

# Shanghai's Best Bourbon Bars

by [zammo](#) | Posted on Feb 22 2010 | [Shanghai Nightlife](#)



Picture courtesy of [Southern Belle](#)

**Bourbon** is seen by many as less of a connoisseur's drink than scotch, but that's changing. Only a couple of the big brands are imported in bulk, so we scoured the city for bars that keep a few crates of something special tucked away.

First stop was **Southern Belle**, a restaurant and bar soaked in Southern culture and bourbon lore (**they even put bourbon in their barbecue sauce**). Owners organize monthly tasting events that offer novices a selection of bourbons and an aficionado to guide your appreciation of the different tastes and textures.

**Southern Belle's** selection ranges from 86-proof, honey-colored Jim Beam Black (RMB35), which washes down your throat with a warm smoothness and finishes off with a caramel taste, to 97-proof Blanton's Single Barrel Silver (RMB75), characterized by a strong, spicy smell and a finish that starts sweet and ends with spicy oak and tobacco. If your pockets are deep enough, **try the exquisite 126-proof Booker's** (RMB120), a mélange of sugar, oak and charcoal flavors that make it one the best high-proof bourbons out there.

A short stagger away is **Constellation One**, another bourbon hotspot which gathers a crowd of laid-back cocktail lovers to its cozy Japanese setting.

Constellation has more than 20 bourbons, ranging from RMB50 for familiar brands to RMB100 for its Woodford Reserve. The Reserve has a charcoal and woody nose with a long, dry and floral finish. The Winter Rye, master bartender Kin's favorite, is a must try, whereas **the 12-year, 86-proof I.W. Harper has a spicier taste and a rough finish**, coupled with hints of oak and vanilla.

If you're after a more exclusive nip, **Monkey Lounge** is hidden just around the corner. Don't expect too much variety, though—**the secretive bar serves three or four labels**, depending on what they've recently brought in, with Jim Beam Black always available (RMB60).

**W.C. Fields** once remarked, "How well I remember my first encounter with The Devil's Brew. I happened to stumble across a case of bourbon—and went right on stumbling for several days thereafter!" With three of the city's best bourbon bars within a few blocks of each other, Shanghai's mashheads can do some stumbling of their own.

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