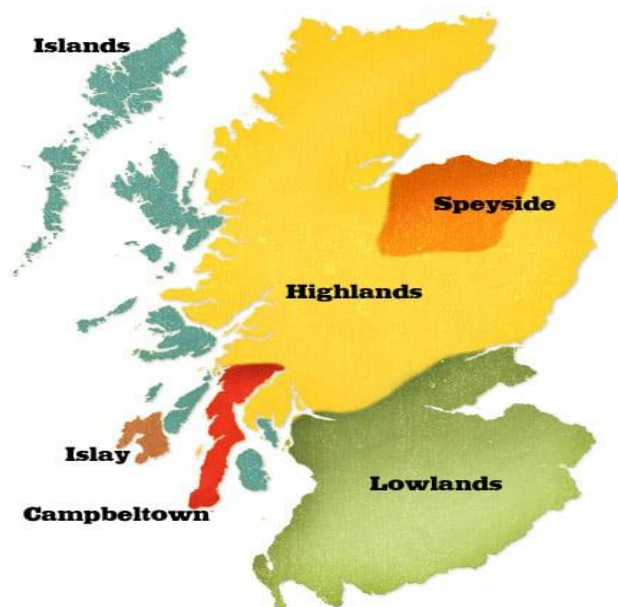


Kingston Single Malt Society

www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com

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

November 14th, 2022 VOLUME 16; NUMBER 5a; No. 208



MENU

First course: Corn & Roasted Red Pepper Bruschetta
with Goat's Feta and Pickled Onions

1st Nosing: GLENDRONACH 11 YEAR OLD HAND-FILLED
(introduced by: Ken Stewart)

Second Course: Gravalax with a Baby Arugula, Fennel
and Pea Shoot Salad with a Crème Fraîche Dressing

2nd Nosing: GLENMORANGIE A TALE OF THE FOREST
(introduced by: Elsabe Falkson)

3rd Nosing: GLENDRONACH 8 YEAR OLD THE HIELAN
(introduced by: Ken Stewart)

Third course: Roasted Pork Rack
with a Warm Mushroom & Barley Salad
and a Sage Caramelized Onion Sauce

4th Nosing: GLENDRONACH CASK STRENGTH BATCH 10
(introduced by: Ken Stewart)

5th Nosing: GLENMORANGIE MALAGA 12 YEARS OLD
(introduced by: Elsabe Falkson)

Fourth course: Maple-Macadamia Tart

with a Glendronach 10 Year Old Fogue Whiskey Chantilly

6th Nosing: GLENMORANGIE COGNAC 13 YEARS OLD
(introduced by: Elsabe Falkson)

GLENMORANGIE A TALE OF THE FOREST Bottling
series: Limited Edition; Bottled: 2022; Label: Crafted
from barley kilned with woodland botanicals
VINTAGES 410936 | 750 mL bottle **Price: \$215.95** Spirits,
Whisky/Whiskey 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

GLENDRONACH 8 YEAR OLD THE HIELAN HIGHLAND
SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY LCBO 463844 | 700 mL
bottle **Price \$117.75** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Scotch
Single Malts 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

GLENDRONACH CASK STRENGTH BATCH 10
HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY LCBO 463844 |
700 mL bottle **Price \$117.75** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey,
Scotch Single Malts 58.6% Alcohol/Vol.

GLENMORANGIE Bottling serie: Barrel Select
Release; Bottled: 08.2020; Stated Age: 12 years old;
Casktype: Bourbon, 1st Fill Malaga Dulce Wine Finish
VINTAGES 410936 | 700 mL bottle **Price: \$145.95** Spirits,
Whisky/Whiskey 47.3% Alcohol/Vol.

GLENDRONACH 10 YEAR OLD FOGUE HIGHLAND
SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY LCBO 463844 | 1000 mL
bottle **Price \$100.00** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Scotch
Single Malts 43.0% Alcohol/Vol.

GLENMORANGIE Bottling serie: Barrel Select
Release; Bottled: 24.05.2021; Stated Age: 13 years
old; Casktype: Cognac Cask Finish VINTAGES 410936 |
700 mL bottle **Price: \$145.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey
46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

October 17th Dinner - KSMS Financial Statement

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Money from 40 October attendees @ \$100) | = \$4000.00 |
| Money from 5 October dinner only @ \$70) | = \$350.00 |
| October dinner 45 persons = | = \$3163.65 |
| (Money remaining for buying Single Malt) | = \$1186.35 |
| Cost of Single Malts: | = \$947.70 |
| Cost of Pours per 45 Persons = \$23.70 | |
| KSMS Monthly operational balance | = \$238.65 |
| Cost per person (All inclusive) | = \$91.36 |
| Money for Heels | = \$310.00 |
| Money Raised from Raffle | = \$ 0.00 |
| KSMS Monthly operational balance | = \$548.65 |

COST OF THE MALTS

GLENDRONACH 2011 Bottling series: Hand-filled at
the distillery; Vintage: 25.04.2011; Bottled:
16.08.2022; Calculated age: 11 years old; Casktype:
PX Puncelon; Casknumber: 529/3126; LCBO 463844 |
700 mL bottle **Price \$450.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey,
Scotch Single Malts 58.2% Alcohol/Vol.

Upcoming Dinner Dates

Monday December 19th 2022 - Christmas Dinner - Blind Tasting
Monday January 23rd 2023 - Robbie Burns - "Fables"
Monday February 13th 2023 - Speyside / Islay
Monday March 13th 2023 - Irish / Speyside
Monday April 17th 2023 - Speyside / Islay
Monday May 29th 2023 - Speyside / Islands / Islay
Monday June 19th 2023 - June BBQ - Speyside / Islands (Mull)

Late-night socialising down as costs soar

24 OCTOBER 2022 By Melita Kiely

As the cost-of-living crisis takes hold, 88.5% of Britons will change or have already changed their socialising habits around late nights out to save money.



The latest Rekom data shows that while Brits are socialising late at night less, they are spending more

The most recent Rekom Night Index – a quarterly report for the late-night leisure industry – showed 35% of respondents said they would ‘significantly reduce’ how frequently they go out.

However, the report also showed that spend per head has grown by 16.5% over the last three months, with nightclubs proving to be particularly popular among younger age groups.

The average total-night-out spend is now higher at £73.36 (US\$83.30), compared with £68.03 (US\$76.83) in March 2022.

Peter Marks, chairman of Rekom UK, said: “Clearly people are starting to consider the impact the cost-of-living crisis will have on their social lives and are putting budgets in place when planning a night out. However, I have confidence in the fact that while financial behaviours are changing, social habits are not.”

Those aged between 18 and 24 years old are adjusting their socialising budgets by focusing on how they prepare for a night out, the survey showed.

Of those who were questioned, 43.4% said they would pre-drink at home more, while 38.2% said they would buy cheaper drinks to have at home. Almost a third (29.4%) said they would cut down on clothes shopping, and hair and beauty treatments before a night out.

The UK night-time economy was worth £112.8 billion (US\$127bn) in 2019, accounting for 5.1% of GDP (gross domestic product) and 1.95 million jobs. Marks added: “We know that as a nightclub business, we will remain resilient if we continue to prioritise well-invested propositions that are good value and relevant to our target audience. Because of this, our nightclubs continue to see a strong surge in attendance.

“This survey acts as an important reminder to all in the hospitality trade that we should prepare for consumer habits to change somewhat. It’s natural against the backdrop of a looming recession that people will choose to cut costs, but we must remember that people will always want to prioritise socialising with friends and come together to enjoy fun, shared experiences.

“If we continue to foster that clear enthusiasm for a night out, we will evolve and become stronger for it.”

In the September 2022 issue of *The Spirits Business* magazine, we explored how [nightclubs in party destinations](#) such as Ibiza and Mykonos are performing post-pandemic.

Tomatin creates Portuguese Collection

18 OCTOBER 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Highland distillery Tomatin has released a limited edition range finished in wine casks from Portugal.



The trio of whiskies have been matured in Portuguese wine casks. The Portuguese Collection comprises The Port Edition, The Moscatel Edition and The Madeira Edition. Each expression is bottled at 46% ABV. The trio of whiskies was distilled on 8 September 2006 and laid down in traditional oak casks for more than eight years.

On 23 April 2015, the whiskies were transferred into Tawny Port, Moscatel de Setúbal and Madeira wine casks for a further seven years.

Scott Adamson, Tomatin blender and global brand ambassador, said: “Portugal has a great tradition of winemaking and is particularly well renowned for its characterful fortified wines.

“We wanted to take some of that incredible aroma, taste and mouthfeel and combine it with the unique flavours of Tomatin to create something outstanding – worthy of the gifting season and special occasions.”

The Port Edition offers an aroma of Black Forest gâteau with spices, forest fruits, and peach and apricot on the finish.

Meanwhile, the Moscatel Edition provides a nose of marmalade, honey and salted caramel, combined with a hint of citrus, ginger and star anise.

The Madeira Edition provides a honey and lemon aroma, with flavours of butterscotch and stewed apples.

The Portuguese Collection is available to buy from Tomatin’s website and specialist retailers worldwide, priced at £90 (US\$102) per 700ml bottle.

Last month, Tomatin Distillery distributed [Shirakawa 1958 Single Malt](#), believed to be ‘the world’s rarest Japanese whisky’.

Bunnahabhain unveils second 12YO whisky

18 OCTOBER 2022 By Alice Brooker

Scotch whisky brand Bunnahabhain has introduced the second release of its 12-year-old cask strength expression.



The Scotch whisky is non-chill-filtered and rests at 56.6% ABV. The ‘most remote distillery’ on Islay has released the 2022 iteration of its 12-year-old limited edition whisky, which takes inspiration from the distillery’s Warehouse 9.

Master distiller Brendan McCarron said: “Not all whiskies work at cask strength and many don’t stand up to full maturation in Sherry casks but Bunnahabhain is different.

“This release really is Bunnahabhain in a bottle and gives people unable to make the trip to the distillery the chance to enjoy the Warehouse 9 experience wherever they may be.”

The whisky was distilled on the shorelines of northern Islay, and matured in first and second-fill oloroso Sherry casks.

Boasting notes of dried fruits and cinnamon spice, the spirit clocks in at 56.6% ABV.

The finish is said to be sweet and long with flavours of cocoa, cherries and a light sea spray.

McCarron added: “This second release is of course similar in many ways to the first, as we follow the same classic recipe of unpeated Islay spirit in oloroso.

“The latest expression is richer in sweet chocolate and red fruits on the nose and carries a spicier finish delivering bigger, richer and fuller flavours of oloroso Sherry that Bunnahabhain drinkers have come to know and love.”

The liquid is recommended served neat or with a few drops of water to encourage floral scents, followed by caramel and vanilla on the palate. Bunnahabhain distillery is said to be world-renowned for its unpeated malts.

The non-chill-filtered bottling is available in Switzerland, the US, Australia, Taiwan, China, the UK, Bulgaria, Canada and Germany.

It retails for RRP £80 (US\$90).

South African drinks group Distell is the owner of Bunnahabhain.

Last month it was revealed that South Africa’s Competition Commission approved [Heineken’s takeover of Distell](#) if it meets certain conditions. The acquisition would not include its Scotch whisky businesses.

Loch Lomond unveils 54YO whisky

19 OCTOBER 2022 By Alice Brooker

Scotch producer Loch Lomond Whiskies is releasing a 54-year-old single malt whisky priced at £24,000 (US\$27,022).



The bottle will retail for £24,000 (US\$27,022)

Pegged as one of the ‘rarest’ bottlings the brand has released, The Loch Lomond 54 Years Old was inspired by the distillery’s surrounding landscape and its straight neck pot stills.

The non-chill-filtered expression was distilled in 1967, and originally matured in refill American oak hogshead casks, before being recasked into a refill European oak Sherry hogshead in 1994. Only 55 bottles will be available.

Master blender Michael Henry said: “It is a real privilege to work with a whisky so rare. Our 54-year-old single malt whisky had been maturing for more than 40 years before I joined as master blender in 2007.

“It takes a very special cask of whisky to make it to 54 years old, and the expectations are high when working with liquid as special and scarce as this. It was a huge undertaking and came with great responsibility.”

On the nose, aromas of crème caramel, fresh vanilla pods, melted brown sugar and toasted oak, orange peel and marmalade are present, while on the palate vibrant fruit, tart pineapple and lemon citrus with a honey and dried fruit sweetness can be tasted.

It is held in a handmade Glencairn crystal decanter – a premium version of the distiller’s recently refreshed bottle design.

The decanter is hand-engraved with a satin infill and features a gold aged-effect metal coin with the Loch Lomond stag logo. The case is a multi-layered oak box, also made by hand.

Sitting at 41.1% ABV, the limited edition whisky will be available globally. In August, news broke that Loch Lomond was the [fastest-growing single malt](#) by volume in 2021, according to IWSR Drinks Market Analysis.

Cruises ‘phenomenal opportunity’ for Pernod

19 OCTOBER 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

The CEO of Pernod Ricard Global Travel Retail has singled out the cruise channel as a “phenomenal opportunity” to recruit younger consumers to the company’s portfolio.



Malibu is a key brand for Pernod Ricard in the cruise channel. Speaking to *The Spirits Business* in Cannes earlier this month, Mohit Lal, chairman and CEO of Pernod Ricard Global Travel Retail (GTR), said the cruise sector was a “fantastic opportunity” as the “nature of cruising is changing”.

“So earlier, if you talk about cruising, people associated it with retired people going to spend a couple of lazy days in a ship, right? It’s completely changed; you see a much younger generation,” he said. “There’s a phenomenal opportunity to recruit.”

Lal noted that rum is a “big category in cruise” with the company focusing on driving brands such as Havana Club.

He also cited brands such as Absolut vodka, Jameson Irish whiskey, and rum-based liqueur Malibu, the latter being a “big brand as far as the cruise business is concerned, it’s summery and edgy”, Lal explained. The company is also looking at driving its gin brands in the channel.

‘Consumption experience’

Lal also noted the emergence of ‘premium’ cruises, with Virgin Voyages launching an adults-only ship. “It’s a much more mature audience, and there you’re able to list more premium products,” he added.

“It’s a great place to build brands because once you’re on a cruise ship you have a captive audience. So if you’ve got 1,000 passengers partying every night, and if your brands are there, then it’s a great way to introduce your brand.

“It’s different from retail, which is a shopping experience. Cruise is a consumption experience, and we are starting to accelerate the way we address cruises.”

Sustainability is also a key focus for Pernod Ricard in the GTR channel. Lal noted that the cruise industry can come “under pressure for not working in the most sustainable fashion”.

“We tried to see how we can drive sustainability in cruises, to have conversations about waste and disposable waste, and rather than supplying individual bottles to start to get bulk packaging,” said Lal.

“We have some technology that is working, including bulk packaging which also guarantees quality because the moment you get away from standard packs you have an issue of counterfeit products.”

In July, Pernod Ricard GTR revealed its [Ecogift tool](#), which analyses the carbon footprint of a gift with purchase.

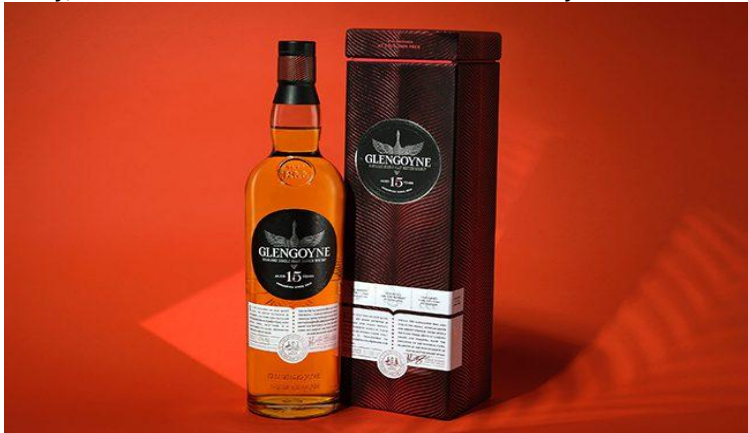
Chivas Regal owner Pernod Ricard saw its [travel retail sales soar by 48%](#) in fiscal 2022, following a ‘rapid rebound’ in international travel. Recovery was ‘exceptionally strong’ in Europe and the Americas.

The company expects its travel retail profit to return to pre-pandemic levels by its 2023 full year.

Glengoyne debuts new 15-year-old whisky

20 OCTOBER 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Highland single malt brand Glengoyne has released a new 15-year-old whisky, matured in a combination of Bourbon and Sherry casks.



Glengoyne 15 Year Old is priced at £90 (US\$101)

The expression will become a permanent addition to the brand's range. Glengoyne's 'light and fruity' new make spirit has been blended together with whiskies matured in first-fill Bourbon and Sherry casks. The Bourbon casks bring notes of sweet dark orchard fruits to the whisky, while the Sherry adds 'oaky spice and vanilla'.

The nose offers hints of malt flour, fresh hay, dried fruits, citrus and rosehip, leading to flavours of tropical fruit, cinnamon, vanilla and apple. The finish is dry with gentle spice and lingering oak.

Katy Muggeridge, brand director at Ian Macleod Distillers, said:

"Glengoyne's spirit spends three times as long in its stills than other whiskies, and this creates a distinctively light, smooth and fruity spirit style."

"For the 15-year-old, we wanted to showcase Glengoyne's signature style brought to maturity in absolute balance from the combination of both Bourbon and Sherry casks."

"The first-fill maturation gives complex depth, bright tropical notes, and a spicy oak finish whilst the refill casks allow the fruity Glengoyne house style to shine through."

The 43% ABV whisky is priced at £90 (US\$101) per 700ml. It is available to buy from Glengoyne's website, as well as leading specialist retailers.

In July, Glengoyne [partnered with professional golf caddy Fanny Sunesson](#) to highlight the 'synergies' between golf caddying and whisky-making.

The past year has seen Glengoyne create a [whisky box that blocks phone signal](#) and release a travel retail-exclusive [53-year-old single malt](#) as the brand's oldest whisky to date.

Super-premium spirits could decline amid recession

20 OCTOBER 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Demand for super-premium wine and spirits brands in the US is expected to drop by mid-single digits in 2023, according to a new report on the impact of a recession on the price segment.



Demand for super-premium spirits and wine are expected to 'soften' in Q4, due to a recession

A report by Rabobank looked at how a recession could affect the consumption of super-premium wine and spirits in the US. Rabobank economists and others see an increasing likelihood of a recession in the near future, the report noted.

Rabobank believes that demand for super-premium brands will 'soften notably' in the fourth quarter of 2022, and 'turn noticeably negative' in 2023. Rabobank expects mid-single-digit declines for the coming year. However, the report said that the long-term growth trend of super-premium brands will 'remain intact'.

"We could imagine a case where the declines could be a bit more pronounced – and this is particularly true of spirits, which saw stronger growth rates in 2021," the report noted.

"That said, we don't expect the downturn to resemble the softness seen during the GFC [global financial crisis]; it should be much more moderate. Perhaps more importantly, we believe the overall growth story of the super-premium segment remains intact, and any declines we may see in the coming year should also be viewed in the context of the exceptional year of growth in 2021."

"We expect the segment to eventually return to its more historical growth trends."

'Impressive growth rates'

The report noted that super-premium wine and spirits have experienced 'impressive growth rates' for more than a decade, surpassing mainstream and value brands. As such, many companies have looked to the super-premium segment for their M&A strategies.

From 2010 to 2021, super-premium spirits enjoyed an average volume growth rate of 8.8%, the report said.

The segment is driven by affluent consumers, Rabobank said, however it said the results from the global financial crisis (GFC) of 2008-2009 shows that these drinkers are not recession proof. During the GFC, the super-premium segments of both wine and spirits experienced 'notable declines', the report said.

The report added that super-premium wine and spirits brands that 'can easily shift sales' from the on-trade to the off-trade will 'enjoy certain advantages'.

Sales of luxury spirits in the US [grew by double digits](#) in the second quarter of 2022, led by Tequila and American whiskey, according to a report by the Distilled Spirits Council of the US.

Macallan unveils coffee-inspired whiskies

25 OCTOBER 2022 By Georgie Pursey

The Macallan has revealed the second edition of its Harmony Collection, which celebrates the world of coffee.



The collection's red packaging reflects the coffee fruit, while the green represents un-roasted coffee beans

The new limited annual release series features two new single malt whiskies: The Macallan Harmony Collection Inspired by Intense Arabica for domestic markets, and Smooth Arabica for global travel retail.

The Macallan whisky maker Steven Bremner has created the 'intensely flavoured' whiskies to pair with coffee, having been inspired by the Ethiopian Arabica coffee bean.

Bremner immersed himself in the art of coffee by hosting a masterclass with world-renowned coffee experts at The Macallan Estate. He explored the journey from field to cup, uncovering the unique process and distinct flavour profiles at each stage.

Bremner commented: "Exploring the world of coffee with our masters in the industry, who shared their knowledge, creativity and love for their art, was both an education and an inspiration.

"There are many parallels between the approach to creating incomparable whisky and coffee. Each requires unique skills and craftsmanship to achieve depth and complexity of taste, and both worlds aim to deliver an extraordinary consumption experience."

Among the coffee masters who shared their knowledge with Bremner were: Ethiopian coffee grower Kenean Asefa Dukamo, whose family works with the Arabica variety showcased by the whiskies; Scottish coffee roaster Lisa Lawson, a pioneer of speciality coffee in Scotland; and award-winning American barista Andrea Allen, renowned for creating coffee experiences.



The Macallan enlisted the help of award-winning American barista Andrea Allen to advise on the process. UK-based coffee artist Dhan Tamang crafted a range of coffee art, sharing his knowledge on the art of the perfect coffee serve and sensory perceptions, while leading coffee historian Professor Jonathan Morris provided an insight into the roots of coffee and how it has become the global phenomenon it is today.

To create the whisky, Bremner selected a combination of American and European oak casks to achieve the distinctive notes offered by the single malts.

"To create the coffee-inspired second edition of The Harmony Collection, I sought out intense notes in The Macallan's traditional sherry seasoned European oak casks that would offer the rich and satisfying elements of coffee, with the influence of Sherry-seasoned American oak casks adding sweeter and softer vanilla notes for a balanced and rounded experience," he said.

A 'sensorial experience'

Inspired by Intense Arabica is said to be reminiscent of a sweet-yet-strong espresso coffee and has a higher ABV of 44%, while Smooth Arabica offers the flavours of a gently spiced and soft americano, and rests at an ABV of 40%.

"Each expression has been paired with two different variations of Ethiopian coffee, which accentuate the unique tasting notes within the whisky when enjoyed side by side, creating a new sensorial experience of The Macallan," Bremner concluded.

The collection explores The Macallan's future packaging journey, with each release featuring a distinctive packaging design that incorporates organic by-products, including discarded coffee bean husks, in order to give them 'new life'.

The rich red pantone colour on the Inspired by Intense Arabica pack reflects the coffee fruit, while the vibrant green on the Smooth Arabica pack represents the un-roasted coffee bean.

The Harmony Collection commenced with [the release of Rich Cacao last year](#), followed by Fine Cacao earlier this year, which both incorporated discarded husks from cacao pods in their packaging and offered chocolate flavour profiles.

The Macallan Harmony Collection Inspired by Intense Arabica, and Smooth Arabica both have an RRP of £140 (US\$185).

Inspired by Intense Arabica will be available at The Macallan Estate Bar, The Macallan Online Boutique and in premium retailers, bars and restaurants around the world from October 2022.

Smooth Arabica will be available in The Macallan Airport Boutiques, key airports around the world and China Hainan Island duty free shops from November 2022.



Bowmore unveils two-part series The Changeling

Bowmore has unveiled a new travel retail-exclusive series, The Changeling, with graphic artist Frank Quitely.

The Changeling comprises two single malt whiskies, aged 22 and 33 years, designed by Quitely and Bowmore's master blender Ron Welsh. It is the second release in the Frank Quitely collection, which aim to capture the myths and legends of Bowmore's island home of Islay. The new series is inspired by the folkloric story of a blacksmith who rescued his son from Islay's 'Fairy Folk' after they kidnapped the boy and replaced him with a changeling.

The Changeling 22 Years Old and 33 Years Old single malts were first matured in American oak hogsheads before a finishing of around two years in port casks – white port for the 22 Years Old, and tawny port for the 33 Years Old. The expressions will be available at airport stores including Paris, Istanbul, Frankfurt, Amsterdam, Dubai, Singapore, Taipei and London Heathrow, as well as at outlets across Hainan Downtown. Bowmore The Changeling 33 Years Old single malt Scotch whisky, part of the new collection in the Frank Quitely series

Ron Welsh said: "Taking this story of transformation as the inspiration, we've brought together different maturation styles to shape the character of each of these exquisite expressions. The choice of port casks to add a distinct dimension to their characters is an intentional, and vital, part of the creative process. Keeping the story firmly front of mind, the whisky tells its own story, defined by intriguing flavours and aromas which bring the story to life and immerse the senses."

Glasgow-born artist Quitely rose to prominence through Scotland's comic book scene and has since worked with both Marvel and DC Comics. He previously partnered with Bowmore on the sell-out two-part release No Corners to Hide. Of The Changeling series, he said: "To continue to tell these incredible stories through such awe-inspiring and special whiskies is both hugely exciting and rewarding for me. We started from a different place this time, with a very different narrative to bring to life but I needed to make sure this was an evolution from No Corners to Hide. The whiskies themselves are captivating and its vital to me that I do them justice in my work."

Manuel González, marketing director of global travel retail for Beam Suntory, said: "We are very excited to continue bringing to life the legends from Islay and Bowmore and after [the] success of the first edition No Corners to Hide, we're delighted to launch Bowmore The Changeling exclusively to global travel retail. The award-winning Frank Quitely has once again captured the rich history of Bowmore and brought the myths and legends to life in the same vein as he did with the immense Marvel and DC Comics. The Frank Quitely collection continues to demonstrate our commitment to offer our customers consumers incredible exclusive collectible opportunities across our portfolio."

24 October 2022 - Bethany Whymark

The Macallan Just Dropped a Whisky That's Made to Drink With Your Coffee

No shame in enjoying this single malt at breakfast.

By [JONAH FLICKER](#)



The Macallan

The [Macallan](#) releases a whole lot of new expressions throughout the year, so it's no wonder the distillery is always looking for inspiration. Chocolate, James Bond and New York City have all been the muses for recent whiskies, but now it's time for coffee to perk things up.

[The Macallan](#) Harmony Collection Inspired by Intense Arabica and The Macallan Harmony Collection Smooth Arabica are a new duo of single malt scotches from [The Macallan](#), each said to be influenced by the Ethiopian Arabica coffee bean. The former will be available in the US next month, while the latter is a travel retail exclusive. This is the second release in the Harmony Collection, the first being last year's duo of Rich Cacao and Fine Cacao single malts.

So how exactly does a sherry cask-matured [scotch](#) evoke the buzz of a cup of joe? [Whisky](#) maker Steven Bremner wanted to create an expression that would pair perfectly with your espresso, so he worked with a group of caffeinated experts including Ethiopian grower Kenean Asefa Dukamo, Scottish roaster Lisa Lawson and acclaimed American barista Andrea Allen. "Exploring the world of coffee with our masters in the industry, who shared their knowledge, creativity, and love for their art, was both an education and an inspiration," said Bremner in a statement. "There are many parallels between the approach to creating incomparable whisky and coffee. Each requires unique skills and craftsmanship to achieve depth and complexity of taste and both worlds aim to deliver an extraordinary consumption experience."

Each whisky was aged in a combination of American and European oak casks, as are many of The Macallan's whiskies, but the two expressions are said to have differing characteristics. Intense Arabica is more of your morning redeye jolt with strong espresso notes and an ABV of 44 percent, while Smooth Arabica is kind of a softer flat white or Americano with an ABV of 40 percent. Bremner recommends pairing both with coffee, of course. "I sought out intense notes in The Macallan's traditional sherry seasoned European oak casks that would offer the rich and satisfying elements of coffee," he said, "with the influence of sherry seasoned American oak casks adding sweeter and softer vanilla notes for a balanced and rounded experience."

The whiskies come in boxes that are made partially from repurposed coffee bean husks, created by Italian paper mill Favini along with The Macallan. Intense Arabica will be available at the distillery and online starting this month and then at US retailers in November, while you can find Smooth Arabica at The Macallan boutiques in airports around the world, each with an SRP of \$185.

Lochlea uses Sherry casks for new whisky

28 OCTOBER 2022 By [Alice Brooker](#)

Scotch producer Lochlea Distillery will release 9,000 bottles of a new Sherry cask-matured whisky, called Fallow Edition.



Only 9,000 bottles will be available of the whisky, which is being released 3 November

The whisky, launching on 3 November, is the third limited release from the seasonal Edition series, joining the inaugural bottling, [Sowing Edition](#), and Harvest Edition, released in September. The next release will be Ploughing Edition in winter.

Lochlea [revealed its flagship single malt whisky](#), Our Barley, earlier this year, matured in three different cask types.

John Campbell, Lochlea production director and master blender, said: "When we were first planning for our core single malt, Lochlea Our Barley, we found some wonderful Sherry butts that deserved to be showcased together and decided to use these to create Lochlea Fallow Edition."

Inspired by autumn, Fallow Edition was matured exclusively in 100% ex-oloroso Sherry casks, giving the spirit flavours of freshly baked banana bread, malt biscuits and dark, dried fruits.

Campbell added: "Lochlea Fallow Edition is 100% matured in oloroso Sherry butts, bringing a rich, deep colour and a dry, fruity palate that is perfect for the season of autumn on the farm."

Only 9,000 bottles will be available globally, and will be released to key UK retail and wholesale partners, and across 15 export markets.

The non-chill-filtered expression will retail for RRP £50 (US\$57.69), and clocks in at 46% ABV.

In more news of whisky releases, Beam Suntory-owned Bowmore recently [released a 22-year-old whisky](#) in collaboration with luxury car brand Aston Martin.

New plans submitted for Portavadie Distillery

28 OCTOBER 2022 By Georgie Pursey

An application to build a new whisky distillery at Portavadie on the banks of the Loch Fyne, Scotland, has been submitted to the Argyll and Bute council.



Designs for the new Scotch distillery have been drawn up by Organic Architects

The news comes almost five years after [initial plans were submitted by the previous owners](#), which have since been scrapped.

The new proprietors, Portavadie Distillers and Blenders, have put forward plans for a 'completely new design', with a larger production capacity. The building is being constructed on the former site of the 'ghost village' of Polphail, which was built for oil workers, yet never occupied. For years it lay empty, being finally demolished by the former owners a few years ago. The site is to have a 'new lease of life' as a distillery and visitor facility, and will bring many jobs and opportunities for the local area.

Whisky tourists will be able to link a visit to the distillery with a trip to Islay via the Calmac ferry to Tarbert, which leaves from the Portavadie marina. A £15 million (US\$17.3m) investment has been made by Piccadilly Agro Industries, the largest independent malt spirit distiller in India.

Piccadilly is part of the growing Indian premium whisky movement, and is the maker of the Indri single malt which recently won a Gold medal in [The World Whisky Masters 2022](#) blind tastings.

The building has been designed as a coastal distillery, having the appearance of a number of gables typical of a traditional Scottish seaside village.

Traditional Scottish pot stills will look out over Loch Fyne, linking the production areas with the landscape.

Building work is expected to commence early in 2023 with the first spirit flowing in 2024

Bowmore and Aston Martin create 22YO

27 OCTOBER 2022 By Alice Brooker

Scotch whisky brand Bowmore has collaborated with Aston Martin to unveil the second release of its Masters' Selection series: a 22-year-old single malt.



The whisky clocks in at 51.5% ABV

The second bottling in the Master's Selection range captures 'synchronised creativity', bringing together whiskies matured in American oak hogsheads and Sherry butts.

The whiskies were distilled in 1997 and 2000 respectively.

The 22-year-old has notes of honey, peach and apricot, then opens up to flavours of tobacco and clove.

It follows the launch of a 21-year-old whisky, the [first Master's Selection release](#), in November 2021.

Ron Welsh, master blender at Bowmore, said: "We talk about shared synergies between the contrasting worlds of Bowmore and Aston Martin and this is what truly defines the relationship Marek Reichman, chief creative officer at Aston Martin, and I have formed.

"We have relished in the opportunity to share experiences, ideas and thoughts from each other's world's, listening and learning from the inherent skill, knowledge and creativity we both possess. In collaborating as guardians of our respective legacies, we recognise the honour bestowed upon us."

Bowmore Masters' Selection Edition 2 is available in key global markets including UK, Germany, Canada, the US, and China, for RRP £390 (US\$450), excluding VAT.

Aston Martin first partnered with [Bowmore in 2019](#). Since then, the companies have created [three travel retail-exclusive whiskies](#), and a £50,000 (US\$66,000) whisky, called [Black Bowmore DB5 1964](#). The collaboration also saw the release of [a 52-year-old single malt](#) in a limited edition 'futuristic vessel' in June this year.

The two paired up again in August to release the second iteration of its [Designed by Aston Martin collection](#) in global travel retail.

Diageo acquires Balcones Distilling

BY [AMERICANWHISKEYMAG](#) - NOVEMBER 2, 2022



Texas-based craft distiller Balcones is now housed on the Diageo portfolio of whiskeys

Diageo has announced the news that it has acquired Balcones Distilling, the Texas craft distiller and leading producer of American Single Malt Whiskey.

The distillery, based in Waco, Texas, was founded in 2008 and in that time has created a diverse portfolio of whiskeys. Expressions such as Texas “1” American Single Malt, Lineage American Single Malt, and Baby Blue Corn Whisky have showcased the brands aim to embrace its terroir.

Balcones embraces Texas’ intense heat as well as its temperature fluctuations to create whiskeys with differentiated flavours. The team also leverages distinctive high quality, and often locally sourced, original ingredients, including Texas-grown malted barley and roasted blue corn. Claudia Schubert, president, Diageo North America, commented: “We are delighted to welcome Balcones Distilling into Diageo. The Balcones team are true innovators and pioneers in the emerging American Single Malt and Texas whiskey movements, and their super premium plus whiskeys are highly complementary to our whiskey portfolio. This acquisition is in line with our strategy to acquire high growth brands in fast growing segments, such as super premium whiskey, and we look forward to working with the Balcones team to support further growth for these world-class whiskeys.” Greg Allen, chairman, Balcones Distilling, said: “Balcones started with an idea driven by an innovative spirit and passion to create something original and authentic in the heart of Texas. Now, we couldn’t be prouder to have created these award-winning American Single Malt and Texas whiskeys, but also to have helped initiate an exciting new era of whiskey in Texas. We are thrilled that Diageo shares our belief in its potential and we look forward to seeing Diageo bring Balcones’ incredible whiskeys to more consumers.” The acquisition has been funded through existing cash resources.

Benriach relaunches The Sixteen

04 NOVEMBER 2022 By Alice Brooker

Speyside distillery Benriach has re-introduced its 16-year-old whisky, which has been ‘missing’ from its portfolio since 2016.



The whisky retails for £72 (US\$80)

The brand’s ‘flavour-forward’ portfolio of single malts will once again include Benriach The Sixteen.

The liquid is matured in three casks, and has not been in circulation since 2016.

The full Benriach portfolio is created by master blender Rachel Barrie and her team.

Barrie said: “The return of Benriach The Sixteen is a very special moment for the distillery as it is one of our most treasured expressions.

“Our signature Speyside style blossoms at 10 years old, finding depth and richer layers of orchard fruit character as it turns sixteen.”

The reintroduction of the whisky bridges the gap between its 12-year-old and 21-year-old single malts, according to Benriach.

Barrie added: “Our core flavour components of fruit, malt and oak become more concentrated, enriched with age at sixteen years old, bringing layers of stone fruit, smooth creamy malt, wild honey and nutty oak spice.”

The whisky sits at 43% ABV, and is available to purchase from specialist retailers in select markets globally. It retails for RRP £72 (US\$80).

Earlier this year, the brand launched [10 twinset whiskeys on NFT marketplace Blockbar](#), the only time the pair of expressions will be available ‘anywhere in the world’.

The pair, which included the Forty Years Old and The Forty Octave Cask Matured, featured bespoke customisation on the packaging.

In May, Benriach [released the second edition of its single malt](#) made entirely from barley malted at its floor maltings – Benriach Malting Season. The inaugural edition of Benriach Malting Season was [released in August 2021](#) and was described as the first bottling of its kind from the Brown-Forman-owned distillery in a century.

Bruichladdich debuts Black Art 10

04 NOVEMBER 2022 By Georgie Collins

Islay-based Bruichladdich Distillery has launched the 10th annual release in its Black Art whisky series.



Only the head distiller knows the Black Art 10 recipe. Since its inception in 2012, the limited edition Black Art series has been said to ‘intrigue’ whisky fans across the world with its ‘mysterious allure’. The series is the antithesis to [Bruichladdich’s traditional commitment to total transparency](#). Rather than revealing all details of production, from cask type to specific barley varietal, as is usual with Bruichladdich, Black Art is created in total secrecy – the vintage alone has been revealed. Only head distiller Adam Hannett knows the recipe to Black Art 10. He explained: “As a whisky brand committed to giving our customers as much information as we possibly can, our Black Art series is a real leap of faith.” “The creative freedom I have when creating this single malt is a privilege. It allows me to take risks and explore the realms of possibility. Whisky making relies on the harmonious marriage between cask and spirit, and Black Art 10 is a celebration of the extraordinary things that can happen when we abandon the detail and simply appreciate and enjoy the flavour.” A 1993 vintage, the unpeated 29-year-old single malt has been created using pre-renaissance casks from Bruichladdich Distillery that have been maturing exclusively on Islay for almost three decades. The whisky offers bright and fruity notes on the nose that move into praline, cedar and leather.

Orange barley sugars, ginger nut biscuits and lemon meringue pie can be detected on the palate, with toasted oak bringing smooth chocolate and vanilla.

Velvet in texture, the smooth finish has notes of tablet and fudge, with subtle tobacco and a hint of ginger linger.

Black Art Edition 10 is available now at [bruichladdich.com](#) and selected specialist whisky retailers, priced at RRP £395 (US\$443.26).

Each 700ml bottle is presented at 45.1% ABV.

REVIEW: Lagavulin's Special 12-Year Release Is One The Most Unique Scotches You'll Ever Try

BY [CONNOR TOOLE](#) OCTOBER 28, 2022 2:38 PM



As someone who's tried a lot of different whiskeys (and is partially motivated to write about them to justify how much of the spirit typically drink on a weekly basis), there are certain bottles that stand out when looking back at the hundreds of different options I've tasted over the years. I've been lucky enough to check off unicorns from the Pappy Van Winkle and Weller family, exercised more self-restraint than I ever have while spending years nursing a bottle of the now-discontinued Hibiki 12, and fondly remember the night I spent close to an hour savoring a small dram of a 44-year-old offering from Talisker.

However, prior to this month, there was never a whiskey I found myself repeatedly thinking about weeks after I got the chance to try it—but that all changed when I was introduced to the [limited-edition 12-year-old from Lagavulin](#) that comprises part of the widely sought-after Special Release lineup spirits giant Diageo unveiled for the 2022 installment of its annual drop.

The ["Elusive Expressions" collection](#) contains bottles from eight legendary Scottish distilleries, including Oban, The Singleton, and Clynelish. I got the opportunity to try a few of them side-by-side, and while there's not a bad batch in the bunch, Lagavulin's not only immediately stood out but stuck with me in a way no other whiskey (scotch or otherwise) has been able to.

REVIEW: Lagavulin 2022 Special Release 12-Year-Old Single Malt



If you're familiar with Lagavulin, you're likely aware the distiller is known for products boasting the incredibly smoky and peaty nature of the Scotch

whisky that defines the Islay region it's called home since officially opening for business in 1816.

Those notes are front and center in the vaunted 16-year-old that's arguably the distillery's flagship (and were amplified in the 11-year-old Charred Oak variant that served as [the third installment of its partnership with Nick Offerman](#)). However, it turned things up to 11 with 2022's wildly unique Special Release.

Much like you should never judge a book by its cover, you typically want to avoid making assumptions about a whiskey based on its label. However, the fact that a fiery phoenix graces this one isn't a coincidence.

Lagavulin's single malts have always had a spicy character, and the heat of a cask-strength whisky that clocks in at 114.6 proof (57.3% ABV) is immediately reflected in its impressively smoky nose. With that said, you buy scotch to taste it, not smell it, and you'll likely be in for a bit of a surprise once you take a sip.

While the liquid is distinctly Lagavulin, the fairly tart citrus and slight saltiness that greet you when you sip it only hang around for a few seconds before your palate starts to get invaded by the smoke and a tingling sensation that almost mimics the sensation (and flavor) that comes with taking a nibble of a mild jalapeño pepper; it's not an overwhelming burn by any means, but one that lingers and lasts for an impressive amount of time.

As I alluded to before, that taste also lingered in my mind for so long that I eventually decided to reach out to Diageo Master Blender Dr. Craig Wilson to get some insight into how it came together. He was kind enough to answer a few questions via email about the creative process, saying:

"This year, the decision was made to make as smoky a Lagavulin as we could. The approach did change slightly during liquid development when the virgin oak casks were added as a top dressing, just to add a little spice to the character which complemented the smoke beautifully."

He said the barrels that were picked to go into the batch were essentially the result of a scavenger hunt inside Lagavulin's warehouses to find the ones that fit the desired profile, and the liquid inside those casks also got some help after being transferred to a new home prior to bottling:

"The blend is mainly refill casks, as we wanted to preserve the vibrant smokiness which is found in Lagavulin spirit."

The spice was added by using whiskies finished in virgin oak casks which contain high amounts of tannins due to not having previously been used.

I'd imagine some of the heat is also coming from the spirit itself which has remained at a high ABV despite twelve years in cask."

You'll have to shell out a bit more for the Special Release than you would for one of Lagavulin's more widely-available options, but if you're looking to treat yourself (or someone else) to one of the most distinctive whiskeys I've ever tried, I can't recommend this one enough.

Glengoyne 15 Year Old Becomes Latest In Distillery's Core Collection
[Nino Kilgore-Marchetti - Scotch](#) | November 2, 2022

[Scotland's Glengoyne distillery](#), "unhurried since 1883," recently unveiled a new 15 year old that's become part of its core range.

The new Glengoyne 15 Year Old, [according to those behind it](#), was aged in first fill sherry and bourbon casks. It is said to celebrate "the contrast and harmony" created by the interplay of these casks.

"Glengoyne's spirit spends three times as long in its stills than other whiskies, and this creates a distinctively light, smooth and fruity spirit style," said Katy Muggeridge, Brand Director at Ian Macleod Distillers, parent company of Glengoyne, in a prepared statement. "For the 15 Year Old, we wanted to showcase Glengoyne's signature style brought to maturity in absolute balance from the combination of both bourbon and sherry casks. The first fill maturation gives complex depth, bright tropical notes, and a spicy oak finish whilst the refill casks allow the fruity Glengoyne house style to shine through."



Scotland's Glengoyne distillery, "unhurried since 1883," recently unveiled a new 15 year old that's become part of its core range. (image via Glengoyne)

"It's an exciting and intriguing Glengoyne dram, with a unique flavour profile."

Bottled at 43% ABV, the Glengoyne 15 Year Old is priced at £90 and available at leading specialist retailers around the world. Official tasting notes are below.

The whisky has a natural light amber hue and a rich bouquet of flavours; on the nose you can expect malt flour, fresh hay, dried fruits, citrus and Rosehip.

The palate is clean, with a gentle sweetness and a hint of tropical fruit. Cinnamon, vanilla and apple combine to evoke memories of a freshly baked apple pie. A pleasant dry finish is complemented by gentle spice and lingering oak.

Dunnet Bay unveils first whisky

07 NOVEMBER 2022 By Alice Brooker

The UK's most northerly mainland distillery, Dunnet Bay Distillers, has revealed its new debut whisky brand Stannergill, with 250-litre casks available to pre-order for £4,750 (US\$5,305).



The distillery has unveiled three 'early bird investment opportunities' Only 200 barrels of Stannergill have been released for pre-order today (7 November) at 12pm GMT. These will be sold by the Whisky Hammer. In future years, there will be a limited number of 200-litre casks sold at a higher price.

Pre-ordered casks will be left to rest for up to 10 years in the cool, dunnage warehouse where the fresh sea air blowing from Dunnet Bay will contribute to the creation of a smooth, mellow spirit.

Stannergill is Dunnet Bay's first whisky brand, and will be produced at the brand's new distillery.

Plans for the development were [unveiled in June this year](#), which will see a 200-year-old mill refurbished at Castletown in Scotland.

The distillery previously produced its Rock Rose Gin and Holy Grass Vodka exclusively.

Martin Murray, co-founder and co-director of Dunnet Bay Distillers, said:

"We have long-travelled past the beautiful but dilapidated mill with thoughts to one day being able to restore it.

"Our dream became reality when we took ownership of this iconic building and then attained planning permission to refurbish it as a destination distillery and visitor centre.

"The project will see a wonderful new-style Scottish whisky being launched after the distillery is commissioned in summer 2024. The project will bring more jobs to the area."

Stannergill Whisky will be matured in Bourbon casks from the US, and Sherry casks from Spain. The style will be 'light and fruitier' than many 'traditional' Scotch whiskies, and the price of the bottling is yet to be revealed.

The brand has revealed further 'early bird investment opportunities' in the £4 million (US\$4.5m) development project.

Firstly, Stannergill Whisky is launching a virtual club called The 1818 Society.

Membership costs £750 (US\$838) per person to join the society, which is 'for whisky and history lovers'. The '1818' in the name is inspired by the year the original mill was constructed, which will serve as a home to the distillery.

The first release of Stannergill Whisky will be exclusively sent to 1818 Society members, bearing their personal membership number. Members will also receive a choice of a handmade brooch or pin.

Claire Murray, co-founder and co-director, said: "We are excited to launch these early opportunities for people not only locally but across the world to get involved by buying a stake in the new whisky – whether that be sponsorship of a tile; joining our new 1818 club; or investing in a cask." Additionally, investors can 'sponsor a roof tile', which involves contributing £40 (US\$44) to the distillery.

Those who donate towards this will receive a certificate and a commemorative Caithness flagstone designed with local firm Norse Stone.

Jack Daniel's debuts American single malt

10 NOVEMBER 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Tennessee whiskey brand Jack Daniel's has released a limited edition American single malt finished in oloroso Sherry casks.



Master distiller Chris Fletcher said the distillery has "never crafted a whiskey like this in Lynchburg"

Launched as part of the brand's Special Release series, the new whiskey is made with a 100% malted barley grain bill, a first for the Tennessee distillery.

The 2022 limited edition Special Release from Jack Daniel's features American single malt whiskey twice barreled, and is bottled straight from Sherry casks at 53%-53.9% ABV.

To create the expression, the distiller begins with 100% malted barley that was fermented and distilled in Lynchburg, Tennessee. The whiskey passes through Jack Daniel's traditional charcoal mellowing process, followed by maturation in new, charred American white oak barrels for at least four years.

It is then finished for an additional two years in oloroso Sherry casks from the Antonio Páez Lobato Cooperage in Jerez, Spain.

"Our Special Release series highlights our ongoing innovations and exceptional whiskeys from the Jack Daniel Distillery, and I'm excited to share this expression as our team set out to craft an American single malt that's uniquely Jack Daniel's," said master distiller Chris Fletcher.

"The combination of maturing in oak barrels and finishing in Sherry casks produces incredible complexity and provides a full-bodied and sophisticated whiskey experience. We've never crafted a whiskey like this in Lynchburg and can't wait to share it with our friends."

The liquid offers an aroma of soft oak, fruit and cocoa, followed by flavours of caramel, vanilla, chocolate-covered nuts and berries, with a subtle Sherry finish.

Jack Daniel's Twice Barrelled Special Release American Single Malt will be available across the US in limited quantities from November, priced at US\$70 per 700ml bottle.

Brown-Forman-owned Jack Daniel's is also planning to release a [global travel retail-exclusive American single malt](#) finished in Sherry casks in June 2023.

The new product comes several months after the US government's Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) [published its proposed standards](#) for American single malt.

Ardbeg bottle sells for £35,000

10 NOVEMBER 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

A bottle of Ardbeg whisky from 1974 has sold for £35,000 (US\$39,893) at auction, setting a record price for a single bottle from the Islay distillery.



The bottle was one of 39 from a "near-mythical" Ardbeg single cask. On Monday (7 November), Whisky Auctioneer sold a bottle of Single Cask Ardbeg #2742, filled on 14 June 1974 and bottled on 20 September 2005. It was one of 36 bottles from cask #2742, which were originally only available to hotel bars around the world, meaning many will have been opened and consumed.

The auctioneer said 1974 was a legendary vintage at Ardbeg as it contained the last batch of spirit to have been made using exclusively on-site peated malt. The use of external peated malt after this year resulted in a change in style for the brand, which makes these vintages rare, as they represent the final 'old school' Ardbegs.

The bottle attracted bids from countries including the UK, Germany and the Netherlands, with a collector from Switzerland securing the winning bid.

Joe Wilson, head curator and spirits specialist at Whisky Auctioneer, said: "As Whisky Auctioneer continues to grow, instances of auctioning a bottle for the first time have become rarer yet all the more special.

"We were hugely excited to be lucky enough to encounter this near-mythical single cask from Ardbeg, notable for its important vintage as well as its tiny 36-bottle yield.

"Ardbeg is a distillery with a somewhat tumultuous past, but since the turn of the century has deservedly become one of the world's most desired whiskies, as evidenced by the high international interest in both this bottle and its incredible result."

In July this year, a whisky collector [bought a cask of Ardbeg](#) distilled in 1975 for a record-breaking £16 million (US\$19.3m).

The sale price surpassed any auction record for a cask of single malt, and was also the distillery's oldest whisky release to date.

5 Classic Scotch Cocktails Every Guy Should Know How to Make

Author: [Amos Kwon](#)

It doesn't matter what the time of year is, it's always a good time for [Scotch](#). For whisky devotees, if there's not at least a few bottles of Scotch on the bar cart (especially a minimum of one go-to [bucket list bottle](#)), then it's time to make a liquor store run. For many Scotch drinkers — both experts and those just getting into the category — the primary way to drink the spirit is to pour it into a [proper Scotch glass](#) and take in its myriad complexities on the nose and on the palate. Often, the whisky is enjoyed neat or on the rocks to pull out the most that Scotch has to offer. But sometimes it's nice to literally mix things up a bit. Scotch cocktails can transform the whisky into something altogether different and uniquely wonderful. And while there's no shortage of celebration for [bourbon cocktails](#) and [tequila cocktails](#), Scotch cocktails generally get less love. It's time to change that. Here are the classic Scotch cocktails every guy should know how to make.



Islay Scotch Old-Fashioned

As great as a [Bourbon Old Fashioned](#) is, switching America's spirit for Scotch is gamechanger. This particular recipe adds intrigue with smoky Islay whisky, and it's a significant adjustment on both the nose and the palate. The ice opens up the peaty smoke of the whisky, while the Creole-style bitters provide some sweetness that's lost by the absence of [bourbon](#). Don't forget to use the right cocktail cherries (don't just revert to those standard maraschinos).

Scotch Suggestion: [Ardbeg 10](#) (\$60)

Recipe:

1. Purified water ice cubes
2. 2.5 ounces of Islay single malt whisky
3. 1/3 ounce of simple syrup
4. 3 dashes of Peychaud's bitters
5. Orange peel, Luxardo cocktail cherries for garnish

How to make it: Add whisky to a lowball glass along with three ice cubes that are dry to the touch (frozen enough not to be wet to the touch). Stir gently. Add simple syrup and two more ice cubes and stir again. Use an orange peel without the pith and a Luxardo cherry as garnishes.



Rob Roy

No, it has nothing to do with Liam Neeson slicing Tim Roth in half with a sword while wearing a kilt. The Rob Roy is the Scotch whisky version of the Manhattan, plain and simple. It's the most famous Scotch cocktail, and it's been around since it was created back in 1894 (in a Manhattan bar, of all places). The ingredients are the same, of course, except you'll need to swap out the traditional rye whiskey or bourbon with a good blended Scotch. It's smooth, just like the character of the base liquor, and the sweet vermouth enhances things along with a bit of spice from the Angostura bitters. Make sure to use fresh vermouth that has been refrigerated and has not been open for more than two weeks.

Scotch Suggestion: [The Famous Grouse](#) (\$25)

Recipe:

1. Fresh cracked ice
2. 1.5 ounces blended Scotch whisky
3. 0.75 ounce sweet vermouth
4. 1 dash of Angostura bitters
5. Orange peel for garnish

How to make it: Chill a cocktail glass. Crack a few cubes of ice in a freezer bag and place it into a [cocktail shaker](#). Add the Scotch and vermouth and stir. Strain the mixture into the chilled glass. Garnish with orange peel.



Penicillin Cocktail

The Penicillin is just the kind of adult medicine you need when you're under the weather and it's frigid outside. It's a relatively new drink, having been created in 2005 at the much-loved, now closed, Milk & Honey bar in New York City. Think of a whiskey sour made with both a peaty single malt Scotch and a smooth blended Scotch instead of rye whiskey. The taste is led by that peaty and smoky layer, followed by the freshness of lemon, honey, and ginger. It's a drink that opens up the senses and tastes like the best kind of medicine. You might want to get sick more often.

Scotch Suggestion: [Monkey Shoulder](#) (\$31) for the blended Scotch, and [Talisker 10 Year](#) (\$62) for the peaty single malt.

Recipe:

1. Purified water ice cubes
2. 2 ounces blended Scotch whisky
3. Peaty single malt Scotch for spritzing
4. 2 thin slices of ginger, about 3/4-inch around
5. 0.5 ounce honey ginger syrup
6. Lemon wheel slice for garnish

7. Giant cocktail ice cube

How to make it: Muddle the fresh ginger in a cocktail shaker and add blended Scotch whisky along with the honey ginger syrup. Fill the shaker with ice and shake for 20 seconds until the mixture is very cold (look for condensation on the outside of the shaker). Strain the mixture into a rocks glass. Strain a second time if ginger pieces are still present. Add a spritz of the peaty single malt Scotch to the top layer.



Paris Between the Wars

Paris Between the Wars is, first of all, beautiful enough to stare at at length before sipping thanks to the rich orangish-gold hue. But don't make the mistake of thinking it's a fruity drink, because it has some potency. The combination of honey, lemon, cider, and that hint of grapefruit give it tremendous dimension and flavor.

Scotch Suggestion: [Dewar's 12 Year Old](#) (\$27)

Recipe:

1. Purified water ice cubes
2. 1 ounce blended Scotch whisky
3. .75 oz Campari
4. 0.5 oz honey
5. 0.5 oz Lemon Juice
6. 3 oz dry hard cider
7. Grapefruit peel

How to make it: Add ice cubes, Scotch, Campari, honey, and lemon juice, in a cocktail shaker. Cover and shake until the mixture is well chilled. Strain into tall fluted glass. Add the dry hard cider and top off with the grapefruit peel garnish.



Smoky Martini

This nuanced pre-dinner drink with a twist adds another dimension to the classic Martini. Instead of vodka or gin, the Smoky adds blended Scotch whisky that makes for a totally different experience. It's a nice deviation from the Dirty Martini and foregoes the olives and olive juice for peat and smoke.

Scotch Suggestion: [Hibiki Japanese Harmony](#) (\$100)

Recipe:

1. Purified water ice cubes

2. 2.5 ounces London dry gin
3. 0.25 ounce blended Scotch whisky
4. Lemon twist

How to make it: Add the the blended Scotch whisky and gin into a cocktail shaker along with ice. Stir it until it's well-chilled, and then strain it into a Martini glass. Add the lemon twist for garnish.

Forget Pappy—These are the Allocated Whiskies You Should be Looking For



10

Courtesy image

by [Susannah Skiver Barton](#)

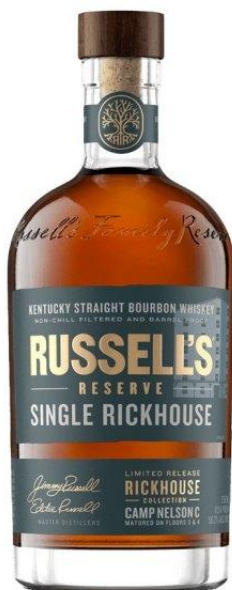
Every fall, the same scenario plays out: Buffalo Trace announces the [Old Rip Van Winkle lineup](#)—aka Pappy—is rolling out to stores, and whiskey lovers feel a twinge of excitement as they imagine that this year they'll actually find a bottle. After all, limited-edition or allocated whiskies are hard to get your hands on.

Alas, for most of us, it's not to be. There's just not that much of it. Or, if you do happen to stumble across a bottle in the wild, it'll be priced many times more than Buffalo Trace's SRP—usually in the thousands of dollars.

But isn't Pappy kind of passé? Sure, it's good whiskey, but it's also yesterday's news. There are so many whiskies that are every bit its equal when it comes to flavor—and clout. Will these be easier to find? That's the hope. But since whiskey is so hot right now it's impossible to predict which bottles are going to be snatched up quickest.

Be on the lookout, keep your wallet at the ready, and good luck!

Best Allocated Whiskies to Hunt for (Besides Pappy)



Courtesy image

1. Russell's Reserve Single Rickhouse Camp Nelson C
Wild Turkey Distillery's other brand, Russell's Reserve, is low key one of bourbon's best buys year-round. But the new line extension hits a higher

price with a more exclusive selling point: It pulls from barrels matured in specific warehouses, highlighting the differences that arise from the distillery's varied maturation environments. The debut bottling comes from Camp Nelson Warehouse C, which was legendary for its honey barrels. The warehouse was decommissioned in 2021, making this expression the final chance to sip some very special bourbon.

[\$250; russellsreserve.com]

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[Courtesy Image1 / 10](#)

2. GlenDronach Grandeur

Macallan 25 too pricy for you? Try this single malt from Highland distillery GlenDronach, released annually in small amounts, which tops that quarter-century with three more years of age. The 2022 release is Batch 11, aged for 28 years in oloroso and Pedro Ximénez sherry casks, and bottled at 48.9% ABV. Like all GlenDronach whiskies, it's rich and full-bodied, packed with classic sherry notes of raisin, dried orange peel, dark chocolate, and leather. With that advanced age comes additional complexity and intensity.

[\$800; glendronachdistillery.com]

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[Courtesy image2 / 10](#)

3. The Last Drop Drew Mayville's Signature Blend

Buffalo Trace's most famous whiskeys—Pappy and the Antique Collection—aren't making this list, but the distillery is still represented by this rare blend of straight bourbon and rye, created by master blender Drew Mayville. With over 40 years of experience across multiple countries and styles, he's one of the best in the whiskey world, and all that expertise can be tasted in this barrel-proof blend that's truly one-of-a-kind. It combines bourbons made with both rye and wheat, as well as rye whiskey, of varying ages but with a palpable maturity that's evident from the first sip. Will it set you back four figures? Yes, but what a way to spend big.

[\$3,999; lastdropdistillers.com]

[LEARN MORE](#)



[Courtesy image3 / 10](#)

4. Nikka Yoichi and Miyagikyo Aromatic Yeast

While distillers in Scotland and the U.S. trumpet their innovative techniques and products, Japanese whisky makers tend to hew more to tradition and the steady pursuit of perfection. But Nikka, Japan's second-largest whisky maker, has been bucking that trend with its Discovery Series, which showcases experiments within different parts of the production process. These two single malts from sibling distilleries feature special yeasts that impart distinct aromas—floral like ginjyo sake for Yoichi, and rich with stone fruit for Miyagikyo.

[\$275; nikka.com]

[GET IT](#)



[Courtesy image4 / 10](#)

5. Little Book Chapter 6

James B. Beam Distilling Co. master distiller Freddie Noe would have gotten attention no matter what he did: He's a member of one of Kentucky's most renowned bourbon families. But his signature brand, Little Book, has made waves since its 2017 debut for the unique blending recipes it showcases. This year's release, called "To The Finish," is a combination of straight bourbon and American single malt, finished with a variety of woods and smoke, from hickory and maple to apple and cherry. It's a wild and unique and flavor-filled barrel-proof whiskey, well worth the hunt.

[\$125; littlebookwhiskey.com]

[LEARN MORE](#)



[Courtesy image5 / 10](#)

6. Teeling 32-Year-Old Purple Muscat Finish

Irish whiskey is often overlooked by the diehard hunters, but releases like this one shouldn't be. Exclusive to the American market and launching in November, this single malt whiskey was distilled in 1990 and aged for 28 years in bourbon barrels. It then spent four more years in a single Portuguese purple muscat cask, which lends plush berry and tropical fruit flavors and vibrant spice. There are just 283 bottles, pouring at a satisfying cask strength of 53.7% ABV.

[\$3,500; teelingwhiskey.com]

[LEARN MORE](#)



[Courtesy image6 / 10](#)

7. BCS Gray Label Bourbon

Craft blending house Barrell creates numerous different whiskeys throughout the year, with its core range hitting a price below \$100, and these are always a worthwhile purchase. But the limited-edition Gray Label line offers a more sophisticated take on the template, often using older stock and a more time-consuming process. The latest BCS Gray Label bourbon includes liquids from Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee that were meticulously blended, then further matured in a cask that previously held a past batch. The cask was made from 36-month air-dried staves, a detail Barrell says is crucial in helping to develop the mouthfeel of the bourbon.

[\$250; barrellbourbon.com]

[GET IT](#)



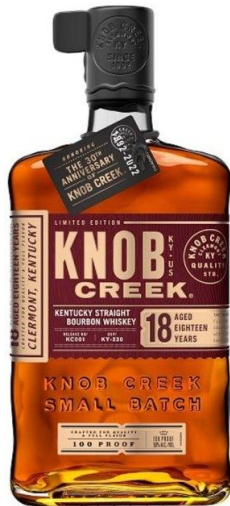
[Courtesy image7 / 10](#)

8. Lagavulin 12-Year-Old (2022 Special Release)

Multinational conglomerate Diageo owns a quarter of the distilleries in Scotland, and it showcases some of this massive collection's most interesting liquid in the annual Special Releases. While the lineup varies from year to year, it always includes a cask-strength 12-year-old Lagavulin—consistently one of the best scotch whiskies around and, in years past, when prices for the more exclusive releases hit astronomical highs, also one of the best values. Laden with the distillery's characteristic heavy peat, the single malt sits at a sweet spot of maturity and vibrancy, with the 2022 batch hitting 57.3% ABV.

[\$149; [malts.com](#)]

[LEARN MORE](#)



[Courtesy image8 / 10](#)

9. Knob Creek 18-Year-Old

Knob Creek's 15-year-old was already one of the best prospects for a bourbon hunting trip, but tacking on three more years has sent the brand into "must find" territory. Double the age of the core Knob Creek and retaining its usual 100 proof, this whiskey hits the rarely achieved intersection of maturity and energy, avoiding the overly woody profile of many old bourbons. It also marks an important milestone as Knob Creek celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. Don't fret if you can't find it: The 15, or the even more available 12-year-old, will still make for a satisfying backup.

[\$170; [knobcreek.com](#)]

[LEARN MORE](#)



[Courtesy image9 / 10](#)

10. Widow Jane The Vaults

Master blender Lisa Roper Wicker deserves to be better known than she is, and bottles like The Vaults prove it. A seasoned wine and whiskey maker, Wicker knows all the tricks to making an ordinary blend into something special. In the case of The Vaults, she uses oak barrels from different areas of the country as finishing vessels; in the past, this has included Appalachian and Adirondack oak. For 2022, the finish is in Missouri Ozark oak barrels whose staves were air-dried for three years, emphasizing smoke, spice, and vanilla notes.

[\$250; [widowjane.com](#)]

[LEARN MORE](#)



[Courtesy image10 / 10](#)

11. St. George 40th Anniversary Edition Single Malt

Craft spirits seem like a new phenomenon, but OG distillery St. George has been at it for four decades, laying down everything from bracingly bright eau-de-vie and terroir-driven gin to some of the finest American single malt around. This limited-edition release celebrates the distillery's milestone anniversary, drawing on 14 casks that included umeshu and California Sauternes wine, as well as some of the first barrels ever laid down. And, in the true spirit of the craft community, St. George is further celebrating by giving back, donating \$40,000 to the STEPUP Foundation, which provides spirits industry training and mentorship to underserved groups.

[\$500; [stgeorgespirits.com](#)]



Visiting Scotland when your partner doesn't like whisky

When planning a whisky trip to Scotland, most keen whisky tourists typically plan their itinerary by plotting out the key distilleries they want to visit, and then they crudely join the dots by shoehorning in the requirements and logistics of accommodation, transport, and food. That's all well and good but, as you quickly discover, distillery tours and visiting times are generally condensed between the hours of 10.00am and 4.00pm – leaving you with some blanks to fill in your days. Also, as we explored in this article [here](#) (scroll down to point no. 7), trying to get your various distillery tours aligned without clashes or overlaps is a tough challenge. Another consideration is that – as a very general generalisation – it would be fair to say that *most* whisky enthusiasts who would plan such a dedicated whisky pilgrimage to Scotland often have partners that don't share a love of whisky to quite the same level of fanaticism. Accordingly, when planning a trip to Scotland with your partner, you'll often need to incorporate stops, side-excursions, and other attractions to keep your other half happy....and not sentence them to the drudgery of sitting in the distillery car park while you're inside having fun. To keep the mood happy between the two of you as you traverse around the country, here are some worthwhile destinations, attractions, and other things to do in Scotland that are all near distilleries or that you'll pass through as you hop from distillery to distillery....

Swing by Dunkeld

As you head north from either Glasgow or Edinburgh up to Speyside, you'll most likely take the A9 road once you've passed through Perth. Common wisdom is to stop at Pitlochry for the obligatory tea or coffee break (particularly if you're going to drop in at either the Edradour or Blair Athol distilleries), but our tip is to take the turn-off and side road just a few miles earlier and pass through Dunkeld *before* you get to Pitlochry. Dunkeld is an old, historic village with a recorded history back to 730AD. After 800 years of prosperity, closely linked with the cathedral, fortunes changed with the Reformation in 1560. The village was then the site of a major battle in the first Jacobite uprising in 1689, and there are buildings in the village today that still display their involvement or role in the battle. So why should you swing by Dunkeld? Firstly, it's beautiful. Quaint, whitewashed buildings; beautiful gardens and walks around the cathedral; a brilliant pub (well, two, actually); parks and walks alongside the River Tay; Telford's stunning stone arched bridge...it's all incredibly picturesque and you'll use up plenty of disk space taking loads of photos at every turn. The main street has some nice, genuine shops that aren't selling the usual tourist nonsense you encounter everywhere else. And for those who appreciate incredibly good coffee (I'm looking at you, Australians), The Cloutie Dumpling, located just off the main road on Cathedral Street, is your *must-do* stop for morning or afternoon tea. Or lunch. The Atholl Arms hotel's beer garden by the river bank is also an incredible place to enjoy a pint of cask ale (weather permitting) with a good meal.

Click on each photo to enlarge....



The village of Dunkeld, by the River Tay



Enjoy a meal and/or drink in the beer garden of the Atholl Arms by the River Tay



The southern end of the main road through the village



Thomas Telford's stone arch bridge across the River Tay that links the villages of Dunkeld and Birnam



The grounds of Dunkeld Cathedral



The Cloutie Dumpling – serving excellent coffee, tea, scones, pastries, and cloutie dumplings!

But, for the whisky tourist and their partner, Dunkeld's hidden jewel is the Dunkeld Whisky Box. Just a few doors off the main road on High Street, the Dunkeld Whisky Box is a tiny shop with a diverse and eclectic collection of whiskies and other spirits, and a fascinating range of beers. You'll not find the big names and garden variety brands here (that, frankly, are widely available in every other whisky shop you go into), but you'll find plenty to keep you interested. More critically, you'll find two warm and passionate shopkeepers who live and breathe true Highland hospitality, and will make you feel relaxed and at home. Owners Will and Helen Stockham established the shop in 2019, having previously worked in the travel and tourism industry organising whisky tours! There's a wee tasting area in the front of the shop where you can try some unusual and rare stuff by the dram, with plenty of other tipples to choose from for your non-whisky-loving partner. Check out their website [here](#), which also has links to their Instagram and Facebook page. You'll struggle to find a more friendly, helpful, and knowledgeable whisky retail outlet in all of Scotland.



A bit like Dr Who's tardis...it's small on the outside, but plenty of goodies inside!



An example of the tasting flights you can enjoy instore

Drop in at the Culloden Battlefield

If your partner (or yourself!) are fans of the TV series Outlander (or the original novels by Diana Gabaldon) and you're in the vicinity of Inverness, it's well worth visiting Culloden. (It's also a scenic 50 minute drive from Elgin, if you're already at the top of Speyside, possibly visiting the Glen Moray distillery). The battlefield itself is fairly unremarkable in appearance (you're basically just standing in an open field), but the large and feature-packed Visitor Centre is excellent in telling the history and story of the Jacobite uprisings and, of course, the fateful battle that took place here in 1746. The disastrous Jacobite defeat led to broad, sweeping changes that forever changed Highland culture and life. There are brilliant displays, presentations, talks, and guides that are both informative and entertaining, as well as a museum of sorts that showcases the weapons, fighting styles, and military aspects of the day. Be sure to join one of the guides or tours to maximise your visit and experience. More details at the Visitor Centre's website [here](#).



The sombre battlefield of Culloden Moor.

Edinburgh and Glasgow

Need more things to do in Scotland? Many whisky tourists fly into Edinburgh or Glasgow and then immediately head off to the Highlands or Islay without stopping to smell the roses in either of the two big cities. Until recently, the distillery options in these two cities were limited: Glasgow had Auchentoshan, and Glenkinchie was a wee hike out of Edinburgh's metro area. However, Glasgow now also has the excellent [Clydeside Distillery](#) (located in an area where there's plenty of other things to keep your partner amused), and Edinburgh also now has the likes of [Holyrood Distillery](#), and the Bonnington and Port of Leith distilleries aren't too far behind either.



Edinburgh's Royal Mile, looking east towards the Holyrood Palace end. Of course, Edinburgh has a plethora of attractions that merit spending at least three to four days in town. At the very least, spend a day on the Royal Mile. You can start at the top by visiting Edinburgh Castle (allow at least an hour or two), then slowly make your way down to the bottom of the Mile where you can finish the day with a tour through Holyrood Palace and its gardens. (Again, allow at least an hour or two). In between these two bookends, you'll find no end of shops, pubs, historic attractions, and some very worthwhile street entertainment. The High Kirk of St. Giles is also worth popping in to if, for no other reason, to simply admire the incredible gothic architecture. There are some well-stocked whisky retail shops scattered along the Mile, and – of course – there's the Scotch Whisky Experience at the top of the Mile, just before you head into the Castle. You'll also encounter more cashmere than you can poke a stick at.



Edinburgh Castle

Back down in town at the western end of Princes Street, fans of Johnnie Walker should also pop into their new museum/experience centre. (I'm not sure there's a word or term that quite captures all that this multi-faceted attraction seeks to be, but you can find out more [here](#)). Meanwhile, whilst you're taking in the story of the *striding gent*, your partner can check out the great range of shops along Princes Street, or the beautiful Princes Street Gardens. And, whilst there's no end of touristy shops selling kitschy tartan souvenirs around these parts, the Romanes and Paterson store is well-worth popping into for some better quality gifts and clothing.



The Princes Street Gardens are pretty enough, not to mention the impressive backdrop

Castles, cathedrals, museums, monuments, and shops

Your partner may not be a fan of whisky, but if he/she appreciates history, architecture, or quality shopping, then there are plenty of attractions and things to do in Scotland that you'll encounter near or en route to the whisky distilleries. Our list here is by no means exhaustive, but here are a few suggestions and tips that you might like to work into your travels to keep your other half amused while you're peering into a washback....

- If you're driving to Islay (via the ferry, of course) from either Glasgow or Edinburgh, you'll pass through the quaint town of Inveraray. You'd do well to devote half a day here, or even stay overnight. (Our tip: Stay at [The George Hotel](#)). [Inveraray Castle](#) is an excellent attraction, with an added bonus if your partner was a fan of the Downton Abbey television series. Back in the centre of town, Inveraray Jail doesn't look like much from the street, but it's actually a fascinating visit that you'll find surprisingly interesting, enlightening...and a little macabre!



Inveraray Castle

- Heading up the "Great Glen" between Oban and Inverness? You'll doubtless want to drop into the Ben Nevis distillery, but you could also incorporate attractions such as Neptune's Staircase near Fort William or the canal locks at Fort Augustus. Between Fort Augustus and Inverness, there's also [Urquhart Castle](#) which has a worthwhile visitor centre.



The canal locks at Fort Augustus, at the base of Loch Ness



Urquhart Castle

- At some point as you're heading north from either Glasgow or Edinburgh, or on your return leg back down, you'll likely pass through or be near Stirling. Fans of the film Braveheart might like to drop in at the [Wallace Monument](#) and learn the real story of William Wallace. (Spoiler: The movie took more than a few liberties with historical accuracy!) The view from the top of the monument is worth the entry price alone, but be prepared to climb a few steps. And Stirling Castle itself is also well worth a visit, giving fantastic insights into the lives and lifestyles of Scotland's medieval kings & queens, and the country's long-running disputes with that pesky country, England, to the south. And as you head from Stirling to Edinburgh (or vice versa), anyone with even just a vague interest in engineering, construction, or transport should stop in at the world-renowned [Falkirk Wheel](#).



The Wallace Monument



The Falkirk Wheel

- Returning to Perthshire, if you're indeed heading to the likes of the Edradour, Blair Athol, or Aberfeldy distilleries, your partner can check out the many attractions of the district. A short drive to the incredibly scenic Queen's View is recommended. [Blair Castle](#) and its gardens is also an excellent attraction. For those seeking retail therapy, there's plenty of shops in Pitlochry (one or two of them actually selling quality goods, such as [Macnaughtons of Pitlochry](#)) but the real gem of the district is to drive 15 minutes north of Pitlochry and spend a few hours (and doubtless a few pounds) at the incredible [House of Bruar](#).



Blair Castle

- If your trip to Scotland is genuinely a whisky trip, then you'll be spending time in Speyside. You'll be giddy with all the distilleries to visit but, the truth is, there's not a heck of a lot of other stuff for your non-whisky-drinking partner to do, unless s/he enjoys drinking endless cups of tea or coffee in the visitor centre cafes. If your partner is fit and enjoys a hike, then a jaunt up Ben Rinnes is actually a very worthwhile pursuit, with – weather permitting – an incredible view from the top. You can read our guide to climbing Ben Rinnes [here](#). If you're visiting the Glen Grant distillery, your other half will also likely enjoy a stroll around the [Major's Gardens](#). And for some more tips in

this neck of the woods, you should also check our other article, [The Top 6 things to do in Speyside](#).

- If you're heading down into the Lowlands and your partner is at least partial to gin, then a visit to The Borders Distillery is a must, as this excellent distillery produces both malt whisky *and* gin, and you can thus *both* enjoy the tour and the tasting afterwards. (The gin made here is spectacular, and it's also quite unique, as the spirit that goes into the column still for further rectifying and infusing with the botanicals is the very same malted barley spirit that gets filled into casks to become whisky!) Notwithstanding whether or not your partner enjoys a G&T, this area of the Lowlands is rich with ruined abbeys and cathedrals, which you can check out nearby. Jedburgh Abbey and Melrose Abbey are good examples.



Jedburgh Abbey

So there you have it: Hopefully enough activities and attractions to keep the peace and ensure you *both* have a happy and balanced holiday. And, in case you were wondering, Mrs Whisky & Wisdom is not a fan of whisky, and so all of the above-listed attractions and activities come with our genuine endorsement, having personally visited and experienced them all. Even with two kids in the backseat!

Cheers,

AD

PS: Got some other suggestions and recommendations you think other readers might appreciate? Add them in the Comments section below.

PPS: If you *are* heading off to Scotland soon or in the early stages of planning your whisky trip, make sure you read our guide, [10 things every whisky lover should know before visiting Scotland](#)

PPS: Images 2, 4, 6, 7, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, and 19 above all (c) Whisky & Wisdom, 2022. Image 8 courtesy Dunkeld Whisky Box. Remaining images purchased through Shutterstock.

10 things every whisky lover should know before visiting Scotland



Visiting Scotland soon? For every whisky lover, it's the ultimate pilgrimage: After listening jealously to *other people's* travels and dreaming of making it to the promised land, you've **FINALLY** saved up for and planned your first whisky trip to Scotland. Exciting times! Of course, every first-timer always asks the same questions in the early stages of planning: *Where's the best place to stay? Which distilleries should I visit? Should I hire a car? Do I have time to get to Islay? How many days should I spend in Speyside? Is the trip up to Orkney worth it?* Naturally, the answers to these are highly subjective and individual. They'll depend on your budget, the amount of time you can spare, which distilleries are your favourites, and what transport options are at your disposal. But there are a few things to appreciate about visiting distilleries that you won't read in the guide books or find online. Here are ten things you ought to know before heading off to Scotland...

1. You ain't alone

Believe it or not, this whisky appreciation thing is actually pretty popular around the rest of the world. Other pilgrims will be flocking to the sites of worship at the same time as you, and – particularly during the busy summer months and holiday periods – the distilleries will be swarming with whisky tourists.



It's unlikely you'll be the only person rocking up to the Visitor Centre. Accordingly, tours book up quickly and you're really chancing your arm if you just show up and expect to be squeezed on to a tour. Accordingly, do as much research as you can *before* you depart; find out the tour times in advance, and book yourself in accordingly. There's nothing worse than arriving at a distillery and being told you'll have to wait two hours (or two days!) until they can accommodate you.

2. This ain't the city

The list of "urban" distilleries is small. Notwithstanding the smaller distilleries that have just been established in the last year or two, Glasgow has Auchentoshan, and Edinburgh has Glenkinchie. Day trips and bus tour companies can take you from both these cities to the likes of Glengoyne, Deanston, Tullibardine, Blair Athol, and Edradour. Beyond that, you've got to leave the "big smoke" and head off into the countryside. It surprises many (although it shouldn't, if you think about it!) that the distilleries scattered throughout Speyside and the Highlands are in rural areas. There are no major shopping centres in the middle of Speyside (Elgin is the best you'll get); there's no regular taxi service operating between the distilleries; internet and phone services can be very grim; and it's a very different life and scene altogether if you head to the islands of Islay, Mull, Skye, or the Orkneys.



You won't find a Starbucks in the middle of Speyside. (Which is a good thing!) All we're saying is that you shouldn't automatically assume the coffee shops, restaurants, department stores, conveniences, and services of cosmopolitan life extend up into the Highlands or the remote areas of Scotland. For our north-American readers, don't bother looking for a Starbucks. And, speaking of services, if you're buying a local phone or SIM card for your time in Scotland, Vodaphone is the only reliable service up in Speyside. Go with the other carriers (EE, O2, or Three) and you'll find yourself with no reception around most of the towns, villages, and distilleries.

3. This ain't hotels.com

A combined result of the issues raised in Items 1 and 2 above, you'll quickly find that accommodation options are limited in the whisky tourist areas, and demand for a place to stay will be high with every other whisky enthusiast in town wanting a room for a night or three. You won't find any of the big chain hotels in the Highlands (at least not near the distilleries), and your accommodation will generally be in 3 to 3.5 star village hotels and pubs (with the occasional 4 star gem to be found here and there). Alternatively, there are excellent Bed & Breakfasts and self-catering options scattered all over Scotland. Fear not – despite the outward appearance of some places, the service and quality is generally good, and you'd do well to experience Highland hospitality in all its forms. Having made six separate trips to Scotland over the last 18 years and spent a combined total of six months staying in all forms of accommodation whilst travelling across Scotland, Whisky & Wisdom is pleased to personally endorse & recommend the following:

- Speyside – [Dowans Hotel](#), Aberlour
- Speyside – [The Station Hotel](#), Rothes
- Speyside – [The Highlander Inn](#), Craigellachie
- Eastern Highlands – [Castle Hotel](#), Huntly
- Highlands – [Mansfield Castle Hotel](#), Tain (perfect for when visiting Glenmorangie & Dalmore, or before heading further north)
- Highlands – [2 Quail](#), Dornoch (a superb B&B – perfect for when visiting Glenmorangie, Balblair, Clynesh and Dalmore)
- Perthshire – [Atholl Palace Hotel](#), Pitlochry (perfect for visiting Aberfeldy, Edradour, & Blair Athol)

- Fife/Lowlands – [The Bank](#), Anstruther (perfect for visiting Kingsbarns & the other new distilleries in the area – or the attractions at St Andrews).
- Islay – [The Bowmore House](#), Bowmore
- Islay – [Harbour Inn](#), Bowmore
- Skye – [Taigh Ailean Hotel](#), Portnalong
- Mull – [Western Isles Hotel](#), Tobermory
- Arran – [Catacol Bay Hotel](#), Lochranza
- Oban – [The Ranald Hotel](#), Oban
- Ardnamurchan – Salen House B&B (+44 1967 431 384)
- Edinburgh – [Malmaison](#), Leith (perfect if you're visiting The Scotch Malt Whisky Society's members' rooms at The Vaults)
- Edinburgh – [Le Monde Hotel](#)
- Glasgow – [Blythswood Square Hotel](#) (a bit fancy and pricey, but worth spoiling yourself!)

Of course, if you stay in any of these places, let them know Whisky & Wisdom referred you!

4. You ain't special

When it's your first time in Scotland and your first time at a distillery, it's easy to get caught up in the magic and the romance of it all. You'll walk around with wide-opened eyes; your mouth gaping open at each amazing sight & experience; and each dram you sample at a distillery will taste 10 times better than it did when you last tried the same bottling at home. In this state of euphoria, it's easy to lose perspective on what it's like for your hosts and the distillery guides. For them, this is just their job and their daily grind. Don't be too crestfallen if it seems your tour guide is just going through the motions, or when – after you've crossed the planet and travelled for two days to get to the distillery – they tell you that 10 of your countrymen were already at the distillery earlier that morning! The tour guides and visitor centre staff deal with whisky tourists all day, every day; they deal with many tourists for whom English is not their native language; and they have to deal with folks who've been dramming all day and are the worse for wear. Show your hosts respect and courtesy and they'll reciprocate accordingly.

Bear in mind also that, at most distilleries, the tour guides are *guides* and usually aren't involved with production. Don't be too upset if they can't answer your question about which year the distillery switched from 20 mashes to 24 mashes each week or whether the spirit's character changed when they started automating their cuts with density meters.

5. You ain't invincible

How many distilleries can you visit in a day? It depends on the timing of the tours, and whether you opt for simple tours (some last just 30 minutes), or the more detailed tours and tastings which some distilleries offer that can go for two or three hours. However, if you're visiting multiple distilleries in a day, and participating in tastings or samples at each visit, then you need to give due consideration to your alcohol consumption and whether or not you should be driving. Five drams in the space of a 15 minute tasting followed by five drams again at the distillery down the road, and it's pretty obvious you shouldn't be behind the wheel to drive back to your hotel afterwards. Plan and space your visits and tastings accordingly, or have yourself a designated driver, or – as I've observed many German and Swedish whisky tourists doing – take along some sample bottles and pour your tasting drams into your bottles for you to enjoy safely when you get back to your accommodation later that night.



Visiting distilleries and driving afterwards? Give it a miss.

6. You ain't a taxi

Public transport is grim or non-existent around most distilleries, particularly in Speyside. Remember, these places were chosen because of their proximity to a good water supply, not because they were near the main road! Islay does a little better, but it's still not uncommon to see folks catch the bus from Bowmore to Port Ellen and then walk to Laphroaig, Lagavulin and Ardbeg.



It's a long and lonely road to Dalwhinnie. You wouldn't want to walk it... The best bet and our recommendation is to hire a car and be under your own steam – although give due regard to your alcohol consumption, as discussed above.

7. You ain't Doctor Who

Time travel is impossible, and yet it would be very handy if you could utilise it whilst trying to co-ordinate visits to the distilleries. The problem is that the Visitor Centres at the distilleries are very varied with their tour times and durations. Most pilgrims want to squeeze as many distillery visits into a day as possible, but the tour commencement times, duration, and travel times required between the distilleries will rarely align for you. Larger distilleries like Glenfiddich or Glenlivet run very frequent tours all throughout the day; others might have just one in the morning and one in the afternoon. If (for example) the tour at Cardhu commences at 10.00am, then you simply aren't going to be able to make the 11.00am tour at Aberlour. Also, many distilleries don't have late afternoon tours – for

example, it's not uncommon for the last tour to depart at 3.00pm, so don't plan on distillery hopping well into the evening. In short, you might have to stay in a particular region for more days than you were banking on if you want to get to all the distilleries on your list.

Again, plan your visits in advance; do your homework; calculate your travel times (Google Maps is pretty accurate with its journey times); give yourself a bit of leeway (it's not uncommon to get caught behind a tractor or a flock of sheep); and book your tours in advance. It's the best way to avoid disappointment.

8. This ain't the Sahara

Okay, stereotypes aside, there's one or two gospel truths in Scotland, and one of them is simply this: It will rain. Expect to get wet. The locals will hardly notice – the distillery guides will think nothing of talking to you out in the open courtyard whilst the rain is coming down, so grin and bear it. After all, if Scots ran inside every time it rained, they'd never see the outdoors!

The trick is to take a light but good quality and thoroughly waterproof jacket with you, ideally with a hood. You'll want something you can wear in and out of the car and around the distilleries without overcooking yourself whilst indoors. Umbrellas are discouraged – not only will the wind blow them inside out, they make it hard to hold a dram and take photos at the same time!

9. This ain't a Disney tour

Distilleries are factories for producing alcohol. They're not exhibition rides at Disney, and there's no purpose-built monorail that takes you effortlessly around the production areas in the comfort of an air-conditioned seat. No, you'll be walking up and down stairs (so make sure you're physically fit and mobile); walking along catwalk grilles (so, ladies, don't wear high heels); and you'll experience two contrasting temperatures in a single visit, so dress appropriately. (Warehouses can be uncomfortably cold; stillhouses – particularly right next to the stills – can get incredibly hot, so be prepared to add or take off layers as necessary).

Furthermore, don't automatically assume you can take your phone or camera out and start snapping lots of Instagram moments. Many distilleries (particularly the Diageo ones) do not permit cameras or photographs in or around some of the production areas. Airborne dust in the mill rooms is a known explosion hazard, as are the highly volatile vapours that escape in the stillhouses. Whilst the chances of your Canon Powershot or Samsung Galaxy causing a distillery explosion are ridiculously small, there are Workplace Health & Safety issues at stake here, so respect the distilleries' policy on cameras and everyone will be happy.

10. It ain't all about the whisky

The distilleries and the whisky are why you're here – but don't shut yourself off to what the rest of Scotland has to offer...

- There is incredible history to explore. The Highlands north of Glenmorangie feature some incredible Neolithic tombs and sites; the Lowlands & Borders not far from Bladnoch have wonderful old Medieval abbeys & churches; and – of course – there are castles scattered all across the land. Check out the sights as well as the sites.
- Scottish dining and cuisine copped a bad rap when tales of the deep-fried Mars Bar did the rounds, but the truth is, there's excellent seafood, game, fresh produce and food being served up around the place and in the many gastropubs that have popped up everywhere. Don't just retreat to the local chippie at the end of the day – seek out the good food and support the local economy.
- It goes without saying, but Scotland has a great love of outdoor sports: Golf, hiking, kayaking, fly fishing – you can do all these things in the areas around the distilleries, so give your liver a break for a day and support the other businesses in the area.
- On this very theme, check out our other article, [The Top Six things to do on Speyside](#)

Cheers, AD

Bowmore ARC-52 Whiskey Review: We Taste Bowmore and Aston Martin's \$75,000 Scotch

A bottle of whiskey that costs as much as a very nice car? Sure, we'll give it a taste.

BY [WILL SABEL COURTNEY](#) - OCT 20, 2022



Will Sabel Courtney

To paraphrase Sean Bean in *The Lord of the Rings*, one does not simply walk into the tasting for a \$75,000 bottle of scotch.

No, one is driven to such a tasting in an [Aston Martin](#) — specifically, in my case, the [DBX 707](#), the brand's latest, most potent SUV. Driven to Connecticut, to be precise, to [an art museum created on the grounds of a modern / postmodern architect](#), where you're eased into the tasting with fresh Wellfleet oysters, caviar and whiskey cocktails, then whisked off to an underground art gallery to preview this most exquisite of browns before noshing on lobster tails and Wagyu tenderloin.

In other words, it's an *experience*.

Of course, it's hard to fault Bowmore for rolling out the metaphorical red carpet for the ARC-52, the brand's latest partnership with Aston Martin. It's not every day a legendary distillery rolls out a 52-year-old whiskey, and it's not every day a distillery teams up with an automotive icon to create a bottle worthy of installation in an art museum itself ([although that, admittedly, is becoming a bit more common](#)).

But for those lucky few — more on that in a second — who actually take home a bottle of Bowmore ARC-52, the draw isn't the experience shared by a few journalists — it's the whiskey itself. (Admittedly, if they can afford a bottle of this whiskey, they likely have the means to recreate that sort of culinary experience at the drop of a hat.)

What's Good About the Bowmore ARC-52:

It's remarkably delicious.

Suffice it to say, my expectations were high walking into the tasting. After all, while age and flavor often go together in whiskeys and some other spirits, there's no guarantee that more time always equals a better product. That said, I'm pleased to say that the ARC-52 is absolutely one of the best scotch whiskeys I've ever tasted. It's shockingly well-balanced and light for a spirit that's been maturing in sherry butt and American oak ex-Bourbon hogshead casks for more than half a century.

On the nose, it's dominated, unexpectedly, by flavors of fruit — light, tropical notes that bring to mind sea breezes and swaying palm trees. Those fruit flavors dominate the palate and finish, as well; they're never overpowering, never cloying or sickly, but simply fresh — it has a freshness you wouldn't expect from a 50-year-old whiskey. The closest analogy I could come for it, oddly enough, was a mango Starburst — not a real mango Starburst, rather, but the perfect childhood memory of that first mango Starburst you ever had, when candy was the greatest treat imaginable and your whole world seemed to stop when you managed to snag some.

The bottle is an absolute work of art.

One easy way to sum up how unique this bottle is? It's the first bottle of whiskey I've ever seen with keyless entry.

Okay, slight exaggeration — but only just. See, the decanter is divided into two parts: the glass vessel that holds the liquid, and the metal cap that covers up the mouth. That part is magnetically clasped to the top of the bottle, so it won't tumble off or rattle around. In order to unlock it, Bowmore provides you with a magnet inside a metal lozenge that looks almost exactly like the ones used to lock and unlock cars; hold it against the bottle in the right place, and *boop*, the magnet releases and the metal sheath slides off the mouth of the bottle.

Even setting aside the car-inspired opening process, the ARC-52's bottle is worthy of attention. Aston Martin's designers played a role in crafting it, and it shows; its flowing, organic lines rendered in tapered glass and metal bring to mind the likes of cars like [the DB5](#) and [Vanguish](#), if in spirit more than clear homage. It's utterly unique, and very cool.



You'll have some serious bragging rights.

Only 100 bottles of ARC-52 are ever scheduled to be sold — 50 this year, and 50 in 2023 — so if you happen to be lucky enough to take one home, it's worthy of display. Although, ideally, under gentle lighting that won't heat up or otherwise affect the whiskey. Maybe keep it in the Batcave for that day you finally put away the Riddler.

What's Not Ideal About the Bowmore ARC-52:

Uh, it costs \$75,000 a bottle.

I didn't have a chance to bust out a measuring cup at the Bowmore event, so I can't tell you whether the dram of ARC-52 I had was one ounce or 1.5 — but if it was the latter, it was around \$4,438 worth of whiskey. (Even one ounce would still be worth \$2,954.) One glass of this stuff is worth around as much as a hyper-inflated bottle of [Pappy Van Winkle Family Reserve](#). Between the price and the rarity, it seems unlikely that most whiskey lovers will ever even have the chance to see a bottle of this Bowmore / Aston collaboration, let alone drink or buy one. Which is a shame, because it really is damn good whiskey.



Bowmore ARC-52 Scotch Whiskey: The Verdict



Much like [Aston Martin's Valkyrie hypercar](#), the Bowmore ARC-52 is an aspirational product designed to make a statement and draw buyers to other, more affordable items in the line. Car buyers get hooked by the Valkyrie, start paying attention to Aston Martin, and wind up buying a [Vantage](#); whiskey buyers are drawn in by the ARC-52, get more interested in Bowmore, and wind up taking home some bottles of [the 18-year](#). But if you should ever find the opportunity to try it, I highly recommend you do. I can't say it's worth \$75,000 — I'm not sure any whiskey really could be, and to be frank, I'm not sure how you even could judge the value of one at such a price — but I can say that it's one damn fine scotch.

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 19th, 2022 dinner date as an example:
- Dinner invitations will be sent out Friday August 29th, 2022. 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 9th, 2022 @ 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 9th, 2022 @ 6pm will be removed from the list.
- Anyone canceling between Friday September 9th, 2022 @ 6pm and Monday September 19th, 2022 will be expected to pay for the cost of the dinner and scotch (\$100). 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 19th, 2022 dinner without having cancelled and been successfully replaced will be expected to pay the full cost (\$100). A member will be responsible for their guest's cancellation (\$110).
- If a member asks to be included at the dinner between Friday September 9th, 2022 @ 6pm and Monday September 19th, 2022 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.



Membership and Dinner prices for 2022-2023

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| Membership Fee: | \$50 (singles) |
| | \$75 (couples) |
| One Time Initiation Fee: | \$15 |
| Standard Dinner Fee: | \$100 (member) |
| | \$110 (non-member) |



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