

BROWN FORMAN CORP
Form 424B3
March 22, 2018
Table of Contents

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3)
Registration No. 333-205183

The information in this preliminary prospectus supplement is not complete and may be changed. A registration statement relating to these securities has been filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission. This preliminary prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not an offer to sell these securities or our solicitation of an offer to buy these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale would not be permitted or legal.

SUBJECT TO COMPLETION

PRELIMINARY PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT DATED MARCH 22, 2018

Prospectus Supplement

, 2018

(To Prospectus Dated June 24, 2015)

\$

\$ % Notes due 2025

\$ % Notes due 2038

This is an offering by Brown-Forman Corporation of \$ aggregate principal amount of % Notes due , 2025, which we refer to in this prospectus supplement as our 2025 notes and \$ aggregate principal amount of % Notes due , 2038, which we refer to in this prospectus supplement as our 2038 notes. We collectively refer to both of the series of notes offered hereby as the notes. Interest on the notes will be payable on and of each year, commencing on , 2018. The notes will be issued only in minimum denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 in excess thereof. The 2025 notes will mature on , 2025 and the 2038 notes will mature on , 2038.

We may redeem all or part of the notes at our option at any time in whole and from time to time in part at the redemption prices specified in this prospectus supplement under Description of Notes Optional Redemption.

The notes will be our unsecured senior obligations and will rank equally with all of our other existing and future unsecured senior indebtedness and senior to any existing and future subordinated indebtedness from time to time outstanding. The notes will be effectively subordinated to our secured indebtedness to the extent of the value of the assets securing such indebtedness. See Description of Notes Ranking.

Investing in the notes involves risks. See Risk Factors on page S-8.

	Per 2025 Note	Total	Per 2038 Note	Total
Public Offering Price ¹	%	\$	%	\$
Underwriting Discount	%	\$	%	\$

Edgar Filing: BROWN FORMAN CORP - Form 424B3

Proceeds (before expenses) to Brown-Forman Corporation ¹	%	\$	%	\$
---	---	----	---	----

¹ Plus accrued interest from _____, 2018, if settlement occurs after that date.

The notes will not be listed on any securities exchange or quoted on any automated quotation system. There is currently no public market for the notes.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

We expect that delivery of the notes will be made to the respective purchasers through the book-entry delivery system of The Depository Trust Company on or about _____, 2018.

Joint Book-Running Managers

Barclays

BofA Merrill Lynch

Citigroup

US Bancorp

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Prospectus Supplement	
<u>About this Prospectus Supplement</u>	S-i
<u>Forward-Looking Statements</u>	S-ii
<u>Market and Industry Data</u>	S-iii
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	S-iii
<u>Incorporation of Information by Reference</u>	S-iv
<u>Summary</u>	S-1
<u>Risk Factors</u>	S-8
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	S-9
<u>Capitalization</u>	S-9
<u>Description of Notes</u>	S-10
<u>Material United States Federal Income Tax Consequences</u>	S-13
<u>Certain ERISA Considerations</u>	S-18
<u>Underwriting</u>	S-20
<u>Legal Matters</u>	S-24
<u>Experts</u>	S-24
 Prospectus	 Page
<u>About this Prospectus</u>	1
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	1
<u>Incorporation of Information by Reference</u>	1
<u>Prospectus Supplement</u>	2
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	2
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	2
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	3
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	14
<u>Legal Matters</u>	15
<u>Experts</u>	15

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This document is in two parts. The first part is this prospectus supplement, which describes the terms of the offering of the notes. The second part is the accompanying prospectus, which gives more general information, some of which may not apply to the notes.

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We have not, and the underwriters have not, authorized anyone to provide you with different information. We are not, and the underwriters are not, making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted. Persons into whose possession this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus come are required by us and the underwriters to inform themselves about, and to observe, any applicable restrictions. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus may not be used for or in connection with an offer or solicitation by any person in any jurisdiction in which that offer or solicitation is not authorized or to any person to whom it is unlawful to make that offer or solicitation. See Underwriting Selling Restrictions in this prospectus supplement. You should assume that the information contained in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference is accurate only as of their respective dates. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since those dates.

Table of Contents

FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the information incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus contain statements, estimates, and projections that are forward-looking statements as defined under U.S. federal securities laws. Words such as aim, anticipate, aspire, believe, continue, could, envision, estimate, expect, expectation, interest, potential, project, pursue, see, seek, should, will, and similar words identify forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date they are made. Except as required by law, we do not intend to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise. By their nature, forward-looking statements involve risks, uncertainties, and other factors (many beyond our control). Some of these risks are described more fully in Part I, Item 1A. Risk Factors of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended April 30, 2017, which is expressly incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, and those risks described in this prospectus supplement under Risk Factors and elsewhere in documents filed with the SEC and incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. These factors could cause our actual results to differ materially from our historical experience or from our current expectations or projections. These risks and uncertainties include those described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K and those described from time to time in our future reports filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC), including:

Unfavorable global or regional economic conditions, and related low consumer confidence, high unemployment, weak credit or capital markets, budget deficits, burdensome government debt, austerity measures, higher interest rates, higher taxes, political instability, higher inflation, deflation, lower returns on pension assets, or lower discount rates for pension obligations

Risks associated with being a U.S.-based company with global operations, including commercial, political, and financial risks; local labor policies and conditions; protectionist trade policies or economic or trade sanctions; compliance with local trade practices and other regulations, including anti-corruption laws; terrorism; and health pandemics

Fluctuations in foreign currency exchange rates, particularly a stronger U.S. dollar

Changes in laws, regulations, or policies especially those that affect the production, importation, marketing, labeling, pricing, distribution, sale, or consumption of our beverage alcohol products

Tax rate changes (including excise, sales, VAT, tariffs, duties, corporate, individual income, dividends, capital gains) or changes in related reserves, changes in tax rules (for example, LIFO, foreign income deferral, U.S. manufacturing, and other deductions) or accounting standards, and the unpredictability and suddenness with which they can occur

The impact of the recently enacted U.S. tax reform legislation, including as a result of future regulations and guidance interpreting the statute

Dependence upon the continued growth of the Jack Daniel's family of brands

Changes in consumer preferences, consumption, or purchase patterns particularly away from larger producers in favor of smaller distilleries or local producers, or away from brown spirits, our premium products, or spirits generally, and our ability to anticipate or react to them; bar, restaurant, travel, or other on-premise declines; shifts in demographic trends; or unfavorable consumer reaction to new products, line extensions, package changes, product reformulations, or other product innovation

Decline in the social acceptability of beverage alcohol products in significant markets

Production facility, aging warehouse, or supply chain disruption

Imprecision in supply/demand forecasting

Higher costs, lower quality, or unavailability of energy, water, raw materials, product ingredients, labor, or finished goods

Route-to-consumer changes that affect the timing of our sales, temporarily disrupt the marketing or sale of our products, or result in higher implementation-related or fixed costs

S-ii

Table of Contents

Inventory fluctuations in our products by distributors, wholesalers, or retailers

Competitors' consolidation or other competitive activities, such as pricing actions (including price reductions, promotions, discounting, couponing, or free goods), marketing, category expansion, product introductions, or entry or expansion in our geographic markets or distribution networks

Risks associated with acquisitions, dispositions, business partnerships, or investments such as acquisition integration, termination difficulties or costs, or impairment in recorded value

Inadequate protection of our intellectual property rights

Product recalls or other product liability claims; product counterfeiting, tampering, contamination, or product quality issues

Significant legal disputes and proceedings; government investigations (particularly of industry or company business, trade or marketing practices)

Failure or breach of key information technology systems

Negative publicity related to our company, brands, marketing, personnel, operations, business performance, or prospects

Failure to attract or retain key executive or employee talent

Our status as a family-controlled company under New York Stock Exchange rules

MARKET AND INDUSTRY DATA

Certain market data contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are based on independent industry publications and reports by market research firms. Although we believe these sources are reliable, we have not independently verified the information and cannot guarantee its accuracy and completeness. Some data are also based on our good faith estimates, which are derived from our review of internal surveys, as well as the independent sources referred to above.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are available over the Internet at the SEC's web site at <http://www.sec.gov>. You may also read and copy any document we file with the SEC at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 to obtain information on the operation of the public reference room. You may obtain copies of this information and the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus at no charge by writing or telephoning us at the following address or telephone number: Brown-Forman Corporation, 850 Dixie Highway, Louisville, Kentucky 40210 USA, Attention: Vice President, Director of Investor Relations, telephone number (502) 774-6903.

Our Class A common stock and Class B common stock are listed on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) under the symbols BF/A and BF/B, respectively. You may also inspect the information we file with the SEC at the NYSE's offices at 20 Broad Street, New York, New York 10005.

Table of Contents

INCORPORATION OF INFORMATION BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information that we file with the SEC. This means that we can disclose important business and financial information to you by referring you to information and documents that we have filed with the SEC. Any information that we refer to in this manner is considered part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Any information that we file with the SEC after the date of this prospectus supplement will automatically update and, where applicable, supersede the corresponding information contained in this prospectus supplement or in documents filed earlier with the SEC.

We incorporate by reference into this prospectus supplement the following documents that we have previously filed with the SEC (other than, in each case, documents or information deemed to have been furnished and not filed in accordance with the SEC's rules):

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended April 30, 2017 (which incorporates by reference certain portions of the Proxy Statement for the Annual Meeting of Stockholders filed with the SEC on June 27, 2017); and

Our Quarterly Reports on Form 10-Q for the quarters ended July 31, 2017, October 31, 2017 and January 31, 2018; and

Our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on May 26, 2017, August 1, 2017 (other than Item 7.01 and Exhibit 99.1), September 28, 2017, November 13, 2017 and March 21, 2018.

We are also incorporating by reference any future filings that we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"), after the date of this prospectus supplement and prior to the termination of any offering pursuant to this prospectus supplement. In no event, however, will any of the information that we disclose under Items 2.02 or 7.01 of any Current Report on Form 8-K that we may from time to time furnish to the SEC be incorporated by reference into, or otherwise included in, this prospectus supplement.

Each document referred to above is available over the Internet on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov> and on our website at <http://www.brown-forman.com>. However, the information on our website is not a part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. You may also request a free copy of any documents referred to above, including exhibits specifically incorporated by reference in those documents, by contacting us at the following address and telephone number:

Brown-Forman Corporation

850 Dixie Highway

Louisville, Kentucky 40210

Attention: Vice President, Director of Investor Relations

(502) 774-6903

In this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, we, us, our and the Company refer to Brown-Forman Corporation and its consolidated subsidiaries, unless otherwise expressly stated or required by the context. The symbol \$ refers to U.S. dollars, unless otherwise indicated.

Table of Contents

SUMMARY

The following summary highlights certain significant aspects of our business and this offering, but you should carefully read the entire prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the documents incorporated by reference, which are described under Incorporation of Information by Reference, before making an investment decision. Because this is a summary, it does not contain all the information that may be important to you. Our actual results could differ materially from those anticipated in certain forward-looking statements contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus as a result of certain factors, including those set forth under Forward-Looking Statements and Risk Factors.

Brown-Forman Corporation

Brown-Forman is one of the leading global spirits companies, producing and marketing premium branded wines and spirits that are sold in more than 165 countries. George Garvin Brown founded the Company in 1870 and descendants of the Brown family remain active in the Company to this day.

We primarily manufacture, bottle, import, export, market and sell a wide variety of alcoholic beverage brands. Our principal beverage brands are:

Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey	el Jimador Tequilas
Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey	el Jimador New Mix RTDs
Jack Daniel's ready-to-drink cocktails (RTDs)	Herradura Tequila
Gentleman Jack Rare Tennessee Whiskey	Sonoma-Cutrer California Wines
Jack Daniel's Tennessee Fire	Canadian Mist Canadian Whisky
Jack Daniel's Single Barrel Collection ¹	GlenDronach Single Malt Scotch Whisky
Jack Daniel's Winter Jack	BenRiach Single Malt Scotch Whisky
Jack Daniel's Sinatra Select	Glenglassaugh Single Malt Scotch Whisky
Jack Daniel's No. 27 Gold Tennessee Whiskey	Chambord Liqueur
Jack Daniel's Tennessee Rye	Early Times Kentucky Whisky and Bourbon
Korbel California Champagnes ²	Old Forester Kentucky Bourbon
Korbel California Brandy ²	Pepe Lopez Tequila
Woodford Reserve Kentucky Bourbon	Antiguo Tequila
Woodford Reserve Double Oaked	Coopers Craft Kentucky Bourbon
Woodford Reserve Kentucky Rye Whiskey	Collingwood Canadian Whisky
Finlandia Vodkas	Slane Irish Whisky ³

¹ The Jack Daniel's Single Barrel Collection includes Jack Daniel's Single Barrel Select, Jack Daniel's Single Barrel Barrel Proof, Jack Daniel's Single Barrel Rye, and Jack Daniel's Single Barrel 100 Proof.

² While Korbel is not an owned brand, we sell Korbel products under contract in the United States and other select markets.

³ New brands launched in limited markets during fiscal year 2017.
For the fiscal year ended April 30, 2017, we generated net sales of approximately \$3,857 million and net income of approximately \$669 million.

The most important brand in our portfolio is Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey, which is the fourth-largest spirits brand of any kind and the largest American whiskey brand in the world, according to Impact Databank's, a well-known trade publication, Top 100 Premium Spirits Brands Worldwide list, which was published in March 2017. Among the top five premium spirits brands on the list, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey was the only one

S-1

Table of Contents

to grow by volume in 2016. In its fourth year on the Worldwide Impact list, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey remains the second-largest-selling flavored whiskey. Our other leading global brands on the Worldwide Impact list are Finlandia, the tenth-largest-selling vodka, Canadian Mist, the fourth-largest-selling Canadian whisky, and el Jimador, which is the fourth-largest-selling tequila and designated as an Impact Hot Brand. Additionally, Woodford Reserve was once again selected as a Hot Brand.

Our strategy is to market high quality products that satisfy the preferences of consumers of legal drinking age and to support those products with extensive international, national, and regional marketing programs. These programs are intended to increase consumer brand recognition and brand loyalty.

We own numerous valuable trademarks that are essential to our business. Registrations of trademarks can generally be renewed indefinitely as long as the trademarks are in use. Through licensing arrangements, we have authorized the use of some of our trademarks on promotional items for the primary purpose of enhancing brand awareness.

Ingredients and Other Supplies

The principal raw materials used in manufacturing and packaging our distilled spirits, liquors, RTD products, and wines are shown in the table below.

Principal Raw Materials

Distilled Spirits	Liqueurs	RTD Products	Wines	Packaging
Agave	Flavorings	Flavorings	Grapes	Aluminum cans
Barley	Neutral spirits	Malt	Wood	Cartons
Corn	Sugar	Neutral spirits		Closures
Malted barley	Water	Sugar		Glass bottles
Rye	Whiskey	Tequila		PET ¹ bottles
Sugar	Wine	Water		Labels
Water		Whiskey		
Wood				

¹ Polyethylene terephthalate (PET) is a polymer used in non-glass containers.

Our grape supply comes from a combination of our California vineyards and contracts with independent growers. We believe that our relationships with our growers are good. Currently, none of these raw materials are in short supply, but shortages could occur. From time to time, our agricultural ingredients (corn, rye, malted barley, agave, and grapes) could be adversely affected by weather and other forces that might constrain supply.

Whiskeys, certain tequilas, and other distilled spirits must be aged. Because we must schedule production years in advance to meet future demand for these products, our inventories of them may be larger in relation to sales and total assets than in many other businesses.

Distribution

We use a variety of distribution models across the globe to deliver our products to our customers. In the United States, which generally prohibits wine and spirits manufacturers from selling their products directly to consumers, we sell our brands either to distributors or (in states that directly control alcohol sales) to state governments that then sell to retail customers and consumers. We own and operate distribution companies in 14 markets: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hong Kong, South Korea, Mexico, Poland, Spain, Thailand, and Turkey. In these markets, and in a large portion of the travel retail channel, we sell our products directly to retailers, to wholesalers, or, in Canada, to provincial governments. In the United

S-2

Table of Contents

Kingdom, we partner with another supplier, Bacardi, to sell a combined portfolio of our companies' brands. In many other markets, including Italy, Japan, Russia, and South Africa we rely on others to distribute our brands, generally under fixed-term distribution contracts.

International Markets

Our largest international markets include the United Kingdom, Australia, Mexico, Germany, France, Poland, Japan, Canada, and Russia. Our fiscal 2017 net sales by geography were as follows:

United States	48%
Europe	26%
Australia	5%
Other International	21%

Competition

While we believe that the overall market environment offers considerable growth opportunities for us, the distilled spirits industry is now, and will remain, highly competitive. Trade information indicates that we are one of the largest global suppliers of premium spirits and wine. According to International Wine & Spirit Research (IWSR), for calendar year 2016, the ten largest global spirits companies controlled less than 20% of the total global market for spirits (on a volume basis). We compete against many global, regional, and local brands in a variety of categories of beverage alcohol, but our brands compete primarily in the industry's premium-and-higher price categories. Our competitors include major global wine and spirits companies, such as Bacardi Limited, Beam Suntory Inc., Davide Campari-Milano S.p.A., Diageo PLC, LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton SE, Pernod Ricard SA, and Rémy Cointreau. In addition, particularly in the United States, we increasingly compete with national companies and craft spirit brands, many of which are recent entrants to the industry.

Regulatory Environment

Federal, state, local, and foreign authorities regulate the production, storage, transportation, distribution, and sale of our products. Some countries and local jurisdictions prohibit or restrict the marketing or sale of distilled spirits in whole or in part.

In the United States, at the federal level, the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau of the U.S. Department of the Treasury regulates the wine and spirits industry with respect to the production, blending, bottling, labeling, sales, advertising, and transportation of beverage alcohol. Similar regulatory regimes exist at the state level and in most non-U.S. jurisdictions where we sell our products. In addition, beverage alcohol products are subject to customs duties or excise taxation in many countries, including taxation at the federal, state, and local level in the United States.

Laws of each nation define distilling and maturation requirements; for example, under U.S. federal regulations, bourbon and Tennessee whiskeys must be aged in new charred oak barrels. We typically age our whiskeys three to six years. Canadian whiskey is required to be manufactured in Canada in compliance with Canadian laws. Mexican authorities regulate the production and bottling of tequilas; they mandate minimum aging periods for *extra anejo* (three years), *anejo* (one year), and *reposado* (two months) tequilas. Irish whiskey must be matured at least three years in a wood cask, such as oak, on the island of Ireland. Scotch whisky must be matured in oak casks for at least three years in Scotland. We comply with all of the above laws and regulations.

Employees

As of January 31, 2018, we employed approximately 4,700 persons. We believe our relations with employees are good.

Table of Contents

Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges

The following table sets forth our historical ratio of earnings to fixed charges for the periods indicated. Earnings consist of income from continuing operations before income taxes, excluding undistributed minority interest in income of affiliates and fixed charges. Fixed charges consist of interest charges, whether expensed or capitalized and is inclusive of that portion of tax reserves we believe to be representative of interest and that portion of rental expense we believe to be representative of interest.

		For the Years Ended April 30,				For the Nine Months Ended January 31,
	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges	20.9x	26.9x	28.1x	28.8x	14.8x	15.7

Corporate Information

The Company was incorporated under the laws of the State of Delaware in 1933, successor to a business founded in 1870 as a partnership and subsequently incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Kentucky in 1901. Our principal executive offices are located at 850 Dixie Highway, Louisville, Kentucky 40210, and our telephone number is (502) 585-1100. Our website address is www.brown-forman.com. Information included or referred to on our website is not part of this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus, unless otherwise specifically set forth herein.

Additional information about us, including our audited financial statements, is contained in the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#) and [Incorporation of Information by Reference](#).

Table of Contents**Summary Consolidated Financial Information**

The following table sets forth our summary consolidated financial information for the fiscal years ended April 30, 2015, 2016 and 2017 and the nine months ended January 31, 2017 and 2018 and as of April 30, 2016 and 2017 and January 31, 2018. The information for the fiscal years ended April 30, 2015, 2016 and 2017 and as of April 30, 2016 and 2017 was derived from our audited annual consolidated financial statements. The information for the nine months ended January 31, 2017 and 2018 and as of January 31, 2018 was derived from our unaudited condensed consolidated financial statements. You should read the following summary consolidated financial information together with Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations and our historical consolidated financial statements, including the related notes, in each case, in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended April 30, 2017 and in our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended January 31, 2018, each of which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement. See Where You Can Find More Information and Incorporation of Information by Reference.

	Twelve Months Ended			Nine Months Ended	
	2015	April 30, 2016	2017	2017	2018
	(In millions)			(In millions)	
Income Statement Data:					
Sales	\$ 4,096	\$ 4,011	\$ 3,857	\$ 2,969	\$ 3,251
Excise Taxes	962	922	863	670	736
Cost of Sales	951	945	973	758	825
Gross Profit	2,183	2,144	2,021	1,541	1,690
Gain on Sale of Business		(485)			
Operating Expenses and Other	1,156	1,096	1,032	763	796
Operating Income	1,027	1,533	989	778	894
Interest Income	2	2	3	2	4
Interest Expense	27	46	59	44	49
Income Taxes	318	422	\$ 264	212	242
Net Income	\$ 684	\$ 1,067	\$ 669	\$ 524	\$ 607

	As of April 30, 2016	As of April 30, 2017 (In millions)	As of January 31, 2018
Balance Sheet Data:			
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 263	\$ 182	\$ 287
Total Current Assets	2,233	2,351	2,641
Property, Plant and Equipment, net	629	713	766
Total Assets	4,183	4,625	5,042
Short-Term Borrowings	271	211	327
Current Portion of Long-Term Debt		249	
Total Current Liabilities	791	970	1,486
Long-Term Debt	1,230	1,689	1,770
Total Liabilities	2,621	3,255	3,841
Total Stockholders' Equity	\$ 1,562	\$ 1,370	\$ 1,201

Table of Contents

The Offering

Issuer	Brown-Forman Corporation		
Securities	\$	aggregate principal amount of	% Notes due 2025
Maturity Date	\$	aggregate principal amount of , 2025 for the 2025 notes	% Notes due 2038
		, 2038 for the 2038 notes	
Interest	Interest on the 2025 notes will accrue at the rate of % per year and interest on the 2038 notes will accrue at the rate of % per year. Interest on the notes will be payable semi-annually in arrears on and of each year, beginning , 2018.		
Ranking	The notes will be our unsecured senior obligations and will rank equally with all of our other existing and future unsecured senior indebtedness and senior to any existing and future subordinated indebtedness from time to time outstanding. The notes will be effectively subordinated to our secured indebtedness to the extent of the value of the assets securing such indebtedness. See Description of Notes Ranking.		
Optional Redemption	We may redeem each series of the notes at our option, in whole at any time or from time to time in part. We may redeem the 2025 notes before , 2025 (two months prior to the maturity date) and the 2038 notes before , 2037 (six months prior to the maturity date) at the make-whole redemption price described in Description of Notes Optional Redemption.		
	On or after , 2025 (two months prior to the maturity date), with respect to the 2025 notes, and on or after , 2037 (six months prior to the maturity date), with respect to the 2038 notes, we may redeem the notes at a redemption price equal to 100% of the outstanding principal amount of the notes being redeemed. See Description of Notes Optional Redemption.		
Certain Covenants	The indenture under which we will issue the notes contains covenants that, among other things, limit our ability under certain circumstances to create liens, enter into sale and lease-back transactions and engage in mergers, consolidations and sales of substantially all of our assets. See Description of Debt Securities in the accompanying prospectus.		
Lack of a Public Market for the Notes	There are no existing trading markets for the notes, and there can be no assurance regarding:		

any future development or liquidity of a trading market for the notes

the prices at which you may be able to sell your notes; or

your ability to sell your notes at all.

S-6

Table of Contents

Future trading prices of the notes will depend on many factors, including:

prevailing interest rates;

our operating results and financial condition; and

the markets for similar securities.

We do not currently intend to apply for the listing of the notes on any securities exchange or for quotation of the notes in any dealer quotation system.

Denomination

The notes will be issued in minimum denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 in excess thereof.

Trustee

U.S. Bank National Association

Use of Proceeds

We estimate that the net proceeds from the sale of the notes offered hereby will be approximately \$ million after deducting the underwriting discounts and estimated offering expenses we will pay. We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, including dividends, repurchases of stock by the Company pursuant to any authorized stock repurchase program or otherwise, repaying, redeeming or repurchasing existing debt, including commercial paper, and for working capital, capital expenditures, acquisitions and funding our pension plan obligations. A portion of the proceeds will be used to pay the Company's recently announced special cash dividend in the aggregate amount of approximately \$480.9 million, which will be paid on April 23, 2018 to stockholders of record on April 2, 2018.

Further Issuances

The 2025 notes will be limited initially to \$ in aggregate principal amount and the 2038 notes will be limited initially to \$ in aggregate principal amount. We may, however, re-open each series of the notes and issue an unlimited principal amount of additional notes of such series in the future without the consent of the then-existing holders. Any such additional notes of a series, together with the notes of such series offered hereby, will constitute a single series of notes under the indenture.

Governing Law

The indenture and the notes provide that they will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of New York.

For a discussion of certain risks that should be considered in connection with an investment in the notes, see Risk Factors on page S-8. For a more complete description of the terms of the notes see Description of Notes in this prospectus supplement and Description of Debt Securities in the accompanying prospectus.

S-7

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

You should carefully consider the risks and uncertainties described below and other information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and in the documents incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference herein before you decide whether to invest in the notes. In particular, we urge you to consider carefully the factors set forth in Part I, Item 1A. Risk Factors of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended April 30, 2017, incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, as such may be updated in our future filings under the Exchange Act. If any of the risk factors were to occur, our business, financial condition, liquidity, results of operations, and prospects could be materially adversely affected. This may adversely affect our ability to pay interest on the notes or repay the principal when due, and you may lose part or all of your investment.

Ratings of the notes may not reflect all the risks of your investment in the notes and could be lowered or withdrawn in the future.

We expect that the notes will be rated by one or more nationally recognized statistical rating organizations. Those ratings are limited in scope, and do not address all material risks relating to an investment in the notes, but rather reflect only the view of the rating agency at the time the rating is issued. An explanation of the significance of the rating may be obtained from the applicable rating agency. A rating is not a recommendation to purchase, hold or sell debt securities, since a rating does not predict the market price of a particular security or its suitability for a particular investor. Any rating organization that rates the notes may lower our rating or decide not to rate the notes in its sole discretion. Any downgrade or withdrawal of a rating by a rating agency that rates the notes could have an adverse effect on the trading prices or liquidity of the notes.

An active trading market for the notes may not develop.

Each series of notes will constitute a new issue of securities with no established trading market. The notes will not be listed on any securities exchange or any automated dealer quotation system. The underwriters may make a market in the notes after completion of the offering, but will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market-making activities at any time without notice. If a trading market does not develop or is not maintained, holders of the notes may find it difficult or impossible to resell their notes. If a trading market were to develop for the notes, the notes may trade at prices that are higher or lower than their principal amount or purchase price, depending on many factors including prevailing interest rates, our operating results and financial condition, and the market for similar securities. Accordingly, there can be no assurance regarding any future development of trading markets for the notes or the ability of holders of the notes to sell their notes at all.

The indenture may not protect you if we undertake a highly leveraged transaction.

Other than the covenants described under Description of Debt Securities Certain Covenants in the accompanying prospectus, which limit our ability to secure certain types of debt, the indenture does not contain any provisions that would limit our ability to incur additional indebtedness. In addition, the indenture does not limit our ability to pay dividends, make distributions or repurchase shares of our common stock. These transactions could adversely affect holders of the notes.

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

We estimate that the net proceeds from the sale of the notes offered by this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus will be approximately \$ million after deducting the underwriting discounts and estimated offering expenses we will pay. We intend to use the net proceeds from this offering for general corporate purposes, including dividends, repurchases of stock by the Company pursuant to any authorized stock repurchase program or otherwise, repaying, redeeming or repurchasing existing debt, including commercial paper, and for working capital, capital expenditures, acquisitions and funding our pension plan obligations. A portion of the proceeds will be used to pay the Company's recently announced special cash dividend in the aggregate amount of approximately \$480.9 million, which will be paid on April 23, 2018 to stockholders of record on April 2, 2018.

CAPITALIZATION

The following table sets forth our capitalization as of January 31, 2018 (1) on an actual basis and (2) on an as adjusted basis after giving effect to the offering of the notes and the application of the net proceeds therefrom as described under Use of Proceeds.

	As of January 31, 2018	
	Actual	As Adjusted
	(In millions)	
Short-Term Debt:		
Commercial Paper and other short-term borrowings	\$ 327	\$
Long-Term Debt ¹ :		
2.25% senior notes, \$250 million principal amount, due January 15, 2023	248	
1.20% senior notes, 300 million principal amount, due July 7, 2026	369	
2.60% senior notes, £300 million principal amount, due July 7, 2028	419	
3.75% senior notes, \$250 million principal amount, due January 15, 2043	248	
4.50% senior notes, \$500 million principal amount, due July 15, 2045	486	
The 2025 notes offered hereby		
The 2038 notes offered hereby		
Other long-term debt		
Total long-term debt	\$ 1,770	\$
Total Stockholders' Equity	\$ 1,201	\$
Total Debt and Stockholders' Equity	\$ 5,042	\$

¹ Amounts shown are net of unamortized discounts and issuance costs.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF NOTES

The following description of the particular terms of the notes supplements, and, to the extent inconsistent, replaces the description of the general terms and provisions of the debt securities set forth in the accompanying prospectus.

We are issuing the 2025 notes and the 2038 notes under an indenture (the "base indenture") dated as of April 2, 2007 between us and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee, as supplemented by the first supplemental indenture dated as of December 13, 2010 and the second supplemental indenture dated as of June 24, 2015 (collectively with the base indenture, the "indenture"). The 2025 notes and the 2038 notes will each be a series of debt securities issued under the indenture as described in the accompanying prospectus.

We do not intend to apply for listing or quotation of the notes on any securities exchange or automated quotation system. The notes will be issued as "global notes" as described in the accompanying prospectus. DTC will act as depositary.

Principal, Maturity and Interest

The 2025 notes will be limited initially to \$ _____ million in aggregate principal amount and the 2038 notes will be limited initially to \$ _____ million in aggregate principal amount. We may re-open each series of the notes and issue an unlimited aggregate principal amount of additional notes of such series from time to time. Any such additional notes of a series, together with the notes of such series offered hereby, will constitute a single series of notes under the indenture. No additional notes of a series may be issued if an Event of Default (as defined in the indenture) has occurred with respect to such series of notes or if such additional series of notes will not be fungible with the previously issued series of such notes for federal income tax purposes. We will issue the 2025 notes and the 2038 notes in denominations of \$2,000 and integral multiples of \$1,000 in excess thereof.

Interest on the 2025 notes will accrue at the rate of _____ % per year and interest on the 2038 notes will accrue at the rate of _____ % per year. We will pay interest on the notes semi-annually in arrears on _____ and _____ of each year, commencing on _____, 2018. We will make each interest payment to the persons who are the registered holders of the notes on the immediately preceding _____ or _____, respectively.

Interest on the notes will accrue from the last interest payment date on which interest was paid on the notes or, if no interest has been paid on the notes, from the date of original issue.

Interest on the notes will be computed on the basis of a 360-day year comprised of twelve 30-day months.

The 2025 notes will mature on _____, 2025 and the 2038 notes will mature on _____, 2038, unless such series of notes are previously redeemed or repurchased in whole.

Ranking

Our obligations to pay principal, interest, and premium, if any, on the notes are our general unsecured senior obligations and will rank equally with all of our other unsecured senior indebtedness from time to time outstanding. As of January 31, 2018, we had approximately \$2,097 million of unsecured senior debt. Of that amount, approximately \$7 million was indebtedness of our subsidiaries. Because the creditors of our subsidiaries have direct claims on our subsidiaries and their assets, the claims of holders of our debt securities are structurally subordinated to any existing and future liabilities of our subsidiaries. This means that the creditors of our subsidiaries have priority in their claims on the assets of our subsidiaries over our creditors. In addition, a substantial portion of our ordinary course liabilities, including accounts payable and accrued liabilities, as reflected on our consolidated balance sheet at January 31, 2018, were incurred by our subsidiaries. The indenture does not contain any covenants or provisions that would afford the holders of the notes protection in the event of a highly leveraged or similar transaction.

Events of Default and Remedies

The events of default contained in the indenture described under "Description of the Debt Securities" Events of Default and Remedies will apply to the notes.

Table of Contents

Because the applicable threshold amount of indebtedness, the acceleration of which would give rise to an event of default under the indenture, is lower for certain series of senior indebtedness previously issued under the indenture, the acceleration of any outstanding indebtedness of ours may constitute an Event of Default with respect to one or more of such previously issued series but may not constitute an Event of Default under the terms of the notes.

In addition, because the applicable threshold amount of payments required to be made by us as a result of one or more judgments, decrees or orders against us that would give rise to an event of default under the indenture is lower for certain series of senior indebtedness previously issued under the indenture, such required payments may constitute an Event of Default with respect to one or more of such previously issued series but may not constitute an Event of Default under the terms of the notes.

Optional Redemption

Each series of the notes will be redeemable at our option at any time in whole or from time to time in part. If the 2025 notes are redeemed before , 2025 (two months prior to the maturity date) or the 2038 notes are redeemed before , 2037 (six months prior to the maturity date) (each such date, a Par Call Date), the applicable redemption price will equal the greater of:

100% of the principal amount of the applicable notes to be redeemed; or

the sum of the present values of the remaining scheduled payments of principal and interest on the applicable notes to be redeemed (exclusive of interest accrued to the date of redemption) discounted to the date of redemption on a semi-annual basis (assuming a 360-day year consisting of twelve 30-day months) at the then current Treasury Rate plus basis points in the case of the 2025 notes and plus basis points in the case of the 2038 notes.

On or after the applicable Par Call Date, the redemption price for such notes will equal 100% of the principal amount of the notes being redeemed.

Notice of redemption will be mailed at least 15 days but no more than 60 days before the redemption date to each holder of the notes to be redeemed, at its registered address. The notice of redemption for the notes will state among other things, the amount of such notes to be redeemed, the redemption date, and the place or places that payment will be made upon presentation and surrender of the notes to be redeemed. Unless we default in the payment of the redemption prices, interest will cease to accrue at the redemption date on any notes that have been called for redemption.

We will pay accrued and unpaid interest on the principal amount of the notes being redeemed up to, but excluding, the date of redemption.

Comparable Treasury Issue means the United States Treasury security selected by an Independent Investment Banker as having a maturity comparable to the remaining term of the notes to be redeemed (assuming that such notes matured on their applicable Par Call Date) that would be utilized, at the time of selection and in accordance with customary financial practice, in pricing new issues of corporate debt securities of comparable maturity to the remaining term of such notes.

Comparable Treasury Price means with respect to any redemption date, (1) the average of the Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations for such redemption date, after excluding the highest and lowest Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations, or (2) if the Independent Investment Banker obtains fewer than four such Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations, the average of all such quotations.

Independent Investment Banker means one of the Reference Treasury Dealers that we appoint to act as the Independent Investment Banker from time to time.

Reference Treasury Dealer means (i) each of Barclays Capital Inc., Citigroup Global Markets Inc. and Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated, provided, however, that if any of the foregoing ceases to be a Primary Treasury Dealer, we will substitute another primary dealer in United States Treasury Securities (a Primary Treasury Dealer), (ii) a Primary Treasury Dealer selected by U.S. Bancorp Investments, Inc. and (iii) one or more Primary Treasury Dealers selected by us.

Table of Contents

Reference Treasury Dealer Quotations means with respect to each Reference Treasury Dealer and any redemption date, the average, as determined by the Independent Investment Banker, of the bid and asked prices for the Comparable Treasury Issue (expressed in each case as a percentage of its principal amount) quoted in writing to the Independent Investment Banker by such Reference Treasury Dealer at 5:00 p.m., New York City time, on the third business day preceding such redemption date.

Treasury Rate means, with respect to any redemption date, the rate per annum equal to the semi-annual equivalent yield to maturity, computed as of the second business day immediately preceding that redemption date, of the Comparable Treasury Issue, assuming a price for the Comparable Treasury Issue (expressed as a percentage of its principal amount) equal to the Comparable Treasury Price for that redemption date.

Mandatory Redemption; Sinking Fund

No mandatory redemption obligation will be applicable to the notes. The notes will not be subject to, nor have the benefit of, a sinking fund.

Table of Contents

MATERIAL UNITED STATES FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES

The following discussion is a summary of material U.S. federal income tax consequences relevant to the purchase, ownership and disposition of the notes, but does not purport to be a complete analysis of all potential tax consequences. The discussion is based upon the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the "Code"), the regulations promulgated thereunder by the U.S. Treasury (the "Treasury Regulations"), rulings and pronouncements issued by the Internal Revenue Service (the "IRS"), and judicial decisions, all as of the date hereof and all of which are subject to change at any time. Any such change may be applied retroactively in a manner that could adversely affect a holder of the notes. We have not sought any ruling from the IRS with respect to the statements made and the conclusions reached in the following discussion, and there can be no assurance that the IRS will agree with such statements and conclusions.

This discussion does not address all of the U.S. federal income tax consequences that may be relevant to a holder in light of such holder's particular circumstances or to holders subject to special rules, including, without limitation:

banks, insurance companies and other financial institutions;

regulated investment companies;

grantor trusts;

real estate investment trusts;

U.S. expatriates and certain former citizens or long-term residents of the United States;

holders subject to the U.S. federal alternative minimum tax;

dealers in securities or currencies;

traders in securities;

partnerships, S corporations or other pass-through entities;

U.S. Holders (as defined below) whose functional currency is not the U.S. dollar;

controlled foreign corporations;

tax-exempt organizations;

passive foreign investment companies;

persons holding the notes as part of a straddle, hedge, conversion transaction or other risk reduction transaction;

persons deemed to sell the notes under the constructive sale provisions of the Code; and

persons required for U.S. federal income tax purposes to conform the timing of income accruals with respect to the notes to their financial statements under Section 451 of the Code.

In addition, this discussion is limited to persons purchasing the notes for cash at original issue and at their original issue price within the meaning of Section 1273 of the Code (i.e., the first price at which a substantial amount of the notes is sold to the public for cash). Moreover, the effects of other U.S. federal tax laws (such as U.S. federal estate and gift tax laws) and any applicable state, local or foreign tax laws are not discussed. The discussion deals only with notes held as capital assets within the meaning of Section 1221 of the Code.

If an entity taxable as a partnership holds the notes, the tax treatment of an owner of the entity generally will depend on the status of the particular owner in question and the activities of the entity. Owners of any such entity should consult their tax advisors as to the specific tax consequences to them of holding the notes indirectly through ownership of such an entity.

YOU ARE URGED TO CONSULT YOUR TAX ADVISOR WITH RESPECT TO THE APPLICATION OF THE U.S. FEDERAL INCOME TAX LAWS TO YOUR PARTICULAR

S-13

Table of Contents

SITUATION AS WELL AS ANY TAX CONSEQUENCES OF THE PURCHASE, OWNERSHIP AND DISPOSITION OF THE NOTES ARISING UNDER THE U.S. FEDERAL ESTATE OR GIFT TAX LAWS OR UNDER THE LAWS OF ANY STATE, LOCAL, FOREIGN OR OTHER TAXING JURISDICTION OR UNDER ANY APPLICABLE TAX TREATY.

U.S. Holders

The following is a summary of the material U.S. federal income tax consequences that will apply to you if you are a U.S. Holder of the notes. As used herein, U.S. Holder means a beneficial owner of the notes who is for U.S. federal income tax purposes:

an individual who is a citizen or resident of the United States, including an alien individual who is a lawful permanent resident of the United States or meets the substantial presence test under Section 7701(b) of the Code;

a corporation or other entity taxable as a corporation created or organized in or under the laws of the United States, any state thereof, or the District of Columbia;

an estate, the income of which is subject to U.S. federal income tax regardless of its source; or

a trust, if a U.S. court can exercise primary supervision over the administration of the trust and one or more United States persons within the meaning of Section 7701(a)(30) of the Code can control all substantial trust decisions, or, if the trust was in existence on August 20, 1996, having validly elected to continue to be treated as a United States person.

Payments of Interest

Stated interest on the notes generally will be taxable to a U.S. Holder as ordinary income at the time that such interest is received or accrued, in accordance with such U.S. Holder's method of tax accounting for U.S. federal income tax purposes. In addition, interest paid to certain individuals, estates or trusts may be subject to a 3.8% Medicare tax.

Additional Payments

In certain circumstances (see Description of Notes Optional Redemption), we may be obligated to make payments in excess of stated interest and the principal amount of the notes. We intend to take the position that the notes should not be treated as contingent payment debt instruments despite the possibility of these additional payments. This position is based in part on assumptions regarding the likelihood, as of the date of issuance of the notes, that such additional payments will have to be paid. Assuming such position is respected, any amounts paid to a U.S. Holder pursuant to any such redemption or repurchase, as applicable, would be taxable as described below in U.S. Holders Sale or Other Taxable Disposition of Notes. Our position is binding on a U.S. Holder unless such holder discloses its contrary position in the manner required by applicable Treasury Regulations. The IRS, however, may take a position contrary to our position, which could affect the timing and character of a U.S. Holder's income and the timing of our deductions with respect to the notes. U.S. Holders are urged to consult their tax advisors regarding the potential application of the contingent payment debt instrument rules to the notes and the consequences thereof. The remainder of this discussion assumes that the notes are not treated as contingent payment debt instruments.

Sale or Other Taxable Disposition of Notes

A U.S. Holder will recognize gain or loss on the sale, exchange, redemption, retirement or other taxable disposition of a note equal to the difference between the amount realized upon the disposition (less any portion allocable to any accrued and unpaid interest, which will be taxable as interest) and the U.S. Holder's adjusted tax basis in the note. A U.S. Holder's adjusted tax basis in a note generally will be equal to the amount that the U.S. Holder paid for the note less any principal payments received by the U.S. Holder. Any gain or loss will be a capital gain or loss, and will be a long-term capital gain or loss if the U.S. Holder has held the note for more than one year at the time of disposition. Otherwise, such gain or loss will be a short-term capital gain or loss. Long-

Table of Contents

term capital gains recognized by certain non-corporate U.S. Holders, including individuals, generally will be subject to a reduced tax rate. The deductibility of capital losses is subject to limitations. In addition, gain attributable to the disposition of notes by certain individuals, estates or trusts may be subject to a 3.8% Medicare tax.

Information Reporting and Backup Withholding

A U.S. Holder may be subject to information reporting and backup withholding when such holder receives interest payments on the notes held or upon the proceeds received upon the sale or other disposition of such notes (including a redemption or retirement of the notes). Certain holders generally are not subject to information reporting or backup withholding. A U.S. Holder will be subject to backup withholding if such holder is not otherwise exempt and such holder:

fails to furnish the holder's taxpayer identification number (TIN), which, for an individual, ordinarily is his or her social security number;

furnishes an incorrect TIN;

is notified by the IRS that the holder has failed to properly report payments of interest or dividends; or

fails to certify, under penalties of perjury, that the holder has furnished a correct TIN and that the IRS has not notified the holder that the holder is subject to backup withholding.

U.S. Holders should consult their tax advisors regarding their qualification for an exemption from backup withholding and the procedures for obtaining such an exemption, if applicable. Backup withholding is not an additional tax, and taxpayers may use amounts withheld as a credit against their U.S. federal income tax liability or may claim a refund if they timely provide certain information to the IRS.

Non-U.S. Holders

The following is a summary of material U.S. federal income tax consequences that will apply to you if you are a Non-U.S. Holder of the notes. A Non-U.S. Holder is a beneficial owner of the notes who is neither a U.S. Holder nor a partnership or other entity that is treated as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes. Special rules may apply to Non-U.S. Holders that are subject to special treatment under the Code, including controlled foreign corporations, passive foreign investment companies, U.S. expatriates, and foreign persons eligible for benefits under an applicable income tax treaty with the U.S. Such Non-U.S. Holders should consult their tax advisors to determine the U.S. federal, state, local and other tax consequences that may be relevant to them including any reporting requirements.

Payments of Interest

Generally, interest income paid to a Non-U.S. Holder is subject to withholding tax at a rate of 30% (or, if applicable, a lower treaty rate). Nevertheless, subject to the discussion of backup withholding and FATCA below, interest paid on a note to a Non-U.S. Holder generally will not be subject to U.S. federal withholding tax provided that:

the interest is not effectively connected with such holder's conduct of a U.S. trade or business;

such holder does not directly or indirectly, actually or constructively, own 10% or more of the total combined voting power of all classes of our voting stock;

Edgar Filing: BROWN FORMAN CORP - Form 424B3

such holder is not a controlled foreign corporation that is related to us through actual or constructive stock ownership and is not a bank that acquired such note in consideration for an extension of credit made pursuant to a loan agreement entered into in the ordinary course of its trade or business; and

either (1) the Non-U.S. Holder certifies in a statement provided to us or the paying agent, under penalties of perjury, that it is not a United States person within the meaning of the Code and provides its name and address, (2) a securities clearing organization, bank or other financial institution that holds customers

S-15

Table of Contents

securities in the ordinary course of its trade or business and holds the note on behalf of the Non-U.S. Holder certifies to us or the paying agent under penalties of perjury that it, or the financial institution between it and the Non-U.S. Holder, has received from the Non-U.S. Holder a statement, under penalties of perjury, that such holder is not a United States person and provides us or the paying agent with a copy of such statement or (3) the Non-U.S. Holder holds its note directly through a qualified intermediary and certain conditions are satisfied.

Even if the above conditions are not met, a Non-U.S. Holder generally will be entitled to a reduction in or an exemption from withholding tax on interest if the Non-U.S. Holder provides us or our paying agent with a properly executed (1) IRS Form W-8BEN or W-8BEN-E claiming an exemption from or reduction of the withholding tax under the benefit of a tax treaty between the United States and the Non-U.S. Holder's country of residence, or (2) IRS Form W-8ECI stating that interest paid on a note is not subject to withholding tax because it is effectively connected with the conduct by the Non-U.S. Holder of a trade or business in the United States.

If interest paid to a Non-U.S. Holder is effectively connected with the Non-U.S. Holder's conduct of a U.S. trade or business (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, the Non-U.S. Holder maintains a U.S. permanent establishment or fixed base to which such interest is attributable), then, although exempt from U.S. federal withholding tax (provided the Non-U.S. Holder provides appropriate certification), the Non-U.S. Holder generally will be subject to U.S. federal income tax on such interest in the same manner as if such Non-U.S. Holder were a U.S. Holder. In addition, if the Non-U.S. Holder is a foreign corporation, such interest may be subject to a branch profits tax at a rate of 30% or lower applicable treaty rate.

Sale or Other Taxable Disposition of Notes

Any gain realized by a Non-U.S. Holder on the sale, exchange, retirement, redemption or other taxable disposition of a note (other than any amount representing accrued but unpaid interest, which will be treated as a payment of interest subject to the rules above) generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax unless:

the gain is effectively connected with the Non-U.S. Holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, the Non-U.S. Holder maintains a U.S. permanent establishment or fixed base to which such gain is attributable); or

the Non-U.S. Holder is an individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more in the taxable year of sale, exchange or other disposition, and certain conditions are met.

A Non-U.S. Holder described in the first bullet point above will be required to pay U.S. federal income tax on the net gain derived from the sale or other taxable disposition generally in the same manner as if such Non-U.S. Holder were a U.S. Holder, and if such Non-U.S. Holder is a foreign corporation, it may also be required to pay an additional branch profits tax at a 30% rate (or a lower rate if so specified by an applicable income tax treaty). A Non-U.S. Holder described in the second bullet point above will be subject to U.S. federal income tax at a rate of 30% (or, if applicable, a lower treaty rate) on the gain derived from the sale or other taxable disposition, which may be offset by certain U.S. source capital losses, even though the Non-U.S. Holder is not considered a resident of the United States.

In certain circumstances (see "U.S. Holders' Additional Payments"), we may be obligated to pay amounts in excess of stated interest and principal on the notes. Such payments would be treated as additional amounts paid for the notes and subject to the rules discussed above regarding the sale or other taxable disposition of the notes.

Information Reporting and Backup Withholding

A Non-U.S. Holder generally will not be subject to backup withholding and information reporting with respect to payments that we make to the Non-U.S. Holder, provided that we do not have actual knowledge or reason to know that such holder is a United States person, within the meaning of the Code, and the holder has given us the statement described above in the last bullet point under "Non-U.S. Holders' Payments of Interest."

Table of Contents

However, a Non-U.S. Holder will be subject to backup withholding and information reporting with respect to the proceeds of the sale or other disposition of a note (including a retirement or redemption of a note) within the United States (or information reporting if such sale or other disposition is conducted through certain U.S.-related brokers) unless the payor receives the statement described above and does not have actual knowledge or reason to know that such holder is a United States person or the holder otherwise establishes an exemption. In addition, we may be required to report annually to the IRS and to the Non-U.S. Holder the amount of, and the tax withheld with respect to, any interest paid to the Non-U.S. Holder, regardless of whether any tax was actually withheld. Copies of these information returns may also be made available under the provisions of a specific treaty or agreement to the tax authorities of the country in which the Non-U.S. Holder resides.

Backup withholding is not an additional tax. A Non-U.S. Holder generally will be entitled to credit any amounts withheld under the backup withholding rules against the holder's U.S. federal income tax liability or may claim a refund provided that the required information is furnished to the IRS in a timely manner.

Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA)

A 30% U.S. federal withholding tax may apply to interest income paid on notes, and the gross proceeds from a disposition of notes occurring after December 31, 2018, in each case paid to (i) a foreign financial institution (as specifically defined in the Code), whether such foreign financial institution is the beneficial owner or an intermediary, unless such foreign financial institution agrees to verify, report and disclose its United States account holders (as specifically defined in the Code) and meets certain other specified requirements or (ii) a non-financial foreign entity, whether such non-financial foreign entity is the beneficial owner or an intermediary, unless such entity provides a certification that the beneficial owner of the payment does not have any substantial U.S. owners or provides the name, address and taxpayer identification number of each substantial U.S. owner and certain other specified requirements are met. In certain cases, the relevant foreign financial institution or non-financial foreign entity may qualify for an exemption from, or be deemed to be in compliance with, these rules. If an interest payment is subject both to withholding under FATCA and to the withholding tax discussed above under Non-U.S. Holders Payments of Interest, the withholding under FATCA may be credited against, and therefore reduce, such other withholding tax. Holders should consult their own tax advisors regarding these rules and whether they may be relevant to their ownership and disposition of notes.

Table of Contents

CERTAIN ERISA CONSIDERATIONS

The Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA) imposes requirements on employee benefit plans subject to Title I of ERISA, which we refer to as ERISA plans, and on those persons who are fiduciaries of ERISA plans. Investments by ERISA plans are subject to ERISA's general fiduciary requirements, including, but not limited to, the requirement of investment prudence and diversification and the requirement that an ERISA plan's investments be made in accordance with the documents governing such ERISA plan.

Section 406 of ERISA and Section 4975 of the Code prohibit certain transactions involving the assets of an ERISA plan, as well as those plans that are not subject to ERISA but that are subject to Section 4975 of the Code, such as individual retirement accounts, which, together with ERISA plans, we refer to as the plans, and specified persons, referred to as parties in interest or disqualified persons, having specified relationships to such plans, unless a statutory or administrative exemption is applicable to the transaction. A party in interest or disqualified person who engages in a prohibited transaction may be subject to excise taxes and to other penalties and liabilities under ERISA and the Code. In addition, if a prohibited transaction occurs with respect to a plan, the fiduciary may be subject to penalties and liabilities under ERISA and the Code.

The fiduciary of a plan that proposes to purchase and hold any notes should consider, among other things, whether such purchase and holding may involve (1) a direct or indirect extension of credit to a party in interest or to a disqualified person, (2) the sale or exchange of any property between a plan and a party in interest or disqualified person, or (3) the transfer to, or use by or for the benefit of, a party in interest or disqualified person, of any plan assets. Such parties in interest or disqualified persons could include, without limitation, Brown-Forman Corporation and its affiliates, the underwriters, and the trustee under the indenture. Depending upon the identity of the plan fiduciary making the decision to acquire or hold the notes on behalf of a plan, Prohibited Transaction Class Exemption (PTCE), as amended, 91-38, as amended, (relating to investments by bank collective investment funds), PTCE 84-14, as amended, (relating to transactions effected by a qualified professional asset manager), PTCE 95-60, as amended, (relating to investments by an insurance company general account), PTCE 96-23, as amended, (relating to transactions directed by an in-house professional asset manager) or PTCE 90-1, as amended, (relating to investments by insurance company pooled separate accounts), could provide an exemption from the prohibited transaction provisions of ERISA and Section 4975 of the Code, although there can be no assurance that all of the conditions of such class exemptions will be satisfied.

Federal, state, local or non-U.S. laws governing the investment and management of the assets of governmental plans and other plans which are not subject to ERISA or the Code may contain fiduciary and prohibited transaction requirements similar to those under Title I of ERISA and Section 4975 of the Code, which we refer to as similar laws. Accordingly, fiduciaries of such plans, in consultation with their counsel, should consider the impact of their respective laws on investments in the notes and the considerations discussed above, to the extent applicable.

Because of the above, the notes should not be purchased or held by any person investing plan assets of any plan or employee benefit plan subject to similar laws, unless such purchase and holding will not be subject to, or will be exempt from, the prohibited transactions rules of ERISA and the Code or similar violation of any applicable similar laws.

Accordingly, by acceptance of a note, each purchaser and subsequent transferee of a note will be deemed by such acquisition or acceptance to have represented and warranted that either: (1) no portion of the assets used by such purchaser or transferee to acquire the notes constitutes assets of any employee benefit plan subject to Title I of ERISA or Section 4975 of the Code or the applicable provisions of any similar law or (2) the purchase and holding of the notes by such purchaser or transferee will not constitute a non-exempt prohibited transaction under Section 406 of ERISA or Section 4975 of the Code or a violation of any similar laws.

Table of Contents

In addition, by acceptance of a note, each ERISA Plan will be deemed to have acknowledged and represented that:

- (1) the decision to purchase and hold the notes has been made by a duly authorized fiduciary of the ERISA Plan that (i) is independent (as that term is used in 29 C.F.R. 2510.3-21(c)(1)) of Brown-Forman Corporation, each of the Underwriters and their respective affiliates; (ii) is either a bank, an insurance carrier, a registered investment adviser, a registered broker-dealer, or an independent fiduciary that holds, or has under management or control, total assets of at least \$50 million (in each case, as specified in 29 C.F.R. 2510.3-21(c)(1)(i)(A)-(E)); (iii) is capable of evaluating investment risks independently, both in general and with regard to particular transactions and investment strategies (including, without limitation, with respect to the decision to purchase and hold the notes); and (iv) is a fiduciary under ERISA or the Code, or both, with respect to the decision to purchase and hold any notes and is responsible for exercising (and has exercised) independent judgment in evaluating whether to invest the assets of such ERISA Plan in the notes;
- (2) it has been fairly informed that (i) Brown-Forman Corporation, the Underwriters, and their respective affiliates have not and will not undertake to provide impartial investment advice, or to give advice in a fiduciary capacity, in connection with the purchase and holding of the notes; and (ii) Brown-Forman Corporation, the Underwriters and their respective affiliates have financial interests in the ERISA Plan's acquisition of the notes, which interests may conflict with the interest of the ERISA Plan, as more fully described in the offering materials; and
- (3) neither the ERISA Plan nor such duly authorized fiduciary of the ERISA Plan is paying Brown-Forman Corporation, any Underwriter, or any of their respective affiliates, any fee or other compensation directly for the provision of investment advice (as opposed to other services) in connection with the ERISA Plan's purchase and holding of the notes.

Due to the complexity of these rules and penalties that may be imposed upon persons involved in nonexempt prohibited transactions, it is particularly important that fiduciaries, or other persons, considering purchasing the notes on behalf of, or with the assets of, any plan or employee benefit plan subject to ERISA, Section 4975 of the Code or similar laws, consult with their counsel regarding the potential applicability of ERISA, Section 4975 of the Code and any similar laws applicable to such investment and whether an exemption would be applicable to the purchase and holding of the notes.

Table of Contents**UNDERWRITING**

Subject to the terms and conditions set forth in the Underwriting Agreement dated March 1, 2018 (the "Underwriting Agreement") among us and the underwriters, each of the underwriters named below (the "Underwriters"), for whom Barclays Capital Inc., Citigroup Global Markets Inc., Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated and U.S. Bancorp Investments, Inc. are acting as representatives, has severally agreed to purchase from us the principal amount of each series of notes set forth opposite its name below.

Underwriters	Aggregate Principal Amount of Notes to be Purchased	
	2025 Notes	2038 Notes
Barclays Capital Inc.	\$	\$
Citigroup Global Markets Inc.		
Merrill Lynch, Pierce, Fenner & Smith Incorporated		
U.S. Bancorp Investments, Inc.		
Total	\$	\$

The Underwriting Agreement provides that the obligations of the several Underwriters thereunder are subject to approval of certain legal matters by counsel and to various other conditions. The Underwriters are obligated to purchase and accept delivery of all of the notes of a series if they purchase any of the notes of such series. The notes are offered subject to receipt and acceptance by the Underwriters and to certain other conditions, including the right to reject orders in whole or in part.

The Underwriters propose to offer the notes directly to the public at the applicable public offering price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement and to certain securities dealers at such prices less concessions not in excess of % per 2025 note and % per 2038 note. The Underwriters may allow, and such dealers may re-allow, concessions not in excess of % per 2025 note and % per 2038 note on sales to other dealers. After the offering of the notes, the public offering price, concessions and other selling terms may be changed by the Underwriters.

The following table shows the underwriting discounts that we are to pay to the Underwriters in connection with the offering of the notes (expressed as a percentage of the principal amount of the notes and in total):

	Paid by Brown-Forman
Per 2025 note	%
Per 2038 note	%
Total	\$

We estimate that our total expenses for this offering will be approximately \$.

We have agreed to indemnify the Underwriters against certain liabilities under the Securities Act or to contribute to payments that the Underwriters may be required to make in respect thereof.

Each series of notes is a new issue of securities with no established trading market. The notes will not be listed on any securities exchange or on any automated dealer quotation system. The Underwriters may make a market in the notes after completion of the offering, but will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market-making activities at any time without notice. No assurance can be given as to the liquidity of the trading markets for the notes or that an active public market for the notes will develop. If an active public trading market for the notes does not develop, the market price and liquidity of the notes may be adversely affected.

Edgar Filing: BROWN FORMAN CORP - Form 424B3

In connection with the offering of the notes, certain of the Underwriters may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the notes. Specifically, the Underwriters may over-allot in connection with the offering, creating a short position. In addition, the Underwriters may bid for, and purchase, the notes in the open market to cover short positions or to stabilize the price of the notes. Any of these activities

S-20

Table of Contents

may stabilize or maintain the market price of the notes above independent market levels, but no representation is made hereby of the direction or the magnitude of any effect that the transactions described above may have on the market price of the notes. The Underwriters will not be required to engage in these activities, and although they may engage in these activities, they may end any of these activities at any time without notice.

The Underwriters and their affiliates have provided and in the future may continue to provide investment banking, commercial banking and other financial services, including the provision of credit facilities, to us in the ordinary course of business for which they have received and will receive customary compensation. The trustee under the indenture is an affiliate of U.S. Bancorp Investments, Inc., one of the Underwriters.

In addition, in the ordinary course of their business activities, the Underwriters and their affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (including bank loans) for their own account and for the accounts of their customers. Such investments and securities activities may involve securities and/or instruments of ours or our affiliates. Certain of the Underwriters or their affiliates that have a lending relationship with us routinely hedge their credit exposure to us consistent with their customary risk management policies. Typically, such Underwriters and their affiliates would hedge such exposure by entering into transactions which consist of either the purchase of credit default swaps or the creation of short positions in our securities, including potentially the notes offered hereby. Any such credit default swaps or short positions could adversely affect future trading prices of the notes offered hereby. The Underwriters and their affiliates may also make investment recommendations and/or publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or financial instruments and may hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and/or short positions in such securities and instruments.

Selling Restrictions

This prospectus does not constitute an offer to sell to, or a solicitation of an offer to buy from, anyone in any country or jurisdiction (i) in which such an offer or solicitation is not authorized, (ii) in which any person making such offer or solicitation is not qualified to do so or (iii) in which any such offer or solicitation would otherwise be unlawful. No action has been taken that would, or is intended to, permit a public offer of the notes or possession or distribution of this prospectus or any other offering or publicity material relating to the notes in any country or jurisdiction (other than the United States) where any such action for that purpose is required. Accordingly, each underwriter has undertaken that it will not, directly or indirectly, offer or sell any notes or have in its possession, distribute or publish any prospectus, form of application, advertisement or other document or information in any country or jurisdiction except under circumstances that will, to the best of its knowledge and belief, result in compliance with any applicable laws and regulations and all offers and sales of notes by it will be made on the same terms.

European Economic Area

The notes are not intended to be offered, sold or otherwise made available to and should not be offered, sold or otherwise made available to any retail investor in the European Economic Area (EEA). For these purposes, a retail investor means a person who is one (or more) of: (i) a retail client as defined in point (11) of Article 4(1) of Directive 2014/65/EU (as amended, MiFID II); or (ii) a customer within the meaning of Directive 2002/92/EC (as amended, the Insurance Mediation Directive), where that customer would not qualify as a professional client as defined in point (10) of Article 4(1) of MiFID II; or (iii) not a qualified investor as defined in Directive 2003/71/EC (as amended, the Prospectus Directive). Consequently no key information document required by Regulation (EU) No 1286/2014 (as amended, the PRIIPs Regulation) for offering or selling the notes or otherwise making them available to retail investors in the EEA has been prepared and therefore offering or selling the notes or otherwise making them available to any retail investor in the EEA may be unlawful under the PRIIPs Regulation. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus have been prepared on the basis that any offer of notes in any Member State of the EEA will be made pursuant to an exemption under the Prospectus Directive from the requirement to publish a prospectus for offers of notes. This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are not a prospectus for the purposes of the Prospectus Directive.

Table of Contents

United Kingdom

Each of the underwriters severally represents warrants and agrees as follows:

- (a) it has only communicated or caused to be communicated and will only communicate or cause to be communicated an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of Section 21 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of the securities in circumstances in which Section 21 of the FSMA does not apply to us; and
- (b) it has complied with, and will comply with all applicable provisions of the FSMA with respect to anything done by it in relation to the securities in, from or otherwise involving the United Kingdom.

Hong Kong

The notes may not be offered or sold in Hong Kong by means of any document other than (i) to professional investors as defined in the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap.571) of Hong Kong and any rules made under that Ordinance, or (ii) in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a prospectus as defined in the Companies Ordinance (Cap.32) of Hong Kong or which do not constitute an offer to the public within the meaning of that Ordinance. No advertisement, invitation or document relating to the notes may be issued or may be in the possession of any person for the purpose of issue, whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere, which is directed at, or the contents of which are likely to be accessed or read by, the public of Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the securities laws of Hong Kong) other than with respect to notes which are or are intended to be disposed of only to persons outside Hong Kong or only to professional investors as defined in the Securities and Futures Ordinance and any rules made under that Ordinance.

Japan

The notes have not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law of Japan (Law No. 25 of 1948, as amended) and accordingly, will not be offered or sold, directly or indirectly, in Japan, or for the benefit of any Japanese Person or to others for re-offering or resale, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to any Japanese Person, except in compliance with all applicable laws, regulations and ministerial guidelines promulgated by relevant Japanese governmental or regulatory authorities in effect at the relevant time. For the purposes of this paragraph, Japanese Person shall mean any person resident in Japan, including any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan.

Singapore

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus have not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of notes may not be circulated or distributed, nor may the notes be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore other than:

- (i) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the SFA), (ii) to a relevant person pursuant to Section 275(1), or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions specified in Section 275, of the SFA, or
 - (ii) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA.
- Where the notes are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 of the SFA by a relevant person which is:

- (a)

Edgar Filing: BROWN FORMAN CORP - Form 424B3

a corporation (which is not an accredited investor (as defined in Section 4A of the SFA)) the sole business of which is to hold investments and the entire share capital of which is owned by one or more individuals, each of whom is an accredited investor; or

- (b) a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited investor) whose sole purpose is to hold investments and each beneficiary of the trust is an individual who is an accredited investor, securities (as defined in

S-22

Table of Contents

Section 239(1) of the SFA) of that corporation or the beneficiaries' rights and interest (howsoever described) in that trust shall not be transferred within six months after that corporation or that trust has acquired the securities pursuant to an offer made under Section 275 of the SFA except:

- (a) to an institutional investor or to a relevant person defined in Section 275(2) of the SFA, or to any person arising from an offer referred to in Section 275(1A) or Section 276(4)(i)(B) of the SFA;
- (b) where no consideration is or will be given for the transfer;
- (c) where the transfer is by operation of law;
- (d) as specified in Section 276(7) of the SFA; or
- (e) as specified in Regulation 32 of the Securities and Futures (Offers of Investments) (Shares and Debentures) Regulations 2005 of Singapore.

Taiwan

The notes have not been, and will not be, registered with the Financial Supervisory Commission of Taiwan, the Republic of China (Taiwan) pursuant to applicable securities laws and regulations. No person or entity in Taiwan is authorized to distribute or otherwise intermediate the offering of the notes or the provision of information relating to the offering of the notes, including, but not limited to, this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. The notes may be made available for purchase outside Taiwan by investors residing in Taiwan (either directly or through properly licensed Taiwan intermediaries acting on behalf of such investors), but may not be issued, offered or sold in Taiwan.

Switzerland

This prospectus supplement is not intended to constitute an offer or solicitation to purchase or invest in the notes described herein. The notes may not be publicly offered, sold or advertised, directly or indirectly, in, into or from Switzerland and will not be listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange or on any other exchange or regulated trading facility in Switzerland. Neither this prospectus supplement nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the notes constitutes a prospectus as such term is understood pursuant to article 652a or article 1156 of the Swiss Code of Obligations or a listing prospectus within the meaning of the listing rules of the SIX Swiss Exchange or any other regulated trading facility in Switzerland, and neither this prospectus supplement nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the notes may be publicly distributed or otherwise made publicly available in Switzerland.

Neither this prospectus supplement nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the offering, nor us nor the notes have been or will be filed with or approved by any Swiss regulatory authority. The notes are not subject to the supervision by any Swiss regulatory authority, e.g., the Swiss Financial Markets Supervisory Authority FINMA (FINMA), and investors in the notes will not benefit from protection or supervision by such authority.

Canada

The notes may be sold in Canada only to purchasers purchasing, or deemed to be purchasing, as principals that are accredited investors, as defined in National Instrument 45-106 Prospectus Exemptions or subsection 73.3(1) of the Securities Act (Ontario), and are permitted clients, as defined in National Instrument 31-103 Registration Requirements, Exemptions and Ongoing Registrant Obligations. Any resale of the notes must be made in accordance with an exemption from, or in a transaction not subject to, the prospectus requirements of applicable securities laws.

Securities legislation in certain provinces or territories of Canada may provide a purchaser with remedies for rescission or damages if this prospectus supplement (including any amendment thereto) contains a misrepresentation, provided that the remedies for rescission or damages are exercised by the purchaser within the time limit prescribed by the securities legislation of the purchaser's province or territory. The purchaser should refer to any applicable provisions of the securities legislation of the purchaser's province or territory for particulars of these rights or consult with a legal advisor.

Edgar Filing: BROWN FORMAN CORP - Form 424B3

Pursuant to section 3A.3 of National Instrument 33-105 Underwriting Conflicts (NI 33-105), the underwriters are not required to comply with the disclosure requirements of NI 33-105 regarding underwriter conflicts of interest in connection with this offering.

S-23

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain legal matters relating to the notes will be passed upon for us by Hogan Lovells US LLP, Washington, District of Columbia. The underwriters have been represented in connection with this offering by Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP, New York, New York.

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements as of April 30, 2017 and 2016, for each of the three years in the period ended April 30, 2017, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of April 30, 2017 (which is included in Management's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting) incorporated in this prospectus supplement by reference to our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended April 30, 2017 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report, which contains an explanatory paragraph that refers to Brown-Forman Corporation's change in presentation of excise taxes as well as a separate explanatory paragraph on the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting due to the exclusion of certain elements of the internal control over financial reporting of The BenRiach Distillery Company Limited that Brown-Forman Corporation acquired as of June 1, 2016, of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

S-24

Table of Contents

BROWN-FORMAN

Prospectus

Debt Securities

We may, from time to time, offer debt securities in one or more offerings. We will provide the specific terms of the debt securities in supplements to this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, as well as the documents incorporated or deemed to be incorporated by reference in this prospectus, carefully before you invest. Our principal executive offices are located at 850 Dixie Highway, Louisville, Kentucky 40210. Our telephone number is (502) 585-1100.

Investing in our debt securities involves risks. Before buying our debt securities, you should refer to the risk factors included in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and our other periodic reports, in supplements to this prospectus and in other information filed by us with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or passed upon the adequacy or accuracy of this prospectus. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

We will sell these securities on a continuous or delayed basis directly, through agents, dealers or underwriters as designated from time to time, or through a combination of these methods. We reserve the sole right to accept, and together with our agents, from time to time, to reject in whole or in part any proposed purchase of securities to be made directly or through agents. If our agents or any dealers or underwriters are involved in the sale of the securities, the applicable prospectus supplement will set forth the names of the agents, dealers or underwriters and any applicable commissions or discounts. Our net proceeds from the sale of securities will also be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

This prospectus is dated June 24, 2015.

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<u>About this Prospectus</u>	1
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	1
<u>Incorporation of Information by Reference</u>	1
<u>Prospectus Supplement</u>	2
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	2
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges</u>	2
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	3
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	14
<u>Legal Matters</u>	15
<u>Experts</u>	15

Table of Contents

About this Prospectus

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, referred to herein as the SEC or the Commission, using a shelf registration process. Under the shelf registration process, we may sell from time to time debt securities in one or more offerings. Each time we sell debt securities we will provide a prospectus supplement and may provide other offering materials that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement or other offering materials may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement or other offering materials, together with the additional information described under the headings **Where You Can Find More Information** and **Incorporation of Information by Reference**.

You should not assume that the information in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement or any other offering materials is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of each document.

In this prospectus and any prospectus supplement, references to our company, the Company, we, us and our mean Brown-Forman Corporation and its consolidated subsidiaries, unless otherwise expressly stated or required by the context.

Where You Can Find More Information

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. Our SEC filings are also available over the Internet at the SEC's web site at <http://www.sec.gov>. You may also read and copy any document we file with the SEC at the SEC's public reference room at 100 F Street, N.E., Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549. Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 to obtain information on the operation of the public reference room. You may obtain copies of this information and the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus at no charge by writing or telephoning us at the following address or telephone number: Brown-Forman Corporation, 850 Dixie Highway, Louisville, Kentucky 40210 USA, Attention: Vice President, Director of Investor Relations, telephone number (502) 774-6903.

This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement do not contain all of the information included in the registration statement as permitted by the rules and regulations of the SEC. For further information, we refer you to the full registration statement on Form S-3, of which this prospectus is a part, including its exhibits. Statements contained in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement or other offering materials about the provisions or contents of any agreement or other document are only summaries. If an agreement or document is filed as an exhibit to the registration statement, you should refer to that agreement or document for its complete contents. You may review a copy of the registration statement on Form S-3 and the documents incorporated by reference herein at the SEC's public reference room in Washington, D.C., as well as through the SEC's Internet web site listed above.

Incorporation of Information by Reference

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information that we file with the SEC. This means that we can disclose important business and financial information to you by referring you to information and documents that we have filed with the SEC. Any information that we refer to in this manner is considered part of this prospectus. Any information that we file with the SEC after the date of this prospectus will automatically update and, where applicable, supersede the corresponding information contained in this prospectus or in documents filed earlier with the SEC.

Table of Contents

We incorporate by reference into this prospectus the following documents that we have previously filed with the SEC (other than, in each case, documents or portions thereof or information deemed to have been furnished and not filed in accordance with the SEC's rules):

Our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended April 30, 2015 (which incorporates by reference certain portions of the Proxy Statement for the Annual Meeting of Stockholders filed with the SEC on June 23, 2015).

We are also incorporating by reference any future filings that we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the "Exchange Act"), after the date of this prospectus and prior to the termination of any offering pursuant to this prospectus. In no event, however, will any of the information that we disclose under Items 2.02 and 7.01 of any Current Report on Form 8-K that we may from time to time furnish to the SEC be incorporated by reference into, or otherwise included in, this prospectus.

Each document referred to above is available over the Internet on the SEC's website at <http://www.sec.gov> and on our website at <http://www.brown-forman.com>. You may also request a free copy of any documents referred to above, including exhibits specifically incorporated by reference in those documents, by contacting us at the following address and telephone number:

Brown-Forman Corporation

850 Dixie Highway

Louisville, Kentucky 40210

(502) 774-6903

Attention: Vice President, Director of Investor Relations

Prospectus Supplement

The prospectus supplement for each offering of debt securities will contain the specific information and terms for that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. It is important for you to read both this prospectus and the prospectus supplement in making your investment decision.

Use of Proceeds

Except as otherwise provided in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will use the net proceeds from the sale of the debt securities for general corporate purposes. General corporate purposes may include retiring existing indebtedness including commercial paper, acquisitions, repurchases of our common stock, dividends, funding of our pension plan obligations, additions to working capital and capital expenditures.

Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges

The following table sets forth our historical ratio of earnings to fixed charges for the periods indicated. Earnings consist of income from continuing operations before income taxes, excluding undistributed minority interest in income of affiliates and fixed charges. Fixed charges consist of interest charges, whether expensed or capitalized and is inclusive of that portion of tax reserves we believe to be representative of interest and that portion of rental expense we believe to be representative of interest.

		For the Years Ended April 30,				
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	
Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges	22.3x	22.1x	20.9x	26.9x	28.1x	

Table of Contents

Description of Debt Securities

This prospectus describes certain general terms and provisions of the debt securities. The debt securities will be issued under an indenture (the "base indenture") between us and U.S. Bank National Association, as trustee dated as of April 2, 2007, as supplemented by the first supplemental indenture dated as of December 13, 2010 and the second supplemental indenture dated as of June 24, 2015 (collectively with the base indenture, the "indenture"). When we offer to sell a particular series of debt securities, we will describe the specific terms for the securities in a supplement to this prospectus. The prospectus supplement will also indicate whether the general terms and provisions described in this prospectus apply to a particular series of debt securities. In this section entitled "Description of Debt Securities," references to "we," "us," "our," and "Brown-Forman," include Brown-Forman Corporation only and not any of its subsidiaries.

We have summarized certain terms and provisions of the indenture. The summary is not complete. The indenture has been incorporated by reference as an exhibit to the registration statement for these securities that we have filed with the SEC. You should read the indenture for the provisions which may be important to you. The indenture is subject to and governed by the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended.

The indenture does not limit the amount of debt securities which we may issue. We may issue debt securities up to an aggregate principal amount as we may authorize from time to time. The prospectus supplement will describe the terms of any debt securities being offered, including:

classification as senior or subordinated debt securities;

ranking of the specific series of debt securities relative to other outstanding indebtedness, including subsidiaries' debt;

if the debt securities are subordinated, the aggregate amount of outstanding indebtedness, as of a recent date, that is senior to the subordinated securities, and any limitation on the issuance of additional senior indebtedness;

the designation and aggregate principal amount;

the maturity date;

the interest rate, if any, and the method for calculating the interest rate;

the interest payment dates and the record dates for the interest payments;

any mandatory or optional redemption terms or prepayment, conversion, sinking fund or exchangeability or convertibility provisions;

the place where we will pay principal and interest;

if other than denominations of \$1,000 or multiples of \$1,000, the denominations in which the debt securities will be issued;

Edgar Filing: BROWN FORMAN CORP - Form 424B3

whether the debt securities will be issued in the form of global securities or certificates;

the applicability of and additional provisions, if any, relating to the defeasance of the debt securities;

the currency or currencies, if other than the currency of the United States, in which principal and interest will be paid;

any material United States Federal income tax consequences;

the dates on which premium, if any, will be paid and whether and under what circumstances additional amounts on such debt securities shall be payable;

our right, if any, to defer payment of interest and the maximum length of this deferral period;

Table of Contents

any listing on a securities exchange;

the appointment of any trustees, depositaries, paying agents, transfer agents, exchange agents, conversion agents, registrars or other agents;

the initial public offering price; and

other specific terms, including any additional events of default or covenants.

Senior Debt

Senior debt securities will rank equally and pari passu with all of our other unsecured and unsubordinated debt from time to time outstanding.

Subordinated Debt

Subordinated debt securities will be subordinate and junior in right of payment, to the extent and in the manner set forth in the indenture, to all of our senior indebtedness from time to time outstanding. The indenture defines senior indebtedness as obligations or indebtedness of, or guaranteed or assumed by, Brown-Forman for borrowed money, whether or not represented by bonds, debentures, notes or similar instruments and amendments, renewals, extensions, modifications and refundings of any such obligations or indebtedness. Senior indebtedness does not include any indebtedness or other obligations specifically designated as not being senior indebtedness. See the indenture, Article XIII.

In general, the holders of all senior indebtedness are first entitled to receive payment of the full amount unpaid on senior indebtedness before the holders of any of the subordinated debt securities or coupons are entitled to receive a payment on account of the principal or interest on the indebtedness evidenced by the subordinated debt securities in certain events. These events include:

any insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings, or any receivership, liquidation, reorganization or other similar proceedings which concern us or a substantial part of our property;

a default having occurred for the payment of principal, premium, if any, or interest on or other monetary amounts due and payable on any senior indebtedness or any other default having occurred concerning any senior indebtedness, which permits the holder or holders of any senior indebtedness to accelerate the maturity of any senior indebtedness with notice or lapse of time, or both. Such an event of default must have continued beyond the period of grace, if any, provided for such event of default, and such an event of default shall not have been cured or waived or shall not have ceased to exist; or

the principal of, and accrued interest on, any series of the subordinated debt securities having been declared due and payable upon an event of default pursuant to section 5.02 of the indenture. This declaration must not have been rescinded and annulled as provided in the indenture.

If this prospectus is being delivered in connection with a series of subordinated debt securities, the accompanying prospectus supplement or the information incorporated in this prospectus by reference will set forth the approximate amount of senior indebtedness outstanding as of the end of the most recent fiscal quarter.

Certain Covenants

Limitation on Liens

The indenture provides that, unless otherwise specified in the terms of debt securities of any series, if we or any of our Subsidiaries (as defined below) incurs, issues, assumes or guarantees any Indebtedness (as defined below) secured by a Mortgage (as defined below) on Principal Property (as defined below) of ours or of any Subsidiary or on any shares of capital stock or Indebtedness (owed to us or any other Subsidiary)

of any Subsidiary

Table of Contents

that owns Principal Property, we will secure, or cause such Subsidiary to secure, all outstanding debt securities governed by the indenture equally and ratably with such secured Indebtedness, unless after giving effect thereto the aggregate amount of all such secured Indebtedness, together with all Attributable Debt (as defined below) of ours and of our Subsidiaries in respect of sale and lease-back transactions involving Principal Properties (other than certain sale and lease-back transactions that are permitted under Limitation on Sale and Leaseback Transactions) would constitute 15% or less of our and our consolidated Subsidiaries Consolidated Net Assets (as defined below) upon such incurrence, issuance, assumption or guarantee. This restriction will not apply in the case of:

Mortgages affecting property of any person existing at the time such person becomes a Subsidiary or at the time it is acquired by us or a Subsidiary or arising thereafter under contractual commitments entered into prior to and not in contemplation of such person s becoming a Subsidiary or being acquired by us or a Subsidiary;

Mortgages existing at the time of acquisition of the property affected by such Mortgage, or Mortgages incurred to secure payment of all or part of the purchase price of such property or to secure Indebtedness incurred prior to, at the time of, or within 180 days after, the acquisition of such property for the purpose of financing all or part of the purchase price of such property (provided such Mortgages are limited to such property and improvements to such property);

Mortgages placed into effect prior to, at the time of, or within 180 days of completion of construction of new facilities (or any improvements to existing facilities) to secure all or part of the cost of construction or improvement of such facilities, or to secure Indebtedness incurred to provide funds for any such purpose (provided such Mortgages are limited to the property or portion thereof upon which the construction being so financed occurred and improvements the cost of construction of which is being so financed);

Pledges or deposits in the ordinary course of business and in connection with bids, tenders, contracts or statutory obligations or to secure surety or performance bonds;

Mortgages imposed by law, such as carriers , warehousemen s and mechanics and materialmen s liens, arising in the ordinary course of business;

Mortgages for taxes or assessments or governmental charges or levies, so long as such taxes or assessments or governmental charges or levies are not due and payable, or the same can be paid thereafter without penalty, or the same are being contested in good faith;

minor encumbrances, easements or reservations which do not in the aggregate materially adversely affect the value of the properties or impair their use;

Mortgages in respect of judgments that do not result in an event of default under the indenture;

Mortgages which secure only debt owing by a Subsidiary to us or to a Subsidiary of ours;

Mortgages required by any contract or statute in order to permit us or a Subsidiary to perform any contract or subcontract made by it with or at the request of the United States of America or any state, or any department, agency, instrumentality or political subdivision of any of the foregoing or the District of Columbia, and Mortgages on property owned or leased by us or a Subsidiary (a) to secure any Indebtedness incurred for the purpose of financing (including any industrial development bond

Edgar Filing: BROWN FORMAN CORP - Form 424B3

financing) all or any part of the purchase price or the cost of constructing, expanding or improving the property subject thereto (provided such Mortgages are limited to the property or portion thereof upon which the construction being so financed occurred and the improvements the cost of construction of which is being so financed), or (b) needed to permit the construction, improvement, attachment or removal of any equipment designed primarily for the purpose of air or water pollution control, provided that such Mortgages shall not extend to other property or assets of us or any Subsidiary;

landlords liens on property held under lease;

Table of Contents

Mortgages, if any, in existence on April 2, 2007; and

certain extensions, renewals, replacements or refundings of Mortgages referred to in the foregoing clauses.

Limitation on Sale and Lease-back Transactions

The indenture provides that, unless otherwise specified in the terms of debt securities of any series, neither we nor any of our Subsidiaries may enter into any sale and lease-back transaction involving Principal Property acquired or placed into service more than 180 days prior to such transaction, whereby such property has been or is to be sold or transferred by us or any Subsidiary, unless:

we or such Subsidiary would at the time of entering into such transaction be entitled to create Indebtedness secured by a Mortgage on such property as described in *Limitations on Liens* above in an amount equal to the Attributable Debt with respect to the sale and lease-back transaction without equally and ratably securing the outstanding debt securities; or

we apply to the retirement or prepayment (other than any mandatory retirement or prepayment) of our Funded Debt (as defined below), or to the acquisition, development or improvement of Principal Property, an amount equal to the net proceeds from the sale of the Principal Property so leased within 180 days of the effective date of any such sale and lease-back transaction, provided that the amount to be applied to the retirement or prepayment of our Funded Debt shall be reduced by the principal amount of any debt securities delivered by us to the trustee within 180 days after such sale and lease-back transaction for retirement and cancellation.

This restriction will not apply to any sale and lease-back transaction (i) involving the taking back of a lease for a period of three years or less; (ii) involving industrial development or pollution control financing; or (iii) between us and a Subsidiary or between Subsidiaries.

Merger, Consolidation or Sale of Assets

The indenture prohibits us from merging into or consolidating with any other corporation or selling, leasing or conveying substantially all of our assets and the assets of our Subsidiaries, taken as a whole, to any person, unless:

either we are the continuing corporation or the successor corporation or the person which acquires by sale, lease or conveyance all or substantially all of our or our Subsidiaries' assets is a corporation organized under the laws of the United States, any state thereof, or the District of Columbia, and expressly assumes the due and punctual payment of the principal of, and premium, if any, and interest on all the debt securities and the due and punctual performance and observance of every covenant and condition of the indenture to be performed or observed by us, by supplemental indenture satisfactory to the trustee, executed and delivered to the trustee by such corporation;

immediately after giving effect to such transaction, no Event of Default described under the caption *Events of Default and Remedies* or event which, after notice or lapse of time or both would become an Event of Default, has happened and is continuing; and

we have delivered to the trustee an opinion of counsel stating that such transaction and such supplemental indenture comply with the indenture provisions and that we have complied with all conditions precedent in the indenture relating to such transaction.

Upon any consolidation or merger with or into any other person or any sale, conveyance, lease, or other transfer of all or substantially all of our or our Subsidiaries' assets to any person, the successor corporation shall succeed to, and be substituted for, us under the indenture and each series of outstanding debt securities, and we shall be relieved of all obligations and covenants under the indenture and each series of outstanding debt securities to the extent we were the predecessor person.

Table of Contents

Certain Definitions

Attributable Debt means, with respect to any sale and lease-back transaction, as of any particular time, the present value discounted at the rate of interest implicit in the terms of the lease (as determined in good faith by us) of the obligations of the lessee under such lease for net rental payments during the remaining term of the lease (including any period for which such lease has been extended or may, at our option, be extended).

Consolidated Net Assets means the aggregate amount of assets (less applicable reserves and other properly deductible items) after deducting all current liabilities (excluding any portion of current liabilities constituting Funded Debt by reason of being renewable or extendable), all as set forth on the balance sheet for the most-recently ended fiscal quarter of the person for which such determination is being made and computed in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

corporation means a corporation, association, company, joint-stock company, limited liability company or business trust.

Funded Debt means all indebtedness for money borrowed classified as long-term debt on the audited balance sheet for the most-recently ended fiscal period (or if incurred subsequent to the date of such balance sheet, would have been so classified) of the person for which the determination is being made.

Indebtedness means:

any liability of any person for borrowed money, or evidenced by a bond, note, debenture, or similar instrument (including purchase money obligations but excluding Trade Payables), or for the payment of money relating to a lease that is required to be classified as a capitalized lease obligation in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;

any of the foregoing liabilities of another that a person has guaranteed, that is recourse to such person, or that is otherwise its legal liability;

mandatorily redeemable preferred or preference stock of one of our Subsidiaries held by anyone other than us or one of our Subsidiaries; and

any amendment, supplement, modification, deferral, renewal, extension, or refunding of any liability of the types referred to in the foregoing clauses.

Mortgage means, with respect to an asset, any mortgage, lien, pledge, charge, security interest or encumbrance of any kind in respect of such asset.

Principal Property means all real property, fixtures, machinery and equipment located within the United States directly engaged in our or our Subsidiaries' manufacturing activities, including manufacturing and processing facilities, except any such real property, fixtures, machinery and equipment which our board of directors determines is not material to our business and our Subsidiaries' business taken as a whole.

Significant Subsidiary means each Subsidiary which is a significant subsidiary as defined in Rule 1-02(w) of Regulation S-X, as amended or modified and in effect from time to time.

Subsidiary means any corporation, partnership or other entity of which at the time of determination we own or control directly or indirectly capital stock or equivalent interests having more than 50% of the total voting power of the capital stock or equivalent interests then outstanding and normally entitled to vote in the election of directors, managers or trustees thereof.

Trade Payables means accounts payable or any other Indebtedness or monetary obligations to trade creditors created or assumed in the ordinary course of business in connection with the obtaining of materials, finished products, inventory or services.

Table of Contents

Events of Default and Remedies

When we use the term "Event of Default" in the indenture with respect to the debt securities of any series, we mean:

- (1) default in paying interest on the debt securities when it becomes due and the default continues for a period of 30 days or more;
- (2) default in paying principal, or premium, if any, on the debt securities when due;
- (3) default is made in the payment of any sinking or purchase fund or analogous obligation when the same becomes due, and such default continues for 30 days or more;
- (4) default in the performance, or breach, of any covenant in the indenture (other than defaults specified in clause (1), (2) or (3) above) and the default or breach continues for a period of 60 days or more after we receive written notice from the trustee or we and the trustee receive notice from the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the series;
- (5) we default in the payment of any scheduled principal of or interest on any of our Indebtedness or any Indebtedness of any of our Subsidiaries (other than the debt securities), aggregating more than \$50 million in principal amount, when due and payable after giving effect to any applicable grace period;
- (6) we default in the performance of any other term or provision of any of our Indebtedness or any Indebtedness of any of our Subsidiaries (other than the debt securities) in excess of \$50 million principal amount that results in such Indebtedness becoming or being declared due and payable prior to the date on which it would otherwise become due and payable, and such acceleration shall not have been rescinded or annulled, or such Indebtedness shall not have been discharged, within a period of 15 days after there has been given to us by the trustee or to us and the trustee by the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the debt securities then outstanding of any series, a written notice specifying such default or defaults;
- (7) one or more judgments, decrees, or orders is entered against us or any of our Significant Subsidiaries by a court from which no appeal may be or is taken for the payment of money, either individually or in the aggregate, in excess of \$50 million, and the continuance of such judgment, decree, or order remains unsatisfied and in effect for any period of 45 consecutive days after the amount of the judgment, decree or order is due without a stay of execution;
- (8) certain events of bankruptcy, insolvency, reorganization, administration or similar proceedings with respect to us have occurred; and
- (9) any other Events of Default set forth in a prospectus supplement.

If an Event of Default (other than an Event of Default specified in clause (8) with respect to us) under the indenture occurs with respect to the debt securities of any series and is continuing, then the trustee or the holders of at least 51% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series may by written notice require us to repay immediately the entire principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series (or such lesser amount as may be provided in the terms of the securities), together with all accrued and unpaid interest and premium, if any.

If an Event of Default under the indenture specified in clause (8) with respect to us occurs and is continuing, then the entire principal amount of the outstanding debt securities (or such lesser amount as may be provided in the terms of the securities) will automatically become due and payable immediately without any declaration or other act on the part of the trustee or any holder.

After a declaration of acceleration, the holders of a majority in principal amount of outstanding debt securities of any series may rescind this accelerated payment requirement if all existing Events of Default, except for nonpayment of the principal and interest on the debt securities of that series that has become due solely as a

Table of Contents

result of the accelerated payment requirement, have been cured or waived and if the rescission of acceleration would not conflict with any judgment or decree. The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series also have the right to waive past defaults, except a default in paying principal or interest on any outstanding debt security, or in respect of a covenant or a provision that cannot be modified or amended without the consent of all holders of the debt securities of that series.

Holders of at least 51% in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of a series may seek to institute a proceeding only after they have notified the Trustee of a continuing Event of Default in writing and made a written request, and offered reasonable indemnity, to the trustee to institute a proceeding and the trustee has failed to do so within 60 days after it received this notice. In addition, within this 60-day period the trustee must not have received directions inconsistent with this written request by holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series. These limitations do not apply, however, to a suit instituted by a holder of a debt security for the enforcement of the payment of principal, interest or any premium on or after the due dates for such payment.

During the existence of an Event of Default, the trustee is required to exercise the rights and powers vested in it under the indenture and use the same degree of care and skill in its exercise as a prudent man would under the circumstances in the conduct of that person's own affairs. If an Event of Default has occurred and is continuing, the trustee is not under any obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers at the request or direction of any of the holders unless the holders have offered to the trustee reasonable security or indemnity. Subject to certain provisions, the holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee, or exercising any trust, or power conferred on the trustee.

The trustee will, within 90 days after any default occurs, give notice of the default to the holders of the debt securities of that series, unless the default was already cured or waived. Unless there is a default in paying principal, interest or any premium when due, the trustee can withhold giving notice to the holders if it determines in good faith that the withholding of notice is in the interest of the holders.

The indenture requires that we must deliver to the trustee within 120 days after the end of each fiscal year an officers' certificate stating whether such officers have knowledge of any default under the indenture and, if so, specifying such default and the nature thereof.

Modification and Waiver

The indenture may be amended or modified without the consent of any holder of debt securities in order to:

evidence a successor to the trustee;

cure ambiguities, defects or inconsistencies;

provide for the assumption of our obligations in the case of a merger or consolidation or transfer of all or substantially all of our assets that complies with the covenant described under "Merger, Consolidation or Sale of Assets";

make any change that would provide any additional rights or benefits to the holders of the debt securities of a series;

add guarantors or co-obligors with respect to the debt securities of any series;

secure the debt securities of a series;

establish the form or forms of debt securities of any series;

add additional Events of Default with respect to the debt securities of any series;

Table of Contents

maintain the qualification of the indenture under the Trust Indenture Act; or

make any change that does not adversely affect in any material respect the interests of any holder.

Other amendments and modifications of the indenture or the debt securities issued may be made with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series affected by the amendment or modification. However, no modification or amendment may, without the consent of the holder of each outstanding debt security affected:

reduce the principal amount, or extend the fixed maturity, of the debt securities;

alter or waive the redemption or repayment provisions of the debt securities;

change the currency in which principal, any premium or interest is paid;

reduce the percentage in principal amount outstanding of debt securities of any series which must consent to an amendment, supplement or waiver or consent to take any action;

impair the right to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment on the debt securities;

waive a payment default with respect to the debt securities or any guarantor;

reduce the interest rate or extend the time for payment of interest on the debt securities;

adversely affect the ranking of the debt securities of any series; or

release any guarantor or co-obligor from any of its obligations under its guarantee or the indenture, except in compliance with the terms of the indenture.

Satisfaction, Discharge and Covenant Defeasance

We may terminate our obligations under the indenture with respect to the outstanding debt securities of any series, when:

either:

all debt securities of any series issued that have been authenticated and delivered have been delivered to the trustee for cancellation; or

all the debt securities of any series issued that have not been delivered to the trustee for cancellation have become due and payable, will become due and payable within one year, or are to be called for redemption within one year and we

Edgar Filing: BROWN FORMAN CORP - Form 424B3

have made arrangements satisfactory to the trustee for the giving of notice of redemption by such trustee in our name and at our expense, and in each case, we have irrevocably deposited or caused to be deposited with the trustee sufficient funds to pay and discharge the entire indebtedness on the series of debt securities; and

we have paid or caused to be paid all other sums then due and payable under the indenture; and

we have delivered to the trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel, each stating that all conditions precedent under the indenture relating to the satisfaction and discharge of the indenture have been complied with.

We may elect to have our obligations under the indenture discharged with respect to the outstanding debt securities of any series ("legal defeasance"). Legal defeasance means that we will be deemed to have paid and discharged the entire indebtedness represented by the outstanding debt securities of such series under the indenture, except for:

the rights of holders of the debt securities to receive principal, interest and any premium when due;

Table of Contents

our obligations with respect to the debt securities concerning issuing temporary debt securities, registration of transfer of debt securities, mutilated, destroyed, lost or stolen debt securities and the maintenance of an office or agency for payment for security payments held in trust;

the rights, powers, trusts, duties and immunities of the trustee; and

the defeasance provisions of the indenture.

In addition, we may elect to have our obligations released with respect to certain covenants in the indenture (covenant defeasance). If we so elect, any failure to comply with these obligations will not constitute a default or an event of default with respect to the debt securities of any series. In the event covenant defeasance occurs, certain events, not including non-payment, bankruptcy and insolvency events, described under Events of Default and Remedies will no longer constitute an event of default for that series.

In order to exercise either legal defeasance or covenant defeasance with respect to outstanding debt securities of any series:

we must irrevocably have deposited or caused to be deposited with the trustee as trust funds for the purpose of making the following payments, specifically pledged as security for, and dedicated solely to the benefits of the holders of the debt securities of a series:

money in an amount;

U.S. government obligations (or equivalent government obligations in the case of debt securities denominated in other than U.S. dollars or a specified currency) that will provide, not later than one day before the due date of any payment, money in an amount; or

a combination of money and U.S. government obligations (or equivalent government obligations, as applicable) in an amount,

in each case sufficient, in the written opinion (with respect to U.S. or equivalent government obligations or a combination of money and U.S. or equivalent government obligations, as applicable)

of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants to pay and discharge, and which shall be applied by the trustee to pay and discharge, all of the principal (including mandatory sinking fund payments), interest and any premium at due date or maturity;

in the case of legal defeasance, we have delivered to the trustee an opinion of counsel stating that, under then applicable Federal income tax law or a ruling published by the Internal Revenue Service, the holders of the debt securities of that series will not recognize income, gain or loss for Federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit, defeasance and discharge to be effected and will be subject to the same Federal income tax as would be the case if the deposit, defeasance and discharge did not occur;

in the case of covenant defeasance, we have delivered to the trustee an opinion of counsel to the effect that the holders of the debt securities of that series will not recognize income, gain or loss for Federal income tax purposes as a result of the deposit and covenant defeasance to be effected and will be subject to the same Federal income tax as would be the case if the deposit and covenant defeasance did not occur;

Edgar Filing: BROWN FORMAN CORP - Form 424B3

no event of default or default with respect to the outstanding debt securities of that series has occurred and is continuing at the time of such deposit after giving effect to the deposit or, in the case of legal defeasance, no default relating to bankruptcy or insolvency has occurred and is continuing at any time on or before the 91st day after the date of such deposit, it being understood that this condition is not deemed satisfied until after the 91st day;

Table of Contents

the legal defeasance or covenant defeasance will not cause the trustee to have a conflicting interest within the meaning of the Trust Indenture Act, assuming all debt securities of a series were in default within the meaning of such Act;

the legal defeasance or covenant defeasance will not result in a breach or violation of, or constitute a default under, any other agreement or instrument to which we are a party;

the legal defeasance or covenant defeasance will not result in the trust arising from such deposit constituting an investment company within the meaning of the Investment Company Act of 1940, as amended, unless the trust is registered under such Act or exempt from registration;

if the debt securities are to be redeemed prior to their maturity (other than from mandatory sinking fund or analogous payments), notice of such redemption shall have been duly given; and

we have delivered to the trustee an officers' certificate and an opinion of counsel stating that all conditions precedent with respect to the legal defeasance or covenant defeasance have been complied with.

Concerning our Relationship with the Trustee

U.S. Bank National Association serves as trustee under certain indentures related to other securities that we have issued or guaranteed.

Paying Agent and Registrar

The trustee will initially act as paying agent and registrar for all debt securities. We may change the paying agent or registrar for any series of debt securities without prior notice, and we or any of our Subsidiaries may act as paying agent or registrar.

Forms of Securities

Each debt security will be represented either by a certificate issued in definitive form to a particular investor or by one or more global securities representing the entire issuance of the series of debt securities. Certificated securities will be issued in definitive form and global securities will be issued in registered form. Definitive securities name you or your nominee as the owner of the security, and in order to transfer or exchange these securities or to receive payments other than interest or other interim payments, you or your nominee must physically deliver the securities to the trustee, registrar, paying agent or other agent, as applicable. Global securities name a depositary or its nominee as the owner of the debt securities represented by these global securities. The depositary maintains a computerized system that will reflect each investor's beneficial ownership of the securities through an account maintained by the investor with its broker/dealer, bank, trust company or other representative, as we explain more fully below.

Global Securities

Registered Global Securities

We may issue the registered debt securities in the form of one or more fully registered global securities that will be deposited with a depositary or its custodian identified in the applicable prospectus supplement and registered in the name of that depositary or its nominee. In those cases, one or more registered global securities will be issued in a denomination or aggregate denominations equal to the portion of the aggregate principal or face amount of the securities to be represented by registered global securities. Unless and until it is exchanged in whole for securities in definitive registered form, a registered global security may not be transferred except as a whole by and among the depositary for the registered global security, the nominees of the depositary or any successors of the depositary or those nominees.

Table of Contents

If not described below, any specific terms of the depositary arrangement with respect to any securities to be represented by a registered global security will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to those securities. We anticipate that the following provisions will apply to all depositary arrangements.

Ownership of beneficial interests in a registered global security will be limited to persons, called participants, that have accounts with the depositary or persons that may hold interests through participants. Upon the issuance of a registered global security, the depositary will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the participants' accounts with the respective principal or face amounts of the securities beneficially owned by the participants. Any dealers, underwriters or agents participating in the distribution of the securities will designate the accounts to be credited. Ownership of beneficial interests in a registered global security will be shown on, and the transfer of ownership interests will be effected only through, records maintained by the depositary, with respect to interests of participants, and on the records of participants, with respect to interests of persons holding through participants. The laws of some states may require that some purchasers of securities take physical delivery of these securities in definitive form. These laws may impair your ability to own, transfer or pledge beneficial interests in registered global securities.

So long as the depositary, or its nominee, is the registered owner of a registered global security, that depositary or its nominee, as the case may be, will be considered the sole owner or holder of the securities represented by the registered global security for all purposes under the indenture. Except as described below, owners of beneficial interests in a registered global security will not be entitled to have the securities represented by the registered global security registered in their names, will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of the securities in definitive form and will not be considered the owners or holders of the securities under the indenture. Accordingly, each person owning a beneficial interest in a registered global security must rely on the procedures of the depositary for that registered global security and, if that person is not a participant, on the procedures of the participant through which the person owns its interest, to exercise any rights of a holder under the indenture. We understand that under existing industry practices, if we request any action of holders or if an owner of a beneficial interest in a registered global security desires to give or take any action that a holder is entitled to give or take under the indenture, the depositary for the registered global security would authorize the participants holding the relevant beneficial interests to give or take that action, and the participants would authorize beneficial owners owning through them to give or take that action or would otherwise act upon the instructions of beneficial owners holding through them.

Principal, premium, if any, and interest payments on debt securities represented by a registered global security registered in the name of a depositary or its nominee will be made to the depositary or its nominee, as the case may be, as the registered owner of the registered global security. Neither we nor the trustee or any other agent of ours or the trustee will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in the registered global security or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to those beneficial ownership interests.

We expect that the depositary for any of the securities represented by a registered global security, upon receipt of any payment of principal, premium, interest or other distribution of underlying securities or other property to holders on that registered global security, will immediately credit participants' accounts in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in that registered global security as shown on the records of the depositary. We also expect that payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in a registered global security held through participants will be governed by standing customer instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with the securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in street name, and will be the responsibility of those participants.

If the depositary for any of these securities represented by a registered global security is at any time unwilling or unable to continue as depositary or ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act, and a successor depositary registered as a clearing agency under the Exchange Act is not appointed by us within 90 days, we will issue securities in definitive form in exchange for the registered global security that had

Table of Contents

been held by the depository. Any securities issued in definitive form in exchange for a registered global security will be registered in the name or names that the depository gives to the trustee or other relevant agent of ours or theirs. It is expected that the depository's instructions will be based upon directions received by the depository from participants with respect to ownership of beneficial interests in the registered global security that had been held by the depository.

Unless we state otherwise in a prospectus supplement, the Depository Trust Company (DTC) will act as depository for each series of debt securities issued as global securities. DTC has advised us that DTC is a limited-purpose trust company created to hold securities for its participating organizations (collectively, the Participants) and to facilitate the clearance and settlement of transactions in those securities between Participants through electronic book-entry changes in accounts of its Participants. The Participants include securities brokers and dealers, banks, trust companies, clearing corporations and certain other organizations. Access to DTC's system is also available to other entities such as banks, brokers, dealers and trust companies that clear through or maintain a custodial relationship with a Participant, either directly or indirectly (collectively, the Indirect Participants). Persons who are not Participants may beneficially own securities held by or on behalf of DTC only through the Participants or the Indirect Participants. The ownership interests in, and transfers of ownership interests in, each security held by or on behalf of DTC are recorded on the records of the Participants and the Indirect Participants.

Governing Law

The indenture and each series of debt securities are governed by, and construed in accordance with, the laws of the State of New York.

Plan of Distribution

We may sell the securities in and outside the United States through underwriters or dealers, directly to purchasers or through agents.

Sale Through Underwriters or Dealers

If we use underwriters in the sale of securities, the underwriters will acquire the securities for their own account. The underwriters may resell the securities from time to time in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale. Underwriters may offer securities to the public either through underwriting syndicates represented by one or more managing underwriters or directly by one or more firms acting as underwriters. Unless we inform you otherwise in the prospectus supplement, the obligations of the underwriters to purchase the securities will be subject to conditions, and the underwriters will be obligated to purchase all the securities if they purchase any of them. The underwriters may change from time to time any initial public offering price and any discounts or concessions allowed or re-allowed or paid to dealers.

During and after an offering through underwriters, the underwriters may purchase and sell the securities in the open market. These transactions may include over-allotment and stabilizing transactions and purchases to cover syndicate short positions created in connection with the offering. The underwriters may also impose a penalty bid, whereby selling concessions allowed to syndicate members or other broker-dealers for the offered securities sold for their account may be reclaimed by the syndicate if such offered securities are repurchased by the syndicate in stabilizing or covering transactions. These activities may stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the market price of the offered securities, which may be higher than the price that might otherwise prevail in the open market. If commenced, these activities may be discontinued at any time.

If we use dealers in the sale of securities, we will sell the securities to them as principals. They may then resell those securities to the public at varying prices determined by the dealers at the time of resale. The

Table of Contents

dealers participating in any sale of the securities may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act of 1933 with respect to any sale of those securities. We will include in the prospectus supplement the names of the dealers and the terms of the transaction.

Direct Sales and Sales Through Agents

We may sell the securities directly. In that event, no underwriters or agents would be involved. We may also sell the securities through agents we designate from time to time. In the prospectus supplement, we will name any agent involved in the offer or sale of the securities, and we will describe any commissions payable by us to the agent. Unless we inform you otherwise in the prospectus supplement, any agent will agree to use its reasonable best efforts to solicit purchases for the period of its appointment.

We may sell the securities directly to institutional investors or others who may be deemed to be underwriters within the meaning of the Securities Act of 1933 with respect to any sale of those securities. We will describe the terms of any such sales in the prospectus supplement.

Delayed Delivery Contracts

If we so indicate in the prospectus supplement, we may authorize agents, underwriters or dealers to solicit offers from certain types of institutions to purchase securities from us at the public offering price under delayed delivery contracts. These contracts would provide for payment and delivery on a specified date in the future. The contracts would be subject only to those conditions described in the prospectus supplement. The prospectus supplement will describe the commission payable for solicitation of those contracts.

General Information

We may have agreements with the agents, dealers and underwriters to indemnify them against civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, or to contribute with respect to payments that the agents, dealers or underwriters may be required to make. Agents, dealers and underwriters may engage in transactions with us or perform services for us in the ordinary course of their businesses.

Legal Matters

Certain legal matters relating to the debt securities will be passed upon for us by Hogan Lovells US LLP, Washington, District of Columbia. Legal counsel to any underwriters may pass upon legal matters for such underwriters.

Experts

The consolidated financial statements as of April 30, 2015 and 2014, for each of the three fiscal years in the period ended April 30, 2015, and management's assessment of the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting as of April 30, 2015 (which is included in Management's Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting) incorporated in this prospectus by reference to the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended April 30, 2015 have been so incorporated in reliance on the report of PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, given on the authority of said firm as experts in auditing and accounting.

Table of Contents

\$

\$ % Notes due 2025

\$ % Notes due 2038

Prospectus Supplement

, 2018

Joint Book-Running Managers

Barclays

BofA Merrill Lynch

Citigroup

US Bancorp