

## **The Skinny on Yellowfin Vodka's Newest Products from Jamison Trouth:**

First, no additives in the vodka, no additives in the Oaked Otoro. It is legal to add 1.5 grams of sugar in a fifth of vodka to take the edge off, but Yellowfin doesn't add anything of any kind. A misconception about Yellowfin is that it has more calories or sugar because it's made from sugar. But what people don't realize is that all beverage alcohol is made from sugar; it's just that if you start with anything but plain sugar, you have to break down the raw material into sugar because the only thing yeast can convert to alcohol is sugar. But with spirits, the sugar cannot make it beyond distillation. Sugar is a dissolved solid that cannot vaporize/turn to gas so all of the sugar and other dissolved solids remain in the kettle when distilling.

We make Oaked Otoro by resting our original Yellowfin Otoro Single Estate Vodka in stainless steel barrels with American Oak Staves. Barrels are made of wooden slats called staves. While the small pieces of toasted or charred oak pieces that we get are called staves as well, these small pieces were never attached to a barrel. They use the same curing process to prepare the wood as they do for barrels. Then, they toast to different levels and char to different degrees and you can purchase these pieces. The toasted Oaked Otoro - lighter one - has an array of American Oak staves toasted to different levels. The charred version of Oaked Otoro - darker one - has a different array of toasted pieces and it also has charred pieces as well. There are several differences between what we are making and bourbon. The raw materials are different. Bourbon is distilled to a lesser purity. And the biggest difference is the allowable additives. Bourbon makers are allowed 2.5 weight % additives that are typical of bourbon but there is no list to go by. These additives include sugar, caramel, coloring, etc. 12.8 gallons of spirits weighs about 100 pounds. So you can put a 2.5 pound brick of sugar/caramel/whatever in 12.8 gallons of spirits....for reference, kegs are around 15 gallons. That's a lot of calories and it completely changes the spirits.

Yellowfin Otoro has no sugar and Oaked Otoro is just Yellowfin Otoro rested with oak. No additives other than putting the oak and letting it rest and give character. The reason I'm using a stainless barrel instead of wood is because I feel I can make a smoother spirit this way. Wooden barrels can't be completely sealed so the spirits are exposed to air for extended periods of time. Air is bad for spirits and deteriorates them. When oxygen is added to alcohol, all sorts of other molecules are made. So, I fill my stainless barrels all the way up, drop the oak in and then seal them from air intrusion.