

Kingston Single Malt Society

www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com

A social club for the appreciation of Single Malt Whisky since 1998
AUGUST 17th, 2020 VOLUME 14; NUMBER 2b



This evening's menu in the company of

The GLENDRONACH DISTILLERY C^oLIMITED

SINCE 1826 SINCE



MENU

Welcome Nosings: GLENDRONACH 12 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Ken Goodland)

1st Course: Spinach Salad with Fresh Berries, Purple Onion, Toasted Pecans,
Tennessee Whisky Cheddar and a Raspberry Dressing
Paired Nosing: GLENDRONACH 8 YEAR OLD THE HIELAN
(introduced by: Bruce Baker)

2nd Course: Orange Chipotle Glazed Duck Wings Shredded Cabbage Salad
Paired Nosing: GLENDRONACH 18 YEARS OLD ALLARDICE
(introduced by: Sylvain Bouffard)

3rd Course: Veal Chop, Fried Brussel Sprouts, Gorgonzola Cream Sauce
Paired Nosing: GLENDRONACH CASK STRENGTH BATCH 7
(introduced by: Dave Finucan)

4th Course: Raspberry White Chocolate Mousse
Paired Nosing: GLENDRONACH 21YEAR OLD PARLIAMENT
(introduced by: Conrad Falkson)

Goodbye Drams Paired Nosings:
GLENDRONACH 26 YEARS OLD 1992 PORT PIPE CASK
GLENDRONACH TRADITIONALLY PEATED
(introduced by: Bill Gorham)

COST OF THE MALTS

GLENDRONACH 12 YEAR OLD HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY
LCBO 601872 | 750 mL bottle **Price \$79.95** Spirits, Scotch Single Malts 43.0% Alcohol/Vol.

GLENDRONACH 8 YEAR OLD THE HIELAN
HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY LCBO 463844 | 700 mL bottle
Price \$64.75 Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Scotch Single Malts 46.0% Alcohol/Vol

GLENDRONACH 18 YEARS OLD ALLARDICE HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY
VINTAGES 288233 | 750 mL bottle **Price \$169.95** Spirits, Single Malt Scotch 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

GLENDRONACH CASK STRENGTH BATCH 7
LCBO 582551 | 700 mL bottle **Price \$169.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 57.9% Alcohol/Vol.

GLENDRONACH 21YEAR OLD PARLIAMENT
SINGLE MALT SCOTCH LCBO 435818 | 700 mL bottle **Price \$280.45** Spirits, 48.0% Alcohol/Vol.

GLENDRONACH TRADITIONALLY PEATED
LCBO 582551 | 700 mL bottle **Price \$99.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 48.0% Alcohol/Vol.

THE GLENDRONACH 26 YEARS OLD 1992 PORT PIPE CASK# 5896;
SINGLE CASK RELEASES BATCH 17; DISTILLED 27/11/1992;
BOTTLED 2019; Bottle No. #322/828
VINTAGES 288233 | 700 mL bottle **Price \$755.95** Spirits, Single Malt Scotch 49.3% Alcohol/Vol.

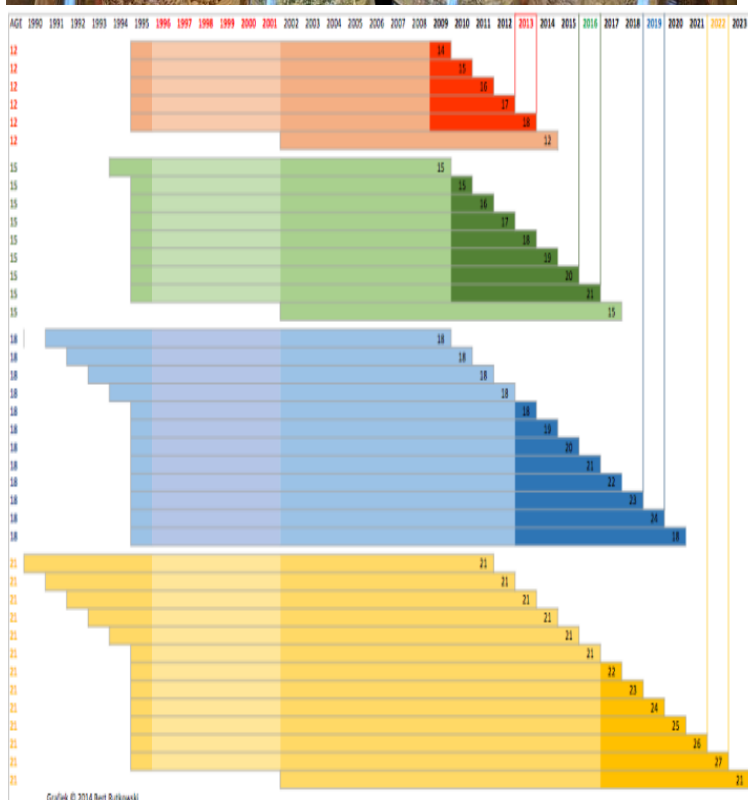
GlenDronach Core-Range Review (12, 15, 18, 21)

The “true” age of the GlenDronach line

You may have read the [Words of Whisky](#) article about the GlenDronach core-range being a lot older than the age statement on the label...

“The distillery was closed from 1996 until 2001, and that gap of six years forces GlenDronach to use older whisky than necessary. The 12yo Original was released in 2009, so should’ve been at least partly distilled in 1997. Except that wasn’t a possibility. So the first batch of 12yo GlenDronach was already actually at least 14 years old. If you bought a 12yo in 2013, you actually got a 18 year old whisky. The same also works for the 15yo Revival, 18yo Allardice and 21yo Parliament. At certain peak moments you’re buying a whisky that is actually six years older than is stated on the bottle. All of the above almost sounds to good to be true, but it is. Firstly because numbers don’t lie, and secondly because it was confirmed to Bert Rutkowski during a visit to the distillery in the summer of 2013.”

The graph below shows the “true” age of each bottling in each year. The article does seem compelling, but just like anything you read on the internet, you can be skeptical.



GlenDronach 12 Original, 43% ABV, \$72 CAD (2016 bottling, *12 years old)

- **Nose:** Sherry up front, plums, spice, oak, and a slight citrus note.
- **Taste:** Sherry again (get used to me saying that), a lot of raisin, nice chocolate note, MacDonalds Apple Pie, toffee, and oak.

- **Finish:** Medium length, oak lingers, with a slight alcohol note. Not overly complex.
- **Thoughts:** Fairly decent entry level. Not quite at Macallan 12 quality, but approaching it. Certainly better than most 12 year sherries.
- **Score:** 84 – 1 value point(s) = 83/100

GlenDronach 15 Revival, 46% ABV, \$135 CAD (2015 bottling, *20 years old)

- **Nose:** Big heavy sherry, strawberry jam, Maynards Blush Berries candy, floral roses.
- **Taste:** Sweet sherry, chinese sweet and sour red sauce, raisins, fudge, slight mint hard candy, saltwater taffy, Haribo Giant Strawberry candy, wood tannins, and wood smoke.
- **Finish:** Long, powerful, sherry lingers.
- **Thoughts:** Ultimate sherry bomb! Dronach 15 is to sherry what Ardbeg is to peat... hard hitting and in your face. The oak notes in the 12 were tolerated, but are welcomed here. I cannot get enough of this! Literally... its hard to find. Stocking up while I can. If this is 20 year juice, what amazing value!

- **Score:** 90 + 2 value point(s) = 92/100

GlenDronach 18 Allardice, 46% ABV, \$175 CAD (2015 bottling, *20 years old)

- **Nose:** Do I need to say sherry again? Nutmeg, chocolate fudge, ginger snap cookies, sugar cookies, vanilla, dates, oak.
- **Taste:** Chocolate fudge, raisins, dates, walnuts, red plums, and heavy oak.
- **Finish:** Layered, complex, drying which then leaves a nice spicyness.
- **Thoughts:** Well shit, this is just as much a sherry bomb as the 15. Quite similar in profile actually. Maybe because they are both Oloroso and similar in age? The oak influence seems a little more prominent here, it was more integrated in the 15, but all around great whisky.

- **Score:** 90 + 0.5 value point(s) = 90.5/100

GlenDronach 21 Parliament, 48% ABV, £97 (2016 bottling, *21 years old)

- **Nose:** The obvious sherry stuff, some really nice coffee elements, getting some of those older dust and leather notes. Fresh wood, and wood smoke.
- **Taste:** Really nice dark chocolate, plums, apricots, and dates blast off your palate, oak again, and toffee.
- **Finish:** Big and long, chocolate lingers.
- **Thoughts:** I love the added sweetness and complexity the Pedro Ximenez brings. Very juicy and bold fruit notes are what edges this slightly above the rest. Really good stuff!
- **Score:** 91 + 0 value point(s) = 91/100

Overall thoughts:

15 Revival – 92

21 Parliament – 91

18 Allardice – 90.5

12 Original – 83

GlenDronach is winning the sherry game. I think the 12 has a few rough edges, but the 15, 18, and 21 are all exceptional. The 15 wins as the value pushes it to the top, but all the older expressions were very similar and very good. There is a underlying tangy oak note that is present in all four bottles, it isn’t unpleasant, but other whiskies (like Macallan) have done it better. Obviously the next Revival release won’t be as old as this bottling, I doubt they can afford to keep putting 20 year old scotch in a 15 year age statement, but hopefully the profile stays as close as possible. That being said the 18 and 21 should be getting even older, so their quality shouldn’t lessen. If you’re a sherry person the Revival, Allardice or Parliament are musts.

Scores:

After my initial score I will add or subtract points relative on how I perceive value (based on what I paid for the bottle). A zero value means I think the price is justified.

0-69.5 – Don’t bother trying, life is too short for bad spirit.

70-79.5 – Worth trying, but you’re not missing out if you don’t.

80-84.5 – I recommend trying.

85-87.5 – Definitely try this!

88-92.5 – I recommend buying a bottle blind!

93-95.5 – Stuff you reserve for special pours!

96+ – The meaning of life.



SPREAD THE WORD:

6 new whisky launches that will impress the most discerning whisky collectors and connoisseurs

Emma Reynolds - Aug 10, 2020, 9:18 AM

<https://www.businessinsider.com/best-new-whisky-launches-collectors-connoisseur-should-know-about-2020-8>



Courtesy Macallan

- Business Insider spoke with experts Kirsteen Campbell, Master Whisky Maker at The Macallan, and Sotheby's Spirits Specialist, Jonny Fowle, on the increasing demand for rare and collectible whisky.
- According to Fowle, two of the most valuable whisky brands for collectors are The Macallan and Karuizawa, both which have new releases.
- Some of these luxurious whisky releases are more than 60 years old and come with decanters made of hand-blown crystal and adorned with sapphires.
- Here are six luxurious whisky launches from Scotland and Japan to look forward to this summer and fall.
- [Visit Business Insider's homepage for more stories.](#)

Whisky has the unique ability to take you back decades in time. Every so often, distilleries mine their old stocks in hope of creating a luxurious, well-aged, one-of-a-kind whisky that collectors will swoon over.

Jonny Fowle, Spirits Specialist at Sotheby's, who manages private collections and presents authenticated bottles at auctions, told Business Insider that whisky collecting has been on an upward trajectory for the last 10 years.

"Whisky is incredibly diverse and offers collectors the opportunity to create their own personal journey into understanding its nuances," he

said, adding that people also collect whisky as an investment. "As equities and property seem less and less solid, I think people are looking to diversify. Whisky has proved itself as a pretty good bet in this area."



Courtesy Kirsteen Campbell

Kirsteen Campbell, Master Whisky Maker at [The Macallan](#), says over the last five years the brand has seen "an increased interest in rare and collectible whiskies as appreciation for single malt Scotch has grown around the world." For example, in October 2019, a bottle of The Macallan Fine & Rare 60-Year-Old 1926 set an auction record, fetching \$1.9 million at Sotheby's London.

Collectors value quality, age, rarity and provenance. "But ultimately, beauty is in the eye of the beholder, and it can be difficult to prescribe exactly what will appeal to some collectors," Fowle said.

Whether you're new to whisky or a connoisseur, here are the latest luxurious and collectible launches that should be on your radar.

Diageo Prima & Ultima Collection



Courtesy Diageo

In late July, spirits producer [Diageo](#) released Prima & Ultima, a collection of eight rare and vintage single malt whiskies, each hand-selected by Diageo Master Blender, Dr. Jim Beveridge OBE. The liquid within each bottle comes from small casks, each aged for decades, at various Diageo-owned distilleries in Scotland. Prima & Ultima, meaning first and last, represents the first and last vintage whiskies of their kind.

The collection includes Caol Ila 1984, Clynelish 1993, Cragganmore 1971, Lagavulin 1991, Mortlach 1994, Port Ellen 1979, Singleton of Dufftown 1988 and Talisker 31988. Each bottle represents a distinct or notable time in whisky-making history, whether it's the introduction of a new flavor profile or the last cask created using a retired technique. "The quality is undeniable with high critic scores across the board," Fowle said of the collection. "I am one of the lucky few who has been able to taste all of these whiskies and can attest to their calibre."

Purchase details: Just 238 sets will be retailed for £20,000 (\$25,000).

Glenfarclas Pagoda Sapphire Reserve



Courtesy Glenfarclas

Inspired by the tiered pagoda top that helps kilns vent at Scottish malt whisky distilleries, [Glenfarclas Pagoda Reserve Series](#) is a five-bottle collection consisting of whisky (ranging 43 to 63 years) created in the Glenfarclas Pagoda Kiln before it was decommissioned in 1972. The series revealed the final release in late June, the Pagoda Sapphire Reserve, aged 63 years.

The 1953 single malt has notes of espresso, dark bitter chocolate, tart blackberry, and gooseberry, as well as rich spices like clove and nutmeg. On the palate, there is citrus with cloves, sherried fruits, and a long finish with flavors of cocoa nibs, leather, leafy greens, and tobacco. The decanter is made from hand-blown Glencairn crystal and features 36 dark-blue sapphires to create the number '63,' the whisky's age designation. The blue sapphires complement the blue crystal pagoda stopper and metallic blue-colored engravings on the side of the bottle.

Purchase details: Just 180 700ml formats (\$31,038) and 63 1.5L Magnum formats (\$66,530) will be made, as well as 45 of the Collector's Edition 1.5L Magnum (\$73,715).

The Macallan Double Cask Range



Courtesy Macallan

[The Macallan](#) first launched its Double Cask Range in 2016 with the The Macallan Double Cask 12 Years Old, and in July, The Macallan finalized the range with the addition of the Double Cask 15 Years Old (\$135) and

Double Cask 18 Years Old (\$330). Each expression is a blend of two casks: American and European oak sherry-seasoned casks. "Very much like the 12 Year Old, Double Cask 15 Year Old has a sweetness. The delicate and indulgent flavors of American oak including honey, citrus, and chocolate balance The Macallan's more traditional characteristics of rich fruits, sherry, and wood spice. Double Cask 18 Year Old offers slightly more complexity, with rich raisin and sultana, notes of caramel, and ginger, subtly balanced by warming oak spice," Campbell said.

Purchase details: The bottles can be purchased individually, or the complete three-bottle range is exclusively available on [Reserve Bar](#) for \$575.

Port Ellen 40-Year-Old – 9 Rogue Casks



Courtesy Port Ellen

Single malt Scotch whisky Port Ellen was distilled for just 16 of the last 90 years, making every last drop coming from its casks precious. In 1979, a small parcel of stocks were set aside due to their unusual flavor profiles. Now, decades later, Port Ellen released the 40-Year-Old single malt whisky, its oldest and rarest release, which is made up of nine rogue casks from this parcel. Port Ellen's Master Blender, Dr. Craig Wilson, blended these casks, resulting in a balanced expression featuring Port Ellen's signature flavor of soft peat smoke.

The whisky has herbal notes, burnt tangerine and water, crème caramel, roasted coffee, and red fruit compote on the nose. The palate consists of bonfire smoke, pipe tobacco, leather, and wood spice, with a long, smoky finish.

Purchase details: Only 1,380 bottles will be made and will retail at £6,500 (\$8,488).

The Balvenie Fifty: Marriage 0614



Courtesy Balvenie

Scotch whisky [The Balvenie](#) is no stranger to releasing 50-year-old expressions, all of which were released under Malt Master David Stewart MBE in 1987, 2002, 2012, 2014, 2018, 2019 and 2020. This year's Marriage release marks the third and final installment of the series: The Balvenie Fifty: Marriage 0614. The name "Marriage" comes from the tedious and difficult task of "marrying" whisky, when casks of mature malt whiskies are blended and put into a barrel to further assimilate. These bottles are made from the oldest and most precious American and European oak casks within the distillery. In Marriage 0614, Stewart blended seven casks, and each adds a new layer of flavor to the final product.

Marriage 0614 has notes of deep, dark spices, fruitcake, oak, dried fruits, raisins, and sultanas. The palate is rich and lush with bitter chocolate, spices, maple syrup, honey, and oak tannins. The finish is rich and sweet with oak and spice notes. The presentation is even stunning: Each decanter is made from hand-blown crystal in Balvenie's signature bottle shape, modeled after the copper stills at the distillery. The bottle is presented in a wooden canister made from elm trees found on the distillery's grounds (there are 48 layers of elm and two layers of brass).

Purchase details: Launching in mid-September, there will be just 148 bottles globally, and each retails for \$40,500.

Karuizawa 35-Year-Old Budō Collection



Courtesy Karuizawa

Karuizawa distillery first opened in 1955 and closed in 2000 before the Japanese whisky boom in Western countries. Today, Karuizawa is

regarded as one of the most sought-after Japanese distillers due to its limited remaining supply. This November, a private bottling of Karuizawa 35-Year-Old Budō Collection will be released by [dekantā](#), an online retailer of rare Japanese spirits and wine. There are three bottles in the collection, each containing whisky distilled in 1981 and matured for 35 years in an ex-sherry cask before being bottled in 2017. It has rich sherry notes with cinnamon-baked plum, rich cocoa, burnt toffee, and sweet licorice. On the palate, there are Christmas cake flavors with fresh tobacco leaves, sticky dates, and rich oak and a long, spicy finish of blackcurrant and red leather.

While Fowle isn't specifically speaking to this release, he said:

"Japanese whisky has seen enormous surges in value in recent years. Now, almost every Japanese single malt is released on tight allocation and closed distillery whiskies sell for hundreds of thousands." Each bottle is painted by three of Japan's famous street artists, Fate, Phil & TwoOne.

Purchase details: There are just 43 sets, priced at \$45,000 each.

The Best Bottles of Scotch, According to American Whiskey Producers

Even today, our best distillers are still taking lessons from Scotland



BY [KIRK MILLER](#) / JULY 28, 2020 9:32 AM

"There is more to whiskey than corn and rye," Heaven's Door Master Blender Ryan Perry reminds us.

Chances are if you're a whisky/whiskey fan, you know a decent amount about Scotch. But if you're primarily an American whiskey drinker, now's a good time to reacquaint yourself with Scotland's finest export, which offers multiple flavors and styles, along with its own set of rules (aging minimum in oak casks for 3+ years, malted barley as the core ingredient, etc.).

Reminder: most Scotch isn't peaty, and the spirit's less-restrictive rules around what those oak barrels can contain (sherry, port, etc.) means you can find an abundance of flavors that, say, a bourbon can't recreate. Plus, blending is far more prevalent as a skill in Scotland than with American whiskies, which adds in its own unique component to the final product.



Ryan Perry, Master Blender at Heaven's Door and avowed Scotch fan HEAVEN'S DOOR

To bridge the gap between our two worlds — and to celebrate the oddly timed National Scotch Day, which is this week (July 27th) — we asked some pros at a few up-and-coming American whiskey brands to tell us what they love about their Scottish peers. Below, Greg Metze (Master Distiller, [Old Elk](#)), Christian Krogstad (Master Distiller, [Westward Whiskey](#)), Ryan Perry (Master Blender, [Heaven's Door](#)) and Sean Josephs (Owner/Master Taster, [Pinhook](#)) tell us about their favorite cross-pond tipples.

InsideHook: What do you appreciate about Scotch?

Greg Metze: I've always had a deep respect for the traits of heritage, tradition and craftsmanship that Scotch distillers evoke in their passion to produce world class spirits. These values have always been part of my training and career as a Master Distiller. There is simply no room for short cuts or sacrificing product integrity for cost.

Christian Krogstad: I really appreciate the sense of tradition and heritage found in their distilleries.

Ryan Perry: Too many to pick, but the two that jump out to me are the art of blending and distinction of taste by region. With so many unique distilling styles, barrel types and climate variances, the ability of Scotch blenders to create uniformity over decades of a product's life is truly amazing. And I can't appreciate the commitment of their craft more than when you can raise a glass and immediately know the heavy peat came from Islay (which is my daughter's namesake) or the grit of the Highlands.

Sean Josephs: There's such tremendous variety in Scotch between single malts, vatted malts, blends and the like. Between that and the regional differences, the multitude of finishes, and, of course, peat, there is endless exploration.



Talisker, a single malt from the Isle of Skye
EDUCATION IMAGES/UNIVERSAL IMAGES GROUP VIA GETTY IMAGES
What's something American whiskey producers could learn from their Scotch counterparts?

Greg Metze: High-malt-content mash bills intrigue me. At Old Elk, we actually took a page from the Scotch makers playbook with our 34%

malted barley bourbon whiskey. Lowering the corn content and raising the malted barley content in a bourbon mash bill unmask smooth and delicate congeners that are hidden behind those attributed to high-corn content recipes.

Christian Krogstad: American distillers can learn a lot from the subtlety and diverse flavors that you can get from a single malt.

Ryan Perry: There is more to whiskey than corn and rye. The American single malt category already has a few winners, but there is a long road ahead which I couldn't be more excited about.

Sean Josephs: When I first opened my American Whiskey bar, Char No. 4 in 2008 (New York), the bourbon category was very narrow and we also carried a good number of Scotches as well. While the bourbon industry has evolved a lot since then, at the time I felt that bourbon needed to take a page out of Scotch's book and experiment with a variety of elements to create the breadth and depth of Scotch in order to move American whiskey forward and bring in a new audience.



THE WHISKY EXCHANGE

What's your go-to Scotch, and why?

Greg Metze: I really like 12-year-old [Bunnahabhain](#). It's a moderately peated single malt Scotch Whisky that was produced by Burn Stewart Distillery and Master Distiller Ian MacMillan, who were former work affiliates of mine several years ago.

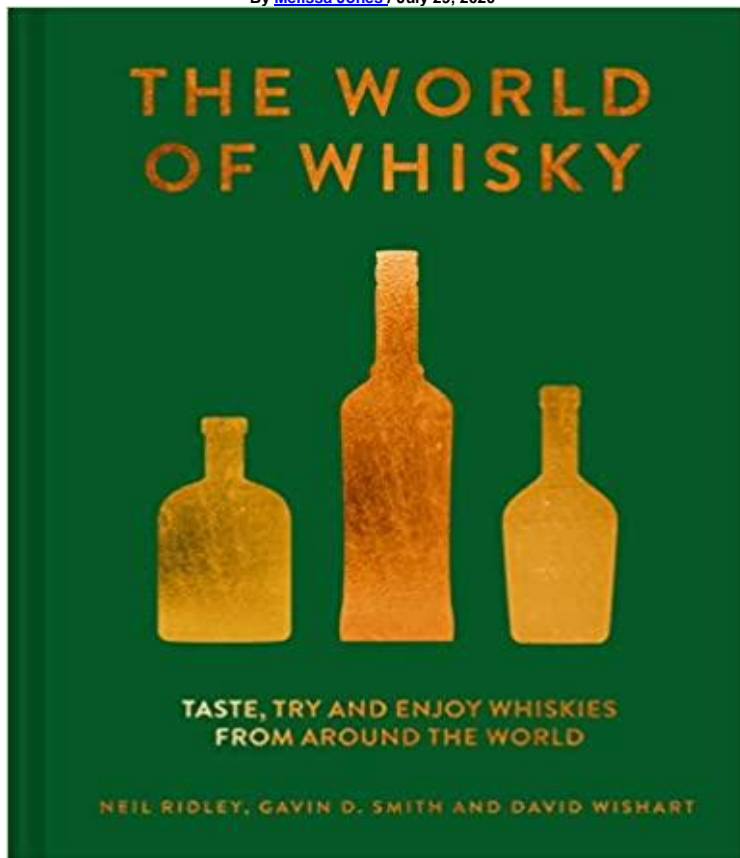
Christian Krogstad: My go-to Scotch is [Talisker](#): It's balanced, rich and packed with great flavor.

Ryan Perry: Right now, [The Glenrothes Whiskey Makers Cut](#). It's a no-age statement (NAS) Scotch, which is untraditional to the brand, but it doesn't need to be since it is aged in first-fill Sherry casks. It's fruit forward and bordering on a "Sherry bomb," but so damn good!

Sean Josephs: I will never forget the first time I drank [Lagavulin 16](#) over 20 years ago. I love sitting by a campfire and the whiskey made me feel like I was both next to a fire and drinking in the woodsy smoke. It's one of my favorite taste memories and I will always have a soft spot for it.

Book Review: The World of Whisky

By [Melissa Jones](#) / July 29, 2020



Don't let the name of this book deceive you. It's about all whiskies of the world and not just Scotch whisky, which is spelled without the 'e'. [The World of Whisky](#) by Neil Ridley, Gavin D. Smith and David Wishart contains notes on tasting and enjoying Irish whiskey, American rye whiskey, Japanese single malt and a bunch of others from around the world. This book includes 250 distilleries and tasting notes from 150 whiskies.

I feel that this book would be great for anyone wanting to get into the world of whiskies but also anyone that wants to taste or collect more. It's not only about sipping whisky neat but also food pairing notes and cocktail recipes. There are notes about visiting the distilleries too if there's a world tour in your future.

Each whisky entry in the book goes over the history of the brand and distillery. It talks about that specific whisky and the availability from the distiller. If you liked that whisky you may discover what else they have to offer that you might like or a whisky on an adjacent page that is similar. For each whisky there is a picture of the bottle and notes on strength, nose, taste, and finish.

This is not a photo heavy book, it's more about the content. Each bottle has a photo which helps if you wanted to buy that bottle in the store but otherwise there are some world maps and a few distillery shots. The World of Whisky is really about learning more about whisky and the brands than showing off the locations.

The World of Whisky is written by three authors who have written other whiskey books by Pavilion. There's a lot of information to be gleaned from these three in this book for only \$27, new. I'd highly recommend looking into this book or one of the other 30+ books by these authors if you really want to get a better understanding of whiskey.

10 of the most beautiful Scottish whisky distilleries

Not only do they produce the world's best spirit but they look good doing it too.

Running all the way from Bladnoch in Dumfries and Galloway in the south to Highland Park in Orkney in the north, there are over 130 single malt [whisky](#) distilleries [in Scotland](#).

Though many are built purely with function in mind, there are many that are as pleasing on the eye as any castle or country house.

From traditional stone buildings with beautiful gardens to modern design masterpieces - here are some of the most beautiful whisky distilleries to found across the country.

Strathisla Distillery, Keith, Speyside



Always one of the first names on these lists, Strathisla is the jewel in owner Chivas' crown.

One of the oldest continuously operating malt distillery in the Highlands, the double pagoda, water wheel and neatly manicured gardens combine to great effect to frame this picturesque stone building, which hides a newly renovated and stylish interior.

Macallan Distillery, Aberlour, Speyside



The newly built Macallan Distillery (Image: Ian Gavan)

Dubbed the 'Cathedral of Whisky', the newly built Macallan Distillery is an architectural marvel. Not entirely loved by traditionalists, we believe it deserves to be on the list due to its incredible design and the fact it truly is unique.

The £140 million state-of-the-art distillery is 'cut into the slope of the landscape' of the hill site on the Easter Elchies Estate (where the original distillery stood) overlooking the river Spey, and is inspired by "ancient Scottish earthworks".

Blair Athol Distillery, Pitlochry, Highlands



Adding ivy into the mix for any external facings of your building is always going to make it more pleasing on the eye and in Blair Athol, they've created something special with the plant framing their name. This exciting little distillery in Pitlochry is hugely popular with tourists and its easy to see why.

Edradour Distillery, Pitlochry, Highlands



They do say that good things come in small packages and in Edradour, one of the country's smallest distilleries that statement is certainly true.

Not only does it produce great whisky but with its white washed walls, white picket fences and flowing stream its wonderful to look at too.

Dalmunach Distillery, Carron, Speyside



Built upon the site of the former Imperial Distillery in Carron, the new Dalmunach distillery sports a striking glass frontage with beautiful wooden facades.

Named for the nearby pool in the River Spey, it's just started producing its whisky after being built in 2015.

Tormore Distillery, Advie, Speyside



With its topiary, slate green roof, clock tower and white wash buildings you'd be forgiven for thinking this was a Victorian spa resort and not a distillery.

One of the more quaint choices on this list, it's always a welcome site on a trip up to Speyside.

Clydeside Distillery, Glasgow, Lowlands



One of the most visually pleasing of the recently built distilleries is the one that opened on the banks of the River Clyde recently.

With its strikingly renovated clocktower, externally visible stills and extensive visitor centre, Clydeside Distillery is an excellent addition to Scotland's biggest city.

Lindores Abbey Distillery, Newburgh, Lowlands



Built close to the spiritual home of Scotch whisky, where the earliest written reference to Scotch whisky was recorded, this exciting new distillery in Fife is a perfect addition to the area.

Picturesque and modern, it sits proudly as one of the best looking of the new crop of whisky distilleries.

Ardbeg Distillery, Islay



With nine distilleries and an abundance of beautiful scenery, a trip to Islay is always memorable.

Standing proud on the island's Kildalton coastline, the beautiful white coated walls and stencilled name mark Ardbeg distillery as one of our favourite sights when visiting this popular island.

Lagg Distillery, Isle of Arran



Following its successful stablemate in the north of the island, Lagg is the newest distillery on Arran.

Featuring an intriguing design, stunning interior and unrivalled views across the Irish Sea, its another great reason to visit this wonderful little island.

The best Scottish whisky distillery tours - according to the experts

We asked some top whisky experts for their picks of the best whisky distillery tours.



distillery tours can often be magical. (Image: Dewars Aberfeldy)

In Scotland, we are spoiled for options, with top sites operating from the Borders right the way up to Orkney.

With many readily accessible from our major cities, we asked some top whisky experts for their picks of the best whisky distillery tours.

Clydeside Distillery, Glasgow, Lowland

(as chosen by Geraldine Murphy, Manager at the Pot Still Whisky Bar Glasgow and Whisky Ambassador Mariella Romano)



This new distillery on the banks of the River Clyde makes for an impressive sight with its restored pump house building and glass fronted still house.

Adequately equipped for visitors, it features an impressive museum, cafe and a shop with a vast array of whiskies from a wide range of distilleries.

Geraldine said: "It's our closest distillery and the building is steeped in amazing local history but they have managed to make the tour experience super modern and customer friendly."

"The shop is well stocked and reasonably priced and the food in the cafe is fantastic!"

"Even if you don't like whisky go for lunch. The staff are amazing and the still house has to be one of the best views in the city."

Mariella added: "I fell in love with Clydeside when I first visited two years ago."

"They had so much information about the Whisky Barons and Glasgow's historical role as a centre for merchants and commerce."

"Not only do you get to learn about Glasgow and whisky, you get to enjoy some incredible Scottish hospitality."

Glen Grant, Rothes, Speyside

(as chosen by... Christopher Coates, Scotch Whisky Editor at Whisky Magazine)



Glen Grant Distillery. (Image: Dingerwarren/Wikimedia/CC)

One of Speyside's hidden gems, Glen Grant is hugely popular with visitors to the area, sitting so close as it does to both Elgin and Rothes.

Equipped with an incredible visitor centre, it's reasonably priced and even has its own gardens to enjoy after the tour.

Chris said: "Nestled amidst woodland on the outskirts of Rothes in Speyside, Glen Grant Distillery has a wonderful atmosphere that's delightfully peaceful."

"Historic elements like dunnage warehouses and (now disused) furnace chambers from the distillery's days of coal firing are in evidence, along with purifiers – a bit of distilling kit that whisky geeks won't get to see every day."

"It's also one of the few distilleries where people can see bottling take place and, after seeing the whisky's journey from grain to bottle, you can enjoy a relaxing walk through the distillery's beautiful landscaped gardens – a lovely way to pass the time after enjoying a dram or two of Glen Grant's light and fruity spirit."

"Lucky visitors may even get a chance to speak with Denis Malcolm, the distillery's much-loved manager, who's worked at the site since the early 1960s."

Balvenie Distillery, Dufftown, Speyside

(as chosen by... Chris White, editor of Edinburgh Whisky Blog)



Balvenie is one of the world's most recognisable names, and the distillery is nestled among the hills of Scotland's most populous whisky region.

Featuring plenty of tour options, whisky fans can enjoy one of the only traditional, working floor maltings in the Scottish Highlands.

Chris said: "The Balvenie is such a unique distillery to visit; it's one of the few distilleries to retain its floor maltings, it has its own cooperage on site, and the tour is extensive and completely immersive."

"The distillery ambassadors don't simply talk you through the process of whisky making, they take plenty of time to tell stories and anecdotes along the way, which really brings the history of the place to life."

"Exploring the wonders of Warehouse 24, and sampling extraordinary drams straight from the cask rounds off an unforgettable experience."

Tomatin Distillery, Inverness, Highlands

(as chosen by... Rachael Fossey, barstaff at the Pot Still)



The oft overlooked Tomatin is a brand and distillery that deserves to be rediscovered, with a range of exciting tours on offer.

Rachael said: "The visitor experience at Tomatin is amazing."

"Not only do you get a real feel for what the distillery does for the small village it lies in, but you get a real behind the scenes look at how they make their whisky- including being able to go right into their cooperage which is a real treat. A really authentic experience."

Glenfiddich Distillery, Dufftown, Speyside

(as chosen by... Cameron Ewen, Bar Manager, Scotch at The Balmoral)



One of the most famous single malt whisky brands in the world, Glenfiddich Distillery has facilities to match its reputation.

Popular with visitors who flock to the region each year, its Malt Barn Coffee Shop and Bar is an added jewel in its crown.

Cameron said: "The walk down from the main road towards the distillery is immense."

"Seeing all the history on the reception walls along with the family tree, followed by a tour around the distillery of one of the industry's most forward thinking names."

"All finished with a nosing and drawing of samples from the casks selected by Brian Kinsman showcasing the amazing character of spirit."

"Then no visit is complete without a trip to see Colin at The Malt Barn and enjoy a bowl of Cullen Skink. The perfect tour in my mind."

Glengoyne Distillery, Dumgoyne, Lowlands

(as chosen by... Rosalind Erskine, food and drink podcaster at [Scran](#) - and Robert Corrigan of [Mr C's handcrafted pies](#))



One of the trio of distilleries close to Glasgow that allow visitors, Glengoyne is just a bus ride away from the city centre and sits at the foot of Dumgoyne on the West Highland Way.

Known for its incredible hospitality, the little distillery with its white washed walls offers a range of popular tours.

Rosalind said: "The Glengoyne Story takes visitors on a journey from the rough and ready roots of the distillery to the popular single malt that is produced from Scotland's slowest stills today - and is told in an interactive style from their whisky experiential ambassador, Gordon Dallas.

"Who knew pirates, smugglers and illicit distilling played such a big part in the Glengoyne history? Gordon is a fab host and even dresses up to play some parts making this a whisky tasting to remember."

While Robert Corrigan stated that it's one of his favourites, he added: "Glengoyne is just such a great location with a wonderful customer care experience."

Whisky fan Cory MacRae is another who suggests the distillery near Glasgow, which he describes as the best tour he's ever had, he said: "We did the chocolate tasting tour, where you get a set of three malts matched to chocolate.

"When we finished the tasting the guy was answering questions and I told him someone had recommended I try the cask strength and asked him how it compared to the 15yo, which was to be my purchase that day.

Without missing a beat, he went to a cupboard and poured me a generous dram of the cask strength and that then instantly became my purchase. You can't beat that for customer service."

Aberfeldy Distillery, Perthshire, Highlands

(as chosen by... Blair Bowman, Whisky Consultant & Author)



The Dewar's Aberfeldy Distillery in Perthshire is easily accessible from all of Scotland's major cities, from Edinburgh to Inverness.

A traditional site with a modern approach, the original Malting House has been transformed into a Whisky Lounge and Bar, while the interactive heritage museum is another great addition to its range of tours.

Blair said: "Aberfeldy distillery has something for everyone. From fascinating historical archives on display to a cafe serving delicious local produce (and a secret scalextric race track).

"An incredibly passionate team will look after you and help you explore how whisky is made at Aberfeldy."

Kilchoman Distillery, Bruichladdich, Islay

(as chosen by... whisky writer Felipe Schrieberg)



This charming little farm distillery on the west coast of Islay is a throw back to simpler times and simpler methods, with a focus on creating a more traditional style of whisky.

One of the most recent distilleries built on the island, it's much loved for its rustic outlook and cosy tours.

Felipe said: "I enjoy the Kilchoman tour as it really shows off the charming intimacy of the distillery, as it really is a farmhouse operation (even after its production expansion).

"The location by the stunning Machir Bay beach is also a plus."

Bowmore Distillery, Bowmore, Islay

(as chosen by... Steve Prentice, founder of the [somersetwisky.com](#) whisky blog)



The spiritual home of whisky in our eyes is a haven for peat lovers, with nine active distilleries, Islay is a must visit for the avid whisky fan - just ask Ron Swanson.

Mixing it up with the best of them, Bowmore is an intriguing little distillery that produces some very delightful whiskies with a range of great tours and an ideal location it's no wonder it's made this list.

Steve said: "To be honest, all Islay distilleries offer a warm welcome and a great tour, Bruichladdich is excellent, the three southerly distilleries are fabulous, and Bunnahabhain has one of my favourite views..."

"But if I had to pick one, then the tour of Bowmore has it all; great history, a maltings, traditional dunnage warehouses, good whisky, warm atmosphere and a great dram bar next to an amazing sea to while away the time and get to know the range.

"Mix that with a well stocked shop and then a stroll over to The Harbour Inn after for some food and you're sure to have had a tour that takes in most of the whisky processes, sights and smells that you could want to see."

Fettercarin Distillery Once Again Expands Core Scotch Range

By [Nino Marchetti](#) / August 3, 2020

The Fettercarin Distillery, for having been a bit dormant in recent years in Scotland with regards to new releases and the like, has been going through a major revamping as parent company Whyte and Mackay looks to bring it into consideration by more drinkers. We've seen 12-, 28-, 40- and 50-year-old whiskies [announced initially last September](#), followed [by a 16-year-old in June](#). Now comes word of a 22 year old joining the family.

The new Fettercarin 22 Year Old single malt whisky, according to those behind it, is matured for the full term in first fill, American ex-bourbon casks after having been distilled in what's described as the distillery's unique "copper cooling ring distillation process." In it the stills are drenched with "crystal clear mountain water to ensure only the purest vapours rise to create the new make spirit."



Fettercarin 22 Year Old (image via Whyte & Mackay)

Interestingly, this Scotch was laid down in 1996 and then recask "13 years later in specially selected distillery run bourbon barrels to optimise its distinctive character development."

"In adding a further expression to the core range, we have significantly enhanced the flavour experience on offer at Fettercarin," said Kirsteen Beeston, Head of International Malts at Whyte and Mackay, [in a prepared statement](#). We've also expanded consumer choice and demonstrated the exceptional quality of our aged stock at Fettercarin. "Growing from four to six expressions reflects feedback we have received on the core range and the clear need to bridge the gap between the 12 and 28 Years Old. We are working hard to create a range of whiskies which honour the approach at Fettercarin, but also provide whisky drinkers with single malts showcasing the special character which sits at its heart."

As it stands now the Fettercarin 22 Year Old, bottled at 47% ABV and both of natural color and non-chill filtered, is coming out this month globally for around £200, or about \$260 USD. Some official tasting notes are below for your consideration.

- Colour: Amber gold
- Nose: Banana, citrus fruit and plum, combines with raisin, fig and ginger bread
- Finish: Spiced pear, caramelised orange and coffee, tempered by liquorice that then makes way to morello cherry, plum and treacle

Loch Lomond Whiskies unveils brand redesign

5th August, 2020 by Melita Kiely

Scotch whisky producer Loch Lomond has revealed a complete brand overhaul including new packaging for both its domestic and global travel retail ranges.



Loch Lomond Whiskies has given its range a redesign

Loch Lomond Whiskies chose to invest in the brand refresh following five years of "strong business growth", which has resulted in the brand ranking as one of the top five fastest-growing single malt brands in the world.

The packaging has been updated to be more contemporary and now features simpler flavour descriptors to help consumers discover the range with ease.

A restructured portfolio now includes Inchmurrin 12 Years Old and Inchmoan 12 Years Old as part of the Loch Lomond Whiskies range, where they will sit alongside Loch Lomond 12 Years Old.

Furthermore, Loch Lomond is planning to release three aged single malts later this year.

John Grieve, chief marketing officer, said: "We recognise that in a growing and increasingly fragmented market the continued success of the Loch Lomond Whiskies portfolio depends on our ability to clearly communicate what makes our whiskies so unique.

"The breadth of flavour characteristics available across the range is unrivalled across the industry. Our investment in this brand refresh allows us to better communicate this range of flavour profiles to consumers, as well as improving stand out of the Loch Lomond Whiskies brand, and celebrating our much-loved location close to the banks of Loch Lomond."

The World's Most Underrated Scotch Whisky

[Brad Japhe](#) Contributor



Bowmore 25 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky
BEAM SUNTORY

‘Underrated’ is a challenging term to define—especially as it applies to whisky. Does it signify that not enough people are talking about a certain bottle? If so, what sort of people: Industry professionals, [connoisseurs](#), the general public? Typically those camps are holding wildly different conversations.

Is the phrase a stand-in for a release that’s priced below what it reasonably ought to cost? Surely it can’t be that alone, because many of the most *highly* rated liquids on earth actually retail for far, far less than what they end up fetching on the re-sale market. In fact, ‘underpriced’ liquids are often a direct precursor to overhyped mania. To wit, several years ago Weller 12 bourbon was suddenly seen as a steal at \$30 a bottle. It still retails for roughly the same. [But good luck finding it for less than 10 times that amount on the shelf](#). Ideally, we’re looking for something that, in practice, *sells* for less than what it’s worth.

An earnest determination of the most underrated requires a careful synthesize of *all* these metrics, and more. You start with a product that’s unassailably awesome on its own merits; it’s hard to *underrate* if we can’t widely agree upon any rating. Atop that foundation, levels of information are laid. Does significant buzz swirl around the product—within the industry or beyond? Or does it exist entirely outside the hype-sphere? Can you still easily find it on the shelf at its retail cost? And then, to triangulate the overall value, view it against comparable examples within the category.

In the world of scotch—weighing *all* of the above—a clear contender emerges: Bowmore 25 Year Old Islay Single Malt. Let’s look at the facts that led us here...

[Sherried malt](#)—single malt that’s matured or finished with the help of ex-sherry barrels—is the object of virtually every connoisseur’s affection. Most of the bottles you see [snagging record price at auction](#) are prominent examples. And over the past ten years, the prices of *all* scotch aged 25 years and up—regardless of cooperage—have rocketed into the stratosphere. Notorious offenders such as Macallan 25 and Dalmore 25 are now well north of \$1000 a bottle. And they almost *always* command more than their already-formidable list price.



The oldest warehouse in scotch whisky. A bottle of this 1965 Bowmore 25, for its part, is every bit as wondrous to observe in its deep mahogany hue; every iota as complex as its rivals—even introducing a slight hint of smoked sophistication into the fray. Its [rancio-laden](#) finish, stubbornly persistent, will stand up to the best of whiskies its age. Then comes the coup de grâce: it retails for \$559, and you can routinely find it [hiding online](#) for well under a hundred dollars below that. Ball game...Or is it?

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Why Kids Of All Races Need To Know How To Talk About Race
Bowmore 25, for its part, is every bit as wondrous to observe in its deep mahogany hue; every iota as complex as its rivals—even introducing a slight hint of smoked sophistication into the fray. Its [rancio-laden](#) finish, stubbornly persistent, will stand up to the best of whiskies its age. Then comes the coup de grâce: it retails for \$559, and you can routinely find it [hiding online](#) for well under a hundred dollars below that. Ball game...Or is it?

Sadly, not all drinkers can tolerate the peated personalities of [Islay whisky](#). Even when it’s an expression as subdued in its smokiness as Bowmore 25. Another monkey wrench thrown into our yearnings for objectivity. Namely: subjectivity.

So be it. Rather than trying to win them over, I present two honorable unpeated alternatives for the ‘underrated’ crown: [Glenjoyne 25 Year Old](#), a rich and elegant highland malt retailing for just under \$400; and [Glenfarclas 25 Year Old](#), a Speyside stunner that somehow still sells for less than \$200!

To be sure, these examples are very well known to industry insiders. They likely will not appreciate their inclusion here. Which brings us back to the final conundrum of the whole ‘underrated’ exercise. Much like the ‘[Observer Effect](#)’ in particle physics, merely writing about these bottles can fundamentally affect their status as such. So now that you know, maybe don’t tell anyone?



Honorable mentions for world's most underrated scotch.
GLENJOYNE; GLENFARCLAS DISTILLERIES

The Best Sherry Cask Matured Scotch Whiskies That You’ve Never Heard Off

[Joseph V Micallef](#) Contributor



Tasting of original scottish cheese and Scotch whisky,
GETTY

Sherried whiskies are whiskies that have been matured in casks that previously held sherry. These whiskies add the nutty and sweet dried fruit flavors typical of sherry to the core Scotch whisky flavors of cooked cereal, floral aromas and fresh fruit. They also pair exceptionally well with a wide variety of foods.

The term “sherry matured” denotes a whisky that has been matured exclusively in a sherry cask, while the term “sherry cask finished” denotes a whisky that was “finished” for a period of time, typically anywhere from 6 months to 24 months, in a sherry cask. Sherry is a fortified wine that is produced in the Jerez region of Spain. Loosely centered around the city of Jerez de la Frontera, it lies in the province of Cadiz in the southwest corner of Spain in what was once the ancient kingdom of Andalusia.

The wine undergoes maturation in wooden barrels beneath a layer of floating yeast called flor. The yeast metabolizes the alcohol in the wine and produces as a byproduct the nutty and solvent like flavors typically found in sherry. The yeast covering prevents the sherry from coming into contact with air and getting oxidized.



A selection of Sherry from Jerez
GETTY

There are around a dozen main types of sherry. Stylistically, these can vary from a straw colored Fino, an extremely dry pale wine that can have a pronounced nuttiness and often a saline note, to a Pedro Ximénez (PX), a dark colored, syrupy sweet wine made from raisinated PX grapes.

There is also a subset of sherry comprised of wines that undergo some maturation under flor, and some maturation without flor. In the later case they are exposed to air and oxidized. The degree of oxidation determines the classification of the resulting sherry.

Sherries that undergo the bulk of their maturation under flor are labelled Amontillado, while those that undergo the bulk of the fermentation without flor are labelled Oloroso. This is a darker, richer style of sherry. It is particularly important to whisky lovers since Oloroso casks are the ones most often used for maturing whisky. Most sherries are dry. Their sugar content is typically between 0 and 5 grams per liter. This is equivalent to about a teaspoon of sugar in an eight-ounce glass of water. Both Fino and Oloroso sherries fall into this category. At the other extreme, a PX sherry can contain over 200 grams of sugar per liter. Whiskies matured in PX casks can be noticeably sweet, with rich flavors of raisins and prunes, as well as dried figs and dates.

Historically, Great Britain has been the principal foreign market for sherry. Casks of mature sherry were shipped to British ports like Bristol and Liverpool where they would be disgorged and bottled. The importers had little use for the casks once they were emptied so these were sold cheaply to whisky distillers to use for maturing whisky. That's how the practice of maturing whisky in sherry casks began.

Fast forward to the 21st century. Great Britain is still a major market for sherry, but consumption has declined significantly, as it has elsewhere. Moreover, under Spanish law sherry must now be bottled in Spain, so casks of sherry are no longer being exported to bottlers. The decline in sherry consumption, coupled with the boom in Scotch whisky sales and the popularity of sherry matured whiskies, has resulted in an acute shortage of sherry casks.



Sherry barrels in Jerez bodega, Spain
GETTY

To ameliorate the shortage many sherry producers will now create "seasoned casks" specifically for the whisky industry. A seasoned cask is a new cask in which sherry has been stored for a period of one to three years. When the cask is ready, the sherry is emptied out and the cask is shipped to the whisky distiller.

The new seasoned sherry casks are very different from the type of sherry cask used in the past. Historically, casks used for shipping were made with thicker staves. When used to mature whisky, these casks allowed less oxygen to seep in resulting in a very slow maturation process. They were also made with cheaper European oak rather than the more expensive American oak casks used to mature sherry. You can stumble across some of these old casks on occasion, but their sherry influence has long since been exhausted.

Additionally, casks used for maturation were usually very old and had been used prior to mature other wines. The resulting casks had neutral wood, i.e., wood that did not impart a lot of flavor, and in particular tannin, to the sherry.

The new casks tend to impart a lot more tannin, both to the sherry and later, to the whisky matured in them. Very often, sherry stored in new casks is too tannic to be bottled. It is usually discarded or used to produce sherry vinegar. Some sherry producers now generate more revenues from producing "sherried casks" for the whisky industry than they do from selling sherry to consumers. Macallan, far and away the most well-known of the sherried whisky producers, began commissioning its own sherry barrels in the 1950s. Today, there are over 70,000 quietly maturing sherry barrels in Jerez destined for Macallan.



LONDON, ENGLAND - OCTOBER 23: Bottles of 12 years old double cask Macallan highland single malt ... [+]

GETTY IMAGES

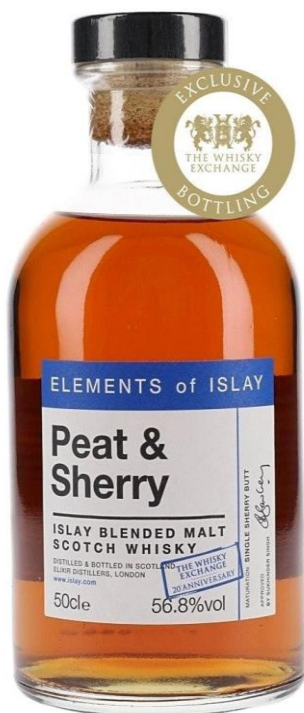
Distillers like Macallan and Aberlour are well-known for their sherry matured whiskies. So too, are smaller distillers like Glenfarclas or Glendronach. There are also dozens of distillers and specialty bottlers, however, which produce outstanding sherry matured whiskies that are far less known. That's a pity because some of their expressions are exceptional. Below is a roundup of reasonably priced, less well-known expressions, which are definitely worth a taste.

Many whisky producers have sherry matured whiskies in their core ranges. These whiskies are particularly interesting when bottled at cask strength, since sherry maturation can often take the edge off over-proofed whiskies. Aberlour's A'bunadh, is the best known and best-selling expression of cask strength sherry matured whiskies. Consider also trying, Arran Sherry Cask, 55.8% ABV (\$99). This is a particularly rich, dense whisky with aromas of raisins, ripe figs, black cherry, cinnamon spice and sugared ginger on the nose. On the palate, it offers up flavors of dried fruit, orange zest, tropical spices like cinnamon and clove, as well as dark chocolate.

Signatory, the specialty bottler, has a Cask Strength Collection of sherry matured whiskies, ranging in price from around \$150 dollars to several thousand. These are hard to find in the U.S., although they are available from UK mail order houses like [The Whisky Exchange](#). Try, in particular, the Deanston 2007 12 YO, 64.5% ABV, the Ledaig 12 YO, 59.8% ABV, or the exceptional Caol Ila, 9 YO, 60.1% ABV. All three sell for less than \$150.

For a real treat, get the Signatory bottling of the Glenlivet, 1981, 47.6 % ABV, 700 ml. Distilled on December 12, 1981 and bottled on April 18, 2018, only 702 bottles of this 36-year-old, sherry cask matured, Glenlivet were ever released. At around \$700 per bottle, it's an exceptional whisky at an outstanding price.

Other sherry matured whiskies worth trying include the Dailuaine 16 YO, 43% ABV (\$100). This is another big, rich, sweet whisky full of dried fruits and nuts and a touch of smoke. Try also the Tamdhu, 15 YO, 46% ABV (\$75). This whisky offers up flavors of dried apricot, fresh raspberries, baked apple and orange zest, followed by a long, sweet, spicy finish of gingerbread. At around \$200 per bottle the Glengoyne, 21 YO, 43% ABV offers up an aged expression full of flavors of rich dried fruit and seasoned oak.



Elements of Islay, Peat & Sherry

PHOTO, COURTESY THE WHISKY EXCHANGE

Peated whiskies marry particularly well with sherry cask maturation. The result is an outstanding combination of smoke, char and dried fruit sweetness. Think of these as “barbecue sauce whiskies”. PX sherry casks do particularly well here, adding intense dried fruit sweetness and a pleasing dark color.

Elements of Islay Peat and Sherry, 59.2% ABV, 500 ml, (\$75) is a blend of Islay malts matured in a Oloroso sherry butt. The expression is a special bottling from Elixir Distillers, a sister company of the Whiskey Exchange. This whisky has a classic barbecue sauce flavor profile ranging from smoked bacon to raisins to candied orange zest and dark chocolate.

Ian Macleod Smokehead Sherry Bomb, 48% ABV, (\$80) is a peated whisky matured in an Oloroso sherry cask from the like named specialty bottler. It combines an intense smokiness with pronounced sweetness and dried fruit notes. Try also the Benromach Peat Smoke Sherry Cask Matured, 59.9% ABV. It was distilled in 2010 and bottled in 2018. Made with heavily-peated malted barley, it offers up a classic peated aroma and flavor profile with the fruitiness and nut notes of sherry maturation.

Lagavulin’s Distiller’s Edition, Laphroaig PX and Bowmore Sherry Cask all offer excellent examples of sherry influenced peated whiskies. None of these are sherry matured, however. They are all “cask finished” in various types of sherry casks for several months. All three are nonetheless superb and widely available in the U.S.

Gordon & MacPhail (G & M), a well-known whisky developer and bottler, has a long history of producing sherry matured versions of many of Scotland’s classic malts. Among the standouts are expressions of Glen Grant, Strathisla and Linkwood. Prices vary depending on the age of the whiskies, but the more recent versions typically cost around \$100 to \$150 a bottle. The ABV ranges from the standard 40% to cask strength. Sherried whiskies seems to have a bottling sweet spot of between 43% ABV and 46% ABV.



A Gordon & MacPhail bottling of Sherry matured 15 YO Linkwood
PHOTO, COURTESY GORDON & MACPHAIL

Try, for example, the Gordon & MacPhail Linkwood, 15 YO, 43% ABV (\$85) or the 25 YO (\$220). A personal favorite is the Gordon & MacPhail, Mortlach, 25 YO, 43% ABV. (\$248). This is a rich, sherried whisky, with notes of crème brûlée, orange marmalade, raisins and dark chocolate. The G & M Glen Grant bottlings are available in sequential vintage editions. That’s perfect if you are looking for a vintage whisky to commemorate someone’s birth year or an anniversary. Expressions from the 1950s, for example, generally sell for between \$2,000 and \$4,000 a bottle, depending on the year and scarcity. Whiskies from the 1960s tend to run between \$1,500 and \$2,000, while those from the 1970s range from around \$1,000 to \$1,500.

If you’re ready to explore sherried whiskies beyond the usual, better known brands, there is a whole world of exceptional malts waiting for you.

Sláinte

Aston Martin and Bowmore bottle DB5 1964 whisky

6th August, 2020 by Owen Bellwood

Islay Scotch brand Bowmore and luxury car maker Aston Martin have launched their first collaborative whisky: Black Bowmore DB5 1964.



Bowmore and Aston Martin have released Black Bowmore DB5 1964
[Bowmore and Aston Martin announced a partnership in 2019](#) to create exclusive bottlings and experiences. Black Bowmore DB5 1964 is the first release as part of this collaboration.

The 31-year-old whisky, which aged in a walnut brown oloroso Sherry butt, is said to be a celebration of “a definitive moment in history” for both Bowmore and Aston Martin.

For Bowmore, 1964 was the year a new boiler was installed, which saw the distillery enter the “modern age of distilling” as coal fires were replaced with steam as a means of heating the stills. It was the first distillation from this new boiler that produced the spirit to make Black Bowmore, which was first distilled on 5 November 1964.

David Turner, distillery manager at Bowmore, said: “1964 represents a significant date in the modern history of the distillery. Not only a key moment in how we distilled our spirit, but perhaps even more significant as this very spirit went on to create Black Bowmore.

“These defining moments are fundamental to the history of Bowmore. This collaboration with Aston Martin has allowed us to once again showcase this iconic single malt in the most incredible way.”

The year was also important for Aston Martin. Following the release of its DB5 model in 1963, the sports car made its on-screen debut as the vehicle of choice for James Bond in the 1964 film *Goldfinger*.

Marek Reichman, executive vice president and chief creative officer of Aston Martin Lagonda, said: “This exciting new association with Bowmore gives us the perfect opportunity to celebrate a vital part of our star-studded history by combining the unrivalled appeal of the iconic DB5 with the cultured flavours of this world-renowned single malt.”

Just 27 bottles of Black Bowmore DB5 1964 have been created, and 25 of these will be offered for sale. Bottled at 49.6% ABV, the whisky is described as having “intense flavours of mango, passion fruit and acacia honey interwoven with a powerful combination of coffee and tobacco smoke”.

The Black Bowmore DB5 bottle has been handcrafted by Glasstorm, a contemporary glass studio in Scotland. The bottles are presented in a handmade presentation box, which was inspired by the distillery’s coastal home.

Black Bowmore DB5 1964 will be available from late autumn 2020 with an RRP of £50,000 (US\$66,000).

Talisker supports coastal communities affected by Covid-19

6th August, 2020 by Owen Bellwood

Isle of Skye-based Scotch whisky Talisker has launched an initiative to support coastal communities impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.



Talisker will donate £1 to The Fishermen's for each social media post with the hashtag #ShuckTogether

Talisker has partnered with seafood provider Loch Fyne Oysters to raise funds for The Fishermen's Mission charity, which provides practical and financial support to coastal fishing communities across Great Britain.

Ali Godfrey, director of business development at the charity, said: “The Fishermen's Mission is the only charity that works with active and retired fishermen and their families in and around the UK coastline. This has been a desperately hard year for our fishermen. Winter storms battered the coast in the first three months, which made fishing almost impossible for the smaller boats. “Covid-19 meant the collapse of the supply chain for UK fish with the closure of fish markets, restaurants and cafés. During the first three months of this crisis we distributed more £250,000 (US\$329,000) in emergency support.

“Not only is this partnership offering vital financial support, but just as importantly, it is spreading the word far and wide that The Fishermen's Mission is here to help, whatever the problem. Reaching out to all fishermen working in the UK, including those who are working in the water in the aquaculture sector.”

As part of the collaborative effort, Talisker has created the Talisker & Oyster Signature Pairing Kit, which is available to purchase through Loch Fyne Oysters’ at-home delivery service. The kit consists of two Talisker 50ml bottles and a dozen oysters.

For every image of the pairing kit shared on social media with the hashtag #ShuckTogether, Talisker will pledge £1 (US\$1.30) to The Fishermen's Mission to support the economic recovery of coastal communities.

Talisker UK brand manager Nick Moore said: “We have always known that Talisker pairs brilliantly with oysters, but we are thrilled to be able to bring this ritual to people's homes whilst being able to support the fantastic work of The Fishermen's Mission in supporting the recovery of coastal communities across the UK through these challenging times.”

Bartenders Call Out

The Most Over-Hyped Scotch Whiskies

<https://uproxx.com/life/the-most-overrated-scotch-whiskies/>
CHRISTOPHER OSBURN TWITTER AUGUST 6, 2020

Sometimes terms like “[overrated](#)” and “[over-hyped](#)” conjure the wrong idea. No one's trying to put these brands on blast or knock them down a peg. And we're definitely not shaming you for drinking what you like. We're simply reminding fellow aficionados to *taste* their whisky, rather than going off of brand perceptions. Make sure you like its flavors, not just its marketing.

After all, the world is full of choices and the most famous drams might not always be the most enjoyable. Taking a break from more [media-friendly, well-distributed expressions](#) gives you a chance to branch out into something different. Something you haven't tasted before. Maybe a smokier or sweeter or oakier bottle.

With this aim, we asked some of our [favorite bartenders](#) to share the most overrated Scotches on the market. Maybe you reject what they say, or maybe it inspires you to broaden your horizons. Either way, no offense is meant to the brands called out here. As the sage Jay-Z says, “[It's not a diss song, it's just a real song.](#)”

The Macallan 18

Jeremy Allen, beverage director of [MiniBar Hollywood](#) in Los Angeles *I'm sure if we were playing Family Feud about scotches and someone said, "Show me, Macallan!" it would be the number one answer on the board. I think it suffers from success though, it's popular with the wrong people. Try its sister brands, Edradour and Highland Park.*

Johnnie Walker Black Label

Reniel Garcia, bar director of [Havana 1957](#) in Miami *Black Label (40 percent ABV, 80 proof) is a great introduction to the taste of Scotch because it offers a nice balance of sweet and peat. It's an elegant — almost scrumptious — Scotch at a great price and a reliable whisky that can easily become a regular in any bar. It's also overrated. Confused? Well, while it's high quality and affordable, there are much better blended whiskies on the market for you to discover.*

Laphroaig 10

Seamus Gleason, bartender at [Hotel Jackson](#) in Jackson Hole, Wyoming *Laphroaig 10 Year. If you're using it for anything other than a float on a penicillin, you're wasting everyone's time. It's not complemented by the peat, it's smothered by it. Nevertheless, it maintains a salty-ness that makes you wonder if you're drinking bog water.*

The Macallan 12

Drew Reid, restaurant manager at [W Aspen](#) in Aspen, Colorado *Macallan 12 – To me, this Scotch just doesn't bring a lot to the table. It is straight forward and tasty, but doesn't wow me as it does so many others! I like a scotch that has more bite and/or is peated.*

Johnnie Walker Blue Label

Kurt Bellon, general manager and beverage director at [Chao Baan](#) in St. Louis *Johnnie Walker Blue label comes to mind. A household name now and a likely favorite of your grandpa. For its price point, it does not justify its lack of taste and quality. Basically, the "Beats headphones" of Scotch. There are better quality headphones out there.*

Glenlivet 12

Marta De La Cruz Marrero, food and beverage supervisor at [Burlock Coast](#) in Fort Lauderdale, Florida *The most overrated Scotch is Glenlivet 12. It's a great, well-balanced whisky, but there are also many more higher quality single malts on the market to be discovered instead.*

Ardbeg 10

Hayden Miller, head bartender at [Bodega Taqueria y Tequila](#) in Miami *While I do enjoy Ardbeg, there are a lot of other great bottles out there that are a little more subtle with the peat. Ardbeg 10 is a good example of over-hyping. There are better, less peat-driven Scotches from Islay that I certainly prefer.*

The Macallan 25

Erin Gowdy, bartender at [Paul's Landing](#) in St. Petersburg, Florida *Macallan 25. It is a very good Scotch, but I believe it is overpriced. In the last few years, demand has increased its price reminiscent of Pappy Van Winkle. There are better, more wallet-friendly options available.*
Writer's Picks:

Highland Park 18

Don't get us wrong, Highland Park 18 is a great bottle of whisky. The problem is that while this Orkney-produced whisky is well-balanced and full of sherry sweetness, there are other options on the market for much less than this bottle's price tag.

Oban 14

This Highland whisky is just about as well-rounded and classic as Scotch gets. It's rich, smooth, and full of caramel and toasted vanilla. That being said, it's more of a beginner bottle than anything and, if you enjoy it, you can find many other comparable bottles to try instead of buying it a second time around. Keep things fresh and give new brands a shot!

Liquor Nerd: Scotch is kind of like having a favourite band

by [Mike Usinger](#) on August 5th, 2020 at 3:36 PM



- Glenmorangie is an unpeated Scotch that is more mellow than many American whiskies.

Canada is home to Glasgow-raised Bryan Simpson these days, but when it comes to liquor there's little doubt where his allegiance lies. "For me, I truly believe that Scotch whisky is the best drink in the world," states the proudly Scottish brand ambassador for Ardbeg and Glenmorangie, speaking on Zoom from his adopted base of Toronto. "I think there's a huge amount of history and heritage that kind of goes in line with Scotland."

Some of those things—kilts, haggis, and caber tossing—haven't exactly taken root around the globe. Scotch whisky most certainly has. "The community of people around the world who love Scotch whisky is phenomenal," Simpson says. "I don't really know any other type of spirit where you'll get these passionate fans. They'll follow whisky from Scotland in the same way that people will talk about their favourite band—merchandise and all. I've seen people in my travels across Canada with Ardbeg tattoos."

For reasons that have everything to do with heavily peated offerings from Ardbeg, Laphroaig, and Lagavulin, Scotch is often considered a liquor for advanced imbibers. Like oysters, caviar, and sea-urchin sushi, it's something that requires a bit of working up to. But Simpson notes that not all Scotch has the kind of smokiness made famous by distilleries in Scotland's Islay region. For those who want a drink that lets them play connect-the-dots with American, Canadian, and Irish whiskies, Glenfiddich, the Balvenie, and Glenmorangie are easy to appreciate.

"Flavour-wise, Glenmorangie and Ardbeg are on opposite sides of the flavour spectrum," Simpson says. "One of the lines you'll have in Scotch whisky is if the whisky is going to be peated or unpeated—smoky, or not smoky. All Glenmorangies are unpeated. All the Ardbegs are heavily peated."

Let's do a quick Scotch-whisky guide for dummies. First, peated whiskies. The process starts with barley that is steeped in water and then heated up right before germination starts. "Hot air is used to dry the barley," Simpson relates. "Underneath where the barley is drying there's peat, which gives off a huge amount of smoke which kind of wraps itself around the barley. It's not enough to dry the barley—it's just to add a smoky flavour."

As for unpeated whiskies, there are different varieties. Grain whisky can be made from corn, wheat, or barley. Malt whisky comes from 100-percent malted barley. When it's from a single distillery, it's single-malt, whereas blended malt whisky is a mix from different distilleries. Blended Scotch makes up over 90 percent of all Scotch whisky sold. A single-malt Scotch whisky has to mature for a minimum of three years in oak casks, where it picks up subtle flavours.

Peated offerings often skew perspectives of what Scotch whiskies are. "When it comes to unpeated single-malt whiskies, I personally think they get a bad rep," Simpson offers. "A lot of people think it's going to be a strong spirit. But some of the most popular brands of North American whisky are actually more aggressive than what you'll get with a Glenmorangie, which is very approachable."

As with many things in life, the more you push yourself, the more you'll be open to new experiences. Cocktails are a great way to ease yourself into things.

"When it comes to cocktails, you don't have to use too much. Some people want the smoke, but not necessarily the intensity of having it neat," Simpson says. "Then, once you get used to having a smoky cocktail, you can work the back end to having it neat with a little bit of water or maybe over ice—whatever it takes to get over that hurdle." And even if you're not quite ready to tackle that hurdle, it's okay. There's a Scotch whisky for everyone.

"I say this all the time: it's not that you don't like Scotch," Simpson says with a laugh, "it's just that you haven't found the right one."

Here are two drinks you can make with Scotch whisky:

Ardbeig Daiquiri

1 oz. Ardbeg Wee Beastie

1/2 oz. apple juice

1/5 oz. fresh lime juice

1/4 oz. vanilla syrup

Shake over ice, strain into chilled coupe glass.

Glenmorangie Ginger Lemon Highball

1.5 oz. Glenmorangie Original 10 Year Old

1 dash lemon bitters

1 dash aromatic bitters

Top with ginger ale

Stir the ingredients together and serve in a highball glass with a twist of orange and a touch of crystallized ginger.

Fettercarin Distillery Once Again Expands Core Scotch Range

By [Nino Kilgore-Marchetti](#) / August 3, 2020

The Fettercarin Distillery, for having been a bit dormant in recent years in Scotland with regards to new releases and the like, has been going through a major revamping as parent company Whyte and Mackay looks to bring it into consideration by more drinkers. We've seen 12-, 28-, 40- and 50-year-old whiskies [announced initially last September](#), followed [by a 16-year-old in June](#). Now comes word of a 22 year old joining the family.

The new Fettercarin 22 Year Old single malt whisky, according to those behind it, is matured for the full term in first fill, American ex-bourbon casks after having been distilled in what's described as the distillery's unique "copper cooling ring distillation process." In it the stills are drenched with "crystal clear mountain water to ensure only the purest vapours rise to create the new make spirit."



Fettercarin 22 Year Old (image via Whyte & Mackay)

Interestingly, this Scotch was laid down in 1996 and then recask "13 years later in specially selected distillery run bourbon barrels to optimise its distinctive character development."

"In adding a further expression to the core range, we have significantly enhanced the flavour experience on offer at Fettercarin," said Kirsteen Beeston, Head of International Malts at Whyte and Mackay, [in a prepared statement](#). We've also expanded consumer choice and demonstrated the exceptional quality of our aged stock at Fettercarin. "Growing from four to six expressions reflects feedback we have received on the core range and the clear need to bridge the gap between the 12 and 28 Years Old. We are working hard to create a range of whiskies which honour the approach at Fettercarin, but also provide

whisky drinkers with single malts showcasing the special character which sits at its heart."

As it stands now the Fettercarin 22 Year Old, bottled at 47% ABV and both of natural color and non-chill filtered, is coming out this month globally for around £200, or about \$260 USD. Some official tasting notes are below for your consideration.

- Colour: Amber gold
- Nose: Banana, citrus fruit and plum, combines with raisin, fig and ginger bread
- Finish: Spiced pear, caramelised orange and coffee, tempered by liquorice that then makes way to morello cherry, plum and treacle

Glengoyne asks drinkers to help choose single cask

10th August, 2020 by Nicola Carruthers

Highland Scotch whisky producer Glengoyne is inviting consumers to decide what goes into its next single cask bottling as part of a live-streamed tasting.



The Glengoyne tasting kit is priced at £50

Drinkers can join Glengoyne in its live tasting of four single cask whiskies at 8pm BST on 28 August to help decide what will be the distillery's new Cask of the Moment bottling.

The Casks Unlocked event will see distillery manager Robbie Hughes, global brand ambassador Gordon Dundas, and a panel of industry figures taste and discuss the single cask expressions.

Each whisky was hand selected from Glengoyne's Warehouse 8 – including a Port pipe from 2005, a re-fill hogshead from 2006, an ex-Bourbon barrel from 2004 and a Madeira cask from 2007.

Consumers can take part in the event by buying a tasting kit, which comes with a Glencairn glass, to enjoy at home for £50 (US\$65) from the Glengoyne website. There are only 230 tastings kits available. The panel and participants will then vote on their preferred cask, which will be hand bottled and available to buy from the distillery shop and online.

"At Glengoyne, we're incredibly fortunate to have some of the most loyal fans in the whisky world," said Hughes. "That's why, to show our appreciation for their ongoing support, we decided to host Casks Unlocked – a special opportunity for our community to select Glengoyne's latest single cask whisky."

"Having helped to pick the four casks on offer, I'm truly excited to see and hear the reaction to these rare and unique drams. Some of the liquid in the sample kits may have never been released for sale, so this truly is a one-of-a-kind experience that we're excited to offer our community."

Aug 9, 2020,08:33am EDT

Tasting Ardbeg Beer And Three New Whisky Expressions From Islay's Iconic Distillery

[Joseph V Micallef](#) Contributor



Ardbeg's new The Shortie Smoky Porter beer

PHOTO COURTESY ARDBEG/MIKE BUCK, PHOTOGRAPHER

Ardbeg is one of Islay's iconic distilleries. It dates back to the early 19th century. Its core range exhibits the distinctive smoke, char and medicinal character that is typical of Islay's peated whisky style. Recently, the distillery announced that it was adding a namesake beer to its lineup. Named Shortie, after the Jack Russel terrier that is the distillery's mascot, the beer is a smoky porter that share's Ardbeg whisky's DNA.

The project was created with Brewgooder, a charity committed to supporting clean water projects in Malawi. It was supposed to launch on March 22, World Water Day, but it was delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic. All profits from the sale of Ardbeg beer will be donated to Brewgooder.



Ardbeg Distillery, Islay. (Photo by: Education Images/Universal Images Group via Getty Images)

Beer and whisky, after all, are kindred spirits that follow similar production processes. The fermented wort, technically called wash, is often referred to as beer by distillers. Both beer and whisky are often made from the same three ingredients: water, malted barley and yeast. In both cases, the barley is malted and, after it has started to germinate, it's kilned and ground. The ground malt, called grist, is then mixed with hot water in a mash tun in order to extract the sugars. The resulting liquid, called wort, is then fermented into beer or, in the case of whisky, wash. The only significant difference is that brewers add hops to the wort prior to fermentation. Distillers skip the hopping and go right to fermentation.

Beer casks and whisky casks have been used by both industries to "finish" their respective beverages. The Glenfiddich Experimental Series and Jameson Caskmates expressions are both finished in casks that previously held beer. In Belgium, Brouwerij de Dochter van de

Korenaar, uses casks from Ardbeg to create peat notes in its beer.

According to Mickey Heads, Ardbeg distillery manager:

"...any whiskyphile worth their malt will tell you, beer and whisky share the same DNA. Just like brewers, we ferment our malt. The only difference being, we hold on to the hops."

The beer was brewed at Williams Brothers Brewing Company (Heather Ale Ltd.) a family owned microbrewery in Alloa, and utilizes the same peated malt used by the distillery for the production of its Ardbeg 10 YO expression.

The beer is described by its creators as having a "peat bog brown" color and has an ABV of 6.2%. Combined with the classic Ardbeg 10 YO, the combination might be an Ardbeg enthusiast's ultimate boilermaker.

Dr. Bill Lumsden, Director of Whisky Development at Ardbeg and at its sister distillery Glenmorangie, described the porter as "smooth and creamy" and "distinctly smoky." Brenden McCarron, Glenmorangie's Director of Maturing Whisky Stocks, described the smoky character of the porter as not the medicinal, cold smoke of Ardbeg whisky but more of a tar and coal dust smoke.

The beer is only available at the distillery's gift store or online at [Ardbeg.com](#). A six-pack sells at retail for around \$20. You'll have to make it to Great Britain, if not Islay, if you want a taste, however, as the website only delivers to UK addresses.

Below are tasting notes supplied by the distillery:

Nose: *On the nose, Ardbeg's distinctive peat gives rise to more oily notes intermingled with sour cherries, rich coal tar and pine. Ardbeg's malt then begins to reveal itself, with aromas of toasted nuts and sweet lemon and lime.*

Palate: *On the palate, this smoky porter boasts a typically creamy texture, with bitter dark chocolate, malty biscuit, dry espresso coffee and a hint of liquorice.*

Finish: *In a finish that lingers long beyond the can, delicious and distinctively smoky notes guide the palate towards the bitter end.*

Frustrated you can't get your hands on Ardbeg's beer? No worries. Here are three new expressions of Ardbeg whisky that will tide you over instead.



Ardbeg Wee Beastie Single Malt Scotch Whisky
PHOTO, COURTESY ARDBEG

Ardbeg, Wee Beastie, 5 YO, 47.4% ABV, 750 ml, ARP \$49

Wee Beastie is among the youngest Ardbeg whiskies ever released. On the nose, it offers a pronounced aroma of peat, green vegetative notes, black pepper and a hint of vanilla along with slight apple and pear notes. There is a noticeable briny quality, like a beach exposed at low tide, that is typical of Ardbeg. The peat notes are earthier, more like dried compost and brush than the pronounced cold smoke, char and medicinal notes typical of other Ardbeg expressions.

On the palate, the whisky is sweet, with a distinctive oily character. There are notes of lemon zest, some faint tropical fruit notes of roasted plantain, baked pears, dark chocolate and caramel fudge, along with vegetative notes of green moss and anise, bacon, some tar and the unmistakable aroma of asphalt on a hot summer's day. The finish is

long and briny, with notes of white pepper and dried fruits and a lingering medicinal element. Wee Beastie is a classic example of a young Ardbeg, but it is smooth and very drinkable.



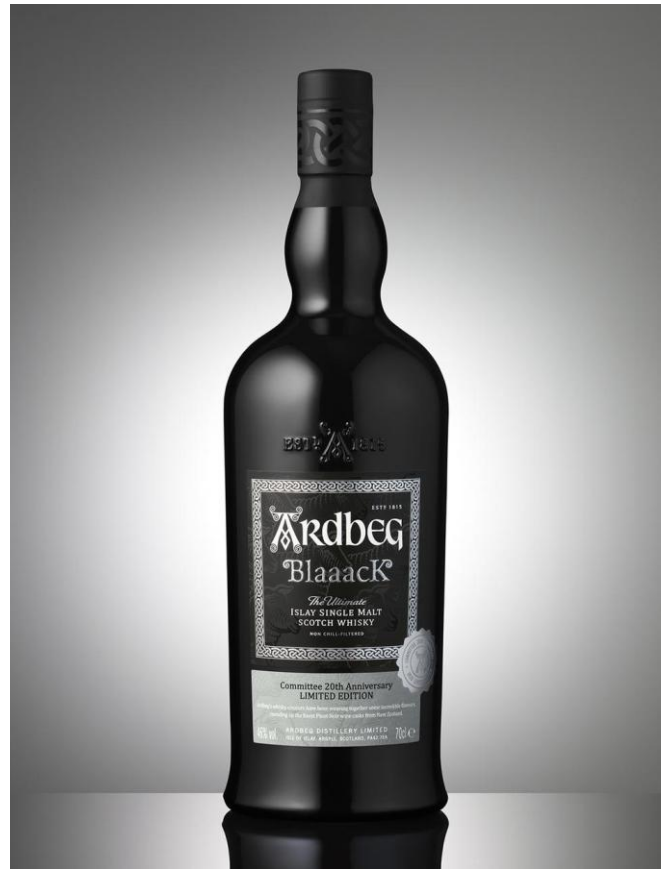
Ardbeg Supernova 2019, Single Scotch Whisky
PHOTO, COURTESY ARDBEG

Ardbeg, Supernova 2019, NAS, 53.8% ABV, 750 ml, ARP \$374

The last Ardbeg Supernova, the fourth expression to bear that name, was released in 2015, and has been unavailable for several years. The 2019 expression is a limited release. Per the distillery, “one more brief and shattering return” in the same style as the original Supernova. This is among the peatiest Ardbeg available. The whisky does not carry an age statement (NAS), and packs a powerful 53.8% cask strength ABV. It was aged in a combination of ex-bourbon and Sherry casks.

On the nose, there is a pronounced aroma of peat smoke, along with candied sweetness and a distinctive briny note in the background. As the whisky opens up notes of citrus zest and some tropical and green fruit notes emerge.

On the palate, there is a noticeable mouth coating oily quality, with a pronounced palate weight. The whisky is creamy, sweet, with distinctive cold smoke and wood char notes and a fruity character, along with anise, some mint, vanilla and taffy. There is a pronounced pepper note that fades quickly. For a cask strength whisky, the alcohol is remarkably smooth and well integrated. The finish is long, with a lingering fruity sweetness and smoky note.



Ardbeg. Blaaack, Single Malt Scotch Whisky
PHOTO, COURTESY ARDBEG

Ardbeg Blaaack Committee Edition, 50.7% ABV, 700 ml, ARP \$226

The Ardbeg Blaaack, was originally intended for release on Ardbeg Day 2020, historically the last day of the annual *Fèis Ile*, Islay's Festival of Music and Malt. This year it was a virtual celebration due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This expression is the “Committee Edition,” and was exclusive to the Ardbeg fan club, named The Committee, of over 120,000 Ardbeg enthusiasts. The whisky commemorates the 20th anniversary of The Committee. There is a second version, intended for general release, bottled at 46% ABV. The whisky was matured in casks previously used for New Zealand Pinot Noir.

The label features a sheep, a reference to the New Zealand origins of the barrels used for maturation since there are five sheep or more for every New Zealand citizen. Rumor has it that the triple a in Blaaack, is a reference to “baa,” the sound made by bleating sheep.

On the nose, there is the requisite peat smokiness you have come to expect from Ardbeg, along with a note of cooked cereal porridge. The smoke has an oily, meaty character to it, like the aroma from an old smoker, think smoked bacon or jerky. There are red berry notes, strawberry and raspberry mostly, presumably the contribution of the Pinot Noir casks, along with elements of vanilla, honey and fruit.

On the palate, there is the candied sweetness typical of Ardbeg, along with notes of cooked cereal and fruit, a bit of anise, some slight medicinal notes and a hint of brine. Some mild pepperiness emerges toward the end. The finish is long and smooth, with a lingering sweetness, along with some pepper and fruit notes.

Sláinte

Ballantine's The Glenburgie 15 Years Old

By Ryan on February 28, 2019 6:30 PM | [1 Comment](#)



A couple of years back I [was turned onto Glenburgie](#) during a chance encounter at a New Brunswick liquor store and since then I've kept my eye out for other bottlings of this somewhat hard-to-find Speyside single malt.

So, when I discovered this distillery label release of [Glenburgie 15 years old](#) on LCBO shelves this past December, I leapt at the opportunity to try it. For the first time in Ontario, the so-called "heart of Ballantine's" blended Scotch whisky is available as an aged, stand-alone offering and is bottled at 40% ABV.

Similar to Dewar's "Last Great Malts" product launch a couple of years back which released a handful of single malts typically destined for blending as stand alone bottles; the Chivas and Glenlivet Group is offering whisky enthusiasts access to the core malts that make up it's flagship Ballantine's blend: Milntown, Glentauchers and Glenburgie. Typically, these malts are only available through independent bottlers and so it was quite a surprise to me to see them all appear under their original distillery labelling and aged to a

very respectable 15 years.

I quite enjoyed the Gordon and MacPhail 10 year old expression but how would this older bottling, matured exclusively in ex-bourbon American oak, hold up to my reference point?

Nose: Fruity notes of red apples and pears along with a whiff of vanilla.

Palate: Muddled stewed fruit flavours of apples, pears, lychee and citrus peel with a texture and sweetness of thinned honey. This light-to-medium bodied dram shows additional notes of white chocolate fudge and warming ginger

Finish: Dry and relatively short-lived with caramel, orange peel, and something almost nutty on the finish.

Overall: This distillery labeled release of Glenburgie 15 years old is a straight-forward dram with a dry, fruity profile. While I think I prefer the G&M bottling over this one, it's still worth a buy at [\\$73.80 in the LCBO](#) especially given its relative rarity. Although it's not particularly complex, this version of Glenburgie offers great value to whisky geeks seeking single malts from distilleries whose output is typically relegated to blending. After all, it's not often you can find a 15yr old single malt in the LCBO under \$80!

The Top-Rated Whiskey In Every Category, According To The Ultimate Spirits Challenge

[ZACH JOHNSTON](#) [TWITTER](#) LIFE WRITER

AUGUST 11, 2020

What makes a bottle of [whiskey](#) "the best?" That's a minefield and often entirely subjective. What I love [to sip on](#) after a long week isn't going to be what you love to sip on. Neither of us is wrong — we just have different palates due to living different lives. Basically, the very notion of finding the best bottle of [whiskey](#) is a bit of a lie. Still, there are expressions that are universally beloved by both the public and the people in [whiskey](#) who rate the stuff for a living. Among those experts is a crew of tasters who work tirelessly to rate booze every year for the [Ultimate Spirits Challenge](#). The blind tastings run by the USC occur over the span of two months in Hawthorne, New York. This is not a whirlwind tasting event over a single weekend. It's slow, meticulous, and detailed — allowing the judges plenty of breathing room to decide which drams they dug the most.

Is it perfect? Well, nothing is. Still, the methodology used helps point us in the right direction if we insist on looking for that unattainable best dram of [whiskey](#). That's why we went through and pulled the best of the #1 rated expression in each and every whiskey style judged during the recent 2020 [Ultimate Spirits Challenge](#).

Check out the 17 entries below.

Best Flavored Whiskey: Jameson Cold Brew (92 points)

ABV: 30%

Distillery: New Midleton Distillery, County Cork (Pernod Ricard)

Average Price: [\\$30](#)

This Whiskey:

The blend of coffee liqueur and classic Jameson Irish Whiskey is a treat. The bottle helps give credence to the whole flavored whiskey genre with expert craftsmanship and real accessibility in both flavor and price.

Tasting Notes (ours):

I dig this. The nose opens with a nice balance of vanilla and orange zest. That serves as a base for a hint of oaky spice and plenty of coffee bitterness with a velvet texture. That bitterness combines with the vanilla and edges into a lush dark chocolate territory near the end.

Our thoughts:

Grab a bottle for mixing up with your next Irish Coffee, espresso martini, or a surprisingly tasty highball.

Best Irish/Blended: Jameson Bow Street Cask Strength 18 Years ([95 points](#))

ABV: 55.3%

Distillery: New Midleton Distillery, County Cork & Jameson Distillery Bow Street, Dublin (Pernod Ricard)

Average Price: [\\$165](#)

The Whiskey:

This whiskey swings for the fences and it works. The juice is created down at the New Midleton Distillery in Cork where it's aged for 18 long years in both ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casks. Then it's transported up to Dublin's Bow Street for a finishing rest in new American oak for up to 12 months.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Breakfast cakes, light honey, sweet tobacco, and slight char create a layered set of aromas. The flavor explodes in the mouth with baking spices, juicy and tangy nectarine, vanilla, and light toffee. The robust flavors integrate seamlessly into the satiny texture from start to finish."

Our Thoughts:

If you can get your hands on this bottle, buy two. Drink one now and save one for later, and don't be afraid to add a few drops of water to open it up.

Best Canadian: Heaven's Door Bootleg Series 2019 Edition 26 Year Old ([96 points](#))

ABV: 55.75%

Distillery: Sourced in Canada

Average Price: [\\$550](#)

The Whiskey:

Bob Dylan's whiskey line is a legitimate entry in the whiskey world — celebrity endorsements aside. The sourced juice is a well-kept secret, but their 26-year-old Bootleg Series is so good, it doesn't really matter. The juice is finished in the iconic and very rare Mizunara casks and it leads to a truly unique dram.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Exotic, yet soft aromas of coconut, pink peppercorn, dried mango, and orange blossom honey. Exceptionally smooth and bright on the palate, which belies its 26-year-old age statement; nectarine and red plum are followed by walnut and brown sugar. A triumphant whisky, indeed."

Our thoughts:

We were lucky enough to [taste this one recently](#). It lives up the hype and then some. Sip it with a drop or two of water.

Best Scotch/Blended Malt: Wemyss Malts Peat Chimney ([96 points](#))

ABV: 46%

Distillery: Wemyss Vintage Malts, Edinburgh, UK

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

The Whisky:

This dram is a peat-lover's sip. The juice is drawn from four whisky regions around Scotland with a focus on the peaty Islay products. The final blend is a great example of how accessible (and sippable) a well-crafted blend can be.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"This aptly named whisky is smokey through and through. Intertwined with spice and campfire smoke, flavors of sweet oats, wheat, and hay

are earthy and mild. A pleasantly balanced smoked meat flavor lingers on the palate."

Our thoughts:

The price is low enough that you can try this if you're interested in peaty whisky but not quite sure you're going to love all that smoke.

Best Irish/Single Malt: Teeling Single Cask ([96 points](#))

ABV: 55.1%

Distillery: Teeling Distillery, Dublin

Average Price: [\\$110](#)

The Whiskey:

Teeling's Single Cask expressions are unique experiences. Their standard Single Malt outing blends malted barley whiskeys aged in sherry, Port, Madeira, White Burgundy, and Cabernet Sauvignon casks. This bottle refines that further by bottling its juice from just one of those casks (in this case, sherry) that hit just the right mark for aged perfection before going into the bottle unfussed with.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"This amber-hued whiskey is full of baking spice, vanilla, and nutty aromas. Bold and rich, flavors of deeply roasted chestnut mix with red and yellow stone fruits. The thick velvety texture is full of spicy mace and cinnamon with a persistent nutty undertone."

Our thoughts:

This is a great bottle to pick up once a year because you're going to get something wholly unique (and tasty) each time.

Best Bottled-in-Bond: Henry McKenna Bottled-in-Bond 10 Years Old ([96 points](#))

ABV: 50%

Distillery: Heaven Hill Distillery, Bardstown, KY

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

The Whiskey:

This is a solid bottle that's not going to be this cheap much longer. The juice is touched with a note of rye and aged in a bonded rickhouse under the Fed's watchful eye. The result is a damn fine dram.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Bright and honey-tinged on the nose, with suggestions of cedar, lemon tart, and baked wheat. Full-bodied and round on the palate; warm Panettone, baked apricot, and cinnamon come forward before hints of Brazil nut and cocoa last on the tongue."

Our thoughts:

Makes for a great sipper and an even better cocktail base.

Best American/Single Malt: Westland Garryana 2019 Edition 4|1 ([96 points](#))

ABV: 50%

Distillery: Westland Distillery, Seattle, WA

Average Price: [\\$150](#)

The Whiskey:

Seattle's Westland Native Oak series continues to wow. This edition was aged in Garry oak, which is local to the Pacific Northwest. The juice is supported by single malts also aged in ex-bourbon, ex-rye, and former Pedro Ximenez sherry casks, giving this sip a serious depth.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Robust aromas are earthy, reminiscent of wet earth, peach pit, hay, and a touch of honey. The round and plush texture instantly fills the mouth as distinctive malt and toasted peanut flavors develop into a spiced yet soft nougat finish. A unique and spectacular whiskey."

Our thoughts:

This was a small bottling of fewer than 4,000 bottles. There's really nothing else like it right now.

Best Scotch/Blended: Dewar's Double Double Aged 27 Years ([97 points](#))

ABV: 46%

Distillery: John Dewar & Sons, Aberfeldy, UK (Barcardi)

Average Price: [\\$100](#)

The Whisky:

Master blender Stephanie Macleod created a masterpiece with the Double Double four-step aging process. Step one: aging single malt and single grain whiskies for 27 long years. The malts are then blended, so are the grains and they rest again. All of that is blended together and rested. Finally, the juice is finished in ex-Palo Cortado sherry casks.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Aromas of fresh buttery biscuits are toasty and light. Impeccably smooth in the mouth, subtle cooked grain notes quickly turn into deep, bold flavors of toasted nuts, browned butter, and toffee brittle with hints of dried fruits coming through. A powerful and delicious whisky."

Our thoughts:

This bottle could easily cost three or four times the price tag right now. Snatch up as many as you can and enjoy them for the next few years with a few drops of water in each dram.

Best Scotch/Island Single Malt: Highland Park Aged 21 Years ([97 points](#))

ABV: 46%

Distillery: Highland Park, Orkney, UK

Average Price: [\\$350](#)

The Whisky:

This is a wildly popular expression that's not available on the primary whisky market in the U.S. (it's a global release though). The juice is aged in sherry casks from the U.S., not Spain. The result is a very unique expression that's worth the effort to track down.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Stately nose of dried apricot, plum preserves, flint, heather honey, and sea breeze. A perfectly balanced palate offers playful tension between smoke, stone fruit, and tinges of rancio which give way to sweet spice and smoked meats on the finish. This is a singular dram if there ever was one."

Our thoughts:

There are probably only one or two occasions where you should spend this much on a bottle of whisky. We'll let you decide what those are for yourself.

Best Scotch/Island Single Malt: Kilchoman Sanaig ([97 points](#))

ABV: 46%

Distillery: Kilchoman Distillery, Bruichladdich, UK

Average Price: [\\$70](#)

The Whisky:

This small whisky hits big notes. The malted barley spirit is aged in ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casks with an emphasis on the sherry in this case.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Roasted fig, cedar smoke, and chocolate are full and rich aromas. The plush texture balances the intense campfire smoke, with flavors of berries, smoked meats, and oats. Impressively smooth throughout, nutty toffee and smoked cacao round out the finish."

Our thoughts:

This is an easy sipper at a fairly easy price and works well in a highball.

Best World Whisk(e)y: The Matsui Mizunara Cask ([97 points](#))

ABV: 48%

Distillery: Kurayoshi Distillery, Tottori Prefecture

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

The Whiskey:

This is a rare bottle that's findable and worth the price. The whisky is aged in the rare Mizunara casks and cut with spring water from Mt. Daisen, next to the distillery.

[Tasting Notes](#):

"Distinctive aromas of toasted cereal grains with dried fruit and flowers are fresh and enticing. The robust flavors explode in the mouth with roasted grain supported by softly sweet malt and expertly balanced spice, all leading to a silken finish. An absolute pleasure to drink."

Our thoughts:

While the price is high, this is a great gateway Japanese whisky that'll work wonders as a sipper or highball base.

Best American: Barrell Dovetail ([97 points](#))

ABV: 62.15%

Distillery: Barrell Craft Spirits, Louisville, KY (Sourced)

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

The Whiskey:

This whiskey is a blend of ideas and flavors. It's meant to marry oak bourbon with bold red wine, French oak, Spanish Port, and rummy blackstrap molasses. The result is an American whiskey unlike any other.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Ebullient nose of ripe red berries and blossom is anchored by brown sugar, leather, lanolin, and wildflower honey. Rich and powerful on the palate, it is tempered by decadent flavors of maple cream, molasses, and cherry preserves. A truly dynamic and delicious whiskey."

Our thoughts:

This is the sort of bottle that challenges the advanced drinker. You'll need to add a little water to really open up all those notes.

Best Irish/Single Pot Still: Green Spot Chateau Leoville Barton ([98 points](#))

ABV: 46%

Distillery: New Middleton Distillery, County Cork (Pernod Ricard)

Average Price: [\\$100](#)

The Whiskey:

There's a deep history to this whiskey from Irish mercenaries heading to mainland Europe to fight in the middle ages to an Irishman named French Tom who went to France to open wineries in the 1700s. To celebrate the latter, this whiskey is first aged in Ireland in ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casks before heading off to France to age at one of those wineries, Léoville Barton in Bordeaux, for an addition 12 to 24 months in wine casks.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Bold and complex aromas are rich with spice, dried fruit, and balanced oakiness. Buttery in texture and flavor, nectarine, vanilla bean, and softly cooked grains are well integrated. The smooth spirit finishes with a touch of long-lasting baking spice."

Our thoughts:

A great Irish whiskey that any bourbon aficionado will truly adore.

Best Scotch/Highland Single Malt: Oban Aged 18 Years ([98 points](#))

ABV: 43%

Distillery: Oban Distillery, Oban, UK (Diageo)

Average Price: [\\$150](#)

The Whisky:

We're big [fans of Oban](#) around these parts. This is an expertly-crafted, small-batch operation in the heart of Oban Harbor. The whisky is aged on-site for 18 long years until it's just right for the bottle.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Soothing aromas of sea salt, pencil lead, and crisp granola cookie are well-balanced. The satin texture weaves together flavors of wood-fired grain, candied nuts, golden raisins, and a slight hint of campfire. The layers of this easy-sipping whisky keep peeling back."

Our thoughts:

Worth every penny in our estimation. Add a little water to get the full experience.

Best Bourbon: Staggy, Jr. ([98 points](#))

ABV: 64.2%

Distillery: Buffalo Trace Distillery, Frankfort, KY (Sazerac)

Average Price: [\\$60](#)

The Whiskey:

This quality expression from Buffalo Trace's expansive line is a bottle that's about to sky-rocket to stardom. The juice is aged for ten years and edges towards rye without overpowering itself.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Poundcake, grapefruit zest, chopped walnuts, red apple skin, and maple cream make for an alluring bouquet. The palate carries weight in terms of body and powerful spice, as well as ample fruit to add balance. Deep woodsy smoke and dark chocolate mark the finish."

Our thoughts:

This was [our pick](#) as one of the best alternatives to extremely expensive bottles and we stand by that.

Best Scotch/Speyside Single Malt: Glenrothes Aged 18 Years ([98 points](#))

ABV: 43%

Distillery: The Glenrothes Distillery, Rothes, UK

Average Price: [\\$150](#)

The Whisky:

This whisky leans heavily into the sherry cask process. The juice sits in first-fill sherry casks for 18 years and draws all its rich hues from the wood.

[Tasting Notes](#) (from the USC):

"Breakfast cereal, graham crackers, and butter baked fruit are refreshing aromas. Flavors of sea salt, caramel, coffee and cream are deep and continue to develop in the mouth. The dark toffee finish has a hint of smoke and leather."

Our thoughts:

If you dig on the briny single malts over the peaty, this is the bottle for you. It's pricey but worth it for a special occasion.

Best American/Rye: Thomas H. Handy Sazerac ([99 points](#))

ABV: 63.45%

Distillery: Buffalo Trace Distillery, Frankfort, KY (Sazerac)

Average Price: [\\$450](#)

The Whiskey:

This is one of the five nearly unattainable bottles from Buffalo Trace's Antique Collection. The juice was distilled in 2013 and aged in very specific areas of the rickhouses before being bottled with no fussing whatsoever.

[Tasting Notes](#):

"This barrel proof and unfiltered rye whiskey is bold. Aromas lean toward the sweeter side with maple syrup, fresh apples, and oatmeal porridge. Echoing the aromas, the smooth flavors are strong, beginning sweet and evolving into robust grain and spices like cinnamon and mace."

Our thoughts:

Is it worth the price tag? That's between you and your checking account. Our advice, try it at a tasting first and go from there.



MARKET ANALYSIS

The Most Collected Whiskies

27. March 2020 | 4.9K Views

In this article we count down the ten most collected whiskies on Whiskystats. You won't believe which releases made it to the top! Or maybe you do, because some of them are quite obvious.

Everybody loves top ten countdowns and catchy headlines, so it is about time Whiskystats jumps on that train too. We here simply take a look at what bottles the Whiskystats users put into [their collections](#) the most. Unsurprisingly, all of these releases also belong to the most traded whiskies on the [secondary market](#).

The below price charts are also a great display of how inefficient the auction market can be. This means, that we observe significant differences in prices across the several platforms we track, even for this regularly traded and widely collected releases. On the other side, this inefficiency is of course also a great opportunity for the informed market participant!

Place 9 & 10: Glendronach

The tenth most collected whisky among the more than [66 thousand entries in our database](#) is the [Glendronach 15yo Revival \(Old Style\)](#). Old Style here means the pre-2015 edition, which was matured in oloroso sherry casks only. Once available for less than 40 Euros, the Revival saw prices climbing to more than 200 Euros by mid 2018. That price increase stopped though. Currently, it seems like nobody is really sure what the price for this whisky should be. Prices bounce back and forth between 100 and 150 Euros.

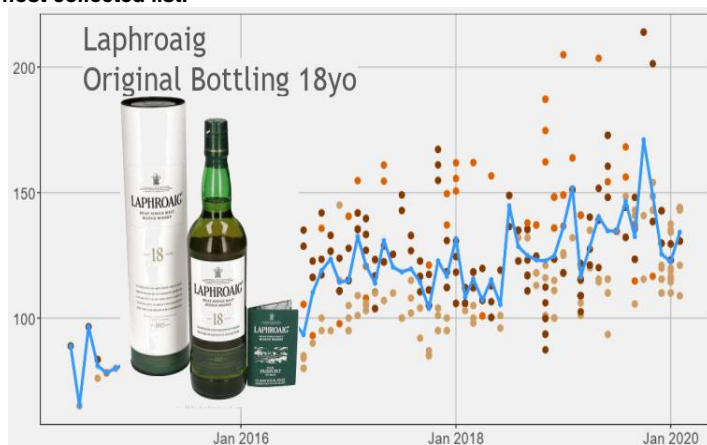


Also from Glendronach comes the ninth most collected whisky on our platform, the [Glendronach 21yo Parliament](#). Ever since this Highland single malt appeared on auctions for the first time in 2013, prices only increased modestly. The latest auction results from February 2020 all lie in the range of 120 to 160 Euros.

Place 6 to 8: Islay South Coast

The first Ardbeg on our list comes in at place eight. The [Ardbeg Dark Cove \(Committee Release\)](#) just recently jumped above 300 Euros per bottle. In the February round of auctions prices ranged from 230 to 350 Euros. This difference equals roughly a third of the price, so there is huge potential to save money when going for this 2016 Ardbeg release.

Similar is true for the below displayed [Laphroaig 18yo](#). Most of the trades we observed over the last year lie between 100 and 150 Euros. But on some occasions, the winning bids clearly exceeded the 150 Euros and even the 200 Euro threshold. These trades probably come in favor of the many collectors as this Laphroaig takes place seven on our most collected list.



This trio from the south coast of Islay is rounded off by the [Ardbeg Galileo](#). Current prices for the sixth most collected whisky come in at around 200 Euros. Thereby the price range is not as extreme as we have seen above. The latest trades varied between 180 and 230 Euros, although we have seen single months where the price tag went as high as 250 Euros on average.

Place 4 & 5: Yamazaki

We now detour away from Scotland to find two Japanese releases within the Top 5 most collected whiskies. Among this list the [Yamazaki 18yo](#) has by far the most impressive price history. From 2011 all the way to 2014 this single malt was available for around 100 Euros. Then the [Japanese Whisky Boom](#) set in and prices quickly climbed to 400 Euros. At this level they remained until early 2018. Then, within a year, we saw another 50% increase and nowadays you probably need to pay around 600 Euros for one of the remaining bottles.

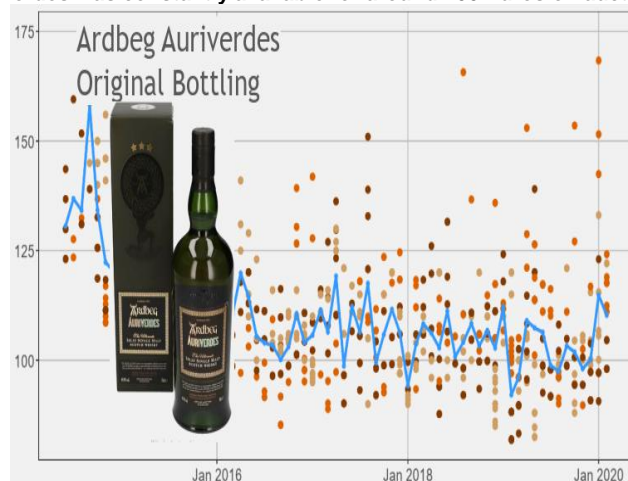


Not quite as impressive, but still gaining value is the [Yamazaki 12yo](#). The overall fourth most collected whisky currently fetches 140 Euros on auctions. In late 2018, this now discontinued Yamazaki release reached

almost 200 Euros in several rounds of auctions. By the way, even last month, in February 2020, some single lots went as high as 200 Euros.

Place 3: Ardbeg Auriverdes

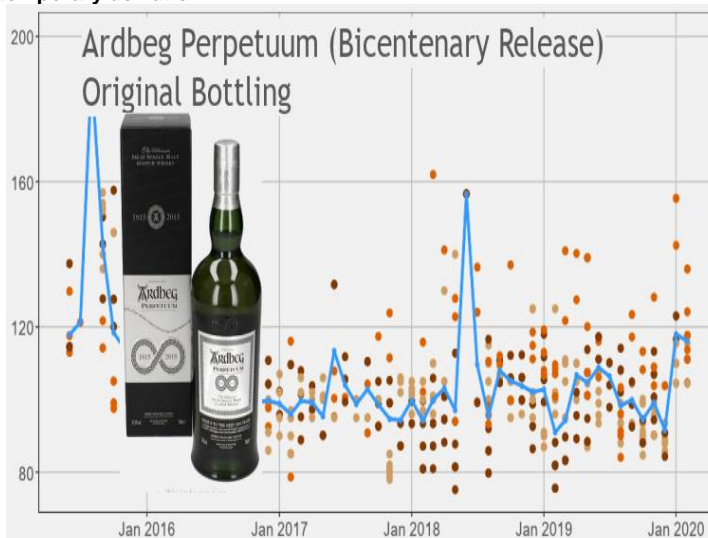
We now enter the podium of our ranking. The overall third most collected whisky on the market is the [Ardbeg Auriverdes](#). Apart from the initial spike, which we observe for many anticipated releases, prices for this Ardbeg never really moved much. Over the last four years, the Auriverdes was constantly available for around 100 Euros on auctions.



We see many prices go as low as 80 Euros on a regular basis, which makes the occasional bids for 130 or above even more questionable. Clearly, a little patience and a [Whiskystats membership](#) could have saved some money there. By the way, the [Auriverdes Gold Edition](#) is currently trading for around 1.300 Euros.

Place 2: Ardbeg Perpetuum

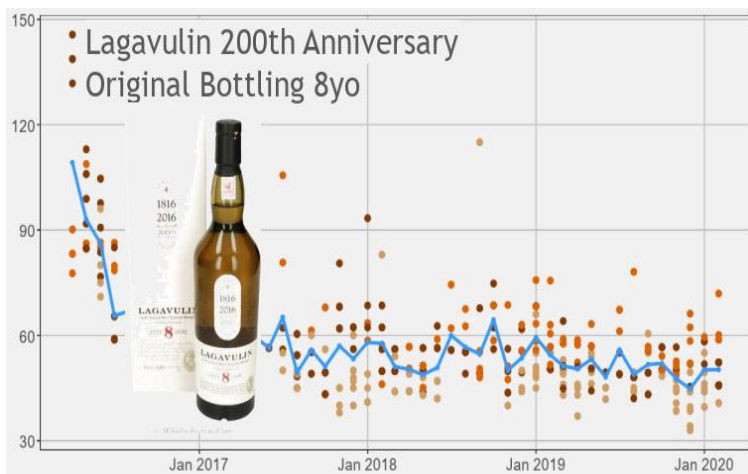
Quite fittingly, the silver medal of our ranking is going to the silver labeled [Ardbeg Perpetuum](#). Again we see the typical spike of prices right after the release. Our best guess is that there are some people, with deep enough pockets, which just cannot wait to get their hands on these new releases, no matter what the price is. Also for the Perpetuum prices never really moved much once they settled in at a level of around 100 Euros, except for the last two months. Here we saw a little upward movement and it remains to be shown if this is substantial or just a temporary deviation.



About the same is true for the [Ardbeg Perpetuum \(Distillery Release\)](#). After the initial spike, prices quickly dropped to around 100 to 150 Euros and remained there ever since. The latest results range between 160 and 190 Euros across all platforms. So it seems like the market's opinion about this 2015 release is quite uniformly.

Place 1: Lagavulin 8yo 200th Anniversary

And then we come to the single most collected whisky on Whiskystats. Yet again it is a single malt from the South coast of the Isle of Islay. The [Lagavulin 8yo 200th Anniversary](#) release experienced a similar price history like the above Ardbegs. Shortly after the release, prices went far and beyond when considering the official retail price. But soon the bids dropped to a more reasonable range and did not move away from there ever since. We are currently standing at around 50 Euros, and it seems like prices won't leave that level anytime soon.



For everyone who is following the secondary market, it is probably of no surprise that the Isle of Islay is dominating this list. Six out of the ten most collected whiskies come from an Islay distillery and three from Ardbeg. So from a collectors point of view it seems like Ardbeg relates to Islay like Islay relates to the overall market, a true collectors favorite.

Essential Whiskey Cocktail: Whiskey Collins

MAY 18, 2020 | [BRITTANY RISHER](#)



Whiskey Collins (Photo by Ian J. Lauer)

The Collins is one of those classic cocktails that started out featuring one base spirit but has evolved to encompass a range of variations—including the popular and tasty Whiskey Collins.

“Collins cocktails rank among the oldest cocktails of all time,” says Brent Rosen, president and CEO of the [National Food and Beverage Foundation](#). In the mid-19th century, single-serve cocktails replaced communal punches as the drink *du jour*, he says. In turn, the Gin Punch created by London bartender John Collins in the 1830s—a mixture of gin, sugar, citrus, and water—was later dubbed the “Tom Collins”—as mixologists began using Old Tom gin (a sweeter style) as the base spirit.

But gin wasn’t the only base for this refreshing drink. Bartenders experimented with other spirits, including whiskey since at least the 1870s, according to Rosen. Today, Whiskey Collins recipes exist using bourbon, rye, Irish whiskey, and pretty much every other style as a base.

“It’s a great cocktail because of its historic nature and elegant simplicity,” Rosen says. “Drinking a Whiskey Collins is like going back in time to the earliest days of drinking.”

CHOOSE YOUR WHISKY

Almost anything goes in a Collins, although it is usually made with American whiskey.

If you want some spice, Erick Castro, co-founder of San Diego’s [Raised by Wolves](#) and [Polite Provisions](#), suggests a rye like the 50% ABV [Rittenhouse](#). “It lends a bit of depth to the drink and holds up against the other ingredients,” he says.

Similarly, for bourbon lovers, Castro recommends [Old Grand-Dad Bonded](#), which is “assertive with plenty of flavor.”

Beyond American, other styles are easily worked into the simple recipe. Castro recommends blended options like [Tullamore D.E.W.](#) Irish

whiskey and [Famous Grouse](#) scotch. “I would stay away from anything too expensive,” he says. Rosen likes Japanese whisky such as Suntory’s [Hibiki Harmony](#) because it’s light yet has a bold finish that prevents it from being overwhelmed by the other ingredients in a Collins.

The Collins is a simple cocktail, making it easy to customize to your taste. (Photo by Ian J. Lauer)

WHISKEY COLLINS RECIPE

- 2 oz. whiskey
- ¾ oz. lemon or lime juice
- ½ oz. simple syrup
- Club soda
- Garnish: lemon, lime, or orange wheel

Shake whiskey, citrus juice, and simple syrup with ice. Strain into a Collins glass over fresh ice. Top with soda and garnish with citrus wheel.

TOP TIPS

Don’t skimp on the whiskey

“Very simple ingredients—spirit, lemon juice, sugar, and club soda—means there is nowhere to hide,” Rosen says. “If the whiskey is bad, so is the drink.” So while there’s no need to go super high-end, pick a nice bottle that you enjoy.

Top with high-quality soda

“Ideally, you want to choose a soda that’s extra fizzy from carbonation and built for mixing rather than drinking on its own,” Castro says. “This is why many of the fancy mineral waters don’t work well for cocktails, whereas a brand like [Topo Chico](#) works wonderfully.”

Use a proper Collins glass

A Collins glass is taller and narrower than a Highball glass. Because it has less surface area, this shape helps to maintain the bubbles in the drink and also keeps it cold.

Keep your soda super cold

Club soda makes up a large part of the drink and should be kept as cold as possible to ensure a crisp cocktail. “There is nothing worse than topping off your frosty-cold cocktail with lukewarm club soda—it really ruins the drink,” Castro says.

Use jiggers

“Don’t freelance too much on ratios as you pour, or you will end up with a cocktail that’s out of balance with nothing to hide it,” Rosen says. Those simple, minimal ingredients demand accurate measurement.

MAKE IT YOUR OWN

- Create a John Collins by opting for bourbon and lemon juice, and garnishing with an orange wedge and maraschino cherry.
- The combination of Irish whiskey and lime juice, garnished with a lime wheel, make a Michael Collins. One teaspoon of powdered sugar can replace the simple syrup (and, indeed, was the original form of sweetener). Rosen recommends stirring it in after shaking the whiskey and citrus juice; the drink will lightly foam, enhancing the mouthfeel.
- Try out a simple syrup infused with herbs, fruit, and other flavors to heighten and modify the cocktail’s flavor.
- Add a dash of Averna or other amaro. “This adds a powerful base note to the usually lighter, sweeter Whiskey Collins,” Rosen says.

7 Outstanding World Whiskies to Try Now

JULY 20, 2020 | [SAM STONE](#)



You’ve heard of going around the world in 80 days, but how about going around the world in seven drams? Whether you’re a bourbon

believer or a die-hard scotch fan, a trip outside the realm of your own whisky boundaries is a great way to further your education and strengthen your palate. While the countries that produce whisky on a larger scale—the U.S., Scotland, Ireland, Canada, and Japan—create top-notch whiskies, other nations are giving them a run for their money. Just last year, [Adnams Rye Malt](#) from England rose above hundreds of whiskies to earn a spot on our 2019 Top 20, while other world whiskies—like [Sierra Norte Yellow corn whisky](#) from Mexico and [Rampur Select single malt](#) from India—have placed on the list in years past.

Several world whiskies are highlighted in our [Summer 2020 Buying Guide](#), including the standouts below. Each whisky on this list comes from a different country, from Armenia to Australia. If you're feeling adventurous, seek out these bottles and take a trip around the globe from your glass!

7 NEW WORLD WHISKIES TO SEEK OUT



[Dram Hunter's 7 year old Southern Coast Distillers Single Cask Australian Single Malt \(Cask No. 112\)](#)—95 points, \$250

Without water, this oddball is deeply herbaceous and spiced with aniseed, coriander, hardwood smoke, brown sugar, and powerful oak throughout the nose and palate. Add some water, and suddenly the sunbeam breaks through the crack in the curtain. There are still plenty of herbal and spice notes, but now more dimension emerges—orange, forest fruits, semisweet chocolate, coffee ice cream, and sweet woodsmoke, fully relaxed in its integration. The finish is savory, then sweet—clean and rich, a revelation. (150 bottles; U.S. exclusive) —Susannah Skiver Barton



[Amrut 6 year old Aatma Single Cask Indian Single Malt \(Cask No. 4675\)](#)—94 points, \$215

Sweet saline peat on the nose, along with red berries, milk chocolate,

hazelnuts, dates, and nougat. It's lush and rich, qualities that extend to the palate's oily, dense character, which is floral and soapy before shifting into plummy red berry fruit, dark chocolate, roasted hazelnuts, and a panoply of spices. The finish is ashy, peppery, sweet, and mouthwatering, with long, lingering smokiness. Water is a must to showcase the rounded, powerfully flavorful balance of this whisky. (360 bottles; U.S. exclusive) —Susannah Skiver Barton



[Penderyn 10 year old Madeira Cask-Finished Single Cask Welsh Single Malt \(No. 047-3\)](#)—94 points, \$110

When you feel you've earned a treat, pour a dram of this bottled candy. The nose is a tropical fruit basket, with papaya, guava, mango, jackfruit, and dried kiwi; extra goodies come in the form of Jordan almonds and vanilla sandwich cookies. Consistent tropical flavors on the silky palate. Nuttiness, gentle spice, milk chocolate, and coffee bean emerge with water. Intensely satisfying on the finish, with persistent fruit, integrated oak, almonds, and grapefruit peel. (243 bottles; U.S. exclusive) —Susannah Skiver Barton



[Hammerhead 30 year old Czech Single Malt \(Cask No. 378\)](#)—91 points, \$425

The malt shows well on the nose, with toasted almonds, cooked cereal, and rolled oats; there's also coriander seed, dill, dewy grass, peaches, and nectarines. It's intensely spiced and herbaceous on the palate: clove-studded orange, chai, sandalwood, pouch tobacco, and more coriander and aniseed. With water, milk chocolate, almonds, and hazelnuts emerge. The finish is oaky, with hints of tobacco and persistent spice, especially coriander. Compelling. (300 bottles; U.S. exclusive) —Susannah Skiver Barton



[M&H Whisky](#)

[in Bloom Lightly Peated Young Israeli Single Malt](#)—90 points, \$55
M&H (Milk & Honey), founded in 2013, is Israel's first whisky distillery. This expression and its sibling bottling Double Cask are M&H's first to hit the U.S. Aged 2 years in bourbon, STR (shaved, toasted, and re-charred), and Islay casks, its nose offers candied lemon, lime leaf, tea, and licorice. The palate is soft, fruity, and spiced, with chocolate and light peat. The finish is spiced and lightly peated, with tropical fruit accents. Brilliant texture and an unusual spice profile. —David Fleming



[Hye-Land 12](#)

[year old Small Batch Armenian Whisky](#)—87 points, \$39
Hye-Land's inaugural U.S. release, made from 100% malted wheat at Eraskh Winery in Armenia (which also has a distillery), aged in Caucasus Mountain oak barrels, and then finished in Armenian brandy barrels. The nose offers seasoned oak, citrus, ginger, and allspice. The palate brings sweet notes of melon, coconut shavings, tobacco, Christmas cake, ginger, and clove, all lightly accented by black pepper. The finish is viscous and has balanced sweetness. —David Fleming



[Drayman's](#)

[Highveld 5 year old French Oak Reserve South African Single Malt](#)—89 points, \$100

This is a highly fragrant young whisky with aromas of peeled satsumas, zested lime, rosebuds, graham cracker, sponge cake, and a trace of aromatic spice. Light to medium-bodied with sweet orange honey, marmalade, walnut, and malt, then a slow crescendo of cocoa, spice, and cereal notes to a finish of grated chocolate. (1,200 bottles) —Jonny McCormick

These Bottles Of Scotch Are Absolutely Worth Their \$50-100 Price Tags

[ZACH JOHNSTON](#) [TWITTER](#) LIFE WRITER

AUGUST 11, 2020

A quality single malt [scotch](#) is always going to set you back more than a well-crafted [bourbon](#). There are a lot of factors at play to create that higher price tag — price differences between corn and barley, malting techniques, international tariffs, etc. — but if you pick the right bottle, the cost can definitely be worth it. Single malt scotch is a refined spirit that still maintains a lot of variation, depending on who's making it and where their stills and warehouses are located in Scotland.

That makes finding the [best bottles of scotch](#) a fun endeavor. [An adventure](#) for your palate.

Scottish [single malts](#) are simple only in their base parts: local water, yeast, barley, peat, and wood. From there, the stills (some antique, some new), the way the barley is malted, the quality of the water, the specific woods used to age the expression, how those whiskies are married for the final product, and the all-important abilities of the distiller, noser, and blender each add a little something special. While each whisky region of Scotland (Campbeltown, Highland, Islay, Lowland, Islands, and Speyside) tend to have a distinct feel, there are still variations therein. If you love scotch, you really just have to go distillery by [distillery](#) and find what grabs you.

To help you start your single malt scotch whisky journey, we're calling out [ten bottles](#) that are worth every penny. We're keeping these call-outs around the \$50-\$100 mark — which, admittedly, is steep. But these bottles are also “value picks” — marrying great taste and a heightened whisky experience with a fair price.

Check out our ten single malt scotches worth their \$50 to \$100 price tags below!

The Glenrothes Bourbon Cask Reserve

ABV: 40%

Distillery: The Glenrothes Distillery, Rothes, UK (Edrington)

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

The Whisky:

This Speyside whisky is a standout bottle. The juice was aged exclusively in ex-bourbon casks. Due to that process, this is a solid single malt for bourbon fans looking to expand their palates (and whisky knowledge) further afield.

Tasting Notes:

Vanilla pods, honey, coconut, and a slight marzipan nose greets you. The bourbon vanilla really pops with a soaked-in-honey vibe as the spice kicks in. The marriage of pepper and cinnamon is counterpointed by a hint of red berries. The woody nature of the dram pops late as a flourish of orange helps close out the sip.

Bottom Line:

This is a great highball base and feels like a whisky that could easily be in the \$75 range.

Auchentoshan The Bartender's Malt

ABV: 47%

Distillery: Auchentoshan Distillery, Dalmuir, UK (Beam Suntory)

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

The Whisky:

This Lowland whisky is a one-of-a-kind, devised especially by 12 international bartenders who make a living working and drinking the stuff. The juice is a blend of single malts aged in ex-Laphroaig casks, rum casks, red wine barriques, German oak casks, and American oak casks.

Master blender Rachel Barrie assisted the bartenders in selecting casks, some of which were up to 40 years old.

Tasting Notes:

Fresh pipe tobacco dances with a note of milky chocolate, honeycomb, and dried stone fruit. The sip edges towards wildflowers while a sharp fresh ginger spiciness balances an almost croissant level of buttery malt, spiked with vanilla. The warmth from the ginger and sweetness of the honey linger the longest as this dram slowly fades away.

Bottom Line:

This is a great workhorse single malt for cocktails, highballs, and on the rocks.

Talisker Distiller's Edition

ABV: 45.8%

Distillery: Talisker Distillery, Isle of Skye, UK (Diageo)

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

The Whisky:

This Island whisky from the Isle of Skye is damn near perfect. The whisky is rendered by the masters at Talisker and then double matured — first in Olorosso sherry casks and then finished in the subtler Amoroso sherry casks.

Tasting Notes:

The sea and smoke meet on this one with a hint of berry. There's a mild spiciness that leads to a smoked fat feel from an old smoker with a splash of seawater smoothness, mild bitterness, and toffee. The sip doesn't overstay its welcome and instead beckons you back for more.

Bottom Line:

Worth every penny and then some. Check out our [full review here](#).

Caol Ila Distiller's Edition

ABV: 43%

Distillery: Caol Ila Distillery, Islay, UK (Diageo)

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

The Whisky:

Down in Islay, this small whisky operation is one you may not have heard of but will fall in love with on the first sip. Caol Ila is also renowned for its refinement and accessibility compared to the bigger peat-monsters of Islay. This particular dram ebbs into that subtly by aging in Moscatel sherry casks to really smooth the juice out.

Tasting Notes:

Oysters, beach campfire smoke, dry cedar bark, and vanilla custard lead the way. The peat is clearly present but offset by a maple sweetness and a spicy stone fruit jam feel. That stone fruit, smoke, and mild brine all combine on the end with a subtle push towards orange zest and oak with a final rush of minty tobacco.

Bottom Line:

This was love at first sip for me. I'd buy it by the case if I could, and drink it with a single rock all day.

Highland Park Aged 15 Years

ABV: 43%

Distillery: Highland Park Distillery, Orkney, UK (Edrington)

Average Price: [\\$100](#)

The Whisky:

This one is going to be a little tough to source in all markets, but it's worth the hunt. The juice is aged in American oak from the Ozarks that is sent to Spain to air dry for two years and then holds Olorosso sherry for a couple of more years before heading to Scotland's Orkney Islands to age this whisky.

Tasting Notes:

Well oiled leather, fatty nuts, marzipan, and burnt brush greet you. The sip embraces the nuts and smoke as an apple and pear orchard arrives

with a cinnamon and honey flourish and plenty of that Ozark, sherry-soaked oak. The sweetness holds as the toasted oak really shines through on the long end.

Bottom Line:

Given the depth of work that goes into the barrels alone, this could cost twice as much, and the taste of this dram matches that.

The Balvenie Aged 14 Years Caribbean Cask

ABV: 43%

Distillery: Balvenie Distillery, Dufftown, UK (William Grant & Sons)

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

The Whisky:

This is a classic all around. The whisky is aged in former rum casks that The Balvenie uses to age their own blend of West Indies rums. After those rums age, the barrels are emptied and the whisky goes in for its own rest. The results are a much-beloved expression from this Speyside distillery.

Tasting Notes:

This isn't rum-flavored whisky. It's more a whisky that reminds the sipper that rum exists and is delicious — by leaning into tropical fruit notes next to orange and creamy vanilla pudding. The fruits, toffee, vanilla, spice, and a mild wisp of smoke all balance perfectly as the sip slowly dissipates through your senses.

Bottom Line:

If this dram doesn't wow you, we're not sure what will. It's also excellent in a highball.

Lagavulin Aged 16 Years

ABV: 43%

Distillery: Lagavulin Distillery, Islay, UK (Diageo)

Average Price: [\\$100](#)

The Whisky:

This is probably the most "classic" expression on this list and likely one of the most well-known. This whisky is crafted to represent the wonders of deep peatiness associated with Islay whiskies.

Tasting Notes:

The Port Ellen peaty malts are the star of the show but in no way overpower the dram. Creamy vanilla custard sits next to a black tea bitterness with a spice matrix and sweetness pulled from the sherry. It's malty, smoky, sweet, rich, creamy, spicy, briny, and... just f*cking good. The finish embraces the peat smoke, spice, and vanilla as it fades at exactly the right speed.

Bottom Line:

If you can find this for less than \$100, buy all of it you can. Also, don't sleep on the illustrious and devilishly simple [Smoky Cokey](#), especially if you have some Jarritos Mexican Cola on hand.

Oban Little Bay

ABV: 43%

Distillery: Oban Distillery, Oban, UK (Diageo)

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

The Whisky:

While this is technically a Highland whisky, Oban's location beside the sea sort of bridges it to the Islands and Islay, too.

The tiny distillery is in the heart of the town and this expression is a love letter to that place. The juice is aged in various sized barrels for varying times and with a variation of new and used casks in the mix. The final result is a masterclass in refined whisky.

Tasting Notes:

There's a fruitiness that welcomes you up top. The sip edges into malts, apple orchards, butterscotch, orange zest, and sharp clove on the tongue. All of that combines to create a sort of spiced apple cake with a buttery crumble as it slowly meanders away while warming you up.

Bottom Line:

A great bargain for a unique expression. Check out our [full review here](#).

Ardbeg Uigeadail

ABV: 54.2%

Distillery: Ardbeg Distillery, Islay, UK (Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy)

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

The Whisky:

Ardbeg is the quintessential peaty Islay single malt. Their Uigeadail expression — pronounced "Oog-A-Dal" — is named after the local lake where the distillery pulls its water for making their whisky. The ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casking are classic measures taken to enrich the already deeply flavorful spirit.

Tasting Notes:

Smoky fruits, wildflowers, and Christmas spices dominate up front, with a fleeting sense of banana. The fruit and smoke dominate the palate with hints of spice and oak adding a nice warmth as the leisurely finish slowly ebbs.

Bottom Line:

This is just a solid bottle of booze all around and a great example of a place and style. Also, check out our [full review here](#).

Dalmore Port Wood Reserve

ABV: 46.5%

Distillery: The Dalmore Distillery, Alness, UK (Emperador Inc.)

Average Price: [\\$100](#)

The Whisky:

This is another expression that puts on a lot of miles while aging. The juice is initially aged in American oak. Then it's transferred to tawny Port casks from Portugal. Finally, the two are married and bottled when the juice hits the exact right moment.

Tasting Notes:

There's a sense of light white cake covered in fresh, tart berries and sugar with a rush of orange and clove lurking in the background. The dram then veers into the world of honey, fresh ginger, black pepper, dried fruits, and dark chocolate bitterness. In the end, a sense of roasted nuts and pipe tobacco pop up as the sip fades.

Bottom Line:

This is a great gift or special occasion bottle that's worth the extra cash. Make sure to add a few drops of water to really open it up.

Upcoming Dinner Dates

Friday August 28th 2020 - 13th Annual Premium Night
Friday September 18th, 2020 - Springbank/Longrow/Hazelburn
September 21st, 2020 - Diageo Special Releases
October 19th, 2020 - Speyside / Islands
November 16th, 2020 - Highlands / Islands
December 7th 2020 - Christmas Dinner
January 25th, 2021 - Robbie Burns Dinner
February 15th, 2021 - Speyside / Highlands / Islay
March 15th, 2021 - Irish / Speyside / Highlands
April 19th, 2021 - Campbeltown / Islands / Islay
May 17th, 2021 - Campbeltown / Speyside
June 28th, 2021 - BBQ (Final Exam)
July 19th, 2021 - 10th "Matt" Night
Friday August 27th 2021 - 14th Annual Premium Night
September 20th, 2021 - Campbeltown / Lowland / Speyside /
Highlands / Islands / Islay
October 18th, 2021 - Speyside / Highlands
November 15th, 2021 - Speyside
December 6th 2021 - Christmas Dinner

Membership and Dinner prices for 2020-2021

Membership Fee:	\$50 (singles) \$75 (couples)
One Time Initiation Fee:	\$15
Standard Dinner Fee:	\$80 (member) \$85 (non-member)
Christmas Dinner Fee:	\$80 (member) \$85 (non-member)
Robbie Burns Dinner Fee:	\$80 (member) \$85 (non-member)
June BBQ Dinner Fee:	\$80 (member) \$80 (non-member)

Reservation policy

- The agreement with the Kitchen's requires that we provide seven (7) business days notice for them to guarantee accommodation for our requested numbers. To accommodate the Kitchen's needs and meet our contractual obligation with them; our members are requested to respond to the emailed invitation seven (7) 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 23rd, 2019 dinner date as an example:
 - Dinner invitations will be sent out Friday August 23rd, 2019. Please respond to me (rdifazio04@gmail.com). 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).
 - Unless otherwise stated accommodation at the dinner will be guaranteed for all members who respond by Friday September 6th, 2019 @ 6pm.
 - Once the RSVP date has been achieved I will e-mail a spreadsheet informing everyone of their status and amount due.

Cancellation policy

- Using the same example as above, anyone who cancels anytime prior to Friday September 6th, 2019 @ 6pm will be removed from the list.
- Anyone canceling between Friday September 6th, 2019 @ 6pm and Monday September 23rd, 2019 will be expected to pay for the cost of the dinner and scotch (\$70). 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 23rd, 2019 dinner without having cancelled and been successfully replaced will be expected to pay the full cost (\$70). A member will be responsible for their guest's cancellation (\$80).
- If a member asks to be included at the dinner between Friday September 6th, 2019 @ 6pm and Monday September 23rd, 2019, their name will be placed on a wait-list and be accommodated on a first-come first-serve basis.

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.

Dinner Payments

- Please consider sending your payment by e-transfer prior to the dinner. The password will be "KSMS2020RDF", 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.

Just a note because we care.

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



Kingston Single Malt Society

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