

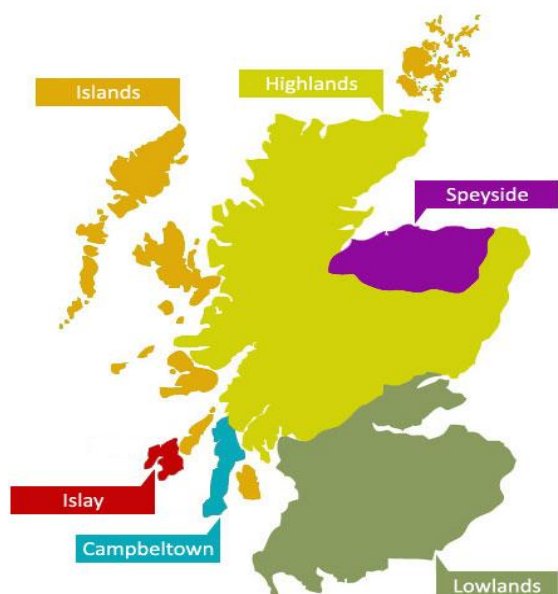
Kingston Single Malt Society

www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com

A social club for the appreciation of Single Malt Whisky since 1998

April 11th, 2022

VOLUME 15; NUMBER 10b; No. 195



MENU

Soup: Beef Barley

1st Nosing: GLENDRONACH 12 YEARS OLD 2003
OLOROSO SHERRY PUNCHEON CASK #580
(introduced by: Stewart Williams)

Salad: Panzanella Salad - Local Heirloom
Tomatoes, Olives, Red Peppers, Olive Oil Fried
Baguette, Purple Onions, Basil, Bocconcini, Red
Wine Vinaigrette

2nd Nosing: GLENDRONACH 13 YEARS OLD 2003
VIRGIN OAK HOGSHEAD CASK #1753
(introduced by: Stewart Williams)

3rd Nosing: FIRKIN SCOTCH WHISKY 10 SINGLE
MALT 10 YEAR OLD ROYAL BRACKLA

4th Nosing: ROYAL BRACKLA 2007 13 YEAR OLD
ARTIST COLLECTIVE #4.5
(introduced by: Conrad Falkson)

Entrée: Pork Rack, Sweet Potato Fries, Guinness
BBQ Sauce.

5th Nosing: CAOL ILA "EARTH" 8 YEAR OLD 2010
(introduced by: Bill Gorham)

Dessert: Dark Chocolate Tiramisu

6th Nosing: CRAIGELLACHIE "FIRE" 12 YEAR
OLD 2006
(introduced by: Bill Gorham)

COST OF THE MALTS

**GLENDRONACH 12 YEARS OLD 2003 OLOROSO
SHERRY PUNCHEON CASK #580; SINGLE CASK
RELEASES BOTTLED FOR COOP LIQUORS BATCH 14;
DISTILLED 14.11.2003; BOTTLED 10.2016; Bottle No.
#574/661 LCBO 102230 | 700 mL bottle Price: \$231.95**
Spirits, Scotch Whisky 55.1% Alcohol/Vol.

**GLENDRONACH 13 YEARS OLD 2003 VIRGIN OAK
HOGSHEAD CASK #1753; SINGLE CASK RELEASES
BOTTLED FOR COOP LIQUORS BATCH 14; DISTILLED
14.01.2003; BOTTLED 10.2016; Bottle No. #179/245**
LCBO 102230 | 700 mL bottle Price: \$231.95 Spirits,
Scotch Whisky 53.7% Alcohol/Vol.

**FIRKIN SCOTCH WHISKY 10 SINGLE MALT 10 YEAR
OLD ROYAL BRACKLA Distilled: 2008; Bottled: 2018;
Cask Type: Madeira; Character: Bodacious Elegance;
Cask #02; Bottles # 029/330; VINTAGES 555656 | 750**
mL bottle Price: \$175.95 Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Scotch
Single Malts 48.9% Alcohol/Vol.

**ROYAL BRACKLA 2007 13 YEAR OLD ARTIST
COLLECTIVE #4.5; TROMPE L'OEIL SERIES; BATCH
OF 2 CASKS; CASK TYPE: 1st FILL SHERRY BUTT
Distilled: 2007; Bottled: 2020; VINTAGES 846868 | 700**
mL bottle Price: \$209.95 Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Scotch
Single Malts 48.0% Alcohol/Vol.

**CRAIGELLACHIE "FIRE" 12 YEAR OLD 2006 - OLD
PARTICULAR ELEMENTS COLLECTION (DOUGLAS
LAING); ONE OF 365 BOTTLES; DISTILLED: MARCH
2006; BOTTLED DECEMBER 2018; MATURED IN A
SHERRY BUTT 841058 | 750 mL bottle Price: \$185.95**
Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 55.8% Alcohol/Vol.

**CAOL ILA "EARTH" 8 YEAR OLD 2010 - OLD
PARTICULAR ELEMENTS COLLECTION (DOUGLAS
LAING); ONE OF 253 BOTTLES; DISTILLED:
NOVEMBER 2010; BOTTLED JUNE 2019; MATURED IN
A REFILL HOGSHEAD 841058 | 750 mL bottle Price:
\$155.95 Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 59.8% Alcohol/Vol.**

March 11th Dinner - KSMS Financial Statement
(Money from 39 December attendees @ \$90) = \$3510.00
March dinner 39 persons = \$2408.88
(Money remaining for buying Single Malt) = \$1101.12
Cost of Single Malts: = \$959.45
Cost of Pours per Person = \$23.99
KSMS Monthly operational balance = \$141.67
Cost per person (All inclusive) = \$86.37
Money for Heels = \$350.00
Money Raised from Raffle = \$420.00
KSMS Monthly operational balance = \$911.67

Upcoming Dinner Dates

Monday May 30th 2022 - Speyside
Monday June 20th 2022 - June BBQ - Cigar Malts & Sherry
Monday July 25th, 2022 - Speyside / Highlands
Friday August 26th, 2022 - 15th Annual Premium Night
Monday September 19th, 2022 - Lowland / Islands (Kyle)
Monday October 17th, 2022 - Speyside / Highlands / Islay
Monday November 14th, 2021 - Campbeltown / Highlands / Islay
Monday December 12th 2022 - Christmas Dinner
Monday January 23rd 2023 - Robbie Burns
Monday February 13th 2023 - Speyside / Islands / Islay
Monday March 20th 2023 - Speyside / Islands / Islay
Monday April 17th 2023 - Speyside / Islands / Islay
Monday May 15th 2023 - Speyside / Islands / Islay
Monday June 19th 2023 - June BBQ - Speyside / Islands / Islay

Canada sees eagerness to return to bars

28 MARCH 2022 By Melita Kiely

The velocity of on-trade sales in Canada rose by double digits in the week ending 19 March, new data has revealed.



Consumers in Canada are demonstrating eagerness to return to bars

By Melita Kiely

According to CGA's Beverage Trak, on-trade velocity was up by 11% during the seven-day period, compared with the same period in 2019. All 'key provinces' were up, except for Alberta.

The previous week, ending 12 March, also saw an increase of 2% compared with the same week pre-Covid-19.

While Alberta saw sales velocity dip by 5% during the week ending 23 March, British Columbia rose by 10%, compared with 2019. When compared with the same week in 2021, sales velocity in Alberta was up by 24%, and by 25% in British Columbia.

In Ontario, sales velocity rose by 15% compared with 2019, and by 188% compared with 2021.

Quebec returned to 100% capacity on 12 March, and saw on-trade velocity grow by 50% in the week ending 23 March 2022, compared with 2019. This marked a 241% increase compared with 2021.

Matthew Crompton, CGA regional director – North America, said:

"Restrictions lifting and recent key on-premise events has really helped drive Canada's velocity positively back to pre-pandemic levels.

"Being able to report daily sales trends is just one aspect that really sets apart CGA's Beverage Trak service and allows beverage suppliers and operators to adapt strategies for the on-premise.

"Further to this, with the capability to analyse sales by the hour for brands, CGA can offer granular insights around how successful different on-premise activations are."

Eden Mill gets green light for new distillery

15 MARCH 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Scotch whisky and gin maker Eden Mill has received planning permission to build a new carbon-neutral distillery and visitor centre at the University of St Andrews in Fife.



The new Eden Mill distillery will be based on the University of St Andrews' Eden Campus

Earlier this year, Eden Mill sold a [majority stake in the company](#) to investor Inverleith to help complete the carbon-neutral distillery project and expand distribution.

Eden Mill said it has now signed a 50-year land lease with the University of St Andrews, with the new distillery due to be located on the Eden Campus, which is dedicated to zero-carbon businesses.

Construction on the site has already commenced, with the distillery expected to be open to visitors during the first half of 2023. Future distillation will be based at the new facility on the Eden Campus.

The distillery will be partially powered by the university's new ground solar development and a future roof-mounted system. Eden Mill and the university are also exploring how they can capture carbon from the distillery's production process to turn it into fuel.

Paul Miller, Eden Mill managing director and founder, said: "The vision for the Eden Mill distillery has been closely developed with the University of St Andrews.

"Its fabulous location at the mouth of the River Eden meets the romantic requirements for single malt Scotch whisky, while the strictly sustainable nature of our new distillery and the environmentally innovative surroundings of the campus are perfect for our progressive brand."

Furthermore, Eden Mill has also made several appointments to its board. Stella Morse, who has worked in senior financial and strategy roles at Edrington and C&C Group, has been named the chair of the board.

Rennie Donaldson, former group financial controller at Edrington and ex-head of corporate development at William Grant & Sons, has also joined the board as chief operating officer.

The former regional director of Moët Hennessy Asia, Paul Skipworth, has been added to the board, alongside Inverleith's senior investment director Michael Atkinso.

Morse added: "We're pleased to have worked in partnership with the University of St Andrews to secure planning permission for what will become one of Scotland's future iconic distilleries. Our values and ambition regarding sustainability are closely aligned and we look forward to opening the distillery to visitors from across the globe in 2023."

European distillers: driving whisky innovation

15 MARCH 2022 By Tom Bruce-Gardyne

While Scotch whisky has centuries of heritage to draw upon, as well as strict production rules, European distilleries in the likes of Finland, France and Italy have a freer hand in their creations, with impressive results.



Europe: the new frontier for whisky production?

**This feature was originally published in the January 2022 issue of The Spirits Business magazine.*

In 2016, there were excited reports in the press that France was planning to usurp Scotland at what it does best. “Within 15 years the world’s best whiskies will be French,” a supremely confident Nicolas Julhès, head of La Distillerie de Paris, told *The Times*. “We will be able to stop copying the Scots and bring a real French style.” Elsewhere, readers were being informed that French winemakers in Champagne were preparing to flee their vineyards and replant England’s South Downs to escape climate change. So far, neither story has quite come true. “French whisky is still very small,” says Matthieu Acar, sales director at La Maison du Whisky (LMDW). “There are around 100 producers, and altogether they produce as much as a medium-sized Scottish distillery like Auchentoshan.” Being responsible for sourcing French whisky for an independent bottling range called Version Française, launched in 2021, he believes the Scots have nothing to fear – for now, at least. LMDW has seven French single malt whiskies available under the Version Française label, and they are clearly not cheap alternatives to Scotch. Prices range from €85 (US\$96) for Le Breuil 2017 from Normandy to €115 (US\$129) for Alpenglou 2015. “We take inspiration from our traditional spirits like Armagnac and Calvados,” Acar explains. “We’ve had distillations since the seventh century in France, so we know how to distil.” When he joined the firm five years ago, French consumers dismissed the idea of native whisky, but he feels they have become a lot more open to it, especially during lockdowns when they have had time to explore. Compared with Scotch, the rules around whisky making in the rest of Europe are relatively relaxed. You can use any cereal grain, any kind of still and any type of wood for your cask so long as you mature the spirit for at least three years. The result is endless diversity, and perhaps not always a great deal of consistency. That last point may start to change, reckons Acar, who points to a small band of Cognac distillers who have begun dabbling in whisky. They know all about producing a consistent spirit, and their first bottles should hit the market in a year or two. Unbound by tradition In Finland, the Kyrö Distillery Company fired up its stills in 2014, but then got distracted by the gin boom, as Sanna Dooley, brand commercial director, admits. “We took time in 2018 to [invest in infrastructure in the distillery](#) and rebuild the whole separate whisky side, and we were able to release the [first permanent line of whisky in 2020](#),” she says. Her country’s lack of whisky-making heritage has been a positive thing, she notes: “Being from Finland has actually given us a really nice starting point, because we’re not weighed down by a certain set of rules that might be there because of history.”



Kyrö Distillery

Kyrö has been keen to present itself as something different from the outset. This was clear from an early publicity shot of the five founders rampaging through a field of rye stark naked, taken before the distillery was even built, to squeeze into a new whisky book. “We never saw the point of trying to copy the more established whisky brands. My God, they’ve been around for hundreds of years, so you know there’s no point,” says Dooley. “If you’re going to take the risk of starting a whisky distillery in Finland, it makes perfect sense to create something that doesn’t exist yet.” That something is Finnish rye whisky from a grain, which, compared with North American rye, “is much smaller, due to the weather conditions and the soil”, Dooley says. “All the flavour is right underneath the husks, so smaller grains have more flavour intensity.” And, to ramp things up further, Kyrö insists on 100% rye, as opposed to the 51% minimum in the US. Having worked in whisk(e)y in Ireland and the UK, Dooley says: “I think it’s one of those categories where there are still a lot of rules, a lot of assumptions, stereotypes and clichés.” The Scotch whisky industry has spent decades trying to free the drink from the misperceptions that cling to it, but this may be an easier task for an outsider. That is Dooley’s view. “In whisky, I think not having that long heritage perhaps even lowers the threshold in terms of making a product that’s more approachable,” she says. “I take it as an advantage that we come from an obscure place, and that we don’t have credibility built in. We need to build it ourselves.” Her point about overturning whisky clichés is picked up by Charlie Steel, whisk(e)y portfolio director at Distill Ventures, the innovation incubator funded by Diageo. Talking of the established players, he says: “There’s been a lot of push to be more open, but there’s been just hundreds of years of ‘your granddad drinking it by the fire’. There’s a lot to overcome there.” New entrants tend to have a different attitude, in his view. “Not to disparage old world whisky makers, but I think naturally there’s a more progressive, open mindset into how you can make a great-tasting liquid,” he says. Those that Distill Ventures has backed since setting up in 2013, can choose whether to go public about the partnership. So far, the only declared European whisky venture is Stauning in Denmark, though Steel insists: “We look at whiskies across Europe the whole time, and we see a huge opportunity there.” The [Stauning investment in 2015](#) funded a new distillery with an 800,00-litres-per-annum capacity, around 10 times the original that was housed in a former abattoir with a repurposed meat grinder to grind the malt, which is all malted on site. As with any start-up, the novelty factor wears off, as Steel explains: “You get an initial buzz for being new, and hopefully also for having fantastic quality, and that gets you into the hands of whisky geeks. But if you want to go beyond that and carve out a bigger consumer base, you have to find stories that cut through quickly and distinctly.”



Distill's investment in Stauning allowed the producer to build a new distillery

Maverick founders

Having a bunch of maverick founders helps. In Stauning's case they include a doctor, a teacher, a butcher and a helicopter pilot, while at Kyrö you will hear of how the idea was cooked up sitting naked in the sauna.

Speaking of which, Dooley admits: "You can get a lot of awareness with naked butts in a rye field, but I think validation is still really important. For us it was being listed in the top 50 most admired whisky brands so early in the game."

Steel agrees that recognition matters but adds: "What we've seen as a real key success factor is the ability to build a community around your brand. That buzz and love for your whisky is what really sets you apart for longer-term growth."

There is also the issue of how you define yourself, which will determine where your brand is displayed on a back bar, in a specialist store or in a whisky book. Stauning describes itself as 'new Nordic whisky' a category that could include Kyrö. "There are more and more Nordic whiskies out there," says Dooley, "but it's difficult to describe a 'Nordic style', so we identify more with the rye whisky category."

Distill Ventures' Steel prefers to widen the net and talk of 'new world whisky'. "We see it evolving and believe it's [the biggest opportunity in driving the whisky category forward](#) in the coming decades," he says.

"At the moment it's a bit of a jungle, let's be honest."

A whisky revolution?

Whether it will ever compare with the new world wine revolution of the 1980s and 1990s remains to be seen, but spare a thought for the Puni distillery in the Dolomites – a lone voice in Italian whisky.

"If it all goes well Italian whisky could become synonymous with premium whisky. However, to be taken seriously, Italy will need more than one serious whisky producer," says Puni's managing director, Jonas Ebensberger, who co-founded the distillery in 2010. People had strange expectations about this new Italian malt, as if it would be "something completely different from Scotch whisky," he says. "They appear to readily accept that Japanese whisky would be made from rice and Italian whisky from pasta grains."

Instead, as he explains to visitors to his wonderfully eye-catching distillery, Puni follows a classic recipe of malted barley, traditional pot stills from Scotland and ageing in oak barrels. The Alpine water and 900m altitude adds a sense of terroir, and the aim is to reflect Italy's reputation for high-quality artisan food and drink, and for style. "We are leading this effort, and hope that others with a similar passion for whisky might join in the future," says Ebensberger. For now, Puni is part of a growing family of European whiskies that appear high on ambition if small in size. There are big new world whisky distilleries out there like [Kavalan in Taiwan](#), but so far nothing on that scale in Europe.

Lochlea to launch seasonal single malts

15 MARCH 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Scotch whisky distillery Lochlea has revealed the first whisky in a new annual seasonal range and details of its inaugural core single malt.



Lochlea Sowing Edition is limited to 7,000 bottles

Lochlea Distillery is the result of a more than £6 million (US\$7.8m) investment. Production of the liquid started in August 2018 with the first casks filled and stock laid down in their on-site warehouse.

The new annual limited edition series is inspired by the changing seasons at Lochlea Farm in Ayrshire, Scotland.

The first expression in Lochlea's new seasonal range is the 48% ABV Sowing Edition whisky. The product reflects spring, when the distillery starts sowing the seeds for this year's barley.

It was matured in first-fill Bourbon barrels and is non-chill-filtered and bottled at natural colour.

John Campbell, Lochlea production director and master blender, said of the Sowing Edition: "We chose 23 first-fill Bourbons hand selected from the first filling the distillery completed in September 2018. We chose 23 very flavourful casks, combined them together and bottled them at 48% ABV."

Campbell said the flavours expected from Sowing are "vanilla, and lots of green apple in Lochlea, its signature fruit". He added: "It gets a wee sweeter with Bonbon flavours and grassy flavours from the cereal, it smells a bit like straw and then leads to cooked biscuits and gentle aromatics. There's a nice bit of spice coming through from the cask."

The release of Sowing Edition follows the distillery's inaugural bottling, [Lochlea Single Malt First Release](#), which launched on Burns Night (25 January) this year, with 7,500 bottles and sold out within 24 hours.

Lochlea Sowing Edition is available from whisky and spirits shops around the UK from 21 March, priced at RRP £50 (US\$65). It will also be available in 10 export markets.

Seasonal lineup

Sowing Edition will be followed by a summer release, Harvest Edition, then Fallow Edition in autumn, and Ploughing Edition in winter.

There will be 7,000 bottles of Sowing Edition available, while the rest of the range will have around 9,000 bottles available, Campbell said.

Campbell said the new range will focus on different cask styles. Harvest Edition will use European oak and be double matured in Port casks, while Fallow will be a first-fill oloroso Sherry cask. Finally, Ploughing will be a nod to Campbell's past and will be matured in ex-Laphroaig whisky barrels.

Campbell [joined Lochlea in November 2021](#), after more than 25 years at Islay producer Laphroaig, where he most recently served as distillery manager.

Campbell said it was "exciting to get out of my comfort zone" and define the character of Lochlea. "The main reason I'm here is I wanted to be responsible for creating new liquid and push and be different. Going from heavily peated to unpeated also presents different challenges," he added.

Campbell said Lochlea plans to release its first permanent whisky in July, which will be aged for nearly four years and made with a combination of different cask styles.

He said: "We're 90% of the way to completing our recipe, it will be Bourbon, European oak and oloroso Sherry casks. There's some nice vanilla coming through, green apple and grassy notes. There's floral aromatics from the European oak and nice dry fruits coming through from the Sherry casks."

Campbell is also planning for the long term and aims to release several age statements in the future, including a 25-year-old.

Council refuses plans for £15m Wolfcraig Distillery

17 MARCH 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Planning permission for the £15 million (US\$19m) Wolfcraig Scotch whisky distillery has been rejected by Stirling Council.



The Wolfcraig Distillery project was due to be located on the Craigforth Campus in Stirling

Michael Lunn, the former chief executive of Whyte & Mackay, revealed plans to [build a new Scotch whisky distillery](#) near Stirling in October 2020. The site was due to be [located at the Craigforth Campus](#) in Stirling, following a deal with Ambassador Group in June 2021. The plans for the new site included a distillery, an interactive and education-focused family visitor attraction, a private tasting room and a 180-cover bistro restaurant and bar.

The distillery planned to have the capacity to produce 1.5m litres of spirit per year, which would include making Wolfcraig Highland single malt Scotch whisky and other spirits. The site also aimed to establish Stirling as a tourist destination.

However, Stirling Council has refused planning permission for the Wolfcraig development due to the scale of the project and its impact on the open landscape.

The decision notice said the proposal would have a negative effect on historic landmarks, 'eroding the unique sense of place to the detriment of Stirling as a place to visit in Scotland'. Furthermore, the council said the development's mixture of facilities could have a negative impact on Stirling city centre.

It also took the view that the project would harm the setting of Stirling Castle and the Stirling Town and Royal Park conservation area, as the proposed building was of 'considerable scale and design' and would affect an area that was mostly free from built-up development.

In addition, the notice said Wolfcraig had not submitted relevant surveys and supporting documents to 'clearly demonstrate the protection, conservation and enhancement of wildlife, its habitats, and other natural features in line with statutory requirements'. It also claimed that Wolfcraig had not submitted a tree report to justify the removal of trees.

'Disappointing decision'

Wolfcraig confirmed it would be appealing the decision, but due to the length of time it will take, the company is looking at sites outside of the Stirling area.

A spokesperson for Wolfcraig said: "This is a very disappointing decision; however, we remain determined to build a world-class brand, whisky distillery and tourist attraction that the people of Stirling can be proud of."

"We have already committed £2.5 million [US\$3.3m] to the project and firmly believe that Wolfcraig will be a strong contributor to the city's

masterplan for economic development, employment and cultural advancement.

"We have been working closely with the planning department over the past eight months and we are extremely surprised by the recommendation for refusal and the reasons given are difficult to comprehend.

"There have been no objections or issues raised by legislative bodies, including Historic Environment Scotland (HES) or the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (Sepa) and we have received overwhelming support from the local community and high street businesses."

The decision has "hugely impacted" the development's timeline and Wolfcraig is looking at alternative plans, the spokesperson added.

"The Wolfcraig team will remain committed to doing everything we can to make our vision for the distillery a reality," the statement concluded.

The Three Drinkers returns to screens

17 MARCH 2022 By Alice Brooker

Drinks experts Helena Nicklin and Aidy Smith have unveiled their second TV project, a six-part Amazon Prime series called *The Three Drinkers in Ireland*.



L-R: Smith, Shead Osagiede and Nicklin
Nicklin and Smith previously starred in the [The Three Drinkers Do Scotch Whisky](#) series in 2019 with Colin Hampden-White, which is available to watch on Amazon Prime.

To make up the third drinker following the departure of Hampden-White, the series will feature Irish wine consultant Beth Brickenden for episodes one to three, and Eulanda Shead Osagiede, an American travel writer, for episodes four to six.

The first three episodes are available to watch from today (17 March) on Amazon Prime to coincide with St Patrick's Day, with the remaining episodes released by the end of the month.

Nicklin said: "We've loved bringing everything together, from the food and drink, to the people, places, culture and tourism of the whole of the island of Ireland.

"We've been blown away by the sheer quality of Irish produce too. Ireland is also the perfect country to visit as the world opens up again, thanks to its wide open spaces and easy accessibility – and it's a great location for lovers of fantastic food and drink to boot."

The Three Drinkers in Ireland differs to the Scotch iteration in that it explores drinks beyond whiskey, looking at gin, cider and Irish cream too. The team also dives into Ireland's food scene and take part in activities such as eel fishing and Irish dancing.

Within the series, special guests will include UK drag queen Vanity Von Glow, plus Hampden-White, the original third drinker.

Smith is said to be one of the few TV presenters with Tourette Syndrome worldwide.

He said: "As part of the LGBTQIA+ community, and having faced on-going hurdles due to stigmas associated with Tourette's throughout my career, I've been very keen for us to play our part when it comes to increasing diversity, equity and inclusion within the drinks industry."

"We are delighted that our key guests within this series showcase a more inclusive world; it's a step forward for the trade and we couldn't be more delighted to welcome our incredibly talented third drinkers." In 2019, the trio created a [blended malt whisky](#) inspired by *The Three Drinkers Do Scotch Whisky*.

Smith added: "Having been drinks professionals for more than 25 years collectively, we felt it was time to take the leap and speak directly to our audience via the TV screen.

"We'll be offering them a variety of tips and tricks that they can explore for themselves at home."

Glenallachie Releases Batch 7 Of Its 10-Year-Old Cask Strength Bottling
[Gary Carter - Scotch](#) | March 19, 2022

[Scotland's GlenAllachie Distillery](#) recently announced the next installment of its sought-after, 10-year-old single malt, The GlenAllachie 10-year-old Cask Strength Batch 7.

The release follows award-winning previous batches from the Speyside distillery, most notably the fourth installment which was awarded World's Best Single Malt (World Whiskies Awards, 2021).

Batch 7, with a suggested retail price of £62.99 in the UK, was aged in a combination of Pedro Ximénez and Oloroso sherry puncheons, Rioja barriques and virgin oak casks. Each cask was personally selected and blended by Master Distiller Billy Walker.



GlenAllachie 10-year-old Cask Strength Batch 7 (image via GlenAllachie)

[A statement from Glenallachie](#) noted that Walker, who this year celebrates a half-century as a blender in the Scotch whisky industry, is recognized for his hands-on approach and innovative maturation philosophy. Each release of the decade-old expression reflects his expertise in wood management.

The distiller's notes for Batch 7 show that it clocks in at 56.8% ABV, without added coloring or chill filtration, and the cask strength spirit has notes of rich mocha, stewed plums, runny honey and cinnamon. Walker said of Batch 7, "Every batch we create of our 10-year-old Cask Strength represents the direction in which we are taking The GlenAllachie. From the outset, our defined objective has been to achieve a bold and flavorful yet balanced spirit, predominantly matured in Sherry wood, but with interesting twists introduced by unusual cask types.

"This latest batch is a complex and enjoyable drinking experience which brings together spirit from some truly exceptional Sherry, wine and virgin oak casks. I must say, this one is pretty special!"

Prior to this launch, the latest addition to The GlenAllachie's core range was the 21-year-old Cask Strength Batch 2, unveiled last month.

One of Scotland's few independently owned and managed distilleries, The GlenAllachie is led with an emphasis on wood policy, as its cask budget for 2021 stands at £1m/\$1.2m. With 16 on-site warehouses holding more than 50,000 casks, the distillery has complete control of the end-to-end maturation process.

And the distillery chooses to reduce its production capacity from 4 million to 500,000 liters of alcohol, and increases its fermentation period to 160 hours for an ester rich, fruity spirit.

For more information on the distillery, check out www.theglenallachie.com.

The GlenAllachie 10-year-old Cask Strength Batch 7 tasting notes:

- **Color:** Rich mahogany.
- **Nose:** Waves of heather honey, dried fruit, cinnamon and nutmeg, followed by orange peel, mocha and treacle.
- **Taste:** Lashings of dark chocolate, figs and heather honey, with raisins, cinnamon, plums and hints of orange zest.
- **ABV:** 56.8%.

Whisky Talks... – #99 Billy Walker



Billy Walker – The GlenAllachie Master Distiller

Billy is one of the most recognisable characters and respected Master Blenders within the Scotch whisky industry. During his almost 50 year career, he has been responsible for the creation of award winning whiskies and has been involved in the acquisition and resurrection of several single malt whisky distilleries. After selling The BenRiach Distillery Company in 2016, Billy wasn't quite ready to retire so quickly assembled a team to start a new journey with The GlenAllachie distillery, with the simple aim of making great whisky and having fun.



Questions & Answers – English Version

1. Love, passion or just work? What is whisky for you?

Firstly, Whisky is a passion, and maybe even an obsession. Every day presents an opportunity to continue the adventure and the pursuit of Whisky excellence, How lucky is that ?

2. The first whisky you remember? Did you like it?

My first involvement in Scotch Whisky was with Hiram Walker & Sons (Ballantines) in my home town of Dumbarton. They were a fantastic company and provided me with so many opportunities to learn and immerse myself (figuratively speaking) in the Scotch Whisky processes. So my first love was Ballantine's 12 yo Blended Scotch Whisky, an absolute stellar brand.

3. Whisky, the taste of which will remain in your memory forever?

Whisky Taste – Enduring Memories. The role of Blender conjures up many taste, organoleptic experiences: so I carry with me the taste profile of most whiskies.

4. What are your flavours? Which aspects of whisky are the most important for you?

I have been fortunate to have been involved in a number of Distilleries, both Malt and Grain.

However, the ownership of GlenDronach, BenRiach and GlenGlassaugh provided the freedom to develop (and reinstate) the personality of these Distilleries, and now the ownership of The GlenAllachie has given us licence to create “A Classical Sherry Style”.

5. Do not mix whisky with ...? Controversial views on whisky, what do you think about it?

From a personal point of view, without water and without ice is my drinking style.



Photo Credit: The GlenAllachie

6. Whisky with water or maybe cask strength?

When we choose to bring a GlenAllachie release to market at Cask Strength, it is important to me that this can be comfortably enjoyed at Cask Strength, without the need to add water.

7. The best whisky you've ever tasted?

Had some fantastic taste experiences, but right now, very much in love with GA 21YO, GA 15YO, GA 12YO, GA Cask Strength.

8. Whisky of your dreams you haven't tried and would like to do?

Currently sampling some amazing 2006 GA Sherry Casks and essentially, I am looking Forward to enjoying these 2006 GA Sherry casks when we make the decision to bottle them. In the meantime I am monitoring their continuing Maturation journey.

9. Your favourite tasting glass?

Favourite Tasting Glass – Chunky Crystal Glass

Favourite Nosing Glass – Tulip Glass with stem.

10. Your favourite whisky cocktail?

Lum Reek 12YO Rhubarb & Custard

11. How do you see the future in the world of whisky? Where can experiments lead us?

The World of Whisky is in a really good place with exciting, informed and inquisitive Consumers. Wood management will continue to drive the pursuit of quality.

12. List three favourite drinks for tasting, drinking and sipping?

Three favourite drinks for tasting, drinking, sipping:

GA 21YO

MacNairs Lum Reek, 21YO

MacNairs 15YO Exploration Rum (Panama Edition)



Photo Credit: The GlenAllachie

13. Your greatest authority in the world of whisky?

Richard Paterson and Jim Beveridge know a thing or two.

14. What book, would you recommend about whisky?

Difficult to answer.

15. Is it worth investing in whisky?

Too many answers to that question, but in general yes as long as you take the long term view: but as with all investments, they can go down as well as up.

16. Whisky is one thing, but if not what else you would like to do?

Developing an interest in Rum, and got some ambitions for that.

*main picture source: <https://squaremile.com/food-and-drink/billy-walker-glenallachie/>

PRESENTING: Batch 2 of The Virgin Oak Series

We are thrilled to introduce the latest tranche of single malt expressions to join our [Virgin Oak Series](#).

The limited-edition range explores the influence of ageing whisky in specially selected casks crafted from oak sourced from regions across the globe. Each cask reacts uniquely with the GlenAllachie spirit, adding texture, depth and complexity.

Comprising of a [15-year-old Scottish Virgin Oak](#), [10-year-old French Virgin Oak](#) and a [10-year-old Chinguapin Virgin Oak](#) finish, each bottling in the range is offered at a strength of 48% and, as with all of our whiskies, presented at natural colour and non chill filtered.

Discover Batch 2 of our [Virgin Oak Series](#) below...



THE GLENALLACHIE 15YO SCOTTISH VIRGIN OAK

From Batch 2 of our Virgin Oak Series, we are proud to present a rare single malt which underwent additional maturation in casks made of Scottish Sessile Oak (*Quercus Petrae*), sourced from the Atlantic coast. Scottish oak is incredibly challenging to work with at all stages of production; growing, milling and coopering. Its rarity, costliness and tendency to knot mean it is scarcely used for whisky maturation. Before being filled, the wood was air dried for 36 months, then toasted and charred to a medium level. Using just a handful of casks, the resulting spirit delivers a truly exceptional drinking experience, oozing with vanilla and butterscotch, perfectly balanced with rich notes of cinnamon, ginger and cloves.

Bottled at 48%, natural colour and non chill filtered.

TASTING NOTES

COLOUR

Golden Sunset.

NOSE

Bursting with honeycomb, vanilla pods and citrus fruits, with butterscotch, orange zest and white chocolate.

TASTE

Lashings of heather honey, caramelised pine nuts, cinnamon and toffee, followed by orange peel, lemon zest, banana and ginger.



THE GLENALLACHIE 10YO FRENCH VIRGIN OAK

From Batch 2 of our Virgin Oak Series, this golden bronze malt was first matured in American oak ex-Bourbon barrels before undergoing additional maturation in hogsheads made of French oak (*Quercus Robur*), sourced from the Haute-Garonne region, for approximately 18 months. The fine-grained wood was air dried for 15 months before hosting the GlenAllachie spirit.

The secondary maturation period has added silky tannins, sweet spices and fruit notes to this delectable, earthy single malt. Bottled at 48%, natural colour and non chill filtered.

TASTING NOTES

COLOUR

Golden Bronze.

NOSE

Waves of orange peel, heather honey and soft spice, followed by caramel, orchard fruits and mocha.

TASTE

Layers of heather honey, mocha and brittle toffee, with grapefruit, cinnamon, earthy tannins and notes of ginger on the finish.



THE GLENALLACHIE

10YO CHINQUAPIN VIRGIN OAK

From Batch 2 of our Virgin Oak Series, this exceptional malt was first matured in American oak ex-Bourbon barrels before undergoing additional maturation in casks made of Chinquapin Oak (*Quercus Muehlenbergii*), which is sourced from the Northern Ozark region in Missouri for approximately 18 months. The casks were air dried for almost four years, then toasted to medium level before hosting the spirit.

The result is a complex, zesty malt bursting with runny honey, sweet cinnamon and orange peel.

Bottled at 48%, natural colour and non chill filtered.

TASTING NOTES

COLOUR

Rich Bronze.

NOSE

Bursting with orange zest, heather honey and pecan, with notes of butterscotch, nutmeg and liquorice.

TASTE

Lashings of cinnamon, barley sugar and toasted biscuits, followed by rose hips, orange peel and heather honey.

SCOTTISH OAK AMONGST NEW RELEASES TO JOIN GLENALLACHIE VIRGIN OAK SERIES

22nd March 2022



The GlenAllachie Distillery, [winner of Icons of Whisky's Visitor Attraction of the Year](#), today adds three new bottlings to their [Virgin Oak Series](#); a limited-edition range which explores the influence of aging whisky in a variety of different oak species from around the world.

The new tranche of expressions consists of three Speyside Single Malts; [the 15-year-old Scottish Virgin Oak Finish](#), [the 10-year-old French Virgin Oak Finish](#), and [the 10-year-old Chinquapin Virgin Oak Finish](#). The marked flavour differences between the three bottlings are led by a variety of factors: the oak species, the local terroir and the period of natural air drying, along with the toasting, charring and coopering of the casks.

[The Virgin Oak Series](#) showcases the expert cask sourcing and [wood management skills of Master Distiller Billy Walker](#), who this year reaches a staggering half-century as a blender and distiller in the Scotch Whisky industry.



Each expression was first matured in American Oak (*Quercus Alba*) ex-Bourbon Barrels. To add a distinctive layer of flavour characteristics, the whisky then underwent a secondary maturation period of approximately 18 months in virgin oak casks, all carefully selected by Walker.

[The 15-year-old Scottish Virgin Oak](#) (UK RRSP £175) – one of the few whiskies to ever be matured in Scottish oak – was finished in casks made of Sessile Oak (*Quercus Petrae*) sourced from the Atlantic coast of Scotland. Scottish oak is incredibly challenging to work with at all stages of production: growing, milling, and coopering. Its rarity, costliness and tendency to knot mean it is scarcely used for whisky maturation.

Before hosting the GlenAllachie spirit, the wood was air dried for 36 months, opening up the oak for maximum flavour extraction. After toasting and charring to a medium level, the small quantity of casks used have delivered just 2,250 bottles of truly exceptional liquid abundant in vanilla pods, ginger and cloves.

[For the 10-year-old French Virgin Oak Finish](#) (UK RRSP £61.99), Walker sourced casks made of French Oak (*Quercus Robur*) from the Haute-Garonne region, close to the Pyrenees. The fine-grained, consistent wood was air dried for 15 months before being filled with the whisky. The result is a subtly sweet yet earthy malt.



[The 10-year-old Chinquapin Virgin Oak Finish](#) (UK RRSP £61.99) used wood from the Northern Ozark region of Missouri in the United States. Once air dried for nearly four years and toasted to a medium level, the casks made of Chinquapin – a sub species of *Quercus Alba* – have bestowed distinctive spicy, biscuity notes upon The GlenAllachie. The three whiskies are proudly presented at their natural colour, non chill filtered and at a high strength of 48% ABV.

Commenting on the new trio, Walker said:

“Exploring the interaction of virgin oak with our whisky has become a real passion of mine over the last few years, and I feel it’s something that we are really specialising in. I don’t think it’s a secret that I am devoted to [wood management](#) and sourcing unusual casks, but I believe virgin oak is underexposed in the Scotch whisky industry; something we are eager to change.

“This expansion of our [Virgin Oak Series](#) showcases three superb Single Malts, each with incredibly unique attributes. I’m particularly proud to release a very rare [Scottish Virgin Oak bottling](#); a long-held ambition of mine, with full appreciation of how challenging and expensive it is to work with. The result, in my humble opinion, is genuinely outstanding.



The new [GlenAllachie Virgin Oak Series](#) bottlings are available via specialist retailers globally, with UK RRSPs starting at £61.99.
TASTING NOTES

The GlenAllachie 15-year-old Scottish Virgin Oak Finish – 48% ABV

- Colour: Golden Sunset.
- Nose: Bursting with honeycomb, vanilla pods and citrus fruits, with butterscotch, orange zest and white chocolate.
- Taste: Lashings of heather honey, caramelised pine nuts, cinnamon and toffee, followed by orange peel, lemon zest, banana and ginger.

The GlenAllachie 10-year-old French Virgin Oak Finish – 48% ABV

- Colour: Golden Bronze.
- Nose: Waves of orange peel, heather honey and soft spice, followed by caramel, orchard fruits and mocha.
- Taste: Layers of heather honey, mocha and brittle toffee, with grapefruit, cinnamon, earthy tannins and notes of ginger on the finish.

The GlenAllachie 10-year-old Chinquapin Virgin Oak Finish – 48% ABV

- Colour: Rich Bronze.
- Nose: Bursting with orange zest, heather honey and pecan, with notes of butterscotch, nutmeg and liquorice.
- Taste: Lashings of cinnamon, barley sugar and toasted biscuits, followed by rose hips, orange peel and heather honey.

ENTERTAINING

Whisky Rooms Put Personal Collections on Full Display

MARCH 9, 2022 | [SAM STONE](#)



Joe Hayhoe of Urbandale, Iowa built a hidden speakeasy-styled whisky bar in his home.

Shut out of bars by the pandemic, whisky lovers are bringing their passion to life in their own homes by building whisky rooms. Fusing the functionality of a cellar with the atmosphere of a club, whisky rooms are a space not only to store your whisky, but also to hang out and sip. They come in all shapes, styles, and sizes.

“I had a very specific feel I wanted for my room—something with a very early 20th century-hotel feel to it,” says Nicholas Pagan, who finished his whisky room at his home in Morgan Hill, California last August. His space, which he calls “The Parlor,” has early 1900s hotel-style furniture sourced from online retailer Wayfair to suit the space and aesthetic. Pagan had a fairly easy time procuring the furniture, which was all brand new. “I would have loved to use antiques, but the budget didn’t really allow for that,” he said. While the furnishings proved simple to acquire, Pagan did encounter some issues with shelving. “None of the shelving came with guardrails, and since we’re in earthquake country, that was an absolute must,” he says. To resolve this issue, Pagan turned to Pinterest, where he found a photo that looked similar to the guardrail shelving he wanted. “More out of necessity than want, I built all the shelving out of ½-inch steel pipe and wood, which I stained to give it an aged look,” he adds. The parlor look that Pagan wanted shines throughout the room, with its burgundy armchairs, classic wooden chess set, and [crystal decanters](#) for some of the whiskies. That

decor is embraced by walls of whisky, prominently displayed on those shelves Pagan built himself.



Nicholas Pagan sips whiskey in his custom whiskey room which he dubbed The Parlor. (Photo by Stan Olszewski/SOSKlphoto)

SHOW OFF THOSE BOTTLES

Pagan's concern over shelving was well placed. In any whisky room, the shelving is not just a means of storing and displaying whisky—it's the focus of the entire space. Many people want to store their whisky standing upright so all the bottles can be seen, notes Jim Cash, founder of [Revel Custom Wine Cellars](#) in East Lansing, Michigan. That method is also important for preservation, because the cork influence can seep into a whisky when it's stored horizontally.

"In a wine cellar, the wines are laid down, but in a whisky cellar, the bottles will have more visibility," says Cash, adding that a whisky room needs wall space that goes high rather than deep, as required for wine. He recommends using glass for the room's external walls so the whiskeys are visible from an adjacent space, where you might be shooting pool or smoking cigars.

When Pagan and his wife Chelsea were searching for their home last spring, he was already thinking of a dedicated space for storing and sipping his whisky. "As we were looking at each location, I was building the room in my head," he said. "Things like direct sunlight, temperature changes, size, and space became part of our house-buying decision." Factors that Pagan considered in his house hunt are similar to those of professional cellar designers. In terms of climate control, Cash notes that a home whisky room will have more flexibility than with wine. "We're always shooting for something at approximately 55 degrees and 70% humidity [for wine], and that's not necessary for whisky," Cash says.

Since a whisky room will be a place where people spend a good chunk of their time, Cash emphasizes the importance of aesthetics. He starts by asking clients about the style of their home, and then poses additional questions about what aesthetics they prefer. "Generally, they

will know something, or have something to offer as inspiration, and we take it from there," he adds. In his designs, Cash often incorporates artwork and memorabilia his clients wish to showcase, and that can help establish a theme.

[Pro Tips for Building Your Own Whisky Room](#)

In Weston, Massachusetts, Baljit Gill had a clear aesthetic vision for his whisky room: a library theme. "My wife and I designed the room ourselves and knew what type of material we needed, though the actual build was done by a local carpentry company," Gill says. Wood was central to the theme, and the hardwood they used for the space had some structural benefits as well. "I knew the weight of the bottles would be a challenge, so we went with the hardest wood possible," Gill notes, adding the room's wooden bottle encasement is made of hardwood and is a heavyweight all on its own. "It weighs 6,000 pounds [without the bottles] and sits on a metal frame, six inches above the ground." Gill's grand bottle display and storage cabinet sit against a wall, but it's certainly a strong focal point. A table in the center of the room is built atop whisky barrels, and a library ladder adds a thematic touch, as well as being a functional tool for reaching bottles in the overhead spaces. Creating this elaborate storage capacity was a necessity, as Gill's bottle collection is an impressive one. "I have around 1,200 bottles, split between single malts, pure malts, some bourbons and rye, and a few blends," he says. Gill also keeps around 400 bottles of wine. His whisky room has a wine refrigerator, but his next project is to add a wine wall.



Baljit Gill constructed a library-themed whisky room in his Massachusetts home that showcases around 1,200 bottles. (Photo by Joe St. Pierre)

The large wooden encasement for Gill's bottles looks a lot like a bookshelf, which underpins the whisky library theme. It also boasts a major benefit: security. "The locking system is biometric-driven, and only my wife and I have access to it," Gill says, adding that this feature was custom-designed. He and his wife have two children, and as the kids grow up, the parents want to ensure that "all the alcohol is in one confined space and in a controlled manner," he says.

A PLACE TO HANG

Cash emphasizes that a whisky room can be whatever a client wants it to be. His company has designed tasting spaces that feature a whisky barrel in the room, he says. "You can really go wild if you want to," he adds. For Pagan, relaxation is the name of the game. "My room is quiet and cozy," he says. "Whenever we have guests over, it's a very popular place to hang out. I plan on having my poker nights in there, once I can safely do so again. But even with just one person visiting, it's a great place to just sit and catch up."

With around 500 bottles in his whisky room, Pagan and his friends like to enjoy a dram or two while they catch up. “Being a collector for nearly a decade, I have accumulated a few pretty special bottles,” he says. Some of his more prized additions include Green Spot 26 year old, Mister Sam Tribute whiskey, Blade and Bow 22 year old, Heaven Hill 14 year old, 1792 225th Anniversary Edition, and Caol Ila 20 year old Artist Collective, which he got on a trip to Paris with his wife. “What’s great about having this room is being able to go in, scan the shelves, see something I haven’t tried in a while, and go for it,” Pagan says. He opted not to include a television or any other distractions so he and his guests can focus on conversation, although there is a chessboard if visitors are interested.

At Joe Hayhoe’s home in Urbandale, Iowa, the whisky room has an interesting twist: it’s a secret space in his basement, behind a door that looks like a simple shelving unit. That door leads into Hayhoe’s personal speakeasy—dubbed The Blind Pig—that also houses his whisky collection. “It came about when my love of whisky collided with my wife’s love for having counter space in the kitchen,” Hayhoe jokes. “A few buddies and I were sitting around enjoying a drink, the thought of building a basement speakeasy came up, and it snowballed from there. I began mapping out the space and all the changes that would be needed.”

The Blind Pig came together in about two and a half months, with the Prohibition theme centered around artwork and memorabilia—including framed original Prohibition-era liquor prescriptions purchased on e-commerce website Etsy, an original 1933 newspaper cover of the Chicago Daily Tribune with the headline “Iowa Votes for Dry Repeal” from eBay, and other non-original Prohibition artwork Hayhoe found online. Exposed brick walls enhance the speakeasy theme, and there’s a small bar where guests can sip while listening to the record player or playing at the dartboard.

Now that Hayhoe’s speakeasy is complete, he enjoys many of his favorite pours there—including Smoke Wagon Private Barrel, High West Midwinter Night’s Dram, E.H. Taylor Single Barrel, Angel’s Envy finished rye, and Elijah Craig 18 year old. “I’m excited about sharing great drinks and great conversation with friends and family [in this room] for years to come,” Hayhoe says.



Jefferson’s Tavern is the name of Brian Latwis’s whisky room. It’s a space he created to display his 300 whiskies, gather with friends and family, or just relax with a pour. (Photo by Rachel Vanni)

A TAVERN AT HOME

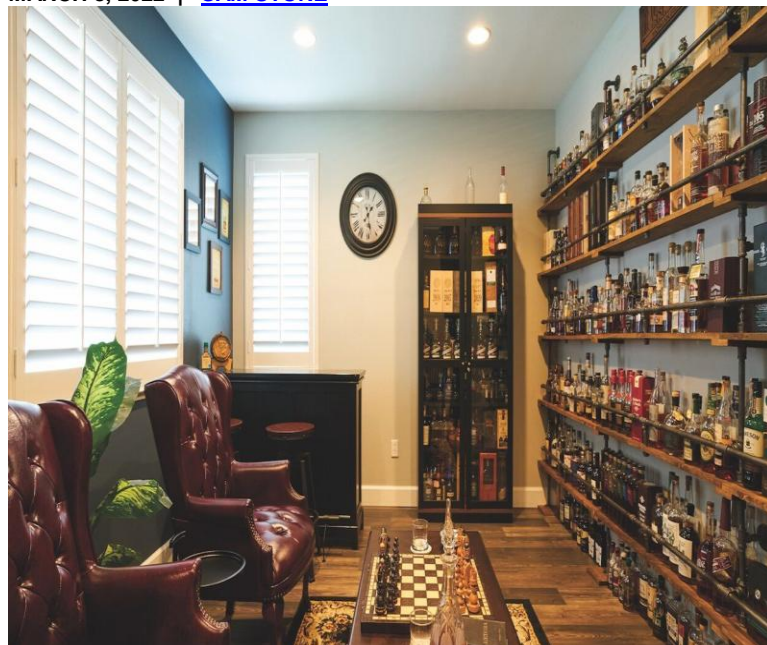
Brian Latwis of Bayville, New Jersey had a whisky collection that once occupied just a couple of bookshelves, but eventually grew to need an entire room. Latwis built his home whisky room in the theme of an old-style tavern. In keeping with that idea, the space offers ample places for setting down your dram—a counter, a table, a bar with several stools, and a small table made from a whisky barrel that bears the room’s name: “Jefferson’s Tavern Bourbon & Cigars Est. 2014.” While the bottles occupy most of the wall space, there’s room for a quote painted on the wall that reads, “You can’t buy happiness, but you can buy whiskey, and that is pretty close.”

Though not facing earthquake concerns like Pagan, Latwis found it challenging to make sure the gas-pipe shelving was secure. He didn’t simply hang the shelving on the wall; instead, he mounted it directly to the wood framework of the room. “I made sure the gas piping was

mounted directly to the ceiling joists and into the studs in the wall,” he says. “But I also reinforced each gas pipe with wire directly attached to the ceiling joists. There are a lot of bottles on each shelf, so ensuring the shelving could handle the weight was my number-one objective.” All of Latwis’s hard work paid off, and he now spends time in his whisky room every day. It’s home to the wide variety of whiskies in his 300-bottle collection, which includes many expressions from Buffalo Trace, such as Weller Full Proof, Eagle Rare 17 year old, Staggy Jr, and Blanton’s. The collection also includes Jefferson’s—one of his favorite bourbons and inspiration for the room’s name. “I named this place Jefferson’s Tavern because Jefferson’s is one of my favorite bourbons, and also because I live on Jefferson Avenue,” he says. Like others with their whisky rooms, Latwis enjoys connecting and relaxing with friends and family in his personal tavern. “I love whisky, but it’s about more than just the whisky,” he says. “I go there to socialize, relax, unwind, and to look at the bottles. It is a great place to ...enjoy whisky with others. When I have company, it is fun to just hang.” He adds that the room has been especially helpful during the pandemic, as it creates an atmosphere of being out while he’s still at home. But the room’s best decor seems to be the whisky itself. “The whiskies on these shelves are like photographs on a wall, representing different moments in my life,” he says. “I can remember where I bought them and who I’ve poured them with. Those bottles are connected to memories—it’s like looking at pictures. I love to have a glass and get lost in thought.”

Pro Tips for Building Your Own Whisky Room

MARCH 8, 2022 | [SAM STONE](#)



Build yourself a dedicated whiskey room like Nicholas Pagan's The Parlor which he modeled after a 20th century hotel. (Photo by Stan Olszewski/SOSKIphoto)

Want [a whisky room of your own](#)? Whether you enlist the help of a professional like Jim Cash of [Revel Custom Wine Cellars](#) or go the DIY route, here are some tips for minding the whisky in your room.

SHOW YOUR BOTTLES OFF

While wine is typically stored horizontally in a cellar to allow for more space, this room is all about your whisky, so show off those labels by displaying whisky bottles standing up. Plus, if whisky is stored laying down, the cork could alter the flavor over time and you certainly don’t want your spirit to be tainted!

LOCK ‘EM UP

A whisky collection is no cheap endeavor, and you’ll want to keep your bottles safe. A vault or locked cabinet can be perfect for a small selection of rarer bottles that you want to protect—just make sure not to lose the key! If you’d rather lock up your entire collection, like Baljit Gill did with his whisky room, you should consider glass-front cabinets that lock, so your whisky is on display and secure.

WATCH THE EMPTY SPACE

Whisky doesn't age in the bottle—in fact, it oxidizes. Over time, the oxygen in an opened, partially full bottle could alter the whisky's flavor. While it may be tempting to walk into your roomful of whisky and want to sample from many pieces of your collection, be careful not to have too many bottles open at once.

BUILD THAT COLLECTION

If you have a whole room dedicated to whisky, it's the perfect opportunity to broaden your whisky horizons and accumulate more bottles. The best way to learn which whiskies you like is by trying them at your local bar, a friend's home, or even a local liquor store that offers samples. Building a relationship with liquor store employees can also help keep you abreast of new releases and promotions. Plus the Whisky Advocate Buying Guide is a great resource to guide your next purchase.



Scotch Malt Whisky Society unveils 150th distillery bottling
The Scotch Malt Whisky Society (SMWS) has presented its landmark 150th distillery bottling - from an Irish producer.

Cask 150.1, sourced from a distillery in south-west Ireland, is being released by the society to mark St Patrick's Day on 17 March. It is the first whiskey from the distillery to be bottled as a single cask.

Bottled as 150.1*, 'Let's Go West!', the whiskey falls into the society's 'spicy and sweet' flavour profile. It is exclusively available to members via ballot entry at £75.

To celebrate the milestone, SMWS is hosting [a livestream event to celebrate St Patrick's Day](#). It will include Irish music, whiskey chat, a pub quiz and competitions, with hosts from the US and Australia discussing the Irish-Scots connection.

The livestream starts at 8pm GMT on 17 March and will be shown on the SMWS social and YouTube channels.

Kai Ivalo, SMWS spirits director, said: "For our landmark 150th bottling, we wanted to showcase the journey of our never-ending quest for quality and flavour. Choosing an Irish distillery to mark this milestone occasion truly shows the adventurous spirit of the society - celebrating our vibrant spirit no matter its source.

"Our milestone 150th distillery bottling demonstrates how far the society has travelled. Having bottled from distilleries way beyond our own shores, we continue to explore a world beyond single cask, single malt Scotch that is at our core. We are celebrating both our beginnings and our future."

17 March 2022 - Bethany Whymark

Mar 15, 2022, 08:00pm EDT | 9,797 views

The International Wines And Spirits Competition: The Best Single Malt Scotch Of 2022

[Joseph V Micallef](#) - Contributor



2022 International Wines and Spirits Competition
PHOTO, COURTESY INTERNATIONAL WINES AND SPIRITS COMPETITION

The International Wine and Spirits Competition (IWSC) has just announced the results of the 2022 spirits judging. A total of 85, predominantly UK based, judges evaluated over 4,000 entrants across more than a dozen major spirit categories.

In the Scotch whisky category, traditionally one of the competition's largest and most competitive segments, a total of 38 single malt Scotch whiskies were awarded the coveted Gold Outstanding medal.

The IWSC is an annual wine and spirits competition. Founded in 1969, by Anton Massel, it has grown to become one of the largest such competition in the world. Spirits are evaluated on a 100-point scale and awards are given out for Gold Outstanding (98-100 points), Gold (95-97 points), Silver (90-94 points) and Bronze (85-89 points).

PROMOTED

The top three Scotch whiskies, each scoring 99 points out of a hundred, were, surprisingly, from two of Scotland's lesser-known distilleries: Tomatin and Deanston.

Tomatin is a single malt distillery located in the village of Tomatin in the Speyside district of the Scottish Highlands. The distillery, after having passed through several Japanese owners, is now owned by Marubeni, a Japanese integrated trading and investment company. Tomatin was once the largest Scotch distillery in Scotland, with an annual capacity of around 10 million liters of pure alcohol.

Current production is approximately 2 to 3 million liters of alcohol. Most of the distillery's production is slated for its own blended whisky brands: Antiquary and Talisman. The company has been shifting its production to single malts and expanding its available range of expressions. Emphasizing a higher percentage of first fill ex-Bourbon and ex-Sherry casks has allowed it to produce very flavorful, structured and complex single malts.



Tomatin, Legacy Single Malt Scotch Whisky
PHOTO, COURTESY TOMATIN DISTILLERY

Tomatin, 1976 Single Malt Scotch Whisky and Tomatin, Legacy Single Malt Scotch Whisky were two of the top three ranked Scotch whiskies. The Tomatin 1976 is a single cask, 36 YO+, whisky. Distilled on 13 September 1973 and bottled on August 10, 2010. It was matured in a first fill America oak cask. The official tasting note on the Tomatin 1976, described it as:

Strong spices and wood aromas. Evolves to powerful red fruits with high alcohol. Water addition creates softer, sweeter notes of tropical fruit and vanilla spice. Sweet lengthy finish.

The Tomatin Legacy is a no age statement (NAS) expression that is matured in a combination of ex-Bourbon and Virgin Oak casks. The Tasting Note on the Tomatin Legacy described it as:

Ripe honeyed lemons and sweet vanilla fudge characterise the nose, while a pleasant fresh grapefruit flavour comes through wonderfully on the palate creating a superb lift. Fragrant and complex, with a harmonious, lingering finish.

The third top ranked whisky is the Deanston, Virgin Oak, Single Malt Scotch Whisky. This is a NAS, peated whisky produced at the Deanston distillery in Doune, a small-town northwest of Edinburgh. The company has been owned by Distell since 2013 - a South African based beverage conglomerate recently acquired by Dutch brewer Heineken.

The Deanston Virgin Oak is a young whisky matured in ex-Bourbon barrels and then finished in brand new casks of American oak from Kentucky. The official tasting note described the whisky as: *Splendidly extravagant with a rich flow of milk chocolate, smooth vanilla and sumptuous pears on the palate. The finish is long and weighty with a stunning flow of creamy nuttiness that keeps on going. Absolutely marvellous.*

The other winners were a mix of perennial medalists as well as a number of lesser-known distilleries.



Richard Paterson, Master Blender The Dalmore and Panel Chair for the International Wines and Spirits ... [+]

PHOTO, COURTESY INTERNATIONAL WINES AND SPIRITS COMPETITION

Ardbeg 25 YO and the Ardbeg Wee 5 YO Beastie were both awarded Gold Outstanding medals. Glendronach, a distillery whose profile and medals has been rapidly rising under the deft hand of Master Distiller Rachel Barrie, was a triple winner.

The Glendronach 16 YO Boynsmill, 18 YO Allardice and 21 YO Parliament single malt Scotch whiskies all won Gold Outstanding medals. The 21 YO, a personal favorite that is matured in both Oloroso and Pedro Ximénez (PX) Sherry casks, gets its name from a resident flock of crows at the distillery. A flock of crows is referred to as a "parliament" - hence the name.

The official tasting note described the 21 YO whisky as:

Intermingled aromas and flavours of Christmas cake, sherry, furniture polish and dark chocolate, with some hints of beeswax and dried dates. Gorgeous and beautifully rounded, with a very attractive woody spice on the finish.



Balblair, 25 YO. Single Malt Scotch Whisky
PHOTO, COURTESY BALBLAIR DISTILLERY CO. LTD.

Among the lesser-known Gold Outstanding medalists was Balblair, which was a triple winner for its 12 YO, 18 YO and 25 YO. This is another up and coming distillery whose portfolio of single malt whiskies is outstanding and hugely underappreciated. It's sister

distillery, Pulteney, also won for its 18 YO expression. The Balblair 25 YO, an exceptional whisky was described in the official tasting note as: *Autumnal fruit, apple compote and toasted nut aromas create a very attractive nose. Juicy melon flavours with hints of vanilla and cocoa nib sit alongside notes of lemon pith and nutmeg. Complex on the finish with nuances of fine oak.*

Other notable winners are Highland Park's 15 YO Viking Heart Single Malt Scotch Whisky and Aberfeldy's 16 YO and 21 YO expressions. The Glenmorangie Company won a Gold Outstanding medal for its Finest Reserve 19 YO Single Malt Scotch Whisky.

Among Islay distillers, Laphroaig was the big winner, taking two Gold Outstanding medals for its 10 YO Sherry Oak Finish Single Malt Scotch Whisky and its Select Single Malt Scotch Whisky. Islay whiskies marry particularly well with sweet wine casks, producing expressions that are smoky and with distinct fruity and sweet notes.

Kilchoman was the only other Islay distillery to take a Gold Outstanding medal. It won for its Machir Bay Scotch Whisky. The whisky is matured in both ex-Bourbon and Sherry casks. Great Drams, a specialty bottler, took a Gold Outstanding medal for its Islay Distillery Single Cask Single Malt Whisky.

Among the more unusual winners was Atom Brands, 10 YO Seaweed & Aeons & Digging & Fire Single Malt Scotch Whisky. The tasting note described it as:

Ripe fruits throughout: apple, red berries, peaches, and plum with cinnamon, cranberry crumble. A hint of old leather enhances this soft easy-drinking, smoke-scented spicy dram. Light and lovely.

Another unusual winner was a single malt Scotch whisky expression from The Lindores Company, one of Scotland's newest whisky distilleries. The distillery is named for one of Scotland's original 17th century distilleries at the Lindores Abbey. The Lindores Distilling Company, Single Malt Scotch Whisky was described by the judging panel as:

Sweet combining with sour: custard, cooking apples, greengages, white grapes and honey. Spiced, fruity and sweetly fragrant with cask notes and cinnamon. Well-rounded and complex.

Loch Lomond, another Scotch whisky distillery with a rapidly rising profile, took a Gold Outstanding medal for the

Inchmoan 12 YO and Glengarry 12 YO. The latter is matured in a combination of first fill and refill ex-Bourbon casks as well as re-charred ex-Bourbon casks. The tasting note for the Inchmoan 12 YO described it as:

Bright and perfumed, full of sweet smoke layered upon creamy dark chocolate and polished oak. Unctuous and rich on the palate, superbly balanced and wonderfully long, with a vanilla fudge quality lingering on a very attractive finish.

Rounding out the Gold Outstanding medal winners were several expressions from Whyte & Mackay: Co-Op Irresistible 12 YO, Tamnavulin French Cabernet Sauvignon Cask Edition, and a retailer branded offering - Sainsbury's Taste The Difference Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky. The latter is not available in the US, but widely available in the UK.

Other standout winners included Ballantine's Glenburgie 12 YO Single Malt Scotch Whisky. Most of Glenburgie's whisky output is slated for Ballantine's Blended Scotch Whisky, one of the top 5 blended whiskies in the world by volume. The distillery, significantly underappreciated, has also been releasing single malt whisky expressions.

The judging panel described it as:

Nosing this dram opens the door to a fine pastry shop redolent of baked brioche, almond dust, chocolate and marzipan. Pineapple and syrupy peach fruit lie under a cloak of black pepper and ginger on a palate of superlative length.

Glencadam, another little-known distillery, which is among Scotland's oldest working distilleries, took three Gold Outstanding medals for its The Rather Dignified 15 YO, Reserva Andalusia Oloroso Sherry Cask Finish and American Oak Reserve Small Batch Malt Scotch Whisky. The latter is not yet available in the US market but is coming soon.

Glencadam has been rapidly increasing its whisky lineup with a range of single barrel expressions as well as innovative cask finishes.

The Oloroso Sherry Cask Finish, a personal favorite, was described by the judging panel as showing:

Beautifully aromatic with indulgent sweet vanilla, perfumed runny honey and floral jasmine on the nose. Spicy on the palate with complex flavours of banana, passionfruit and cinnamon spice. Charming and extremely well-balanced throughout.

The other Double Gold medalists included: William Grant & Sons, Ailsa Bay; Glen Moray, Elgin Heritage 21 YO Portwood Finish; Ian Macleod Distillers, Glengoyne 12 YO; Glen Turner Company, Heritage Double Cask; John Dewar & Sons, Royal Brackla 18 YO Sherry Cask Finish Paulo Cortado and William Grant & Sons Distillers, The Balvenie 12 YO Sweet Toast of American Oak.

This year's judging produced an outstanding selection of Scotch whiskies. Some well-known, perennial medalists, others less so. Plenty to explore and discover here.

Sláinte.



Loch Lomond, Inchmoan 12 YO Single Malt Scotch Whisky
PHOTO, COURTESY LOCH LOMOND

Glen Garioch reopens after £6m Beam Suntory investment 23 MARCH 2022 By Kate Malczewski

Spirits producer Beam Suntory has reopened Highland Scotch whisky distillery Glen Garioch following a £6 million (US\$7.9m) renovation of the facility.



Oldmeldrum is one of the oldest operating distilleries in Scotland
By Kate Malczewski

After two years of closure, Glen Garioch's Oldmeldrum Distillery is once again open to public – and it has received a [multi-million-pound makeover](#).

The funds were used to reinstate traditional processes at the distillery, including the reintroduction of floor maltings and the installation of direct-fired heating to the wash still.

The whisky maker has also developed a new and 'highly efficient' method for direct-fired distillation, forecast to cut the distillery's carbon footprint by about 15%.



Glen Garioch 1991 Bourbon Single Cask

"It's been amazing to reopen the distillery up to the public after all this time, and especially to show them all the work that has been done so far to reinstate our traditional processes and drive towards our vision of a more sustainable future," said Kwanele Mdluli, distillery manager at Glen Garioch.

To coincide with the reopening, Glen Garioch has unveiled a 1991 Bourbon Single Cask. Sitting at 46.4% ABV, the expression offers a sweet, nutty nose with dried fruits, white peach and oak spices. The palate features notes of heather honey, vanilla cream, salted toffee and roasted walnuts.

The distillery has created a 'bottle your own' experience around the whisky, allowing visitors to draw the liquid straight from the barrel.

"It's truly an exciting and milestone moment for Glen Garioch as we open this new chapter in our history and invite others to share a dram of our iconic whisky," Mdluli concluded.

Spey whiskies given limited edition designs

24 MARCH 2022 By *Melita Kiely*

Speyside Distillery has commissioned artwork for a trio of limited edition bottle designs for its core Spey whiskies.



A trio of Spey whiskies, including Fumare, have been given limited edition bottle designs

The Scotch whisky distillery, operated by Speyside Distillers, created the Speyside's Artist Trio series in partnership with artist-in-residence Joanna McDonough.

McDonough commented: "While preparing to start work, I realised that artists, musicians and distillers are all working towards a very similar – if not identical – goal in their art and craft.

"My goal in my work is to express myself, my feelings and my emotions – and create art which, in turn, then causes an emotional reaction.

"Similarly, distillers are masters at crafting whisky that creates an emotional reaction in the taster – taking the drinker on a journey of sight, smell and taste. We are all artists in our own way."

Each expression – Trutina Melody, Tenne Rhapsody, and Fumare Overture – is limited to 1,500 numbered 700ml bottles, with some 200ml bottles also available. All three whiskies sit at 46% ABV.

Trutina Melody is said to have aromas of white grapes and apple blossom, leading to a sweet palate with crisp acidity, and a white chocolate finish.

Tenne Rhapsody boasts faint raspberry jam and potpourri on the nose, with tastes of fruit and almonds on the palate.

Lastly, Fumare Overture delivers slow-building smoke on the nose, leading to vanilla notes and sweetness on the palate when water is added.

John Harvey McDonough, Speyside Distillers chief executive, said: "My wife Joanna has previously created stunning labels for our Spey single malts and Byron's Gin, but these new artworks truly encapsulate the joy of whisky.

"Our distillers have lovingly crafted these whiskies, and we are delighted to have collaborated with Joanna on artwork that has had equal love poured into it."

In January 2021, Speyside Distillers revealed plans to [build a second single malt distillery](#) in the region.

Dalmore launches 33-year-old as NFT

25 MARCH 2022 By *Melita Kiely*

Highland single malt The Dalmore is selling a cask of 33-year-old Scotch whisky as an NFT.



The Dalmore 33 Years Old will launch exclusively as an NFT
By *Melita Kiely*

The Dalmore 33 Years Old whisky sits at 51% ABV. Tasting notes include cassia, blackberries, citrus, marzipan, liquorice and soft spices. The Dalmore has partnered with Block Bar to release 223 NFTs of its 33-year-old single malt – marking the first time The Dalmore has sold an entire cask exclusively via blockbar.com.

On Tuesday 29 March, the first 10 bottles of The Dalmore 33 Years Old will be available to existing Block Bar NFT holders via a lottery on blockbar.com. Each bottle will be priced at US\$8,800.

The 10 buyers will be invited on an exclusive VIP experience at the Highland distillery, which will include paid-for flights. Pre-sale registration, also called the blocklist, for the remaining 213 bottles will open on 30 March for 48 hours, when the general public will be able to sign up ahead of the NFT release on 5 April. The cask will be bottled in early September, and the physical bottles will be ready to collect in late December 2022.

Gerry Tosh, private client director, The Dalmore, said: "Following the success of our first NFT-backed bottle with Block Bar last November, we are pleased to exclusively release 223 bottles of this exceptional 33-year-old whisky."

"The Dalmore offers some of Scotland's most rare and precious whisky stocks, remarkable in their desirability to collectors, investors and drinkers alike and this bottle is no exception."

"It takes artistry to craft each bottle of The Dalmore and so it is our pleasure to invite the first 10 buyers of this special single malt to experience the home of our whisky."

NFT explained

The NFT acts as a digital receipt that verifies the buyer's ownership of the bottle, plus its authenticity.

Each bottle will be stored at Block Bar's facility in Singapore until the buyer chooses to redeem the bottle. The cryptographic version will be held by blockbar.com, with a record of authenticity held on the blockchain as a digital certificate of ownership.

The buyer can choose to keep the NFT in their 'digital bar', gift it, or redeem the physical product, which will then be delivered from the storage facility. The NFT can also be traded on the blockbar.com marketplace.

Dov Falic, co-founder and CEO of Block Bar, said: "By purchasing The Dalmore 33 Years Old Vintage on Block Bar, owners will have the rare chance to attend a celebratory bottling event at a venue chosen by the community anywhere in the world."

"This is not something you would have the chance to experience with a regular whisky purchase, let alone the fact that this is an exceptionally rare bottle in the first place. It's something we're extremely excited to offer in collaboration with The Dalmore."

"I'm very conscious of cost and want the whisky to be affordable to enthusiasts like myself."

The distillery unveiled its [first series of whiskies](#) last year. According to the founders, this marks the first time that Scotch whisky has been produced in Stirling since 1852, when the original Stirling Distillery closed its doors. It is also the distillery's first foray into new make whisky.

June commented: "For us, the essential components for creating a truly special whisky are simple; from using only the best water, yeast and malted barley to the care that goes into hand-selecting the best quality casks to develop the rich flavours."

"Whisky production is a delicate process that takes time, love and passion and we're excited to start our whisky journey."

The distillery selected wood from locations worldwide for the casks. The VI Casks for King James will be laid down in a traditional dunnage in sight of Stirling Castle to ensure minimal temperature variation between seasons.

Only 300 bottles will be available per single cask, and each set will cost RRP £350 (US\$461).

Sets can be ordered online at stirlingdistillery.com/whisky, and will also include a branded polo shirt and an exclusive pin badge.

Benriach launches four GTR-exclusive whiskies

04 APRIL 2022 By Alice Brooker

Speyside producer Benriach is releasing four malt whiskies exclusively in the global travel retail (GTR) market.



The whiskies will be available from airports worldwide from 1 May 2022. The four expressions include Benriach Quarter Cask, Benriach Smoky Quarter Cask, Benriach Triple Distilled Ten and Benriach 22 Year Old Triple Distilled.

Rachel Barrie, master blender at Benriach Distillery, said: "As international travel will hopefully continue to open this year, whisky lovers will have the opportunity to sample this distinctive range of expressions available exclusively for GTR."

"Our oldest triple distilled expression, the 22 Year Old Triple Distilled, is a complex fruit and oak masterpiece, with rich layers of caramel mocha and morello cherry, overlaid with mellow nutty elegance and the exquisite richness of orange peel, red apple and date."

"The Triple Distilled Ten is layered in glazed fruit, creamy vanilla and honey sweetness alongside vibrant toasted oak spice."

To produce the Quarter and Smoky Quarter Cask, smaller bespoke casks were used in the second maturation of the whiskies to elevate their fruit-forward character.

Barrie added: "The bespoke quarter casks used in both Benriach Quarter Cask and Benriach Smoky Quarter Cask gives each a very distinctive flavour profile. In Quarter Cask it creates layers of glazed orchard fruit and rich vanilla, finishing with notes of ripe barley and oak spice."

"Smoky Quarter Cask adds layers of ripe fruit, fresh wood smoke and spiced vanilla, with finishing notes of mellow smoke and nutty oak."

The range is now exclusively available in UK-based airports, and can be bought from global airports from 1 May.

Stephane Morizet, marketing director – GTR, commented: "This exclusive portfolio offering is a powerful statement on how much Benriach firmly believes in the power and strategic role of travel retail."

Stirling Distillery unveils exclusive whisky set

25 MARCH 2022 By Alice Brooker

Scotland-based Stirling Distillery has revealed a limited edition single malt whisky set that will comprise six bottles matured in various casks.



The release of the whisky set marks the distillery's first venture into new-make spirits

Founded by husband and wife June and Cameron McCann, the Stirling Distillery has debuted its VI Casks for King James whisky set, which will be released on a bi-annual basis from 2027.

The six bottle set will feature one bottle from six different casks:

Bourbon, Sherry, Port, rum, wine and Madeira.

Cameron said: "We are delighted to be launching this unique VI Casks for King James bottling. If your preference is for rare bottles rather than investing in casks, then the limited edition VI Casks for King James is the perfect choice."

“Our mission is to enrich travellers’ journeys, and these beautiful expressions offer a wide and unique range of taste exploration for whisky lovers.”

Last year, the brand [revealed a new whisky](#) made entirely from barley malted at its floor maltings – the first bottling of its sort in a century. In April 2021, Benriach also unveiled its [first visitor centre](#) following a six-figure investment.

Bartenders Name The One Scotch Whisky They Recommend To Undecided Drinkers

CHRISTOPHER OSBURN - MARCH 9, 2022

[Scotch whisky](#) might be the most intimidating segment of whisky there is. It comes from far away, it's more expensive, and it has its own lingo. There are “blended whiskies,” “[blended malts](#),” “[single malts](#),” and “single grain” whiskies all with different vintages, age statements, and editions. And just like that, we’re in the weeds.

That all becomes especially apparent when you walk into a whisky joint and spot a sea of bottles stacked behind the bar. Where to start? Are blends bad? Should you [go with “Any Glen”](#)?

We’re here to help you navigate the whole scene. First, check out our [rankings](#) and [blind tastings](#) for some guidance. Next, scroll down to see what a few well-known [bartenders](#) suggest at their bars when drinkers are overwhelmed. It’s a good list that may lead to your new favorite pour.

Bunnahabhain 18



BUNNAHABHAIN

Andrew Guerin, bartender at [Bourbon O Bar](#) in New Orleans

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$190](#)

Why This Whisky?

My pick is Bunnahabhain 18. The complexity leads to finding new flavors in every pour. The smoke never overpowers the malts. The caramel sweetness pokes through in harmony with some subtle baking spice notes. And I’ll be damned if it doesn’t warm you up a bit, too.

The Glenlivet 12



THE GLENLIVET

Heather Buelna, head bartender at [Sun Outdoors San Diego Bay](#) in San Diego

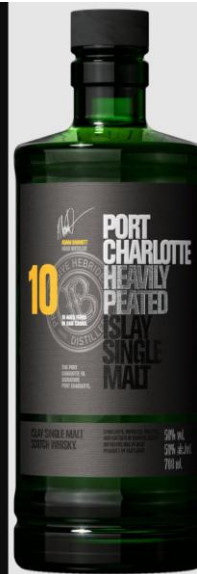
ABV: 40%

Average Price: [\\$50](#)

Why This Whisky?

Single malt scotch can really run the gamut in flavors, smokiness, and peaty qualities. We always lean toward The Glenlivet 12 as a great entry to single malts. It introduces many of the qualities that single malts are known for without being too in your face with any of them. Plus, it has a nice price point. Some of these scotches can get very expensive.

Port Charlotte 10



BRUICHLADDICH

Evan Hosaka, lead bartender at [The Dorsey Cocktail Bar](#) in Las Vegas

ABV: 50%

Average Price: [\\$77](#)

Why This Whisky?

Port Charlotte Heavily Peated 10-year Islay Single Malt by Bruichladdich is one I always suggest for peat fans. It’s my favorite for a cold winter or early spring night because of the warm smokiness, malt sweetness, and the hints of varied fruits that sneak up on the palate.

Oban 14



OBAN

Joshua Scheid, beverage manager at [REX at The Royal](#) in Philadelphia

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$80](#)

Why This Whisky?

I’m really into Oban 14 Year and I love to have guests try it. I love a nice smoky scotch, and this one is backed up with nice hints of spice and sweet fruits that make it super luxurious.

The Dalmore Cigar Malt



THE DALMORE

Mariza Sabino, general manager at [Dirty Habit](#) in San Francisco

ABV: 44%

Average Price: [\\$190](#)

Why This Whisky?

The Dalmore Cigar Malt Reserve is my recommendation. Every so often, I enjoy a mild cigar and the Cigar Malt is built for it. There's a gentle sort of warm spice, like a bit of nutmeg and vanilla, under a mid-palette of honey and cedar. It makes me think of a warm room, on a cold winter's night, by a fireplace with a heady cigar and a great single malt, listening to Etta James. Even if you're not a smoker, guests can appreciate the nuanced, rich flavors.

Aberlour A'Bunadh



ABERLOUR

Subhash Sankar, head mixologist at [Alaia Belize](#) in San Pedro Town, Belize

ABV: 60-65%

Average Price: [\\$115](#)

Why This Whisky?

There's a reason this whisky is a favorite of drinkers and bartenders alike. This cask strength (around 120 proof) single malt scotch is aged completely in Oloroso sherry casks from Spain. The result is a surprisingly sweet and bold whisky with notes of sticky toffee pudding, toasted vanilla beans, cinnamon, candied orange peels, ginger, and dried cherries. It's warming, sweet, and highly memorable.

The Balvenie DoubleWood 12



THE BALVENIE

Charles Bement, sommelier and beverage director of [B. Hospitality](#) in Chicago

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$75](#)

Why This Whisky?

Balvenie Double Wood 12 Year is an expression I always suggest. This scotch has great notes of honey and vanilla that make it a very comfortable sipping whisky. Slightly more 'oomph' than something like The Macallan but not super peaty like Laphroaig and Lagavulin.

Lagavulin 16



LAGAVULIN

Aaron Ramirez, lead bartender at [Mr. C Beverly Hills](#) in Los Angeles

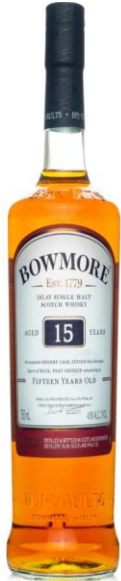
ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$80](#)

Why This Whisky?

Lagavulin 16 is a whisky I always mention to fans of smoky whisky who aren't sure what to drink. It's the perfect scotch to drink on a cold winter or early spring night. The peaty flavor is full-bodied and very intimidating. With notes of tobacco, vanilla, and sherry spice. It's sure to warm you up even in sub-zero temperatures.

Bowmore 15



BOWMORE

Samantha Seltzer, beverage and service manager at [Royal Boucherie](#) in Philadelphia

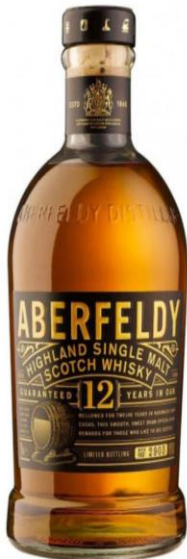
ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$85](#)

Why This Whisky?

Bowmore 15 is one of my go-to recommendations. Matured first in bourbon barrels then Oloroso sherry casks, this Scotch whisky is rich and warming with supple notes of caramel, toffee, dark cherry, and classic Bowmore smoke. What's not to love?

Aberfeldy 12



ABERFELDY

Annie Pierce, bartender and co-owner of [Law Bird Bar](#) in Columbus, Ohio

ABV: 40%

Average Price: [\\$45](#)

Why This Whisky?

Aberfeldy 12 Year is my personal go-to for single malt and one I suggest to guests. It's so deftly balanced between the heather and honey, toasty cereal malts, layers of fruit, and subtle smoke and spice. It also sings in a cocktail, whether you're riffing on a classic or pairing it outlandishly (we're currently using it with beets, orange oil, and bitter chocolate on the menu at Law Bird). It not only shines bright but plays well with others.

Ardbeg Ten



ARBEG

Rob Krueger, bartender at [Bar CHRYSTIE](#) in New York City

ABV: 46%

Average Price: [\\$58](#)

Why This Whisky?

I love an Ardbeg Ten-Year-Old. It's full-on with peat and smoke but balanced with malty sweetness and huge complexity of aromas and flavors from toasted marshmallow to citrus and tropical fruit to bacon and brine. It's rich in texture, being non-chill filtered, so the flavors have lots of time to play on the palate. It's a rich sipper which gives you plenty to think over.

The Macallan 18



THE MACALLAN

Ron Manlapid, bartender and mixologist at [Menlo Tavern](#) in Menlo Park, California

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$399](#)

Why This Whisky?

I always recommend The Macallan 18, neat. With sweet notes of honey, you taste the malt, but not so abruptly that it's off-putting. It's pricier but well worth it.

10 Best Bourbons Around \$40, Ranked

POSTED ON MARCH 20, 2022 BY [FRED MINNICK](#)



Blind tastings are a lot like sports. You can predict how you think it will go, but you just never know. Sometimes Appalachian State [beats Michigan](#) and the once impossible No. 16 Seed defeats a No. 1 Seed in the NCAA tourney. Upsets happen.

That was the case with my [Best Everyday Bourbon Around \\$40](#) blind Friday. These 10 finalists were picked from public voting, but I blind tasted them to determine my No. 1. (Learn how I assembled the [Everyday Bourbons](#).) Based on past performance, the winner, I figured, would have finished toward the bottom.

Pre-Taste Analysis

Prior to the tasting, my team and I analyzed past videos and tastings of every brand in here. Over a decade, I professionally tasted each at least a dozen times in competition, for magazine or book reviews, private tastings and blind flights. Each analysis was provided in the show notes and in the video.

Maker's Mark Cask Strength, Public Ranking: 10

Analysis: This is Maker's wheated bourbon profile at its best. Fred published a score of 92 in *Bourbon Curious*. However, this whiskey has not done well in his blind tastings, with Fred noting an over-oaked note at times. But the product is a staple in the Minnick household.

Evan Williams Bottled in Bond, Public Ranking: 9

Analysis: Winner of Fred's Best Everyday Bourbon in 2019, Evan Williams Bottled in Bond consistently wins over Fred's palate. Will it return to No. 1?

Old Forester 100 Proof, Public Ranking: 8

Analysis: When writing tasting notes for *Bourbon Curious*, Fred rated Old Forester 100 an 89, a solid score for an everyday pour. In addition, Brown-Forman bourbons rate well in his blinds with King of Kentucky and Old Forester 1920 winning past taste offs. But those are big proofed bourbons. Will this 100 proofer stand out enough to win?

Old Grand-Dad 114, Public Ranking: 7

Analysis: While Old Grand-Dad 114 is often a fan favorite, it's not fared well in Fred's tastings, with past notes calling out raw grain notes. However, Fred loves Old Grand-Dad Bonded. Perhaps, this is the day 114 wins over his palate.

Four Roses Small Batch, Public Ranking: 6

Analysis: If Fred happens to be craving cinnamon before the tasting, Four Roses stands to win. Even if the spice note doesn't show or impress, this is standard pour at Fred's corporate tastings. It often beats the allocated products in blinds.

Elijah Craig Small Batch, Public Ranking: 5

Analysis: After Heaven Hill dropped the Elijah Craig 12 year age statement, Fred couldn't look at a bottle of the latest version. The dude has issues! Anyway, he got over it and once again fell in love with the flavor profile.

Knob Creek 9 Year, Public Ranking: 4

Analysis: Fred's been on a Knob Creek bandwagon for a long time, releasing videos that encourage people to buy it over allocated \$200 bourbons. It also won Best Bourbon at the 2015 San Francisco World Spirits Competition, where Fred voted for it. Knob Creek does very well with his palate.

Buffalo Trace, Public Ranking: 3

Analysis: When Fred reviewed Buffalo Trace for *Whisky Advocate*, he scored it an 88, noting a nutmeg note. But that's been several years, and Buffalo Trace has not won any of his blind tastings. That being said, Buffalo Trace is a wild card if this bottle doesn't have a particular off-putting oak note.

Wild Turkey 101, Public Ranking: 2

Analysis: Wild Turkey 101 once beat Old Rip Van Winkle 10 Year in a Fred blind tasting at Silver Dollar in Louisville. However, when in everyday taste offs, Wild Turkey 101 has been inconsistent, even finishing last before.

Russell's Reserve 10 Year, Public Ranking: 1

Analysis: The only 10 year age stated bourbon in the lineup, Russell's Reserve 10 year is a throwback to the old days. It's packing tons of flavor. But five years ago for *Whisky Advocate*, he detected a bitterness that kept the whiskey from entering the 90-point plus club. If that bitterness appears today, it will most certainly not win.

The Results

As I say in my videos and have written in past articles about the San Francisco World Spirits Competition, a blind tasting is one moment with a taster or group of tasters. If we re-poured and tasted again, the winner may finish in the middle of the pack.

In fact, the winner—Old Grand-Dad 114—had never finished higher than [4th in my blind](#) tastings and I gave it a moderate review in the 2015 publication of my book, [BOURBON CURIOUS](#).

Old Grand-Dad 114

Nose: Earthy, featuring fresh-cut tree branch, slight pine, cornbread, maple syrup, and caramel.

Palate: Very grain forward, but the grains are mature and cooked, perhaps in the form of cornbread or a stew; this bourbon is a surefire winner if you love your grains. After the raw and earthy notes subside, caramel and vanilla set in, followed by an overpowering cinnamon that sticks to the end with a dry mouthfeel.

Finish: Medium, with cinnamon-dusted apples (This review originally appeared in *Bourbon Curious*, First Edition)

When the products were revealed, Old Grand-Dad wasn't the only surprise. Two Heaven Hill products—Evan Williams BIB and Elijah Craig—underperformed. Evan Williams finishing toward the bottom was the biggest surprise for me, especially since they won the [2019 taste off](#). But it's not like my palate was off. I picked Maker's Mark Cask Strength at No. 10, citing notes I have many times before—an over-oaked note—and personal sipper Knob Creek finished in my Top 3. I was just feeling Glass A, the eventual winner, over the rest, even though I admitted Glass 'I' or Russell's Reserve could have easily been the winner. It was a tough taste off!

Here's how they ranked....

Top 10 Everyday Bourbons, \$40

10. Maker's Mark Cask Strength

9. Elijah Craig Small Batch

8. Evan Williams Bottled-in-Bond

7. Wild Turkey 101

6. Buffalo Trace

5. Four Roses Small Batch

4. Old Forester 100 Proof

3. Knob Creek 9 Year

2. Russell's Reserve 10 Year

1. Old Grand-Dad 114

So, while I stand by the tasting, I still think you, as the public, should taste for yourself. I encourage all to get these 10, taste blind and let me know your thoughts. Where do they rank for you... in a blind tasting? (View [the public voting](#).)

Top 25 Bourbons Around \$40 (Public Vote)

POSTED ON MARCH 10, 2022 BY FRED MINNICK



What's the best bourbon around \$40? My team and I sought this answer not through public voting.

For the past three months, we've asked in surveys and open questions: What is an everyday bourbon? And what price feels right?

The answers varied, but the debate came down to \$60 vs. \$40, with the latter winning the majority. I was surprised on how difficult choosing an "everyday" price was. Many felt that if the bourbon is in stores and available across the U.S., it should be considered. Perhaps this is the story of our time: Some can buy \$200 bourbons every day. And most cannot.

In addition, pricing varies per market, because of state taxes and how distributors set case sales. Rare Breed is a great example. Many believed it should be in the vote. However, it's more than \$45 in most of the country, while controlled states keep Rare Breed around \$40. So, this examination of price point led to an interesting snapshot of time of bourbon pricing. With inflation and wheat prices on the rise, who knows if these prices hold?

For determining the bourbons for this list, we applied the \$40 price point on Total Wine & More's website, easily coming up with hundreds of products. Then, we culled whiskeys, narrowing it down by availability, price and allocation. We considered products that would sit in the "bourbon" aisle; thus, we allowed straight bourbons, bottled-in-bond, blends of straight bourbon and barrel finishes in this data grab. From there, we triple checked allocation and availability status.

Lastly, we put it to a vote.

After more than 5,000 votes, here are the winners, as ranked by the public. On March 18, I will blind taste the Top 10 to determine my favorite of the list.

Top 25 Around \$40

1. Russell's Reserve 10 Year, 90 proof, \$38.49 (2,103 votes, 40.8%)
2. Wild Turkey, 101 proof, \$25 (2,024 votes, 39.3%)
3. Buffalo Trace, 90 proof, \$27 (1,869 votes, 36.3%)
4. Knob Creek 9 Year, 100 proof, \$36.99 (1,817 votes, 35.2%)
5. Elijah Craig Small Batch, 94 proof, \$29.99 (1,639 votes, 31.8%)
6. Four Roses Small Batch, 90 proof, \$34.99 (1,289 votes, 25.0%)
7. Old Grand-Dad 114, 114 proof, \$26.49 (1,269 votes, 24.6%)
8. Old Forester 100 proof, \$23.99 (1,261 votes, 24.5%)
9. Evan Williams Bottled-in-Bond, 100 proof, \$17.99 (1,229 votes, 23.98%)
10. Maker's Mark Cask Strength, 108-114 proof, \$34.99 (1,214 votes, 23.5%)
11. Maker's 46, 94 proof, \$40.69 (1,197 votes, 23.2%)
12. Early Times Bottled in Bond, 100 proof, \$24.99 (895 votes, 17.4%)
13. 1792 Small Batch, 93.7 proof, \$32.99 (873 votes, 16.9%)
14. Woodford Reserve, 90.4 proof, \$38.49 (859 votes, 16.7%)

15. Michter's Small Batch, 91.4 proof, \$41.99 (799 votes, 15.5%)
 16. Old Grand-Dad Bonded, 100 proof, \$24.99 (777 votes, 15.1%)
 17. Coopers' Craft Barrel Reserve, 100 proof, \$31.99 (652 votes, 12.6%)
 18. Larceny Small Batch, 92 Proof, \$24.99 (619 votes, 12%)
 19. Evan Williams Single Barrel, 86.6 proof, \$30.99 (592 votes, 11.5%)
 20. Bulleit 10 Year, 90.2 proof, \$39.99 (479 votes, 9.3%)
 21. Maker's Mark, 90 proof, \$28.99 (480 votes, 9.3%)
 22. Rowan's Creek, 100.1 proof, \$37.99 (414 votes, 8%)
 23. Old Tub Bottled in Bond, 100 proof, \$17.99 (389 votes, 7.5%)
 24. Woodinville Straight Bourbon, 90 proof, \$39.99 (377 votes, 7.3%)
 25. Bulleit Bourbon, 90 proof, \$31.99 (360 votes, 7%)
- The Next 10: Old Forester 86 Proof, \$19.99 (329 votes, 6.4%); George Dickel 8 Year, 90 Proof, \$34.49 (291 votes, 5.6%); High West American Prairie Bourbon Whiskey, 92 Proof, \$37.57 (280 votes, 5.4%); Yellowstone Kentucky Bourbon, 93 Proof, \$40 (267 votes, 5.2%); Redwood Empire Pipe Dream Bourbon, 90 Proof, \$34.99 (257 votes, 5%); Bowman's Small Batch Bourbon, 90 Proof, \$31.49 (243 votes, 4.7%); Wild Turkey Longbranch, 86 Proof, \$39.99 (231 votes, 4.5%); Ezra Brooks, 99 Proof, \$27.99 (234 votes, 4.5%); Smooth Ambler Old Scout, 99 Proof, \$39.49 (226 votes, 4.4%); and Johnny Drum Private Stock Kentucky Bourbon, 101 Proof, \$38.99 (203 votes, 3.9%)



Johnnie Walker's \$35,000 48-Year-Old Scotch Unveiled

NICK HALL, 26 MAR 2022 | NEWS

When Jim Beveridge took up a post as a flavour chemist at [Johnnie Walker](#) than in the early 1980s, he could scarcely have predicted the impact that move would make. Peering behind the curtain of the world's best-loved blended [whisky](#), Beveridge was invited to dive head-first into the deep intricacies of maturation, and it wasn't long before he rose through the ranks to achieve Master Blender status. The [Scotch](#) icon made the coveted position his own, becoming the first person to be named 'Master Blender of the Year' by the International Whisky Federation for two consecutive years. Now, more than 40 years after he first stepped foot in the Scottish distillery, he's handing over the reins.

THE BEST PAPPY ALTERNATIVES

BY JAKE EMEN - March 25, 2022

Whether you love the craze or loathe it – or love to loathe it – there's no denying that at its core, the [Pappy Van Winkle lineup](#) delivers excellent bourbon. More specifically, it offers excellent wheated bourbon — now distilled by [Buffalo Trace](#) after several historical iterations in the preceding decades. Though, due to the issue of price and availability, many bourbon drinkers are left searching for replacements. What then are your best Pappy alternatives? Beyond merely defaulting to any wheated whiskey you can find, there are certain characteristics that will help to narrow things down a bit. While the exact Pappy [mash bill](#) isn't disclosed, it's generally thought to include around 15% wheat. Therefore, wheat whiskeys with a minimum of 51% wheat, and bourbons that deploy sky-high wheat percentages in the 30-40s, aren't of interest.

Moreover, the Pappy lineup is also noted for its extensive aging. And while there aren't many other 15 or 20-year-old bourbons on the market, what you do want is something that goes beyond the typical craft, or bottom shelf, realm of only a few years of aging. Ideally, look for bourbon that aged in full-size 53-gallon barrels, and hopefully for a minimum of around six years. For that matter, avoid anything that sits at the bare minimum of 40% ABV.

With those parameters set, here's how to start putting together a shopping and sampling list.

0 seconds of 6 seconds Volume 0%

WHISKEY TO TRY WHEN YOU CAN'T BUY PAPPY THE W.L. WELLER LINE

The long-standing backup for the Pappy bourbon collection is the [W.L. Weller line](#), as these wheated bourbons are also distilled by Buffalo Trace. In fact, not only are Weller and Pappy now made in the same place, but they also share the same mash bill, the same barrel entry proof, and the same barrel specifications.

But of course, in the all-things-Pappy-adjacent craze of the past decade, even shelf staples such as the standard tier of [Weller Special Reserve](#) are often either impossible to find or price gouged. While I would be doing a disservice without mentioning Weller, certainly I'd be doing you a worse disservice if all I did was offer a list of five different Wellers you won't be able to find, either. Therefore, we'll move onto some bottles you hopefully can locate more easily.



Weller bourbon /Photo Credit: Weller

BARTON 1792 SWEET WHEAT

[Barton 1792](#) has now been under the Sazerac umbrella for more than a decade. But what some fail to realize is that the distillery has absolutely mammoth capacity, with a quirky, ancient, six-foot wide, 50-foot tall column still capable of churning out some 750 barrels per day. While Barton is distinctive on its own, consider it as a long-lost sister distillery of sorts to Buffalo Trace.

Barton predominantly uses a high-rye for most of its line, but as the name implies, [Sweet Wheat](#) is the exception. Yes, once again this is a limited, hard to find release. But there's good news, here. The distillery has been ramping up its wheated bourbon production, so expect to see more here in the near future.

THE HEAVEN HILL WHEATERS

Pappy Van Winkle, the man himself, was a key cog in the history of what is now [Heaven Hill Distillery](#). Here, traditional brands such as [Old Fitzgerald](#) have long been made with a wheated bourbon mash bill consisting of 68% corn, 20% wheat, and 12% malted barley. That recipe is used for all of the Old Fitz expressions, as well as for [Larceny Bourbon](#).

The most recent [Spring 2022 Old Fitzgerald Bottled-in-Bond](#), at 17 years of age, is a gem to seek out. But unfortunately, it's though another sparsely available one. Therefore, for everyday drinkability, and findability, Larceny is right in the wheelhouse of what you should be seeking out. The [Barrel Proof version](#) offers you a proof upgrade as well as a non-chill filtered flavor profile.



Old Fitzgerald Bottled-in-Bond /Photo Credit: Heaven Hill

MAKER'S MARK

[Maker's Mark](#) is famously a wheated bourbon. Its signature flavor profile, softer and sweeter than its chief competitors, is one of the factors which helped fuel its initial rise. Across its growing product range, the distillery uses a 70% corn, 16% wheat and 14% mash bill. But what they're now doing more of is [experimenting with maturation](#), as well as different bottling proofs.

[Maker's Mark 46](#) has a wonderful extra layer of complexity and is widely available. Therefore, it would do well to satisfy your wheated yearnings. Meanwhile, both [Maker's Mark 101](#) and [Cask Strength](#) each clock in at the higher proof you may be seeking.

CRAFT WHEATED BOURBONS TO TRY

There's a growing contingent of craft producers making quality wheated bourbons these days. And there are a few in particular that hit the mark in terms of mash bill and maturation level.

[Wyoming Whiskey](#), which was originally under the stewardship of one-time Maker's Mark master distiller Steve Nally, uses a 68% corn, 20% wheat, 12% malted barley mash bill. Its [Small Batch](#) is a good place to start. Meanwhile, its [Double Cask](#) — aged for five years before a finishing process in PX sherry barrels — goes in a different direction than Pappy but stands out for its quality. The sherry also doesn't overwhelm the wheated whiskey at its core.

Wilderness Trail makes both wheated and rye bourbons. For our pursuits, try the [Wilderness Trail Wheated Silver Label](#). It's made from a 64% corn, 24% wheat and 12% barley mash bill, and is aged for a full six years. Additionally, there's the brand's [Single Barrel Bottled in Bond](#). It's aged for at least five years and is bottled at 100 proof.

Garrison Brothers uses a 74% corn, 15% wheat, 11% malted barley mash bill. The combination of its intense maturation conditions in Texas, as well as the use of a mix of smaller barrel sizes, creates a spicier and more wood-influenced flavor profile than one which makes for a straight comparison. Its limited editions, such as the annual [Cowboy Bourbon](#), also pack a hefty punch in terms of proof. But its [Small Batch](#) delivers a range of robust, rich flavors and clocks in at 94 proof, making it worthy of adding to the discussion here.

Rosebank's New Stills A Major Step In Distillery Revival Project

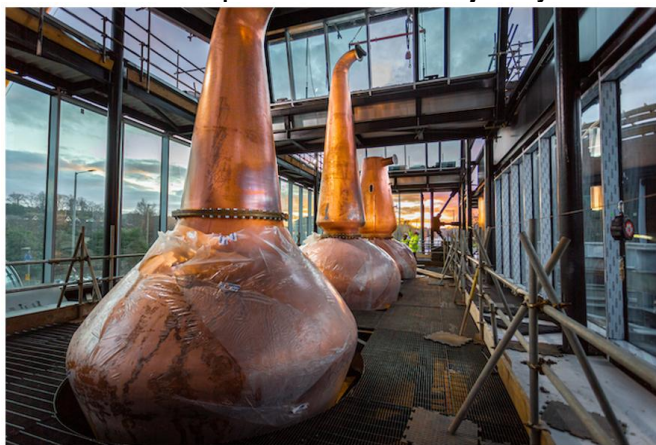
[Gary Carter](#) - [Scotch](#) | March 21, 2022

[Rosebank Whisky](#) is a step closer to a full revival of its distillery, as three new, hand-made stills have recently gone in. They are exact replicas of the historic stills to be replaced.

Rosebank's signature Lowland single malt whisky was born from a combination of triple distillation (a lighter style of whisky) with worm-tub condensing (a thicker liquid).

Malcolm Rennie, Rosebank's distillery manager, said in a prepared statement triple distillation is an integral piece in the "somewhat nonsensical jigsaw puzzle that is the Rosebank spirit. It generally

enhances the lighter, smoother and fruitier components of a spirit, and so is a vital first step in the 'new' Rosebank journey."



Copper Stills Installation, Rosebank Distillery, Falkirk, 5th March 2022 (image via Rosebank)

In order to replicate the original Rosebank style, parent company Ian Macleod Distillers used the original still blueprints from Abercrombie Coppersmiths when they bought the distillery, which helped to replicate the distillation process used more than 30 years ago. The blueprints were then handed to still-makers, Forsyths, who crafted the new stills to the exact dimensions of those used on-site long ago.

Richard Forsyth, managing director of Forsyths, said that to this day, his company still uses their forefathers' hand-hammering techniques to shape copper into pot stills. "Of course, we've tried to mechanize it as much as possible, but the finishes we produce are still very much hands-on, and it's a very physical job," he added. In the revival, the exterior of [Rosebank's distillery](#) is nearing completion, set for late summer of 2022. The distinctive, 108-foot-tall chimney is now complemented by a contemporary sloping, stepped roof, showing a mix of original and modern architecture.

Of the new look at Rosebank, Malcolm Rennie said that unlike traditional distilleries, Rosebank will have a new glass façade, and "passers-by will be able to drink in the beauty of these stills from the street-level."

A rare 50-year-old Speyside Scotch arrives in Singapore
The Glenlivet is releasing only a single bottle of its prized Winchester Collection Vintage 1967 in Singapore. In partnership with The Glenlivet.



The Glenlivet Winchester Collection Vintage 1967. (Photo: The Glenlivet)

[LIN WEIWEN](#) -30 Mar 2022 06:30AM

Whisky connoisseurs, take note. Speyside-based distillery The Glenlivet has released just one bottle of The Glenlivet Winchester Collection Vintage 1967, a 50-year-old whisky, for the Singapore market.

First released outside of Singapore in 2019, The Glenlivet Winchester Collection Vintage 1967, which is limited to only 150 bottles globally, is the third addition to The Glenlivet's Winchester Collection of old and rare whiskies. The previous two releases were Vintage 1964 and Vintage 1966, launched in 2014 and 2016 respectively.

According to The Glenlivet, the whiskies in the Winchester Collection allow the distillery "to tell a new chapter in The Glenlivet's rich history and pay tribute to those who shaped this Speyside single malt whisky".



Only one bottle of the 50-year-old whisky has been allocated to Singapore. (Photo: The Glenlivet)

The Glenlivet Winchester Collection Vintage pays homage to Alan Winchester, the distillery's esteemed master distiller. Winchester, who has more than four decades of experience in the Scotch industry and also oversees distillation for the 14 distilleries in the Pernod Ricard group (of which The Glenlivet is part of), earned the accolade of Master Distiller of the Year in Whisky Magazine's "Icons of Whisky Scotland 2017." He is also the past president of the Malt Distillers Association and past chairman of the Institute of Brewing and Distilling in Scotland.

"The launch of Vintage 1967 is a momentous occasion for The Glenlivet, and a particularly proud one for me personally. To have my name associated with one of the finest luxury single malts that money can buy is an honour – what a fantastic way to celebrate more than 40 years in the whisky industry," said Winchester. Bottled in June 2018, The Glenlivet Winchester Collection Vintage 1967 is a blend of rare single malts, the youngest of which was laid down by Robert Arthur, the distillery's former master distiller, in 1967. Generations of master distillers continued to monitor the elixir's ageing process as it slumbered in American oak barrels, hogheads, and sherry butts. The spirit is non-chill filtered at cask strength with an ABV of 48 per cent.

According to its press statement, the Vintage 1967 offers a rich and fruity nose, with notes of apricot jam and sweet ripe peaches, and a hint of toasted almonds. The taste is smooth and velvety, with flavours of fondant orange and milk chocolate, and a long, luxuriously sweet finish.

The whisky's bottle and curved case designs are beautiful to boot. Award-winning British designer Bethan Gray – whose grandfather was a research forester in the Cairngorms, where the distillery is located – drew inspiration from the River Spey and the layers of mist that drape the surrounding valleys to reinterpret her characteristic Dhow pattern that encircles the bottle.



The whisky bottle features a curved case design and an ombre effect to reflect the ageing process of whisky. (Photo: The Glenlivet)
The hand-stained birds-eye maple case is made with solid copper overlays that are reminiscent of the distillery's charred barrels and copper stills. The canister is also inlaid with mother-of-pearl to reflect the freshwater pearl mussel shells indigenous to the River Spey.

Master glassblower Brodie Nairn was engaged to create an ombre effect – a visual gradation of colours – on the bottle to reflect the ageing process of whisky. Each bottle is then engraved and hand-painted.

Gray, who spent many months working closely with Winchester to produce Vintage 1967, said: "Everything I do is about collaborating with people to tell stories through craft, so it was a real honour to work with Alan Winchester to create this incredibly special bottle of Scotch whisky. We're both inspired by spending time in nature and what better inspiration than the Cairngorms, where The Glenlivet distillery is based?"

Winchester said the collaboration with Gray has allowed them to "epitomise not only Vintage 1967's luxurious quality but also the expert craftsmanship which led to its creation".

He added: "The result is a beautiful and captivating bottle, which complements the sublime tasting experience and helps make Vintage 1967 the definitive collector's item."

The Vintage 1967 will be sold at \$35,000. Interested buyers should first visit [this link](#) to fill in their contact information in a form for the Pernod Ricard team to get in touch with them.

Craigellachie debuts 13YO Armagnac Cask Finish

01 APRIL 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Bacardi-owned Scotch brand Craigellachie has kicked-off a new collection with a 13-year-old whisky finished in an Armagnac cask.



The 13-year-old Craigellachie whisky is the first bottling in a new cask-finished range

Craigellachie 13 Years Old Armagnac Cask Finish is the first expression in the brand's new Cask Collection, which was inspired by the distillery's use of worm tub condensers (also known as coil condensers).

To make the range, Craigellachie sourced casks from producers of oak-aged spirits who also use the same condensers to create their liquid.

The Speyside producer said there were only a handful of distilleries that still use this old fashioned method to condense their spirits, with most now favouring the modern approach of 'shell and tube'. Craigellachie malt master Stephanie Macleod said: "Craigellachie is a distinctly bold and brooding malt; full-bodied and meaty so we are using these cask types to complement and elevate the signature character of the distillery, not mask it, to add an extra dimension of flavour and intrigue."

The brand matured its 13-year-old single malt in a combination of refill and recharred Bourbon barrels, followed by an additional year of secondary maturation in Bas-Armagnac casks from Gascony in France.

The resulting liquid offers 'warming notes of baked apples, dusted with heady cinnamon' and flavours of caramel shortcake, pineapple and 'fiery bonfire night' aromas.

Bottled at 46% ABV, the new expression is priced at RRP £52.99/€49.99/US\$65.

The whisky will initially be available in the UK, Germany and France from April, before being rolled out in the US and Taiwan later this year.

The core Craigellachie portfolio includes 13-year-old, 17-year-old and 23-year-old whiskies.

In October 2018, Craigellachie [launched its oldest whisky to date](#) – 51 bottles of a 51-year-old single malt. The expression was given away for free to whisky fans globally and bottles were not available to buy.

Ardbeg debuts Ardcore whisky for Fèis Ìle 2022

05 APRIL 2022 By Alice Brooker

Islay distillery Ardbeg has revealed a limited edition single malt called Ardcore to mark this year's Fèis Ìle festival.



The punk-inspired Ardcore whisky is bottled at 46% ABV. Ardbeg Day is held once a year on the final Saturday of Islay's Festival of Music and Malt (Fèis Ìle), which will be held from 27 May to 4 June.

This year's Ardbeg Day (4 June) will see festivities take place at the distillery, online and at local events worldwide.

Colin Gordon, Ardbeg's distillery manager, said: "This year will be my first physical Ardbeg Day. We know not everybody can make it to Islay, so we're delighted to be broadcasting all the day's antics online too."

"Whether at the distillery or at home, we hope lots of you rock up, punked out and ready to party come 4 June."

Ardcore has been crafted with roasted black malt, which is a first for the distillery.

The bottling draws inspiration from the brand's punk past, with Islay's main port, Port Ellen, going by the nickname 'Punk Ellen' in the 1970s.

Ardbeg's head of distilling and whisky creation, Dr Bill Lumsden, described the whisky as tasting "like biting on a spiky ball". He added: "Ardcore is a dram that wears its heart on its sleeve – its black heart."

"Created with roasted black malt, burnt to hair-raising levels, this spirit is all about substance. Notes of charcoal and sweet smoke make for an in-your-face nose, while potent notes of aniseed and dark chocolate stamp this bottle out as one fit only for the most Ardcore of fans."

On the palate, the liquid delivers flavours of peanut brittle toffee, smoked lime and bonfire, while the finish is long and sweet with lingering notes of toffee and soot.

The 46% ABV whisky will be available to buy from Ardbeg Embassies, whisky specialists, online retailers and from the distillery visitor centre, for RRP £100 (US\$131.37).

Earlier this year, Ardbeg launched a [13-year-old whisky](#), crafted using the longest fermentation in the producer's history.

Bowmore bottles 50-year-old whisky

05 APRIL 2022 By Kate Malczewski

Islay distillery Bowmore has unveiled the final whisky in its Vaults Series: an 'ultra rare' single malt from 1969 priced at US\$42,000.



The Islay whisky producer has concluded its Vaults Series

By Kate Malczewski

The limited edition whisky will be rolled out exclusively in global travel retail in the coming months.

With just 339 bottles available globally, Bowmore 1969 was matured in American oak ex-Bourbon barrels and hogsheads. It offers notes of citrus fruits, honey, vanilla and apple pie on the nose, with almonds, lemon, crème caramel, coconut and peat smoke on the palate – though the producer said the single malt's flavour profile is 'almost undefinable'.

The 50-year old bottling is now available to buy at London Heathrow Airport, and will debut in Amsterdam Schipol Airport, Istanbul Airport and more in the months ahead.

It joins expressions from 1965, 1966 and 1964 in the whisky maker's Vaults collection.

"The 1960s are truly the defining decade for Bowmore distillery and rightfully these incredible whiskies have become amongst the most admired and revered single malts we've ever produced," said David Turner, distillery manager.

"The depth of character in this 50-year-old whisky is mind blowing and anyone lucky enough to try this will be tasting an exceptionally scarce part of the Bowmore legacy."

1965 availability

In 2018, Bowmore [debuted its 1965 release](#), limited to only 232 bottles.

The 52-year-old whisky initially launched in Los Angeles International Airport, and will be available to purchase at the Hainan Sanya Downtown duty-free store soon.

"We're delighted to launch Bowmore 1969 exclusively to global travel retail in the coming months so that travellers can experience the liquid gold firsthand. Paired with the Bowmore 1965, the bottles are perfect for collectors, drinkers and investors alike," said Manuel González, marketing director of GTR for Beam Suntory, which owns Bowmore.

"They showcase some of the rarest whiskies from the timeless Bowmore distillery and bring a totally new aged expression to the whisky portfolio. They will certainly tantalise both dedicated fans and curious customers to discover the outstanding whiskies."

Glasgow Distillery Co debuts 700ml bottles

07 APRIL 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

The Glasgow Distillery Co has moved to a larger bottle size for its 1770 Scotch range, using less glass than the original 500ml format.



The larger bottle size allows Glasgow Distillery Co to boost its global exports

The new 700ml bottle format will be available across 1770's Signature range of core single malts.

The Scotch whisky producer said the move to a larger bottle size comes at no additional cost for its customers, following an increase in production and international growth.

Liam Hughes, co-founder and CEO of The Glasgow Distillery Co, said: "As Glasgow springs back to her vibrant self, following a difficult couple of years, at The Glasgow Distillery we wanted to come back bigger too, with a larger bottle allowing us to expand our international exports and open up exciting new markets."

"The new packaging is already proving a positive move for us as we prepare to ship orders of our single malt to the US; China; Singapore and a new distribution partner in France for the first time."

"From day one, our mission was to produce a whisky range that is led by flavour and quality, and this new bottle size is another step on that journey."

"Since our first release in 2018 we have been steadily increasing production across our Glasgow 1770 Signature Range and now we're thrilled to reveal this bigger bottle with a more environmentally friendly design."

The products are available to purchase via the distillery's website, priced at RRP £49 (US\$64).

The range will subsequently be available at specialist retailers across the UK, then France, Germany, Denmark, Australia, China, South East Asia and the US. It will be rolled out to further export markets later in 2022.

In February, the Scotch producer created an [exclusive 1770 single malt](#) in partnership with Glasgow's Whisky Festival.

Talisker launches 27YO Elements whisky

08 APRIL 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Diageo-owned Isle of Skye distillery Talisker has released a 27-year-old single malt, the brand's second triple-matured expression to date.



Talisker Elements 27 Year Old is limited to 2,000 bottles

The limited edition Talisker Elements whisky has been matured initially in refill casks, followed by a second maturation in heavily-charred casks, and finally laid to rest in old European oak puncheons.

The resulting liquid offers classic Talisker campfire smoke with sweet notes and an 'intense smoky, spicy, and chilli-pepper power' on the finish.

Daniel Lumsden, distillery manager, said: "The Isle of Skye is a constant inspiration for the whisky we craft and this bottle celebrates the power and depth of the elements around us by exploring the thunderous waves of flavours unique to Talisker's rugged coastal home."

"From intense smoky winds and beastly storms to sweet soaring skies and salty maritime aromas, the explorer spirit of Skye is captured by Talisker Elements."

"Whisky lovers who brave the long journey to meet us on Skye will certainly be rewarded for their adventurous spirit by having the chance to taste what I regard as the most expressive, elemental Talisker released yet."

Limited to 2,000 bottles, Talisker Elements 27 Year Old whisky (58% ABV) is available to purchase from the distillery. It carries an RRP of £495 (US\$646) per 700ml.

This summer, the distillery will unveil a new reimagined visitor experience as part of Diageo's [£150 million \(US\\$215m\) investment in Scotch whisky tourism](#).

Raasay debuts its oldest single malt to date

11 APRIL 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

London-based Berry Bros & Rudd has released the first single cask bottling from Scotland's Isle of Raasay Distillery, its oldest whisky to date.



Berry Bros has released 240 bottles of a Raasay single cask whisky from 2017

Based on the Hebridean Isle, the Scottish distillery started production in September 2017. The producer [bottled the first legal single malt whisky](#) from the Hebridean island in November 2020. The 2017 Raasay single cask #23 selected for this bottling comes from the distillery's peated distillate. After three years in a first-fill ex-Bourbon barrel, the liquid was split for six months into two quarter casks, ex-oloroso and Pedro Ximénez (PX) Sherry, before being vatted back together. Alasdair Day, co-founder and master distiller at Isle of Raasay, said: "We are delighted with this first-ever independent bottling of our Isle of Raasay single malt. A single cask bottling from the 23rd cask filled at the Isle of Raasay resulting in the oldest whisky bottled to date from the distillery.

"This is a bold, balanced, complex single malt combining ex-Tennessee whiskey barrel maturation with oloroso and PX Sherry finishing."

The resulting liquid is bottled at 56.1% ABV and offers notes of apricot, Sauternes wine and coastal peat smoke, along with hints of spice, orange syrup and dried fruit.

Jonny McMillan, assistant reserve spirits manager at Berry Bros & Rudd, said: "The last few years has seen a small but meaningful movement by a few Scottish startup distilleries to create interesting and characterful distillate; not jumping on the bandwagon of Scotch whisky's current global success but pursuing true innovation with local barley varieties or unusual yeast strains – Isle of Raasay is one of these distilleries which is going above and beyond to create a whisky with its own unique identity."

The 2017 Raasay single cask #23 is available to buy from Berry Bros & Rudd, Master of Malt and The Whisky Exchange, priced at RRP £120 (US\$156). Only 240 bottles have been produced.

In November last year, Berry Bros & Rudd released 539 bottles of a [14-year-old single cask Scotch](#) from Royal Brackla Distillery.

In February, the owner of Isle of Raasay Distillery revealed plans to [build a sustainable single malt whisky distillery](#) in Campbeltown.

Bowmore 22YO debuts in China GTR

11 APRIL 2022 By Alice Brooker

Beam Suntory has launched Bowmore 22-Year-Old Pedro Ximénez Cask Finish exclusively to global travel retail (GTR) in China.



Just 3085 bottles of the 22-year-old have been released to China's GTR

The limited edition bottling was aged for 18 years in four different casks, including butts, barrels and hogsheads, followed by further maturation in European oak Pedro Ximénez casks.

The expression was hand-selected by Islay distillery Bowmore's master blender, Ron Welsh.

He commented: "We are always looking for ways to expand our portfolio of exceptional whiskies and the opportunity to introduce new flavours.

"We are excited to add the Spanish flair associated with Pedro Ximénez Sherry to the heritage and character made famous by Bowmore to make this perfect combination.

"I have no doubt that travellers and whisky lovers across China will be pleased to experience this wonderful addition to the Bowmore family."

Only 3,085 bottles have been released through China Duty Free Group (CDFG).

On the nose, the liquid delivers aromas of treacle and sticky toffee pudding, plus bees wax and pecan pie. On the palate, the 22-year-old presents flavours of syrupy molasses, Morello cherries and dark chocolate. The finish is long and sweet with traces of Sherry.

Manuel González, marketing director of GTR for Beam Suntory, said: "Combining Bowmore's smooth quality with the new flavours presented by Pedro Ximénez Sherry, this whisky is the perfect example of our commitment to offering consumers the opportunity to get their hands on new and exciting limited edition products to enjoy.

"The Bowmore 22-Year-Old Pedro Ximénez Cask Finish is a response to market trends, which show that there is a strong preference for smooth whisky in China, with Sherry casks from luxury brands proving to be more popular among our target audience than traditionally mainstream alternatives."

The whisky is bottled at 48% ABV.

Charles Chen, president of CDFG, said: "We know local passengers will love the opportunity to try the rare combination showcased in this exquisite spirit.

"CDFG has always had an excellent relationship with Beam Suntory and our partnership will continue to reap rewards for travellers across China for many years to come."

Earlier this month, Bowmore [bottled a 50-year-old whisky](#) for its Vaults series.

Peated Scotch Blind Taste Test: Our Professional Taster Picks His Earthy Favorites

[ZACH JOHNSTON](#) TWITTER LIFE WRITER

MARCH 30, 2022

Peated [Scotch whisky](#) is perhaps the most divisive style of whisky. This [earthy dram](#) tends to either be beloved to the deepest reaches of your soul from the very first sip or hated for life with the fire of a thousand suns without much in between.

I tend to fall in the latter camp, but that really depends on the smokiness of the juice. Phenols are what people love or hate with [peated whisky](#). Speaking very generally, “peated barley” is barley that has been introduced to moisture to begin the germination process (sprouting), then dried using smoke from [peat](#) — a type of mossy, carbon-rich soil that can be used as fire fuel — to halt germination and complete the malting process.

While that drying process happens, the malts are imbued with phenols. Which then manifest a certain set of flavors into the wash, the distillate, and eventually, the finished whisky. Think: medicinal, iodine-laced, mineral, earthy, smoky, ashy, umami, fatty, bitter, and, yes, smoky. But, as with all [tasting notes in whisky](#), there are varying degrees to the softness and severity of those notes. That can actually be measured by the PPM (parts per million) of those phenols. 70 to 80 PPMs is very high. 50 to 60 is pretty average. 30 to 40 is low. 20 is pretty much the lowest you'll find in the mainstream. Again, all of this varies the deeper you go.

Science aside, in order to parse out these [peated whiskies](#), I decided it was high time for a blind taste test and ranking. I grabbed eight peated Scotch whiskies (both single malts and blends) at random from my shelves, had my wife pour them for me, and dug in.

Today's lineup:

- Talisker 8 The Rogue Seafury
- BenRiach The Smoky 12
- Ardbeg Wee Beastie
- Johnnie Walker 18
- Laphroaig An Cuan Mor
- Bowmore 15
- Caol Ila Distillers Edition
- Compass Box Glasgow Blend

Let's get tasting!

Part 1: The Tasting



ZACH JOHNSTON

Taste 1



ZACH JOHNSTON

Tasting Notes:

The sip opens with a matrix of smoked fruits, sea spray, iodine, and dry nori sheets with a hint of wet forest floor and wet marble countertops. The taste leans into smoked sea salt with an echo of dried rose, hints of green bell pepper, and dirty firewood bark. The mid-palate leans into that black dirt as smoked stone fruits lead toward a spicy tobacco vibe at the very end.

Taste 2



ZACH JOHNSTON

Tasting Notes:

Band-Aids, dark chocolate powder, and sandalwood drive the nose but stay pretty light. That lightness carries on to the palate with a dark chocolate orange next to a grapefruit pith with an earthy moss underbelly. The finish has a whisper of old campfire ash the morning after a cookout with a little more of that Band-Aid.

Taste 3



ZACH JOHNSTON

Tasting Notes:

Alcohol-soaked dried fruits mingle with saffron stewed pears and a vanilla woodiness that leans into dry peat on the nose. The taste is somewhat briny with smoked pears that lead to smoked bacon fat and black ash. The finish feels like fresh asphalt with smoked pear tobacco that's been dipped in salty water.

Taste 5



ZACH JOHNSTON

Tasting Notes:

This opens with a nutty nose next to old leather, oat biscuits, and a hint of Ace bandage. Raisins and plum skins drive the palate toward a medicinal vibe countered by a spicy nut with a hint of honey. The finish moves from light wood toward vanilla tobacco with a final spray of Windex.

Taste 4



ZACH JOHNSTON

Tasting Notes:

This is incredibly soft with applewood mingling with buttery toffee, worn leather, and winter spice on the nose. The palate is all caramel and marzipan as vanilla pudding layers with soft spice, fresh tangerines, and dark chocolate. That choco vibe lasts into the finish with sweet spices and dried chili rounding out the lightly peated end.

Taste 6



ZACH JOHNSTON

Tasting Notes:

Smoked chocolate malts draw you in as smoked raisins, dates, and figs round out the nose with old leather and sourdough scones. A cedar box full of spicy tobacco opens the palate as Caro Syrup sweetens the whole taste toward more dried fruits. The finish holds onto those dried fruits as cinnamon oat cakes mingle with sweet tobacco on the slow fade out.

Taste 7



ZACH JOHNSTON

Tasting Notes:

Smoked apricot, honey, dark chocolate powder, and star anise drive the nose. The palate is bold with crispy salmon skins next to anchovy oils countered by smoked salt toffee candy, orange oils, and dark stone fruits. The finish leans into the fatty smoked salmon vibes as the smoke and peat lean towards a dampened seaside campfire after a rainstorm.

Taste 8



ZACH JOHNSTON

Tasting Notes:

Smoked prunes, nutmeg, and cherry lead the way on the nose. The palate is fairly thin with hints of smoked malts with a spicy edge, dry straw, almond shells, and ripe plums. The finish has a touch of a cold fireplace and BBQ charcoal next to a thin layer of dried figs and plums.

Part 2: The Ranking



ZACH JOHNSTON

8. BenRiach The Smoky Twelve — Taste 2



BROWN-FORMAN

ABV: 46%

Average Price: [\\$72](#)

The Whisky:

The base is a mix of unpeated and peated malted barley. Those juices are then mellowed for at least 12 years in a combination of ex-bourbon, ex-sherry, and ex-Marsala wine casks. The results are then blended by whisky icon Dr. Rachel Barrie into this arresting whisky.

Blind Tasting Notes From Above:

Band-Aids, dark chocolate powder, and sandalwood drive the nose, but stay pretty light. That lightness carries on to the palate with a dark chocolate orange next to a grapefruit pith with an earthy moss underbelly. The finish has a whisper of old campfire ash the morning after a cookout with a little more of that Band-Aid.

Bottom Line:

This was perfectly fine. There was no wow factor but it did deliver a mild peated whisky. Still, this feels more like a mixing whisky than a sipper.

7. Laphroaig An Cuan Mor — Taste 5



BEAM SUNTORY

ABV: 48%

Average Price: [\\$98](#)

The Whisky:

“An Cuan Mor” means “Big Ocean” in Gaelic. This whisky leans into the ocean by being aged right next to the sea on Islay. The whisky spends years maturing in first-fill ex-bourbon casks. After a while (there’s no age statement), the whisky is then transferred to ex-sherry casks made from European oak. Those barrels are then vatted and proofed down with that soft Islay water before bottling.

Blind Tasting Notes From Above:

This opens with a nutty nose next to old leather, oat biscuits, and a hint of Ace bandage. Raisins and plum skins drive the palate toward a medicinal vibe, countered by a spicy nut with a hint of honey. The finish moves from light wood toward vanilla tobacco with a final spray of Windex.

Bottom Line:

This was a bit much in the opposite direction. The Ace bandage and Windex are a lot to take in. Still, there was a clear presence of each flavor on the nose and palate. It just really wasn’t for me.

6. Ardbeg Wee Beastie — Taste 3



LOUIS VUITTON MOET HENNESSY

ABV: 47.4%

Average Price: [\\$50](#)

The Whisky:

This is a new-ish expression from Ardbeg (it was released in April of 2020). The juice is aged for only five years in both ex-bourbon and ex-oloroso sherry casks before marrying for the final product. The idea is to give a sense of the quality of the peaty juice from Port Ellen’s malting house without too much wood influence.

Blind Tasting Notes From Above:

Alcohol-soaked dried fruits mingle with saffron stewed pears and a vanilla woodiness that leans into dry peat on the nose. The taste is somewhat briny with smoked pears that lead to smoked bacon fat and black ash. The finish feels like fresh asphalt with smoked pear tobacco that’s been dipped in salty water.

Bottom Line:

This felt a little young on the palate without a lot of depth, especially for an Ardbeg. The phenols, or peat, were off the charts with that asphalt vibe, and that sort of muted everything else. At the very least, it was a point of view; and as with the Laphroaig above, that counts for a lot.

5. Compass Box Glasgow Blend Scotch Whisky — Taste 8



COMPASS BOX

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$40](#)

The Whisky:

This expression is a marrying of whiskies from all over Scotland. 65 percent of the juice comes from single malts from a “distillery near the town of Aberlour,” Laphroaig, and Clynelish. The rest is part Highland malt blend (from the Glen Moray, Tomatin, and Balmenach distilleries) and a grain whisky from Cameronbridge distillery. Those whiskies were barreled in sherry and bourbon casks with a French oak barrel thrown in too.

Blind Tasting Notes From Above:

Smoked prunes, nutmeg, and cherry lead the way on the nose. The palate is fairly thin with hints of smoked malts with a spicy edge, dry straw, almond shells, and ripe plums. The finish has a touch of a cold fireplace and BBQ charcoal next to a thin layer of dried figs and plums.

Bottom Line:

This was another whisky that was just fine. It was smoky, fruity, and easy to drink. That said, I would likely lean more towards using this as a cocktail base for a great drink than a sipper.

4. Johnnie Walker 18 — Taste 4



DIAGEO

ABV: 40%

Average Price: [\\$90](#)

The Whisky:

This blend used to be called Johnnie Walker Platinum, which was also aged for 18 years. You might still see some of those bottles on shelves where scotch sells slowly. This is the same juice, which is comprised of 18 whiskies all of which are a minimum of 18 years old. The primary distilleries in the bottle are Blair Athol, Cardhu, Glen Elgin, and Auchroisk.

Blind Tasting Notes From Above:

This is incredibly soft with applewood mingling with buttery toffee, worn leather, and winter spice on the nose. The palate is all caramel and marzipan as vanilla pudding layers with soft spice, fresh tangerines, and dark chocolate. That choco vibe lasts into the finish with sweet spices and dried chili rounding out the lightly peated end.

Bottom Line:

This was soft and nice. That saved it a lot as it was also one of the lighter whiskies on this list. Lightness aside, there was real flavor in this whisky that stood out and made sense. It's well-rounded and inviting. It's just not very bold.

3. Bowmore 15 — Taste 6



BEAM SUNTORY

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$99](#)

The Whisky:

This bottle from Islay's Bowmore is a 15-year-old whisky that's a blend of American and European oak. For the first 12 years, this whisky rests in ex-bourbon barrels. For the last three years, the whisky is transferred to Oloroso sherry casks. The whisky is then finished with local spring water, bringing it down to a very approachable 86 proof.

Blind Tasting Notes From Above:

Smoked chocolate malts draw you in, as smoked raisins, dates, and figs round out the nose with old leather and sourdough scones. A cedar box full of spicy tobacco opens the palate as Caro Syrup sweetens the whole taste toward more dried fruits. The finish holds onto those dried fruits as cinnamon oat cakes mingle with sweet tobacco on the slow fade out.

Bottom Line:

This was just ... nice. There was nothing overtly off-putting about the low phenols, and that lack of heavy peat meant that more nuanced flavors could shine through. Overall, this felt like a great end-of-day sipper that'd also work wonders in a cocktail. It's versatile and delicious.

2. Talisker 8 The Rogue Seafury — Taste 1



DIAGEO

ABV: 59.7%

Average Price: [\\$142](#)

The Whisky:

This year's Talisker sticks with the classic age statement of 8-years while leaning into the smokier side of the island whisky. The build on this expression is a marrying of the "Smokiest Reserves" from the Talisker warehouse. That juice is vatted and bottled at cask strength.

Blind Tasting Notes From Above:

The sip opens with a matrix of smoked fruits, sea spray, iodine, and dry nori sheets with a hint of wet forest floor and wet marble countertops. The taste leans into smoked sea salt with an echo of dried rose, hints of green bell pepper, and dirty firewood bark. The mid-palate leans into that black dirt as smoked stone fruits lead toward a spicy tobacco vibe at the very end.

Bottom Line:

This is freakin' delicious. It's so complex and unique while still feeling dialed in and accessible. The only fault is that it wasn't quite as funky as it could have been, which is why it's just shy of first place.

1. Caol Ila Distillers Edition — Taste 7



DIAGEO

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$88](#)

The Whisky:

This yearly release from the tiny Islay distillery, Caol Ila, is all about the finish. The 12-year-old juice is finished in Moscatel sherry casks to give it a truly deep fruitiness next to that briny Islay peat.

Blind Tasting Notes From Above:

Smoked apricot, honey, dark chocolate powder, and star anise drive the nose. The palate is bold with crispy salmon skins next to anchovy oils countered by smoked salt toffee candy, orange oils, and dark stone fruits. The finish leans into the fatty smoked salmon

vibes as the smoke and peat lean towards a dampened seaside campfire after a rainstorm.

Bottom Line:

It was close between this and the Talisker above. But, Caol Ila won out for that little bit more depth and funk. This really is a bold whisky that has a softness that's very enticing. You're never overwhelmed by the flavor notes and they all build to a bigger whole at the end. It's truly a classic pour of whisky.

Part 3: Final Thoughts



ZACH JOHNSTON

Overall, I'm not that surprised by this outcome. I love Caol Ila and Talisker deeply. What can I say? I dig that seaside funkiness and lower-peated vibe.

In the end, I think my first statement up top remains true. These whiskies are going to be very hit and miss for folks, especially if you're coming from the very sweet bourbon world. Sweetness is not the name of the game with these. This is about earthiness, fruit, and smoke with the side of the ocean in all its glory. If you're into that, these are for you, especially the Caol Ila and Talisker.

Membership and Dinner prices for 2021-2022

Membership Fee:	\$50 (singles)
	\$75 (couples)
One Time Initiation Fee:	\$15
Standard Dinner Fee:	\$90 (member)
	\$100 (non-member)

Reservation policy

- The agreement with the Kitchen's requires that we provide five (5) business days notice for them to guarantee accommodation for our requested numbers. To accommodate the Kitchen's needs and meet our obligation with them; our members are requested to respond to the emailed invitation five (5) business days prior to the respective dinner to guarantee a seat at the dinner. Following the RSVP date members will be placed on a waitlist.
- For these individuals the process will be as follows, using the Monday September 20th, 2021 dinner date as an example:
 - Dinner invitations will be sent out Friday August 20th, 2021. Please respond to me (rdifazio04@gmail.com) in the form of an e-transfer. I will then acknowledge that you have a seat. Please understand that if you do not receive a response you are not guaranteed a seat at the respective dinner. In such circumstances (e.g., computer glitches) please e-mail me again or call me (613-532-5285).
 - Once payment is received I will send a confirmation and your seat will be guaranteed reserved.

- An RSVP only does not guarantee the seat and if there is a waiting list, you run the risk of losing your seat.
- Unless otherwise stated accommodation at the dinner will be guaranteed for all members who respond by Friday September 3rd, 2021 @ 6pm or until capacity is achieved.
- Please keep in mind until further notice our maximum attendance will be capped at 40. So delays run the risk of you missing out.

Cancellation policy

- Using the same example as above, anyone who cancels anytime prior to Friday September 3rd, 2021 @ 6pm will be removed from the list.
- Anyone canceling between Friday September 3rd, 2021 @ 6pm and Monday September 20th, 2021 will be expected to pay for the cost of the dinner and scotch (\$90). It is the responsibility of the member who cancels their (or their guest's) reservation to find a replacement. If I am asked to find a substitute and one is found, then the member will be asked to pay for 50% of their dinner cost.
- Anyone who fails to attend the Monday September 20th, 2021 dinner without having cancelled and been successfully replaced will be expected to pay the full cost (\$90). A member will be responsible for their guest's cancellation (\$100).
- If a member asks to be included at the dinner between Friday September 3rd, 2021 @ 6pm and Monday September 20th, 2021 their name will be placed on a wait-list and be accommodated on a first-come first-serve basis.

Dinner Payments

- Please consider sending your payment by e-transfer to me at: rdifazio04@gmail.com prior to the dinner. The password will be "KSMS2022RDF", to whatever your security question is. Receiving payment in advance will allow everyone the opportunity to socialize before the dinner as well as reduce the accounting work required after.
- For e-transfers, Members are responsible for collecting from their guests, and then forwarding one payment in total by e-transfer.

Assigned / Reserved Seating

- Assigned Seating will be offered for the January, June, August, and December dinners.
- Reserved Seating will only be considered if it is a group consisting of a single member plus 3+ guests or a couple member plus 2+ guests.

Perfume / Cologne and Whisky

- Our enjoyment of fine whisky at KSMS starts with a nosing - for many a definitive and delicate moment in their relationship with a new dram. The power of aroma is unquestionable. From defining life experiences to the recall of special memories, the sense of smell is as individual as a fingerprint and has the ability to evoke some of the most precious, rewarding and distinctive moments. Unfortunately strong perfumes can mask and distort other aromas and smells and interfere with the ability to register and recognize subtler fragrances.
- To be fair to all we ask all our members to please refrain from wearing scented products and perfumes to our KSMS evenings.

Just a note because we care.

Please understand that for the purpose of each event you are advised to drink responsibly and refrain from excessive consumption. The dinners hosted by the Kingston Single Malt Society are sampling events. By agreeing to pay and thereby attend the dinner you agree to release from legal responsibility and hold harmless Kingston Single Malt Society, its President Roberto Di Fazio, and any other volunteers from liability or claims arising from these events.





Kingston Single Malt Society

Roberto Di Fazio, President

827 Old Colony Road

Kingston, Ontario, K7P 1S1, Canada

613-532-5285

rdifazio04@gmail.com

<http://www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com>

