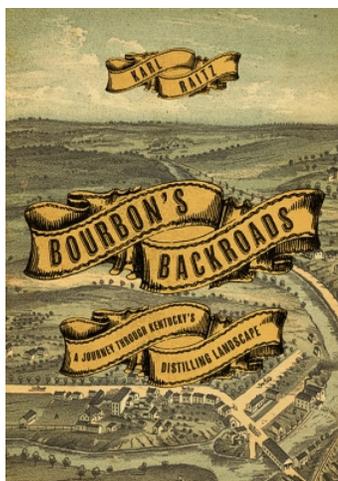
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With Journal Finder, Bucknall invented the very first open URL link resolver in the United States, which changed how libraries and students access journals and e-resources, significantly improving the ability to do academic research. Not only has Bucknall created and developed these tools and services, he also shares his experience and knowledge with others in the profession through writing and presenting on various topics, such as technology, online catalogs, electronic resources, serials management issues, open access and more.

Prior to joining UNCG in 1994, Bucknall served as Electronic Services Librarian at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH). He received his bachelor's degree in Liberal Arts from the University of Texas-Austin and earned his MLIS and MA in Art History from UNC-CH.

BOOK REVIEWS

Bourbon's Backroads: A Journey through Kentucky's Distilling Landscape. Karl Raitz. Lexington, KY: South Limestone Books, 2019. ISBN: 9780813178424. 203 p. \$29.95



Karl Raitz's *Bourbon's Backroads: a journey through Kentucky's distilling landscape* is an engaging foray into the origins and legacy of bourbon. A 1964 Act of Congress proclaimed bourbon to be a "distinctive product of the United States," and it was designated "America's Native Spirit" by the U.S. Senate in 2007. Made from at least 51 percent corn, distilled to no more than 160 proof and stored at 125 proof in new charred oak barrels, bourbon is a uniquely American product. Moreover, distilling is an industry integral to the bluegrass state and its related businesses continue to impact and shape the economy and landscape of the region.

Karl Raitz, professor emeritus at the University of Kentucky, marshals his expertise in cultural and historical geography and American landscapes to deftly guide the reader through the origins of bourbon distilling. He recounts its beginning as a small subsistence level operation through its evolution as a modern-day industrial enterprise. In addition, he explores the primary areas in Kentucky - the Inner and Outer Bluegrass regions and the Ohio River Valley - which offered unique advantages to foster and support the burgeoning trade.

Settlers from Scotland and Ireland, Pennsylvania and Maryland brought their ancient craft of whiskey distilling to Kentucky as early as 1775. Setting up along the streams and natural springs and taking advantage of rich soil that yielded abundant grain, those distillers who had sufficient financing and embraced innovation, prospered. From its beginning as a craft enterprise to its natural evolution as an industry, Raitz describes in topical chapters the technical advancements, inventions, and transportation improvements that brought bourbon distilling into the modern age. Steam power and access to railroad lines were but a couple of the changes that spurred the industrialization of bourbon distilling.

Karl Raitz devotes the last three chapters to those three regions in Kentucky that primarily support the industry. The Inner Bluegrass offered abundant water and fertile land to early settlers and capitalized on these advantages through transportation advancements. The Outer Bluegrass shared the natural gifts of the Inner Bluegrass and embraced the railroad, often moving their distilling operations to be closer to reliable transport. Distillers in the Ohio River Valley took advantage of city locales to have close and reliable supporting businesses such as barrel and glass makers available as dependable suppliers. Often situated on the riverfront in towns, they could readily obtain the materials they needed for production and easily ship their cargo.

Modern distillers have skillfully employed marketing to reach consumers, using clever concepts such as The Bourbon Trail to entice tourists to the state. The remains of the old distilleries instill a sense of heritage and tradition to the industry and reflect authenticity for participants. Both the bourbon aficionado and the curious tourist who seeks a greater understanding of the distilling industry in Kentucky will find it in *Bourbon's Backroads: a journey through Kentucky's distilling landscape*.

Recommended for academic and public libraries with subject related collections.

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