

## Barrel Guide

### Important:

Do not leave the barrel without water/alcohol for more than 2 weeks, as it will shrink and cause leaks. Upon receiving the barrel, seal the barrel according to the instructions below.

Black bands will rust and may leave black paint residue on the barrel if they get wet. If your barrel has black bands, please be careful not to get the bands wet. If they become wet, dry them as soon as possible. The rust and black paint will not contaminate liquid contents and will only affect the barrel aesthetics.

### Care of a New Barrel:

Brand new oak barrels are about as sanitary as they can be because the wood has been heated over direct fire in the process of making the barrel. This heating is done in order to bend the staves into place and also to enhance the various flavor accents of the wood.

### How to Seal the Barrel:

A new barrel must be filled with water to make the wood swell and eliminate leaks. These leaks will often seal themselves in only a few hours, but it may take up to 5 days depending on how much the wood has dried. The barrel should be continually refilled with water until the leaks stop.

If leaks persist after 5 days of continually adding water, you can seal them by applying barrel wax or melted beeswax. The oak wood must be dry in order for the wax to adhere and seal the barrel. Never place wax on the inside of the barrel as it will contaminate the beverages stored inside.

If you are not going to use the barrel, keep the barrel filled with  $\frac{1}{4}$  of its capacity with water. This will avoid shrinkage, which can cause leaks and hoops to fall off.

### How to Prepare for Use:

Before using the barrel, empty completely and use one of the cleaning techniques listed below:

1. When barrel is new, fill the barrel with hot water, rotate it and empty. Continue until the color of the water that comes out is transparent.
2. Once a barrel has been used, additional cleaning and sanitation measures are required. At each racking, rinse the barrel thoroughly with water to remove debris. Follow by rinsing the barrel with an acid wash. Dissolve 2 teaspoons of citric acid in 5 gallons of water, sloshing this mixture around the interior surfaces of the barrel for 5 to 10 minutes. Drain, and refill the barrel with wine or liquor.

### How to Age Wine and Liquors

To age wine or liquor, simply fill the barrel with your favorite beverage and store it in a humid place where it is not exposed to sun, light or heat.

The time required to age a wine or liquor depends on your taste. This can be anywhere from a few months to 3 years. The aging process imbues your wine or liquor with the flavors of the wood (white oak). The longer you store your beverage in the barrel, the stronger the flavor and the darker the color.

### Barrel Assembly Guide:

1. Place the barrel on its side.
2. Insert the spigot into the spigot hole on the end of the barrel, making sure the spigot handle is correctly aligned with the top of the barrel, where the bung hole is located.
3. Tap the front of the spigot with a small hammer until it is firmly placed inside the spigot hole.
4. Fill the barrel with your favorite wine or liquor and close by placing the plug in the bung hole in the top of the barrel.