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Local Bourbon for a Local Hero

By T.W. Barritt(<https://www.ediblelongisland.com/author/t-w-barritt/>) | May 7, 2013

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The word “local” gets tossed around a lot when it comes to artisanal products, but is it merely a descriptor of location? The best products rely not only on local ingredients and ingenuity, but embody a certain spirit and swagger of the people and places where they emerge.

Rich Stabile, owner of Long Island Spirits in Baiting Hollow, has a knack for creating original vodkas that express the essence of Long Island. Now he’s released Long Island’s first bourbon to honor Oyster Bay’s favorite son, 26th President Teddy Roosevelt and the United States First Voluntary Calvary, which he led, commonly known as the Rough Riders.



Growing up, I made many a pilgrimage to Sagamore Hill, Roosevelt’s “Summer White House,” in Oyster Bay to imbibe Teddy’s lore and legend. Roosevelt was a war hero, adventurer and passionate crusader in a time of dramatic change. During the Spanish American War in 1898, Roosevelt commanded the Rough Riders, a raucous collection of 1,250 men – cowboys, Indians and Ivy League athletes and aristocrats – who craved adventure, and ultimately claimed victory at the Battle of San Juan Hill. The Rough Riders were quarantined in Montauk after the war to prevent the spread of yellow fever, and there the regiment disbanded after only 137 days of service. A 12-foot statue of Roosevelt in full Rough Rider regalia stands at the corner of Route 106 and Berry Hill Road in Oyster Bay.

Rough Rider Straight Bourbon Whisky celebrates the unrelenting spirit of the men who fought alongside Roosevelt. Heady with bold flavors of caramel, spice and vanilla it’s like a vigorous charge up San Juan Hill. While there are many recipes for bourbon cocktails, but I’d recommend drinking Rough Rider neat to savor the full, adventurous flavor. That’s what Teddy would have done.

[Long Island Spirits](http://www.lispirits.com/home.html)(<http://www.lispirits.com/home.html>).

2182 Sound Avenue

Baiting Hollow, NY 11933

631-630-9322

T.W. Barritt blogs at culinarytypes.blogspot.com(<http://culinarytypes.blogspot.com/>).



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