



# PRIDE OF THE SOUTH

*Photography by Charles Gold Produced by Clare Rooney by Donna Wilkinson*

In the American consciousness, the mint julep is as symbolic of the Old South as Tara, evoking a more gracious time of genteel folks and lazy summer afternoons. Indeed, the tradition surrounding the making of juleps borders on the sacred.

"A mint julep is not the product of a formula," said Alben Barkley, the noted Kentucky-born statesman who served as Harry Truman's vice-president (1949-53). "It is a ceremony and must be performed by a gentleman possessing a true sense of the artistic, a deep reverence for the ingredients, and a proper appreciation of the occasion. It is a rite that must not be entrusted to a novice, statistician, or Yankee. It is a heritage of the Old South, an emblem of hospitality, and a vehicle in which noble minds can travel together upon the flower-strewn paths of happy and congenial thought."

The word "julep" originates from the Arabic *julab* and the Persian word *gulab*. In Arabia, *julab* was a drink made with rose petals. In the American South, a julep was a plantation beverage,

most likely a punch made with fruit and possibly rum. When and where it evolved into the now-famous concoction is anybody's guess, wherein lies the controversy.

While many states (including Virginia and Mississippi) and even countries (Canada and England) take credit for the drink, Kentucky stakes a strong claim as its true spiritual home. According to *Kentucky Hospitality: A 200-Year Tradition* (published by the Kentucky Federation of Women's Clubs), back in pioneer days "a boatman made the discovery when he left the Mississippi River in search of spring water to mix with his bourbon and, as a whim, added some of the mint growing beside the spring. The actual date of discovery is unknown, but the drink was adopted by genteel Kentucky society in the 19th century."

The julep's Kentucky roots have never been in doubt to Jack Kennard, senior vice-president of Brown-Forman Beverage Company in Louisville, Kentucky, which owns Early Times Kentucky Whiskey, Old Forrester Bourbon, Southern. (Turn to page 161)

*"Authentic Julep Cups" from Wakefield-Scarce Galleries brim with mint juleps. The tablecloth and napkin are by Patrick Frey for Bergdorf Goodman. Completing the setting are a straw hat by Patricia Underwood, a canvas-backed wooden director's chair by Mulberry for Lee Jofa, and wooden shutters by Golden Oldies.*



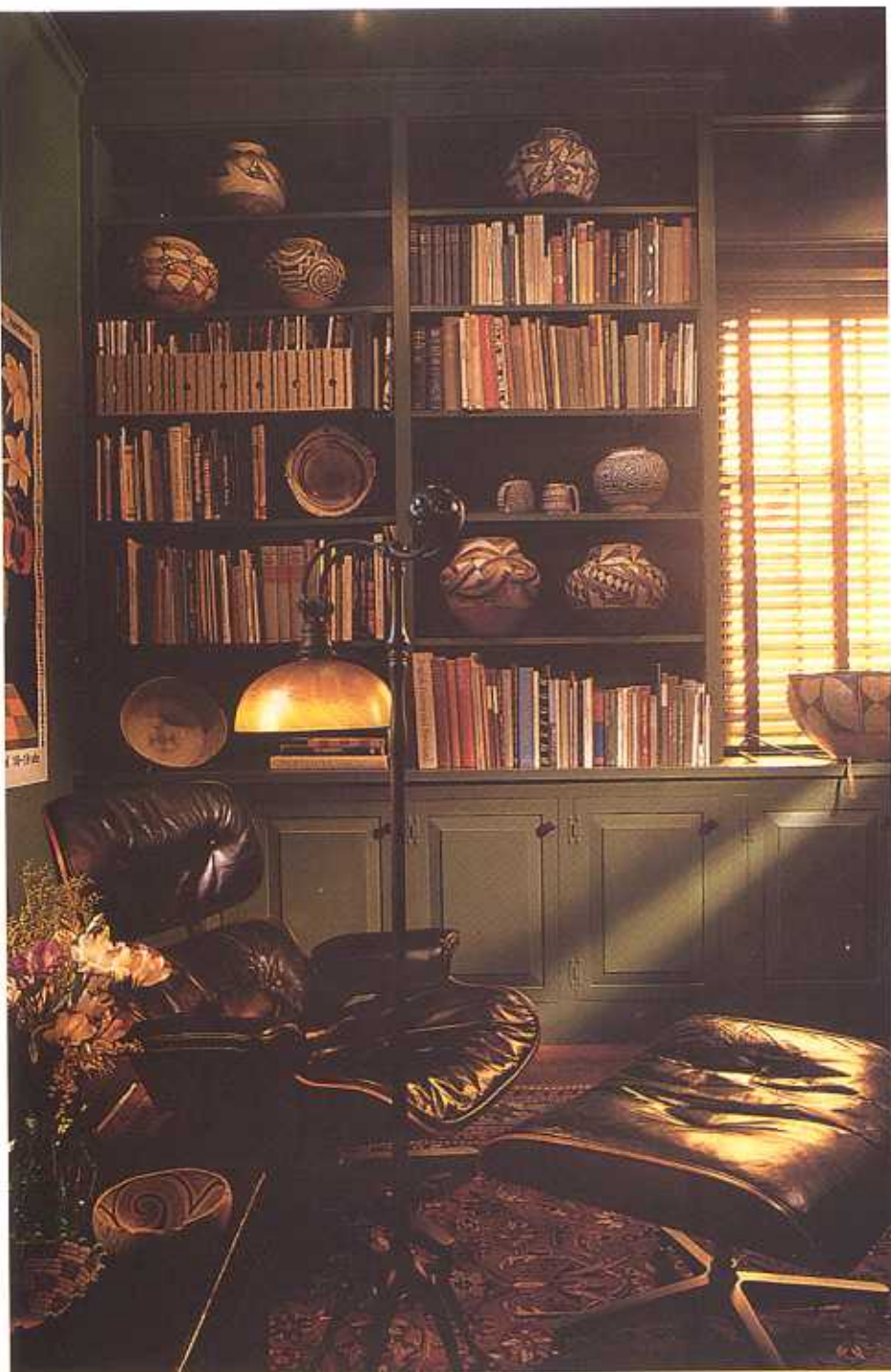
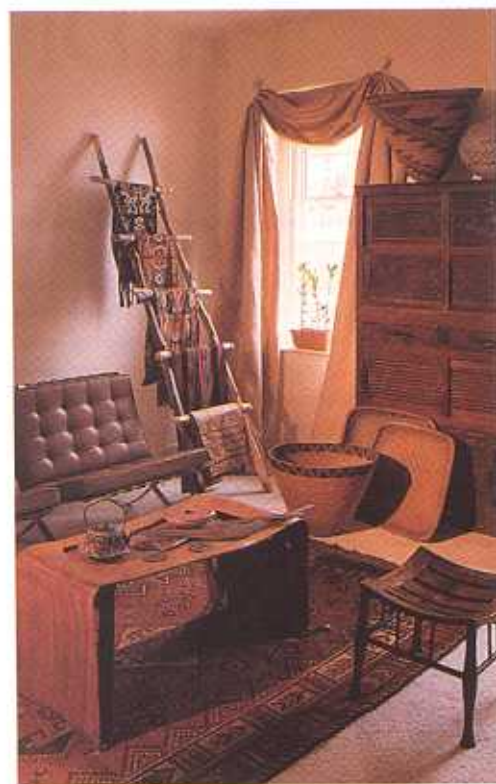
Throughout the first-floor public rooms, personal touches by the Lanmons enhance the traditional American decor. In the dining room (opposite), the warm paint color casts a welcoming glow. "It was Lorraine's push to have a red dining room," Dwight explains. On the serving table is a Chinese export punch bowl. The painting is a reproduction of The Battle of the United States and the Macedonian, October 25, 1812. The banjo clock is by E. Howard Clock Co.

The rich green that sheathes the walls of the library (left) was used by H. F. du Pont in his cottage. Native American pottery from several centuries rests on the shelves. A Tiffany lamp casts light on an Eames chair and ottoman. The second-floor private rooms show much more of the Lanmons' eclectic taste. A dressing area (below) mixes Barcelona chairs; Asian textiles and artifacts, including a kettle and sword guards; Native American pottery; and Southwestern baskets.

When Dwight accepted the director position at Winterthur and began to plan his move to Chandler Farm, he envisioned a decor that included the couple's prized possessions but kept the strong American influence the house has always had. The Lanmons worked with Lucie Frederick, an interior designer at Winterthur, to make this plan a reality. Most of the furnishings, which are made by museum licensees, were already in the house; it was just a matter of rearranging them to meet the new occupants' wishes. Many of the paint colors were changed, most notice-

ably in the dining room, which went from a pale hue to "Chandler Farm Cinnabar," a warm tone that Lucie helped create expressly for the house. The library is coated in a green used by H. F. du Pont in his cottage adjacent to Winterthur.

The Lanmons' "shelf-oriented" pieces, such as glassware and pottery, fit nicely into the design of the first floor, which is used for entertaining important visitors to the museum. An assortment of antique English and Continental glasses rests in a Newport secretary in the living room; floor-to-ceiling (Turn to page 160)





pied the house for more than a century. In 1916, Joseph Perlee Chandler sold the house and land to his neighbor, Colonel Henry Algernon du Pont, who lived at Winterthur. In 1951, Henry Francis du Pont, who had inherited Winterthur several years earlier, turned his family home into a museum. He later made Oak Hall the official home of the museum director. In 1985, the house was renamed Chandler Farm.

Dwight Lanmon has many long-term plans for Winterthur. In general, he wants to make sure that the museum and gardens are used as much for learning as for enjoyment. Dwight also wants to make greater use of the 1,000 acres that comprise Winterthur. "It's an asset we can share."

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Comfort, and Jack Daniels. "The mint julep has always been made with bourbon, and bourbon originated in Kentucky."

Legend has it that Elijah Craig, a Baptist preacher, invented bourbon in 1789 and named it after Bourbon County, Kentucky. Bourbon-making has always been serious business in the Bluegrass State. Today, about 90 percent of U.S. bourbon is produced there.

Since 1875, the mint julep has been the official drink of the Kentucky Derby, which takes place on the first Saturday in May at Churchill Downs in Louisville. The ritual began, it seems, when Colonel Meriwether Clark, the derby's founder, served honored guests juleps in silver cups. However, says Lynn Renau, curator of the Kentucky Derby Museum, "The history of the julep at the derby is rather shrouded in mystery. It's one of those cultural wonders that only happens in the South."

Everyone has an opinion about how to make the perfect mint julep. But most Kentuckians agree that you can't make a good julep one at a time. "They have to be batch-made," says Bill Samuels, Jr., president of Maker's Mark Distillery, a family-owned company that has been making Kentucky bourbon since the 1700s. "And the mint julep must be made with a good Kentucky bourbon whiskey."

What makes a good bourbon? The secret is in the blend of grains and the aging process. A fermented mash of corn, rye, and barley malt, bourbon must contain at least 51 percent corn. "All bourbons are aged in new, charred, white-oak barrels, which gives them their distinctive smoky taste," says Jack Kennard. "By law it must be aged two years, but two-year-old bourbon is rarely marketed because it doesn't taste as good. A bourbon that specifies no age by law has to be at least four years old."

Bill Samuels, Jr., says, "The essence of the mint julep is balance. When mint starts to age it gets acidic, so you need to pick the mint before it gets to be five inches out of the ground. Use only small tender leaves."

Juleps must also be properly chilled. "Never use refrigerator ice cubes," says Kennard. "Juleps should be made with crushed ice." On the other hand, Samuels insists on "shaved ice, like snow cones."

What about presentation? Purists say juleps should be savored from traditional sterling silver cups with a short straw as they are at the winners' party following the derby. The metal keeps the drink cooler and the short straw gives the nose a chance to inhale the mint. Since 1949, Brown, Waterhouse & Kaiser in Louisville has been making the official sterling-silver derby cups with a flared rim and a horseshoe turning upward.

Shirley Hayes of Wakefield-Searce Galleries in Shelbyville, Kentucky, says her company has been making silver julep cups since the Roosevelt administration. In addition to the traditional flared cup, the company makes a taller julep version. Kennard, however, says that 10- or 12-ounce glass tumblers will do just fine.

Whether presented in silver or glass, Kennard says it is imperative to "plan ahead and put the cups or glasses in the freezer. You want those cups frosty cold."

Now for the inside track. "There are probably just as many recipes for making a mint julep as there are for making a dry martini," says Kennard. Since everyone in Kentucky has definite ideas about how to make a proper julep, why not start here.

*Booker Noe, master distiller emeritus at the Jim Beam Distillery, is a sixth-generation descendant of its founder. He developed his own ultra-premium label bourbon, Booker's. The Kentucky distillery has been making bourbon since 1795.*

### BOOKER NOE'S MINT JULEPS

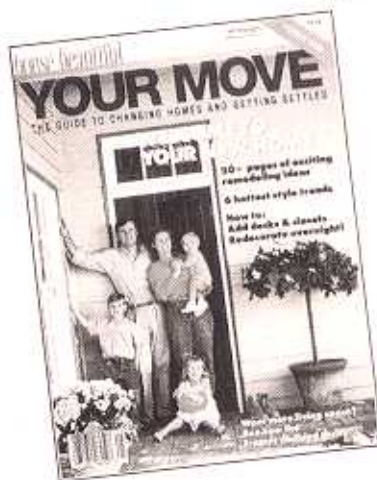
2 cups sugar	Fresh mint
2 cups water	Crushed ice
	Kentucky bourbon

Make a simple syrup by boiling the sugar and water for 5 minutes without stirring. Fill a jar loosely with sprigs of fresh mint and cover with cooled syrup. Cover the mint syrup and refrigerate 12 to 24 hours. Discard mint. There is enough simple syrup for 16 juleps.

Fill each frosted julep glass with freshly crushed ice; pour in 1 tablespoon of mint syrup and 2 ounces of bourbon. Garnish with a sprig of mint and serve at once.

Note: To frost glasses, wet them and place in freezer overnight. Fill with crushed ice and return to the freezer for 30 minutes before serving.

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