



Brown-Forman (BF.B)

Updated July 5th, 2023 by Jonathan Weber

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$67	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	2.9%	Market Cap:	\$32B
Fair Value Price:	\$49	5 Year Growth Estimate:	8.0%	Ex-Dividend Date:	09/02/23
% Fair Value:	136%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	-6.0%	Dividend Payment Date:	10/03/23
Dividend Yield:	1.2%	5 Year Price Target	\$72	Years Of Dividend Growth:	39
Dividend Risk Score:	A	Retirement Suitability Score:	C	Rating:	Sell

Overview & Current Events

Brown-Forman is an alcoholic beverage company that is based in Louisville. The company was founded in 1870. Brown-Forman produces and sells whiskey, vodka, tequila, champagne, and wine. Its portfolio includes a range of mostly premium brands, such as Jack Daniel's, Finlandia Vodka, Old Forester, and many others.

Brown-Forman reported its fourth quarter (fiscal 2023) earnings results in June. The company announced that it generated revenues of \$1.05 billion in the period, which was up 5% from the revenues the company generated during the previous year's quarter. Brown-Forman's revenues came in above the analyst consensus, beating it by \$60 million, or around 6%. The sales growth rate during the quarter was stronger compared to the previous quarter, partially due to an easier comparison with the quarter one year earlier.

Brown-Forman's earnings-per-share totaled \$0.43 during the fourth quarter, which was in line with the consensus analyst estimate. Earnings-per-share were up by 36% compared to the previous year's quarter. During fiscal 2022, Brown-Forman has earned \$1.74 on a per-share basis, but 2023 was a weaker year for the alcoholic beverage company, as earnings-per-share declined by 7% to \$1.63. For fiscal 2024, significantly stronger results are expected.

Growth on a Per-Share Basis

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2029
EPS	\$1.28	\$1.38	\$1.37	\$1.65	\$1.67	\$1.73	\$1.73	\$1.88	\$1.74	\$1.63	\$2.05	\$3.01
DPS	\$0.48	\$0.52	\$0.56	\$0.59	\$0.63	\$0.65	\$0.70	\$0.72	\$0.75	\$0.81	\$0.82	\$1.10
Shares¹	534	522	494	480	481	480	480	479	479	479	478	470

Brown-Forman has a strong growth track record. The company was even able to increase its earnings-per-share during the last financial crisis, which can be explained by the fact that demand for alcohol is not very cyclical. During the 2010-to-2020 time frame, Brown-Forman grew its earnings-per-share at a high single digit rate. Earnings-per-share were driven by a combination of several factors, including revenue growth, rising margins, and buybacks.

Underlying sales growth has been solid during the last couple of years. Due to currency headwinds – the strong dollar results in lower reported sales when sales in other currencies are translated back to USD – the reported revenue growth rate was not as strong during that time frame. Thanks to the fact that Brown-Forman owns strong brands and is active in the super- and ultra-premium alcoholic beverages markets, which see consistent market growth, Brown-Forman should be able to keep its revenues growing in the long run. This has been the most important growth factor for Brown-Forman's earnings-per-share in the past. Brown-Forman's Jack Daniels brand, as well as its American super-premium whiskeys, continue to gain market share around the globe. In many countries, restaurants, bars, and clubs were not allowed to open during the pandemic, which hurt Brown-Forman in the recent past. Net profits will likely hit a new record high in the current fiscal year, however, on the back of investments in its product lineup and margin initiatives that will increasingly pay off in the coming years. In the long run, we believe that Brown-Forman will continue on its growth track and that earnings-per-share will rise meaningfully through the 2020s, with share repurchases likely playing a role in rising earnings-per-share as well.

¹ In Millions

Disclosure: This analyst has no position in the security discussed in this research report, and no plans to initiate one in the next 72 hours.



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Valuation Analysis

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Now	2029
Avg. P/E	28.4	28.8	27.6	33.2	32.0	30.6	35.8	40.4	38.5	39.9	32.7	24.0
Avg. Yld.	1.3%	1.3%	1.5%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%	0.9%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.5%

Shares of Brown-Forman never were especially cheap, but in recent years, the company's multiple has risen to an even higher level. Brown-Forman's shares are valued at 33 times this year's forecasted earnings right now. This is a huge premium over the long-term median and our fair value estimate of a 24 times earnings multiple. The company makes special dividend payments from time to time, but those payments are somewhat irregular. When these special dividends are backed out, the dividend yield is not very attractive, at just above 1%.

Safety, Quality, Competitive Advantage, & Recession Resiliency

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2029
Payout	37.5%	37.7%	40.9%	35.8%	37.7%	37.6%	40.5%	38.3%	38.3%	49.7%	40.0%	36.4%

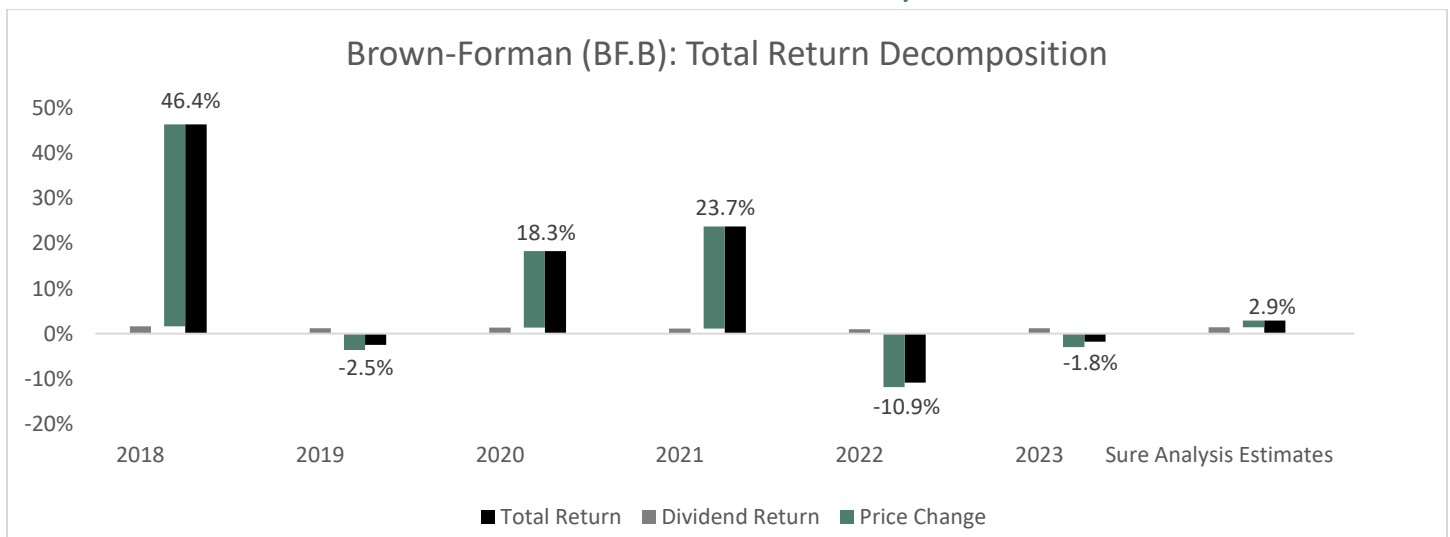
Brown-Forman's dividend payout ratio has been extremely stable over the last decade, as the company paid out between 35% and 40% of its net profits during almost every year. The reliable dividend growth track record and the low payout ratio mean that Brown-Forman's dividend looks highly sustainable and very safe.

Brown-Forman's strong brands and the tendency of customers to stick with the brands they like is a huge competitive advantage. This, along with the fact that Brown-Forman is one of the largest players in its industry, which allows for better economies of scale and a wider geographic reach, makes the company highly competitive. During the last financial crisis Brown-Forman remained highly profitable and actually increased its earnings, which is unsurprising, as demand for alcohol tends to be quite non-cyclical. The impact from the coronavirus crisis has been small as well.

Final Thoughts & Recommendation

Brown-Forman is active in an attractive, relatively non-cyclical industry. Brown-Forman also is a high-quality company that has achieved compelling earnings and dividend growth rates for long periods of time. Unfortunately, shares continue to trade at an excessively high valuation, which is why we do not forecast attractive total returns over the coming years. We rate Brown-Forman a sell given the high valuation and the company's weak total return prospects.

Total Return Breakdown by Year



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Income Statement Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Revenue	2,991	3,134	3,089	2,994	3,248	3,324	3,363	3,461	3,933	4,228
Gross Profit	2,078	2,183	2,144	2,021	2,202	2,166	2,127	2,094	2,391	2,494
Gross Margin	69.5%	69.7%	69.4%	67.5%	67.8%	65.2%	63.2%	60.5%	60.8%	59.0%
SG&A Exp.	1,122	1,134	1,105	1,029	1,170	1,037	1,025	1,070	1,128	1,248
D&A Exp.	50	51	56	58	64	72	74	77	79	80
Operating Profit	971	1,027	1,048	1,010	1,048	1,144	1,091	1,039	1,204	1,127
Operating Margin	32.5%	32.8%	33.9%	33.7%	32.3%	34.4%	32.4%	30.0%	30.6%	26.7%
Net Profit	659	684	1,067	669	717	835	827	903	838	783
Net Margin	22.0%	21.8%	34.5%	22.3%	22.1%	25.1%	24.6%	26.1%	21.3%	18.5%
Free Cash Flow	520	483	414	541	525	679	611	755	798	457
Income Tax	288	318	422	264	260	207	182	178	276	234

Balance Sheet Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Total Assets	4,103	4,188	4,183	4,625	4,976	5,139	5,766	6,522	6,373	7,777
Cash & Equivalents	437	370	263	182	239	307	675	1,150	868	374
Accounts Receivable	569	583	559	557	639	609	570	753	813	855
Inventories	882	953	1,054	1,270	1,379	1,520	1,685	1,751	1,818	2,283
Goodwill & Int. Ass.	1,297	1,218	1,185	1,394	1,433	1,398	1,391	1,455	1,347	2,621
Total Liabilities	2,071	2,283	2,621	3,255	3,660	3,492	3,791	3,866	3,636	4,509
Accounts Payable	134	123	121	137	154	150	131	172	703	308
Long-Term Debt	1,005	1,183	1,501	2,149	2,556	2,440	2,602	2,559	2,269	2,913
Shareholder's Equity	2,032	1,905	1,562	1,370	1,316	1,647	1,975	2,656	2,737	3,268
LTD/E Ratio	0.49	0.62	0.96	1.57	1.94	1.48	1.32	0.96	0.83	0.89

Profitability & Per Share Metrics

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Return on Assets	17.1%	16.5%	25.5%	15.2%	14.9%	16.5%	15.2%	14.7%	13.0%	11.1%
Return on Equity	36.0%	34.7%	61.6%	45.6%	53.4%	56.4%	45.7%	39.0%	31.1%	26.1%
ROIC	23.3%	22.3%	34.7%	20.3%	19.4%	21.0%	19.1%	18.4%	16.4%	14.0%
Shares Out.	534	522	494	480	481	480	480	479	479	479
Revenue/Share	5.56	5.88	6.05	6.13	6.71	6.90	7.00	7.20	8.18	8.80
FCF/Share	0.97	0.91	0.81	1.11	1.08	1.41	1.26	1.56	1.66	0.95

Note: All figures in millions of U.S. Dollars unless per share or indicated otherwise.

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