

Booze Schmooze: Problematic Drinks

Compiled By: Rabbi Nissan Zibell
Adar 5786/February 2026



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Problematic casks:

- Sherry
(Also known as Apera Cask)
- Port
- Shiraz
- Madeira
- Sauternes
- Cognac
- Bordeaux
- Dual finish
- Pinot Noir
- Olorosso
- French cask
- Pedro Ximénez
- European cask
- Double oak/ cask
- Triple oak/ cask
- Double matured/finished
- Triple matured/finished



Liqueur:

All liqueurs require a reliable hashgacha due to added flavoring.



Beer:

It's best to drink certified beers.

Most uncertified unflavored beers from the popular large scale brands are assumed kosher. The moment any flavor, lactose, or other kosher sensitive ingredients are present it needs a reliable Hashgacha. Even for unflavored beer, there can be equipment issues which render the beer not kosher. It is important to investigate if the brewery produces non-kosher flavored beers (oyster, bacon, clam, or lobster etc.) before consuming.



Bourbon:

If a company is Jewish owned, which is very common, there is an issue of "Chametz She'avar Alav HaPesach" (Chametz that remained in a Jew's possession over Pesach, Without being sold to a Non-Jew) which is forbidden for one to have any benefit from. See more below.

Get Clarity:

Click [here](#) for a short audio class. Access helpful resources, & constantly updated lists.

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Flavors:

Any type of added flavor present in any alcoholic beverage (including spiced rum or the like) requires it to have a reliable hashgacha. When a bottle describes experiencing notes of unique flavors like spices, vanilla, floral, cereal, and smoke etc., it may not be referring to added flavors. Rather, it may be describing natural flavors attributed to the grain or barrel. Careful reading of the label will indicate if flavors have actually been added.

Possibly Made From Grape or Whey (Dairy) Alcohol:

Check description.

Especially when coming from France, Ireland & New Zealand):



- Gin & Vodka

Usually Made from Grape Alcohol:

- Ouzo
- Arak
- Raki

Grape Alcohol- Based Alcoholic Beverages.

- Cognac
- Brandy
- Marc
- Grappa
- Tsipouro
- Pisco
- Vermouth
- Armagnac



Israeli Wines & Shemita:

Certainly, all wines, including those from Israel, must have a reliable Hashgacha. It's crucial to be cautious with Post-Shemita wines as even typically certified wines, might not carry the same certification when made with Shemita produce. Even though the Shemita year has passed, wines from popular Israeli brands might still be made from Shemita produce, especially those from 2022. Check the label carefully usually on the back in small print. These wines may originate from Heter Mechirah produce (a controversial practice) or the Otzar Bais Din system, where the Beis Din manages fields to make the produce available to the public. Handling these wines requires caution and can have various complications, so it's best to avoid purchasing them altogether. For more on the topic, see pictures of examples below as well as links to classes with more explanation.

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These are just a few examples of brands that are owned by Jews over Pesach and are not acceptable.



Buffalo Trace does have a special run certified by the cRc Chicago that says Kosher on it. This is not Kosher for Pesach. it is Chametz. However, it is NOT "Chametz She'avar Alav HaPesach" (Chametz that remained in a Jew's possession over Pesach), and therefore it IS acceptable.



For a list of problematic bourbons,
and for bourbons that have no concern, click on links below for the
cRc Chicago's Liquor List at <https://consumer.crckosher.org/liquor/>

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Most Bourbons listed here are problematic because the company is owned by Jews who did not sell their chametz. A select few are listed as not recommended due to added flavors or ingredients—but the original versions are still acceptable (Ex: Jim Beam, Knob Creek, Woodford Reserve).

See the parentheses for details: They indicate whether specific flavored varieties are the issue (due to added ingredients), or if all varieties are problematic (due to Jewish ownership over Pesach).

WHISKEY ALERT BOURBONS & LIQUORS NOT RECOMMENDED



LOCAL STORES ARE SELLING WHISKEY WITH KASHRUS CONCERNS.

THE FOLLOWING IS A CURRENT LIST OF WHISKEYS YOU SHOULD NOT USE, COURTESY OF THE CHICAGO RABBINICAL COUNCIL:

1792 BOURBON (ALL VARIETIES)	COLONEL E.H. TAYLOR (ALL VARIETIES)	KIRKLAND SIGNATURE BARTON 1792 MASTER DISTILLERS (KENTUCKY STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY)	TADWORTH DISTILLING (ALL VARIETIES)
A. SMITH BOWMAN (ALL VARIETIES)	COLONEL LEE (ALL VARIETIES)	KNOB CREEK (SMOKED MAPLE)	TEN HIGH (ALL VARIETIES)
ABRAHAM BOWMAN (ALL VARIETIES)	CORNER CREEK (ALL VARIETIES)	MCAFFEE'S BENCHMARK (ALL VARIETIES)	THOMAS H. HANDY SAZERAC (ALL VARIETIES)
ANCIENT AGE (ALL VARIETIES)	EAGLE RARE (ALL VARIETIES)	NEW RIFF CERTIFIED WHEN BEARING THE CK LOGO (BOURBON)	TOM MOORE (ALL VARIETIES)
ANGEL'S ENVY (BOURBON)	ELMER T LEE (ALL VARIETIES)	NOBLE OAK (BOURBON)	TRADER JOE'S (KENTUCKY BOURBON STRAIGHT WHISKEY)
ANTIQUE COLLECTION (ALL VARIETIES)	FEW SPIRITS (BOURBON WHISKEY)	OLD CHARTER (ALL VARIETIES)	TRADEWATER (ALL VARIETIES)
BEARDS TOWN (BOURBON)	FIREBALL (CINNAMON WHISKEY)	OLD RIP VAN WINKLE (ALL VARIETIES)	TRAVELLER (ALL VARIETIES)
BIG HOUSE (ALL VARIETIES)	FLATBOAT (ALL VARIETIES)	OLD THOMPSON (ALL VARIETIES)	TWO STARS (ALL VARIETIES)
BLACK RIDGE (ALL VARIETIES)	FLEISCHMANN'S (ALL VARIETIES)	OLD WELLER (ALL VARIETIES)	VAN WINKLE (ALL VARIETIES)
BLANTON'S (ALL VARIETIES)	FLINT CREEK (ALL VARIETIES)	PAPPY VAN WINKLE (ALL VARIETIES)	VERY OLD BARTON (ALL VARIETIES)
BOONE COUNTY JAIL DISTILLERY (ALL VARIETIES)	GEORGE T. STAGG (ALL VARIETIES)	POINT RIDER (ALL VARIETIES)	VIRGINIA GENTLEMAN (ALL VARIETIES)
BOWMAN BROTHERS (ALL VARIETIES)	HANCOCK'S PRESIDENT'S RESERVE (ALL VARIETIES)	ROCK HILL FARMS (ALL VARIETIES)	W L WELLER (ALL VARIETIES)
BUCKHORN (ALL VARIETIES)	ISAAC BOWMAN (ALL VARIETIES)	ROUGH RIDER (STRAIGHT BOURBON WHISKEY)	WALKING STICK (ALL VARIETIES)
BUFFALO TRACE (EXCEPT VARIETIES WITH A CRC LOGO ON THEM)	JIM BEAM (DISTILLER'S MASTERPIECE)	STAGG JR. (ALL VARIETIES)	WELLER (ALL VARIETIES)
C.B. JACKSON (BOURBON) (ALL VARIETIES)	JIM BEAM (LEGENT)	STEDMAN'S SELECT (BOURBON)	WILLIAM LARUE WELLER (ALL VARIETIES)
CHESTNUT FARMS (ALL VARIETIES)	JOHN J. BOWMAN (ALL VARIETIES)	STONEHAMMER (ALL VARIETIES)	WOLCOTT (ALL VARIETIES)
CLARK & SHEFFIELD (ALL VARIETIES)	KELSEY CREEK (ALL VARIETIES)	STRAIGHT EDGE (BOURBON)	WOODFORD RESERVE (FROSTY FOUR WOOD)
	KENTUCKY GENTLEMAN (ALL VARIETIES)		ZACKARIAH HARRIS (ALL VARIETIES)
	KENTUCKY TAVERN (ALL VARIETIES)		

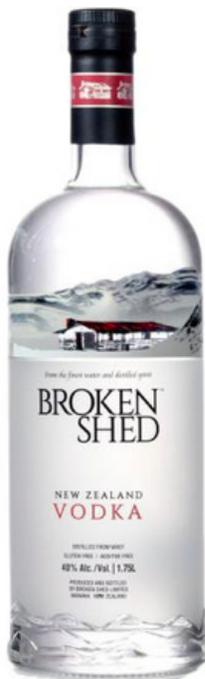
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Made from grape alcohol.



Made from whey (dairy).



5% ALC./VOL. • PER 12 FL. OZ. (355 ML) SERVING: 100g CARBOHYDRATES, 20.3g PROTEIN, 2.0g FAT, 0g SUGAR. CONTAINS: MARGARITAS/ALMEJAS • CONTAINS: SHELLFISH/CLAMS • LLAMADA PARA PREGUNTAS/COMENTARIOS: PREGUNTAS/COMENTARIOS LLAMA 1-800-944-8100 (1-800-347-5282) • TAPINTOYOURBEER.COM • 1 PINT 9 FL. OZ. CLAMATO IS A REGISTERED TRADEMARK OF MOTY'S LLP, USED UNDER LICENSE. • ANHEUSER-BUSCH, ST. LOUIS, MO

GOVERNMENT WARNING: (1) ACCORDING TO THE SURGEON GENERAL, WOMEN SHOULD NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES DURING PREGNANCY BECAUSE OF THE RISK OF BIRTH DEFECTS. (2) CONSUMPTION OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IMPAIRS YOUR ABILITY TO DRIVE A CAR OR OPERATE MACHINERY, AND MAY CAUSE HEALTH PROBLEMS.

Contains shellfish/clams



Descriptions such as "spiced Rum" is considered flavoring and needs proper hashgacha



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The following are a few examples of Otzar Beis Din, and has Kedusha of Shvi'is. Extra attention must be given to any wines coming from Israel made in the year 2022/23.



[For more explanation on the topic, click to listen on these classes below.](#)

[The Why's of Wine \(Part 2\)](#) ● [Produce of Israel \(Part 3\)](#) [Shemita'h](#)



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The following are a few examples of Heter Mechirah wines. Extra attention must be given to any wines coming from Israel made in the year 2022/23.



For more explanation on the topic, [click to listen on these classes below.](#)

[The Why's of Wine \(Part 2\)](#) ● [Produce of Israel \(Part 3\) Shemitah](#)