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**Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa Launches its
Custom Maker's Mark® Private Select™ Bourbon and Hosts First Bourbon Battle**



Lexington, KY April 19, 2016 – [Marriott Hotels](#), the flagship brand of Marriott International, kicked off its national Bourbon Battles competition last week – a five-city tour with a mission to crown the ultimate bourbon cocktail craftsman. Hosted by leading spirit expert and author Heather Greene, the event series debuted in Lexington, KY at the newly renovated Mansion and will be followed by stops in Portland, Calgary and Boston, culminating in New York City on National Bourbon Day, June 14. In conjunction with the Bourbon Battle competition, Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa also debuted its own unique blend of Maker's Mark® Private Select™, the first custom bourbon created by a Marriott Hotel.

On November 30, 2015, 12 resort team members embarked on a journey to Loretto, Kentucky, the home of Maker's Mark®, to create our own unique Maker's Mark® Private Select™ bourbon. The Maker's Mark® Private Select™ experience allows retail customers to “make their own Maker's™” by finishing fully-matured cask strength Maker's Mark® Bourbon in a single barrel made up of their own custom selection of oak staves.

After learning the entire bourbon making process, the team entered a Maker's tasting room where they began the elaborate process of creating a unique Griffin Gate Marriott blend using different wood staves lending different flavors. The staves chosen were four Baked American Pure 2 with an American oak wood, four Roasted French Mocha with a French oak wood, and finally, two toasted French Spice staves, also with a French oak wood.

With the custom flavors chosen, the team loaded the barrel with the chosen staves, filled it with cask strength Maker's Mark®, and hammered the barrel shut. After nine more weeks of aging, the exclusive pour of Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa Maker's Mark® Private Select™ is now ready to be shared.

“The positive response from our guests has been overwhelming since we launched our custom bourbon last week and the Marriott Maker's Mark® Private Select™ bourbon is the hottest libation in town. We plan to produce another barrel later this year” said Theona Simbrat, general manager at Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa.”

“Bourbon has all the essential elements to create an engaging bar experience for our Marriott Hotels’ guests. It has a rich history and compelling stories driven by unique brands. It offers options for everyone’s taste, from creative cocktails to exclusive pours” said Matthew Carroll, vice president Brand Management, Marriott Hotels. “Located in the heart of bourbon country, we are thrilled to see Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa champion the bourbon program.”

Marriott Hotels’ Bourbon Battle features four contestants per event. Winners from the first four events will win a chance to compete in the finale round in New York City. It’s a great way for Marriott Hotels to showcase some of the best bartenders in the industry. At each Battle, the Marriott bartenders will go up against local mixologists to prove their bourbon mixology skills.

The contestants in last week’s Bourbon Battle were three expert Lexington bartenders, Ashley Sherrow **from Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa**, Ty Corriveau from **Saul Good Restaurant & Pub**, and Dante Wheat from **The Garage Bar, Lexington**. Plus, Drew Jordan from the Boston Marriott Burlington flew in to test his skills against Lexington’s finest. After three rounds of competition, including a secret ingredient required for the last round, the winner of Thursday’s Bourbon Battle was, Ashley Sherrow, a 10-year bartender veteran from Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa. She will compete for a chance to be crowned the winner of the Marriott Bourbon Battle in Brooklyn, New York in June.

The winner was selected by a panel of judges, including Maker’s Mark® Maturation Specialist, Jane Bowie, Marriott’s vice president Brand Management, Matthew Carroll, and David Scheurich, Master Distiller.

About Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa

Griffin Gate Marriott Resort & Spa at 1800 Newtown Pike in Lexington, KY offers easy access to the Kentucky Horse Park, Keeneland race course and legendary Kentucky Bourbon Trail, a collection of historic whiskey distilleries and tasting rooms. The resort features 7 floors with 5 concierge levels, 395 guest rooms, 14 suites, 5 restaurants, a spa, a newly renovated golf course, fitness center, 2 swimming pools and 26 event venues. Complimentary wireless Internet is provided in the lobby and all public areas. For information, visit www.GriffinGateMarriott.com or call 1-859-231-5100..

Learn more about [Marriott International Inc.](#)

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