

Kingston Single Malt Society

www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com

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

MARCH 15th, 2021 VOLUME 14; NUMBER 9a; No. 172



This evening's menu we travel the globe



MENU

1st Nosing: PUNI NOVA

(introduced by: Roberto Di Fazio)

1st course: Caramelized Onion & Chèvre Flat Bread

1st Nosing: HYDE No.6 PRESIDENT'S RESERVE

(introduced by: Dave Finucan)

2nd course: Ham & Split Pea Soup

2nd Nosing: GLENTURRET 10 YEAR OLD

(introduced by: Bill Gorham)

3rd Nosing: GLENTURRET SHERRY CASK

(introduced by: Bill Gorham)

Main Course: Beef Bourguignon with
Garlic Butter Noodles

4th Nosing: GLENTURRET TRIPLE WOOD

(introduced by: Bill Gorham)

5th Nosing: MILLSTONE 2010 PEATED CASK
STRENGTH PX CASK

(introduced by: Jason Shepherd)

Dessert: Chocolate-Caramel Pecan Tart

6th Nosing: MILLSTONE SPECIALLY SELECTED AND
BOTTLED FOR CANADA AMERICAN OAK

(introduced by: Elsabe Falskon)

COST OF THE MALTS

HYDE No.6 PRESIDENT'S RESERVE 1938 SHERRY

CASK FINISH 794651 | 700 mL bottle **Price: \$115.25**

Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

PUNI NOVA ITALIAN MALT WHISKY LCBO 788321 | 700

mL bottle **Price: \$105.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 43.0%
Alcohol/Vol.

THE GLENTURRET 10 YEAR OLD SCOTCH WHISKY LCBO

523729 | 700 mL bottle **Price: \$83.95** Spirits,
Whisky/Whiskey 40.0% Alcohol/Vol.

THE GLENTURRET SHERRY CASK EDITION LCBO

523737 | 700 mL bottle **Price: \$84.65** Spirits,
Whisky/Whiskey 43.0% Alcohol/Vol.

THE GLENTURRET TRIPLE WOOD EDITION LCBO

302627 | 700 mL bottle **Price: \$84.65** Spirits,
Whisky/Whiskey 43.0% Alcohol/Vol.

MILLSTONE DUTCH SINGLE MALT WHISKY 2010

PEATED CASK STRENGTH PX CASK - SPECIAL No.10;

DISTILLED: 19.10.10; BOTTLED: 15.11.16; CASK

#30297; BOTTLE #280/707 LCBO 788321 | 700 mL

bottle **Price: \$167.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 54.4%
Alcohol/Vol.

**MILLSTONE DUTCH SINGLE MALT WHISKY SPECIALLY
SELECTED AND BOTTLED FOR CANADA AMERICAN**

OAK; DISTILLED: 25.10.96; BOTTLED: 12.07.17; CASK

#1376; BOTTLE #45/287 LCBO 788322 | 700 mL bottle

Price: \$310.95 Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 51.45%
Alcohol/Vol.

Upcoming Dinner Dates

Friday March 26th, 2021 - Bladnoch Night

April 12th, 2021 - Arran / North Highlands

Friday April 30th, 2021 - Adelphi Night

May 17th, 2021 - Speyside / Highlands / Islay

Friday June 4th, 2021 - Distell Night

June 28th, 2021 - Speyside / Highlands / Islay

July 19th, 2021 - "M&M" Night

Friday August 27th, 2021 - 14th Annual Premium Night

September 20th, 2021 - Speyside / Highlands / Islay

October 18th, 2021 - Speyside / Highlands

November 15th, 2021 - Speyside

December 6th, 2021 - Christmas Dinner

FEBRUARY - KSMS Financial Statement

(Money from 34 February attendees @ \$80)	= \$2720.00
February dinner 34 persons (\$55.00/ea)	= \$1920.99
(Money remaining for buying Single Malt)	= \$799.01
Cost of Single Malts	= \$976.70
Money from Heels sold	= \$250.00
Cost of Pours per Person = \$32.00	
KSMS Monthly operational balance	= \$72.31
Cost per person (All inclusive)	= \$85.23

Whiskey Review: Midleton Very Rare 2020

By [Melissa Jones](#) / February 8, 2021

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

Midleton Very Rare 2020 is the last expression created by master distiller [Brian Nation](#). This is the 37th edition in the highly collectable annual release. Nation [has left Midleton after 23 years](#) to become the new master distiller for O'Shaughnessy Distilling Company, opening in Minneapolis this summer. The master distiller role at Midleton is now filled by long time collaborator, Kevin O'Gorman, formerly the master of maturation and only the third to be able to create this exclusive edition. Once a year, the master distiller hand selects from the Midleton Distillery inventory to create Midleton Very Rare. It is a selection of the finest and rarest to blend and create what has been termed the 'pinnacle of Irish whiskey'. Nation, the second master distiller to have this honor, following [Barry Crockett](#), the creator of Midleton Very Rare in 1984. For Midleton Very Rare 2020, Nation chose whiskeys aged 13-35 in lightly charred ex-bourbon American oak barrels. He also "selected a higher pot still inclusion than in some of his previous vintages, while also increasing the use of refill barrels among his [choice of casks](#)." Midleton is one of the brands under the company name, Irish Distillers which is a subsidiary of Pernod Ricard. Irish Distillers produces Midleton Very Rare, Redbreast, Jameson and Powers. They also produce gin and vodka, among other spirits.



Midleton Very Rare 2020 (image via Irish Distillers)

Tasting Notes: Midleton Very Rare 2020

Vital Stats: Made of whiskeys aged 13-35 in lightly charred ex-bourbon American oak barrels. 80 proof. \$199.

Appearance: Yellow gold. Very impressive and unique bottle.

Nose: The nose is very pleasant and not strong or overpowering. It's sweet, crisp, and summery. I found notes of vanilla, hay, fresh green apple, and strawberries.

Palate: I was a little disappointed that the nose was different than the palate. The taste is not as sweet as the smell. I would say it's a little bit tangy and grain forward rather than sweet. It's light and thin on mouthfeel. I found it grassy and spicy with a sticky sweet aftertaste. My mouth and throat tasted like spicy charred oak and orange peel with pepper and nutmeg.

The Takeaway

Summary

Midleton Very Rare was thin on mouthfeel and mellow on flavor. It's overall pleasant and smooth which I find very typical of an Irish whiskey. I wanted there to be a bit of a boost on the flavors to make it a little more memorable but it was still delicious served neat. The flavors change in your mouth from fruity to tangy to spicy. There's a long finish with citrus and spices.

User Rating 3.5 (4 votes)

MIDLETON VERY RARE 2021 ANNOUNCED

This week Irish Distillers announced the launch of Midleton Very Rare 2021, the latest edition in the brand's annual series. [This year's edition](#) is the first to bear the signature of Master Distiller Kevin O'Gorman who took over the role from Brian Nation in 2020. O'Gorman's is only the third signature to appear on the Midleton Very Rare series which first began in 1984 by [Master Distiller Barry Crockett](#). The whiskey is a blend of [single pot still](#) and Irish single grain whiskeys which aged between 15-36 years in American oak casks. Midleton Very Rare 2021 is bottled at 40% ABV.

Regarding the release O'Gorman, said: "I am particularly proud to have been able to include distillate that was laid down in 1984, the year the collection was first conceived by Master Distiller Emeritus Barry Crockett, from whom I have learned so much. For me, this vintage adds a new dimension and elegance to the style and quality for which the range is renowned. I couldn't ask for a better way to begin my chapter as Irish Distillers' Master Distiller."

Midleton Very Rare 2021 is expected to be released this weekend in Ireland with an SRP of €180. The UK, USA, Global Travel Retail, Australia, Germany, France and Canada will see the release in the coming months. This early release is a departure for the brand which in the past has [released the series in the autumn](#). However, the brand does plan to hold back some bottles of Midleton Very Rare 2021 for a second release in the late autumn in Ireland and select markets to ensure availability for the winter holiday season.



Midleton Very Rare 2021 /Photo Credit: Irish Distillers

First Midleton Very Rare 2021 From New Master Distiller Kevin O'Gorman Unveiled

By [Hannah Kanik](#) / March 8, 2021

Irish Distiller's new Master Distiller Kevin O'Gorman recently unveiled Midleton Very Rare 2021 — the 38th edition in the collectible range, and the first created by him. The Midleton Very Rare series began four decades ago when then-masters set aside small amounts of whiskey for a new luxury offering in the world of Irish whiskey.

Midleton Very Rare 2021 is seen by those behind it as being a balanced blend of rare and hand-selected single pot still and single grain Irish whiskeys from Midleton's extensive inventory. It includes whiskey aged between 15 and 36 years and matured in lightly charred ex-bourbon American oak barrels.



Midleton Very Rare 2021 (image via Irish Distillers)

"It is a great honour to become the custodian of this extraordinary Irish whiskey family and to have my signature adorn our 2021 vintage," O'Gorman said in a prepared statement.

O'Gorman selected what he felt was a perfect mix of first-fill and second-fill casks to enhance the wood contribution while allowing the pot still component to express itself in order to maintain a balanced aroma and taste profile. The higher selection of grain whiskeys are said to have brought in aromas of baked orchard fruits, lime zest and kiwi, with mild pot still spices and soft waves of vanilla from the bourbon casks.

"The journey to launching this vintage began almost 40 years ago," O'Gorman continued. "Continuing the work of my predecessors was both a daunting and extremely enjoyable process that allowed me to explore some of our rarest casks and create an exceptional blend that sits seamlessly within the family."

Midleton Very Rare 2021 is bottled at 40% ABV and available in Ireland now. It will hit the shelves in the UK, USA, Global Travel Retail, Australia, Germany, France and Canada in the coming months for a suggested retail price of €180, or around \$215 USD. You'll find official tasting notes below.

- **Aroma:** Opens with a delicate floral perfume closely followed by roasted coffee beans, salted caramel and honeycomb coming to the fore. Hints of nectarines that linger in the background evolve over time along with freshly grated ginger and nutmeg spice. The American oak provides structure throughout, ranging in depth from fresh woodland notes to aged charred oak.
- **Taste:** Baked orchard fruits with a touch of lime zest and kiwi. Mild pot still spices continue to build along with soft waves of vanilla, sweet coffee liqueur and cocoa powder. The texture initially round and full, gains additional wood spices with a delicate touch of clove oil and nutmeg adding a mild heat, giving balance to the sweetness.
- **Finish:** Lingering finish with the pot still spices and soft fruits eventually fading, allowing the oak to have the final say, highlighting the many years of maturation.

cubicle whisky temple is 5 years later and coincides with PUNI's fresh start on the American market.

Recognition

"Being awarded *European Whisky of the Year 2021* by Jim Murray for our PUNI Aura means a deserved recognition not only for the Ebensperger family but very much so for every member of our small team", says PUNI's master distiller Jonas Ebensperger. "And as we speak we are currently offering four Italian malt whiskeys on select markets throughout the US: PUNI Gold, matured in ex-bourbon barrels; PUNI Vini Marsala Edition, aged exclusively in Marsala casks; PUNI Sole, a full-bodied bourbon aged and sherry finished whisky, as well as PUNI Alba, which was first aged in Marsala casks and subsequently finished in peated Scotch whisky casks", adds Jonas. "Ever since we released our first whiskeys, PUNI Nova and PUNI Alba, back in 2015, we have received many requests from American whisky enthusiasts. For a long time the only way to get our whisky to the US was for people to buy it in Italy and then bring it back themselves".

Latest expressions

Too early to get myself a bottle of the latest expression PUNI Arte, I settle for a sample a few weeks later. Having matured on ex-bourbon casks and Islay whisky casks I smell citrus, soft vanilla, cinnamon notes and a bit of smokiness far away. My tongue touches some lovely peaty vanilla fudge. "Our winning Aura 01 has matured in bourbon casks for two and a half years and another four years on casks from the Isle of Islay. It was bottled (393 bottles in all) in full cask strength of 56.2% abv. We're currently selecting whisky for the Aura 02 and Aura 03".



The malt whiskies of Italy's Puni (image via Puni)

As I enter the PUNI distillery in Glorencia by its hidden door I see the sun beams being filtered by the brick construction and light up the heart of this state-of-the-art whisky temple. "The whole design was made up in a split second", said architect [Werner Tscholl](#). "I know about buildings but hadn't the faintest clue about distilling. The only thing I was sure of was the external design. It should resemble the many hay sheds that can be found in this rural area". Looking through the glass of the immense cube that makes up the interior of this whisky cathedral I see a copper wash and spirit still (by Forsyth & Sons) rising up out of the cellar like two arms greeting me. This is pure poetry. The tasting room downstairs is like a catacomb, an arched room from ancient times, neatly constructed in terracotta bricks. "This almost resembles a chapel with the counter over there as the altar", Werner laughs.

Distillation

PUNI is currently available in 11 countries: from select markets in Europe, all the way to Russia, Australia and Japan. Funny enough this slightly worries me. How do you expand this architectural cube of beauty when the demand of whisky is rising? "Good question", says Jonas. "Both the wash still as the spirit still have the same shape, but the first is a bit larger. A deliberate choice we made from the start because we're treating the first distillation with the same care as the second distillation. We run the wash still at much lower temperature than usual and therefore we can have a tall and slender wash still with a reflux boil. For us the first distillation is a vital part of the whole distillation process and therefore is executed with great care, slowly and at relatively low temperatures."

Expansion

"The second reasoning behind the shapes of our stills answers your question: Should we, in the future, decide to up our production output, we could use both current stills as spirit stills. This way we would go

A Visit To Italy's PUNI Destillerie Reveals This Nation's Single Malt Specialist

By [Fred Blans](#) / February 9, 2021

As I am driving up and down the Passo dello Stelvio from Livigno to Glorencia (Italy) I realize it is exactly 5 years ago that the first Italian triple malt whisky was presented by [PUNI Destillerie](#). My second visit to the

from one spirit still with 2,000 litres capacity to two spirit stills with a joined capacity of 5,000 litres. Of course this would require installing a new and bigger wash still as well as adding further fermentation vessels. The mash tun can be run twice a day in order to produce enough worts. So, we do not have space for additional equipment inside the distillery cube and would need to install the new wash still in a new building next to the distillery.”

Mash bill

A tattoo on Jonas left arm (three stripes) refers to the PUNI approach: rye, wheat and barley. Even tattoos are sometimes fading though. “Our main mash bill for the first four years of production has been a mixture of barley-, wheat- and rye malt. Then in 2016 we have introduced a barley malt only mash bill as well. Since then we have given this “Single Malt” mash bill more and more space in our annual production plan and are looking forward to the release of these whiskies soon. Malting the grain is the only production step that we do not do ourselves here at PUNI. We buy barley malt from different suppliers. Normal, not peated, malt we buy either from a malting company in Bavaria, Germany or from an Italian malting company near Rome. We are in constant discussion with our suppliers regarding the barley varieties that are grown. So far we are using mostly Laureate, Planet or Quench (Propino) and Concerto for the peated malt with a 50ppm phenol content.

Bunker warehouse

There’s one more thing I would like to revisit and that’s the bunker warehouse. Just outside Glorenza I find a huge World War II bunker which is one of many in the area. “It’s an ongoing experiment”, Jonas explains. “We initially set them up in order to test long time maturation of our whisky under different climatic conditions. So far no whisky has left the bunkers and we are focusing on our above ground dunnage warehouses. The naturally increased maturation rate in these warehouses is paramount to the overall mellow and elegant taste of our whiskies and we do not want to change this. Perhaps in the future there will be specific releases from the bunkers. If we are not satisfied with the whisky however, it just might be possible that we move the whisky to our dunnage warehouses for a finishing maturation”.

Veni, vidi, vici

Time to go. Last question keeps lingering in my mind: how does Jonas please the sweeter American palate? “With our core range of four whiskies we already offer a relatively wide range of taste impressions. From the light to fruity PUNI Gold, all the way to PUNI Alba which is a full-bodied and smoky expression”.

I know for sure PUNI will succeed and surprise many Americans as it already did with so many whisky lovers on other continents. It’s *veni, vidi, vici* all over again.

Elixir Distillers gets planning approval for Islay site

10th February, 2021 by Nicola Carruthers

Spirits producer Elixir Distillers has gained planning approval to build a new Scotch whisky distillery on Islay, which is expected to break ground this year.



The Islay site will combine the ‘best elements of tradition and modernity’ across design and production

Co-founded by [Sukhinder Singh](#) of retailer The Whisky Exchange, Elixir Distillers [originally submitted a planning application](#) to Argyll and Bute Council in November 2018, which gained approval the following month. However, in February 2020, Elixir Distillers submitted an [altered planning application for the site](#), which featured an exterior that maintains the traditional look of the other south coast distilleries, along with ‘modern touches’ that reflect the site’s individual landscape.

“The news that our planning application has been accepted is fantastic,” said Singh. “We’ve worked closely with the Argyll and Bute planning committee to create plans for a distillery that fits into the landscape and supports the community.

“We want to create whiskies that inspire both the people of Islay and Islay whisky fans worldwide, enhancing the already glowing reputation of Islay whiskies, while also becoming an integral part of the community.”

The new site, which will be located outside the town of Port Ellen, will include a visitor centre, an educational facility and housing. The name of the distillery will be revealed at a later date.

Elixir Distillers plans to create an apprentice programme to train the next generation of distillers. The producer hopes to work with the Islay community and the Scotch whisky industry to create initiatives to support the environment and local people.

Oliver Chilton, head blender at Elixir Distillers, added: “We take great pride in being able to learn, as whisky enthusiasts and use that knowledge as a guide to find and bottle great whisky including our independent bottlings brands Port Askaig and Elements of Islay.

“Having our own distillery will be a fantastic opportunity to apply the same methodology and passion for flavour in a drive to make truly great spirit to enhance the incredible reputation that Islay single malt already has.”

The site will combine the ‘best elements of tradition and modernity’ across design and production. The facility will include floor maltings capable of supplying more than 50% of the full one million litre annual capacity of the distillery.

The Macallan Adds A New Scotch Single Malt to Its Archival Series

By [Allyson Nichols](#) / February 20, 2021

[The Macallan](#) recently revealed a new addition to The Archival Series. The new release Folio 6 celebrates the 1984 advertisement story of the then Chairman of the company, Allan Shiach.

An avid writer and advertising enthusiast, Shiach tasked his creative advisors with delivering a memorable campaign for the brand. This led to an iconic image depicting Shiach doing a sword-dance over a crossed brush and pen, symbols for his creative men, and appears to illustrate the gauntlet he had thrown down to them. The advertisement featured a headline which included the words, “ever keen to keep his Publicity Advisers on their toes,” ending with the strapline of: “The Macallan. The Malt.”



The Macallan The Archival Series: Folio 6 (image via The Macallan)

“Crafted to pay tribute to the playful sword-dancing Chairman advert of the 1980s, Folio 6 is a captivating single malt whisky which truly reflects the iconic status of the artwork it celebrates,” The Macallan Whisky Maker Polly Logan [said in a prepared statement](#).

First released in 2015, [The Archival Series](#) was created to celebrate the brand’s print, press and film advertising campaigns of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Through gathering the stories, anecdotes, drawings and photographs that featured as part of the campaigns, the series of individual releases have showcased how The Macallan grew from a remote farmstead on the River Spey to a well known whisky company.

With an ABV of 43%, The Macallan The Archival Series: Folio 6, as far as travel retail goes, is available from The Macallan Boutiques in Dubai DXB, London Heathrow and Taiwan Taoyuan airports from Q1 2021. The bottle is priced at £250 (around \$345 USD) and comes accompanied by a special booklet commemorating the brand’s vintage advertising, presented in a book-shaped tin.

Official tasting notes make mention of a fruity nose of orange and poached pear, giving way to vanilla, warming cinnamon, nutmeg and a touch of milk chocolate. The commemorative drink finally offers a long, ginger finish.

Speyside Distillery Parent Company Reveals Plans For New Whisky Making Facility

By [Hannah Kanik](#) / February 20, 2021

Speyside Distillers, currently operators of the historic Speyside Distillery “nestled within the magnificent Cairngorm Mountains,” recently revealed plans for a new state of the art single malt whisky distillery. While some of the details of the plan, including location and design, are still under wraps, the facility is supposed to be the latest extension in the distillery’s expansion plan.

“Last year was challenging for us, as it was for most businesses dealing with Covid-19. With our industry also facing the added problem of US tariffs, we have had to change our strategy to find new and innovative ways to drive our business forward,” Patricia Dillion, Speyside Distillers managing director, said [in a prepared statement](#). “In 2019 we committed to increasing our distillate to meet rising demand, and this year we are producing five times our normal rates.”



The current Speyside Distillery (image via Speyside Distillers)

The new distillery will give them the capacity to distill the quantities of whisky required, while still giving them the ability to expand. Dillion noted the brand is looking forward to sharing more details as they become available over the next few months and years.

Speyside Distillers chief executive John Harvey McDonough added the distillery will be the perfect next step for the Speyside brand and the Harvey Family legacy.

“Building a new distillery is obviously a major commitment, and we are incredibly excited about the opportunities it shall bring for our single malt whisky brands,” Harvey McDonough said. “In recent months we have in two new team members – Martin MacLeod and Raymond MacKay – to assist long-serving employee Andrew Scorgie and distillery manager Allan Findlay, which will allow us to maintain the levels of production required to match demand.

“It’s important to us that we continue to embrace experience and history within the whisky industry, while also continuing to innovate and nurture new talent to ensure its bright future.”

Bowmore adds 31-year-old to Timeless Series

23rd February, 2021 by Nicola Carruthers

Islay Scotch whisky brand Bowmore has added two single malts to its Timeless Series, including a 31-year-old expression.



A 27-year-old single malt and a GTR-exclusive 31-year-old whisky form the Timeless Series. The new bottlings in the Bowmore Timeless Series are a 27-year-old single malt and a travel retail-exclusive 31-year-old whisky.

The 27-year-old whisky was matured in Sherry and ex-Bourbon casks for 15 years, followed by 12 years in first-fill oloroso butts.

Bottled at cask strength (52.7% ABV), the single malt has a ‘fruity flavour’ with notes of Sherry and fresh leather, tobacco and beeswax.

Meanwhile, the 31-year-old single malt was matured in ex-Bourbon casks for 29 years and finished for two years in Spanish oak Matusalem Sherry-seasoned butts.

Bottled at 45.4% ABV, the resulting liquid has floral notes, honey and vanilla sweetness, and a hint of peppermint.

Ron Welsh, master blender, said: “With Bowmore Timeless Series, the key is the careful selection of the right casks, at the right time. This enables us to determine when the spirit has reached its peak, or if it should be left longer to develop its character further. This careful balance is vital to ensuring we allow the character of our whiskies to be optimised and can therefore, promise exceptional flavour delivery.”

To mark the launch of the new range, Bowmore has teamed up with independent French film director and artist Thomas Vanz. Using film and art, Vanz highlighted the ‘power of time’ through the evolution of whisky.

Vanz said: “The artistry involved in the whisky-making process is fascinating and provided me with rich and vivid inspiration to create my own unique interpretation. Through my work, I focused on capturing a galaxy of beautiful chemical reactions to represent the whisky-making process, which is made up of complex movement and colours.

“This is my interpretation of the Bowmore universe, from where it begins to the final character. To collaborate with a single malt with such a remarkable legacy and from an awe-inspiring place is a first for me and I relished the opportunity to explore Bowmore in my own way.”

Each expression comes in a black box, complete with an hourglass. Bowmore 27 Years Old is priced at RRP US\$1,525, while the 31-year-old has an RRP of US\$2,100 and is limited to 3,000 bottles.

Scotland’s Glen Luss Distillery gets green light

23rd February, 2021 by Nicola Carruthers

Scotland’s Glen Luss has secured planning approval to build a new distillery on the shores of Loch Lomond.



The Glen Luss Distillery will be built on the shores of Scotland’s Loch Lomond. Glen Luss first revealed plans to open the distillery in April 2020, with the aim of [raising £3 million \(US\\$3.7m\)](#) through its Founder’s Club.

The Glen Luss Distillery will produce a range of premium drinks, including a single malt Scotch whisky, a gin, aged and new make rums, small batch vodka and a line of craft beers.

The site claims to be the first distillery and brewery on the shores of Loch Lomond and the first within Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park. Glen Luss confirmed it had received planning approval on its Facebook page. The post read: "Last week we received the great news that our planning application had been approved. To say we are excited would be an understatement. This is a major milestone in our journey to bring our vision for the first experimental brewery and distillery, on the shores of Loch Lomond, creating craft drinks and experiences to life.

"As we reflect on the last year, 2020 played hard ball, and 2021 looks like it will bring its own challenges, but that will not stop us. Although Covid has dented our plans we are on course to open to the public and start laying spirit down in the latter part of 2021.

"2021 is shaping up to be a great year, we are literally fizzing (again) with excitement and simply cannot wait to welcome you to Glen Luss later this year."

Glen Luss Distillery was founded by Trystan Powell, Patrick Colquhoun and Daniel Lewis, graduates of the University of Strathclyde.

In July last year, Glen Luss Distillery [appointed Gary Deans and Brian Woods](#) as non-executive directors.



[Ardbeg 19](#)

9 Peaty Scotch Whiskies for Smoke Lovers to Try Now [LIST]

JANUARY 28, 2021 | [TED SIMMONS](#) | FROM [WINTER 2020](#)



Peated scotch can be divisive, but for those who [love it](#), there's no acceptable substitute. Building an appreciation for peated single malt may start with whiskies like [Laphroaig 10 year old](#), [Ardbeg 10 year old](#), or [Lagavulin 16 year old](#), but there is a wide world of deliciously smoky scotch beyond those building blocks. And while Islay tends to be most directly associated with peat, its neighboring Scottish isles and the mainland produce equally exquisite drams every bit as briny and ashy.

In the [Winter 2020 Buying Guide](#), peat lovers will find plenty to enjoy, as limited editions and seasonal releases of old favorites abound. Stalwart single malts are represented, as are a few [blended malts](#) worthy of consideration. There's even a cask-strength whisky on offer from Highland Park for those looking for an extra-powerful punch of peat.

The Winter Buying Guide features scores and tasting notes for 170 whiskies, from scotch and bourbon to Irish, Japanese, and more. Start with these nine scotch whiskies for a supply of smoke, and then check out the full lineup of reviews.

FEEL THE PEAT WITH THESE SMOKY SCOTCH WHISKIES

[year old Traigh Bhan \(Batch 2\)](#)

95 points, 46.2% ABV, \$300

The early nose offers hand-rolled tobacco, ginger, black pepper, and fragrant woodsmoke. Medicinal notes, brine, and lemon develop in time. Sweet peat smoke, tropical fruits, toffee, and aniseed on the palate, with smoked haddock and a suggestion of tar. Iodine, black pepper, and sea salt in the lengthy finish. — Gavin Smith



[Lagavulin 12](#)

[year old \(Diageo Special Releases 2020\)](#)

93 points, 56.4% ABV, \$164

Sweet woodsmoke, peat embers, Jaffa oranges, new leather, sea salt, and cigarette smoke on the nose. Orange carries over onto the robust palate, with quite pronounced smokiness, black pepper, and dark chocolate. Long and peppery in the finish, with lingering smoke and brine. —Gavin Smith



[Talisker 8](#)

[year old \(Diageo Special Releases 2020\)](#)

93 points, 57.9% ABV, \$119

The youngest of the 2020 Special Releases. Warm tar, farmyard, charcuterie, and faint iodine on the fruity nose. Peppery stewed fruits and gentle woodsmoke on the voluptuous palate. Very prickly in the long finish, with fruit-and-nut dark chocolate and chile paste. An intriguing and attractive take on Talisker. —Gavin Smith



[Highland Park](#)

[Cask Strength \(Release No. 1\)](#)

92 points, 63.3% ABV, \$90

This first cask-strength expression in Highland Park's core range was matured predominantly in sherry-seasoned American oak. Honey, bonfire smoke, orange peel, and a suggestion of treacle on the nose. Sweet and smoky on the palate, with toffee and orchard fruits turning more citric in time. The finish yields sweet spices, more honey, dark chocolate, black pepper, and bonfire embers. Classic Highland Park—turned up to 11! —Gavin Smith



[Compass Box](#)

[The Peat Monster Arcana Blended Malt](#)

92 points, 46% ABV, \$95

Comparatively speaking, this is a little monster for peat-loving monster hunters. Lemon, attractive florals, pine forests, and gentle peat smoke. Sweet flavors cascade through honey, lemon, candied peel, and vanilla fudge, heading toward sweet cinnamon, chocolate, clove, and a dry finish of oak and straw bundles. The neat touch here was filling cask-strength Peat Monster into custom French oak casks. A very fine blend indeed. (8,328 bottles, 3,900 for U.S.) —Jonny McCormick



[Kilchoman](#)

[100% Islay \(2020 Release\)](#)

92 points, 50% ABV, \$120

The nose opens with relatively light sweet woodsmoke, then red apples, sherry, iodine, sea salt, and lively spices emerge. Spicy citrus fruits, toffee, and more sweet smoke on the palate. The finish carries citrus fruits, with sherry, spice, and peat smoke. (12,400 bottles, 1,440 for U.S.) —Gavin Smith



[Octomore 10](#)

[year old \(2020 Release\)](#)

90 points, 54.3% ABV, \$235

Malted to 208 ppm and matured in a mix of virgin oak and first- and second-fill bourbon and Tennessee whiskey barrels. The nose is fragrant, with pepper, iodine, intense peat smoke, and lemon peel. Juicy orchard fruits and more smoke on the palate, with treacle, caramel, and spice. Black tea, licorice, lingering woody peat, and chile in the finish. —Gavin Smith



[DS Tayman 10](#)

[year old Flam Wine Barrel-Finished \(Distilled at Caol Ila\)](#)

88 points, 46% ABV, \$65

This kosher-certified single cask was matured in a refill bourbon barrel before finishing in a wine barrel from Israel's Flam Winery. The nose opens with barbecue smoke and new leather, then rosé wine, salt, and ginger cookies emerge. The nutty palate features woodsmoke, cocoa, instant coffee, stewed fruits, and more salt. The finish is long, with coffee, dry red wine, and prickly oak. (400 bottles) —Gavin Smith



[Big Peat](#)

[Christmas \(2020 Edition\) Blended Malt](#)

90 points, 53.1% ABV, \$59

This is a spicy prospect, with pepper, lemon bonbons, and dense peat smoke, though the toffee and sweet lemon are well-balanced against the smoke. Sweet lemon meringue pie, candied peel, and a twin assault of smoke and clove-led spices on the palate, though the sweetness mounts a fight back. Great crescendo of flavor as Big Peat tries to show he is the perfect house guest for the holidays. (900 bottles for U.S.) —Jonny McCormick

COLLECTING

What's It Worth? Ardbeg Committee Releases

FEBRUARY 10, 2021 | [JONNY MCCORMICK](#)



In "What's It Worth?" our resident auction expert examines the collectibility of a distillery, brand, or series. Here he breaks down the value of Ardbeg's popular Committee Releases.

Just three years after reopening, on Jan. 1, 2000, Ardbeg Distillery launched the [Ardbeg Committee](#), a fan club that's free to join and offers members access to special releases and other privileges. The goal was to build up a loyal following and ensure the Islay distillery never fell silent again; during the 1980s and 1990s, production had been spotty, with long periods of disuse at the distillery culminating in closure in 1996.

One large perk of joining the Ardbeg Committee is access to its exclusive bottlings, many of which have become collector's items—though plenty are opened and enjoyed. The earliest releases were available by mail order and took time to sell out, but as Ardbeg's fan base grew, release days were marked by chaotic online scrambles to acquire a bottle—even though quantities are now higher than ever. Since 2008, alongside the Committee Releases, which are typically cask strength, Ardbeg has usually offered a more widely available version of the whisky, typically bottled at 46% ABV.

Unlike many limited editions, Ardbeg Committee Releases aren't particularly expensive to buy on release (Arrrrrrrdbeg!), [released in February 2021](#), had a suggested price of \$180), but they can subsequently achieve prices ranging from a few hundred to several thousand dollars at auction. We ranked 20 of the best-known Ardbeg Committee Releases by hammer price achieved during 2020. Read on to see what your bottles might be worth, or check out the latest prices if you are looking to add a missing bottle to your collection.

ARBEG COMMITTEE RELEASES RANKED BY 2020 HAMMER PRICE



[2](#)
[Drum Committee Release \(2019\)](#)
 Hammer Price: \$258 at Just Whisky
 Sold: Oct. 18, 2020
 This cask-strength rum cask-finished Ardbeg was released in 2019. It is slowly increasing in value but still readily available at auction.

[0. Ardbeg](#)



[18. Ardbeg](#)
[Perpetuum Bicentenary Committee Release \(2015\)](#)
 Hammer Price: \$339 at Whisky Hammer
 Sold: Oct. 25, 2020
 Bottled to celebrate the bicentenary of Ardbeg distillery in 2015, this was released at 49.2% ABV, while the general release of Perpetuum, [rated 90 points](#), was bottled at the lower strength of 47.4% ABV.



[19. Ardbeg](#)
[Grooves Committee Release \(2018\)](#)
 Hammer Price: \$273 at Whisky Auctioneer
 Sold: Feb. 3, 2020
 The 2018 Ardbeg Committee Release was matured in wine casks charred so heavily that the surface became deeply grooved. The grooves were sufficient to inspire an Ardbeg Day theme that channeled the spirit of Woodstock, the Summer of Love, and '60s psychedelia.



[17. Ardbeg](#)
[Blaack Committee Release \(2020\)](#)
 Hammer Price: \$355 at Whisky Auctioneer
 Sold: Sep. 7, 2020
 With the [cancellation of Fèis Ile \(the Islay Festival\) in 2020](#), whisky events had to adapt and move online. That year's Committee release, [rated 92 points](#), was matured in New Zealand pinot noir casks and bottled at cask strength at 50.7% ABV, while the general release was cut to 46% ABV.



[16. Ardbeg](#)

[Supernova Committee Release SN2014 \(2014\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$395 at Whisky Hammer

Sold: Sep. 27, 2020

Limited-edition Ardbeg Supernova debuted in 2009 (see below), but collectors had to wait five years for [the second Supernova Committee Release](#), which was bottled to mark the return to earth of [Ardbeg's space experiment](#).



[14. Ardbeg](#)

[Kelpie Committee Release \(2017\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$403 at Whisky Auctioneer

Sold: Feb. 3, 2020

In 2017, the Committee Release was named after a Scottish water spirit and partly matured in Russian virgin oak casks sourced from the Black Sea.



[15. Ardbeg](#)

[Dark Cove Committee Release \(2016\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$398 at Whisky Auctioneer

Sold: Jun. 1, 2020

The [2016 Committee Release](#) was based on a smuggling theme. It was reportedly Ardbeg's darkest-ever whisky, the result of select sherry cask maturation.



[13. Ardbeg](#)

[Supernova Committee Release SN2019 \(2019\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$403 at Whisky Auctioneer

Sold: Feb. 3, 2020

The fourth Committee Release of Supernova came four years after the distillery had declared the series complete (see below). Despite probing, information on the age of the whisky inside, the ppm level, or the number of bottles released remains as classified as the Roswell Incident.



[12. Ardbeg](#)

[Supernova Committee Release SN2015 \(2015\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$417 at Whisky Hammer

Sold: Oct. 25, 2020

Supposedly the final Supernova release for the Committee, this coincided with the publication of director of distilling, whisky creation, and whisky stocks Dr. Bill Lumsden's white paper on the results of orbiting maturation experiments that began in 2011. (Obviously, this was back before sending barrels by rocket to the international space warehouse became a routine mission.)



[10. Ardbeg](#)

[Day \(2012\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$574 at Whisky Hammer

Sold: Oct. 25, 2020

Named after Ardbeg Day—the distillery's open day during Fèis Ile—this [release](#) capitalized on the growing number of retailers in the distillery's embassy program. If you couldn't make it to Islay, you could always visit your local "embassy" to pick up a bottle. The final whisky was a combination of Ardbeg styles, a marriage of sweet and spicy Ardbeg with a more botanical style that was finished for 6 months in refill sherry butts.



[11. Ardbeg](#)

[Rollercoaster Committee Release \(2010\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$539 at Whisky Auctioneer

Sold: Nov. 11, 2020

Ardbeg released 15,000 bottles of Rollercoaster for the 10th anniversary of the Ardbeg Committee. The whisky comprised Ardbeg distillates laid down every year from 1997–2006.



[9. Ardbeg](#)

[Alligator Committee Reserve \(2011\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$598 at Whisky Auctioneer

Sold: Feb. 3, 2020

The 2011 release was named after the heavy "alligator" char given to the new American white oak casks employed in maturation in the distillery's sea-facing warehouse No. 3. At the U.S. Committee launch of this whisky following [WhiskyFest Chicago](#), Ardbeg brought along live gators and a friendly boa constrictor.



[8. Ardbeg](#)

[Corryvreckan Committee Reserve \(2008\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$744 at Scotch Whisky Auctions

Sold: Sep. 6, 2020

With just 5,000 bottles released, this offering has always performed well at auction, but climbed significantly in value during 2020. It is named after the Gulf of Corryvreckan whirlpool that lies between the isles of Jura and Scarba.



[6. Ardbeg](#)

[Committee Reserve \(2002\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$1,008 at Scotch Whisky Auctions

Sold: Dec. 6, 2020

This multi-vintage vatting of Ardbeg stock from the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s featured the more typical black label found on Ardbeg's core bottlings.



[7. Ardbeg](#)

[Very Young For Discussion \(2003\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$797 at Scotch Whisky Auctions

Sold: Sep. 6, 2020

This youngster was the first Ardbeg to be released to Committee members stamped "for discussion" and the first to feature the Committee's now-familiar cream label. It offered the first opportunity to drink Ardbeg made under the ownership of The Glenmorangie Co., the group that purchased the distillery in 1997. The inaugural bottling in Ardbeg's "Peaty Path to Maturity", a general release of Very Young followed, before Still Young and Almost There paved the way to the release of Ardbeg Renaissance in 2008.



[5. Ardbeg](#)

[Supernova Advance Committee Release \(2009\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$1,226 at Whisky Hammer

Sold: Oct. 25, 2020

The original Supernova release from 2009, this cask-strength, multi-vintage single malt comprised peaty stocks of Ardbeg in excess of 100 ppm. When released in 2009, it was the fastest-selling Ardbeg in history, with all 3,000 bottles selling out in 112 minutes. At the time, [Islay distillers were competing](#) to see who could [pack the most smoke into their whiskies](#).



[4. Ardbeg](#)

[Young Uigeadail "The Oogling" Committee Reserve \(2006\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$1,436 at Whisky Auctioneer

Sold: Aug. 3, 2020

One of the toughest Committee releases to acquire, only 1,392 bottles of "The Oogling" were released in 2006. A combination of three casks of very young Ardbeg with a sherry butt of 2002 Ardbeg, this youthful one-off now commands serious prices.



[2. Ardbeg](#)

[Kildalton 1980 \(2004\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$1,971 at Whisky Auctioneer

Sold: Nov. 9, 2020

An unusual Ardbeg one-off released in 2004, Kildalton is a combination of experimental unpeated Ardbeg and lightly peated Ardbeg. Encouraged by its reception, the distillery released the lightly peated Ardbeg Blasda in 2008, though it was never available in the U.S. Blasda was a younger whisky made using malt peated to 8 ppm, and is much easier to find at auction than Ardbeg Kildalton 1980 if you want to experience how the low phenols shift the Ardbeg taste profile.



[3. Ardbeg 21](#)

[year old Committee Exclusive \(2001\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$1,803 at Whisky Auctioneer

Sold: Dec. 7, 2020

This 2001 release had 2,500 bottles drawn from a dozen casks filled during 1979 and 1980. Stuart Thomson, then Ardbeg's distillery manager, signed each bottle, and their scarcity has pushed prices up.



[1. Ardbeg](#)

[Alligator Exclusive Committee Reserve 4.5 liter \(2011\)](#)

Hammer Price: \$4,330 at Just Whisky

Sold: Dec. 14, 2020

Ardbeg has created 4.5 liter bottlings of several releases including Ardbeg Mór, Uigeadail, Rollercoaster, Auriverdes, and Alligator. These large-format bottles of Alligator, the equivalent of six standard bottles, were perfect for Committee launch events and whisky shows, but inevitably, a small number of them found their way into the hands of collectors and are now hot commodities at auction. *Please note:* Highest hammer prices set during the year 2020 were determined from the following selection of leading whisky auction houses: [Scotch Whisky Auctions](#), [Whisky Auctioneer](#), [Whisky Hammer](#), [Whisky Auction](#), [Just Whisky](#), [Whisky Online Auctions](#), [Bonhams](#), and [Sotheby's](#). Prices were converted to U.S. dollars using www.xe.com exchange rates from the date of each auction. The list is not intended to be comprehensive and not all Ardbeg Committee releases are included. Highest hammer prices from 2020 are shown, and future auction results may produce higher or lower hammer prices.

Glendronach Offers Up Batch 9 Of Its Cask Strength Single Malt

By [Hannah Kanik](#) / February 23, 2021

The GlenDronach Distillery out of Scotland recently unveiled the ninth limited edition release of its Cask Strength Highland Single Malt Scotch Whisky. The brown spirit is matured in Pedro Ximénez and Oloroso Sherry casks from Andalucía.

This whisky is a richly-sherried expression, bottled at 59.4% alcohol by volume. It is said that with each unique cask strength release Master Blender Dr. Rachel Barrie “selects and combines the perfect balance of sherry casks before they are bottled at natural cask strength.” The Pedro Ximénez casks bring in rich, fruit flavors while the Oloroso casks draw out dry, nutty notes.



The GlenDronach Cask Strength Batch 9 (image via The GlenDronach)

“The GlenDronach Cask Strength Batch 9 is incredibly rich and full-bodied; the result of years of slow maturation in Pedro Ximénez puncheons and Oloroso sherry butts,” Barrie said [in a prepared statement](#). “The depth of this Highland Single Malt’s character is boundless.”

The GlenDronach is known for what’s said to be its strong commitment to tradition, where little has changed over the centuries. The distillery was established nearly two hundred years ago, and the distillers have stuck with what works. Founder James Allardice was an early pioneer of sherry cask maturation and thought the distillery’s whisky would be perfect for slow maturation in the Spanish oak sherry casks.

The GlenDronach Cask Strength Highland Single Malt Scotch Whisky is being sold at a suggested retail price of £72, or around \$105 USD. It is available to buy from specialist retailers worldwide from this month (global markets may vary) and in the US from June 2021.

You’ll find official tasting notes for it below.

- Appearance: Deep copper
- Nose: Cocoa, liquorice root and baked orange on a base of sultana bread and crème brûlée.
- Palate: Treacle toffee and raisin-filled toasted brioche crescendo to baked apple and bramble pie, butterscotch and star anise.
- Finish: Layers of richly roasted malt, and a lingering dark chocolate, espresso finish.

Benriach debuts ‘smokiest’ single malt

26th February, 2021 by Nicola Carruthers

Scotch whisky distillery Benriach has released its ‘most intensely smoked’ single malt to date, called Smoke Season.



Smoke Season is Speyside distillery Benriach’s ‘most intensely smoked’ whisky to date

Benriach said smoky whiskies are not typically associated with Speyside, however a look back at the distillery’s archives found that heavily peated single malts were favourable in the region during the 19th century.

To celebrate the time of year where peated spirit runs through its stills, the Speyside distillery has unveiled a small-batch release that captures Benriach’s seasonal production method.

Rachel Barrie, master blender at Benriach Distillery, said: “Smoke Season is a special time of year in the distillery’s calendar, and this new addition gives both the whisky novice and connoisseur the opportunity to discover the uniquely rich, sweet and smoky character of Benriach single malt, crafted in Speyside, a whisky-making region rarely associated with peated malt.”

Described as both ‘intensely smoked’ and sweet, the new Smoke Season whisky has been matured in two different casks – American virgin oak and Bourbon barrels. The wood types were chosen to ‘amplify the toasted sweet notes in Benriach’s smoky spirit’.

The use of Highland peat from the mainland, and derived from trees and heather, provides the whisky with a character of ‘distinct aromatic smoke which toasts the barley at Benriach, resulting in an intense thread of sweet smoke interwoven with Benriach’s staple orchard fruit character’.

Barrie said: “With intensely peated spirit batch distilled every year, at Benriach we never stop exploring how the fruit and smoke aromatics intertwine and mature in a range of eclectic oak casks, either amplifying or transforming the perception of peat.

“Smoke Season is the result of exploring 100% intensely peated malt, batch distilled and matured in first-fill Bourbon barrels combined with a high proportion of charred and toasted American virgin oak casks.

“Crafted exclusively from intensely peated malt distilled in Smoke Season, the spirit is reminiscent of barbecue smoked fruit in a pine forest. American virgin oak and Bourbon barrel maturation develop sweet caramel smoke and cinnamon spiced roasted apple, with hints of charred orange peel and hickory, concentrated at the bottling strength of 52.8% ABV.”

Smoke Season will be available gradually in global markets from February, priced at RRP £53 (US\$74). It will launch in the US from September 2021.

In September last year, Benriach revealed a [new core range of single malts](#) and a refreshed look for the series.

Scotch Whisky Sales Plummeted In 2020 Due To Pandemic And US Tariffs

By [Robert Ham](#) / February 26, 2021

The state of the Scotch Whisky industry is grim, according to a recent report from the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA), the organization that advocates on behalf of Scotland’s many distillers.

Distillers and distributors have seen a drop in eight out of the 10 top export destinations for their product, with the biggest losses coming from the US market, where the value of whisky imports fell nearly 32% from the previous year’s high of £1.07bn. Experts cite the effects of the coronavirus to most of these losses, but with the United States spirits market, the 25% tariff imposed on imports of whisky has had the biggest impact.



Diageo Rare by Nature 2019 Scotch Whisky Special Releases (image via Diageo)

“These figures are a grim reminder of the challenges faced by distillers over the past year, as exports stalled in the face of the coronavirus pandemic and US tariffs,” Scotch Whisky Association Chief Executive Karen Betts said, [in a prepared statement](#). “In effect, the industry lost 10 years of growth in 2020 and it’s going to take some time to build back to a position of strength.”

That tariff went into effect in 2019 as part of an ongoing trade war that began with an argument over the subsidies that the World Trade Organization gave to Airbus and Boeing to help in the development of new planes. The result was tariffs applied by the US to hundreds of items imported from Europe, including Parmesan cheese and wool clothing. “In these challenging times, what’s so disappointing is the damage being caused by US tariffs,” Betts’ statement continued. “The US has been, for decades, our strongest and most valuable market, but Scotch Whisky is now losing considerable ground there. These tariffs were avoidable had the UK, EU and US governments and the European and American aerospace industries been less intransigent. That governments and companies have allowed their dispute to continue while the livelihoods of real people, and the future of one of Scotland’s oldest industries, are put at stake reflects badly on them.”

There is some hope of resolution. The UK trade minister Liz Truss has already requested a meeting with incoming US trade czar Katherine Tai to discuss the removal of these tariffs. And just before the transition of power, Trump administration officials were working on a mini-deal to get tariffs on both sides of the Atlantic lifted.

The SWA is also calling on Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak to consider cutting the duty on spirits in the UK budget to help, as Betts says, “reassure distillers that the UK government wants to support Scotch Whisky in riding out the current storm and returning to growth when possible.”

The US isn’t the only source of the Scotch Whisky industry’s financial woes. According to the SWA, the value of exports is down £1.1bn compared to 2019’s numbers and down in 127 of 179 global markets. This is due, in no small part, to ongoing pandemic lockdowns and travel restrictions that have cut into airport retail sales.

Benriach unveils Cask Edition Collection 2021

3rd March, 2021 by Nicola Carruthers

Speyside distillery Benriach has revealed Cask Edition Collection 2021, comprising 19 single malts matured in 11 different cask types.



The Benriach Cask Edition Collection 2021 features 19 bottlings

Each expression has been created to celebrate different cask styles, and explores a ‘different facet’ of Benriach’s multi-layered, fruit forward’ profile.

Featuring both peated and unpeated whiskies, each bottling was selected at its ‘optimum’ maturation point by Benriach master blender Rachel Barrie.

The 11 different cask types include Madeira, Moscatel hogsheads, rum barrels and Port pipes. Each expression was distilled between 1994 and 2009.

Barrie explained: “When it comes to experimenting with flavour through our rich inventory of cask types at Benriach, it is important to appreciate the individuality of the cask and its back story to tease out its full potential. Benriach Cask Edition Collection 2021 offers an insight into

this journey, capturing unique moments in time at our Speyside distillery.

“Exploring cask maturation at this specific level continues to excite me about the flavour possibilities of Benriach. From the honey, apricot and stewed plum of the sauternes barrique to the smooth barley cream of the rum barrel, it’s a true joy to savour the palette of flavour in these cask edition releases.”

Benriach Cask Edition Collection 2021 is available to buy from specialist retailers in select markets globally.

More details on each cask and their availability are below.

The casks earmarked for Europe are:

- 1997 Cask #7420 – Aged 23 years, virgin wood barrel, unpeated, 51.6% ABV (France and Belgium)
- 1998 Cask #10298 – Aged 22 years, Marsala wine hogshead, unpeated, 52.2% ABV (Italy)
- 2005 Cask #2569 – Aged 15 years, oloroso butt, unpeated, 59.8% ABV (France, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark and Ukraine)
- 2005 Cask #1867 – Aged 15 years, rum barrel, unpeated, 55.9% ABV (Benriach Distillery visitor centre, Scotland)
- 2007 Cask #3944 – Aged 13 years, Pedro Ximénez puncheon, peated, 56.2% ABV (France)
- 2008 Cask #4052 – Aged 12 years, Pedro Ximénez puncheon, peated, 60.5% ABV (Belgium, Cyprus, Greece, Malta and Poland)
- 2009 Cask #4833 – Aged 11 years, Port pipe, peated, 60.8% ABV (UK)
- 2009 Cask #1642 – Aged 11 years, Madeira hogshead, peated, 60.6% ABV (Andorra, Poland and Portugal)
- 2009 Cask #8562 – Aged 11 years, oloroso puncheon, unpeated, 58.9% ABV (Nordics and Eastern Europe)
- 2009 Cask #8748 – Aged 11 years, Moscatel hogsheads, unpeated, 53.9% ABV (the Netherlands)
- 2009 Cask #3911 – Aged 11 years, Pedro Ximénez puncheon, unpeated, 56.5% ABV (Germany, Austria and Switzerland)

The casks destined for Asia Pacific, Australia, New Zealand and **Canada** include:

- 1994 Cask #1851 – Aged 26 years, Pedro Ximénez puncheon, peated, 51.5% ABV (China)
- 1994 Cask #1272 – Aged 26 years, oloroso butt, peated, 53.2% ABV (China)
- 1997 Cask #16004 – Aged 23 years, Bourbon barrel, unpeated, 51.1% ABV (Israel)
- 1998 Cask #2803 – Aged 22 years, Pedro Ximénez puncheon, unpeated, 52.7% ABV (Southeast Asia)
- 2006 Cask #5303 – Aged 13 years, Pedro Ximénez puncheon, unpeated, 61.2% ABV (Australia)
- 2007 Cask #8736 – Aged 12 years, muscatel hogshead, unpeated, 58.1% ABV (New Zealand)
- 2008 Cask #5813 – Aged 12 years, sauternes barrique, unpeated, 61.3% ABV (**Canada**)
- 2008 Cask #2014 – Aged 12 years, Pedro Ximénez puncheon, peated, 60.5% ABV (China/Southeast Asia)

Benriach Brings Forward A Trio Of Ultra Premium Scotch Single Malts

By [Hannah Kanik](#) / March 2, 2021

Deep in Scotland’s Speyside region sits Benriach Distillery — a brand that prides itself on having what’s described as a distinctive flavor-forward portfolio of single malt Scotch whiskies. Keeping in this theme it recently launched three new ultra-premium offerings that are coming available now.

The three new expressions were matured over decades and feature 21, 25 and 30 year old bottlings. They were matured in a diverse selection of highly distinctive oak casks and combined with what’s said to be complex layers of smoke, with each aged expression having been “meticulously composed for aromatic effect, richness and deep mellow maturity.”



Benriach 21, 25 and 30 year old (image via Benriach)

"It's a real honor to be able to offer our fans an opportunity to experience the diversity and versatility of Benriach's orchard fruit-laden style, elevated by a longer maturation time," said Rachel Barrie, Benriach Master Blender, [in a prepared statement](#). "These older expressions are a beautiful reflection of the landscape around the distillery with intriguing, luxurious layers of flavor imparted by the eclectic casks sourced from around the world. "The refreshed Benriach range is for those open to new possibilities, building on a wealth of experience and tradition. I invite the drinker to join me on this creative journey, as we explore the lush rewards of single malt whisky."

The company [had a redesign of its core expressions last September](#), and these new offerings are a continuation of that. You'll find more official information, including tasting notes, on each below.

The Twenty One was matured in four casks: Bourbon, Sherry, Virgin Oak and Red Wine. 46% ABV. Suggested retail price is \$199.99 per 750-ml. bottle

Tasting notes:

- Nose: Berry fruit, orchard apple, wild honey and mountain oak spice
- Palate: Candied grape, rich cocoa, smoked pine nut
- Finish: Caramelized pear and honey smoke

The Twenty Five was mature in four casks: Bourbon, Sherry, Virgin Oak and Madeira Wine. 46% ABV. Suggested retail price is \$359.99 per 750-ml. bottle.

Tasting notes:

- Nose: Smoked apricot, dark cherry chocolate, hazelnut toffee
- Palate: Baked fruit, toasted oak spice, orange and cinnamon spice
- Finish: Rich caramelized smoke

The Thirty was matured in four casks: Bourbon, Sherry, Virgin Oak and Port. 46% ABV. Suggested retail price is \$739.99 per 750-ml. bottle.

Tasting notes:

- Nose: Stewed plum, baked orange, smoked walnut, and cinnamon cocoa
- Palate: Dark fruit, manuka honey and chocolate raisin
- Finish: Long and complex smoked honey finish

Jim McEwan unveils Islay single malt range

4th March, 2021 by Nicola Carruthers

The first three single malt whiskies from Jim McEwan's new Signature Collection will be auctioned next week, including one of the oldest Octomore bottlings to date.



Jim McEwan began his career in the whisky industry in 1963

McEwan, who helped revive Islay distillery Bruichladdich in 2001, has unveiled the Jim McEwan Signature Collection. The range comprises nine whiskies across three editions, each from a single cask Bruichladdich, Port Charlotte and Octomore from McEwan's personal reserves. Bottles numbered one to 20, and number 88, from editions one and two of the new collection will be auctioned by Whisky Auctioneer from 11 to 15 March 2021.

Winners of bottles 1-20 and 88 will be given first refusal on that same bottle number in successive releases, allowing them to complete a full collection of the same bottle numbers.

McEwan said: "It's wonderful to see this collection of my final casks bottled and ready to be enjoyed. From starting in the whisky industry aged 15, I can see no better way to mark the ending of a career than to release my own personal collection.

"This collection really speaks for itself in terms of quality, just like each of the whiskies I've ever produced."

The Islay single malt whiskies were distilled under the supervision of McEwan and bottled by Scottish independent bottler Dramfool.

Joe Wilson, head of auction content at Whisky Auctioneer, said: "The Jim McEwan Signature Collection embodies a true industry icon's passion for the liquid he has spent most of his life creating, as well as the Island he calls home. It's a pleasure to bring the first edition bottles to our online auction in partnership with Dramfool.

"These are the final casks to be selected by Jim during his time at Bruichladdich and the whiskies he has personally deemed to be amongst his finest creations. We're sure Islay whisky lovers around the world will be incredibly excited to learn about the collection's release, and to try these whiskies for themselves."



The first edition bottlings from Jim McEwan's range have been entirely matured in first-fill wine casks

The first edition bottlings have been entirely matured in first-fill wine casks from a French châteaux, and includes a 13-year-old Octomore matured in a Sauternes barrique.

The 2007 Octomore bottling has an ABV of 57.5% and is limited to 290 bottles. The whisky offers a nose of peat fires, sweet oak, bog myrtle, heather flowers, and wild thyme. The palate is said to provide French oak, peat smoke and sweet barley.

In addition, the sale will include a Bruichladdich 2007, matured in a first-fill Bordeaux cask and aged for 13 years. Bottled at 61.8% ABV, the whisky is limited to 265 bottles. On the nose, the whisky has notes of ripe grapes, sweet oak and hot-washed malt, and a palate 'ranging from fruity to floral to wine-like citrus'.

The Port Charlotte 2007 is one of 299 bottles and bottled at 60.9% ABV. It was matured in a first-fill Bordeaux cask and aged for 13 years. The expression provides an aroma of peat smoke and coastal wildflowers, and a palate of ripe grapes and 'coastal marine overture'. The third edition will also comprise Bruichladdich, Octomore and Port Charlotte bottlings.

Each whisky in the range has been bottled at natural cask strength and colouring, and is non-chill filtered.

Bruichladdich fans will also have the opportunity to bid on an exclusive private tasting experience with McEwan during the auction. All proceeds raised from the experience will be donated to Scotland's Charity Air Ambulance.

McEwan's career began at the age of 15 in 1963 as an apprentice cooper at Bowmore distillery. He retired from Bruichladdich in 2005, after 15 years as master distiller, and rejoined the industry in 2017 to help revive [Ardnahoe Distillery on Islay](#).

Whisky Reviews: Balblair 12-, 15-, 18-, 25-Year Single Malt Scotches By [Courtney Kristjana](#) / March 6, 2021

Editor's Note: These whiskies were provided to us as review samples by Balblair. This in no way, per [our editorial policies](#), influenced the final outcome of this review. It should also be noted that by clicking the buy links in this article our site receives a small referral payment which helps to support, but not influence, our editorial and other costs. On the bank of the Dornoch Firth sits one of Scotland's oldest distilleries— Balblair. Founded in 1790, the original site was abandoned two years later to move production closer to the railway. Balblair Distillery [operated under the Ross family](#) for a whole century until Alexander Cowan took over. Sadly, like most distilleries at the beginning of the 20th century, Balblair shuttered.

[World War II reshaped the whisky industry](#), when Winston Churchill authorized the exportation of the brown liquor overseas. However, Churchill was already [wheeling and dealing with Joseph Kennedy](#) before the end of Prohibition. So at this time, 'Bertie' Cumming, the owner of Old Pulteney, put Balblair back into use.

Balblair has changed hands several times since the 1970s but is presently owned by International Beverage Holdings. In 2007, they made the move to release Balblair as a vintage whisky. After new branding with a contemporary flair, the [Highland distillery](#) launched [its range of age statement expressions](#). This is their core collection, and they also have a travel collection.

There are [four age statements available](#); the 12-, 15-, 18-, and 25-year-old. Below, you will see our review of these whiskies based on centuries of tradition.



Balblair Core Collection (image via Balblair)

Tasting Notes: Balblair 12 Year Old

Vital Stats: 46% ABV. Highland single malt matured in ex-bourbon and double fired American oak casks. Natural colored and non-chill filtered. 750ml ~\$70.

Appearance: Pale gold

Nose: Damp earth like garden mulch hits the nose first. Next up is smoke, the kind that comes from a wet pile of leaves and grass. Soot and burnt orange meet in the middle, while mint and clean linen follow up at the end.

Palate: The whisky has a watered-down mouthfeel. It is quite bland in flavor, however it is bold with smoke. The faint sweetness comes from honey. There are some touches of black pepper, but other than that there is only an essence of fruit.

Final Thoughts: For a 12-year-old whisky, there are far more whiskies of the same age that taste better. This particular whisky of the core Balblair collection is comparable to a tangerine La Croix because the flavor is so subdued. It goes down a little harshly because of the ABV. Overall it is a mediocre single malt, and for me, it comes in last place of the age statements. If making cocktails that call for scotch, then the 12-year-old is a good choice.

Score: 3/5

Tasting Notes: Balblair 15 Year Old

Vital Stats: 46% ABV. Highland single malt matured in ex-bourbon casks and finished in first-fill Spanish oak butts. Natural colored and non-chill filtered. 750ml ~\$120.

Appearance: Dark amber

Nose: Oatmeal mixed with cinnamon brown sugar is the first thing I notice. There seems to be a sour tinge to it, almost like over-fermentation. Dried apricot and clove come through in the middle. Dried wood rounds out the end.

Palate: The mouthfeel is both chewy and soft. It is spicy from the clove that comes off the nose. It is dry with oak but does not make the mouth pucker. Black pepper and cinnamon are bold. The smoke is not as brazen like it is in the 12-year-old. On the finish, garden soil provides an earthy taste.

Final Thoughts: Of the aged statements from Balblair, the 15-year-old ranks as the top whisky in the collection. It offers more flavor while keeping a soft mouthfeel. With a few drops of water, the baking spices mellow out.

Score: 4.5/5

Tasting Notes: Balblair 18 Year Old

Vital Stats: 46% ABV. Highland single malt matured in ex-bourbon casks and finished in first-fill Spanish oak butts. Natural colored and non-chill filtered. 750ml ~\$210.

Appearance: Amber

Nose: Honey greets the nose at the beginning. Orange, reminiscent of marmalade, mingles with cinnamon almost like a picturesque breakfast of the best french toast. However, there is a small touch of acetone underlying the whisky. Clove and mint slip in at the end.

Palate: The whisky has a soft mouthfeel and is light. It is overly oaky, but also, the whisky is harsh with nail polish remover. That goes away quickly leaving a slight bit of smoke. The dram mainly reminds me of a damp forest floor.

Final Thoughts: The nose is far more interesting, but it is a step above the 12-year-old. It has some harsh elements, but with a few drops of water they ease. On the other hand, water and ice numb any detectable flavor that is not oak.

Score: 3.5/5

Tasting Notes: Balblair 25 Year Old

Vital Stats: 46% ABV. Highland single malt matured in ex-bourbon casks and reshaped over the years in Spanish oak. Natural colored and non-chill filtered. 750ml ~\$700.

Appearance: Copper

Nose: Cherry and demerara sugar give off a syrupy quality to the dram. Fresh garden mint and toffee meet in the middle. Near the end, the aroma of orange and nutmeg is found.

Palate: The dram has a honey-like sweetness to it but is not syrupy compared to the nose. Orange segment and dried cherry fill out the middle. It is earthy near the end with some peat. However, it has a dry, oaky finish similar to mulch or barkdust.

Final Thoughts: The 25-year-old whisky is better balanced than the 18-year-old. While it offers fruit both on the nose and palate, it has a tad too much oak and earth. Out of the Balblair collection, this age statement comes in second place.

Score: 4/5

A New Distillery Is Set To Be Built On The Shores Of Scotland's Loch Lomond

By [Hannah Kanik](#) / March 10, 2021

The Glen Luss Craft Brewery & Distillery, set to be built on the shores of Scotland's legendary Loch Lomond in the heart of the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park, recently announced its planning application was approved. With this, it is set to be the first experimental brewery and distillery of its kind in that location.

"This is a major milestone in our journey to bring our vision for the First Experimental Brewery and Distillery, on the shores of Loch Lomond, creating craft drinks and experiences to life!" the company said in a [Facebook post](#).

[Plans call for Glen Luss](#) to provide a year-round, all-weather visitor experience to cater for the existing million+ tourists who normally visit the region annually. It aims to actively support sustainable development and provide 26 full-time employment opportunities. The distillery also said it hopes to recruit its workforce from within the Luss and Arden Parish, and provide Modern Apprenticeships to support the development of the local population.



A rendering of the planned Glen Luss distillery (image via Glen Luss)

Glen Luss Distillery will further donate 5% of its yearly profits to a charitable fund for ten years.

"As we reflect on the last year, 2020 played hard ball, and 2021 looks like it will bring its own challenges, but that will not stop us," the company said. "Although COVID has dented our plans we are on course to open to the public and start laying spirit down in the latter part of 2021."

Distillery officials want to reduce the impact of over-tourism by working with local communities to support a local traffic management plan for Luss Village. This includes incorporating a proposed green space and car parking to the south of the township to promote a more walkable experience.

The distillery site will make use of existing buildings within the village, one of which will be the distillery production side. It is here Glen Luss will produce what it says is "a single malt Scotch whisky, a locally sourced botanical gin, aged and new make rums, small batch vodka and craft beers."

One Year, 70 Scotches, and My Father-in-Law

Some people mastered a new skill in quarantine. We got really good at drinking—together. And now we're not so much in-laws, just family.

By [Kelly MacLean](#) - Mar 5, 2021



GETTY IMAGES

Standing on a verdant sea cliff in the Scottish Highlands, the briny breeze in our hair, warmed by a blanket of local single malt whisky—that's where we were *supposed* to be. It was March 2020 and, like all travel, our trip to the UK was canceled. My husband and I found

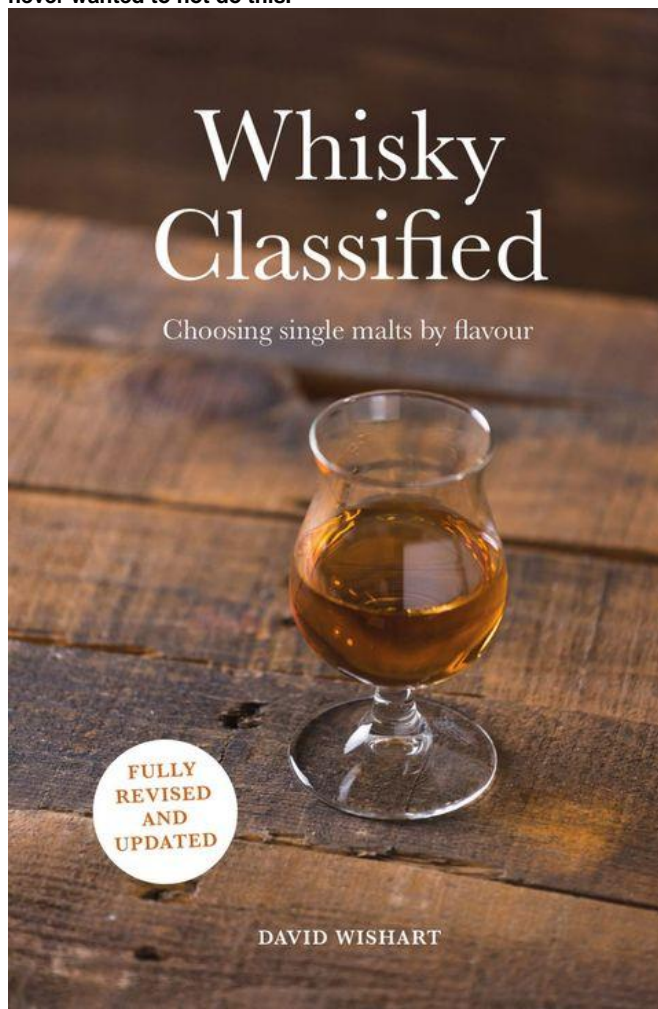
ourselves instead sheltering in place with a toddler, venturing no further than the refrigerator to crack another stress beer. If you've never been in quarantine with a toddler, it's best compared to the movie *Snakes on a Plane*: They're everywhere, they bite, and there's no escape. So when two small bottles of amber liquid appeared on our porch with a note, "Zoom scotch tasting," we welcomed the distraction.

We live around the corner from my father-in-law, who'd long been trying to recruit us for the nerdiest possible version of a drinking club: [a single malt scotch study group](#). We were ambushed by scotch documentaries and an alphabetical whisky classification system. A daunting grid appeared with axes like "smokey/peaty" and "winey/sherry." This was no surprise coming from my father-in-law, whose grocery list is printed and collated, organized by aisle, alphabetically. As someone who sometimes forgets to buy groceries entirely, I had no hope of mastering the painstaking details that surely awaited.

related stories

Then lockdown hit, and I wasn't about to turn down an excuse to start drinking early. Unlike us, my father-in-law was weirdly prepared for this pandemic—he worked from home, had a monthly meal calendar, and was an accomplished handwasher. As a bachelor at the peak of his career, he could also afford a hefty drinks budget. So my husband and I parked our kid in front of Elmo and poured the scotch.

We let it breathe, one minute for every year it spent in the barrel; twelve is a lot of minutes to stare down your first drink of the day in quarantine. We began to "nose." One sniff ferried me from the stuffy confines of house arrest to the shores of a Scottish isle, perfumed with sea-funk, tar, and salt. The first smokey sip warmed my belly like a cup of tea wishes it could. Tasting notes and bad Scottish accents flew. We found ourselves pouring a second dram, carefree for the first time in days, immersed in something other than apocalyptic headlines—something beautiful. I never wanted to not do this.



Whisky Classified: Choosing Single Malts by Flavour

We agreed (tipsily) to the mammoth task of tasting 85 of the world's best single malt scotches. We watched *Scotch: A Golden Dream* on Netflix and studied the scotch tasting bible, [Whisky Classified](#). Particularly delightful was the "tasting notes" section, which read like the back of a Bertie Botts Every Flavor Beans package: nail varnish, christmas cake,

gun oil, butterscotch, waxed raincoat, venison (leave it to the Scots to find deer in their whisky), and, of course, vomit. We came up with our own descriptions, agreeing that Laphroaig 10 Year smelled like riding in a tuk tuk in Delhi traffic. My husband made use of all those college poetry classes, finding notes of “barbecued sushi roll” and “mushrooms in a rotting tree,” as I made use of all those acting classes by not laughing.

For this outlander, the world of scotch was not intuitive. The names contained enough grunting noises and disregarded consonants to make French seem logical. And for every scotch there was another that sounded exactly like it. For Ardmore there was Aultmore. For Bunnahabhain there was Bruichladdich (say that after four fingers). Seemingly half of them started with “Glen.” We studied as if for a weekly test, which it became as my father-in-law left unlabeled mini bottles on our doorstep for pop quizzes. I mostly failed, but finally managed to blindly identify the letter group of a single malt. It was a “Cluster J,” the kind of [peaty, smokey whisky](#) that’s like a punch in the mouth from [Jamie Fraser](#). Once you know it, you can’t unknow it.

Every Sunday was the same: Eight ounces of single malt appeared on our doorstep, proof we’d survived another week of lockdown. Sometimes we got a bonus round midweek. The project made us feel like we were worldly sophisticates, rather than hanging-by-a-thread parents drinking a considerable amount of whisky.

Summer approached and our scotches became lighter, more citrusy and floral, served over a hunk of cocktail ice at my father-in-law’s house, which had been transformed into a scotch hoarder’s den. Eventually, we formed a pod with immediate family. This made for an interesting social life, because every gathering was the same exact 11 people. Thanksgiving? Invite the fam. Birthday? Invite the fam. Super Bowl? Pretend we have Covid.

My father-in-law brought a bottle of whisky to every celebration, expanding our project to include my blended, Scottish-descended side—everyone talking and laughing over each other, kids squealing, way too much food, and plenty of scotch. He could be found grilling my sister about the dram du jour or cornering her husband with a tutorial on the whisky ABCs. My mom mostly stuck to her Kendall Jackson chardonnay, which was clearly *killing* him. We listened to my half sisters’ father, who is an actual Scot, share stories of his childhood in the Highlands. We tasted whisky from the various regions of our ancestors. And when my sister, who lives in the UK, was trapped there for the holidays, we sent her a sherried, Christmassy scotch with a note: “There with you in spirits.”

Along the way, my husband catalogued the bottles with a homemade tasting form. We now have a novella’s worth of pages, and my father-in-law has created his own digital whisky database, categorizing and ranking every scotch. He has a twice-airtight library of leftover hooch (alphabetized, I’m sure). It just might be the most well-documented drinking binge in history.

At a fancy bottle shop, I was told, “I can’t help you. You clearly know more about scotch than I do.”

Five thousand dollars in scotch later—in hindsight, that’s a lot to freeloading off one guy—we are back to the peated, medicinal scotches that insulate late winter blues. As we approach a year since that first lockdown, we’ll open our 70th (are you worried yet?) bottle. My son has officially spent half his life in some level of isolation. He has hugged more friends virtually than in person and tenses when strangers get close. He runs around with his sippy cup saying, “This is my scotch!” (No, we haven’t hit that stage of quarantine. Yet.) None of this is normal. At the beginning of lockdown, people posted memes to the effect of, “If you don’t master a new skill, you’re a piece of shit.” Well, we got really good at drinking scotch. And really good at smelling scotch. And really good at talking about drinking and/or smelling scotch. We drank our way across Scotland, through an ocean of whiskey.

In the single malt section of a fancy bottle shop, I was recently told, “I can’t help you. You clearly know more about scotch than I do.” This was too much for my proud father-in-law, who is triumphant to have turned me into a scotch connoisseur at last. I like the surprise I see on people’s faces when they find out I know about what has somehow remained an old white guy hobby. Mostly, I’m grateful he found us a common language, a goal, something to do while stranded on the desert island that was 2020. That we no longer feel so much like in-laws, just family. On the downside, I’m forever ruined for liquor in my price range.

My father-in-law got the vaccine and one day, we will too. We’ll take that trip to the Highlands, and this time he’ll be in tow. As we stand on the sea cliffs sipping our scotch, we’ll have a far more intimate appreciation for the golden dram: the peat, the heather, the smoke; the freedom to roam. We’ll have earned our moment in the soggy Scottish sun—if the remaining months of research don’t do us in, first.

Some Outstanding Scotches I Can’t Help But Mention



Laphroaig 16 Year Old

[drizly.com](#)

[CHECK PRICE](#)

Laphroaig 10 Year Old will sock you with everything Scotland’s got. But the extra six years in the barrel make for a calmer, more refined Laphroaig: It’s been to grad school, traveled the world, and has even started showering. The finish is an epic unto itself.

Nose: Oolang, charcoal, ginger, jasmine, dock rope

Palate: Grilled lemon, sea spray, salted vanilla ice cream



Ledaig 10 Year Old

[flaviar.com](#)

[CHECK PRICE](#)

Tobermory is one of the oldest distilleries in Scotland and the only one on the Isle of Mull. Ledaig transports you to a quaint seaside village with weathered houses, rotting docks, productive chimneys, and probably an irresistible murder mystery. The older vintages are transcendent if you feel like shelling out.

Nose: Beach bonfire, summer rain, moss

Palate: Brine, iodine, jasmine, eucalyptus



Kilchoman Sanaig
flaviar.com

[CHECK PRICE](#)

As far as scotch goes, Sanaig is a toddler. Founded in 2005, the distillery is younger than most respectable single malts. But don't underestimate a juvenile's ability to outshine older and more established vintages, even when it comes to scotch; this one is more highly rated than most double-digit scotches.

Nose: Ocean air, medicinal, molasses, baking spices

Palate: Chocolate, cinnamon-raisin toast, maple syrup, juniper berry



Inchmurrin 12 Year Old
thewhiskyexchange.com

[CHECK PRICE](#)

From the bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond comes light and springy Inchmurrin. Refreshing, perhaps even hydrating, it's the coconut water of scotch. It doesn't taste bad-for-you enough to be whisky, but you'll get over that. The finish will walk you all the way down the aisle, where you'll want to marry it.

Nose: Hay, grapefruit, lilac, fennel, buttercream

Palate: Bell pepper, heather, almond, iced lemon cake



Glenfarclas 10
flaviar.com

[CHECK PRICE](#)

The price of a single malt scotch says about as much for its character as a seventh grader's popularity. At \$50, Glenfarclas 10 is an aperitif-style scotch you'll want to stock up on. Sure, the Glenfarclas 17 is phenomenal, but it just isn't worth more than two bottles of the 10 year.

Nose: Orange blossom, apricot, honey

Palate: Christmas cake, sherry, lemon

Scottish government admits no evidence for bar closures

5th March, 2021 by Nicola Carruthers

The Scottish government has failed to produce evidence to support Covid-19 restrictions on the country's hospitality sector, a trade group has found.



The Scottish Hospitality Group said the government has provided no evidence to justify on-trade restrictions

Trade body the Scottish Hospitality Group (SHG) submitted a freedom of information (FOI) request to the government in November, asking for any evidence to back up restrictions placed on the on-trade from 1 March 2020.

The SHG said the aim of the FOI request was to find out exactly what information the government had used to make policy decisions about Covid-19 restrictions on trading for the industry. After chasing the government several times for a response in December, the government answered a month later and said it could not reply as it had potentially 3,000 documents to consider for the request. After the

SHG restricted the scope of its request, the government said the number of documents was 2,000.

On 23 February, the government responded with one document featuring minutes of a meeting held with external parties.

A new response from the government to SHG read: "Neither the Scottish government, the chief medical officer's Advisory Group nor SAGE have produced evidence papers on a sectoral basis. Instead we have used scientific evidence on transmission coupled with the social and economic benefits of particular sectors, which ministers have used to make decisions."

'No specific evidence'

SHG spokesperson Stephen Montgomery said: "After nearly four months we have finally secured the truth that the government has no specific evidence to justify the restrictions placed on our industry. It's also deeply disappointing to see no thought given to the knock-on effects of closing hospitality, such as driving people towards house parties, which we know has been a major issue."

"Incredibly, the government is asking us to believe that there was no email correspondence with the office of the national clinical director about the evidence base for restrictions on hospitality, considered by them to be one of the main transmission vectors."

The SHG said the government's key points in its response related to documents that can be accessed by the public.

The SHG referenced one point from a government document that read: "Up to 15th July, hospitality was closed. Following entry into phase three of the route map, hospitality reopened. Our modelling of R [rate of infection] at that time shows that around three weeks after the opening of hospitality, R rose to 1 and above. While this cannot be entirely attributed to hospitality, it is likely to have played a significant role."

The SHG said there was no evidence given for this 'very broad and vague assumption'.

In addition, another point given by the government was a paper that combined the 'supposed effects' in the on-trade with a range of venues, such as gyms, churches and cinemas. The SHG said this paper was out of date.

Furthermore, the SHG is appealing a refusal to provide some information protected by personal data exclusions, asking instead for these details to be redacted.

Montgomery noted that the government could have worked together with the industry to implement measures that would protect health and jobs.

"We have repeatedly offered the government different solutions at their request and proactively ourselves," he said. "Now that we're approaching an easing of restrictions, there's still time for the government to listen to businesses and make sensible changes to the levels system to give us a viable trading chance."

"These levels must not leave us disadvantaged to our colleagues in England. If we don't get this right now, and allowed to open soon, we will be facing a fourth, and fifth winter."

Last month, Scotland's first minister said the reopening of non-essential retail and hospitality businesses [could commence from the last week in April](#) if certain conditions are met.

The SHG said it would be "extremely frustrating for operators in Scotland" to see their counterparts in England preparing to reopen their businesses, while they are unable to prepare "for a return to normality".

The *Django Unchained* star's takeover of BSB coincides with a bottle redesign to signal a 'new era' for the brand and its two expressions: BSB-Brown Sugar Bourbon and BSB 103.

Foxx will be responsible for the creative direction of the brand and will lend his experience as an entrepreneur to grow BSB.

"I've always lived by the rule that life is short and you need to go out and do what you want to do," said Foxx. "Owning a brand that brings sweet life to the party has always been a goal and with BSB we're making it happen."

"Before the quarantine I watched bottles of BSB disappear at all my celebrations and knew this was a brand I wanted to bring into the spotlight. Anyone who tries BSB is going to love it just like I do."

BSB was established in Washington state in 2015 and is currently available throughout the US. It is distributed by Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits.

BSB-Brown Sugar Bourbon retails for RRP US\$21.99 per 750ml bottle, while BSB 103 is priced at RRP US\$29.99.

Sean M Penn, CEO of BSB Spirits, said: "We are extremely fortunate that Jamie was introduced to our brand at one of his legendary parties. I have no doubt that Jamie will lead BSB to new heights."

US suspends tariff on single malt Scotch

4th March, 2021 by Nicola Carruthers

The US has agreed to temporarily remove tariffs on UK goods, including single malt Scotch whisky, for four months.



The Scotch whisky sector has suffered more than £500,000 in losses due to US tariffs

The tariffs on Scotch whisky were introduced due to an ongoing dispute between the US and the EU regarding plane manufacturers Airbus and Boeing. [Since single malts were subjected to the tariffs](#), exports of Scotch to the US have [plummeted by 35%](#).

The two nations have agreed a new 'joint approach' to the trade conflict, with the US dropping tariffs for four months in a bid to reach a 'negotiated solution' to the 16-year spat. The measure will come into force on Monday 8 March, backdated to today (4 March).

UK prime minister Boris Johnson said: "From Scotch whisky distillers to Stilton makers, businesses across the UK will benefit from the US decision today to suspend tariffs in this dispute."

"It shows what the UK can do as an independent trading nation, striking deals that back our businesses and support free and fair trade."

The move follows the UK government's announcement in December 2020 that it [would suspend the tariffs](#) that the European Union (EU) imposed on US\$4 billion of US goods as part of the long-running Airbus and Boeing dispute, signalling good news for rum, vodka, brandy and vermouth from the States. In January this year, the UK and US [failed to reach a 'mini-deal'](#) that could have removed tariffs on single malts.

The UK government said its initial removal of tariffs was a 'show of good faith'.

UK international trade secretary Liz Truss said: "The benefits will be felt across our nation, especially in Scotland, where Scotch whisky distillers will be able to sell at lower prices in the United States, their most valuable market."

"The easier it is for Americans to buy a bottle of Macallan, Talisker or Glenfiddich, the more money those producers will have to invest in their businesses, their staff and futures."

"Today's agreement shows that both the UK and the US are determined to work together to build back better and take our trading relationship to new heights."

Jamie Foxx acquires Brown Sugar Bourbon

4th March, 2021 by Melita Kiely

Award-winning actor and musician Jamie Foxx has acquired flavoured whiskey brand Brown Sugar Bourbon (BSB) for an undisclosed sum.



Jamie Foxx has acquired BSB-Brown Sugar Bourbon

The UK and US are currently working towards a trade deal, which could remove almost £500 million (US\$700m) in tariffs on UK exports to the States, according to the UK government.

Industry response

Trade group the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) welcomed the announcement, which will allow businesses to focus on their recovery from the pandemic.

The SWA's chief executive Karen Betts said: "The tariff on single malt Scotch whisky exports to the US has been doing real damage to Scotch whisky in the sixteen months it has been in place, with exports to the US falling by 35%, costing companies over half a billion pounds.

"So today, everyone in our industry – from small companies to large – is breathing a sigh of relief. Suspending these tariffs – stemming from a transatlantic trade dispute that had nothing to do with us – and a return to tariff-free trade with the US means livelihoods and communities across Scotland will be protected.

"It means that companies can now really focus on recovery – on building back the American market as well as on building back global exports hit by the coronavirus pandemic."

Betts added that the two nations must "work hard on finding a negotiated settlement to this long-running aerospace dispute" and resolve the aluminium and steel tariffs that currently impacts American whiskey exports to the UK.

Former US president Donald Trump locked the US in various trade wars in 2018 after imposing 25% and 10% tariffs on steel and aluminium imports respectively from 1 June 2018.

Tariffs curbed American whiskey exports by 53% to the UK and 38% to the EU since they were imposed in 2018, the Distilled Spirits Council of the US (Discus) said. In June 2021, EU tariffs on American whiskey will rise to 50%.

Discus also praised the temporary removal of tariffs, but said it was disappointed that the UK's tariff on American whiskey remained in place. "The US and UK governments' commitment to de-escalate trade tensions represents a fresh start to trade relations under the Biden administration and is a hopeful sign that a resolution to the tariffs on US and UK spirits may be in reach.

"American whiskey exports to the UK, our fourth largest market, have declined by 53%, from US\$150m to US\$71m since the imposition of tariffs (2018-2020).

"We urge the US and UK to build on this positive momentum by negotiating an agreement to simultaneously eliminate retaliatory tariffs on all distilled spirits, which will benefit hospitality businesses on both sides of the Atlantic that are struggling to recover and rebuild from the global pandemic."

Diageo, the world's largest Scotch whisky distiller, also welcomed the move, and said it hoped for a permanent tariff removal.

Diageo CEO Ivan Menezes said: "Today is a very good day for Scotch and Scotland. We recognise the government's tireless efforts, using the UK's newly independent trade policy, to deliver the suspension and hopefully in time, a permanent end to these punitive tariffs.

"We pay particular thanks to the prime minister, Liz Truss, Alister Jack and their teams for speedily negotiating this truce with the new US administration. Final resolution of the aerospace dispute, combined with the announcement of a continued [freeze on spirits duty in yesterday's budget](#), will safeguard thousands of jobs across Scotland and the UK."

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 "KSMS2021RDF", 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

Roberto Di Fazio, President

827 Old Colony Road

Kingston, Ontario, K7P 1S1, Canada

613-532-5285

rdifazio04@gmail.com

<http://www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com>



25 Of The Most Expensive Whiskies In The World

By [Nino Kilgore-Marchetti](#) / February 1, 2016

This list is updated as of March 1, 2021.

You ever wonder what the most expensive whiskies on the market currently cost on average per bottle when you line them up one against another? The fine folks over at [wine-searcher.com](#) maintain one such list of some of the most expensive whiskies currently for sale in the world. This list, updated regularly, is based upon information from the huge network of online retailers they tie into globally, and it is now presented here for your consideration, courtesy of their hard working staff.



This Balvenie 50 year old Scotch is typical of a whisky that might appear in this list. (image via The Balvenie)
Note that this list is based on average prices excluding tax.

The Top 25 Most Expensive Whiskies		Avg. Price (USD)
1	The Macallan Lalique 55 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland	\$173,895
2	The Macallan Lalique 50 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland	\$168,447
3	The Macallan Lalique IV 60 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland	\$135,368
4	The Macallan Lalique 62 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland	\$125,090
5	The Macallan Lalique 72 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland	\$122,860
6	The Macallan 'The Red Collection' 71 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland	\$120,867
7	The Macallan 50 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland	\$114,858
8	The Macallan Lalique VI 65 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland	\$108,331
9	The Macallan 52 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland	\$106,562

	The Top 25 Most Expensive Whiskies	Avg. Price (USD)
10	<u>The Macallan ‘The Red Collection’ 50 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland</u>	\$96,774
11	<u>Bowmore ‘Black Bowmore’ The Last Cask 50 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Islay, Scotland</u>	\$81,127
12	<u>Karuizawa Vintage 50 Year Old Single Cask Malt Whisky, Japan</u>	\$80,125
13	<u>The Macallan Millenium 50 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland</u>	\$79,739
14	<u>The Dalmore 50 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Highlands, Scotland</u>	\$62,587
15	<u>Karuizawa Vintage Aqua of Life 50 Year Old Single Cask Malt Whisky, Japan</u>	\$55,916
16	<u>Hibiki 35 Year Old Blended Whisky, Japan</u>	\$47,563
17	<u>The Balvenie 50 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside, Scotland</u>	\$42,734
18	<u>Bowmore 52 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Islay, Scotland</u>	\$41,471
19	<u>The Macallan Fine & Rare Vintage Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland</u>	\$40,099
20	<u>Gordon & MacPhail Generations Mortlach 75 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside, Scotland</u>	\$38,353
21	<u>Glenfiddich ‘Rare Collection’ 50 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside, Scotland</u>	\$35,477
22	<u>The Macallan 40 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland</u>	\$32,844
23	<u>The Macallan Select Reserve Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland</u>	\$32,232
24	<u>The Macallan ‘The Red Collection’ 40 Year Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Speyside – Highlands, Scotland</u>	\$31,973
25	<u>Bowmore ‘Black Bowmore’ Finest Single Malt Scotch Whisky, Islay, Scotland</u>	\$30,389