

Kingston Single Malt Society

www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com

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

AUGUST 26th, 2022

VOLUME 16; NUMBER 2b; No. 204



Welcome to the 15th Annual Premium Night

MENU

1st Nosing: TORMORE 25 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Steve Fisher)

2nd Nosing: GLENTURRET 27 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Mike Patchett)

Amuse: Aged Cheddar, Spiced Plum Chutney,
Focaccia Crustini

3rd Nosing: ARBIKIE 3 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Philip Henderson)

Salad: Baby Spinach, Shaved Pears &
Watermelon Radish, Toasted Pecans, Fig
Balsamic Dressing

4th Nosing: DEANSTON 25 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Sylvain Bouffard)

Pasta: Lemon and Herb Risotto with Grilled
Shrimp

5th Nosing / Pause: GLEN MORAY 25 YEARS OLD
(introduced by: Stewart Williams)

6th Nosing: GLENDRONACH KINGSMAN EDITION
1989 VINTAGE 29 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: John Leighton)

Entrée: Elk Sirloin, Roasted Fingerling Potatoes,
Broccolini, Rosemary Brown Butter

7th Nosing: GLENFARCLAS 40 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Conrad Falkson)

Dessert: White Chocolate Godiva Mousse,
Chocolate Espresso Beans

COST OF THE MALTS

**BERRY BROS & RUDD TORMORE 25 YEAR OLD KWM
CASK 1995; DISTILLED: 1995; BOTTLED: 2021; CASK
#20207 LCBO 788321 | 700 mL bottle Price: \$276.95**
Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 50.0% Alcohol/Vol.

THE GLENTURRET 27 YEAR OLD SCOTCH WHISKY LCBO
523729 | 750 mL bottle **Price: \$310.95** Spirits,
Whisky/Whiskey 40.0% Alcohol/Vol.

**ARBIKIE RYE SINGLE GRAIN SCOTCH WHISKY
LIMITED EDITION BOTTLING 3 YEAR OLD Distilled:**
2015; Bottled: 2018; Cask #s 9,11,&16; Bottle # 884
of 998; VINTAGES 941068 | 750 mL bottle Price \$468.95
Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Scotch 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

**DEANSTON 25 YEAR OLD 1996 - OLD MALT CASK
(HUNTER LAING); CASK: CHARGED FROM A REFILL
HOGSHEAD ref: HL18415; SINGLE CASK DISTILLED:**
January 2, 1996; BOTTLED: February 2, 2021;
BOTTLE No. 074/217; LCBO 523729 | 700 mL bottle
Price: \$185.95 Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 47.7% Alcohol/Vol.

**GLEN MORAY 25 YEARS OLD; Bottling serie: Rare
Vintage Limited Edition Batch Number 2; Vintage:**
29.09.1988; Bottled: 2013; Stated Age: 25 years old;
Casktype: Port Cask Finish; Bottle No. #5621
VINTAGES 327452 | 700 mL bottle **Price \$655.95** Spirits,
Whisky/Whiskey, Single Malt Scotch 43.0% Alcohol/Vol.

GLENDRONACH KINGSMAN EDITION 1989 VINTAGE
29 YEAR OLD VINTAGES 502061 | 700 mL bottle Price:
\$2250 Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Scotch Single Malts 50.1%
Alcohol/Vol.

GLENFARCLAS 40 YEAR OLD LCBO 906305 | 700 mL
bottle Price: \$1520.00 Spirits, Scotch Whisky 43.0%

Upcoming Dinner Dates

September 19th, 2022 - Lowland / Islands (Kyle)
October 17th, 2022 - Speyside / Highlands / Islay
November 14th, 2021 - Campbeltown / Highlands / Islay
December 19th 2022 - Christmas Dinner - Glen Moray / First Editions
January 23rd 2023 - Robbie Burns - Islands (Arran) / East Highlands
February 13th 2023 - Speyside
March 20th 2023 - Irish / Speyside
April 17th 2023 - Speyside / Islands (Skye)
May 15th 2023 - Speyside / Islands / Islay
June 19th 2023 - June BBQ - Speyside / Islands / Islay



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Who Cares About Whisky?

[Guest Post- Scotch](#) | July 12, 2022

Single malt whisky is not simply a drink. The world of marketing that we live in means that from your clothes to your choice of alcoholic beverage, it is likely that many of your purchases are both consciously and subconsciously chosen to say something about you, your values, your persona etc. Day to day it can be unconscious as your choice of coffee or the type of shoes you wear, but on a larger and more conscious scale there are things that we choose because we like how it looks or what it says about us.

Telling the story of you without words

A Rolex doesn't tell better time than a Casio, but a Rolex, and even the type of Rolex (e.g. a 18ct gold Datejust vs a vintage Submariner), says something about the wearer. Through branding and heritage Rolex has become a status symbol. The same transformation has happened to single malt whisky over the last 20 years.

Whether you are drinking in a bar or creating a collection, single malt whisky is not simply a drink. Just like you might buy (or aim to buy) a Rolex rather than a Casio even though the latter tells better time, so too you might spend £285 on a Macallan 18 year old rather than £80 on a bottle of Old Particular Daluaine 18 year old even though the Daluaine has won the Master Taste award at the [2022 Scotch Whisky Masters](#). On the collecting side of things, you might purchase a Bowmore DB5 collaboration for £115,900 (inc. premium) even though you could buy the exact same whisky, just in a different bottle for £11,760 (inc. premium).

Whisky vs. Wine

Examples like those above are not exclusive to whisky. However the whisky market is often mistakenly considered similar to that of wine, where quality and reviews impact value. Within the secondary whisky market there is very little value placed on the quality of whisky as a drink. Consistently it is *not* the most highly rated whiskies that achieve the highest price. It is not always even the scarcest or the oldest either. In fact, to the untrained eye the whisky market can seem completely unpredictable, with the same whisky achieving vastly different prices depending on the bottle that it is in, and modern relatively common bottles going for two to three times that of much scarcer vintage releases. Think we are exaggerating? Or that the Bowmore example is a fluke? Check out these other examples.

One 50 year old, Two decades, Two hundred thousand pounds difference!

In 1919 Springbank laid down a cask that would mature for 50 years before being bottled in 1970. It was released by the distillery in a stunning pear shaped bottle, unfortunately it was ahead of its time; an aged single malt in a time when blended whisky was the preference. A few bottles reached lucky buyers, and even less were kept, making these very rare on the secondary market. Despite that they are reasonably priced (for what they are) and in February 2022 you could pick up a bottle of this incredible whisky for your collection for just £21,840 inc. premium.

Back to the 1980s, single malt was becoming more popular and Springbank rebottled their remaining stock of the 50 year old into 24 hand numbered, classic glass bottles and gave them an attractive wooden box. With just 24 of these originally available they are correspondingly much rarer at auction today, even so the difference in price between the two versions is staggering. The record auction price for the 1980s rebottled version is £226,200. That's over two hundred thousand pounds more for something that is, at its essence, the same thing. It doesn't look the same though. Both are recognisably Springbank, but the later version with its box and hand numbered label, has much more presence to someone who doesn't necessarily know the difference. It is the 18ct gold Rolex compared to the Cosmograph Daytona; one sends a clear message to everyone who sees it, whereas the vintage Cosmograph is only a signifier of wealth to those who have the knowledge.

The Macallan, Long Live The King

The Macallan are the king of the rebrand, and they have a few examples to blow your understanding of value out of the water. First let's look at the relatively modest 1937 37 Year Old. Depending on whether you go for the original Macallan-Glenlivet from the 1970s, the Fine and Rare version rebottled in 2002, or the Lalique decanter rebottled in 2018, you can expect to pay either £4,312, £36,400 or £53,428 for the exact same whisky in three different bottles.

It shouldn't really come as a surprise when Macallan's most famous bottling, the world record holding Macallan 1926 60 year old, is four different bottles of the same whisky. The rarest, one of one bottle hand painted by Michael Dillon broke the world record for the most expensive bottle when it sold in [November 2018](#). It held the crown for less than a year before the record was broken by the same whisky, but in its far more common Fine and Rare livery, which still holds the record at just over [£1.5million inc premium](#). Going to show that in the secondary whisky market, even scarcity isn't the ultimate definer of value.

Interestingly the world record price Fine and Rare 1926 60 year old had an initial RRP of £20,000, and was released somewhat after the other three bottle designs. There are 12 bottles with a Peter Blake label, 12 with the Valerio Adami label and one Micheal Dillon design. Apparently Macallan kept the rest of the bottles back to offer customers the chance to design their own labels; two were sold without labels and (of the remaining 13 by our calculations) 12 were eventually released with the Fine and Rare label.

With hindsight, of course people don't want to design their own labels; they want Macallan to look unmistakably like a Macallan – especially if you've just paid over a million pounds for it.

Not scarcity, vintage, age or brand alone

Finally, let's round up not with a rebottling, but a reminder that for whisky it is not one thing you can look at and say, 'that is how value is added.' Instead it is some combination of scarcity, age, vintage and brand, combined in some slightly unfathomable way that dictates value on the secondary market. We say unfathomable because there are always exceptions that break expectations and create a demand and market of their own.

In May this year, someone paid over £17,000 (inc premium) for a Macallan Archival series Folio one. Folio one, is 43% ABV, non-vintage, non-age statement whisky which was a limited edition of 2,000 bottles and had an RRP of less than £300 when it was released in 2015. In May 2020 you could buy the Folio one for as little as £2,400, in fact you could buy Folio 1-5 for less than £7,000.

It isn't just Folio one either, over the last 12 to 18 months the Folio series has continued to climb in value, continually breaking expectations. Which is to say, who are we to claim to understand the whisky market, when the market is driven not by whisky, but by people.

So who cares about whisky?

It would be easy to say that no one cares about the whisky. To a degree it is true, as the examples above show. It is important to note that this is very collector centric as a view.

There are huge swathes of the whisky market that are designed for drinkers, as well as incredible people doing fantastic reviews of old and new releases that you can go out and try at incredibly reasonable prices (take the Daluaine 18 year old example above).

But! Of course there is a but, because it is important to realise that even at a drinking level, single malt is still a status symbol.

James Bond doesn't drink beer, he drinks dry martinis and whisky. When you go to buy your tippie at your local whisky store or supermarket, the designs, markers and associations that attract collectors to certain brands are the same ones used to make you pick one bottle over another, whether it is whisky, beer, wine or even soft drinks.

Whisky is an established, global status symbol, with a multi billion dollar drinkers market backed up by a secondary collectors market. And in reality, everyone in the industry cares about whisky.

While it may not always make sense, it is overly simplistic to say the whisky doesn't matter. Suggesting that collectors don't care about whisky is akin to suggesting that diners at Michelin Star restaurants don't care about food. Service, presentation, and setting are an integral part of the experience of dining and add value above what the food might be worth elsewhere. So too the packaging and experience of a whisky adds value to the liquid inside.

Whisky isn't just a drink, it's a brand, it's a status symbol, it is packaging and it is an experience. It is also a huge part of the UK economy. In 2021 the scotch whisky industry [added £5.5bn to the UK economy](#) and accounted for 22% of all UK food and drink exports. The industry employs huge numbers of people in immediate and secondary industries. Values in the secondary and primary markets are intrinsically linked, so that the value of one helps maintain the value of the other. And thus, everyone cares about the whisky.

Whether a different bottle can add £200,000 of value is maybe still up for debate, but putting something in a pretty box doesn't mean the creators, or the purchasers, do not care about the whisky inside

Tamdhù adds to Batch Strength series

22 JULY 2022 By Alice Brooker

Speyside-based Scotch whisky distillery Tamdhù has added a limited edition bottling to its Batch Strength series.



The newest addition to the Batch Strength series was matured in oloroso Sherry casks

Ian Macleod Distillers-owned Tamdhù has introduced an exclusive single malt Scotch whisky to the global market, bottled at 57.5% ABV.

Sandy McIntyre, Tamdhu distillery manager, said: "Batch Strength No 007 is a testament to our dedication to exclusively Sherry-matured whisky, with its deep copper colour and complex profile. Each Oloroso cask is meticulously hand-crafted, delivering an exquisite, nuanced flavour and a long, satisfying finish." Non-chill-filtered, the liquid has been matured in oloroso Sherry casks from the bodegas of Jerez, Spain.

On the nose, the whisky delivers aromas of vanilla sponge, spicy cinnamon, and roasted praline. The mouthfeel is thick and complemented by pavlova and raspberries, and the finish is lingering with warm oak spices.

Batch Strength No 007 can be picked up at specialist global retailers, or online through tamdhu.com for RRP £80.99 (US\$97.67) per 700ml bottle.

Last month, the distillery released [600 bottles of its oldest Tamdhu Single Cask whisky](#), aged 18 years, in China travel retail. The cask was selected and bottled for China Duty Free Group (CDFG) from Tamdhu's vintage series, and was the Speyside producer's first listing with the company.

Springbank 1919 miniature sets auction record

22 JULY 2022 By Melita Kiely

A miniature bottle of Springbank 1919 50 Years Old has set a new auction record for the brand after selling for £7,360 (US\$8,790).



The miniature Springbank 1919 50 Years Old set a new auction record. The 50ml Springbank bottle was sold by Whisky.Auction. It broke its own previous record of £6,440 (US\$7,695) set in August 2021.

The Springbank Distillery is located in Campbeltown, Scotland. The miniature bottle that was sold was labelled 'No. 2' and has a certificate of authenticity.

A 50ml miniature of Malt Mill 10 Years Old also set a new record after it was snapped up for £6,670 (US\$7,970). Whisky.Auction described Malt Mill as the world's rarest single malt.

Malt Mill was produced at a 'tiny' distillery on the grounds of Lagavulin on Islay between 1908 and 1962.

The buyer of the Malt Mill miniature said: "It is exciting. I'm not sure I'll ever drink it though. The description from Serge [Valentin, of whiskyfun.com] et al is good enough for me.

"Rather I'll hang onto it for a few years and feel proud to own it."

Isabel Graham-Yool, Whisky.Auction director, noted how the prices achieved on these whiskies were "exciting, but perhaps not unexpected" due to how rare each spirit is.

"Much of the liquid we see coming to auction in miniatures is simply unavailable in full bottles, having been consumed many years before," Graham-Yool added.

"Miniatures often outlive their full-size counterparts in 'souvenir' style. And sometimes, the liquid is so scarce that only miniatures ever existed."

The Spirits Business and Lux Row Distillers are [auctioning a barrel of Rebel Bourbon](#) to raise funds for the Disasters Emergency Committee Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal.



The Malt Mill miniature sold for £6,670 (US\$7,970)

New Glenturret whiskies include 30-year-old

25 JULY 2022 By Melita Kiely

The Glenturret, Scotland's oldest working distillery, has released two limited edition single malts aged 25 and 30 years old.



The new Glenturret whiskies include a 25-year-old and 30-year-old. The launch of the limited editions coincides with the release of the distillery's 2022 core collection, comprising: Triple Wood, 7 Years Old Peat Smoked, 10 Years Old Peat Smoked, 12 Years Old and 15 Years Old.

Bob Dalgarno, The Glenturret's whisky maker, said: "Continually building on the relationship between our whisky drinkers and The Glenturret, the 2022 release introduces more American oak influence this year and our new 7 Years Old Peated Smoked."

The Glenturret 25 Years Old (42.2% ABV) is limited to 210 bottles and was created from three casks. Two European oak butts and one refill hogshead were used to make the whisky, which is said to be 'fruitful and rich'.

There are 750 bottles of the 30-year-old available, each sitting at 42% ABV. The whisky stems from a Niepoort Portuguese oak cask, European oak Sherry and Moscatel casks.

Triple Wood was aged in American and European oak Sherry-seasoned casks, and Bourbon barrels. At 45% ABV, the whisky has notes of peaches, cinnamon and vanilla, for which it collected a number of Gold medals in [The Scotch Whisky Masters 2022](#).

The 7 Years Old Peat Smoked (44%ABV) was matured in American oak Sherry-seasoned casks, and refill casks.

The 10 Years Old Peat Smoked was aged in a mix of first-fill and second-fill European and American oak casks. It has been bottled at 50% ABV.

The 12-year-old bottling (46% ABV) was aged in American oak hogsheads and European oak casks, to give notes of dried fruits and spices.

Meanwhile, the 15-year-old (53% ABV) spent time in European oak to give a 'complex whisky laden with dried fruits and spices'.

John Laurie, managing director, said: "For centuries, The Glenturret have been producing some of the finest, small batch single malts by hand.

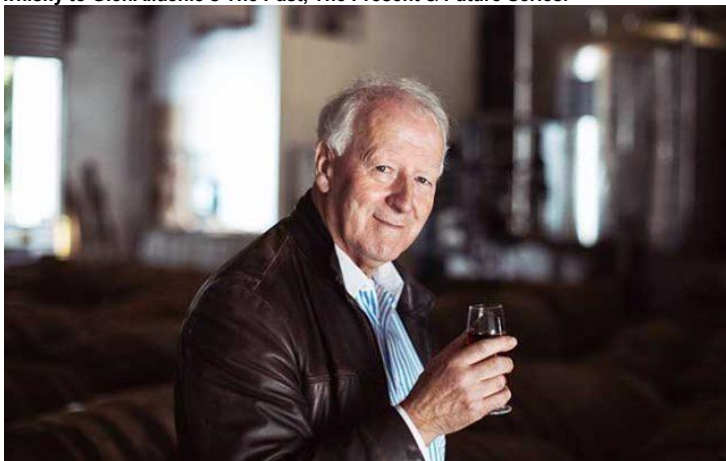
"We are so proud to have built a team who are true experts in the traditional techniques we employ, and who share our values of passion, prowess and provenance.

"It means that each year we release a new collection, we can build on the year before and release single malts that are even more special than the previous year."

GlenAllachie debuts mizunara cask-finished whisky

26 JULY 2022 By Alice Brooker

Master distiller Billy Walker has added a 16-year-old mizunara cask-finished whisky to GlenAllachie's The Past, The Present & Future Series.



The series was launched to mark Walker's 50th anniversary in the Scotch industry. The limited edition series was [launched earlier this year](#) to mark Walker's 50-year tenure in the Scotch industry.

Walker said: "As a master distiller, I'm regularly asked what proportion of the flavour profile of a whisky I attribute to the wood, to which I answer at least 70%. "As a chemist, I find supervising the flavour development of our whisky as it interfaces with interesting cask types truly fascinating. One thing I've absolutely learnt in the last 50 years is that there are no short cuts to achieving quality." The GlenAllachie Present Edition 16 Year Old Mizunara Virgin Oak Finish was matured in Pedro Ximénez (PX) and oloroso Sherry casks, before a secondary ageing in 'ultra-rare' mizunara oak from Japan.

Only 2,900 bottles are available on a global basis, retailing for £280 (US\$336).

Clocking in at 48% ABV, the liquid is non-chill-filtered.

Walker added: "I'm incredibly proud to release my first ever mizunara virgin oak-finished whisky; a cask type that has of course been on my radar to experiment with, not deterred by its undeniable challenges.

"I was confident that it would perfectly complement the bold nature of The GlenAllachie, and we're delighted with the outcome. A very proud moment for a special personal milestone."

On the nose, the whisky delivers dark chocolate, heather honey and grilled almond aromas. The palate presents flavours of cinnamon and crystallised ginger, followed by hazelnuts and fig syrup.

The expression joins the The GlenAllachie Billy Walker 50th Anniversary Past Edition bottling in the series, a fully Sherry matured 16-year-old single malt.

In May this year, the distillery released the [second batch of its oldest core expression](#), a 30-year-old single malt Scotch aged in PX, oloroso Sherry and American virgin oak casks.

Glenmorangie unveils 'playful' redesign

26 JULY 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Highland Scotch whisky brand Glenmorangie has revealed a new look for its core range to better reflect the flavours of each expression.



The new look for Glenmorangie is "an opportunity to welcome new drinkers" The new packaging for Glenmorangie The Original, The Lasanta and The Quinta Ruban aims to combine 'elegance, luxurious materials and a sense of fun'.

Louise Dennett, Glenmorangie global head of brand, said: "Our whisky is truly delicious and our reimagined packaging brings its flavours to the fore. We see this as an opportunity to welcome new drinkers with a playful elegance, which reflects our creativity in whisky making; and to ensure our single malt stands out by using bold colours and enhanced branding."

The refreshed packaging includes a more 'elegant' bottle shape, with wider shoulders, a tapered neck and stopper, and a swirled detail inspired by Glenmorangie's Signet icon on the base.

The carton and labels have also been updated to ensure they stand out on shelves, featuring 'vivid' colours to reflect the flavours of each whisky.

The orange colour used for The Original's design is based on the 10-year-old whisky's notes of orange, honey and peach. The red carton for 12-year-old Lasanta was inspired by the 'rich, spicy sweetness' of the liquid and the hues of a sunset.

Meanwhile, the packaging for 14-year-old Quinta Ruban is green to showcase the 'bold and velvety whisky's forest-like depths'.

The new design includes curving lines that run through the packaging to reflect the fluidity of the liquid, the wood used to age Glenmorangie and the distillery's surroundings.

The Signet icon has been given more prominence and has been simplified, while the name of the brand is split across four lines. The brand's giraffe symbol is depicted on the back of the carton.

Thomas Moradpour, president and CEO of The Glenmorangie Company, added:

"We believe our whisky is for everyone. And we're on a mission to share its wondrous tastes and aromas in every way we can. From this vibrant new packaging to our colourful brand campaign, we are inviting more people to discover the joy of Glenmorangie, whether or not they've tried single malt before."

The new look will be rolled out globally from August 2022 and in the UK from mid-August onwards. The packaging is fully recyclable and the carton is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC).

Brand owner LVMH recorded 'strong growth' for Glenmorangie during its financial results for the [first quarter of 2022](#).

Meanwhile, Ardbeg, which also sits within The Glenmorangie Company, sold a [cask of whisky for £16 million \(US\\$19.3m\)](#) earlier this month.

Cognac: becoming a tourist destination

26 JULY 2022 By Tom Bruce-Gardyne

With an expanding area of vines being planted, producers in Cognac are planning for a healthy future, and that includes enticing consumers to visit the region.



Cognac producers are striving to attract more visitors to the region *This feature was originally published in the May 2022 edition of The Spirits Business magazine.

As well as being a global spirit enjoyed from Shanghai to San Francisco and all points in between, Cognac is a wine region. "In France there are about 800,000 hectares of vines," says Per Even Allaire, deputy commercial director at Cognac AE Dor. "The rules allow for 1% increase per year, so that's 8,000ha for the whole country, and it's a good thing for Cognac that not every region is performing as well."

If the likes of Bordeaux are not expanding, it means Cognac can plant an extra 3,129ha of vineyards this year to bring the total to 83,690ha. "In Cognac when you plant a vine, you won't gather any fruit for four years," says Alexandre Gabriel, head of Maison Ferrand, and vice-president of the spirit's governing body, the BNIC. "Then there's harvesting and distilling, but that's just the start. It's not even Cognac until two years as a minimum for VS, and four for VSOP."

It is a long-term game, in other words. Gabriel talks of "a 20-year vision", and says: "I'm 55, and I'm planting grapes for my kids." For the many growers in the

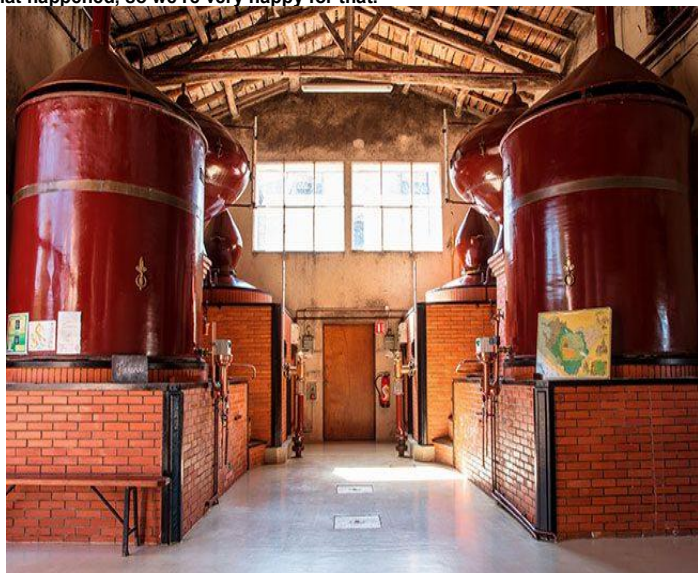
region who supply the big four houses – Hennessy, Martell, Courvoisier and Rémy Martin – expanding the vineyards is a vote of confidence in the Cognac brand. The category saw an impressive bounce last year with exports [up by 16% in volume and by 31% in value](#). According to Gabriel, that is around 3% up on 2019. [Of the 232 million bottles of Cognac shipped in 2021](#), half went to the US, where, together with brandy, the category was worth US\$3.5 billion, according to the Distilled Spirits Council of the US (Discus), placing it fourth behind American whiskey, Tequila and vodka. The most recent figures from Impact Databank for 2020 put Hennessy on 5.1m cases in the US, followed by Rémy Martin on 1.5m and Courvoisier on 907,000. The top six brands all grew last year compared with 2019, apart from Martell, which fell by a quarter to 174,000 cases.

High-end premium

While Discus lumps Cognac and brandy together, the former undoubtedly accounts for the vast majority of the premium-price bands that began to take off in the past six years. Since 2016, ‘high-end premium’ sales have increased by 45.4%, and ‘super premium’ by 112.4%, and together they now make up just over half the total.

In 2020, IWSR Drinks Market Analysis reported Cognac jumped by 18.1% in volume and 17.1% in value in the Americas, the only region to show growth that year. It forecasts that value will continue growing by 3.8% compound annual growth rate through to 2025 in the US, with volume up by 3.9%.

“We’ve seen an acceleration in demand in the past couple of years,” says Allaire about the US. He sees it as part of “the increase in accessible luxury consumption” that occurred during the Covid-19 pandemic. “It even happened in France, which has seen growing demand,” he says. “It’s been a long time since that happened, so we’re very happy for that.”



The heat is on: stills at Maison Ferrand's Angeac site

Gabriel credits the success to the spirit’s versatility as something to sip neat or mix, and he notes how it has managed to surf the American-led resurgence in classic cocktails. “When you go to the US, you really see this deeply-rooted culture into knowing what to do with beautiful Cognacs in bars,” he says. But he is wary about making predictions, especially after this year’s turbulent start.

“It’s hard to bring out a crystal ball,” he says. “We are carefully optimistic as we embrace this culture of high-quality spirits and of good moments shared. And yet we see what is happening with the economy and the destabilising effect of events in Eastern Europe. Some mid-sized and smaller companies have been hit quite hard because they have specialised a bit in Russia and Ukraine.”

As markets they may represent less than 3% of total Cognac sales, “but you have to look at the bigger picture and the whole ripple effect”, says Gabriel, thinking of rising inflation and soaring energy prices.

While he accepts the production costs for the brands on sale were born years ago, in terms of the work in the vineyards and the fuel to fire the stills, he says: “You have to consider everything around it. Cognac is the liquid, but it is also the bottle, the transport and the marketing.”

Supply constraints

As spirits producers know, it is not just a question of having to pay more, you have to get your hands on the goods in the first place, be they glass, cardboard or shipping containers. When LVMH reported Hennessy had slumped by 18% in the first quarter of this year, it blamed “supply and logistic constraints, in the US in particular”.

But with its nearby glass manufacturers, for example, Cognac appears to be better protected than many of its rivals. “We are very lucky to have a rich ecosystem of raw-material suppliers,” says Laura Moore, export sales manager at A de Fussigny Cognac.

“For us, it’s been an initiative to source everything we can in France, and we are up to around 90% of what we need. Initially it was to minimise our carbon footprint, but seeing the global situation we are actually pretty happy to bring everything closer.”

For everyone who relies on buying in spirit, and that includes the big four brands, she says: “The price of eaux-de-vie has increased consistently in the last year, and we don’t know where that will go.”

Planting more vineyards may reduce the pressure on supply, but not for quite a few years. As ever, much will depend on demand in the spirit’s other key market,

China, which in 2020 accounted for 48% of ‘VSOP and above’ Cognac by value, according to IWSR Drinks Market Analysis.

“Martell is a powerhouse of our Pernod Ricard China business, and has continued to strengthen its leadership position,” said Philippe Guettat, chairman and CEO of Pernod Ricard Asia, last summer. The brand was focused on “two key consumption occasions – premium meals and parties”, he explained, and added: “We have delivered gourmet theatre – a series of Martell pop-up restaurants – and have started a meaningful partnership with the Michelin guide and China’s own Black Pearl restaurant guide.”

Guettat also claimed that Martell had catered to more than “9,000 weddings and banquets” in China. However, the country has since experienced the unwelcome return of Covid-19, and at the time of writing, Shanghai’s 25m citizens were entering their fifth week of lockdown.

“People aren’t able to go out in many regions, and Cognac is something that’s usually shared,” says Moore. “If people can’t get together in a restaurant or at an event, they might not drink Cognac at home by themselves.”



Raise a glass: Cognac is an essential part of US cocktail culture

Cognac’s connection with food in China has “been part of the culture for many decades”, says Gabriel. He believes the spirit has the potential to expand into the tier-III and tier-IV cities of Western China, beyond Cognac’s traditional heartland around Shanghai.

“As China develops,” he says, “there’s this deep desire to go with quality products, whether Chinese or international.” Gifting remains very important, particularly for XO Cognacs around Chinese New Year, and while there could be another State-sponsored crackdown on luxury similar to the one of 2012/13, he believes the drink has become more embedded in Chinese culture. “I see it more as part of everyday life, like a reasonable indulgence throughout the year,” he says.

Maison Ferrand previously considered China ‘too branded’ to compete in, but it’s now there through its new distributor, Proof & Co. “The market is still very small for us,” says Angélique Jullienne, the firm’s head of marketing, who senses a shift in consumer behaviour.

“Before, they were only into brands, but the new generation in China is really looking for heritage and history, so there is potential.” And the same goes for new emerging markets in Africa, like Nigeria, which seems to be on everyone’s radar. Back in France, the Cognac region was “a kind of well-kept secret for quite a while”, admits Alexandre Gabriel, who says: “Cognac is a product of provenance. You experience it when you drink it, but you can experience it by visiting distilleries and by going in the vineyards. Seeing the vines, the grapes and the harvest is not something other spirits can offer. You could walk through fields of maize or barley used to make American whiskey or Scotch, but there would hardly be the same connection. Most Cognac houses are saying ‘we’ve got so much to share, let’s share it.’”

Rebecca Montgomery, brand education manager at Delamain, agrees, adding: “Wine tourism is hugely important – that ability to take people into the cellar and take them on their own sensual journey. We’ve just opened our new tourist centre, and the reason we’re so excited is that we’re going to be able to offer a level of visit designed to really illustrate Cognac’s ability to pair with food.”

As the last Covid travel restrictions disappear, the whole region is gearing up to welcome visitors as never before.

Premium alcohol to be worth \$1.7tn by 2032

26 JULY 2022 By Alice Brooker

The premium alcohol market is projected to grow to a value of US\$1.7 trillion by 2032.



The premium whisky category is expected to outpace other premium beverages by 2032

In Future Market Insights' report *Premium Alcoholic Beverages Market Outlook (2022-2032)*, the category is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.3% by 2032.

The market researcher valued the premium alcohol market as currently worth US\$700 billion (US\$0.7tn), and the global demand for premium alcoholic drinks is projected to grow at a year-on-year rate of 8.7% in 2022.

Between 2017 to 2021, premium alcohol grew at a CAGR of 8.2%.

The projection of a 9.3% CAGR rise between 2022 to 2031 takes into account rising disposable income and rising popularity of premium alcohol among younger drinkers.

Currently, North America claims the largest share of the premium alcohol market, with Europe coming in a close second.

This is followed by the Latin America, East Asia, South Asia and Oceania regions.

The Middle East and Africa (MEA) accounts for the smallest hold of the market.

The report states that US consumers have moved towards more premium alcoholic beverages during the last two decades 'more than any other country'.

Plus, Germany is pegged as a 'lucrative' premium alcoholic beverages market, with cream liqueur trending in the country.

Meanwhile, premium whiskies as a whole are noted to be gaining momentum, and even expected to outpace other premium beverages between 2022-2032.

Data recently [released from CGA by Nielsen IQ](#) showed the current successes of the rum category. With sales of rum surpassing £1bn (US\$1.2bn) in the UK, the category now accounts for a bigger market share than whisky.

Jameson hits 10m cases and eyes 15m by 2030

26 JULY 2022 By Melita Kiely

Irish whiskey brand Jameson surpassed 10 million nine-litre cases in the 12 months to 30 June 2022, and is targeting 15m cases by 2030.



Jameson remains the world's leading Irish whiskey brand. Jameson officially broke through the 10m-case mark in March this year, Brendan Buckley, international marketing director at Jameson owner Irish Distillers, told *The Spirits Business*.

Buckley noted a number of reasons for the brand's growth spurt. Following a "slight blip" during the Covid-19 pandemic – Jameson volume sales dropped during 2020, according to [The Brand Champions 2021 report](#) – the brand has since experienced a "strong" rebound.

"The close of the on-premise drove a lot of the initial flattening of sales but obviously people adapted very quickly to socialising at home, treating themselves at home, so we saw a definite change in what they were drinking, definite premiumisation," Buckley said.

"Jameson benefitted from that – Jameson Black Barrel absolutely exploded over the last two years.

"And then, since Covid has begun to unwind and the on-premise has opened back up, we've seen the balance of the on-premise coming back. We've heard of things like 'revenge travel' and 'revenge socialising'. But some of those at-home entertaining habits stuck, so you've got strong activity in the on-premise and off-premise."

Market-wise, Buckley cited the US as "very strong" for the brand.

"We're just shy of 4.5m cases in the US," he noted.

New growth markets: Nigeria and India

Two markets that have "really accelerated" for Jameson Irish whiskey are Nigeria and India, which sit in the brand's top-10 markets worldwide.

"They've been part of our long-term strategy. As we stride towards our next milestone, which is by 2030 we want to be at 15m cases, that would require some of our new growth markets to come on stream.

"Nigeria and India were not overnight; we've been investing in those markets for several years now, and we are beginning to see the results materialise. Nigeria is our second largest market in that part of the world now.

"India will be, in my view, our second [largest] market by 2030 after the USA."

If the 150% import tax on alcohol brands is lifted before this, Buckley said this could come about sooner than expected.

The 15m-case goal will also need the global travel retail channel to "get back up to where it once was and more", he added.

'Big investment' plans in Latin America

"We're clearly on a strong trajectory to becoming a truly global brand," Buckley said. "It'll mean other markets coming on stream.

"In Latin America, we're not strong, but we've got big investment plans going into markets like Brazil and, in due course, Mexico – two big whisk(e)y markets where we're not present really.

"The headroom for growth, when you map whisk(e)y around the world, there are still a lot of dark spots for us where we haven't really yet made in-roads, like Sub-Saharan Africa, where we're already at a million cases.

"We're pretty much, along with Johnnie Walker, the number-one whisk(e)y brand in the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa. So we've been doing that for years but we need to do a similar job now in Asia, Southeast Asia and Latin America."

Jameson was crowned [World Whisky Brand Champion](#) in this year's Brand Champions report.

These were the [world's biggest-selling world whisky brands](#) by volume in 2021, spanning Ireland, the US, Canada and Japan.

During a trip to the Midleton Distillery earlier this month, SB sat down with [actor, comic and Jameson ambassador Aisling Bea](#) to chat comedy, favourite memories and whiskey.



Unveiling an ultra-rare single malt as The Present Edition in our celebratory trilogy to mark whisky master Billy Walker's half-century long career...

This penultimate release is an extraordinary expression which represents the pioneering wood policy that Billy is implementing at The GlenAllachie Distillery. Driven by his passion for sourcing innovative cask types of the highest quality from across the globe, we are thrilled to unveil [The Present Edition](#) as our first-ever Japanese oak-finished whisky: [The GlenAllachie 16-year-old Mizunara Virgin Oak Cask Finish](#).

The spirit began its maturation journey in rich PX and Oloroso Sherry oak, before undergoing secondary aging in virgin Mizunara casks, a scarce and expensive

species of Japanese oak. This notoriously temperamental and rare wood type is scarcely used for whisky maturation due to the multitude of problems it poses to production. It's a tricky oak to cooper due to its tendency to twist as it grows and its porous nature means that these casks are prone to leaking, which can greatly impact final outturn.

Undeterred by these challenges Billy, guided by his wood expertise, crafted this luxurious mahogany malt, boasting indulgent notes of dark chocolate fondant, forest fruits, stem ginger and sandalwood.

Due to the scarcity of Mizunara oak, the release is limited to just 2,900 bottles globally; each proudly presented at a high strength of 48% ABV, without added colouring or chill filtration.

Discover more about the [Present Edition](#) below...



The GlenAllachie Billy Walker 50th Anniversary
Present Edition: Mizunara Virgin Oak
16-Year-Old

Colour: Intense Chestnut.

Nose: Bursting with dark chocolate, heather honey and grilled almonds, with hints of sandalwood, ginger, orange zest, caramelised pecans and coconut shavings.

Taste: Waves of heather honey, cinnamon and crystallised ginger, followed by demerara sugar, dried dark berries, hazelnuts and fig syrup.
Reflecting on this innovative release, Billy commented:

"I'm incredibly proud to release my first ever Mizunara virgin oak finished whisky; a cask type that has of course been on my radar to experiment with, not deterred by its undeniable challenges! I was confident that it would perfectly complement the bold nature of The GlenAllachie, and we're delighted with the outcome. A very proud moment for a special personal milestone."

Royal Brackla Relaunches With New Range Of Whiskies



[Nino Kilgore-Marchetti - Scotch](#) | July 19, 2022

The Royal Brackla Scotch whisky brand has re-launched its core range of expressions, re-imagining the line up with maturation and finishing in selected casks.

Malt Master Stephanie Macleod found, through what's described as extensive research, that [Royal Brackla's whisky](#) holds up well "for taking on fortified wine finishes as the fruity, grassiness of the distillery's character favours this perfectly. After several years of trialling and exploring different sherries, Stephanie has chosen to showcase three types from *Bodegas Jose y Miguel Martin in Jerez, Spain* in each expression."

"Royal Brackla possesses a clean acidity which allows it to cut through the powerful flavours taken on during ageing in ex-Sherry casks," said Macleod in a prepared statement. "The type of cask is always chosen to complement the distillery's signature character, not mask it. Finishing the aged spirit in these prized wooden vessels imparts each expression with incredible complexity, each with their own nuances and all with a superbly balanced finish, but most importantly, still allowing for Royal Brackla's flavour profile to shine through."



Royal Brackla – the first Scotch to be awarded a royal warrant — has relaunched with a new range of whiskies. (image via Royal Brackla)

"The secondary maturation phase gives an extra dimension to the whisky – like a layer of icing on a cake – it adds the finishing touch. The result is a sumptuous, fruitful dram with rich sherried notes and soft spicy overtones."

The newly available offerings includes Royal Brackla 12 Year Old, Royal Brackla 18 Year Old and Royal Brackla 21 Year Old, all bottled at a higher ABV of 46%, compared to the previous strength of 40% ABV and without the use of caramel colouring and chill filtration. More official details on each can be found below, and it should be noted they are available to purchase in select markets in the US now including New York, DC and Chicago.

Royal Brackla 12 Year Old, 46% ABV, finished in Oloroso Sherry casks

- SRP \$70.99

- Oloroso was chosen to age the 12 Year Old as it bestows notes of chocolate covered almonds, muscovado sugar and ripe fruits.
- Tasting notes: Ripe peaches, apples, black cherries, marzipan, chocolate covered almonds and muscovado sugar
- Finish: Rich and exuberant – the full-bodied spice of Oloroso, and the bright summer breeze of Royal Brackla elegantly combine as a smooth and inviting dram

Royal Brackla 18 Year Old, 46% ABV, finished in Palo Cortado Sherry casks

- SRP \$299.99
- The casks from this unusual Sherry were chosen to finish the 18 Year Old because it brings citrus notes and builds flavours of creamy vanilla, spices and soft fruits.
- Tasting notes: Vanilla and caramel, with a fresh citrus note
- Finish: Enticing and complex – rich spices, creamy vanilla, big, succulent soft fruits and cocoa powder, brightened with a zing of citrus

Royal Brackla 21 Year Old, 46% ABV, finished in Pedro Ximénez, Oloroso and Palo Cortado Sherry casks

- SRP \$599.99
- For the 21 Year Old expression, Stephanie has layered casks from three sheries together to create further complexity in this elegant whisky. A blend of Pedro Ximénez, alongside Oloroso and Palo Cortado, is used to finish the oldest expression; the combination was picked as they create a wonderful balance of Sherry and oak revealing each of their influences all in harmony.
- Tasting notes: Thick toffee notes, stewed fruits and muscovado sugar
- Finish: Regal and assured – syrupy toffee notes with richly fragrant stewed fruits warmed by the sun and dusted in cinnamon and muscovado sugar

Seven Rare Secret Speyside Single Cask Editions Launched In Duty-Free
[Gary Carter - Scotch](#) | July 22, 2022
 Pernod Ricard Global Travel Retail recently launched seven “ultra-rare” Single Cask Editions from Secret Speyside. The series is made up of seven expressions, aged between 21 and 27 years, and coming from four distilleries in Scotland’s Speyside region. These include the vanished distillery of [Caperdonich](#), the [Longmorn](#) distillery, the [Glen Keith](#) distillery, and the remote [Braes of Glenlivet](#) distillery. [A statement from Pernod Ricard](#) notes that the Secret Speyside Single Cask Editions showcase the depth and diversity behind these distinguished Speyside distilleries.



Pernod Ricard Global Travel Retail recently launched seven “ultra-rare” Single Cask Editions from Secret Speyside. (image via Pernod Ricard)
 Each edition displays what’s described as an undiscovered character that’s unique to its individual cask. The expressions matured in seven separate American oak casks, a selection of which were first-fill.
 Liya Zhang, marketing vice president for Pernod Ricard Global Travel Retail, said, “The ultra-rare range of Single Cask Editions fuse the rich heritage and unique characteristics derived from the four celebrated and elusive distilleries at the heart of the revered region of Speyside, presenting travel retail shoppers with a unique opportunity to explore and collect new and rarer treasures.”
 She said that whisky’s prestige plus category is growing rapidly, “And we are thrilled to present this remarkable range of rare Single Cask Editions exclusively to travel retail. The ultra-limited malts present an opportunity for Pernod Ricard global travel retail to cut through the prestige-plus category in duty free, offering unique expressions collectors cannot find anywhere else.”
 Sandy Hyslop, Chivas Brothers director of blending and inventory, said that it’s always a satisfying moment for a blending team when they realize a cask they’ve been monitoring for a number of years stands out as being worthy of bottling all by itself.

“The introduction of these seven new captivating single cask releases is a tribute to the exceptional skill and uncompromising dedication that is behind Secret Speyside,” he said. “Over decades of maturation, an incredibly distinctive range of flavors have developed inside each cask and these stunning new releases, bottled at cask strength, represent an impressive depth to Speyside that is just waiting to be discovered.”

The global travel retail exclusive Secret Speyside Single Cask releases, where they are offered, and their suggested retail prices in U.S. dollars are:

- Secret Speyside Caperdonich Peated 1996 exclusive to Heinemann, Frankfurt. SRP \$1,050.
- Secret Speyside Caperdonich Unpeated 1996 exclusive to Dufry, Heathrow. SRP \$1,050.
- Secret Speyside Braes of Glenlivet 1992 exclusive to Dubai Duty Free. SRP \$990.
- Secret Speyside Glen Keith 1998 exclusive to CDFG, Shanghai. SRP \$450.
- Secret Speyside Glen Keith 1994 exclusive to Lagardère, Hong Kong. SRP \$760.
- Secret Speyside Longmorn 1998 exclusive to Lotte, Singapore. SRP \$480.
- Secret Speyside Longmorn 1995 exclusive to Everrich, Taiwan. SRP \$800.

For more information on Secret Speyside, check out www.secret-speyside.com.

Why You’ve Probably Never Heard of Glenturret, Scotland’s Oldest Working Distillery

The company’s story goes back to at least 1763, and new owners are seeing that it gets its due



The Glenturret Distillery, which has a history dating back to 1763.

The Glenturret Distillery

BY [JOSH SIMS](#)

There may be several reasons why Swiss billionaire Hansjörg Wyss — co-owner of Chelsea Football Club — decided to buy a whisky brand few people outside of Scotland have heard of. But perhaps the biggest incentive was his love of history, the same passion which encouraged him to buy a winery in Sauternes designated Premier Grand Cru by none other than Napoleon Bonaparte.

[The Glenturret](#), as the Scotch company is called, caught his eye because it’s the oldest working whisky distillery in the country.

“It’s funny, but for many decades, as whisky hobbyists started looking into the history of whisky, we started to become described as ‘allegedly the oldest,’ so we got to the point where we felt that we had to prove the claim was true or stop using it,” says managing director John Laurie. So the company hired a historian and he dug around among moldy clan documents in dusty Edinburgh archives. Finally, he found one that dated The Glenturret to at least 1763.

“We didn’t dare look back further than that because then documentation gets really hard to find,” says Laurie. “But it does give you a sense that you’re just a custodian of a moment in time, that you’re part of a very long process and the chances that I won’t actually see a lot of the products started here over coming years. I’ll be retired. History sharpens your senses to the idea that there were people before you and there will be people after you.”



The Glenturret Managing Director John Laurie.
The Glenturret Distillery

The research did bring up some interesting stories, from issues securing water rights to past employees who were overcome by CO2 fumes and then drowned in the mash tun. “They bring color to it all,” says Laurie. “It does make you think how these people walked through the rooms you’re walking through now.”

That Glenturret has been lost in the shadows for generations is clear. The small batch distillery has made only some 2,000 cases under its own name — very few of which made it to the U.S. — with over half of its production going to make [Famous Grouse](#). Its distillery even became a Famous Grouse “visitor experience.” As Laurie notes, “The Glenturret brand was effectively covered over.”

But its new owners — Wyss has gone in with the French crystal house Lalique — have spent the pandemic period in serious revival mode, having recognized that Glenturret’s million-plus liters of aging alcohol and its great credentials offered up a golden opportunity. “It’s really the first time it’s been properly invested in for all of its long history,” Laurie adds.

It’s a revival that has already won it 31 industry awards, including the Icons of Whisky Scotland Distiller of the Year for 2022 and the Master Blender of the Year 2021, for Glenturret’s Bob Dalgarno, the man who previously spent 30 years at The Macallan.



The Glenturret’s current range of whiskies.
The Glenturret Distillery

Glenturret’s current warehousing capacity is for just 7,000 casks, so they’re building a new complex able to store 23,000, still leaving the brand a relative minnow. Collaborations with Jaguar and the legendary [Gleneagles hotel](#) — with Glenturret providing 750 bottles of a Gleneagles single malt every year — have recently been followed by a whisky made for St. Andrews, the spiritual home of golf. Glenturret is even getting its own proper visitor center.

Most radically for a Scotch distillery, Glenturret has become the first to open its own fine-dining restaurant, one which has already scooped a [Michelin star](#). The bar, naturally, offers some 250 whiskies from across the world, though the real star is Glenturret 35 Year Old 1977. “There has been some disbelief about that across the industry,” says Laurie. “Distilleries are typically ‘buy a ticket at reception, take a tour and exit through the gift shop with a cup of coffee maybe.’ But this is a restaurant where you have a 16-course tasting menu, with the food that celebrates the same terroir that goes into Glenturret. It’s not a branded restaurant. You don’t get Glenturret whisky sauce on your chicken.” Does this suggest that Glenturret is crossing the Rubicon from niche whisky to an international lifestyle brand? Laurie insists that production levels will remain relatively low, not least because one distinction for Glenturret is that it’s made by hand. He also concedes health and safety regulations have meant some changes. (“We were the last distillery to physically mix the barley and water of the mash with a big stick — literally — but the people who do that end up with all sorts of shoulder injuries.”) But Lalique, Wyss and Laurie have very consciously chosen not to introduce the kind of computerized mechanization that could double or triple output, even though the cash is now there to do so.



The influence of the French crystal house Lalique is obvious in the packaging.
The Glenturret Distillery

“Whether you can taste that Glenturret is handmade, well, probably not,” admits Laurie. “But when you know something is made by an artisan — whether it’s a watch, leather goods or a whisky — it gives the product a romance that consumers really enjoy. Is that just marketing? I can only say it’s something I really value. And the fact is that there are already plenty of lifestyle brands in this industry that just happen to make whisky, whereas I think first and foremost the priority has to be putting exceptional liquid in a bottle. Otherwise, people try you once and don’t come back.”

Not that a fancy bottle is out of the question. Indeed, Lalique is well placed to provide very fancy bottles (they’ve [done it with tequila](#)) and inevitably some cut glass has started to sparkle in the Scottish mists: Glenturret has presented the first of four new Highland single malt whiskies in just 105 handblown decanters, with another decanter project (in collaboration with an unnamed artist) in the pipeline for next year. Back in December a one-off single malt, Uaine, bottled in a jade green crystal decanter, sold at Sotheby’s for \$35,000.

But Laurie is reluctant to move too far from whisky’s bedrock — its fundamental provenance, its connection to the land — in search of the kind of lifestyle novelties that, he argues, have muddled the waters for other spirits.

“Look at what’s happened with gin, for example. That’s got very messy, such that it’s very hard for consumers to have any brand loyalty now,” he says. “Do you need 10 botanicals or 50? Do you need so many different flavors? There’s too much choice and so much confusion, and I think we’ll start to see some consolidation in that market now. Whisky can’t be going down that road.”

What it can do with, however, is an underscoring of its authenticity, so that it continues to appeal to what Laurie says is a rapidly changing global consumer and, essentially for a product long associated with old dufferdom, a younger one too. So there will be no pipers on the labels, no shortbread tins, no stereotyped visions of Scotland more at home in *Highlander* or *Braveheart*.

“New generations are looking for a whisky that’s genuine,” he reckons. “They’re more agile with their palates and want to drink different whiskies on different occasions too. On some days they want a more bourbon-influenced drink and on others they’ll be having more of peat mood.”

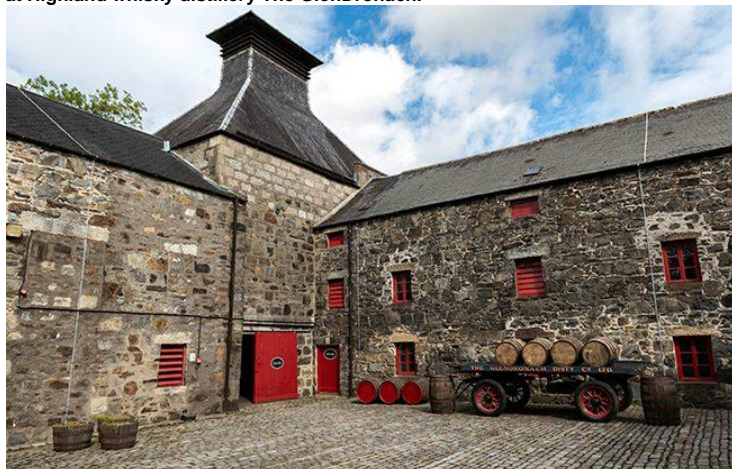
Glenturret is now introducing up to 14 new whiskies every year. But as for the peat? That may be on its way out as whisky producers increasingly come under the hyper-critical lens of sustainability. The use of peat as a natural marshland resource is coming under fire, Laurie says, even for a relatively minimal peat-user like Glenturret. So the pressure is on to find some kind of sustainable peat replacement.

“Though you know what will happen — you can bet that that will only drive up demand for the last of the real peat-based stock,” he adds. “That’s the thing about whiskey, people want the real deal.”

GlenDronach to double production

29 JULY 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Brown-Forman will invest more than £30 million (US\$36.5m) to double production at Highland whisky distillery The GlenDronach.



The GlenDronach Distillery expansion will more than double production. The multi-million-pound investment will 'significantly' increase production facilities at the site in Aberdeenshire.

It will ensure long-term future growth for the single malt brand by more than doubling production capacity. The GlenDronach is known for its Sherry cask-matured single malts.

According to Brown-Forman, global demand for The GlenDronach, has tripled since 2016.

Laura Tolmie, distillery manager, said: "As a small, traditional Scottish distillery, we're very proud to be custodians of such a revered single malt at The GlenDronach.

"I'm delighted that this significant investment in the long-term future of the distillery is secured, preserving our rich heritage whilst ensuring we can meet the increasing demand for The GlenDronach at home and around the world."

The expansion marks the second phase of investment from Brown-Forman for the Scotch whisky distillery, following the renovation of the site's visitor centre in 2020. The upgrade included a new tasting room, whisky bar, lounge and retail space.

The expansion plan will pay 'significant attention' to preserving the historic site, including the restoration of the former maltings building as a working production area. All existing buildings and the courtyard will remain.

The three-year project will also improve operational energy efficiencies.

The news comes several months after Alan McConnochie, manager of The GlenDronach, Benriach and Glenglassaugh Scotch distilleries, [retired in April after 50 years in the whisky trade](#).

Jack Daniel's owner Brown-Forman has ramped up production at several of its distilleries in recent years. In March 2021, the company revealed plans to [expand the Woodford Reserve Distillery](#) in Kentucky, which will double its production capacity.

A month earlier, Brown-Forman moved forward with its [US\\$95m distillery expansion](#) in Louisville, Kentucky.

Beam Suntory plans \$400m distillery expansion

29 JULY 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Jim Beam owner Beam Suntory has revealed plans to invest more than US\$400 million to expand the Booker Noe Distillery in Kentucky.



The expansion will allow Beam Suntory to increase production of Jim Beam Bourbon.

The investment will expand the capacity of the distillery in Boston, Nelson County. It is expected to create more than 50 full-time jobs.

"We are excited about this expansion opportunity at our Booker Noe site, building on our recent investment in the new consumer experience in Clermont, and now

expanding production to ensure enough of our premium liquid is available wherever consumers are looking for them," said [Carlo Coppola](#), managing director of the James B Beam Distilling Co.

He added that the company is "finalising" its expansion plans and will share more details "very soon".

The Fred B Noe Distillery was [opened in Kentucky](#) in September last year. It was part of [Beam Suntory's US\\$60m investment](#) to bring back the James B Beam Distilling Co in Clermont.

"Jim Beam is a renowned name within Kentucky's signature Bourbon industry, and I am thrilled to see the company continue to grow in our state," Kentucky governor Andy Beshear said.

"This is a substantial investment in Nelson County that will ensure Jim Beam continues to grow in central Kentucky for decades to come."

The Kentucky Economic Development Finance Authority (KEDFA) has preliminarily approved a 15-year agreement with Beam Suntory under the Kentucky Business Investment programme.

The performance-based agreement can offer up to US\$3m in tax incentives based on the company's investment of up to US\$436.4m and annual targets of 51 jobs for Kentucky residents, as well as an average hourly wage of US\$51.

Additionally, the KEDFA has approved Beam Suntory for up to US\$550,000 in tax incentives through the Kentucky Enterprise Initiative Act (KEIA). KEIA allows firms to recuperate Kentucky sales and use tax on construction costs, building fixtures, equipment and electronic processing.

Based in Clermont, Kentucky, the James B Beam Distilling Co brands have been produced in the state since 1795.

Beam Suntory was formed in 2014 after Beam was [acquired by Japan-based Suntory for US\\$16 billion](#). The company produces major spirits brands, including Courvoisier Cognac and Bowmore Scotch whisky.

The firm's Bourbon portfolio includes Jim Beam, Maker's Mark, Booker's, Legent, Basil Hayden, Knob Creek and Baker's.

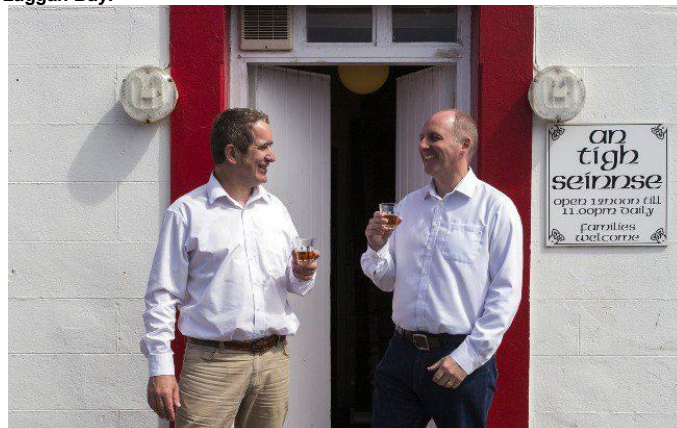
In May, the James B Beam Distilling Co [appointed Freddie Noe](#) as the eighth-generation master distiller of the Fred B Noe Distillery.

Earlier this month, leading figures in the American whiskey industry [gathered in London](#) to raise a glass to the end of the UK's tariff on the category.

Planning permission granted for Islay distillery

01 AUGUST 2022 By Georgie Pursey

Independent Scotch whisky bottler The Islay Boys has been granted planning permission to build the island of Islay's 12th whisky distillery at Glenegedale in Laggan Bay.



(L-R)

Mackenzie and Smith launched their independent Scotch bottling company in 2016.

The application, approved by Argyll and Bute Council, will allow the firm to advance with [plans to build a distillery building](#) to house a traditional, double-distillation Islay whisky.

The Islay Boys, owned by Mackay Smith and Donald MacKenzie, announced a partnership with family-owned Ian Macleod Distillers to help bring the new distillery to fruition. It will be known as Laggan Bay Distillery.

Leonard Russell, chairman of Ian Macleod Distillers, commented: "I have known and worked with the Islay Boys for a long time, and I'm delighted to be able to bring our long experience in creating quality Scotch single malts to the Laggan Bay Distillery project."

The distillery and brewery site covers two hectares, located opposite Islay's airport in the centre of the island, and is situated less than a mile from Islay's longest beach, the Big Strand in Laggan Bay, from which the distillery takes its name.

The Islay Boys' current range comprises both blended and single malt Scotch whiskies under its Flatnose, Bärelegs, and Picti brands. It also owns Islay Ales brewery.

In May, Elixir Distillers confirmed [its new Islay distillery will be called Portinruan](#), which is anticipated to start distilling from early 2024.

Glenmorangie Quinta Ruban 14-Year-Old

Six Scotch whiskies to add to your bar

by [AMIT DIXIT](#)

Every home bar owner takes pride in her or his stash. If you're looking to restock your bar, these are some Scotch whiskies you must consider.

Glenfiddich Orchard Experiment



Glenfiddich's Orchard Experiment is "a collaboration between two iconic families, two entrepreneurial minds and two historic spirits" and the fifth release in Glenfiddich Distillery's Experimental Series. For their latest experiment, Brian Kinsman, Glenfiddich's malt master, travelled to Somerset in the Southwest of England to meet Matilda Temperley, master distiller of her family's Somerset Cider Brandy Company. It was here that Brian encountered Somerset Pomona, a blend of apple cider brandy and apple juice, and it started him on an aromatic journey that led to the first-ever single malt Scotch whisky finished in Somerset Pomona spirit casks. Orchard Experiment has a bright and fruity palate, with notes of crunchy apples, vanilla, oaky spice and caramel that linger in the finish. This whisky is definitely sounding like a pick-me-up.

Glengoyne Legacy Series: Chapter Three



The Glengoyne distillery recently introduced the third and final single malt expression in its Legacy Series. The Glengoyne Legacy Series: Chapter Three is the story of Sir Arthur John Tedder, an excise officer at the distillery. Sir Tedder was a resident at The Customs House at the Distillery between 1889 and 1893. He is said to have pioneered the distillery's 'unhurried' approach to whisky making. The whisky has a rich, fruity flavour profile. It has aromas of creamy vanilla, spicy cinnamon and mixed berry notes, cutting through a base of apple strudel and juicy pears. The finish is light and fruity, with lingering spice.



It's still the same whisky, but Glenmorangie's classic Scotch whisky labels just got a major redesign, a rebrand almost for three whiskies from the distillery's core range: the 10-year Original, 12-year Lasanta and 14-year Quinta Ruban. The labels are striking, with brighter, bolder colours and massive text, a far cry from the current delicate design and lettering. According to Glenmorangie, "the bold colours of the carton were selected to catch the consumers' attention and reflect the taste of the three different whiskies. The orange packaging of the Original reflects the orange and peach notes of the liquid, while the red packaging of the La Santa draws on the whisky's sunset-like taste and the deep green of the Quinta Ruban denotes the velvety depths of the liquid." The Quinta Ruban 14-Year-Old is a full-bodied, silky-smooth single malt finished in a Quinta Ruban port cask, creating a rich chocolate flavour. Gentle aromas of Seville oranges and walnut build into rich dark chocolate, sandalwood and spicy pepper. The palate offers notes of mint chocolate, walnuts and orange which develop into Turkish delight and summer flowers. This whisky is pure poetry.

Bladnoch 30-Year-Old



Set in the Scottish Lowlands, the Bladnoch distillery, which is over 200 hundred years old, has just released an uber-rare 30-year-old single malt. Shuttered in between, the distillery recommenced operations in 2017 and has been on the rise ever since, not least of its achievements being the appointment of master distiller Nick Savage, formerly of The Macallan, as head of operations in 2019. The oldest release from the distillery so far, the whisky is a limited-edition bottling, consisting of whisky from just two casks — Oloroso sherry and Moscatel wine. Official tasting notes suggest a lightly floral nose, orange, almonds and marzipan on the palate, and cracked black pepper on the finish. The Bladnoch 30-Year-Old is a small batch release, numbering just 950 bottles. "Our 30yo was designed to showcase the pinnacle of our range with the unique combination of Oloroso and Moscatel casks," said Savage in a press handout, "This unique cask combination, rarity, and character, will inspire our future whisky making for many years." According to the official tasting notes, there are suggestions of dried apricots,

floral and nutmeg, with Seville oranges on the nose, almonds and marzipan with Seville oranges on the palate, and a light, floral and fruit finish with a crack of black pepper.

Lochlea Our Barley



From the Lochlea Distillery comes its first core single malt whisky, part of Lochlea's seasonal limited editions. Interestingly, Lochlea Our Barley uses three types of casks for greater depth of flavour: first-fill bourbon barrels, STR barriques and Oloroso Sherry butts. The use of these casks gives Lochlea Our Barley extra vanilla, caramel, floral and dried fruit notes and the liquid some extra dryness to create a more rounded and deeper taste profile. According to the distiller's notes, the whisky has hints of pear syrup, fruit bon-bons, warm cut grass, and marmalade on the nose. On the palate, there's golden syrup, pepper, rye bread, macadamia nuts, and cream soda. The finish is long with lasting orange beeswax notes.

The Balvenie French Oak 16-Year-Old



The first new whisky to join Balvenie's line-up in nearly a decade, the Balvenie French Oak 16-Year-Old is part of The Balvenie's Cask Finishes Range and is a vibrant single malt finished in casks that previously held Pineau wine from the French Charentes vineyards. This is the first time the distillery has used Pineau French Oak casks in its 130-year history. Pineau des Charentes, or simply Pineau, is a fortified wine made from unfermented grape juice, to which Cognac eau-de-vie is added and then matured. Maturing the whisky in these casks has resulted in a rich flavour profile. According to the official tasting notes it is beautifully balanced on the nose with light floral notes. On the palate the whisky has an energising zing from tangy lemon rind and grapefruit meeting the delicate subtle sweetness of glazed fruits and spice from root ginger. The finish has been described as 'refreshingly concise'.

Bowmore launches second Designed by Aston Martin series



Bowmore has unveiled the second iteration of its limited-edition Designed by Aston Martin collection.

Following the success of the inaugural release in 2021, the luxury brands have once again collaborated on a trio of whiskies in limited-edition bottles and packs that will be available exclusively through global travel retail.

In addition to the new expressions, Bowmore and Aston Martin have also launched the limited-edition ARC-52, their most ambitious design collaboration to date that features one of the distillery's oldest released whiskies.

For the new series in the annual Designed by Aston Martin collection, the existing Bowmore 10, 15 and 18 Years Old single malt whiskies were paired by designers at Aston Martin with cars that matched each expression's character.

The Bowmore 10 Years Old is paired with the ambitious Aston Martin 1922 GP 'TT2'. Designed solely to take part in the French Grand Prix, the 1922 GP 'TT2' celebrates commitment and vigour, which is said to match the depth of character in the sherry cask-matured 10 Years Old.

The Bowmore 15 Years Old, matured in first-fill bourbon casks and hogsheads, is partnered with the Aston Martin AM V8, both of which are said to show sophistication and elegance in design and execution.

Meanwhile, the Bowmore 18 Years Old has been matched with the Aston Martin 1959 DB4, which was the luxury car maker's bid to enter the competitive world of Formula One motor racing. Matured in Pedro Ximénez and oloroso sherry casks, the 18 Years Old is also said to demonstrate a level of high performance.

The second Bowmore Designed by Aston Martin series will be available exclusively in global travel retail from August 2022 in 17 airports around the world, including London Heathrow, Frankfurt, Hainan Sanya and Taiwan. The launch will be accompanied by 'Moment of the Senses', a shopper experience brought to life through a series of in-store activations.

29 July 2022 - Bethany Whymark

The Irish Whiskey Masters 2022 results

02 AUGUST 2022 By Melita Kiely

The standard of Irish whiskey coming from the island's producers is deeply impressive, as is the breadth of styles they are creating. This became clear in this year's edition of our annual blind-tasting contest.



The Irish Whiskey Masters 2022: the results are in

There are some big investments occurring in the Irish whiskey category. The sector has been growing at a rate of knots in recent years, and producers are moving to ensure they have the future stocks to satiate demand.

Two of the most substantial developments came to light in June this year. Sliabh Liag Distillers [launched a crowdfunding campaign](#) to raise €2 million (US\$2.14m) to increase its production capacity from 440,000 litres per year to 600,000 litres. Later that same month, Buffalo Trace owner [Sazerac acquired Lough Gill distillery](#) in County Sligo, Ireland. The site will become the new home for Sazerac's Irish whiskey brands Paddy, and Michael Collins. The 100-acre location will be transformed into a 'world-class' whiskey facility and visitor attraction, which will be able to welcome up to 150,000 guests annually.

As investment in the category increases, so does innovation. The Irish Whiskey Masters 2022 looked to see what was driving the spirit's popularity, and where the best bargains could be found. The 2022 iteration of the blind tasting took place at the Ibis Styles hotel in London Bridge.

The first panel was led by Melita Kiely, editor of *The Spirits Business*, and chair of The Global Spirits Masters Competitions. She was joined by: Michael Fichtner, whisky sommelier at The Coburg Bar at The Connaught; Herchelle Perez Terrado, director of Drinks Partnership; and Chris Tanner, general manager of Silverleaf bar in London.

Matt Chambers, spirits writer and co-founder of the *Whisky for Everyone* blog chaired the second panel. The team comprised: Derek Millar, retired whisky sales advisor; Angelo Sparvoli, head bartender at St James Bar at the Sofitel St James in London; and Marie Cheong Thong, wine and spirits judge, and Wine and Spirit Education Trust educator.

The third panel, chaired by Billy Abbott, ambassador at The Whisky Exchange, included: Caroline Roddis, editor of The Whisky Exchange; and drinks consultant Stephen Kennard, of SMJK Consulting.

The fourth group consisted of chair Nicola Carruthers, deputy editor of *The Spirits Business*; Nicola Thomson, director of Practical Matters; Toshio Ueno, vice-president and executive instructor at Sake School of America; and Sara Jane Eichler, founder of the Negroni Club UK.

Karen Taylor, co-founder of the *Whisky for Everyone* blog, was at the helm of panel five. Taylor was joined by Elise Craft, co-host of The Whisky Squad; and Ivan Orsini, head bartender at The Aubrey in London's Mandarin Oriental Hotel. A solid set of Golds got the competition off to a strong start, all presented in the Blended – Standard flight, which sampled whiskeys priced up to £30 (US\$37). Gold by name and Gold by nature, Powers Gold Label received one of the three Gold medals for its "bold oakiness on the finish and drying but sweet aftertaste". Jameson Irish whiskey was also found to be Gold-worthy, with its notes of "apples and pear drops".

The Boston Bakers also received a Gold medal for "loads of red apples" on the palate and "a delicious woody spice finish".

Eight Silver medals completed the opening round, with winners including Tullamore Dew Caribbean Rum Cask Finish, Ha'Penny Original, and Wise Owl Whiskey.

Craft noted: "There was a broad spectrum with typical Irish profiles. A good balance between quality and price."

In the Blended – Premium price range, whiskeys costing between £31 and £45 were sampled. Seven more Gold winners were crowned in this heat.

Gold-winning Jameson Caskmates IPA Edition and Jameson Black Barrel were saluted, with the latter delivering "sweet honey, juicy fruitiness with a good pinch of warming spice".

Belfast Distillery Company's McConnell's Irish Whisky 5 Years Old also took home a Gold medal after impressing with "super sharp, fresh green apples" on the nose and "white chocolate and pepper spices" on the palate. Further Golds went to The Irishman Harvest, Ha'Penny Four Cask, Jameson Crested, and Teeling Small Batch. Four Silvers were also awarded.

"Some very nice whiskeys here and at a good price point," noted Cheong Thong. "An enjoyable flight."

Millar was also impressed. He said: "A lovely variation between some lighter styles and heavier/fruitier styles. Good to see some Irish whiskey character shining through."



From single grain to single pot still styles, the diversity of entries was vast. Soft spice on the palate.

The super-premium blended whiskeys comprised bottlings priced between £46 and £60. Here, two Golds were discovered: Tullamore Dew 12 Years Old Special Reserve, and McConnell's Irish Whisky Sherry Cask Finish. The latter, produced by the Belfast Distillery Company, was described as "caramel-forward" on the nose with "soft spice building" on the palate, along with "butterscotch pudding". Abbott noted about the Tullamore expression: "The nose is very fruity, with a backup of polished-oak spiciness."

Teeling Small Batch Collaboration – Stiggins' Fancy Pineapple picked up a Silver award.

In the Blended – Ultra Premium segment, it was Gold-standard across the board. Five Gold medals were presented in this flight: Midleton Very Rare 2022, with "apple, yellow peach" notes; "malty, fruit-focused" Jameson 18 Years Old; "delicious" Jameson Bow Street 18 Years Old with "pecan pie, fudge" flavours; Writers' Tears Mizunara Japanese Cask Finish, with "subtle vanilla and oak"; and The Irishman Caribbean Cask Finish, full of "lovely fruitiness".

Ueno said: "I liked the finishes, they were crisp, and the malty character was still retained, which was nice."

Once the blends had been tasted, the judges moved to single malts, starting with a flight of standard-priced whiskeys (up to £40). The first two Master winners were unearthed here: Spanish Earl Irish Whiskey and Dingle Single Malt Batch 6. Spanish Earl Irish Whiskey intrigued the judges with its "wet washing on the nose", leading to flavours of "toffee, butterscotch and orchard fruit" on the palate. Dingle Single Malt Batch 6 offered a "sweet grain palate, with building apple fruitiness". Among the five Gold medallists in this round were "soft and toffee-forward" Dublin City Whiskey – 100% Irish Single Malt, and West Cork Calvados Cask Single Malt, with "lots of nuttiness, toffee and grainy notes".

A Silver medal completed the flight.

"From this flight, there are clearly some bargains out there – an interesting category," noted Kennard.

Roddis was impressed about what consumers could get for their money. "The fact that these are all sub-£40 shows that there's an accessible level of excellence," she added.

In the Single Malt – Premium heat, where whiskeys were priced between £41 and £60, a Master winner was discovered in Pearse Whiskey 12 Years Founder's Choice.

Taylor enthused: "This was delicious. An excellent example of balance and complexity. Classic rich, woody perfume and soft spices that are well balanced. Delivers on all fronts. Excellent value." Four Golds and one Silver medal were also awarded in this round. Teeling Blackpitts Peated Single Malt was one of the four Gold winners, with "well-balanced gentle peat – a great entry point for new peaty whiskey drinkers and also satisfying enough for aficionados".



Which whiskey would work best in an Irish Coffee?

In the super-premium category, whiskeys priced up to £90 were assessed, and three Gold medals were awarded. Gold-winning Method and Madness Single Malt was “moreish – leaves you wanting more”.

The Irishman 12 Years Old was found to be “harmonious with elegant fruit”, while Tullamore Dew 18 Years Old was described as having “lingering sweetness with some spices and toffee”.

The most expensive single malts, priced at £91 and above, were sampled in the ultra-premium segment – which recognised five Golds. Teeling Whiskey Company collected two awards, one for Teeling 30 Years Old and another for Teeling Renaissance Series 5 18 Years Old – Calvados Cask. A trio of Knappogue whiskeys also took home Gold medals. One of the entries, Knappogue Castle 21, offered a “syrupy feel, warm baking spices and yeasty bread on the finish”. Craft said: “There was nothing in this category not to enjoy. Lots to choose from within that Irish profile. There was diversity in style but true consistency in quality.”

Easy to drink

From there, the tasting progressed to single grain whiskeys by price point. In the standard bracket, ranging up to £30 a bottle, Great Earl Irish Whiskey scooped a Gold medal for being “fresh, vibrant and very easy to drink”.

In the premium heat, which looked at whiskeys sitting between £31 and £45, Teeling Single Grain grabbed a Silver medal for its “classic butterscotch” palate.

The super-premium round was for whiskeys positioned from £46 to £60, with Method and Madness Single Grain securing a Gold medal. The whiskey impressed with its “creamy and soft palate, with lovely delicate peach”.

Single pot still whiskeys always spark some interesting conversations among the judges. Native to Ireland, the whiskey style was enjoyed across the panels and the standard flight (up to £30) rewarded two entries with Gold medals.

Samuel Gelston’s Single Pot Still Irish Whiskey Bourbon bagged a Gold award for “crisp green apple and biscuit cereals”. Stablemate Samuel Gelston’s Single Pot Still Irish Whiskey Pinot Noir also picked up a Gold. Fichtner detected “grapefruit, honey, camomile and apricots” in the whiskey.

In the Single Pot Still – Premium heat, for whiskeys between £41 and £60, Powers Three Swallow Release secured a Gold medal for “oatmeal cookies and chocolate” flavours.

Multi-layered

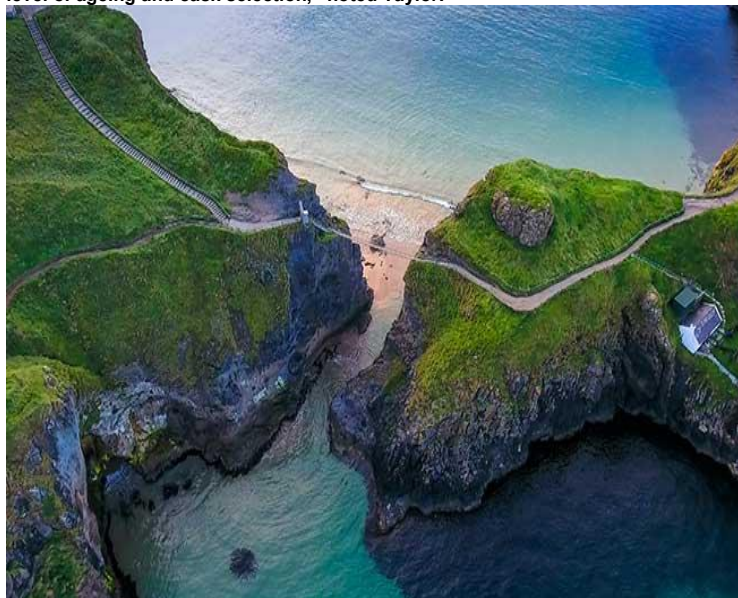
In the super-premium single pot still contingent (£61-£90), Redbreast 12 Years Old soared to success with a Master medal. Chambers noted the whiskey’s “multi-layered” profile and described it as “delicious”. Tasting notes included “dried fruits, dusty baking spices and a hint of peach/apricot”.

Four Gold medallists were also celebrated, including Green Spot. This had “tonnes of vanilla and confection fruit” on the nose, leading to “poached pear with cracked black pepper” on the palate”.

Two Silver medals rounded off the flight.

At the top end of the price bracket, the ultra-premium single pot still whiskeys were greatly enjoyed by the judges, who awarded two Master medals. The first went to Redbreast 27 Years Old. Tasting notes included a “rich and spicy palate; juicy red berries, freshly risen bread, and enough dryness to be moreish”.

“A complex whiskey with loads of character, beautifully balanced with the ideal level of ageing and cask selection,” noted Taylor.



Ireland’s whiskey producers proved there is much to be excited about when it comes to Irish whiskey

Midleton Very Rare Barry Crockett Legacy also secured the top accolade. Roddis picked out “coconut, chocolate-chip cookie dough, and cherries”, evolving into “chocolate-covered tropical fruits on the palate, with fizzes of oaky spice”. Eleven Gold medals and one Silver cemented the category’s success. Gold winners included “rich and indulgent” Blue Spot, and “complex, nutty, herbaceous” Redbreast Lustau Edition.

In the Other – Rye & Malt Blend heat, Method and Madness Rye and Malt made the Gold cut. Tanner found “a nice hint of malt on the nose bolstered by underlying spice”, with “notes of rock candy and tropical fruit” on the palate. Molly Malone Small Batch brought enjoyment to the Small Batch flight, and received a Gold

medal. The judges enjoyed the “freshness” on the palate and “balanced grain qualities”.

In the Flavoured Spirit Drink sector, for flavoured whiskey-based products, a Master medallist was hailed in the form of Carlow Cuttings Botanical Spirits.

Eichler said: “Soft and grapey with a beautiful bouquet of spring flowers.

Complex, leading you in a different direction with each sip. Lovely tropical notes and bursts of citrus; it’s endless yet perfectly balanced.”

Gold and Silver medallists – Tullamore Dew Honey and Jameson Cold Brew, respectively – were also enjoyed.

For the first time in The Irish Whiskey Masters a category for new make spirit was offered. The judges liked what they found in Pearse Lyons Pot Still New Make Dublin 8, awarding the unaged spirit a Gold medal. Tanner found aromas of “tropical fruit and overripe banana” with “hints of jasmine and Demerara sugar” on the palate.

The tasting finished on a high with Black Water Irish Poteen, which was presented with the final Master medal of the day in the closing Poitín round. “Creamy, gorgeous wisps of bonfire smokiness by the ocean, salty and rich; green and fresh,” noted Craft.

The judges then tasted all the Irish whiskey Master medallists. With such a high standard in various categories, the final choice was anything but easy. However, after careful consideration the judges came to the consensus that Redbreast 27 Years Old would be The Irish Whiskey Taste Master 2022.

The excitement about the Irish whiskey category was palpable throughout the tasting, and showed there are some true gems to be found on the Emerald Isle. Further investment in Irish whiskey is inevitable, indicating that there will be much to look forward to in years to come.

Mortlach 30-year-old retails for £3,700

03 AUGUST 2022 By *Melita Kiely*

Diageo has released Mortlach Midnight Malt 30 Years Old for an RRP of £3,700 (US\$4,500).



Mortlach Midnight Malt sits at 49.1% ABV

Sitting at 49.1% ABV, Mortlach Midnight Malt was initially aged in refill American oak and European oak casks.

The whisky was then split into three different seasoned casks: Bordeaux wine, Calvados and Guatemalan rum. Finally, the liquid was married in custom quarter casks.

Dr Craig Wilson, Diageo master of malt, said: “There is an art and science to the creation of whisky, born of an unabating quest to wield flavour – a journey that is complex, evolving into unknown directions, only to finally reveal itself as the patient labour of visionary at work.”

Tasting notes for the new expression include aromas of herbal top notes, suggesting pork crackling and dry sage.

The palate is said to be ‘richly winey’, with apple, spicy intensity and black pepper. The finish is long, sweet and has a peppery spice. Water softens the whisky, while retaining its sweetness and bringing some mint chocolate.

In other whisky news, this week SB revealed the medal winners from a trio of whisky blind tastings: [The American Whiskey Masters](#), [The Irish Whiskey Masters](#), and [The World Whisky Masters](#).

Furthermore, Brown-Forman revealed plans to invest more than [£30 million in the GlenDronach distillery](#) in Scotland.

Top 10 award-winning Scotch whiskies

04 AUGUST 2022 By Georgie Pursey

This year's Scotch Whisky Masters saw our judges travel across Scotland one sip at a time, scattering medals as they went.



From blended liquids to super-premium single malts, the selection of drams up for judging this year was exceptional, and our panel of leading spirits specialists can attest to that, handing out 14 Master medals, 76 Gold medals and 34 Silver medals [throughout the blind tasting](#).

Our panel of experts comprised: Jack Dalton, UK and international sales manager of Edinburgh Whisky Academy; independent spirits consultant Ivan Dixon; Ivan Orsini, senior bartender at The Aubrey, in London's Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park; Malika Kirchel-Sharper, bar manager at Boisdale, Canary Wharf; and Melita Kiely, editor of *The Spirits Business*, who chaired the panel.

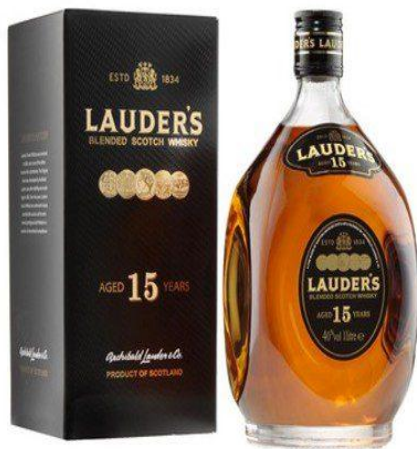
Karen Taylor, co-founder of the *Whisky for Everyone* blog, was the chair of the second panel. Her fellow judges comprised: Derek Millar, retired whisky sales advisor; Alan Uresti, head of agave spirits at Annabel's; and Evan Prousaefs, bar manager and assistant general manager of Los Mochis, London.

Chaired by Matt Chambers, co-founder of the *Whisky for Everyone* blog, the third panel included: freelance writer Ian Wisniewski; Michael Fichtner, whisky sommelier at The Connaught Hotel; and Dimple Athavia, founder of All Things Drinks.

Finally, the fourth panel was chaired by Billy Abbott, ambassador at The Whisky Exchange. He was joined by spirits writer Mark Jennings; Nick Larsson-Bell, senior buyer at Harvey Nichols; and Nicola Carruthers, deputy editor of *The Spirits Business*.

Keep reading to find out which 10 bottles left a lasting impression.

Lauder's 15 Years Old

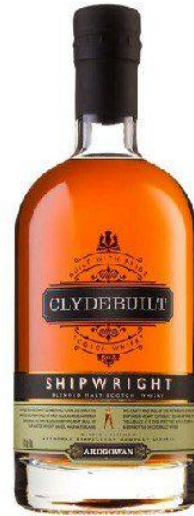


Marking the first Master medal winner of the tasting, this 15-year-old Scotch comprises a blend of Speyside and Highland whiskies, which have been rested in a combination of Bourbon and Sherry casks.

The judges described the whisky as “malty, with caramel, vanilla and cherry, and a touch of sharpness and citrus” and was praised for its “rich, creamy” texture on the palate, and the “notes of crème brûlée and oak tannic finish”.

An excellent bottle for anyone seeking a premium blended whisky that won't set you back more than £30 (US\$36.64).

Clydebuilt Shipwright



In the super-premium blended malts category, another worthy Master winner was found with Clydebuilt Shipwright, which marries Speyside and Highland whiskies in first fill oloroso Sherry casks. Judge Larsson-Bell said the 48% ABV whisky had a “nose of lillies, apricot jam and a touch of spice. On the palate, it is delicious, exceptionally balanced and super creamy.”

Meanwhile Abbott noted “leather and toffee” on the nose, alongside “chocolate and dried fruit on the palate, with some sharpness”.

SMWS 112.55 – The Devil in Pink Silky Pyjamas



If there was a prize for the best named whiskies, The Scotch Malt Whisky Society (SWMS) would win every time. As it happens, the Scotch bottler didn't need the extra category to clean up at this year's tastings, taking away a total of six accolades for its submissions, including a Master medal for 112.55 – The Devil in Pink Silky Pyjamas. Spirits writer Jennings enthused: “A tropical fruit explosion, deceptively drinkable at full strength, and with water it just sings from the rafters ‘drink me all day long’. I adored this.”

The SMWS also took home Master medals for its Campeltown single malt Apocalypse Cow; the cask-strength The Gentle Sparkling Beast From the East; the “creamy and fruity” Funky Old Bodega; and Islay single malt Lighthouse to Smokehouse; plus a Gold medal for Sacher Torte and Simnel Cake.

The Glenturret 10 Years Old Peat Smoked 2021 Release



The Glenturret 10 Years Old Peat Smoked 2021 Release received a Master medal in the super-premium single malt category. Judge Prousaefs was impressed with the liquid's smoothness considering its 50% ABV, noting that it was "peaty and herbaceous on the nose", while also recognising flavours of "red fruits, honey and spice and a long, sweet finish" on the palate. The Glenturret also nabbed a Gold in the flight for the "bold and expressive" 12 Years Old 2021 Release, also noted for having "red fruits on the palate" along with a long Sherry finish.

Glasgow 1770 Single Malt Scotch Whisky – Triple Distilled



Coming from Scotland's Lowland region and landing in the single malt premium category, where bottles are priced between £36-£50, is this Master winner: the Triple Distilled edition of the Glasgow 1770 Single Malt Scotch Whisky, which boasts notes of "banana and tropical fruit". *The Spirits Business* editor, Melita Kiely, noted: "Fruitiness follows on the palate with caramel and toffee sweetness. A lot of flavour for the price – I'd be very happy to pay this for a bottle." The brand also received a Master for its Sauternes Cask Finish which landed on the savoury side of the palate.

Old Particular Dailuaine 18 Years Old



Taking home the biggest accolade from the day's tastings was Old Particular Dailuaine 18 Year Old, which was given the title of Taste Master (the best of the day) for its "red fruits, honey and allspice on the nose and palate. The nose is a bit reserved, but the palate is very expressive and complex". Only 170 bottles of this 48.2% ABV Speyside single cask malt were produced for the Old Particular Midnight Series, having spent its days resting in a single Sherry butt finishing cask from June 2003 to June 2021.

Benromach Contrasts: Organic



Hailing from Speyside, this special edition whisky won a Master medal after having impressed the panellists.

Prousaefs said: "Brilliant on the nose, with red fruit, flowers and honey. The palate is very expressive and smooth, with similar notes, and a long Sherry finish."

The flavour comes from virgin American oak casks, and the whisky is UK Soil Association-accredited from start to finish. It is also the 'world's first' certified organic single malt whisky, and has been in production since 2006.

Seaweed & Aeons & Digging & Fire



There's a lot of speculation around which undisclosed Islay distillery this whisky comes from, with many thinking it resembles the liquid produced by Bunnahabhain, while others assume the liquid can't come far from Laphroaig. Regardless of its origins, our judges were impressed by its "complex nose, subtle barbecue and smoke with fresh fruits still breaking through", all of which saw it awarded a Gold medal.

The 10-year-old whisky has been bottled at 40% after spending a quarter of its ageing time in first-fill oloroso Sherry octaves. Its name gives a lot away when it comes to what drinkers should expect from a dram, and if famous distillery associations and excessive repetitions of ampersands don't bother you, this is a solid bottle to add to your collection.

Glen Scotia 15 Years Old



The new range pays homage to the distillery's Notes of "pink grapefruit, juicy fruit bubblegum and Guadeloupe melon" won this 15-year-old Campbeltown whisky a Gold medal at this year's Scotch Whisky Masters.

This 46% ABV whisky is unpeated; it was matured in first-fill Bourbon and refill American oak casks, and doesn't hold back on letting the liquids classic regional traits shine through.

The Story of the Spaniard



Compass Box took home a plethora of Gold medals at this year's tasting, including for this "spicy and gingery" The Story of the Spaniard. This no-age-statement blended malt is named for a chance encounter the brand's founder had with a man in the south of Spain, where he was introduced to Sherry for the first time. Years later, he was reacquainted with the category through whiskies aged in former Sherry casks, and this specific blend is a tribute to the broad spectrum of styles the Spanish spirit has.

Compass Box recommends sipping this neat, or in a ginger ale Highball, garnished with an orange peel alongside a plate of Spanish cured meats.

The Clydeside Distillery Celebrates Launch Of Inaugural Scotch Single Malt

[Hannah Kanik - Scotch](#) | November 12, 2021

[The Clydeside Distillery](#) recently unveiled its first official Single Malt Scotch Whisky: the Stobcross, a Lowland Single Malt.

The Lowland whisky is matured in American and European oak casks and is now available for purchase from the distillery. The 70cl bottle sells at a recommended retail price of £45.

It is made from 100% Scottish barley and water from Loch Katrine. The distillery said it has a nose of floral notes with fresh sweetness and tropical tones. The palate has notes of orchard fruits and a hint of white pepper.



The Clydeside Stobcross (image via The Clydeside)

"Stobcross pays tribute to Glasgow's industrial heritage and the spirit of innovation which forged its position on the global stage," Andrew Morrison, Commercial Director at Morrison Glasgow Distillers, said [in a prepared statement](#).

"Our whisky has been lying patiently waiting for almost four years. This precious time, along with our distiller's skills and craftsmanship, has created something truly special. We're incredibly proud to launch our very first Single Malt."

Stobcross is named after a historic cross that once marked the route to Dumbarton Rock. It later became a weaving village that was demolished in 1875 to make way for the Queen's Dock. It is in the Dock's former pumphouse that [The Clydeside](#) has been established, having first opened in 2017.

The Clydeside Distillery's Chairman, Tim Morrison, is the great-grandson of John Morrison, who originally built the Queen's Dock in the 1870s. The distillery is said to have established itself as one of Glasgow's leading tourist attractions since opening in 2017. It is home to a state of the art interactive visitor center offering guests of all ages whisky knowledge.

Official tasting notes for this whisky are below.

- Nose: floral notes, fresh sweetness with tropical tones
- Palate: orchard fruits and hints of white pepper
- Finish: fresh, fruit tones

Lochlea Distillery Launches Its First Core Single Malt Whisky

Gary Carter - [Scotch](#) | July 27, 2022

[Scotland's Lochlea Distillery](#) recently launched their first core single malt whisky, called Lochlea Our Barley.

The new expression joins Lochlea's seasonal limited editions and is the first Lochlea whisky to be fully crafted by Production Director John Campbell since he joined the company in November of 2021.

Campbell, also Lochlea's master blender, said the new Lochlea Our Barley is a marriage of three styles of cask types that help to give a greater depth of flavor to their whisky.



Lochlea Our Barley (image via Lochlea)

"We use first-fill bourbon barrels, STR barriques and Oloroso Sherry butts to compliment the signature Lochlea flavors," he said, [in a statement from the distiller](#). "The use of these casks will give Lochlea Our Barley extra vanilla, caramel, floral and dried fruit notes and the liquid some extra dryness to create a more rounded and deeper taste profile for our Lochlea consumers." Thanks to greater sales of the first two products released this year, a greater volume of Lochlea Our Barley was bottled. But as demand continues to outweigh supply, the distiller has noted that previous cases were on allocation across the UK and for export partners.

Lochlea's Commercial Manager David Ferguson said, "I get excited each time we bring a new whisky to market, but with Our Barley in particular, I can't wait for more people to get hold of bottles, try them and let us know what they think. This will be many consumers' first taste of Lochlea, and the casks John has selected for this one give real depth, alongside the signature Lochlea cereal and fruit notes. To me, it's our best whisky yet."

Their newest expression clocks in at 46% ABV, and has a suggested retail price of £45.

Lochlea Our Barley distiller's notes:

- **Nose:** Pear syrup, fruit bon-bons, warm cut grass, marmalade.
- **Palate:** Golden syrup, pepper, rye bread, macadamia nuts, cream soda.
- **Finish:** A long finish with a lovely lasting orange beeswax notes.
- **ABV:** 46%
- **SRP:** £45

Lochlea Distillery is an independent single malt distillery based on Lochlea farm in the heart of Ayrshire. The family-run farm grows and harvests their own barley, ensuring full traceability from field to bottle. Lochlea is the only distillery where Robert Burns actually lived and worked on the farm, from 1777-1784.

Talisker opens revamped visitor centre

08 AUGUST 2022 By [Melita Kiely](#)

Isle of Skye-based Talisker has opened its new visitor centre, which is part of Diageo's £185 million (US\$257m) investment in Scotch tourism.



Talisker has opened its new visitor centre

The new facility offers an interactive experience and new distillery tours to emphasise how the brand is made by the sea.

Guests will be able to choose from a selection of three tours: The Distillery Tour, Made by the Sea Tasting Experience, and Talisker Cask Draw and Tasting Experience.

Furthermore, the space houses two bars and a shop, which will sell local products.

Barbara Smith, managing director of Diageo's Scotland brand homes, said:

"Talisker is inseparable from the unique Isle of Skye landscape, as its whisky is inherently shaped by the sea and landscape that surrounds it.

"Our new brand home celebrates that deep connection with the sea and Talisker's commitment to preserving the wonderful marine environment in Scotland and around the world.

"From the tours to the bars and retail space, there's so much to experience at Talisker, whether you've travelled two miles or 200 miles to be there, and whether you're already familiar with this wonderful whisky, or discovering it for the first time."

To mark the official opening last week, Talisker invited multi-record-breaking wild swimmer Ross Edgley and Skye-based artist, adventurer and conservationist Katie Tunn to Talisker.

Ambassador Edgley said: "It's impossible to visit Skye and not feel like you're on an adventure, it just oozes out of the place. The experience at Talisker embodies this adventurous spirit and is truly worth a visit.

"What you've got here is a truly unique whisky experience in a stunning setting, with its opportunity to get out into the wild and come back here to one of the many tastings and tours, there are so many reasons to keep returning to this beautiful island."

The Skye-based distillery is the sixth site to be overhauled as part of [Diageo's Scotch whisky tourism investment](#).

In July this year, Diageo opened the [new Singleton visitor centre](#) and marked the occasion with a celebratory single malt.



Glenfiddich launches Perpetual Collection in GTR

Glenfiddich has announced the launch of its latest travel retail-exclusive collection.

The Perpetual Collection is a range of whiskies from vats that have been in perpetual use. These vats are never emptied but instead successively filled, generating more complex flavour profiles in the resulting whiskies. Known as the solera vat process, this ageing technique is utilised in brandy and rum production but is fairly uncommon within the whisky world. Glenfiddich's solera vat process means that it only bottles half of the whisky in any vat before it is refilled.

The new Perpetual Collection comprises four expressions: VAT 01 (40% ABV), a single malt that has undergone previous maturation in red wine and bourbon casks; VAT 02 (43%), filled with whisky that has been double matured in oak and sherry casks; VAT 03 (50.2%), a non-chill-filtered whisky that has seen 15 years of maturation in bourbon and sherry casks before solera ageing; and VAT 04 (47.8%), which comprises liquid aged in oloroso sherry and bourbon casks for 18 years and is also non-chill-filtered.

The concept of perpetual motion is also symbolised on the expressions' packs, which feature artwork by Berlin-based studio A N F.

Lindsay Hitzeroth, head of customer marketing global travel retail at William Grant & Sons, said: "This is Glenfiddich's biggest launch in global travel retail in the last decade - the perfect celebration of the world of travel opening back up: a range of whiskies that never sit still, for travellers always in motion."

"The time spent at the airport is that exciting moment where the adventure starts, so so we wanted to give those flying something special to enhance their experience and remind them of their travels. This new range is enticing for all; whether it's a gift for a maverick loved one or a treat for oneself, the Perpetual Collection offers travellers a unique moment of enjoyment to capture their life that never stands still."

To celebrate the launch of the Perpetual Collection, a series of Glenfiddich pop-up retail spaces will be launching at select airport destinations where travellers will have a chance to explore the collection, including through tasting. The range will roll out globally from August 2022.

4 August 2022 - Bethany Whymark



Glenmorangie moves to solar for its bottling plant

Glenmorangie has installed a new solar array at its Livingston-based bottling plant, with the 1,476 panels set to reduce the energy consumption on site by 30%. The move is the latest in a strategy for the company to achieve net zero carbon by 2040, with the switch part of an eight-figure investment in its operations. Glenmorangie Company is doubling the capacity at its bottling plant, too, with the expansion due to be completed in 2023. DB Group, based in West Lothian and in partnership with Emtec Energy, have carried out the installation. Energy management support will be available while they complete the transition and continue to reduce high energy consumption.

Michael Scotland, Facilities and Projects Director at Glenmorangie, commented on the switch: "We're putting sustainability at the heart of the expansion of our Alba bottling plant. Our capacity will be increasing with new high-speed lines being installed over the coming year. At the same time, we have installed solar panels to reduce our current reliance on the national grid. This also gives us a clear pathway to maximise green energy across our site as we work towards our sustainability targets."

Peter Nelson, Operations Director at Glenmorangie, continued: "The Glenmorangie Company has ambitious plans for growth while we are fully committed to building a sustainable future for our business and communities across Scotland. We have key projects already in motion or completed at our sites including the solar array at Livingston, the installation of an anaerobic digestion plant in Tain as part of our Dornoch Environmental Enhancement Project (DEEP). We also continue to work in partnership with other Distilleries on new hydrogen energy trials with many more projects in the pipeline to achieve our 2040 net zero ambition."

2 August 2022 - Bradley Weir



Wemyss Malts releases 19 one-of-a-kind single cask whiskies

Whisky bottlers Wemyss Malts have launched an exclusive single cask range, each hand-selected by distilleries and collectors across Scotland.

There are 19 single cask whiskies in the collection, with each expression said to showcase the variety in production, season and cask influence in the Scotch industry. Each cask has provided between 50-700 bottles.

New packaging has been unveiled to coincide with the launch, with the new design focusing on the key information that makes up each whisky, including age, cask type and the distillery.

Isabella Wemyss, Director of Production, said: "This collection celebrates the exceptional whisky distilleries based across Scotland and it's a privilege to be able to bring these special whiskies to market. The taste, experience and emotion conjured by each drink has been our absolute focus, creating accessible and unpretentious whiskies to encourage the adventurous exploration of flavour. As a brand we're constantly experimenting and discovering, it's been a really exciting time to bring together components from dozens of distilleries and create a bespoke range crafted to suit each taste whether that is sweet, complexly spicy or gently smoky."

Nine of the casks will be launched as market exclusive, which includes a 28-year-old Mortlach cask, dubbed Supper Club, which will be available only online to Wemyss Malts Cask Club members. Other expressions in the range include After Derby Day, the oldest release, and Carriages at Midnight, with each name determined by using the aromas and tastes of each whisky.

Founder of the company William Wemyss further commented: "Single cask whisky is unique in that it is a snapshot of the distillery on one day of production and the type of cask that has been matured in - allowing for the crafting of complex and signature flavours. The release size means there will be ample different flavour profiles for all palates to enjoy - with the maturing age ranging from 13 years through to 29."

To celebrate the release of this collection, the brand will also release a Whisky Villanelle, with the hopes of appealing to an audience that might not otherwise drink.

3 August 2022 - Bradley Weir

Fettercairn debuts 2022 16YO whisky

09 AUGUST 2022 By Alice Brooker

Whyte & Mackay has unveiled the 2022 limited edition bottling of its Fettercairn 16 Years Old single malt whisky.



The bottling rests at 46.4% ABV

This year marks the third limited release in the annual series, which was launched in 2020 and presents different maturation journeys of 16-year-old single malts.

Master whisky maker Gregg Glass said: "In creating this recipe, selecting these casks, I set out to further explore the boundaries of what we can achieve at Fettercairn in our quest for true distinction, whilst continuing to deliver on the tropical house character that defines Fettercairn."

"Once again, the result is a very special, one-off creation that will never be repeated."

The 2022 iteration offers notes of exotic fruits, roasted coffee and syruped figs. The bottling has undergone maturation in a first-fill oloroso Sherry cask, followed by a first-fill Pedro Ximénez Sherry cask, and was then finished in an ex-Bourbon barrel.

Glass added: "The challenge was to fine tune the balance of cask influence that would deliver the unique profile I was looking for. A unique drinking experience, which, with accentuated flavour characteristics, define Fettercairn."

The whisky clocks in at 46.4% ABV, and delivers notes of guava with patisserie spices, cocoa and vanilla.

The release will be available across Europe, including France, the UK, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium from July onwards, and will be extended to global travel retail (GTR) and Asia markets in 2023.

It will retail for RRP £72 (US\$87.26), while the GTR edition can be bought in a one-litre bottle for RRP £82.50 (US\$99.99).

In June this year, Whyte & Mackay unveiled [the Fettercairn 200 Club](#), a partnership with farmers to supply Fettercairn Distillery with 100% of its own barley for whisky production.

How to Pair Whisky and Snack Cakes

JULY 5, 2022 | [STEPHEN BEAUMONT](#)



As rational human beings, we are all aware that some things we eat and drink are better for us than others. A glass of water is superior to a sugary cola after exercise, for instance, and an apple is nutritionally more sound than a cream-filled Twinkie or Swiss Roll.

So why do we so often reach for the less beneficial option? The answer, of course, is indulgence. That is why the snack cake endures as an American favorite, even many decades after America's fitness obsession first took hold. After fully exploring the category by wandering through the snack food aisles of various grocery stores, I settled on five principal snack cake categories: cream-filled vanilla cakes, cream-filled chocolate cakes, fruit pies, oversized cookie sandwiches, and various forms of glazed or frosted dough, from packaged donuts to honey buns. Then I got to work.

What became quickly apparent is the satisfying symmetry of the American snack cake partnering pretty perfectly with the iconic American spirit: bourbon. When pairing Twinkies and bourbon, however, target a whiskey with ample oak and vanilla richness and not too high a proof, since excess alcohol strength will overwhelm the cake-and-cream combination.

After trying several whisky styles with the chocolate and cream-filled Little Debbie Swiss Rolls, I concluded that scotch single malt is the way to go, either with abundant richness for a complementary pairing or impressive peatiness to develop a more contrasting relationship. I eventually settled on the peat, though it took me some time and quite a few Swiss Rolls to get there.

When it came to the Little Debbie Honey Bun, which various savants suggest is superior to the Hostess version, on a whim I tried Canadian Club Chronicles 42 year old, and found the combination to be quite superb. The bun's sweet, cake-like character drew forward every last bit of spice in the spirit, creating a decadent cinnamon-bun experience that can be replicated with most moderately rye-forward Canadian whiskies.

Where hand-held or, as Drake's Cakes puts it, "personal" fruit pies are concerned, the issue is more the pastry and glaze than the fruit filling, since the ratio of the former to the latter is much higher than in a regular fruit pie. I found that contrasting the sweet dough with something bold and spicy, like a straight rye, serves best. I settled in with a Wild Turkey rye poured over a couple of cubes of ice.

Lastly, while there might be a touch of romanticism involved in the idea that a whiskey from Ireland, a country so associated with oatmeal, would pair well with two oatmeal cookies sandwiched around cream, there is definitely a flavor

connection between the Little Debbie Oatmeal Creme Pie and a sweet, rich, lemony whiskey like Hinch 5 year old Double Wood.

DOUBLING DOWN ON INDULGENCE

Little Debbie Swiss Roll & [Ardbeig Wee Beastie](#)

A simple partnership that mixes smoke and chocolate to delightful effect, with a cream addition that complements both.

Little Debbie Honey Bun & [Canadian Club Reserve](#)

The bun coaxes out the spice of the spirit just as it did to the 42 year old, while the sweet oakiness of the whisky adds depth to the flavor of the bun.

Hostess Twinkie & [Four Roses](#) poured over an ice ball

With the ice taking the edge off the spicy spirit, the vanilla is allowed to emerge and enhance the flavor of the snack cake.

'Rare' 31-year-old Rosebank launches

10 AUGUST 2022 By [Alice Brooker](#)

Dormant distillery Rosebank has launched a 'rare' 31-year-old single malt drawn from casks filled before its closure.



The whisky retails for RRP £1,800 (US\$2,177) per 700ml bottle

The casks were salvaged from the Lowlands-based Rosebank distillery in Falkirk, Scotland, before it closed in 1993.

[Ian Macleod Distillers acquired the Rosebank](#) site in October 2017, along with the last remaining stocks. The distillery will open its doors again in early 2023. Malcolm Rennie, Rosebank distillery manager, said: "This is the first Rosebank release during my tenure as distillery manager and I'm under no illusions as to the importance of this launch. The spirit was distilled before the distillery closed its doors and has matured in casks ever since, waiting to be awoken."

To mark the whisky's release, a short film has been created presenting commentary from four whisky experts: Becky Paskin, Brad Japhe, Moa Nilsson and Thijs Klaverstijn.

Rennie added: "It fills me with great pride to know that the 31-year-old will be the last 'old Rosebank' release before the distillery is reopened to the public."

"The revival of this sleeping giant is a huge moment for the whisky community, but most importantly for the people of Falkirk who have patiently awaited its return for three decades."

Starting with citrus notes of lime, lemongrass and coriander on the nose, the expression opens up to flavours of mint, camomile, berry and banana bread on the palate.

Finally, the finish is sweet, with hints of peach, oak and long herbal notes.

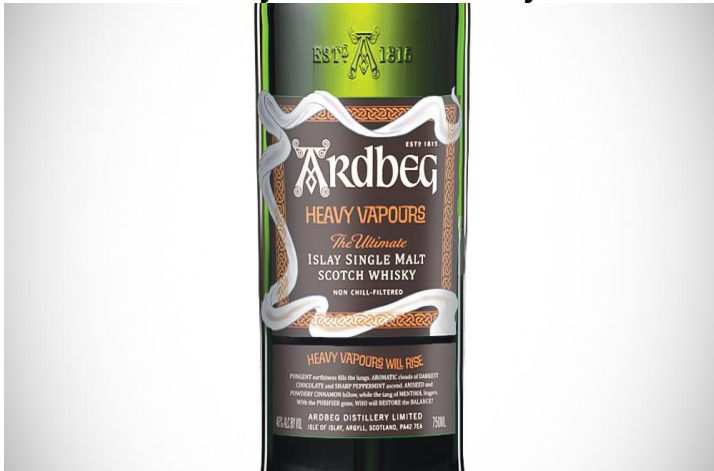
The whisky clocks in at 48.1% ABV, and can be purchased for RRP £1,800 (US\$2,177) per 700ml bottle.

The yet-to-be-opened distillery will house three stills made to the blueprints of the originals from pre-1993.

Worm tub condensers have also been installed, each with a hand-made copper coil.

13 August 2022 Ruben [* Whisky News](#)

New: Ardbeg Heavy Vapours / Springbank PX Sherry / Elements of Islay



Ardbeg Heavy Vapours

As everyone is switching from smoking to vaping, Ardbeg wants to be the first distillery to move from smoky whisky to a vaped whisky? It looks like Ardbeg Heavy Vapours will be the bottling for Ardbeg Day 2023. A Committee release label and the regular label have appeared online. This whisky is distilled “without the pivotal influence of its legendary purifier”, making it a one-of-a-kind expression. Ardbeg claims it is more intense with a pungent earthiness. The marketing department translated this as *the most full-blown Ardbeg ever*, but I think we’ve heard that before. Also I’m not sure the 46% ABV fits this kind of profile (even the Committee release is only 50.2%).



Springbank Sherry Wood: Pedro Ximénez

We already reported the upcoming [Springbank Sherry Wood](#) series, with tasting notes of some preliminary samples. Now, as expected, the first release has been announced: Springbank Sherry Wood – Pedro Ximénez 10 Year Old. Eight to ten casks seasoned with different kinds of sherry have been filled in 2019. The PX edition got the oldest spirit with the shortest finishing period. One new cask type will be released in the following years, always around 10 years of age. When I tasted them, the Pedro Ximénez version was the least impressive for me...



Elements of Islay – new core range trilogy

Elixir Distillers is rearranging its Elements of Islay series. The previous ‘Peat’ expressions are discontinued and replaced by a new core range trilogy:

- Elements of Islay Cask Edit
- Elements of Islay Bourbon Cask
- Elements of Islay Sherry Cask

Cask Edit is a composition (or ‘edit’) of refill bourbon and sherry casks at 46% ABV. The others are bottled at a higher strength of 54.5% ABV to fully showcase their personality.

I will review the new core range trilogy shortly. I see they are already available from [Master of Malt](#) if you’re curious.



Rosebank 31 Year Old

Yesterday the new owner Ian Macleod Distillers announced the second bottling in the Rosebank whisky range: Rosebank 31 Year Old. As the distillery was mothballed in 1993, this comes from old stocks. It will be the last ‘old Rosebank’ release before the distillery reopens.

This whisky is bottled at 48.1% ABV and available for £ 1800 from the [distillery website](#).

Review asks if angels' share affects environment

16 AUGUST 2022 By Melita Kiely

The Scottish government will review whether the angels' share from Scotch whisky maturation has health and environmental impacts.



Ministers will review whether the angels' share impacts the environment. As part of the government's commitment to improving air quality, it is commissioning a review into the impacts of non-methane volatile organic compound (NMVOC) emissions. This will include an assessment into the emissions that come from malt whisky maturation. Every year, approximately 2% of whisky evaporates from casks during maturation. This is known as the 'angels' share'. A Scottish government spokesperson said: "Improving air quality and the health of our people and planet is an urgent priority for this government and we're taking action across the board to deliver this. "Last year, we published our updated air quality strategy, setting out how Scotland can achieve the best air quality in Europe. "To support that, we are commissioning a review of the available evidence on the health and environmental impacts of non-methane volatile organic compound (NMVOC) emissions, including an assessment of the emissions from malt whisky maturation. "Scotland's whisky industry is extremely valuable to our economy and we recognise the sector's commitment to good environmental practices." According to the Scotch Whisky Association trade body, around 22 million casks are maturing in warehouses in Scotland. There are currently 138 operating Scotch whisky distilleries across the country. Earlier this month, SB reported on how Chivas Brothers-owned The Glenlivet had teamed up with the University of Edinburgh and the James Hutton Institute for research purposes. Together, they are investigating whether building small dams [could help distilleries in Scotland avoid closing down](#) during dry spells and heat waves.

Arbikie to be 'first' green hydrogen-powered distillery

18 AUGUST 2022 By Melita Kiely

Scottish spirits producer Arbikie looks set to become the world's first distillery to be powered by green hydrogen.



The Arbikie distillery believes it will be the first to be powered by green hydrogen

Field-to-bottle distillery Arbikie has secured planning permission to build a 1 MW wind turbine on its farm at Lunan Bay on Scotland's east coast. This will allow the production of green hydrogen – thought to be a world first for the spirits industry. Green hydrogen will be created by an electrolyser, and the stored hydrogen will be used by a burner and a boiler compatible with burning hydrogen to create steam. This will be used for heat in distillation. John Stirling, co-owner of Arbikie Distillery, said: "This has the potential to transform the distilling industry. We are delighted to be working with energy experts Locogen and Logan Energy.

"We aim to be one of the world's most sustainable distilleries so being able to use green hydrogen power will be another significant step on our sustainability journey."

In 2020, Arbikie launched the 'world's only climate-positive' gin, [called Nàdar](#).

The gin has a carbon footprint of -1.54kg CO₂e per 700ml bottle.

The distillery is working with hydrogen expert Logan Energy and renewables specialist Locogen on the green hydrogen project.

Bill Ireland, CEO of Logan Energy, added: "As demand to switch to net zero technologies continues to grow, this project is a good example of the important role hydrogen can play."



Inside the World's First Whisky Distillery to Earn a Michelin Star

[SAM MANGIONI](#), 18 AUG 2022 | NEWS

Scotland has given the world many gifts. From [golf](#) and [whisky](#) to the Deep Fried Mars Bar (yes, look it up), we owe a debt of gratitude to our Celtic brothers and sisters. However, we'll happily allow them to take a back seat when it comes to fine dining. That is until now. Enter *The Glenturret Liqueur Restaurant* – the world's first distillery fine-dining concept. Only opening its doors in July 2021, it's now become the first Michelin-star [restaurant](#) in a whisky distillery anywhere on the globe. Unfortunately, they don't serve Mars bars...



Image: Glenturret

The Glenturret is owned by French crystal maker *Lalique*, which has a history of supporting fine dining establishments. Their portfolio includes two Michelin-starred *Villa René Lalique* in Alsace and one Michelin-starred *Château Lafaurie-Peyraguey* in the Bordeaux region of France.

Scottish-born Head Chef, Mark Donald, is one of the big reasons behind *The Glenturret's* success. Inspired by the surrounding environment, he's used the finest, hyper-local produce available. Dishes on the £125pp (AU\$215pp) menu include Tattie scone, winter truffle, Baerii platinum caviar; Langoustine, buttermilk, Daurenki Tsar Impérial; Scallop kedgeree; Dover sole with white asparagus; Sika deer, hay smoked celeriac, sour quince; and Maracaibo millefeuille, green coffee and Glenturret Triple Wood.

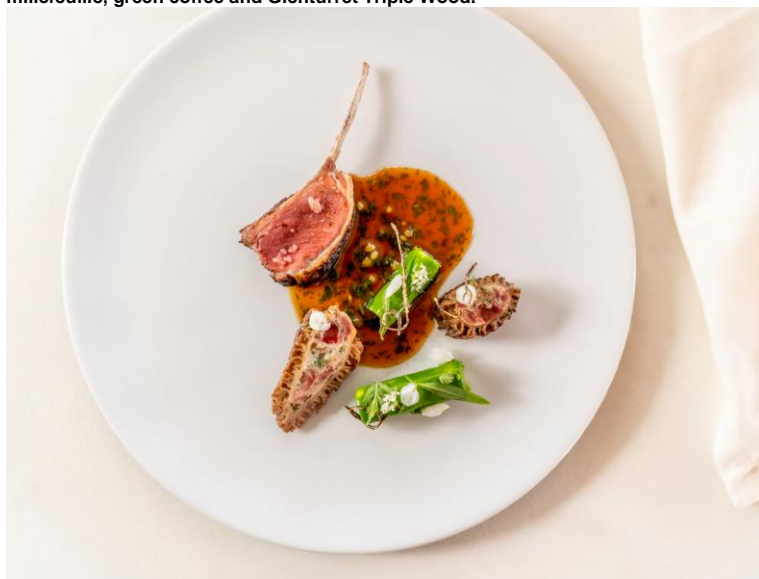


Image: Glenturret

The executive sommelier at *The Glenturret Lique Restaurant*, Julien Beltzung, has curated an extensive international wine list to compliment Mark's menus, comprising over 400 bins, with bottles starting from £39 (AU\$67). Running alongside the restaurant is *The Bar*, which holds a collection of fine whiskies from both inside and outside Scotland's oldest working distillery. A destination in its own right, *The Bar's* 250 whiskies include rare bottlings such as *The Glenturret 35-Year-Old 1977* and a *Port Ellen 18-Year-Old 1979 Silent Stills Signatory*. Located in Crieff, Perthshire, *The Glenturret* was recently acquired by the *Lalique Group* and has seen an enormous rebrand of all the distillery's core expressions. Their whiskies now come in Lalique-designed bottles, resulting in a growth in popularity worldwide. As you'd expect, the *Lalique* restaurant was another huge of the new strategy.

Speaking about the Michelin achievement, Mark Donald said: "I am so proud that Michelin have acknowledged the hard work, creativity and dedication from my team – and everyone at *The Glenturret*. Our Scottish heritage and surroundings are vital to the heart and soul of the restaurant."

To make a reservation or learn more, head over to [The Glenturret Lalique Restaurant website](#).
[Check it out](#)

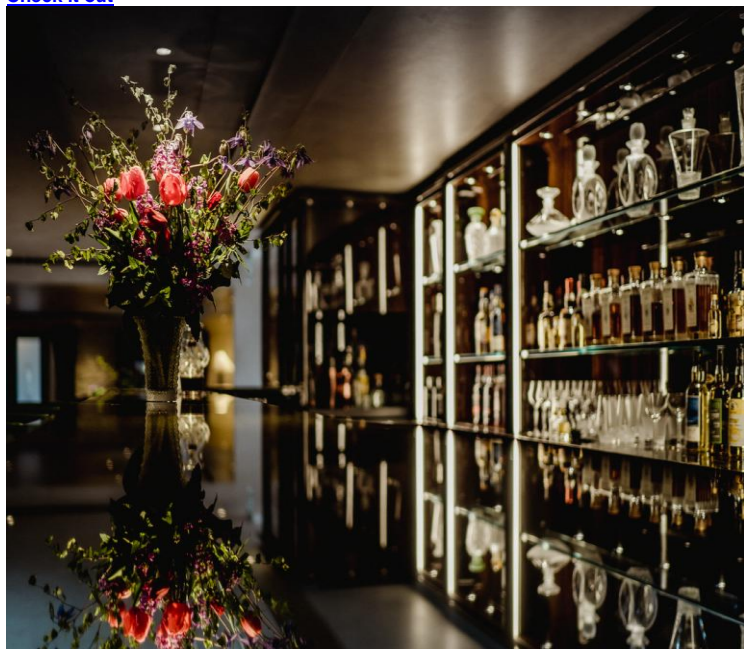


Image: Glenturret



Littlemill 45-year-old to sell for £9,500

19 AUGUST 2022 By Melita Kiely

To mark what would have been Littlemill Distillery's 250th anniversary this year, a 45-year-old whisky will be released for £9,500 (US\$11,250).



Only 250 bottles of the 45-year-old will be released

The 45-year-old Scotch will be the oldest release from Littlemill to date, and only 250 bottles will be available.

Bottled at 41.8% ABV, Littlemill 45 Years Old will be available from 22 August. Founded in 1772 in Bowling, West Dunbartonshire, the distillery was destroyed in a fire in 2004.

Since then, Loch Lomond Group master blender Michael Henry has watched over the remaining whisky casks.

Henry commented: "Littlemill was lost before its contribution to whisky could ever be fully acknowledged and applauded. However, we are lucky to have the remaining few casks under our care, a stone's throw from where the original distillery once stood, and it felt only right to mark this significant milestone with a very special limited release.

"Distilled in 1976 and double-distilled in Littlemill's bespoke straight-neck pot stills, which were designed to give triple distillation-style character, this is a Lowland single malt whisky of exceptional character.

"In keeping with our records of how Littlemill was treated, I have given the liquid a final six-month finish in first-fill oloroso Sherry hogsheads.

"You can taste the history in every precious drop, from elderflower, camomile and lemon zest, to the silk-like crème caramel and tart green apple, and the warming ginger and cinnamon spice finish."

To celebrate the release, photographer Stefan Sappert has collaborated with Loch Lomond Group to create 250 silver-on-black glass photographic plates.

The plates are stored beneath the decanter, and depict images of the River Clyde, which runs close to the closed [Littlemill](#) site.

Each plate is individually numbered and unique; they each contain Sappert's signature and fingerprints on the back.

Sappert said: "The art of whisky making is fascinating. Like wet plate photography, it captures a moment that requires an equal amount of patience, dedication, passion and, most importantly, time.

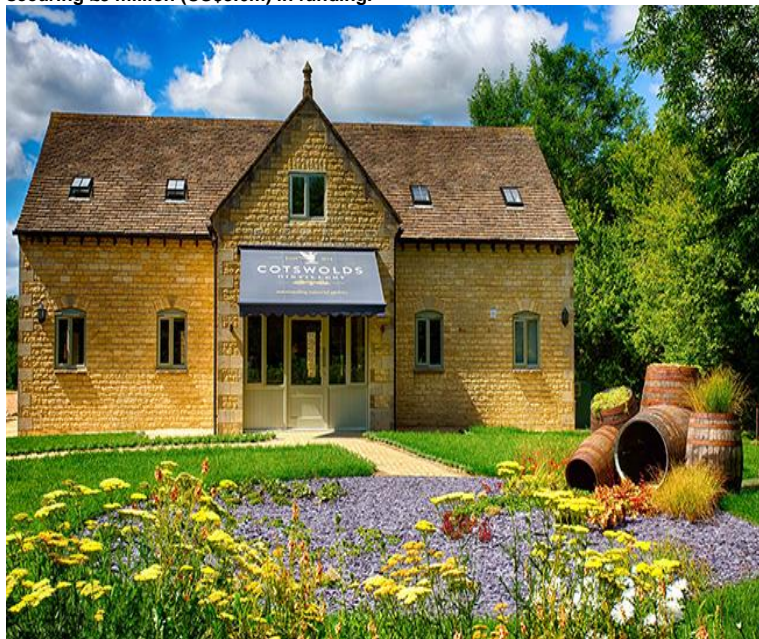
"My work uses one of the oldest photographic processes that links directly to the 1770s, where the basis of creating permanent photographs was discovered and when Littlemill was founded.

"I work with an old wooden camera and a historic lens that is over 160 years old. The result is not just a digital image, but a genuine piece of art."

Cotswolds secures £3m to quadruple production

19 AUGUST 2022 By Melita Kiely

The Cotswolds Distillery will be able to quadruple its annual alcohol production after securing £3 million (US\$3.6m) in funding.



The Cotswolds Distillery will use the funds to quadruple its annual alcohol production.

Located in Shipston-on-Stour in England, the Cotswolds Distillery secured the funding from the Santander UK bank.

The £3m will be used to increase the Cotswolds Distillery's alcohol production from 1250,000 litres a year to 500,000 litres annually.

Daniel Szor, founder and executive chairman at the Cotswolds Distillery, said: "I am delighted that we have had the support of Santander UK in enabling us to maximise our sales potential, allowing us to meet growing demand from the single malt consumer in this luxury category that is forecasting strong growth globally."

The funds will also help the producer grow internationally, enhancing existing sales in the US, France, Germany, China and Australia.

The company aims to increase its annual sales by 15%, and plans to hit £25m (US\$29.6m) turnover by 2030. Export markets will play a key role in this plan.

The distillery currently employs 65 people, and intends to add new members of staff over the coming years as it grows.

Szor established the Cotswolds Distillery in 2014.

Chris Evans, relationship director at Santander UK, added: "Cotswolds Distillery has established itself as a leading brand in the [English whisky](#) and [gin market](#), and we are thrilled to support it with this funding package.

"Santander UK has a dedicated specialised whisky sector team as well as expertise and resources to help UK businesses in the sector expand internationally."

In other funding news, earlier this week drinks-led investment firm Nightcap secured a £10m (US\$11.9m) bank loan to pursue its expansion plans.

Whisky Review: Ardbeg Ardcore Limited Edition Islay Single Malt

[Suzanne Bayard](#) - August 21, 2022

Editor's Note: This whisky was provided to us as a review sample by Ardbeg. This in no way, per [our editorial policies](#), influenced the final outcome of this review. It should also be noted that by clicking the buy link towards the bottom of this review our site receives a small referral payment which helps to support, but not influence, our editorial and other costs.

Ardbeg is an Islay distillery founded in 1815 and today owned by Moët Hennessy/LVMH. Production dwindled to nothing under Hiram Walker's ownership between the 1970s-1990s. Fortunately for us, Glenmorangie purchased and reopened the distillery in 1997. Today, they're known for [stunts](#) including aging whisky in space, a V8 tractor that's toured the world, and being named World Whisky of the Year four times. Recently, a [1975 cask](#) of Ardbeg sold for a record-breaking \$19 million, so they must be doing something right in attracting a following.

The Ardbeg Ardcore Limited Edition Islay Single Malt Whisky was officially released on Ardbeg Day, June 4th, 2022, during the [Fèis Ile \(Islay Festival\)](#) on Islay. In 1986, locals founded the festival to celebrate the island's unique history and heritage within the wider world of whisky. It is a ten-day event of tastings, tours, and festivities, including traditional Scottish dances (ceilidhs).

Each of the island's distilleries has a featured day during which they host tours, offer entertainment, and even release new whiskies. COVID led the festival to be held remotely in 2020 and 2021, so there was plenty of pent up demand and excitement surrounding the 2022 in-person events.

This whisky takes the name "[Ardcore](#)" as a shortening of "hardcore" in homage to punk rock and the roasted black malt used for this release. It's probably appropriate to describe black malt as malt roasted all the way up to 11, or until "practically incinerated," to quote Master Distiller Dr. Bill Lumsden in the [official launch video](#). I highly recommend the video to those curious. It's a sheer delight to watch Dr. Lumsden and Master Blender, Gillian Macdonald, tasting the whisky in straight faces, heavy makeup, and full punk gear.

In it, they describe how the typical Ardbeg heavy peat profile was toned down to better showcase the aromatics of malt so dark, it turned the mash jet black. The whisky was aged in first-fill and second-fill American ex-bourbon barrels to add a contrasting sweetness to the finished product. The Committee release, offered to Ardbeg email newsletter subscribers in select countries, was bottled at 50.1% ABV but not reviewed here.



Ardbeg Ardcore (image via Ardbeg)

Tasting Notes: [Ardbeg Ardcore Limited Edition Islay Single Malt Whisky](#)

Vital Stats: Aged for nearly 10 years in mostly first-fill and some second-fill ex-bourbon barrels, 46% ABV, mash bill: 75% distilling malt, 25% black malt, SRP roughly \$130/ 750ml bottle.

Appearance: This whisky is a pale straw yellow.

Nose: There's a moderate peat aroma when first smelling, showing a touch of sweet corn and iodine. It seems very fresh with a bracing aroma like newly fallen snow that I attribute to the saline aromas. Time in the glass brings forward notes of caramel sauce and melted white chocolate, probably from the bourbon barrels. There's an earthy undertone of wet autumn leaves and fermented pu'er tea that distinguishes it from a typical Islay whisky.

Palate: This is sweet and delicate on entry, with an oily texture and moderately rich body. There's a savory quality not unlike Worcester sauce and roasted peanuts. The pepperiness builds on finish, showing lasting aromas of steamed corn, peat, and baked fish. I'm left with a lasting impression of salty licorice and char. Water brings out a delicate caramel note like milk powder, but does not further enhance the experience.

4/5 Summary:

I tasted this against Caol Isla, which I often use as a benchmark in tasting lineups for Islay whiskies or Scotch in general. Caol Isla has a more oceanic nose. The Ardbeg comes across as darker and earthier aromatically, as though filtered through composted autumn leaves, yet somehow more lifted, perhaps due to the sweetness. This doesn't hit you over the head with peat, but it's certainly present. Overall, I found the aromatics an unusual mix of savory and sweet. Though not my cup of tea, there's plenty to appreciate for those that enjoy dark malts and earthy aromas.

Macallan and Bentley unveil collaborative whisky

22 AUGUST 2022 By Georgie Pursey

The Macallan has revealed the prototype bottle design of Horizon, the first whisky to be produced in collaboration with its luxury automotive partner, Bentley Motors.



The horizontally presented bottle is made with six materials that are pillars of both Macallan and Bentley

The Macallan Horizon will be a limited edition single malt whisky, and is currently in development by the two brands.

The prototype of The Macallan Horizon, which will be available as a whisky product from summer 2023, will fuse both traditional craftsmanship and innovative materials with cutting edge technology to create an 'exclusive' design. Jaume Ferras, global creative director for The Macallan, commented: "Taking inspiration from the automotive industry, we are showcasing our creative vision and concept development of The Macallan Horizon, which is among the most unique projects we have embarked on in our almost 200-year history.

"Our collaboration with Bentley Motors and the knowledge exchange we have undertaken as a result has inspired us to see things very differently. In the spirits world, everything is upright, such as our stills and our bottles.

"When we looked at the horizontal direction pursued by Bentley Motors as part of the automotive industry, it made us consider if and how we could adapt this format for whisky, which ultimately requires to be poured.

"I am incredibly proud of the beautiful design we have created together for The Macallan Horizon and the unique materials we are incorporating. It simply would not be possible without the incomparable craftsmanship and creativity for which The Macallan and Bentley Motors are renowned, and is the embodiment of the uncompromised excellence pursued by The Macallan since 1824."

The 'first-of-its-kind' design, which sees the bottle presented horizontally in a case, has been created using six up-cycled, repurposed or ethically sourced materials that are integral to both brands.

The materials include recycled copper from the disused 'curiously small' spirit stills that were located within The Macallan's former distillery; aluminium recovered from the Bentley Motors manufacturing process; recycled wood; recyclable glass; and locally sourced carbon-neutral leather.

The glass bottle found within the spiral casing features a 180° twist, representing 'the mastery of space and time' achieved by The Macallan and Bentley Motors in creating the prototype, which has no standing base.

These components have been brought together to form a unique concept that breaks away from the traditional vertical aesthetic of a whisky bottle to reflect the horizontal trajectory of the automotive world.



The design reflects the horizontal trajectory of the automotive world. Bentley's product and lifestyle design manager Chris Cooke said: "Our prototype for The Macallan Horizon is truly pioneering in both its design and use of materials. It's a fusion of the sharply defined yet curvaceous Bentley design DNA and The Macallan's innovation, using recycled materials from both iconic British brands.

"The form of the design has allowed us to almost treat light as another material in itself, and the interplay between light and the wood, aluminium and copper materials is extraordinary. In being both an object of beauty in itself and demonstrating such innovation, it's a representation of what's coming next from our partnership."

Whisky details to come

The final element of the upcoming release is the 'very special' single malt whisky being created for The Macallan Horizon.

The Macallan's master whisky maker, Kirsteen Campbell, has developed the flavour profile for the whisky following a visit to Bentley Motors in Crewe, where she observed first hand the brand's shared passion for creativity, craftsmanship and innovation.

Details of the liquid, including the age statement, tasting notes and pricing, will be revealed closer to its release date next year.

This move away from Macallan's customary product release format, which would typically see the product available for immediate purchase, is a conscious decision made by the brand to mimic the way Bentley releases its cars.

The Macallan and Bentley Motors [launched their global brand partnership in July 2021](#).

Glasgow Distillery debuts cask-finished range

23 AUGUST 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

The Glasgow Distillery has released two limited edition 1770 whiskies as part of a new line, including a Tequila cask-finished single malt.



The Glasgow Distillery has kicked off its Small Batch Series with the release of two new whiskies

Tequila Cask Finish and Cognac Cask Finish are the first bottlings in the distillery's new Small Batch Series.

The range aims to highlight the producer's collaborative approach to distilling and experimentation with a variety of casks.

Glasgow Distillery co-founder Mike Hayward said: "The Small Batch Series is a premium range of whiskies we're looking to introduce to the global marketplace. "It will be an ongoing series of hand-selected batched releases of single malts which will give our customers insight into the cask trials we run at the distillery and into the great whiskies we're trying every day.

Tequila Cask Finish is a single cask release of the distillery's unpeated single malt, filled in 2018 into a first-fill ex-Bourbon cask followed by a finishing period of more than 12 months in an ex-Tequila cask.

With an ABV of 55%, the whisky offers notes of rich honey, fresh apples, pears and tropical fruits. Only 295 700ml bottles are available.

Cognac Cask Finish (56% ABV) uses the distillery's signature peated style of malt whisky, filled in 2018 into virgin American oak casks and finished for more than a year in premium Cognac casks.

Limited to 882 700ml bottles, the single malt provides notes of smoky barbecue sauce, dark fruits and earthy spice.

"The Cognac Cask Finish and Tequila Cask Finish are just the beginning of what will be an experimental range that reflect our ethos of exploration and innovation," Hayward added.

Brighter colours were selected for the design of the limited edition releases to reflect the flavour profiles of each whisky.

Each bottle features the signature of the member of the whisky-making team that led the project.

Priced at £59 (US\$69) each, the limited edition whiskies will be available from the distillery website and at a selection of specialist retailers for UK customers from today (23 August).

Both expressions will be available in Germany, with the Cognac Cask Finish available to buy in the Netherlands and South Korea.

The new releases follows the brand's move from [500ml bottles to 700ml bottles](#) across its 1770 range.

Uilebheist distillery unveils cask programme

23 AUGUST 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Highland distillery Uilebheist, the first to be built in the city of Inverness in 130 years, is offering 100 casks of its whisky for sale.



Uilebheist distillery has rolled out a new cask programme

The [£6 million \(US\\$7.3m\) whisky distillery and brewery](#) is to be opened in the city of Inverness, in the Scottish Highlands, for the first time in 130 years. The site is named after the Scots' Gaelic word for 'monster'.

Uilebheist (spelled phonetically as 'EWL-uh-vehst') has released 100 numbered casks as part of a new cask programme. The distillery aims to produce 200-250 casks each year.

Ex-Bourbon and ex-Sherry casks are available to purchase with a minimum maturation period of 10 years, with buyers given the opportunity to visit and sample their cask as it matures.

Master distiller Bruce Smith said: "Our cask programme is an opportunity for whisky lovers to join us at the very beginning of our whisky journey with spirit produced in the heart of Inverness, right on the banks of the river.

"We see this as an opportunity for people from near and far to own a piece of local whisky history, with Uilebheist being the first distillery to operate in the region of Inverness for 40 years, and the first to be built in the city for 130 years."

The distillery anticipates "high demand" for its 100 casks, Smith said.

The site claims to be on track to become one of the lowest carbon distilleries in Scotland.

The site will include an energy centre, powered with water from the nearby River Ness. It is expected to save an estimated 250 tonnes of carbon annually.

Heat pumps within the energy centre will provide heating and hot water, which will be distributed across the Glen Mhor Hotel complex. The process is said to be the

first of its kind in Scotland and further development stages are planned to enable the site to expand significantly.

"Uilebheist will be a Highland single malt like no other, because of our fresh and innovative approach to whisky making that leaves almost no carbon footprint, whilst maintaining the traditional principles that have been used in Scotland for hundreds of years," Smith added.

Bruichladdich completes Barley Exploration range

23 AUGUST 2022 By Georgie Pursey

Islay producer Bruichladdich has unveiled the final single malt vintages in its unpeated Barley Exploration series 2022.



Bruichladdich Organic Barley 2011 and Bere Barley 2012 complete the 2022 single malt range

The two new expressions, Bruichladdich Organic Barley 2011 and Bruichladdich Bere Barley 2012, join the already released Bruichladdich Islay Barley 2013 to complete the 2022 series.

The series has a 'land to dram' mentality, which amplifies the [B Corp-certified distillery's values around total traceability and provenance](#). The trio of whiskies explore the flavour impact of where, what and how barley is grown in order to evoke 'a true sense of place'.

Head distiller Adam Hannett said: "Our Barley Exploration series originally began in pursuit of flavour, but it has grown into so much more. Barley is integral to the whisky making process and we have subsequently become fascinated with the growing process, heritage grains and natural crops – and how every aspect can elevate the drinking experience.

"It is also an opportunity for us to support the farmers who grow for us. By partnering with them we can truly push the boundaries of what we can achieve with barley, discovering new flavours and resurrecting long forgotten ones. Ultimately, it's about reconnecting our whisky with its vital raw ingredient."

Made with 100% Scottish barley cultivated at Mid Coul farm in Inverness, Bruichladdich Organic Barley 2011 is an example of 'a single malt working in harmony with nature'.

The raw ingredient has been farmed without the use of artificial fertilisers or pesticides and supports the soil it was grown in.

The whisky has benefitted from a slow distillation and maturation on Islay. On the nose there are notes of crème brûlée, sweet cantaloupe, water mint and lemon rind. Hints of toasted oak, barley flour, creamy vanilla fudge and ripe pear can be detected on the palate, before moving to a 'luxurious finish' of golden syrup with a subtle maritime sea breeze.

Bere barely

The Bere barley used in the curation of the 2012 expression is a complex ancient grain that dates back to the dawn of Scottish agriculture, approximately 4,500 years ago.

In the pursuit of flavour and 'pushing the boundaries of modern farming practices', the Bruichladdich distillery has been working with the University of the Highland's and Island's Agronomy Institute since 2005 to reintroduce Bere barley to the whisky industry.

The whisky has matured for ten years in first fill ex-Bourbon casks, which has resulted in notes of zesty lime, creamy vanilla, green apples and honeysuckle on the nose.

On the palate, distinct cereal notes give way to flavours of apple crumble and warm scones, with hints of stoned fruits and smooth honey. Hints of rich gingerbread, milk chocolate and marzipan can be detected on the finish.

Completing the Barley Exploration series is Bruichladdich Islay Barley 2013, distilled using barley grown solely on Islay. It is matured in a mix of first-fill American and second-fill European oak casks, benefitting from a harmonious balance between oak and barley.

It boasts delicate cereal notes that open into honeyed porridge and lemon meringue pie, before a long and gentle finish with hints of sweet apricot jam and smooth melted fudge.

Bruichladdich Organic Barley 2011, Bere Barley 2012 and Islay Barley 2013 are available to buy now with prices starting from £65 (US\$76.46). The Barley Exploration series can be purchased at selected specialist whisky retailers.

In June, [Bruichladdich announced it would be removing the tinned packaging across its core single malt brands](#), starting with the heavily peated Port Charlotte range.

Ardbeg Was Almost Extinct. Now It's a Cult Whisky Phenomenon.

WORDS: [SUSANNAH SKIVER BARTON](#)
ILLUSTRATION: DANIELLE GRINBERG

The first time Dr. Bill Lumsden walked into Ardbeg Distillery, he noticed a shoebox on the wall of the mash house. "There's a brand of safety shoes with steel toe caps called Totectors," he recalls. "They always came in a very distinctive gray box with a crimson pattern on it." Thinking the box must have some kind of meaning, Lumsden asked a worker about it. "He pulled it down and it was an electrical junction box. Covered with a shoe box."

It was 1997, the Glenmorangie Company had just bought Ardbeg, and Lumsden — then distillery manager at Glenmorangie Distillery — was there to help restart the Islay distillery under a new regime. But "it was in terrible condition," he says, "held together with Sellotape and string and chewing gum." He was, he admits, nearly reduced to tears.

Although it's unthinkable now, when a single cask just [sold for a record-setting \\$19 million](#), Ardbeg was once on the brink of extinction. It had been mostly non-operational from the early 1980s, going years without firing up its stills or filling a barrel. Like many distilleries, Ardbeg had suffered the effects of over-production and declining demand, a phenomenon dubbed the "Whisky Loch" that reverberated industry-wide and led to dozens of permanent closures. Ardbeg was nearly among them, but somehow scraped along, [occasionally providing parts](#) to its then-sister distillery [Laphroaig](#). At the time Lumsden first visited, Ardbeg single malt was difficult to find; the whisky had primarily been used as a blending component, and only independent bottlers offered an occasional single malt. In fact, the first Ardbeg Lumsden ever tasted, shortly before his first visit to the distillery, was a 1978 Gordon & MacPhail bottling. "It completely blew my socks off, because I wasn't that experienced in peaty whisky," Lumsden says, noting that although he'd had other Islay whiskies, like [Lagavulin](#) and Caol Ila, he "didn't understand that [heavily peated whisky] could also be really quite complex and quite interesting in that way."

ADVERTISING

Dedicated Fanbase

Despite its scarcity — and likely at least in part because of it — Ardbeg was already a bit of a cult whisky, its virtues publicly extolled by whisky critic (and [notorious sexist](#)) Jim Murray. "He came up with a statement that it was unquestionably the greatest distillery on Earth, and if perfection on the palate exists, this is it," Lumsden recalls. "So from that, it really tended to be very geeky, hardcore aficionados that knew about Ardbeg."

Rebuilding the distillery's stocks would take time. The early days of Ardbeg's revival were overseen by industry veteran Ed Dodson, with Lumsden — who is currently the director of distilling, whisky creation, and whisky stocks for both Ardbeg and Glenmorangie — coming over from the Highlands to assist. Repairs to the decrepit plant and replacements of broken-down equipment went on for years. While the first new spirit ran off the stills on June 20, 1997, it took another three or four years for the distillery to be operating regularly year-round — and it took until 2008 for Ardbeg to release the first consistently available whisky made under the new ownership, its flagship 10-year-old.

Along the way, though, Ardbeg offered one-off bottlings of older casks and young whisky — catnip to its small base of existing fans and, as word spread, enticements for newcomers. The effort received a boost in 2000 with the launch of the Ardbeg Committee, a fan club that nodded to Islay's dozens of longstanding community committees. "When you become part of a committee, you take a stake in the success of whatever the committee is trying to achieve, and that's exactly what we wanted with our Ardbeg fans — for them to feel like they had a stake in the future of the distillery," remembers Hamish Torrie, then-marketing manager for Ardbeg. The mission was framed in existential terms, he adds: "Help us make sure the doors of the distillery never close again."

In return for joining the Ardbeg Committee (for free), members received invitations to visit, opportunities to attend events, and the chance to buy limited-edition whiskies. "What we were doing was building a sense of allure and, to be frank, envy because not everybody could get a bottle," Torrie says, noting that this strategy also helped feed excitement about what was to come. "The other thing we did was start to give a sense of anticipation for the future Ardbeg, i.e., the Ardbeg made by Glenmorangie [Company]."

The response from whisky drinkers was overwhelmingly positive, especially when the distillery opened to visitors and many began traveling there in journeys akin to "making a holy pilgrimage," Lumsden says. Ardbeg Day, celebrated on the last day of the island's annual spring festival, Fèis Ile, has become a rite of passage for die-hard fans, with bottle sales, music, revelry, and a high density of Ardbeg-related tattoos. While many whiskies attract devoted followings, few rival that of Ardbeg, and the relationship between distillery and fanbase is, in Torrie's words, "umbilical. ... It's an amazing brand because it generates love."

Opportunism and Experimentation

All of that goodwill is rooted in the whisky, of course, and even with its strong reputation among the cognoscenti, Ardbeg still had to start almost from scratch when building up its portfolio in the late 1990s and early 2000s. In the stillhouse and blending lab, Lumsden worked hard to ensure that the first single malts made under the Glenmorangie Company maintained Ardbeg's established character and reputation while also developing their own, new personality.

Early on, he distilled a whisky that came to be known as the Oogling (Young Uigeadail), released as a sort of proof of concept for Ardbeg lovers. "I said, 'I just want you to see and judge that we are maintaining the style of Ardbeg that you all know and love,'" Lumsden explains. Adding to the body of evidence was the

Peaty Path to Maturity, a consecutive series that included Ardbeg Very Young (6 years old), Still Young (8 years old), and Almost There (9 years old), culminating in the first 10-year-old release, Renaissance, in 2008.

Over the years, as he has cemented Ardbeg's standing in the whisky world, Lumsden has enjoyed a wide open field for experimentation. "We've always reclaimed the Ardbeg distillery for at least one month every year to do trials," he says. Many of his innovations have ended up as limited-edition Committee bottlings; one-offs for Ardbeg Day, like the recently released Ardcore, made with black malt; and potential fodder for new additions to the core range down the road. Like Wee Beastie, added in 2020; at 5 years old, it's a direct descendant of Ardbeg Very Young.

Lumsden also has an uncanny knack for turning mistakes or problems into opportunities, like the time in 2007 when the distillery's boiler died and active fermentations, exposed to wild yeast, continued for weeks longer than normal. The subsequent new-make spirit [diverged significantly](#) from Ardbeg's usual profile, and was bottled earlier this year as Fermutation, exclusive to the Ardbeg Committee. "We've always turned things like that in our favor," Lumsden says. One of Ardbeg's malt suppliers recently lost its peat kiln to fire; no doubt there will be some sort of "Ardbeg from the ashes" release in a few years. When it reopened in 1997, Ardbeg distilled 250,000 liters of spirit; over the years, it ramped up to 1.4 million, and now, thanks to a recent expansion that took the number of stills from two to four, it has an annual capacity of 2.8 million liters. That means greater availability of standard bottlings and more experimental whiskies down the road — plus reassurance that the distillery will never shut its doors again.

"In Gaelic, 'ard' means headland and 'beg' means small — so we've got a small brand with a very big ambition behind it," Torrie says. "Ardbeg was always going to be a niche whisky, and despite expanding our production over the years, it still will be a niche, cult whisky. That's just the way it is."

Loch Lomond is fastest-growing single malt

25 AUGUST 2022 By [Melita Kieley](#)

Scotch brand Loch Lomond Whiskies was the fastest-growing single malt by volume in the world in 2021, according to new data.



The brand was the fastest-growing single malt by volume in 2021, according to IWSR data

Figures from IWSR Drinks Market Analysis cited by the brand's parent company, Loch Lomond Group, showed Loch Lomond Whiskies led the fastest-growing top 25 single malt brands globally.

Loch Lomond Whiskies has experienced 73% year-on-year growth by volume. Single malt brand Glen Scotia, also owned by Loch Lomond Group, reported 10.8% year-on-year growth by volume.

John Grievson, chief marketing officer, Loch Lomond Group, said: "The Scotch whisky market continues to be incredibly buoyant, and we have seen the category steadily grow for a number of years."

"We have made significant investments in Loch Lomond Whiskies and Glen Scotia to improve their visibility, both on shelves and through marketing initiatives, and we are beginning to see our awareness improve with consumers and through trade."

"Recent trends demonstrate a real shift towards more premium spirits, and while very different brands, rooted in their own unique history, both Loch Lomond Whiskies and Glen Scotia are known for their high-quality and innovative approach to whisky making, giving them an appealing proposition to consumers. "This is a great achievement for both brands and an important step in our overall strategic growth plans."

Loch Lomond has had an active 2022 with new product launches. In May, the Scotch whisky brand [unveiled a 46-year-old single malt](#) as the second bottling in its Remarkable Stills Series. Meanwhile in May, the producer [released two single malts](#) to mark The Open golf competition's 150th anniversary this year.

Ardbeg debuts sci-fi comic

25 AUGUST 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Scotch whisky brand Ardbeg has partnered with three artists to create its first sci-fi graphic novel.



Sci-fi comic Planet Ardbeg is inspired by the flavours found in three Ardbeg whiskies

The Islay single malt brand has released *Planet Ardbeg*, a limited edition 40-page sci-fi anthology.

The novel is inspired by the flavours and 'origin stories' of three of the brand's whiskies – Ardbeg 10 Years Old, Ardbeg An Oa, and Ardbeg Wee Beastie. *Planet Ardbeg* was conceived by New York cartoonist Ronald Wimberly, alongside artists Emma Rios and Sanford Greene.

Wimberly, creative director on *Planet Ardbeg*, said: "When we first started thinking about making this graphic novel, I thought about *Planet Ardbeg* as a time machine. Time is important with whisky, and with Ardbeg An Oa, Ardbeg Wee Beastie and Ardbeg 10 Years Old what you're talking about is three different time experiences."

Greene's action-packed 'Guardians of Oa' is inspired by the 'rounded balance and smoky power' of the An Oa whisky, and depicts a copper city coming under attack from a monstrous creature.

Meanwhile, Wimberly's 'The Best Laid Schemes' is based on the 'feisty and formidable flavours' of Wee Beastie. The tale is a neo-Western featuring giant botanicals and beasts.

Rios captured the 'peaty essence' of the 10-year-old Ardbeg in 'Take it with a Grain of Sand', which recounts a mystical quest through a land lost to time.

Colin Gordon, distillery manager, said: "It's amazing to see the different smoky characteristics of these whiskies brought to life in graphic novel form. Each story in *Planet Ardbeg* is brimming with imagination and creativity. It's a must-read for Ardbeg fans everywhere."

Planet Ardbeg will be available to buy from the distillery's visitor centre, select comic book shops, and online at [Ardbeg.com](https://www.ardbeg.com) in certain markets.

A free digital version will also be available exclusively for members of the Ardbeg Committee.

The brand will also debut a Planet Ardbeg campaign in the UK in October 2022.

More details on the campaign will be revealed in the coming weeks.

In July, Ardbeg sold a [cask of whisky for £16 million \(US\\$19.3m\)](#).

Scotch distillers hit hard by rising costs

25 AUGUST 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

Nearly 40% of Scotch whisky distillers have seen their shipping costs double in the last 12 months, while almost a third of producers expect energy fees to soar, a new survey has found.



Whisky production is an energy-intensive process

A new survey conducted by trade group the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) found that 57% of distillers have seen energy costs increase by more than 10% in the last year, with 29% seeing their energy prices double.

Almost a third (30%) of Scotch distillers expect energy costs to double in the next 12 months.

The survey also found that 57% of businesses expect energy costs to go up by a further 50%, and nearly three quarters (73%) expect the same increase in shipping costs.

Furthermore, 43% also reported supply chain fee rises of more than 50%.

However, the SWA noted that the industry continues to invest in operations and supply chain. More than half (57%) of distillers reported an increase in their employee numbers in the past 12 months, with all respondents expecting to expand their workforces in the coming year.

The SWA is calling on the new prime minister and the Treasury to support the industry by cancelling the planned double-digit tax increase in excise duty in the autumn budget. The last budget statement in October 2021 saw former chancellor Rishi Sunak [freeze spirits duty](#).

Mark Kent, chief executive of the SWA, said: "The industry is delivering much needed growth for the UK economy through investment, job creation and rising revenue to the Treasury. But this survey reveals that distillers are investing in growth despite the economic headwinds and rising costs on business.

"The industry has shown remarkable resilience, but this cannot be taken for granted. We are at a critical juncture for many of our members. The autumn budget must support the Scotch whisky industry, which is a crucial driver of growth in the economy, particularly across Scotland."

Kent noted that UK excise duty on spirits is among the highest in the world at 70%.

"Any such increase would compound the cost of business pressures companies are facing, add at least 95p of duty alone onto every bottle of Scotch whisky, and further fuel inflation," he added.

Last November, the UK government [pledged £11.3 million \(US\\$15.1m\)](#) to support four distillery sustainability projects.



Jack Daniel's Launch First 'Super Premium' Whiskey in 25 Years
[SAM MANGIONI](#), 25 AUG 2022 | NEWS

Iconic American [whiskey](#) brand [Jack Daniel's](#) has announced its first 'super premium' product in 25 years. Much to the delight of fans Down Under, the distillery recently launched *Jack Daniel's Bonded Tennessee Whiskey* as the first permanent expression in its new *Bonded Series* – all produced from its original HQ in Lynchburg, Tennessee. You'll also love:



Master Distiller Chris Fletcher | Image: Jack Daniel's

A great addition to any American whiskey aficionado's cabinet, Jack Daniel's *Bonded* packs a punch. Using Jack's time-honoured recipe of 80% corn, 12% malted barley, and 8% rye, barrels have been hand selected for their unique and particular characteristics of deeper colour, flavour, and aroma, which bring a darker, richer, and more oak-forward character. After tasting it for ourselves, we can say the 100-proof Tennessee Whiskey definitely doesn't miss on flavour, offering layered notes of caramel, rich oak, and spice, giving way to a pleasantly lingering finish.

Sitting down with Chris Fletcher, Jack Daniel's Master Distiller, he commented on the inspiration for the premium *Bonded* whiskey: "We started kicking around ideas about six years ago or so. And we had one idea or one word that led us there, and it was bold. We knew we wanted to create a bigger, bolder version of our classic Tennessee whiskey flavour profile that's going to really stand up and cut through in cocktail application."

While Fletcher believes consumers will love *Bonded* neat, he says it will be an absolute winner for whiskey cocktail lovers. "It's perfect for Old-Fashioneds, Manhattans, Juleps and Sours and all these different kinds of classic riffs on

cocktails," Fletcher added. "Cocktail application was really something that we had in the back of our minds as we were developing it."



Image: Jack Daniel's

The new addition is Bottled-in-Bond (BIB). A strict regulation, the BIB Act of 1897, stipulates that the whiskey is a product of a single distillery, made in one season, is aged in a government-bonded warehouse for a minimum of four years and is bottled at 100 proof (50%ABV).

The packaging is inspired by the original design of the 1895 Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey bottle. Officially registered by the US Government in 1866, Jack Daniel's is the oldest distillery in the country, with every drop still being produced and bottled in Lynchburg, Tennessee to this day.

Whiskey fans can now get their hands on Jack Daniel's Bonded across Australia. It will be available in 700 mL bottles and is priced at [Dan Murphy's](#) for AU\$87.99.

Compass Box debuts two whiskies

26 AUGUST 2022 By [Alice Brooker](#)

Scotch producer Compass Box has launched two limited edition whiskies, Flaming Heart 2022 and Ultramarine.



Flaming Heart 2022 (48.9% ABV) joins a range of five limited edition bottlings, released in 2006, 2010, 2012, 2015 and 2018.

The series' name is inspired by a rock song by M Ward, an American singer from Portland, Oregon.

For the 2022 release, a trio of whiskies from the Laphroaig, Talisker and Caol Ila distilleries have been brought together to create 'hearty peatiness'.

Spice comes from a blend of Highland malt whiskies, which have been further matured for at least five years in custom French oak barrels.

James Saxon, lead whiskymaker for Flaming Heart, said: "For the label of this seventh version, we have made the original rock music inspiration still more explicit. We wanted something that could just as easily be used as the artwork for an LP, or as a tattoo.

"Oak, smoke and fire reunite once again, fusing pyrotechnics with deliciousness. As well as being the fruitiest Flaming Heart of recent years, we have brought in special remnant stocks of past releases for layers upon layers of smoke and French oak influence."

Remnants of past limited editions, including Peat Monster Arcana, Myths & Legends, and the 2018 edition of Flaming Heart, have been used in the crafting process to deliver 'extra smoke and richness'. Meanwhile, Ultramarine (51% ABV) is the first instalment of a new series called the Extinct Blends Quartet.

This series will pay homage to styles of Scotch from the past, with Ultramarine taking its inspiration from a 'deluxe' blended Scotch whisky first released in the late 1980s.

Saxon said: "As whisky makers and blenders, we take umbrage that closed single malt distilleries attract all the adulation and explosive hammer prices at auction. "A distillery is never entirely lost. As we see with Brora, Rosebank and Port Ellen, they can be revived – mash tuns can be refilled, stills heated up again.

"Blends, though, are the richest time capsules Scotch whisky has, reflecting the ideas and sensibilities of the teams of people that made them, and the styles of stocks available to the blenders from year to year."

The first few batches of the blend on which Ultramarine is based drew from stocks of malt and grain whisky that had built up as part of Scotland's 'whisky loch' of the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Ultramarine uses aged malts and pre-blended parcels of Scotch whisky, both matured in Sherry casks, together with peated malts.

The whisky features prominent aromas of toffee, vanilla and toasted oak, with impressions of a peaty malt kiln.

Notes include leathery dried mango, roasted pecan and raisin.

Saxon added: "Ultramarine and the whiskies that will come after it are not recreations – that isn't possible. They are instead tributes, our way of reimagining the DNA of some great blends of the past."

Ultramarine retails for RRP £295 (US\$349.23), and will be available to buy from October with 5,982 bottles available worldwide. Flaming Heart 2022 can be purchased for RRP £130 (US\$153.90).

The latter will be on UK shelves from September, with only 9,606 bottles available worldwide.

Earlier this year, Compass Box [released a limited edition blended whisky](#) that brings together flavours inspired by the colour coral, as part of its global bartender programme.

Scotch whisky grew by double digits across all regions, and blended whisky brand Johnnie Walker rose by 34%.

Distell FY sales soar by 20.8%

26 AUGUST 2022 By Nicola Carruthers

South African drinks firm Distell saw revenue rise by 20.8% for fiscal 2022, led by its single malt portfolio and Amarula liqueur.



Amarula liqueur experienced an 'exceptional performance' in the Americas. The company's revenue for the year ending 30 June 2022 reached R34.1 billion rand (US\$2bn), up from R28.3bn rand (US\$1.68bn). Operating profit jumped by 22.8% to R2.4bn (US\$142.4 million).

Revenue from the firm's spirits arm increased by 27.6%, with ciders and RTDs

growing by 26.4%, and wine up by 14.6%.

The company's malt whisky portfolio soared by 32%, led by Scotch brands

Bunnahabhain and Deanston.

Distell also recorded 'outstanding growth' for Amarula, up by 17.2% in revenue.

The liqueur brand reported an 'exceptional performance' led by the Americas,

where it nearly doubled revenue. The company also sold one million litres of

Amarula in both Brazil and Germany.

Amarula [returned to the million-case ranks](#) after growing by 28.9% to 1.2m cases

in 2021, according to Brand Champions 2022 data.

Revenue in the firm's home market of South Africa climbed by 24.4%, with volume

up by 18.7%. The firm noted it had 47 more trading days compared to the previous

12-month period, due to a number of [alcohol bans in the country](#).

In African markets, outside South Africa, revenue increased by 14.4%, with 16.3%

higher sales volumes.

Revenue in international markets outside Africa rose by 7.9%, with volume growth

up by 9.4%, primarily driven by single malts and Amarula.

Distell said the global growth was despite one of its largest revenue-contributing

regions, Taiwan, experiencing on-trade closures due to Covid-19 during the

trading period.

In South Africa, Distell said the economy was boosted by the removal of Covid-19

lockdown restrictions. But it noted that the risk of 'sustained severe

loadshedding', record-high fuel prices, increased inflation and rising living costs

could affect growth forecasts in the medium term.

The group said it would continue to 'improve efficiencies' and manage costs to

offset rising costs related to inflation.

The firm is 'working closely' with its suppliers to address supply shortages and

expects a gradual improvement in supply in the next 12 to 18 months.

In addition, Distell said it had low levels of debt, which could provide the firm with

resources to capture future 'growth opportunities'.

Due to certain conditions stemming from Heineken's [planned purchase of a](#)

[majority stake in Distell](#), the board has decided not to declare a final dividend for

the 12 months ending 30 June 2022.

The sale will exclude Distell's Scotch whisky brands.

Caol Ila opens multi-million-pound visitor centre

26 AUGUST 2022 By Melita Kiely

Islay-based Caol Ila Distillery has opened its new visitor centre following a multi-million-pound renovation.



The Caol Ila Distillery visitor centre offers panoramic views overlooking Jura. The revamped facility offers panoramic views of Jura across the water, a bar with floor-to-ceiling windows, and an immersive storytelling room.

The visitor experience took four years to complete and is the seventh of Diageo's distillery's to be transformed as part of the firm's [£185 million \(US\\$218.7m\) investment in whisky tourism](#).

Caol Ila's visitor centre opening also marks the completion of Diageo's [Glenkinchie](#), [Cardhu](#), Caol Ila and [Clynelish](#) distilleries, 'key ingredients' in the Johnnie Walker blend.

Barbara Smith, managing director of Diageo's Scotland brand homes, said: "Caol Ila is the last of our reimagined brand homes to be unveiled and it's truly something special.

"Islay is known around the world for its whisky and we've ensured that our visitor experience not only tells the story of the Caol Ila brand but also the major role whisky plays in the island's history.

"The new building will offer something new and unique to visitors and also to locals who will be able to come for social occasions or just to simply enjoy the stunning views."

Diageo reported a 28% year-on-year increase in global Scotch organic net sales in its recent [full-year financial results](#).

Benromach Core Range

GRAHAMJULY 28, 2022

<https://malt-review.com/2022/07/28/benromach-core-range/>



A recent Patreon poll of Malt supporters called out for more readily available whiskies for us to review, which got me thinking about how I would define this for myself, and then procure bottles to review over the next few months. "Readily available" is a relative term which can vary from country to country, or even state to state within individual countries.

Another associated and equally ambiguous term I hear whisky fans talking about is "entry level" whisky. Sometimes it's mentioned in complimentary tones; other times dismissively, referring to the lower end of the core range. From all the various accounts of people's entry into the world of whisky I've yet to hear of somebody who had a taste of something like Chivas 12 and whose life was permanently altered, becoming a lifelong whisky fan.

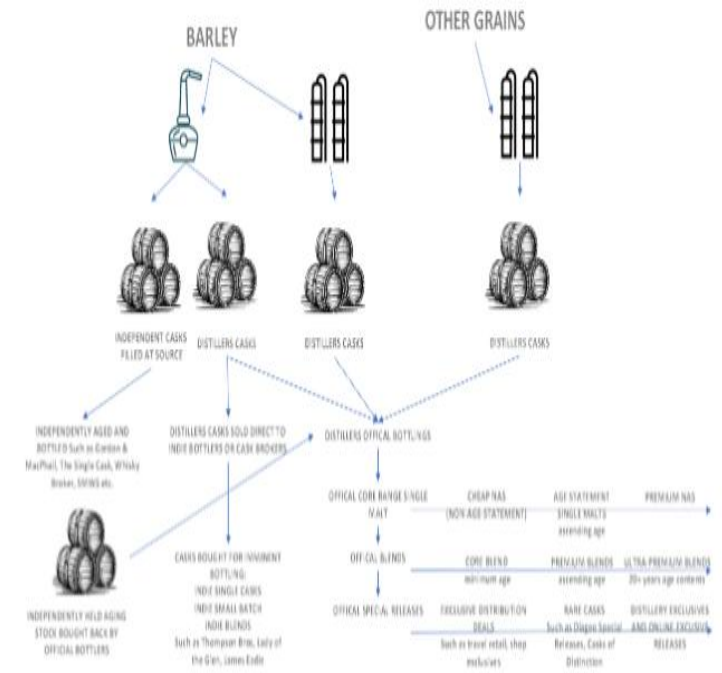
Whisky brands know this too, hence why there is such investment in cocktails and sparkly-launch events featuring more cocktails. The Johnny Walker experience in Edinburgh heavily features cocktails and mixed drinks in the standard tour. Cigarette companies do not rely on cheap, lightly flavoured cigarettes to lure people into the taste of tobacco. In reality, both tobacco and whisky are acquired tastes. Ultimately, I believe we should stop using the term altogether, as it's unhelpful.

As I've previously highlighted, distillery tours are hugely effective in embedding the brand, the brand story, and the sense of place in those who visit, turning reluctant tourists into permanent whiskyphiles. Those experiences are a very difficult thing to export.

Taking a completely new approach to marketing whisky to non-whisky drinkers is the [Monkey Shoulder](#) brand. They have announced a mixing spirit which is a blend of new-make grain spirits without any wood influence. This takes whisky into blanco tequila or white rum territory. I'm intrigued to try it once it becomes available. I like to taste new make spirit but how will it taste in a blended and reduced strength format?

We don't cover many cocktails or blended drinks on Malt, even in the terms of Malternatives we tend to start at the level of sophistication that will allow these drinks to be consumed on their own without mixers... albeit some fall short of our haughty expectations.

The next irritating categorisation of whisky we make is "Supermarket whisky." Not too distant from "entry level" whisky, and equally talked about in both positive and negative ways. I've previously written about the wild fluctuations in price from [these whiskies](#), and it now seems big brands are being put off. Balvenie has ended relationships with many UK supermarkets due to the deep-discounting which they view as damaging their brand. Highland Park are pulling their core 12 year old from the shelves for similar reasons, although the more recently launched 10 year old and some Non-Age Statement (NAS) offerings may be available. It remains a blunt instrument for classification. "Supermarket whisky" is another term I'd like to see condemned to the trash.



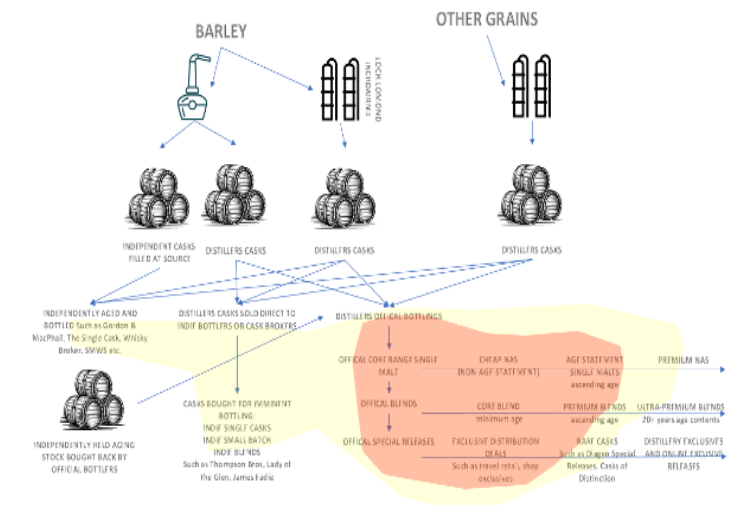
The most consistent distinction we can reliably make is between "official bottlings," from the distillers' companies themselves, and the "independent bottlings" from companies who purchase casks from brokers or the distillers themselves.

Within the official bottlings you will find a core range, usually widely available in many countries around the world and more limited offerings which may turn up in some regions and not in others. For example: the [Balvenie Tun](#) releases. The distribution of Independent bottlings varies widely around the globe as does their output; often focussed on single casks, each release can comfortably be less than 250 bottles. Most of my whisky budget goes to indie bottlers, which then feeds my reviews.

The tide is turning now; with cask prices getting out of hand, indies have no choice but to pass those prices on to consumers. The official bottles are beginning to look better value for money and the quality is improving within the official stocks, too.

In the last 10 years, faced with competition from new distilleries around the world, the Scotch distillers have focussed once again on the quality of spirit they produce. Distilleries like Glen Garioch are returning to direct fired stills which only makes sense in terms of flavour. More core whisky is presented naturally without filtering or artificial colour, and at a higher strength. Many of these improvements are reaching the market now as 10 year old single malt.

Let's try to pull this together and see if we can focus on a particular area for reviewing over the next few months liberally interspersed with interesting or unusual whiskies along the way too. Below gives the red target area for reviews and yellow represents perhaps my wider interest which I'll no doubt touch upon occasionally. Feel free to comment on whether this approach hits the mark or not for you.



Today I bring you a review of core bottles from Benromach Distillery to rebalance my [previous review](#) of their distillery exclusive bottlings. It's not the complete range; I believe a 10, a 12 and at least one Contrasts (the Cara Gold) are missing.



Benromach 15 Year Old – Review

First fill bourbon and sherry casks. 43% ABV. £65.

Colour: Gold.

On the nose: Warm, rich, sweet honey and brown sugar, nice prominent peat, paprika, clove, cinnamon, peppercornio, toasted buttered hot-cross buns, slightly industrial, rich heavy oak sawdust, yeasty malt.

In the mouth: Smooth and sweet, smoky then rich buttery baking spices, lingering spice from the peat, slightly fruity between more waves of smoky spicy peat and sweet malt. Heavy spirit and a spicy finish with hints of tobacco.

Conclusions:

I think this is a great balance of bourbon and sherry, and is a superb substitute for the overly sherried Springbank 15. You heard it here first (as far as I know): anyone missing their Springbank fix should head out and get a bottle of this 15. It's not a direct replacement, but it's close. I often find 15-year-old whiskies a little oaky; there is common trend to use a lot of first fill bourbon, but where it fails to work with the likes of Glencadam's gentle fruity character it works very well with the peat and sherry here.

Score: 7/10



Benromach Contrasts: Organic – Review

Virgin oak casks, 2012 to 2020. 46% ABV. £41.

Colour: Gold

On the nose: Spicy spirit eases with time in the glass, fruity white orchard fruits, hard pear and green apple, buttery vanilla, sweet mash, raw pastry, and mineral clay.

In the mouth: Spirit forward, bright, peppery at first but this does ease after a couple of hours in the glass, very malty, full of vanilla, fruity freshness burst through if you have the patience for it.

Conclusions:

A good dram at a fair price; it's not as immediate as the likes of Tomatin Legacy but – for those who give it time – it really comes out of itself. One of those drams you could be unsure about for half the bottle and then love the second half entirely.

Score: 5/10



Benromach Contrasts Peat Smoke Sherry Casks – Review
First fill sherry casks 2012 to 2021. 46% ABV. £41. [Previously reviewed](#) by Andrew in 2021.

Colour: Deep gold (rusty, thanks Andrew)

On the nose: Thick sweet sherry, followed by spicy peat, smoky and rich, slightly industrial, some TCP, furniture polish, caramelised apple, rich baking spices, raisins, dates, honeycomb, buttery toffee.

In the mouth: Balanced sherry; not too sweet, with a nice savoury note, almost meaty, soy sauce too, oyster sauce, treacle, Deep Heat, earthy, like sweeping up the recently vacated rugby changing rooms, a lingering spicy finish with more iodine, bandages.

Conclusions:

I'd challenge you to comment with any quality peated and sherried whiskies for sale below this price point. It's tremendously good value. Sherry and peat only does so much for me, so I've scored this a full two points below Andrew. I also note: I'm reviewing this in balmy Scottish summer weather and Andrew enjoyed his in early December. I expect that has a good 1 point influence, too. We certainly both really enjoyed this.

Score: 6/10



Benromach Cask Strength Vintage 2010 Batch 1 – Review
Exclusively first fill sherry casks. 58.5% ABV. £60.

Colour: Gold.

On the nose: Woody spices and a punch of ethanol, smoky, gently smoky, dry vanilla, more baking spices, some green apple skin, two-part epoxy, pencil shavings, a little cocoa, Crayola crayons, plasticine and a little biscuity.

In the mouth: At full strength it's a little prickly, but with water it gives more mineral notes, fresh fruitiness is more red fruits and darker dried figs and raisins, vanilla, honey, not too much sherry here given its first fill, some spicy oak and soft smoke. This takes a lot of water before it begins to sing.

Conclusions:

A little hard to dial in with the water; I just wouldn't drink this without water. It does begin to develop well with water and become quite enjoyable. Whilst I'd recommend the Benromach 15 over the Springbank 15, there is no contest when it comes to this and the Springer 12 Cask Strength, but there are similarities which Springer fans may enjoy, albeit perhaps not the diehards!

Score: 6/10



Benromach 21 Year Old – Review

First fill bourbon and sherry casks. 43% ABV. £110.

Colour: Pale gold.

On the nose: Smoky, fruity sweetness, a slight char, honey-nut cornflakes, praline, milk chocolate, toasted oak, unscented artificial candle wax, honeydew melon, slightly herbal with a nice depth.

In the mouth: Fruity sweetness, soft malt surrounded in wisps of smoke. Custard apple, light toffee, baked apple with oak spices intermingling, some spicy peat, the finish is short with some light fruit but quite dry.

Conclusions:

Quite tasty, and not badly priced, but the 43% in the core range does not carry enough of the subtle flavours for this age of whisky. This is the oldest age statement since the distillery was revived. The 40 year old releases are from older stocks held by Gordon & MacPhail. It's not the flagship I was expecting, really, because I hoped for a little more life, some more fruit and a little effervescence. Score: 5/10

All photos courtesy of Benromach.

The best release of 2022 has been the Yamazaki Limited Edition whiskies by House of Suntory. The company is known for embracing *tsukuriwake*, a philosophy that means “artisanship through a diversity of making” and showcases this in its collection of four different foundation pillars of Yamazaki Single Malt Whiskey. The launch was just shy of the brand's 100-year anniversary, which shows the growth and appreciation the company has come to achieve. — Joe DeBlasio, senior food and beverage operations manager at [The Ritz-Carlton, St. Thomas](#), U.S. Virgin Islands

[\$7,999; [suntory.com](#)]

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[Courtesy image3 / 10](#)

3. Craigellachie 13-Year-Old Armagnac Cask Single Malt Scotch

It's hard to pick just one, but if pushed I would go for Craigellachie's 13-Year-Old Armagnac Cask Finish. This is the first release in Craigellachie's Cask Collection and is the only whisky I've ever had that's spent time in an ex-Armagnac cask. After an initial period of aging in refill and re-char ex-bourbon barrels, the whisky is then transferred to ex-Bas Armagnac casks where it spent a little over a year. I'm a huge fan of Craigellachie and this release is absolutely delicious! Tropical fruits, pineapple, baked apple, some really lovely oak integration, and lots of spice. I'll be buying a second bottle as soon as I can. — Adam Montgomerie, bar manager at [Hawksmoor](#) in New York City

[\$84; [craigellachie.com](#)]

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[Courtesy image4 / 10](#)

4. Bardstown Discovery Series #8 Blended Whiskey

One of my favorite releases of 2022 is the Bardstown Bourbon Company's Discovery Series. This year, their eighth release in the series is a blend of several types of differently aged whiskies, from multiple locations, finished with several unique staves, and proofed fairly high. The Discovery #8 is more interesting to me than anything I've tried recently, and I always enjoy the ingenuity that goes into blending, especially when it goes outside the boundaries of territorial

Best Whiskey Releases of 2022 So Far, According to Experts



2. Yamazaki Tsukuriwake Selection Japanese Whisky

[GET IT](#)

denominations of such whiskeys. It demands respect for the taste of the liquid itself and not the geographical location and national laws that dictate what is delightful or not. Distilling is a science, but blending is still an artform as this blend highlights spectacularly what's considered a "world" whiskey. Discovery #8 uses four sources of whiskey from Kentucky, Indiana, and Canada, and five different stave profiles on top of that to create a spice and desert-like quality of dark chocolate, maple, fruit, and toasted oak. There are so many components of this whiskey and I hope it gets the attention it deserves. — *Andrew Nagy, whiskey sommelier at The Parlour Room in New York City* [[\\$152.99; bardstownbourbon.com](#)]
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[Courtesy image5 / 10](#)

5. Jefferson's Ocean Rye

I really liked what Jefferson's did this year with its "Ocean" series. Each year they mature different whiskeys on ships that sail around the world on various voyages. This year, Jefferson's released its first Ocean Rye, a rye whiskey matured at sea, which provides a really unique caramelization to the final taste. Jefferson's is really pushing the boundaries when it comes to maturation and it not only gives me a great whiskey to taste for myself, but it also offers a really unique story to spark up conversation in our bar here at Lonesome Dove. — *Chef Tim Love from Caterina's in Fort Worth, TX* [[\\$78.99; jeffersonsbourbon.com](#)]



[Courtesy image6 / 10](#)

6. Ardbeg Ardcore Single Malt Scotch

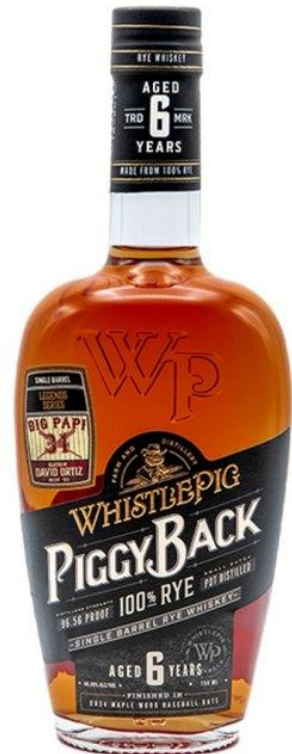
A friend of mine gifted me a bottle of 2022 Ardbeg 'Ardcore' and it was absolutely amazing. In my opinion, one of the more exciting whiskey releases of 2022. It's intricate without being overly complicated, with deep flavor profiles of chocolate and toffee along with some earthy notes. It's a bit pricey, but a definite wow. — *Anthony Aviles, director of operations at The Ritz-Carlton, Sarasota Beach Club in Sarasota, FL* [[\\$139; ardbeg.com](#)]
[GET IT](#)



[Courtesy image7 / 10](#)

7. Jameson 18 Irish Whiskey

The best release of 2022 for me is Jameson 18 Year. Not only do people need to stop sleeping on Irish whiskey, but they also need to consider more of the more high-end, longer-aged selections some of the big-name distilleries are putting out. My Irish grandmother used to refer to Jameson as 'mother's milk' and the 18 release definitely fits that description. It's like a warm hug—smooth and easy to drink yet deeply complex. They've also committed themselves to completely sustainable and biodegradable new packaging, which is amazing for a company of its size. — *Shawn Miller, beverage director at Forsythia in Philadelphia, PA* [[\\$140.99; jamesonwhiskey.com](#)]
[GET IT](#)



[Courtesy image8 / 10](#)

8. WhistlePig Big Papi Barrel Rye

I was thrilled for the Big Papi Barrel to release this year. It's part of Whistle Pig's Piggy Back Legends Series, a limited-edition, single-barrel series that celebrates living legends. This bourbon is inspired by baseball Hall of Famer David Ortiz. It's a rye whiskey aged for six years in American Oak and finished for six weeks in barrels containing Big Papi's signature DO34 maple wood baseball bats, creating a nice balance of cinnamon, spice, and maple syrup, plus a lengthy vanilla and caramel finish from the baseball bats themselves. — *Kevin Smith, food and*

beverage manager at [The Vinoy Renaissance St. Petersburg Resort & Golf Club, FL](#)
[\$47.99; [whistlepigwhiskey.com](#)]
[GET IT](#)



[Courtesy image9 / 10](#)

9. Four Walls Irish Whiskey

Four Walls Irish Whiskey. The release came from the stars of my favorite show, *It's Always Sunny In Philadelphia*, and 100 percent of the proceeds from the debut collection are donated to the hospitality industry in Pennsylvania. — Fernando Velasquez, mixologist at [High Tide Beach Bar & Grill](#) at *Kimpton Surfcomber Hotel* in Miami, FL
[fourwallswhiskey.com](#)
[LEARN MORE](#)



[Courtesy image10 / 10](#)

10. Compass Box The Circle No. 2 Blended Scotch

My favorite drop of the year comes from one of the most interesting blending houses: Compass Box. Annual cocktail competition winners get to put together a whisky with the brand's whisky makers. The Circle No. 2 Blended Scotch paired a 2019 winner with synesthete Mannie Monaghan, who has a rare ability to see scents and flavors as colors (only 4 percent of the population has this ability). He wanted to blend a whisky that was an experience inspired by and evoking the color and warmth of coral. The result is a fruity, warm, not overly wooded blend of Speyside and northern Highland whiskies, driven by American oak but with soft sherry notes. This is a limited edition (3,000 bottles), and you can still find it at a great price at most places. — Jim Wrigley, beverage manager at [Kimpton Seafire Resort + Spa](#) in the Cayman Islands
[\$149.99; [compassboxwhiskey.com](#)]



21 Best Bourbon Whiskey Brands: Top Shelf to Affordable

Additional reporting by Jacob Osborn and Nick Hall
[CHRISTOPHER OSBURN](#), 12 AUG 2022 | [GUIDE](#)

If you're a fan of the Blue Grass State, only the best [bourbon](#) whiskey will do. Sweet and rich with a big brash flavour profile, the famed spirit is a stalwart of the barroom and a favourite amongst celebrities, mixologists and those with a penchant for history, not to mention, rules. Like [tequila](#), [cognac](#), and [Scotch whisky](#), bourbon has specific regulations governing its production. If you're a bourbon fan, you know that it must be made up of 51 per cent corn, be aged new, charred [American oak barrels](#), and be produced in the United States (among other rules). It doesn't, however, need to be made in Kentucky. Yet, the state that birthed America's "native spirit" is still home to 95 per cent of the total bourbon produced in the US. This means that most (if not all) of the most well-known bourbons get lucky in Kentucky.

RELATED: [Best Scotch Whisky Brands](#)



Woodford Reserve Distillery | Image: Woodford Reserve/Facebook
Best Bourbons in the World

- Best Overall Bourbon: Buffalo Trace
- Best for Cocktails: Maker's Mark
- Best for Top Shelf: Pappy Van Winkle
- Best for Value for Money: Woodford Reserve
- Best for Affordability: Jim Beam

How We Chose This List of Best Bourbon Whiskey Brands

This list was compiled through personal experience and online research, plus through commentary from drinks critics and expert whiskey reviewers. We only looked at bourbons with a rating of 4.0/5 or higher through Dan Murphy's reviews and took into account the major gripes and positives from the public. We also studied a series of reviews from prominent critics and online publications, allowing us to cull it down to the best bourbon whiskey brands.

Best Bourbon Brands

Exploring the wide world of [bourbon whiskey](#)—not to mention trying the best bourbons—is among the most rewarding hobbies an adult male can pursue. Indeed, what's better than a hobby that combines the thrill of the hunt with an array of flavours and the warm touch of inebriation? Nothing, that's what

(okay, *almost* nothing). And if you disagree, then you probably haven't tried the world's best bourbons yet. Or maybe you've tasted some of them, but not the one that will change your life. While there are myriad great bourbons produced in far-flung states like Wyoming, California, Texas, and even New York, the eighteen best bourbon whiskey brands (in our opinion) all come from Kentucky. If you're a bourbon aficionado, you won't be surprised by this as giant distilleries like [Jim Beam](#), [Wild Turkey](#), Four Roses, Heaven Hill, and [Buffalo Trace](#) are all located there.

We get it, the idea that given all the different bourbon brands, we could make a list of the eighteen best is hard to fathom. Obviously, there is no way to make a definitive list free of argument. But we like to think even the most ardent bourbon purists would agree with at least most of these selections. If you disagree, let us know. But we believe the brands listed below are the best bourbon brands available today. Keep scrolling to see them all and let the debate begin.



Van Winkle | Image Dan Murphy's

1. Van Winkle

Best for: Top Shelf

When it comes to bourbon brands, there are few as well-known and sought-after as Pappy Van Winkle. The ultimate unicorn brand, the [Buffalo Trace-produced line of Pappy Van Winkle](#) expressions Named for bourbon pioneer Julian P. "Pappy" Van Winkle Sr., the line includes Old Rip Van Winkle as well as Pappy Van Winkle Family Reserve. There are few more awarded, hard-to-find expressions than those of [Pappy Van Winkle](#). If you get a chance to try some, don't hesitate. You might [never get another chance](#).

Location: Frankfort, Kentucky

Founded in: 1994

Best-known expression: Pappy Van Winkle 23 Year

[Check it out](#)



George T. Stagg

2. George T. Stagg

Another Buffalo Trace-produced brand, [George T. Stagg](#) is named for the man who built one of the biggest distilleries of the 19th century (now known as Buffalo Trace). This uncut, unfiltered, barrel-proof bourbon brand named for the whiskey innovator comes in two different expressions. The first, George T. Stagg, was matured in new, charred oak casks for a minimum of 15 years. The result is a bold, complex whiskey with hints of raisins, pipe tobacco, vanilla, and charred wood. The second, George T. Stagg, Jr, was aged for at least eight years and carries flavours of dried cherries, honey, and toasted vanilla beans.

Location: Frankfort, Kentucky

Founded in: 2002

Best-known expression: George T. Stagg

[Check it out](#)



Buffalo Trace

3. Buffalo Trace

Best for: Overall Bourbon

Arguably the world's best bourbon whiskey, [Buffalo Trace](#) is serious value for money. Over two centuries, the icon has churned out [incredible releases](#), been named the best distillery in the world and even managed to create [its own line of cigars](#). Sure, the distillery is known for producing legendary drams like Pappy Van Winkle and WL Weller, the stock standard release is still a certified winner in our books. A workhorse in every sense of the word, the core expression features a mash bill that is slightly lower in rye content, giving it a much sweeter finish that pairs perfectly with soda.

Location: Frankfort, Kentucky

Founded in: 1775

Best-known expression: Buffalo Trace Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey

[Check it out](#)



Woodford Reserve Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey

4. Woodford Reserve

Smack dab in the middle of Kentucky's horse country, Woodford Reserve gets its name from the county (Woodford) it's located in. With its roots beginning in 1812 (although the brand didn't launch until the '90s), the distillery is listed as a National Historic Landmark. Well-known for its [small-batch whiskeys](#) the brand makes straight malt whiskey, rye whiskey, and various other [limited-edition](#) and experimental expressions. Obviously, its roots are firmly

entrenched in bourbon and that's what it does best. According to Woodford Reserve master distiller Chris Morris, the best stock comes from Warehouse C, one of the oldest maturation spots in the Versailles house. "I love to hear people say that Warehouse C is where the "magic" happens. In some respects that statement is true," [he said](#). "The science of maturation has been studied for decades as has the impact of the oak barrel. While we now know a lot about the results of oak exposure and the maturation process, of temperature changes, length of time in barrel, barrel entry proof and more – there is still some mystery about how it happens. We just do not know. So, maturation is best described as being both "art and science."

Location: Versailles, Kentucky

Founded in: 1996

Best-known expression: Woodford Reserve Straight Bourbon

[Check it out](#)



W.L. Weller 12-Year-Old | Image: Buffalo Trace Distillery

5. W.L. Weller

Buffalo Trace has a habit of naming brands after whiskey pioneers and W.L. Weller is no different. Named for William Larue Weller, a whiskey salesman and a man who once hired Pappy Van Winkle to work for him, the brand consists of [seven of the most sought-after whiskeys](#) on the market. This includes unicorn bottles like W.L. Weller 12 Year, W.L. Weller Special Reserve, William Larue Weller, and W.L. Weller C.Y.P.B. There are few brands with more hard-to-find, iconic expressions than W.L. Weller.

Location: Frankfort, Kentucky

Founded in: 1849

Best-known expression: W.L. Weller 12 Year

[Check it out](#)



Russell's Reserve 10-Year-Old

6. Russell's Reserve

Wild Turkey is well-known in the whiskey world. But its offshoot Russell's Reserve is the brand that's received all the acclaim in the last decade. If you're a fan of bourbon, you've heard of whiskey legend Jimmy Russell, the longtime [master distiller of Wild Turkey](#). But his son Eddie has more than thirty years of experience of his own. This is why he created Russell's Reserve as a way to pay tribute to the over 90 years of distilling experience between the pair. First released in 1998, the brand has grown to include multiple different bourbons and ryes, including the much sought-after Russell's Reserve 13-Year-Old.

Location: Lawrenceburg, Kentucky

Founded in: 1998

Best-known expression: Russell's Reserve 13-Year-Old

[Check it out](#)



Maker's Mark Kentucky Straight

7. Maker's Mark

Best for: Cocktails

If you've ever stumbled into a dimly-lit cocktail bar and asked for a whiskey cocktail, chances are you've already tried Maker's Mark. A staple of barrooms across the globe, the spirit is one of the most versatile on the market, making it the ideal accompaniment for cocktails. Specifically, Maker's Mark uses wheat as a flavouring grain in the mash bill instead of the usual rye, giving a softer finish that is far more palatable for the novice drinker. We're big fans of the Maker's 46, arguably the label's most iconic release, due to its use of different proprietary wood staves, which ultimately deliver a far more balanced flavour.

Founder: T. William Samuels Sr

Founded: 1953

Best-known expression: Maker's 46

[Check it out](#)



Old Forester 86 Proof

8. Old Forester

Its name is very appropriate because no bourbon has been continuously distilled, bottled, and sold longer than Old Forester. On top of that, Old Forester was the first brand to sell its expressions in sealed bottles in 1870. Founded by a former pharmaceutical salesman named George Garvin Brown, Old Forester is a brand that has one foot in the contemporary distilling world while having another firmly planted in the past. It's well-known for its prohibition-style bourbons that are crafted to taste the same way they did over 100 years ago when the brand was founded.

Location: Louisville, Kentucky

Founded in: 1870

Best-known expression: Old Forester 1920 Prohibition Style Bourbon

[Check it out](#)



Eagle Rare

9. Eagle Rare

Bourbon fans know all about Eagle Rare. This highly coveted brand has won countless awards over the years and there might be no more aptly named bourbon brand. This small batch bourbon brand is known just as much for its high quality as it is for its difficulty of being found in the wild. While its 10-year-old expression isn't tremendously difficult to stumble upon online and at liquor retailers, its 17-year-old and Double Eagle Rare bourbons are almost impossible to find without paying ridiculous secondary market prices.

Location: Frankfort, Kentucky

Founded in: 1975

Best-known expression: Eagle Rare 17-Year-Old

[Check it out](#)



Parker's Heritage Wheat Whiskey

11. Parker's Heritage

This line of whiskeys, named for late Master Distiller Parker Beam, is known for its special, limited-edition, highly coveted expressions. Currently in its 15th iteration, over the years the releases have been rye, wheat whiskeys, and most often bourbons. While the 2021 version was a wheat whiskey, the 2020 version was a ten-year-old bourbon highlighted by notes of candied orange peels, maple candy, vanilla, and oak wood char.

Location: Bardstown, Kentucky

Founded in: 2007

Best-known expression: Parker's Heritage Heavy Char Bourbon

[Check it out](#)



Wild Turkey Kentucky Straight

10. Wild Turkey

Best for: Value for Money

Besides Jim Beam, there are few names in the bourbon world more well-known than Wild Turkey. Sometimes referred to as the "Buddha of Bourbon", the brand's longtime master distiller Jimmy Russell has been crafting [high-quality bourbon](#) and [other whiskeys](#) for more than 60 years. The distillery makes a wide range of bourbons and rye whiskeys from bargain expressions like its classic Wild Turkey 101 to its award-winning [Master's Keep](#) range of whiskeys.

Location: Lawrenceburg, Kentucky

Founded in: 1855

Best-known expression: Wild Turkey 101

[Check it out](#)



Jefferson's Bourbon Very Small Batch

12. Jefferson's Bourbon

While many of the bigger brands have long histories, Jefferson's Bourbon has only been a brand since 1997 when Trey Zoeller and his bourbon historian father Chet launched it. To say that the brand is known for experimenting and pushing the envelope is a bit of an understatement. While it makes other whiskeys, Jefferson's is most known for its Jefferson's Ocean: Aged at Sea. This bourbon is actually aged at sea. It's matured in barrels on a ship as it travels around the world. The newest version will be aged as long as eight years on the open ocean.

Location: Crestwood, Kentucky

Founded in: 1997

Best-known expression: Jefferson's Ocean: Aged at Sea

[Check it out](#)



Four Roses

13. Four Roses

The story of Four Roses revolves around its founder Paul Jones, Jr. and a southern belle who showed up at an elegant ball wearing a corsage of (you guessed it) four roses. He decided to name his bourbon brand in honor of this woman who stole his heart. Like Wild Turkey and other brands, Four Roses has a nice range of bourbons that start relatively inexpensive and work their way up beginning with its bargain-priced yellow-labeled Four Roses Kentucky Straight bourbon and ending with various limited-edition expressions.

Location: Lawrenceburg, Kentucky

Founded in: 1884

Best-known expression: Four Roses Single Barrel

[Check it out](#)



Knob Creek 9-Year-Aged

14. Knob Creek

One of the most well-known expressions in Jim Beam's small batch line of whiskeys (along with Booker's, Baker's, and Basil Hayden), Knob Creek is known for its high-quality, high-end bourbons and ryes that are all aged in heavily charred American oak barrels. One of the most interesting aspects of this line of whiskeys is the high level of alcohol. Besides its 90-proof Smoked Maple bourbon, there are no expressions under 100-proof.

Location: Clermont, Kentucky

Founded in: 1992

Best-known expression: Knob Creek 9-Year

[Check it out](#)



Elijah Craig Small Batch 1789

15. Elijah Craig

While it's likely just a story, some believe that Elijah Craig, a former Baptist minister invented bourbon when he decided to age his corn whiskey in charred oak barrels. Whether or not this legend is true, it doesn't really matter since he still has a line of bourbon and rye whiskeys named after him. The signature bourbon is Elijah Craig Small Batch, a hand-selected, award-winning readily available whiskey.

Location: Bardstown, Kentucky

Founded in: 1986

Best-known expression: Elijah Craig Barrel Proof

[Check it out](#)



Michter's Straight Rye

16. Michter's

Michter's traces its history to 1753 when Swiss Mennonite brothers Michael and Johann Schenk opened the distillery that would later be known as Michter's. Today, the brand is most known for its [single barrel](#) and small batch whiskeys with its US-1 range being its most well-known. They include sour mash, rye, American whiskey, and bourbon. The brand also makes a handful of limited edition whiskeys including 10, 20, 25, and various special releases.

Location: Louisville, Kentucky

Founded in: 1753

Best-known expression: Michter's 10 Year

[Check it out](#)



Old Fitzgerald Bottled-in-Bond

17. Old Fitzgerald

With a name like Old Fitzgerald, you can assume this brand has more than a century of history. This award-winning, long-aged range produced by Heaven Hill gets its notable, soft, mellow flavor from the addition of wheat instead of the usual rye in the mash bill. Part of the appeal of this brand is the fact that it isn't always readily available (besides the 80-proof version). Every fall and spring, a new bottled-in-bond expression is released and they are always heavily sought-after by bourbon fans.

Location: Bardstown, Kentucky

Founded in: 1884

Best-known expression: Old Fitzgerald Bottled in Bond

[Check it out](#)



1792 Barrel Select

18. 1792 Bourbon

1792 Bourbon is a well-regard brand in the bourbon world. Known for its hand-selected barrels and high-rye recipe, the classic 1792 Small Batch is robust, rich, and a great combination of vanilla beans, butterscotch, and spicy cracked black pepper. Besides the Small Batch expression, the brand also produces limited-edition expressions like Sweet Wheat, Aged 12 Years, High Rye, and Full Proof.

Location: Bardstown, Kentucky

Founded in: 2002

Best-known expression: 1792 Small Batch

[Check it out](#)



Jim Beam White Label

19. Jim Beam

Best for: Affordability

Is there a bigger name in the bourbon world than Jim Beam? Likely not. The Clermont, Kentucky-based brand produces myriad Jim Beam products including the iconic, always cheap, and reliable Jim Beam White Label as well as Booker's, Bakers, Knob Creek, Basil Hayden, Old Overholt, and Old Grand-Dad. There are few distilleries that better bridge the gap between cheap and expensive bourbons.

Location: Clermont, Kentucky

Founded in: 1795

Best-known expression: Jim Beam White Label

[Check it out](#)



E.H. Taylor, Jr.

20. E.H. Taylor, Jr.

You won't find many bourbons more difficult to find than E.H. Taylor (besides Pappy Van Winkle). Named for whiskey innovator Colonel Edmund Haynes Taylor, Jr, this line of whiskeys is actually aged in barrelhouses that were built by E.H. Taylor himself. These mellow, easy-sipping, very limited whiskeys include E.H. Taylor, Jr. Small Batch, E.H. Taylor, Jr. Single Barrel, E.H. Taylor, Jr. Barrel Proof, and a few others.

Location: Frankfort, Kentucky

Founded in: 2013

Best-known expression: E.H. Taylor, Jr. Single Barrel

[Check it out](#)



Booker's

21. Booker's

Named after its own creator, Booker Noe (grandson to Jim Beam), **Booker's** was the first mainstream label to offer drinkers a taste of pure, uncut bourbon. Specifically, the brand refused to water down its whiskey when it launched back in 1988, subsequently giving birth to a barrel proof craze that's more popular today than it ever was. Even with a slew of labels following suit, the originator still holds its own by way of a smooth, sweet and spicy body.

Manufacturer: Beam Suntory

Origin: Kentucky, USA

[Check it out](#)

What is Bourbon Whiskey?

While you might be a fan of the flavour, it may surprise you to know that not all bourbon whiskeys are created equal, despite some [fairly strict regulations](#). Whiskey is a spirit distilled from fermented grain mash, and bourbon is a form of whiskey. To qualify specifically as bourbon, the whiskey must contain a mash bill (i.e. the mix of base grains used to make the spirit) [of at least 51 per cent corn](#). In addition to the corn, the mash bill will usually consist of grains such as malted barley, rye, or wheat. When bourbon is made using wheat instead of rye, it's a "[wheated](#)" bourbon. All bourbon must be aged in new, charred oak barrels, and all "straight" bourbon must sit in those barrels for at least two years.

Bourbon Whiskey History

Bourbon whiskey is a type of American whiskey, with its origins dating back to the 1820s, with consistent use beginning in Kentucky in the 1870s, according to [the University of Kentucky](#). The name derives from the French Bourbon dynasty, however the exact inspiration for bourbon whiskey's name is unknown; likely candidates include Bourbon County, Kentucky and Bourbon St, New Orleans, both also named after the French Royal House of Bourbon. While bourbon is now made anywhere in the world, it is strongly associated with the American South – in particular, Kentucky.

What Makes for Good Bourbon Whiskey?

While everything from ingredients, equipment, climate, distillation methods, and more can play a role when distinguishing one bourbon from the next, most good bourbons are the result of proper aging. Specifically, the highest-quality, top-shelf bourbon is usually aged no less than seven years, and no more than 12. Of course, there are plenty of exceptions to the rule (including some entries on our list of best bourbons), but generally speaking, 7-12 years of aging allows the distillate to suck up a perfect amount of flavour and texture from the oak, without resorting to overkill. In turn, the bourbon retains a beautiful colour of dark or golden amber, while deftly balancing flavour, smoothness, and texture that you would expect from a high-end bourbon whiskey.

That said, not all the best bourbons are automatically "smooth" per se, at least not in the traditional sense. Indeed, some of the foremost whiskey brands (Wild Turkey for instance) mark their respective territory by way of robust flavour, ample spice, and a high (or relatively high) proof. As a result, there's going to be some heat present on every sip, the kind of which you can feel in your chest. Nevertheless, the spirit still qualifies for the list of what is good bourbon, sometimes even top bourbon. It's when the whiskey goes down hot, lacks complexity, and retains thin texture, then it's likely bourbon of low quality. This most commonly occurs when the distillate isn't aged for a long enough period of time, or when an expert isn't overseeing the whole process, to begin with.

Bourbon Basics

Bourbon can be a confusing spirit, so it's worth getting your basics down pat. Unlike Scotch, it isn't subject to the same stipulations, however, it does have some specifics that separate it from all others. Here's what you need to know about bourbon.

- Does all bourbon have to be made in Kentucky? – While the Kentucky Distillers' Association claims that 95 per cent of the world's supply comes from Kentucky, it's not a requirement. Under the regulations set out by federal standards, bourbon can be produced more or less anywhere, however, the [federal standards](#) governing the identity of bourbon stipulate that it is a

'distinctive product of the United States'. Further to that, 'the word "bourbon" must not be used to describe any whiskey or whiskey-based distilled spirits not produced in the United States'.

- What is the difference between bourbon and whiskey? – Put simply, bourbon is a type of whiskey, so there isn't a major difference between the two, however, there are some characteristics that are exclusive to bourbon. Specifically, all bourbons must be made from a mash that contains at least 51 per cent corn and contain no additives. Furthermore, it must be distilled at 160 proof or less and stored in charred new oak barrels.
- What does bottled-in-bond mean? – Bottled-in-bond refers to the [Bottled-in-Bond Act of 1897](#). Under these guidelines, the spirits must be the product of one distilling season from one distillery and bottled at 100 proof. It must also be aged for at least four years in a federally bonded warehouse.

This New Helicopter-Borne Jack Daniel's Distillery Tour Will Let You Take Home an Entire Barrel of Whiskey

Fans of Kentucky bourbon could opt for a Maker's Mark tour instead.

By [JONAH FLICKER](#)



Mint Julep

Visiting a [whiskey](#) distillery is fun, but have you ever thought how much more fun it would be to get dropped off by a helicopter *Magnum P.I.* style and bring home a barrel of whiskey at the end of your visit? If you have, tour company Mint Julep has you covered with a pair of expensive luxury packages that sound like a pretty good time.

The first [Mint Julep](#) experience is called "Roll Out the Barrel" at [Jack Daniel's](#), a multi-day trip during which you'll be able to explore Nashville and visit the distillery in Lynchburg. You'll be picked up at the airport and have black car service for a total of 12 hours during your two-night stay at the Omni Hotel in downtown Nashville. When you're ready to head to the distillery, traffic won't be an issue because a chartered helicopter will get you there in a flash. During your visit you'll get to enjoy a tour of the production process from distillation to maturation and participate in a Jack Daniel's tasting. The icing on this [whiskey](#) cake is a private barrel selection. After you make your pick, the distillery will bottle the whiskey for you (the yield is usually around 200 bottles) with personalized labels, customized bronze medallions, a crystal decanter and a barrelhead with your name on it to commemorate the experience. And last but not least, you will have a classic Southern food lunch at the famous Miss Mary Bobo's Restaurant next door to the distillery. There is one add-on to consider—you can order customized boots from Lucchese Bootmaker worth up to \$2,500. The price for this high roller tour is \$38,000 for a total of four people.



Helicopter to the distilleries Mint Julep

If Kentucky [bourbon](#) is more your style than Tennessee whiskey, there's a similar tour available at the [Maker's Mark](#) distillery outside of Louisville in rural Loretto, KY. For this tour, you can stay in either Louisville or Nashville at the Omni. Either way, a helicopter will whisk you to the Maker's Mark distillery for a complete tour, a tasting and, of course, a private barrel selection. You can either pick up these bottles in person, or they will be shipped to a retailer for you to collect in your home state. Your distillery visit will conclude with a farm-to-table meal from Star Hill Farm at the Innovation Garden before you take to the air and return to your hotel. The price is a bit higher for this experience, at \$42,000 for four people.

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 (\$90). It is the responsibility of the member who cancels their (or their guest's) reservation to find a replacement. If I am asked to find a substitute and one is found, then the member will be asked to pay for 50% of their dinner cost.
- Anyone who fails to attend the Monday September 19th, 2022 dinner without having cancelled and been successfully replaced will be expected to pay the full cost (\$90). A member will be responsible for their guest's cancellation (\$100).
- If a member asks to be included at the dinner between Friday September 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.



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