

13 Bourbon And Fruit Pairings You Need To Try, According To The Pros

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Getting into the world of bourbon and making the most of your drinking experience can seem like an intimidating thing, but it doesn't have to be. A great place to start is [Tasting Table's 13 tips for drinking bourbon from a whiskey connoisseur](#). If you're looking to expand both your knowledge and your palate while making the most of your favorite bourbon styles, enjoying a glass of bourbon is alongside a tasting plate or platter of appetizers is a strong choice. You'll find that some of your favorite fruits are a good way to start building a truly incredible experience. It's often overlooked or ignored fruits that can present a brilliant opportunity for pairing with bourbon in a way that brings out the best in both. To prove this, we gained insight from professionals to get their input on the best fruit and bourbon pairings around.

Tasting Table reached out to a variety of experts, including VinoVoss AI Sommelier Ambassador and Master Mixologist Nikki "In the Mix" Bonkowski, Fox Point Farms Culinary Director Alex Carballo, 1861 Distillery owner Jill Higgins, the founder and CEO of Still Austin, Chris Seals, and the brand ambassador and Chief Mixologist for Four Roses Bourbon, Abby Martinie. They had some brilliant suggestions on not only what fruits to pair with what types of bourbon, but they also gave us their thoughts on desserts, platters, and building an unforgettable bourbon-tasting experience. Here's what they had to say.

Cherries, with a single barrel bourbon that has flavors of warm spice flavors



Aleksandr Zubkov/Getty; Four Roses Bourbon/Facebook

When it comes to the flavor profiles of bourbon, you'll often hear a reference made to warm spices or baking spices. These are notes of cinnamon, star anise, and nutmeg, all of which develop during the aging process, the maturing of the bourbon, and from the characteristics imparted from the oak barrels that are chosen for that aging process. For bourbons with these kinds of fall and wintertime flavors in their tasting notes, Four Roses brand ambassador and chief mixologist Abby Martinie recommends pairing them with cherries — and, she suggests using chocolate-covered cherries for something extra-special.

Dark plums, with bourbons with a caramel/vanilla profile



Igor Normann/Shutterstock/1861 Distillery

When it comes to bourbon, one of the most popular flavor profiles is one that's a heavy mix of caramel and vanilla. It's a profile that's perhaps best well-known as being at the forefront of favorites like Wild Turkey 101, and sometimes, you'll also see tasting notes that refer to toffee and vanilla. (Buffalo Trace is a great, widely-known example of this combination.) If they're the most forward of the flavors in your bourbon of choice, try tasting it alongside dark plums.

Jill Higgins is the owner of [1861 Distillery](#), and when we asked her about her favorite pairing, she said that it was dark plums and the distillery's Shine Shed Bourbon. Why plums? "Their deep, sweet-tart flavor beautifully complements the bourbon's own plum-like undertones, while the slight acidity balances the caramel and vanilla sweetness... making this pairing both seamless and indulgent."

She had some other suggestions for rounding out this pairing as well: "Consider bourbon-roasted dark plums paired with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream. The heat of roasting intensifies the plums' natural sweetness, while the bourbon's caramel and vanilla notes enhance the rich flavor of the fruit." Higgins also suggested a platter with prosciutto, nutty aged cheeses, or a plum-based chutney as the perfect accent to the bourbon.