

Russell's Reserve Single Barrel Bourbon · Camp Nelson E

Jimmy's Drive By

Eight years in a wood-clad rickhouse, an autumn-like profile, and why age is just a number.

WORDS & PHOTOS
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THE BARREL

Like fingerprints

After a stint of traveling and a remodeling project nearing its end, I'm happy to be relaxing at home with a glass of Russell's Reserve Single Barrel Bourbon — specifically, a Camp Nelson E selection from the Pour House in West Virginia. Special thanks to my friend Jeremy for the opportunity to give this Turkey a proper run-through.

When it comes to Russell's Reserve private selections, Camp Nelson E has a solid reputation. Some of my favorite barrels from the last two years were pulled from CN-E, and this selection is one of them. Aged for eight years and four months on the fourth floor, barrel #25-0783, "Jimmy's Drive By," appears similar on the surface to its 2025 CN-E siblings. Yet, every barrel has a story to tell and rarely tastes the same, at least when it comes to Wild Turkey. Like fingerprints, each has its own traits and leaves its own impression. The trick is finding the ones that truly stand out. This is often accomplished by finding off-profile barrels, though hitting bullseye on a core Turkey profile is effective as well.

Jimmy's Drive By owes its name to a Russell's Reserve private barrel experience at Tyrone's rickhouse A. Master Distiller Jimmy Russell stopped by the rickhouse to kick the proverbial tires, and the team from the Pour House took note. Speaking of which, I have some tires to kick myself. Fortunately, this isn't my first afternoon sipping Jimmy's Drive By. In fact, I've had the pleasure of enjoying this bottle over the last several months (nearing the half-full mark). But I'll spare my final assessment in favor of another taste — for science, of course.

BARREL DETAILS

DISTILLED	02/06/2017	BARREL #	25-0783
STORED IN OAK	8 Years	WAREHOUSE	CN-E
DUMPED	05/22/25	FLOOR	4
BOTTLED (NCF)	06/03/25	PROOF	110
SELECTION	Jimmy's Drive By		

8y 4m
AGE STATEMENT

~$70
APPROX. RETAIL PRICE

SELECTED BY
The Pour House, WVA



THE POUR

Russell's Reserve Single Barrel Bourbon – Jimmy's Drive By

Tasted neat in a Glencairn after a few minutes' rest

COLOR
Copper

NOSE

Caramel apple
Rickhouse oak
Vanilla custard
Toffee drizzle
Autumn spice

TASTE

Buttercream frosting
Crisp honey-maple
Cherry syrup
Dried orange peel
Hints of nutmeg

FINISH

MEDIUM-LONG

Brown sugar
Baked apple
Charred oak
Cherry pie
Cinnamon & faint clove

THE VERDICT

Cool weather, county fairs & festive delectables

Jimmy's Drive By is autumn in a glass. While I wouldn't consider that an uncommon or unusual description for a Russell's Reserve Single Barrel bottling, it's always a welcome treat when it comes around. It's not, however, a profile I tend to associate with CN-E barrels in recent years. Tyrone A and Tyrone M, certainly. But Camp Nelson E? Not so much. Yet, this barrel exudes characteristics I can't help but associate with cool weather, county fairs, and festive delectables. From caramel apple and honey-maple to dried orange and dessert-like baking spice, I find myself reaching for this bourbon now that fall is upon us.

I'm confident I've touched on this before, but one criticism I hear about Russell's Reserve private selections is a scoff at their eight- to nine-year age range. During Covid, bourbon enthusiasts were spoiled with barrels ranging 10 to 13 years (with some charity barrels clocking in at 14 years). The thing is, Russell's Reserve Single Barrel selections have averaged eight to 10 years from the beginning — most commonly nine years, pre-Covid. I'll never forget my first Russell's Reserve selection in 2018. It was an eight-year barrel — CN-F, fifth floor. (Boy, would I love to have a few of those left in the bunker.)

While I'd be thrilled to see more Russell's Reserve barrels with age statements over 10 years, I don't fully understand the complaints about an eight- to nine-year bourbon that costs roughly $70. For me, flavor always trumps age (and proof for that matter). In fact, some of the best Wild Turkey bourbons I know are "only" eight years old.

A great bourbon is a great bourbon.

SIDE BY SIDE

Its own Turkey

	JIMMY'S DRIVE BY	WILD TURKEY 101 8-YEAR
PROOF	110	101
FILTRATION	Non-chill filtered	Chill filtered
FORMAT	Single barrel	Batched
AGE	8 years, 4 months	At least 8 years
IN THE GLASS	*A homecoming pour with seasonal sophistication*	*Wild Turkey 101 with additional age*

SHARED SPECS: 75C/13R/12MB MASH BILL · CHAR #4 COOPERAGE · 115 BARREL-ENTRY PROOF

Which brings me back to this Pour House Russell's Reserve private selection. To illustrate my point I'm tasting it next to a glass of modern Wild Turkey 101 8-Year. Admittedly, there's a 4.5% ABV difference between the two, as well as the fact that 101/8 is a chill-filtered batched product. But we're not talking about a polar divide in specs. The differences here are greater than proof, filtration, or maturity. Each of these bourbons, though sharing similar notes, tastes like its own Turkey. Jimmy's Drive By is the superior of the two without question, showcasing more depth, complexity, and uniqueness. For the money I'd happily take Jimmy's Drive By, regardless of its slightly higher price.

All said and done, when it comes to Wild Turkey there's a reason why the legendary Anderson County brand leans on eight years. After seven decades of distilling experience, it's the age Jimmy Russell prefers his bourbon. As enthusiasts we appreciate a hefty age statement, but to disregard or diminish potential quality simply because an expression touts an eight-year age statement is misguided at best, closed-minded at worst. Don't get me wrong — I get just as excited as everyone else when Russell's picks cross the decade mark. But after years of barrel selections on and off site I can say from experience that age is only a number. Jimmy's Drive By is just one of many examples.

Cheers! *dj*

ABOUT RARE BIRD 101

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