

Soldiers and whiskey- words that literally go hand in hand. Recalling my days as a Joe back in the barracks, every afternoon was topped off with a glass or two of whatever was on hand. For me, that was normally Jim Beam and every once in a while when I had a little more cash it'd be George Dickel White Label or Bulleit. Later on my Marine buddies turned me on to Jameson and I've grown pretty fond of its dry finish and mellow character. And while I've definitely got a taste for some of the better single malt Scotchs out there, I always seem to return to that old standby.

Recently I found Leadslingers, a domestic whiskey produced by the same guys behind Article 15 Clothing- Mat Best and his crew. Founded in 2013, I actually hadn't heard much about it. I figured at its cost (~\$30 here in NC) it can't be too bad and I'm always going to support my brothers in arms. Reading over the label I found it pretty interesting that its distilled out in Oklahoma. Never had an Oklahoma whiskey, so I'm fully interested now. Let's dive in.

They definitely hit the mark on the packaging. The bottle is very traditional, having a very late-1800's western motif. The brown paper label with the subdued American flag printed in the rear looks awesome. And like any good American whiskey brand, it's capped with a cork. I like it.

Pouring a glass with two ice cubes I let it stand for ten minutes to allow it settle in. I've found that letting whiskey relax in the glass gives the complex notes time to present themselves. The aroma reminds me very much of Bushmills, as well as a couple of the more common blended Scotch labels absent the trademark smokiness. That's definitely a good thing, because it means the distiller knew what they were doing with the mash and more important, aged it correctly. Its clear this is not some Evan Williams-type party liquor- this is gonna be pretty good.

On first sip I get hints of vanilla and a full body showcasing the character of the oak barrels. There's not a ton of complexity but the taste is very good- on par with my other regulars. It has that familiar dryness of Jameson and a smooth finish. No chaser needed here...this is

good for sitting back with your cigar of choice, listening to some Charlie Daniels, and enjoying good company of whoever is around. Because you only get one shot at life- you'd best enjoy the finer things while you can.

The guys over at Leadslingers have done well with this one. They've got a few other craft liquors out, including a Rye and a Rum. What I'd like to see is some age on this one to really add some complexity. I can imagine a 18 year version of this and I look forward to when they'll have some. Bravo guys- you're making an industry of what you love, and doing a damn fine job at it.

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