

Visitor  
Center

Corporate  
Office

Restaurant

Law Firm



Architectural Woodwork Institute

# design solutions

Winter 2015 | \$6.25







Kentucky Distillery Renovates  
and Expands Visitor Center.

# cheers!

To Guests.



The Woodford Reserve Distillery in Versailles, Kentucky, recently invested more than \$1.5 million in the renovation and modest expansion of its Visitor Center, including a dedicated tasting room, enhancements to the retail space, and aesthetic improvements. The Visitor Center, known as the Homeplace, was originally constructed in 1996. Since that time, the bourbon tourism industry has grown substantially, and the Woodford Reserve Distillery now hosts over 120,000 visitors each year.



Woodford Reserve is crafted at the historic Woodford Reserve Distillery in the heart of thoroughbred country. It is a product of the Brown-Forman Corporation, a producer and marketer of fine quality beverage alcohol brands such as Jack Daniel's, Southern Comfort, Finlandia, Korbel, Tequila Herradura, Sonoma-Cutrer, Chambord, and Tuaca.

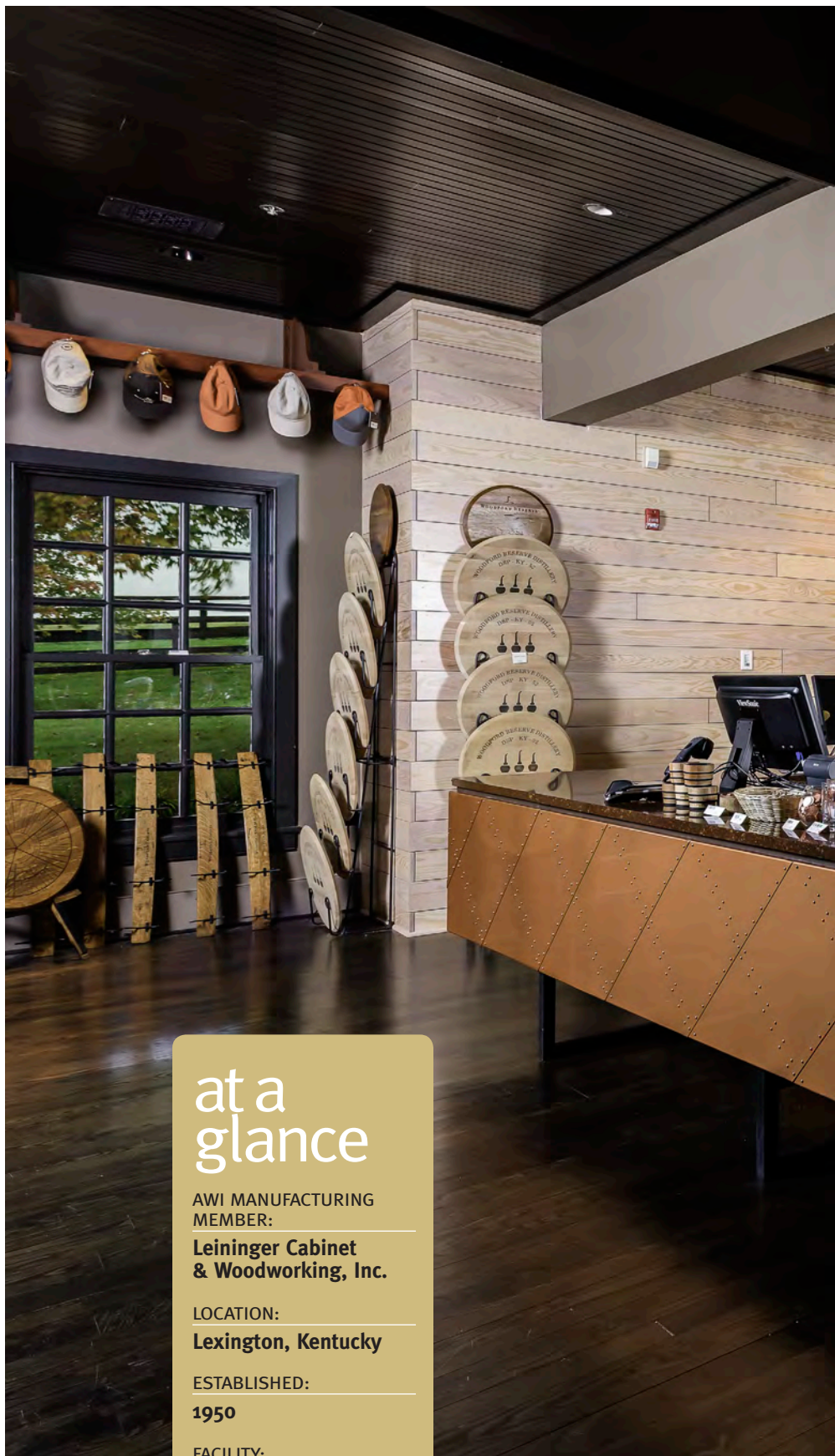
"Our distillery is the oldest working bourbon distillery in the United States and is a National Historic Landmark," reports Dee Ford of Brown Forman. "Given this rich heritage and legacy of excellence in craft bourbon, we wanted to connect visitors and guests to this tradition in all of the elements of the new space. Wood elements abound in the bourbon process, from the charred Oak barrels to the wood ricks in the aging warehouse. Wood elements also provide the opportunity to emphasize the picturesque natural setting of our surroundings."

### Delicious Design

Clickspring Design, Inc. New York City, was brought onboard to design the renovation, while Leininger Cabinet & Woodworking, Inc., an AWI member firm from Lexington, Kentucky, fabricated the architectural woodwork for the project.

The objective of the renovation was to provide a comfortable environment conducive to supporting the beginning of a tour experience geared towards a changing demographic of craft bourbon enthusiasts, as well as to provide an area for a more educational and experiential bourbon sampling.

According to Arjuna Balaranjan of Clickspring, the bourbon produced at Woodford is premium quality and hand-crafted, and so the materials used within the Visitor Center are all intended to tell a story about the ingredients and processes used in production. "There is a rugged authenticity to the distillery grounds where ornament typically takes a back seat to functionality. Detailing within the renovation project adopted a straightforward, practical aesthetic privileging use over appearance," Balaranjan explains.



## at a glance

AWI MANUFACTURING  
MEMBER:

**Leininger Cabinet  
& Woodworking, Inc.**

LOCATION:

**Lexington, Kentucky**

ESTABLISHED:

**1950**

FACILITY:

**35,000 square feet**







“Additionally, as the project serves as an area for visitors to congregate and wait for tour departures, the environment had to provide a degree of interactivity and openness that would keep visitors engaged and allow the center staff to make personal connections and build brand loyalty through personal interaction,” he continues.

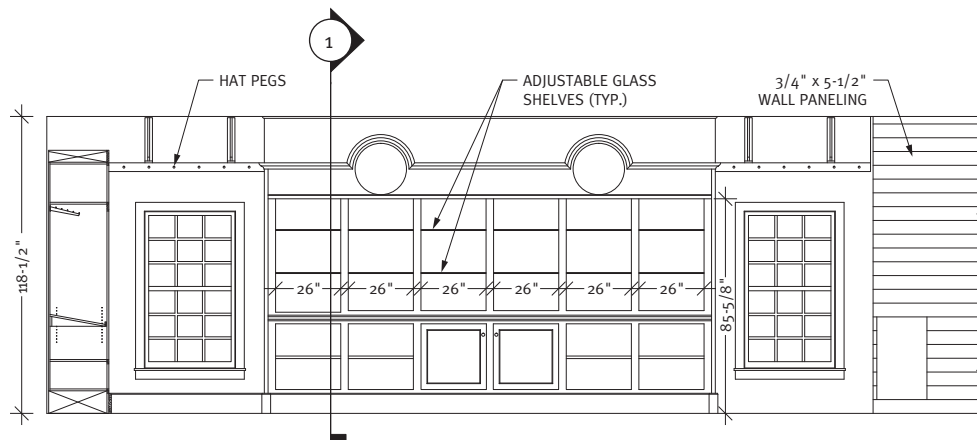
A 424 square foot room was added to the east side of the center that features a commanding view of the grounds and an abundance of light. This room serves as a congregation area at the end of each tour so visitors can view the craftsmanship that takes place within the distillery.

### **Dynamic Details**

According to John Leininger of the woodworking firm, the wall paneling was fabricated of Yellow Pine stained to match the existing ceiling. “The ceiling was aged and difficult to match with new lumber, so we had to do about 10 different samples.”

Many of the furnishings created for the lounge and the tasting tables were built from reclaimed Pine from a centuries-old barn on the distillery property. Coffee tables in the main area of the center were built from an old Cypress vat once used at the distillery.



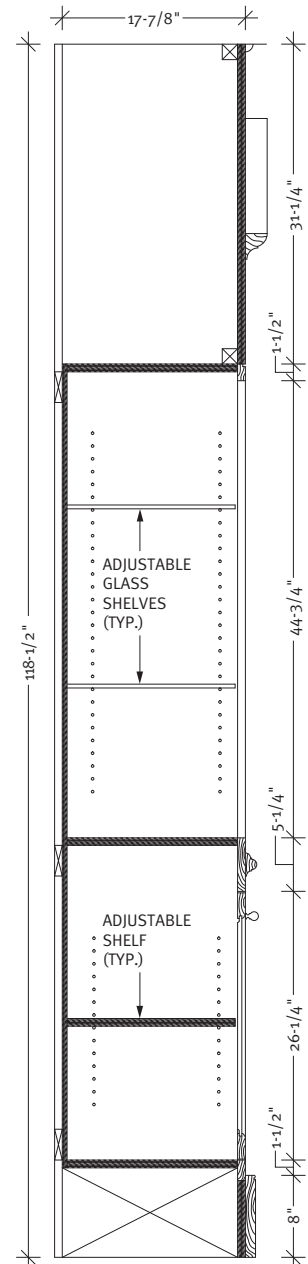


1  
ELEVATION  
@ Gift Shop Casework



“What makes Leininger Cabinet and Woodworking different? Superior quality! Superior quality isn’t just wishful thinking. It’s the norm in every project we undertake — quality defined by detail.”

— John Leininger  
Owner



1  
SECTION  
@ Gift Shop Casework



The Yellow Pine clad wall maintains a monumental presence in the center, organizing the space and serving as a recognizable destination within the center itself, for tour registration and information, says Balaranjan. "The surface, composed of timbers separated by a quarter-inch reveal, and alternating end-grain conditions at the corners, makes reference to the building techniques used to create the original timber barrel houses on the distillery property, in a more contemporary manner."

The copper wall panels, fireplace panels and cabinet fronts were 16-gauge sheet metal, Leininger explains. "We couldn't match the color very well with powder coat so we used automobile finish and clear coat, and it looks great. The strapping on the counter fronts was a challenge at the corners, and there were about 3,000 rivets to put in, which we did when the painting was completed."

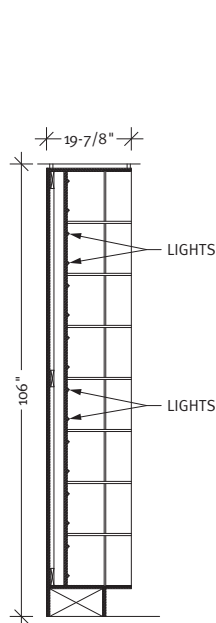
The most interesting item, says Leininger, was the lighted bottle displays at the entryway. "They were specified to be glass with the shelves to sit on the lit backs, but there was no way to attach them to each other. So we decided to use acrylic sheets. It ended up working extremely well."

## Dynamic Team

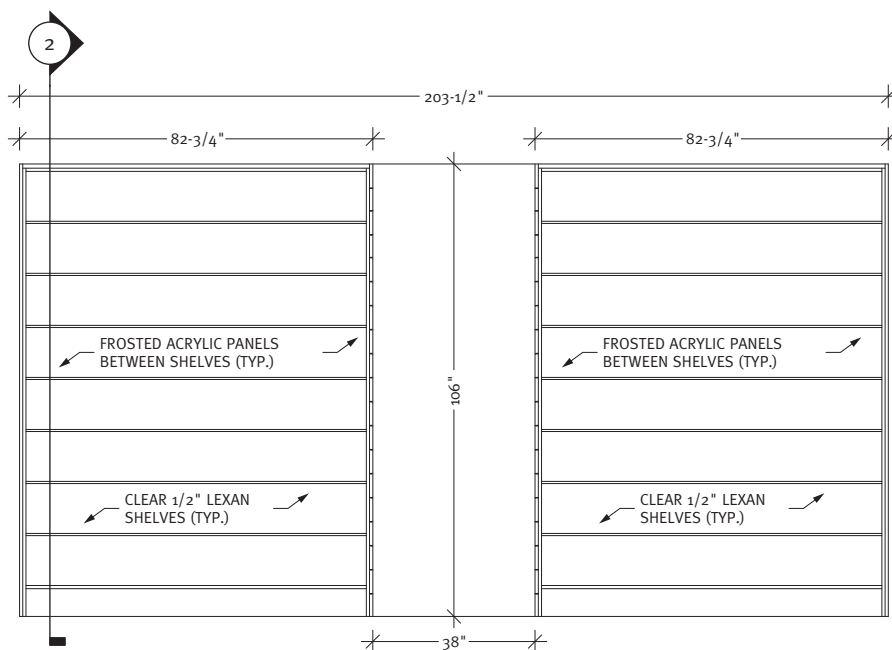
The pieces of casework and panels with the copper-like material are the most noteworthy, says Ford, because they closely imitate copper while providing a durable surface. "Leininger Cabinet & Woodworking was extremely helpful during the construction phase," she goes on to say. "For many of the custom pieces, they provided multiple mock-ups to verify the material and detailing that was desired. These mock-ups also included backlit product displays, from which all of the elements, from the acrylic shelf materials to the frosted backlit panel to the LED lights, were tested and confirmed to produce the optimum result for the bourbon bottles on display."



YELLOW PINE

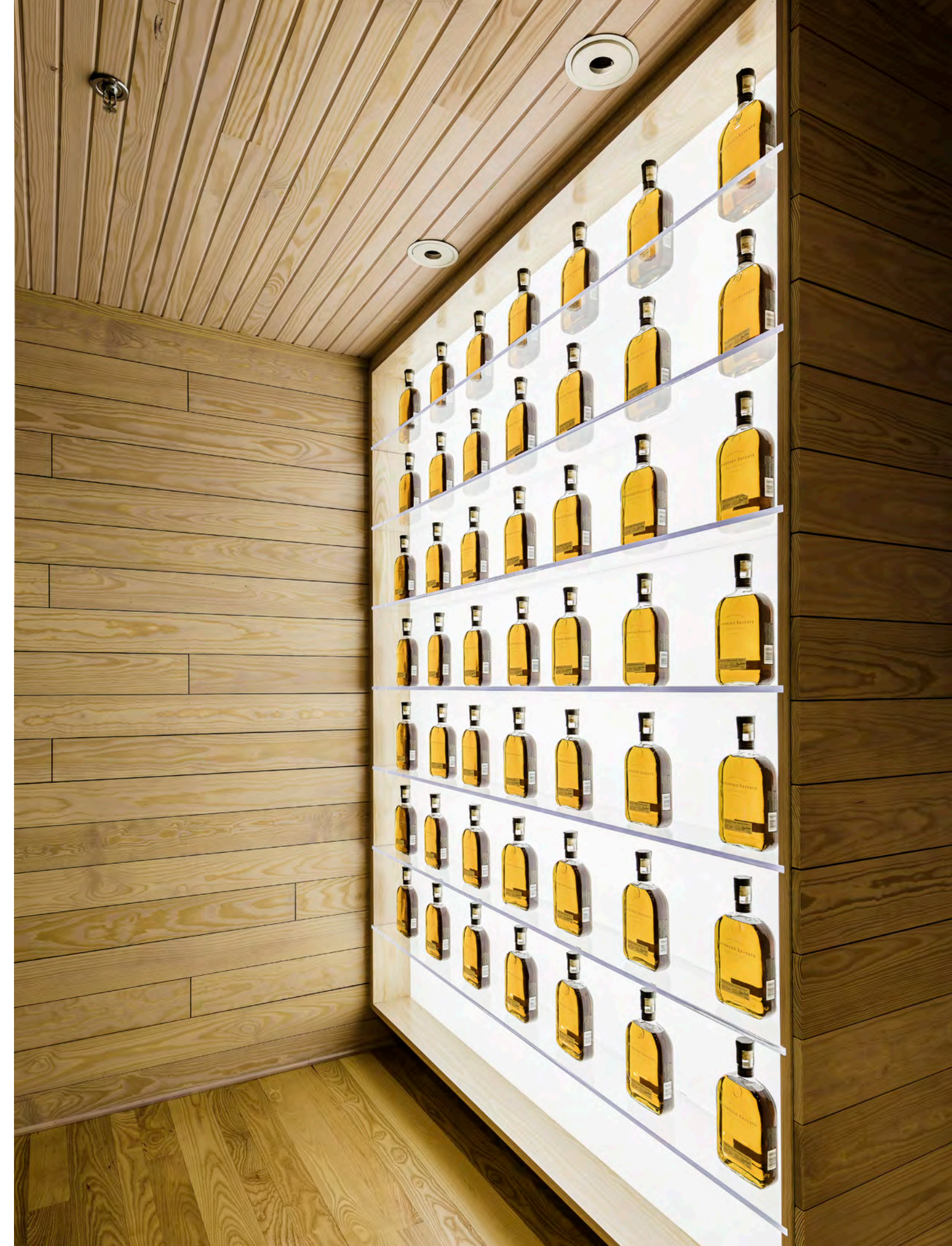


② VERTICAL SECTION  
@ Bottle Display Lightbox



○ ELEVATION  
@ Bottle Display Lightbox









“Finding a balance between what needed to be a contemporary remodel in an extremely historic context was the most challenging aspect of the project,” adds Balaranjan. “A contemporary aesthetic was needed to appeal to the changing demographic, yet finding the balance between that aesthetic and a more historical aesthetic created inherent challenges and contradictions within the project.”

Leininger Woodworking and their representatives understood the design intent and followed through with thoughtful detailing and the flawless execution needed to make the project a huge success, Balaranjan continues. “Given the opportunity to work with them in the future, we would not hesitate, and we would recommend them with full confidence. Clearly they care about their craft and delivered in a manner necessary for the success of the project.”

Although the design team was located in New York City, they had a very clear understanding of what they wanted to achieve in Kentucky, says Leininger.

Every element of the project reinforces the associations with Woodford’s five sources of flavor.

Only wood could provide the richness and warmth desired, and through the use of custom casework, the spirit and uniqueness of handcrafted pieces was able to reinforce the excellence of the craft bourbon. 🍷

**PROJECT:**  
**Woodford Reserve  
Homeplace**  
Versailles, KY

**PROJECT OWNER:**  
**Woodford Reserve  
Distillery**  
Versailles, KY

**WOODWORKER:**  
**Leininger Cabinet  
& Woodworking, Inc.**  
Lexington, KY

**DESIGNER:**  
**Clickspring  
Design, Inc.**  
New York, NY

**GENERAL  
CONTRACTOR:**  
**Bosse Mattingly  
Constructors**  
Louisville, KY

**PHOTOGRAPHER:**  
**Walt Roycraft**  
Nicholasville, KY

**SUPPLIER MEMBERS:**  
**Charles F. Shiels  
& Co.  
Häfele**