

Kingston Single Malt Society

www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com

A social club for the appreciation of Single Malt Whisky since 1998
AUGUST 10th, 2020 VOLUME 14; NUMBER 2a



This evening's menu in the company of



BunnahabhainTM
SINGLE ISLAY MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

TOBERMORY
EST.
THE ISLE 1798 OF MULL

LEDAIG
SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

THE ISLE  OF MULL



MENU

Welcome Nosing: TOBERMORY MARSALA CASK FINISH

1st Course: Mediterranean Chickpea Salad

Paired Nosing: BUNNAHABHAIN FRENCH BRANDY CASK FINISH

2nd Course: Zucchini & Feta Tartlet

Paired Nosing: LEDAIG MANZANILLA CASK FINISH

**3rd Course: Moroccan pomegranate braised lamb shanks
with saffron couscous**

Paired Nosing: DEANSTON CREAM SHERRY CASK FINISH

Le Trou Normand: DEANSTON PALO CORTADO CASK FINISH

4th course: Pistachio Baklava

Paired Nosing: DEANSTON ORGANIC OLOROSO CASK FINISH

COST OF THE MALTS

TOBERMORY MARSALA CASK ISLE OF MULL SINGLE MALT SCOTCH

VINTAGES 15788 | 750 mL bottle **Price: \$ 287.30** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 55.0% Alcohol/Vol.

BUNNAHABHAIN LIMITED RELEASE FRENCH BRANDY CASK FINISH ISLAY SINGLE MALT SCOTCH

VINTAGES 15790 | 750 mL bottle **Price: \$180.25** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 52.0% Alcohol/Vol.

LEDAIG MANZANILLA CASK FINISH ISLE OF MULL SINGLE MALT SCOTCH

VINTAGES 15796 | 750 mL bottle **Price: \$ 335.65** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 52.9% Alcohol/Vol.

DEANSTON CREAM SHERRY CASK FINISH HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT SCOTCH

VINTAGES 15793 | 750 mL bottle **Price: \$140.40** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 54.0% Alcohol/Vol.

DEANSTON PALO CORTADO CASK FINISH HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT SCOTCH

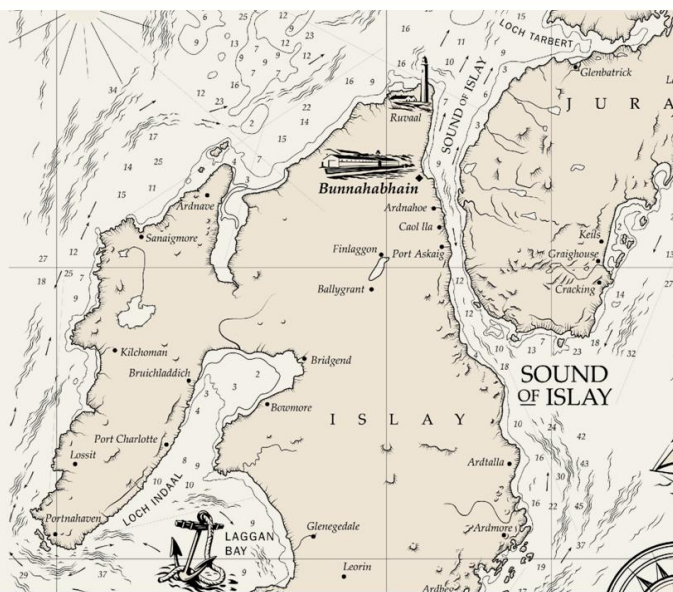
VINTAGES 15795 | 750 mL bottle **Price: \$300.35** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 51.8% Alcohol/Vol.

DEANSTON ORGANIC OLOROSO CASK FINISH HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT SCOTCH

VINTAGES 15794 | 750 mL bottle **Price: \$200.25** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 50.0% Alcohol/Vol.

HISTORY

1. Established in 1881 with a history of seafaring, as illustrated by the helmsman iconography
2. Bunnahabhain means "Mouth of the River" in Scots Gaelic
3. Most Northern distillery on Islay
4. Built close to the Margadale River where the pure spring water is piped to the distillery the only distillery on Islay to use natural spring water



Tobermory launches first gin

15th August, 2019 by Amy Hopkins

Scotland's Tobermory distillery on the Isle of Mull has expanded its portfolio with the launch of its first gin.



The flavour of Tobermory Gin is said to reflect the colourful Isle of Mull

The distillery is owned by South African drinks firm Distell and produces the Tobermory and Ledaig single malt Scotch whisky brands. The site reopened this year after [a two-year closure for refurbishment work](#).

Its new gin has been inspired by its home of the Isle of Mull, the second largest island in the Inner Hebrides. In addition to neutral grain alcohol, Tobermory adds a "splash" of whisky spirit, dubbed 'botanical #1', to the base liquid.

Thirteen botanicals are used to make the gin, including Hebridean tea grown locally on Mull, juniper, elderflower and sweet orange peel. The ingredients are picked in season and steeped for at least 24 hours in the base spirit, which is then distilled in a John Dore & Co copper pot still.

"Tobermory Distillery is one of the oldest distilleries in Scotland, producing one of the oldest single malts," said Stephen Woodcock, Tobermory distillery manager. "We've got a track record of

producing different spirit types, though we'd never tried to make gin, until now.

"Tobermory Gin is the first established single malt distillery to use their name on a gin. Using a splash of spirit from our famous whisky stills, along with a mix of botanicals, some hand foraged on the island, Tobermory Gin really is something different for the gin market, with an interesting story to tell as well as a high quality and unique spirit."

The launch will be supported by a new campaign, titled 'Expressive by Nature', spanning advertising, PR, social and sampling.

Tobermory Gin carries an ABV of 43.3% and has an RRP of £31 (US\$38). It follows the launch of [two new whiskies from Tobermory distillery](#) earlier this year.

New whiskies from Bunnahabhain, Tobermory and Deanston

27th June, 2019 by Amy Hopkins

Distell has launched new bottlings from Bunnahabhain, Tobermory and Deanston as part of its 2019 Limited Release Collection.



Three of the new limited edition releases from Distell

The range features a number of cask finishes with each expression priced between £60 (US\$76) and £450 (US\$570). The series consists of:

- Bunnahabhain (2007) Port Finish: RRP £90
- Bunnahabhain (2007) French Brandy Finish: RRP £90
- Bunnahabhain (1988) Vintage Marsala Finish: RRP £450
- Deanston (2002) Organic Oloroso: RRP £100

- Deanston (2006) Fino Finish: RPP £65
- Deanston (1997) Palo Cortado Finish: RRP £150
- Tobermory (1999) Marsala Finish: RRP £130
- Ledaig (1997) Manzanilla Finish: RRP £160

“The team surprise us every year with the creation of new and exciting expressions, with each distillery having a distinct flavour profile and the team continuing to achieve incredible results with their choice of finishing casks,” said Derek Scott, brand director for malt whisky at Distell.

“One of my particular favourites this year has to be the Bunnahabhain Vintage Marsala Finish; it has sweet hints of chocolate and caramel that develop into a lingering smoky pepperiness, which is extremely memorable, especially if you can enjoy it on Islay at Bunnahabhain Bay overlooking Bunnahabhain Bay, the Sound of Islay.”

Distell used a “modern and progressive route” to unveil the collection, reaching whisky lovers through film and social media. A tasting at the Deanston Distillery with members of Distell’s team – including senior blender Kirstie McCallum – was filmed and broadcast live.

In its latest half-year results, Distell’s whisky portfolio [experienced double-digit growth](#). Its Bunnahabhain distillery is currently [undergoing a £10.5 million \(US\\$13.97m\) renovation](#).

BATCH 208: DISTELL LIMITED RELEASES 2019

10 July 2019 by [Dave Broom](#)



This week, we’re really spoiling you with an extra batch of new whisky tasting notes from Dave Broom, as he gives his full attention to Distell’s eight-strong line-up of Limited Release single malts for 2019, including whiskies from Bunnahabhain, Deanston and the Mull tag-team of Tobermory and Ledaig.

The range covers a lot of bases in terms of cask types, encompassing finishes in Marsala, Port, French brandy, plus a Sherry quartet of fino, manzanilla, palo cortado and oloroso. Variety aplenty.

We open on Islay with a solid trio of Bunnahabhains, the highlight being a ‘rich and complex’ Marsala finish at 31 years of age that evokes memories of marmalade-making.

But, if there’s a standout performance this week, it comes from the sometimes underrated Deanston distillery in the Highlands, which scores a hat-trick of successes and impresses Broom mightily. The oloroso finish is ‘classy’, the fino finish is ‘bargain of the week’ at £65 a bottle – but the palo cortado finish tops the lot with its extra layers of depth and complexity.

We close with one whisky each from Mull’s double act of Tobermory and peaty Ledaig, but it’s more whimper than bang, thanks to the slightly questionable ‘dirty burger’ qualities of Ledaig and a Tobermory Marsala finish that is ‘neither one thing nor the other’.

The soundtrack ranges from Joan Shelley, Julie Byrne and Linda Perhacs plus, er, Sonic Youth (all in gentle mood) to upbeat Carla Bley and Sly Stone, while Jackie Leven’s sitting sadly at the back of the pub on Mull. Click on the links in Right Place, Right Time to enjoy the sounds.

[SCORING EXPLAINED](#)

OVERVIEW

- [> Bunnahabhain 2007, French Brandy Finish](#)
- [> Bunnahabhain 2007, Port Finish](#)
- [> Bunnahabhain 1988, Vintage Marsala Finish](#)
- [> Deanston 2002, Organic Oloroso](#)
- [> Deanston 2006, Fino Finish](#)
- [> Deanston 1997, Palo Cortado Finish](#)
- [> Ledaig 1997, Manzanilla Finish](#)
- [> Tobermory 1999, Marsala Finish](#)

BUNNAHABHAIN 2007, FRENCH BRANDY FINISH

SCORE - 84

[Scoring explained >](#)

PRICE BAND - £ £ £ £ £

ABV - 52.7%

PRODUCTION TYPE *Single malt whisky*

REGION *Islay*

FLAVOUR CAMP *Fruity & Spicy*



NOSE Rather fresh and clean, with gentle apricot, some sweet baking spice that shifts to oxidised fruit, apple, some fruit eaux-de-vie and a background funkiness. Found this one a bit tricky, but it starts to grow on you. Water adds in some pecan pie as the sweet, patisserie elements begin to take over. There’s this slight alcohol burn.

PALATE A silky-soft start with yellow fruits galore, some dessert apple, more of the apricot/peach, then some cinnamon toast and Bunna’s mix of sweet mash, hazelnut and ginger. Like many brandy casks, things become slightly rigid in the middle as the finish begins to exert itself, but though it becomes increasingly firm, there’s enough lift and vibrancy there. It needs time and water in order to mellow and bring the two halves together.

FINISH Drying, slight brandy butter burn.

CONCLUSION It starts off very much as a game of two halves, but ultimately it works.

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME A mix of [Wine and Honey](#).

BUNNAHABHAIN 2007, PORT FINISH

SCORE - 83

[Scoring explained >](#)

PRICE BAND £ £ £ £ £

ABV 55.7%

PRODUCTION TYPE *Single malt whisky*

REGION *Islay*

FLAVOUR CAMP *Fruity & Spicy*

NOSE Chewy, with red fruits galore – the Port seems to have taken charge in this relationship. Strawberries, redcurrants, a glimmering of something darker – hawthorn jam, perhaps? – in the background. Grows in boldness as it begins to open, adding a savoury edge. Water



opens up the sweet trolley to the full.

PALATE The generosity of spirit is there from the start, as Bunna' begins to make its presence more clearly felt. We're back to hazelnut (but now in a Nutella-esque way), then some cherry pie filling. There's a surprisingly mature undertone to this – whiffs of cigar lounge and old-style whisky bars – that's then given a cooked berry fruit lift. Becomes very spicy in the centre, with some burn in the mid-palate, though this is sorted out by a judicious splash of water, though again it's the finish that's taking charge here – there's also a little drying wood.

FINISH Fruit, light anise, hint of sloe.

CONCLUSION Easier-going structurally than the brandy, but the three years of extra maturation in Port has the wine in charge. That said, it's an easy-drinking early evening companion.

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME The dark enfolding you, then lit with [Hits of Sunshine](#).

BUNNAHABHAIN 1988, VINTAGE MARSALA FINISH

SCORE - 87

[Scoring explained >](#)

PRICE BAND £ £ £ £ £

ABV 47.4%

PRODUCTION TYPE *Single malt whisky*

REGION *Islay*

FLAVOUR CAMP *Rich & Round*

NOSE This has a rich, almost vinous quality that initially gives off strawberry chews and light plum, but then moves into marmalade, some apple and an earthy, cacao note. There's some of the dried rose petal you only get with age, along with scented woods and hints of clove oil. Rich and well-balanced.

Water adds light, almost maritime notes, initially at least, with a return to the light red fruits: raspberry juice/rose cordial, rhubarb, before it starts to deepen and shape-shift into something darker and more dangerous.

PALATE There's some wood here from the off, alongside that slightly burnt raisin quality which you can get from Marsala casks. As things start to open, you get an intriguing mix of After Eights, ginger (very Bunna') in syrup, then a huge hit of liquorice allsorts

(savoury-sweet, coconut and dried fruit). Water brings out the oak more, drying things down. Things have shifted to the nutty side compared to the first pair and, while there's still some of the pâtisserie on show (brioche this time), the hazelnut is now toasted. A late flaring of soft fruits gives a nodule of sweetness towards the back, but things start to dry and fade slightly.

FINISH More oaky (but hey, it's 31 years old), with chocolate and a drying, almost ashy finish.

CONCLUSION Mature, a little oaky, but overall rich and complex.

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

Stewing things down in the kitchen, making [Marmalade](#).



DEANSTON 2002, ORGANIC OLOROSO

SCORE - 88

[Scoring explained >](#)

PRICE BAND £ £ £ £ £

ABV 50.6%

PRODUCTION TYPE *Single malt whisky*

REGION *Highland*

FLAVOUR CAMP *Rich & Round*

NOSE Deep, sweet and lightly pruneey, with some cereal back notes. Moving towards figginess and tinned prunes. That said, it's also retained sweetness – there's a touch of vanilla and buttercream icing and a tiny hint of red fruits, which brings both sweetness and lift, adding to the complexity. Water enhances this steamed figgy pudding quality, alongside more resinous qualities.



PALATE As the nose suggests, this is sweet and highly concentrated, starting with deep, heavy chocolate, some tobacco and lots of iced gingerbread. There's a flare of heat in the middle before it resolves itself back into those figs again. It's here, in the softly-textured mid-palate, that Deanston's signature citrus comes in to perk things up, alongside a return of dried raspberry/raspberry leaf. It then progresses into spices: mace, clove especially. With water added, you get some more mature notes (leather), as well as freshness (red cherry). Things remain generous and ripe.

FINISH Slight peppery heat. Dried fruit.

CONCLUSION This started off in recharred casks, then spent some unspecified time in oloroso casks from Montilla-based organic producer Robles. Rather than being dominated by the finish, it is enriched. Classy stuff.

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

Lying in the open air under the [honeyed moon](#).

DEANSTON 2006, FINO FINISH

SCORE - 89

[Scoring explained >](#)

PRICE BAND £ £ £ £ £

ABV 55%

PRODUCTION TYPE *Single malt whisky*

REGION *Highland*

FLAVOUR CAMP *Fruity & Spicy*

NOSE Immediately bright, fresh and fruity, with zingy citrus dominating: spiced orange, tangerine marmalade, light almond and a distinct waxiness reminiscent of scented candle.

In time you get some olive playing alongside the fruit syrups. With water, there's some sweet nut and a light chalkiness. Upfront and energetic.

PALATE Warm and soft to start, with concentrated, lightly oxidised fruits and a touch of bran on the sides, before things soften in the middle of the tongue, where it is all butterscotch toffee, thick peach juice and orange blossom honey. As seems to be the case with Deanston, it's here that the spices start to kick in – and do



so fairly dramatically. Has drive and real energy, but is balanced.

Water makes things more oxidised and, by calming the spiciness down a notch, makes things more rounded overall.

FINISH Lightly acidic. Mandarin Napoléon.

CONCLUSION Only £65? Bargain of the week – and marked in its competitive set. There's only 268 bottles though...

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME A [Frisky](#) little number.

DEANSTON 1997, PALO CORTADO FINISH

SCORE - 90

[Scoring explained >](#)

PRICE BAND £ £ £ £ £

ABV 51.8%

PRODUCTION TYPE *Single malt whisky*

REGION *Highland*

FLAVOUR CAMP *Fruity & Spicy*

NOSE Opens with the pleasant fuzziness you occasionally get from good Sherry-casked whiskies. Working your way through that, you can pick out fruit salad, overripe melon, soft dried fruits (sultana especially) and citrus peels. The waxiness seen on the fino is more overt here: beeswax-polished wood. Everything is ripe and mellow. There's some nougat-like



nuttness when water is added, alongside hints of toffee which provide another layer to the mix of (now dried) citrus peels, banana skin, fruit trifle and black cherry.

PALATE Chewy, sweet and rich to start, with sweetness taking off to the extent that you wonder if it's got enough grip and acidity to balance. There's fruit trifle, ripe nectarine, then the date. The mid-palate remains soft and tongue-coating, but here the mature elements and the wax start to spread out. There's some country house elements, light leather, dried fruit while, when the spices come in, they have the earthy pungency of cumin and the acidic brightness of sumac. When water is added, there's more orchard fruits layered on top, as well as Seville orange peels giving a twang of bitterness.

FINISH Peaches and spices, then some chocolate.

CONCLUSION Deanston is on fire with this trio. This has more depth and complexity than the fino and is less heart-on-the-sleeve than the oloroso. Classy.

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME All is [in balance](#).

LEDAIG 1997, MANZANILLA FINISH

SCORE - 80

[Scoring explained >](#)

PRICE BAND £ £ £ £ £

ABV 52.9%

PRODUCTION TYPE *Single malt whisky*

REGION *Islands*

FLAVOUR CAMP *Smoky & Peaty*

NOSE Big and smoky, with the smell of an old copper coin/just polished brass, then a whiff of stable/tack room and linseed oil. No real manzanilla influence, as far as I can see. When water is added, you get some rubbery notes; then cigarette ash and kippers – the stale yet pungent smell of the breakfast room in a rundown Hebridean hotel.

PALATE Big, oily, slightly earthy and meaty and, as ever, teetering on the brink of being grubby, but this time it saves itself with a mid-palate hit of minty sweetness and rich, cooked red fruits. The wood and the smoke are integrated; some woodsmoke,

smoked cereal, some treacle-cured bacon and tar. With water, thick, briny and oily.

FINISH Tarry. The first Gitanes of the day.

CONCLUSION A dirty burger that's been saved by the barbecue sauce.

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME Wiping the [Greasy Gravy](#) off your chin.



TOBERMORY 1999, MARSALA FINISH

SCORE - 82

[Scoring explained >](#)

PRICE BAND £ £ £ £ £

ABV 55.7%

PRODUCTION TYPE *Single malt whisky*

REGION *Islands*

FLAVOUR CAMP *Fruity & Spicy*

NOSE Quite a funky opening: all stewing fruit, old citrus peels and almond, with a slight meatiness behind. There's a distinct weightiness here. When water is added, you get more wet, earthy notes, alongside vegetable stock cube then finally the concentrated, raisined fruits. The distinctive whiff of an old bookshop, stuffed with leather-bound, slightly foxed tomes.

PALATE Starts with rich, fruity weight, some peachiness, touches of raisin and then the slightly singed/licuorice signature from the Marsala



cask. As it relaxes, so you can pick out more soft plummy weight, though that runs alongside the artificial flavour of an isotonic drink. It needs water, which brings out fresh orange, more sweetness, riper fruits and, finally, some camphor.

FINISH Drying and short.

CONCLUSION It's neither one thing nor the other.

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME In a quiet corner, [Grievin' at the Mishnish](#).

The Dramble

Bunnahabhain

Bunnahabhain was founded in 1881 on the rugged northeastern coast of the Isle of Islay. Robertson & Baxter in partnership with the Greenlees Brothers incorporated as 'Islay Distillery Company Ltd' and in 1887 became 'Highland Distillers' (a forerunner of Edrington Group). Bunnahabhain has always produced a lot of its whisky to be destined for blending. This includes some world famous blends such as Famous Grouse, Cutty Sark and later, Black Bottle. The distillery (and Black Bottle brand) were bought by Burn Stewart in 2003 and are as of 2013 now owned by South African based Distell. Distillery Bottlings



[Bunnahabhain An Gladach](#)

75%

Posted 08 May 2018

We've had to wait quite some time for An Cladach – its been 9 months since this new travel retail bottling was [first announced](#) – whether the distillery or parent company Distell have had production issues, or whether the PR agency hit 'go' on the press release all too soon, who's to say – but, regardless, it's far from the best method for introducing a new expression into the increasingly busy (and often times odd) space that is global travel retail. Nevertheless, An Cladach is now looking like it's finally ready to dock following a month of exclusivity at Frankfurt airport.



[Bunnahabhain Cruach Mhona](#)

83%

Posted 01 May 2018

Gaelic for 'peat stack' Cruach Mhona continues a recent Bunnahabhain trend for completely unpronounceable whisky names. Whilst in 2018, peated Bunna (often termed 'Moine' by the distillery itself) is a fairly regularly sight, back in 2010 when Cruach Mhona was first released, it was all a touch more tentative when it came to peating. Over the past 8 years, the volume of peated whisky released by the distillery has steadily increased, and bottlings such as Toiteach and Ceobanach have

paved the way for a dual future for Bunnahabhain – unpeated still at its core, but with a healthy pipeline of smokier expressions.



[Bunnahabhain Moine Oloroso](#)

89%

Posted 01 August 2017

As of writing, Bunnahabhain is undergoing a large-scale £11m renovation effort. Wash Still no.1 has had a new Forsyths-made upper half installed, and there are plans to upgrade the distillery buildings and warehouses over the next three years. Whilst described in several places as 'scruffy' I have always found the distillery to exhibit an oddly appealing Victorian workhouse charm - you can read more about that [here](#). In the meantime Bunnahabhain have a range of new and exciting release for us over the next few months to look forward to.



[Bunnahabhain Toiteach](#)

83%

Posted 27 April 2017

Bunnahabhain is more commonly known for its lightly peated and unpeated expressions, but over the last few year's they've been experimenting with their 'moine' ('peat' in Scots Gaelic) and have released a range of whiskies with more of a peaty kick. Today we're taking a look at one of these in the form of the fairly unpronounceable Toiteach ('toch-chach' I'm reliably told).



[Bunnahabhain 2008 Moine Bordeaux red wine cask matured](#)

86%

Posted 14 January 2019

Last summer Distell launched a series of six new limited edition 'Malt Galley' releases from their three Scotland-based distilleries – Two from Bunnahabhain, one from Deanston and three from Tobermory (two peated, one unpeated). The releases were designed to reflect each distillery's house style whilst using sherry, brandy and red wine maturation to add 'points of difference'. All six of the expressions have now seen the light of day (some came later in 2018 due to packing issues delaying their release), so today we'll be closing our account of the series by checking out the limited edition red wine matured peated Bunnahabhain.



[Bunnahabhain 12 year old](#)

84%

Posted 03 November 2017

Bunnahabhain's 12 year old was given a welcome makeover in 2010 with the ABV increased up to 46.3%, a move to non-chill filtration and natural colouring, and a new opaque smoked glass bottle design. Recently, the distillery has had a very subtle branding change (they've joined up the letters of Bunnahabhain) and introduced the new Stiureadair as, what's described as a 'partial replacement' for the 12 year old – meaning a release of a similar style to ease some of the pressure that is presumably being currently made of their stocks sherry casks. Nevertheless, presently the 12 year old is still readily available.



[Bunnahabhain 2007 French Brandy Finish](#)

86%

Posted 27 June 2019

We saw a release of Bunna vs. brandy last year – through that was a peated (Moine) expression. For the 2019 Limited Releases we're now treated to the unpeated variant - matured in refill ex-bourbon casks and then finished in French brandy butts. Bottled at 52.5% ABV and with an RRP of £90 – there's a worldwide allocation of 2764 bottles.



[Bunnahabhain 2007 Port Pipe Finish](#)

83%

Posted 27 June 2019

This limited edition Bunnahabhain was matured in refill ex-bourbon hogsheads until 2016 when it was re-racked into port pipes for a finishing period. The end result has been bottled with an ABV of 55.3% and an RRP of £90.



[Bunnahabhain 2004 Moine Brandy Finish](#)
88%

Posted 16 March 2018

The 2004 Moine Brandy Finish is a first for Bunnahabhain. Whilst the distillery has experimented with somewhat comparable casks in the past (cognac in the Taiwan exclusive 'Frenchman's Rocks' for example), this is a maiden outing for brandy casks being used to finish their peated ('Moine') distillate. The release is a 13 year old whisky that has spent 10 years in ex-sherry butts before being finished in French brandy casks for three years. It is bottled at 55.3% ABV and is a release of 6,000 bottles with an RRP of £80.



[Bunnahabhain 2003 Pedro Ximenez Finish](#)
85%

Posted 16 March 2018

The 2003 Pedro Ximenez Finish is a 14 year old whisky bottled at 54.8% ABV. It has spent 11 years in 2nd fill sherry butts before being transferred into 1st fill PX casks for 3 years of finishing. Sherry on top of sherry – you should be able to guess the direction this one is going in. It is a release of 5,000 bottles and has an RRP of £85.



[Bunnahabhain 18 year old](#)

88%

Posted 03 November 2017

Similarly to the Bunnahabhain 12 year old, the 18 year old had its ABV upped to 46.3% and dropped the use of caramel colourant in 2010. Since this relaunch, the bottling has achieved wide-spread acclaim, though that has seen the price rise somewhat – from around £70 in 2016 to nearly to £100 as of writing. Nevertheless, that still remains in the same region as many 18 year olds from other distilleries.



[Bunnahabhain 1997 Palo Cortado Cask Finish](#)

90%

Posted 22 October 2018

The 1997 Bunnahabhain is the most expensive of Distell's 2018 limited releases. It's also one of the last to reach the market. Packaging issues have been cited as delayed the release of this eagerly anticipated expression – fair enough – the nice box does look nice. It's now starting to hit the shelves and with just 1620 bottles (with a mere 300 allocated to the UK market), it will no doubt sell out in double time.



[Bunnahabhain 25 year old](#)

91%

Posted 03 November 2017

Bunnahabhain 25 year old is the pinnacle of the distillery's core range. Already well regarded when it was bottled at 43% like the 12 and 18 year olds, it moved to a new regime of higher ABVs (46.3%), non-chill filtering and natural colouring in 2011. Hoorah. The bottling comes in a very solid alder wood box with hessian lining and brass latches – whilst we're not here to champion packaging (liquid is our purview), it's a suitably stylish container for a high-end expression.



[Bunnahabhain 1988 Vintage Marsala Finish](#)

90%

Posted 27 June 2019

Bunnahabhain is spirit which I feel works at an impressively broad range of ages. Bright and fresh young, deep and austere old. Distilled back in 1988, this is from the latter category with three decades of maturation under its belt. Similarly aged to this year's sought after Feis Ile release – though delivered with a marsala finish rather than champagne. The bottling strength is 47.4% ABV and the RRP has been set at £450.



[Bunnahabhain 1968 Auld Acquaintance](#)

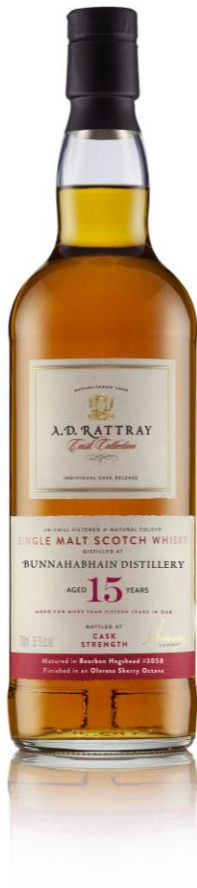
94%

Posted 05 August 2019

Unicorn (noun): something that is highly desirable but difficult to find or obtain: a mythical animal typically represented as a horse with a single straight horn projecting from its forehead (farts rainbows). There's no set definition of what a unicorn whisky is - to many it's simply a bottle that has become so expensive that save for a second mortgage or selling a kidney, the likelihood of obtaining one has now become very low. To others, it's the rarity of it - the Malt Mills of this world - the never, (if ever) sighted. To me, it's both more than that, and less than that. It's a milestone on my whisky journey. The completion of a side quest, but not the end of the story.

Independent Bottlings

A.D. Rattray



[Bunnahabhain 15 year old Oloroso Octave](#)

86%

Posted 13 June 2018

This 15 year old Bunnahabhain was matured for over 14 years in an ex-bourbon cask before being subjected to an additional 5 months of finishing in a specially commissioned oloroso sherry Octave.



[Bunnahabhain 15 year old PX Octave](#)

81%

Posted 13 June 2018

This 15 year old Bunnahabhain was matured for over 14 years in an ex-bourbon cask before being subjected to an additional 5 months of finishing in a specially commissioned PX Sherry Octave.



[Bunnahabhain 15 year old Rioja Octave](#)

73%

Posted 13 June 2018

This 15 year old Bunnahabhain was matured for over 14 years in an ex-bourbon cask before being subjected to an additional 5 months of finishing in a specially commissioned Rioja Octave.



[Bunnahabhain 15 year old Rum Octave](#)

84%

Posted 13 June 2018

This 15 year old Bunnahabhain was matured for over 14 years in an ex-bourbon cask before being subjected to an additional 5 months of finishing in a specially commissioned rum Octave.

Douglas Laing



[Bunnahabhain 1975 40 year old](#)

92%

Posted 15 August 2018

Douglas Laing's XOP (Extra Old Particular) is described as the 'big brother' to the well-known Old Particular range from this independent bottler. The selection of single malts and single grains which make up this series of single cask bottlings are drawn from the company's 'family jewels' – they're invariably older, rarer and always worth keeping an eye out for in terms of a special treat. As with many independent bottlers, you'll find that the prices for particularly aged-whiskies are much lower relative to original distillery bottlings - as such, they're a good target for those looking for birth year whiskies – particularly if you're getting a bit long in the tooth and were born in the 1970s.



[Elements of Islay Ma2](#)

85%

Posted 12 April 2019

The considerable differences in peat smoke type and intensity relative to their origins are fairly well documented. Islay peat is richer in phenolic compounds such as guaiacol, vanillins and nitrogens. Highland peat has a greater concentration of carbohydrates. These chemical variances are reflective of the landscapes where the peat has been extracted from – Islay: iodine packed sphagnum moss, washed by sea water and coastal air. The Highlands: larger numbers of wood-based deciduous plants offering syringol compounds from the lignins contained in plant matter. Complex stuff – well beyond my pay grade - and that's without any consideration of Orkney, Campbeltown (or even further afield).

James MacArthur



[Bunnahabhain 1978 16 year old](#)

87%

Posted 16 August 2018

James MacArthur's Fine Malt Selection ran from the early 1990's all the way through to 2014 with some 343 separate bottlings ([according to Whiskybase](#)). The series covered a huge selection of Scottish distilleries – a fair of which are now permanently closed – including the unicorn distillery Malt Mill. MacArthur's 10 year old Malt Mill (the only bottling known in existence from this distillery) originated from a blender's sample – as such, there are only four 50cl miniatures out there. One of them sold on Scotch Whisky Auctions earlier this year for £3,400 (plus fees).

Malts of Scotland



[Bunnahabhain 1973 38 year old](#)

92%

Posted 14 September 2017

Today marks a small landmark for The Dramble – our 100th tasting note. We've already had some real highs (Balvenie Tun 1401) and some incredible lows (Fujikai 10 year old) along our journey, but Danny and I would both like to take this opportunity to thank you for all the support you've given us since our launch back in April 2017. To celebrate our landmark tasting note, I've pulled out something old and interesting for today's post – Bunnahabhain 1973 38 year old, bottled by Malts of Scotland.

Scotch Malt Whisky Society



[10.173 Selkie caviar](#)

84%

Posted 04 July 2019

Oily & Coastal Bunna – 6 years in a refill ex-bourbon hogshead and then two years in a heavily toasted, medium char hogshead. [View on SMWS](#)



[10.128 Sea Salt and Smoked Peppered Almonds](#)

80%

Posted 09 November 2017

A Bunnahabhain that's certainly 'Moine' given the dark green flavour profile colour. Distilled on 10th December 2007, this whisky spent 9 years in an ex-Bourbon hogshead and then was transferred to a 2nd fill toasted oak hogshead. Seeing as it's still listed as 9 year old, it wasn't in that toasted jobbie for very long. One of 253 bottles.



[10.125 Charred sticks in a honey pot](#)

88%

Posted 30 November 2017

The monthly SMWS Bunnahabhain is a peated one this time. Distilled in February 2008 this whisky has spent its life in a refill ex-Bourbon barrel. One of 224 bottles. Lightly Peated profile.



[10.146 Sweet smoky succulent sensation](#)

83%

Posted 03 May 2018

Always good to see Bunnahabhain on the SMWS menu and this month's outturn has two examples – we're taking a look at the 'moine' version which has been matured for 9 years in a refill ex-bourbon barrel. Peated profile.



[10.148 Pretty in pink](#)

87%

Posted 01 June 2018

We saw some excellent port cask Bunnahabhain last year with [SMWS 10.118](#). This one was distilled two years later in 2008 and comes sans peat, but is similarly drawn from a 1st fill ex-port barrique and so has quite a pink hue to it. Oily & Coastal profile.



[10.162 Big wave sofa](#)

83%

Posted 08 November 2018

The near-obligatory monthly Bunna. This one takes a different approach to the most recent bottlings, having been finished in a 1st fill ex-oloroso hogshead after 7 years in refill bourbon. Oily & coastal profile.



[10.118 Enthralling Pink and Peat Intensity](#)

87%

Posted 14 August 2017

The Scotch Malt Whisky Society (SMWS) underwent somewhat of a rebrand in time for their 35th Anniversary. Still keeping the distinctive green coloured bottles (they don't want you judging by the colour of the liquid alone), the labelling introduced a colour-coded system of [12 unique flavour profiles](#) which help to define the style of each dram based on its inherent aromas, flavours and regional characteristics. It's both useful and attractive.

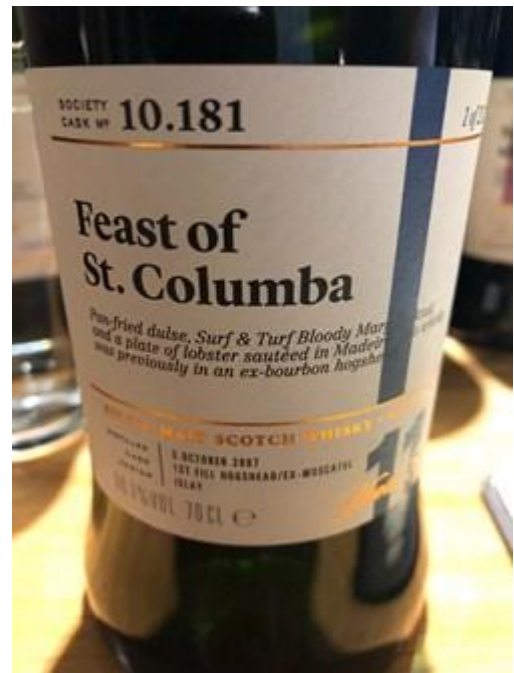


[10.158 Seaside adventures](#)

86%

Posted 06 September 2018

All the recent SMWS bottlings from Bunna have fallen into either the Peated or Oily & Coastal Profiles, but not this one! A 10 year old matured in a refill ex-bourbon barrel. Spicy & Dry profile.



[10.181 Feast of St. Columba](#)

89%

Posted 31 October 2019

Over to Islay for a 10 year old Bunna that's been matured for 9 years in an ex-bourbon hogshead and then finished for an additional year in a 1st fill moscatel hogshead.

[View on SMWS](#)



[10.163 Treacle on a bonfire](#)

88%

Posted 29 November 2018

10 year old Bunnahabhain moine drawn from a refill ex-bourbon hogshead. Heavily Peated profile.



[10.172 A silurian's seasoning cupboard](#)

86%

Posted 28 February 2019

Straight-forward refill ex-bourbon Bunnahabhain from 2007 – not much to go wrong there. [View on SMWS](#)



[10.178 The sleeping giant awoken](#)

84%

Posted 05 September 2019

11 year old Bunnahabhain matured in a refill ex-bourbon hogshead.

[View on SMWS](#)



[10.179 Flamingos smoking pipe tobacco](#)

88%

Posted 14 November 2019

10 years in an ex-bourbon hogshead and finished in a 1st fill red wine barrique. Oh, and heavily peated - consider me interested.

[View on SMWS](#)



[10.168 Cuquillo black olives](#)

84%

Posted 23 May 2019

Over to the North East coast of Islay for a 13 year old 2nd fill ex-bourbon Bunnahabhain.



[10.183 Velociraptor Vs Xenomorph](#)

85%

Posted 05 December 2019

Yet another full-term sherried offering this month – this time via a Bunnahabhain which has been maturing in a refill sherry butt since 2004.

[View on SMWS](#)

Signatory Vintage



[Bunnahabhain Staoisha 2014 TWE Exclusive](#)

85%

Posted 24 June 2019

The name 'Staoisha' is derived from Loch Staoisha – some 2.7 miles SW of Bunnahabhain. The Loch has long provided with the distillery with cooling water - and in the past has been utilised as an alternative production water source. Quite when and where the Gaelic name was introduced as a moniker for Bunnahabhain's external filling contracts seems unknown to all but those at the heart of those contracts. Irrespective, the term is now being used more frequently for independently bottled, young, peated Bunnahabhain spirit.

That Boutique-y Whisky Company



[Bunnahabhain 11 year old Batch 5](#)

86%

Posted 09 December 2018

Regularly readers will know I'm quite fond of Bunnahabhain. I find it to be a versatile spirit that can work just as well bottled young and crisp as bottled old and austere. Door number 8 of the 2018 Boutique-y Advent calendar presents an example of the former – Bunnahabhain 11 year old Batch 5.

upcoming dram). A short conversation later, and here it is first thing this morning ready for tasting – thanks guys! This is the oldest Bunna from Boutique-y so far, coming in at 35 years of age – seemingly it wouldn't have lasted too much longer in the cask as the ABV is right on the cusp at 40.2%.

The-Whisky-Barrel



[Bunnahabhain 35 year old Batch 4](#)

90%

Posted 15 December 2017

Master of Malt really are wonderful chaps – my Bunnahabhain was sadly missing in action from the Boutique-y Advent calendar (accidentally replaced with a duplicate of Saturday's

[Bunnahabhain 2009](#)

84%

Posted 08 April 2020

Much of my life, professional or otherwise is spend dealing with words. Over time you develop strong associations to certain words – look over the body of work of any whisky writer and you'll be able to quickly distinguish common descriptors and go-to phraseology. These language hallmarks and constructions are what gives a writer their style, their personality on paper – and in terms of tasting notes - a sense of consistency (and hopefully also dependability). But, when you deal with words day-in, day-out you also develop some pretty strong opinions about the use of language. There are countless overused words within the whisky lexicon – there are also countless misunderstood words. But that doesn't stop these being rolled out time and time again.

Wemyss Malts



[Bunnahabhain 1987 The Viceroy's Elixir](#)

84%

Posted 10 February 2020

Whisky and expectations are inherently tied together. As a producer - freshly laid down new make spirit is all potential – a foundation upon which to build, a canvas on which to paint. Its prospects driven by both nature and nurture – and its eventual end point somewhat clouded in mystery until the finishing line of bottling is reached. Throughout the spirit's long slumber expectation and anticipation are both present. Is the liquid destined for blending, or already earmarked for potential greatness as a single cask? Will it capably fulfil the requirements for either of these? What if it doesn't? But similarly, as consumers, our journeys are also defined by our expectations – when we open a bottle will we find that familiar friend or unlock the demon of disappointment?

Whisky Baron



[Bunnahabhain 16 year old](#)

86%

Posted 16 January 2020

The oldest bottling (at present) in the Whisky Baron's Founder's Collection is an unpeated Bunnahabhain that has spent 16 years in an ex-bourbon hogshead (#3186). 258 bottles have been produced at an ABV of 51% - they'll set you back [£150 on the nose from the Baron's webshop](#).