

MINT JULEPS

The mint julep has been the traditional beverage of Churchill Downs and the Kentucky Derby since the 1930s, and the Early Times Mint Julep Ready-to-Serve Cocktail has been “The Official Mint Julep of the Kentucky Derby” since 1987. Each year, approximately 120,000 Early Times Mint Juleps are served over the two-day period of Kentucky Oaks and Kentucky Derby weekend at Churchill Downs. That’s a feat that requires more than 10,000 bottles of Early Times Mint Julep Ready-to-Serve Cocktail, 2,250 pounds of freshly harvested mint and 60,000 pounds of ice.

The commemorative bottles have become collector items for many, capturing the mood and spirit of the famous Churchill Downs track and Kentucky Derby race.

The Early Times Mint Julep Ready-to-Serve Cocktail – served at Churchill Downs year-round – is a brand owned by Brown-Forman and produced at the Brown-Forman Distillery in nearby Shively, Ky. The highest-priced mint juleps at the Kentucky Derby, which are sold in limited quantity for a whopping \$1,000 each, use, unique ingredients and bourbon from the Brown-Forman sister brand Woodford Reserve, which is marketed as the “Official Bourbon of the Kentucky Derby.”

If the Early Times Ready-to-Serve Cocktail is not available from your local retailer, you can make your own with this time-honored recipe:

The Early Times Mint Julep Recipe

- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups water
- Sprigs of fresh mint
- Crushed ice
- Early Times Kentucky Whisky
- Silver Julep Cups

Directions: Make a simple syrup by boiling sugar and water together for five minutes. Cool and place in a covered container with six or eight sprigs of fresh mint, then refrigerate overnight. Make one julep at a time by filling a julep cup with crushed ice, adding one tablespoon mint syrup and two ounces of Early Times Kentucky Whisky. Stir rapidly with a spoon to frost the outside of the cup. Garnish with a sprig of fresh mint.