



This week's guest on Spirits of Whisk(e)y is Dr. Don Livermore, Master Blender at Hiram Walker & Sons Limited. Located in Windsor, Ontario, just across the Detroit River from Motor City, the historic Hiram Walker & Sons Distillery is Canada's oldest—and North America's largest!—and home to a vast range of spirits and brands, including a distinguished quartet of Canadian whiskies: J.P. Wiser's, Lot No. 40, Pike Creek, and Gooderham & Worts. Listen and learn how "Dr. Don," who this year celebrates his silver anniversary at Hiram Walker, parlayed deep agricultural roots and a knack for science into a quarter-century of innovation and dedication to advancing the craft of Canadian whisky. Then delight to Chef Louise Leonard's suggestions for pairing Hiram Walker's rum barrel-finished Pike Creek 10-Year Canadian Whisky with her take on the classic Puerto Rican Mofongo, featuring fried chicken skin, charred pineapple, and pickled habañero onions.



Dr. Don Livermore is the Master Blender of Hiram Walker & Sons Limited in Windsor, Ontario, Canada. He is responsible for some of Canada's award-winning whiskies such as JP Wiser's, Lot 40, Pike Creek, and Gooderham & Worts. After graduation in 1996 from the University of Waterloo with a degree in microbiology, Don started his career in the distillery as a lab technician. At that time Don was a pioneer in developing techniques using NIR for fermentation analysis. This transformed how the distilling industry monitored fermentations and distillery processes. He wrote a chapter in the Alcohol Textbook 4th Edition and in the Worldwide Distilled Spirits Conference in 2012 on the topic of NIR and has spoken around the world in this area of expertise. Don furthered his education by completing a MSc and PhD in Brewing and Distilling at Heriot Watt University with a focus on how wood interacts with whisky. In 2012, he became the Master Blender of Hiram Walker Distillery. This year is his 25th anniversary at the distillery! Today, Don is a sought-after speaker on Canadian Whisky as he brings together all facets of distillery operations and maturation processes and how flavours are developed in whisky. He created the Canadian Whisky Flavour Wheel[®] which is a unique perspective on blending whisky.

The Hiram Walker Distillery is the most southerly in Canada, giving it a unique climate for aging whisky. It's also the largest by square footage in North America, processing 100,000 metric tons of corn per year, 10,000 metric tons of rye as well as wheat and barley. It has 19 grain silos which hold 750 metric tons of each grain, and 39 fermentation tanks standing four stories high and processing 40,000 gallons of spirit per day. There are 2 column stills 5 stories high, with a capacity of 55 million liters of alcohol per year; 37.5 million liters will go into whisky fills. 1,300 barrels are drained and filled daily and then rest in 16 warehouses that are 480 ft. x 200 ft. x 20 ft. Inside, barrels are staked 6 pallets high with 600 barrels per row. The warehouses are aging over 1.6 million barrels at any given time. Hiram Walker bottles 5 million cases per year.

Words from Weezy:

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