



## THE BEST AMERICAN WHISKEY UNDER \$50

Contributed by Liquor.com

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(illustration: Elizabeth Reyes)

You know who knows best which bottles to buy? The people who pour and sell drinks—that's who. We asked dozens of top bartending and spirits industry professionals to tell us which bottles they love and why.

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*Heads up: The numerical order below is not organized by importance or quality; it's an alphabetical list, not a ranking. Prices are averages and can vary from state to state.*



### 1: CORSAIR TRIPLE SMOKE (\$49)

“A single malt’s smoke comes from three different sources: peat, cherrywood and beechwood. With tasting notes of fruity, dry, sweet and smoke, this is a complex flavor dance on your tongue.”—Juyoung Kang, lead bartender at Las Vegas' [Dorsey](#)



### 2: DAD'S HAT PENNSYLVANIA VERMOUTH FINISH RYE (\$49)

“It’s probably one of the most well-paired finishes of casks. With notes of cinnamon, pepper and vanilla spice like a rye should, it also lends a rich orange, delicate sweet finish. Its complexity gives your palette a dance from beginning to end.”—Kang



### 3: GEORGE DICKEL RYE (\$28)

“It’s a delicious cocktail rye with bang for the buck.”—H. Joseph Ehrmann, owner of San Francisco’s [Elixir](#)



### 4: J. RIEGER & CO. KANSAS CITY (\$35)

“The addition of Dry Sack sherry gives it an added layer of richness that complements the cherry notes, and it works really well for a pickle back.”—Franky Marshall, beverage director at New York City’s [Le Boudoir](#)



### 5: JACK DANIEL'S SINGLE BARREL BARREL PROOF (\$49)

“This fun [whiskey](#) is hot because of the proof, but with a little water or ice, it’s the best sipping whiskey I’ve had in a long time.”—Jennifer K. Knott, head bartender at [312 Chicago](#)



### 6: JACK DANIEL'S MASTER DISTILLER SERIES (\$30–\$34)

“It’s an interesting series of different Jack Daniel’s releases honoring its seven master distillers. At 86 proof, you get to see what Jack used to taste like, and you might just realize that it tastes better than you thought.”—Neal Bodenheimer, owner and bartender at New Orleans’ [Cane & Table](#) and [Cure](#)



### 7: JOURNEYMAN NOT A KING RYE (\$47)

“This is a fun whiskey out of southern Michigan. It is well-balanced with the grain blend and makes for a great cocktail like an Old Fashioned, or throw it over some rocks and call it a night.”—Knott



### 8: KOVAL SINGLE BARREL OAT (\$45)

“This unique whiskey tastes like warm breakfast cereal.”—Kellie Thorn, bar manager at Atlanta's Empire State South



### 9: MCKENZIE PURE POT STILL (\$42)

“This whiskey is well-rounded and full of fat barley flavor. It's like biting into a caramel green apple without the sweetness, but it actually has some silky texture to it and some warm white pepper notes on the back.”—Brian Means, bartender at San Francisco's Mina Group



### 10: MICTER'S US\*1 AMERICAN (\$48)

“At only 50 percent corn and aged in barrels both old and new, this easy-drinking whiskey doesn't qualify as a bourbon. But honestly, who cares what it's called if it tastes good?”—Michael Lazar, whiskey concierge and lead bartender at San Francisco's Hard Water



### 11: NEW YORK DISTILLING CO. RAGTIME RYE (\$46)

“For only being three-plus years old, this rye has great spice, caramel and oak notes.”—Kang



### 12: OLD OVERHOLT RYE (\$18)

“It’s a classic rye whiskey with a great hint of spice.”—Lara Lowenhar, beverage director at New York City’s [La Pecora Bianca](#)



### 13: PIKESVILLE RYE (\$49)

“I was really excited when I heard this six-year-old, 110-proof rye whiskey was being released in late 2015. I was stunned it would be priced under \$50. This is not your typical rye, as its mash bill contains quite a bit of corn to round out some of the peppery rye flavor. It’s a fantastic value and makes an excellent Old Fashioned.”—Paul McGee, owner and bartender at Chicago’s [Lost Lake](#)



### 14: RITTENHOUSE BONDED RYE (\$30)

“It’s the best American whiskey you can buy for this price. It is a little light on the nose but makes it all up when taking a sip. This whiskey is great neat, on the rocks and in cocktails.”—Tomas van den Boomgaard, beverage manager at [The Langham, Chicago](#)



### 15: SAZERAC RYE (\$45)

“In New Orleans, it ain't a Sazerac cocktail without it—great juice, great price.”—Bodenheimer



### 16: SONOMA COUNTY DISTILLING CO. CHERRYWOOD RYE (\$49)

“Delicious and locally made (local to the Bay Area), it has rye spiciness and a little hint of young green steaminess but has a really soft cherry fruit finish.”—Aaron Paul, bar director at San Francisco's Alta

**Locations:** Atlanta California Chicago Georgia Illinois Kentucky Las Vegas Louisiana Michigan Nevada New Orleans New York San Francisco Tennessee

**Brands:** Corsair Dad's Hat Dry Sack George Dickel J. Rieger Jack Daniels Journeyman Koval McKenzie Michter's New York Distilling Old Overholt Pikesville Ragtime Rittenhouse Sazerac Sonoma County Distilling

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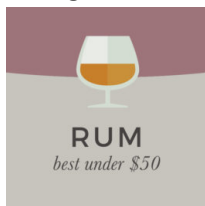
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