



Brown-Forman (BF.B)

Updated March 12th, 2024 by Jonathan Weber

Key Metrics

Current Price:	\$55	5 Year CAGR Estimate:	6.6%	Market Cap:	\$26B
Fair Value Price:	\$48	5 Year Growth Estimate:	8.0%	Ex-Dividend Date:	03/07/24
% Fair Value:	115%	5 Year Valuation Multiple Estimate:	-2.7%	Dividend Payment Date:	04/01/24
Dividend Yield:	1.6%	5 Year Price Target	\$71	Years Of Dividend Growth:	40
Dividend Risk Score:	A	Retirement Suitability Score:	B	Rating:	Hold

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 revenues of \$1.1 billion for its third quarter (fiscal 2024) earnings results. The company's revenues were down by 1% compared to the previous year's quarter. Brown-Forman's revenues came in below the analyst consensus, which caused a negative market reaction. The sales performance during the quarter was also weaker compared to the previous quarter, when Brown-Forman's year-over-year growth had been stronger. In constant currencies, Brown-Forman experienced a revenue decline of 2% compared to the previous year's quarter.

Brown-Forman's earnings-per-share have performed well so far this year, thanks to margin increases primarily. The company was able to grow its gross profit by 5% so far this year, despite revenues being up by just 1% on a year-to-date basis. Thanks to operating leverage and tight cost controls, operating profit rose by 25% year-to-date, with earnings-per-share jumping up by 32%. It is expected that 2024 will be a significantly stronger year profit-wise compared to 2023.

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	\$2.00	\$2.94
DPS	\$0.48	\$0.52	\$0.56	\$0.59	\$0.63	\$0.65	\$0.70	\$0.72	\$0.75	\$0.81	\$0.87	\$1.16
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	27.5	24.0
Avg. Yld.	1.3%	1.3%	1.5%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%	0.9%	1.1%	1.2%	1.6%	1.7%

Shares of Brown-Forman never were especially cheap, but shares got even more expensive in 2020-2023, with shares trading at as much as 40x net profits. Brown-Forman's shares are valued at 27-28 times this year's (fiscal 2024) forecasted earnings right now. This is still a premium over the long-term median and our fair value estimate of a 24 times earnings multiple, but shares aren't as expensive as they were over the last couple of years. Without special dividends, the dividend yield is not very attractive, at around 1.6%.

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%	43.5%	39.6%

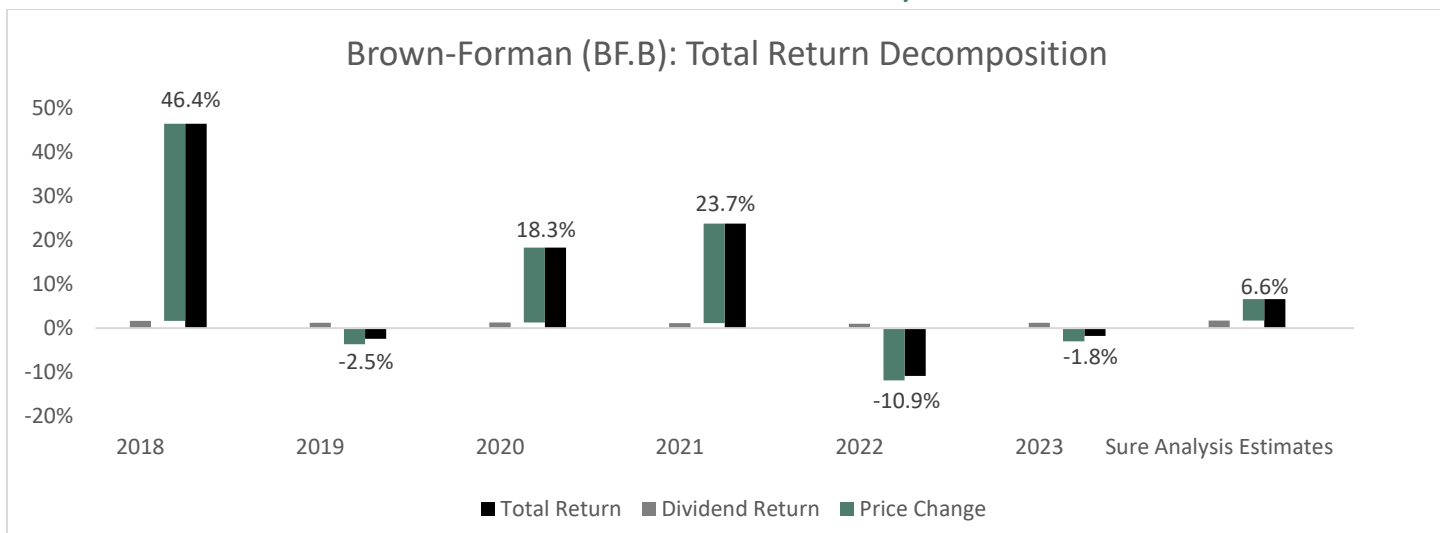
Brown-Forman's dividend payout ratio has been extremely stable over the last decade, as the company paid out between 35% and 40% of its net profits during almost every year. The reliable dividend growth track record and the low payout ratio mean that Brown-Forman's dividend looks highly sustainable and 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 was 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 a high valuation, which is why we do not forecast especially attractive total returns over the coming years. We rate Brown-Forman a hold given the company's solid 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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