

MINT JULEPS

The mint julep has been the traditional beverage of Churchill Downs and the Kentucky Derby since the 1930s, and the Old Forester Mint Julep is “The Official Drink of the Kentucky Derby.”

Old Forester was introduced in 1870 as America’s First Bottled Bourbon and is the founding brand of Brown-Forman Corporation, which formerly had Early Times as “The Official Mint Julep of the Kentucky Derby” from 1987-2014.

Each year, approximately 120,000 mint juleps are served over the two-day period of Kentucky Oaks and Kentucky Derby weekend at Churchill Downs. That’s a feat that requires more than 10,000 bottles of Old Forester Mint Julep (the ready-to-serve cocktail made with Old Forester Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whisky), 1,000 pounds of freshly harvested mint and 60,000 pounds of ice.

The Old Forester Mint Julep commemorative one-liter bottles bottled at 60-proof capture the mood and spirit of the famous Churchill Downs track and Kentucky Derby race with a horse-theme neck wrap.

The Old Forester Mint Julep is served at Churchill Downs year-round – and produced at the Brown-Forman Distillery in nearby Shively, Ky.

The highest-priced mint juleps at the Kentucky Derby, which are sold in limited quantity for a whopping \$1,000 each, use unique ingredients and bourbon from the Brown-Forman sister brand Woodford Reserve, which is marketed as the “Official Bourbon of the Kentucky Derby.”

If the Old Forester Mint Julep is not available from your local retailer – they retail in 36 markets for \$24.99), you can make your own with this time-honored recipe:

The Old Forester Mint Julep Recipe

- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups water
- Sprigs of fresh mint
- Crushed ice
- Old Forester Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whisky
- Silver Julep Cups

Directions: Make a simple syrup by boiling sugar and water together for five minutes. Cool and place in a covered container with six or eight sprigs of fresh mint, then refrigerate overnight. Make one julep at a time by filling a julep cup with crushed ice, adding one tablespoon mint syrup and two ounces of Old Forester Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whisky. Stir rapidly with a spoon to frost the outside of the cup. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint.

Fresh Mint is Locally Produced

Dohn Farms (7916 Canna Dr., Louisville, KY 40258) produces the fresh mint that is a critical part of the mint juleps that are sold at Churchill Downs on Kentucky Derby and Oaks Days. In recent years, Levy Restaurants has purchased 3,800 pounds of fresh mint for those days. That’s nearly two tons of mint!