

# Kingston Single Malt Society

[www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com](http://www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com)

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

DECEMBER 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Volume 15 Number 6a No 186



## COST OF THE MALTS

**GLASGOW DISTILLERY 1770 THE ORIGINAL BOTTLING** LCBO 779564 | 500 mL bottle **Price \$105.95**  
Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

**GLASGOW DISTILLERY 1770 PEATED** LCBO 779565 | 500 mL bottle **Price \$105.95**  
Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

**GLASGOW DISTILLERY 1770 TRIPLE DISTILLED** LCBO 779566 | 500 mL bottle **Price \$105.95**  
Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

**KILCHOMAN SANAIG 2020 RELEASE** LCBO 779564 | 700 mL bottle **Price \$183.95**  
Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

**KILCHOMAN EX-BOURBON TRACE BOURBON BARREL 8 YEAR OLD SPECIALLY SELECTED FOR ALBERTA, CANADA CASK #15/2013; Bottle# 173/252; Date Filled: 24.01.2013; Date Bottled: 26.02.2021; 20PPM** LCBO 839214 | 700 mL bottle **Price \$195.95**  
Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 57.1% Alcohol/Vol.

**KILCHOMAN LOCH GORM 2021 RELEASE; ONE OF 17000 Bottles** LCBO 779564 | 700 mL bottle **Price \$164.95**  
Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

## MENU

### Nosings:

GLASGOW DISTILLERY 1770 THE ORIGINAL  
GLASGOW DISTILLERY 1770 PEATED  
GLASGOW DISTILLERY 1770 TRIPLE DISTILLED  
(introduced by: Chantaille Buczynski)

Soup: Butternut Squash & Double Smoked Bacon

2<sup>nd</sup> Course: Smoked Cheddar Cheese Puffs with Sofrito

### Nosings:

KILCHOMAN SANAIG 2020 RELEASE  
KILCHOMAN EX-BOURBON TRACE BOURBON BARREL 8 YO  
KILCHOMAN LOCH GORM 2021 RELEASE  
(introduced by: Tim Barber)

### Choice of Main Course Entree:

Roasted Turkey, Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Chorizo & Sage Dressing, Heirloom Carrots, Gravy and Cranberry Sauce  
Or

Brown Sugar and Dijon Glazed Ham, Pommes Anna,  
French Beans, Creamy Chardonnay Garlic Sauce

Dessert: Cranberry Cake

## NOVEMBER - KSMS Financial Statement

(Money from 46 November attendees @ \$90)	= \$4140.00
November dinner 46 persons =	= \$2769.88
(Money remaining for buying Single Malt)	= \$1370.12
Cost of Single Malts:	= \$1127.70
Cost of Pours per Person = \$28.19	
Money for Heels	= \$140.00
KSMS Monthly operational balance	= \$382.42
Cost per person (All inclusive)	= \$84.73

## Upcoming Dinner Dates

Monday January 24<sup>th</sup> 2022 - Robbie Burns Dinner  
Monday January 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 - Robbie Burns Dinner  
Monday February 28<sup>th</sup> 2022 - Islands / Islay  
Monday March 14<sup>th</sup> 2022 - Irish / Lowland / Highland  
Monday April 11<sup>th</sup> 2022 - Bunnahabhain Dinner  
Monday May 30<sup>th</sup> 2022 - Campbeltown / Highlands  
Monday June 20<sup>th</sup> 2022 - June BBQ - Cigar Malts & Sherry  
Monday July 25<sup>th</sup> 2022 - Speyside / Highlands  
Friday August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 - 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Premium Night  
Monday September 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022 - Campbeltown / Lowland / Speyside / Highlands / Islands / Islay  
Monday October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 -  
Monday November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2022 -  
Monday December 12<sup>th</sup> 2022 - Christmas Dinner

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## Heineken to buy majority stake in Distell

15 NOVEMBER 2021 By Nicola Carruthers

Brewing giant Heineken has agreed to buy a 65% stake in South African drinks group Distell for €2.2 billion (US\$2.5bn), excluding the Scotch whisky business.



Heineken will own Amarula liqueur through the purchase of a majority stake in Distell

Dutch firm Heineken and Amarula liqueur owner Distell [first entered into discussions over a potential takeover deal](#) in May 2021.

If approved, the transaction will include an internal restructure of Distell to create two new businesses: Newco and Capevin.

Newco will combine Distell's portfolio of spirits, wine, cider and ready-to-drink beverages with Heineken's Southern Africa and export markets business, which includes Namibia Breweries.

Distell's spirits portfolio includes South African whisky brands Bains and Three Ships, Cruz vodka and Klipdrift brandy.

Capevin will include the company's remaining assets, including its Scotch whisky business, consisting of the Bunnahabhain, Deanston and Tobermory brands.

As part of the agreement, Heineken will own a minimum 65% stake in Newco, while Distell's largest shareholder Remgro will retain control of Capevin.

Distell said this would create a 'world class, unlisted, Southern African-focused, alcoholic beverages entity with a leading international beer and cider portfolio'. Furthermore, the combined business will have a 'significant presence' in nearby African markets.

'Formidable' beverage company

Richard Rushton, CEO of Distell, called the deal a 'major milestone'.

He continued: "The offer is testament to the strength of Distell's leading position in South Africa and growth in select African markets, alongside the value of our brands and people providing the potential to immediately unlock significant value for our shareholders."

"Together, this partnership has the potential to leverage the strength of Heineken's global footprint with our leading brands to create a formidable, diverse beverage company for Africa."

"We will have a stronger route to market with a unique multi-category portfolio, furthering our sustainable growth trajectory and ability to compete on scale."

"I am excited for what lies ahead as we look to combine our strong and popular brands and highly complementary geographical footprints to create a world class African company in the alcohol beverage sector."

"Our combined entity will grow our local expertise and insights to better serve consumers across the region. Heineken and Distell collectively have family-owned values with strong legacies in South Africa and are committed to continuing to play a strong role in addressing critical social and economic imperatives in the country." Newco will also be involved in projects and partnerships that have an impact on behavioural change and reduce alcohol-related harm, along with investment in responsible drinking campaigns.

Heineken's CEO and chairman of the executive board, Dolf van den Brink, added: "We are very excited to bring together three strong businesses to create a regional beverage champion, perfectly positioned to capture significant growth opportunities in Southern Africa. Distell is a highly regarded, resilient business with leading brands, a talented workforce and a strong track record of innovation and growth in Africa."

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## Teeling launches 30YO whiskey

15 NOVEMBER 2021 By Alice Brooker

Irish whiskey producer Teeling has expanded its Vintage Reserve Collection with a 30-year-old single malt, the oldest release in the series.



The 30-year-old whiskey will be available to purchase for US\$2,199.99. Teeling Distillery will release 4,000 bottles of its new Vintage Reserve 30-year-old globally.

The limited edition single malt whiskey was distilled 1991, and was matured in Bourbon casks before it was given nine years of extra maturation in Sauternes wine casks.

Jack Teeling, founder of the Teeling Whiskey Company, said: "We are extremely proud to be able to release some of the oldest ever bottlings of Irish single malt with our Vintage Reserve Collection."

"Each release has proven that Irish whiskey can match and beat any whiskey from around the world."

The unveiling of the 30-year-old follows the launch of Teeling's 24-year-old and [28-year-old](#) in the Vintage Reserve Collection.

"Our latest Teeling 30-year-old single malt is a perfect representation of everything good about Irish whiskey – from its robust nose to its fully rounded and balanced array of flavours," Teeling added.

"We are very proud of this whiskey and we hope it can continue to help forge our reputation as a truly world class whiskey producer."

The dual maturation of the whiskey results in 'significant depth of fruit flavours'. This is said to balance the 'hint of smoke', which derives from the use of peated malt as well as oak influence from the ageing process.

Bottled at 46% ABV, the liquid is non-chill-filtered and will be available from this month at Teeling Whiskey distillery in Dublin, before launching in the US in January 2022 as part of its global rollout. In the States, it will be available to purchase from liquor retailers in California, Nevada, Texas, Illinois, New York, Massachusetts and Florida.

The 30-year-old will retail for US\$2,199.99.



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## Bladnoch Releases New Collection Of Whiskies In The US

By [Hannah Kanik](#) / November 15, 2021

[Bladnoch](#) recently announced the release of three new single malt Scotch whiskies in the United States: Vinaya, 11-Year-Old and 14-Year-Old.

This new core range was created by Master Distiller Nick Savage [for the 204-year-old Lowland distillery](#). Each expression in the classic collection showcases what's described as the signature Lowland style and range of flavors the historic distillery is known for — floral, spice and fruits with a hint of chocolate.

'Vinaya' is a Sanskrit word meaning respect and gratitude, which pays homage to the original founders and the distillery's heritage. It is the second non-age statement single malt whisky in the portfolio, following the 2018 release of Samara.



*Bladnoch Vinaya (image via Bladnoch)*

The 11 and 14-Year-Olds are aged single malts that will be annual releases in the ongoing portfolio. The Vinaya is matured in a unique combination of ex-Bourbon and ex-Sherry casks, never before released by the distillery. First-fill ex-bourbon barrels, noted the distillers, highlight the floral notes from the distillery character along with refreshing, citrus sweetness.

First-fill ex-sherry casks then add a subtle, rich body to the whisky and mouthfeel experience. Vinaya is presented at 46.7% ABV and has official tasting notes of fresh apple, sweet floral grass, and hints of chocolate. The finish is light and refreshing.

The 11 Year Old is a 100% ex-bourbon cask matured expression that reflects traditional Lowland style single malts. It is described as smooth and refreshing with a lemon gold color. It has notes of floral, sweet honey and fresh-cut apples.

The 14-Year-Old is also a Lowland single malt matured in ex-oloroso sherry casks. It has hints of sweet spices and dried fruits and chocolate, with a rich, long finish.

"Releasing three new products simultaneously in the US market is extremely exciting. The release of Bladnoch Vinaya, 11 Year Old, and 14 Year Old offers a breadth of experiences, and it is the start of a range that not only demonstrates the quality of Bladnoch whiskies, but also the accessibility for everyone to find their perfect dram," said Dr. Nick Savage, Bladnoch's Master Distiller, in a prepared statement. Pricing is set at \$54.99 for Vinaya, \$64.99 for the 11 Year Old and \$109.99 for the 14 Year Old. They are available for purchase at select retailers in New York, New Jersey, Georgia, Illinois, Texas, Colorado, California, and Washington state.

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## MR PORTER Launches Its First Custom Scotch with Glenfiddich

[Adam Santa Maria](#) - Oct 25, 2021

There's nothing quite like two luxury brands teaming up and making a limited-edition product. Nowadays, it seems commonplace to see unlikely brands collaborate to make an exquisite product, and today is no different. The brands are MR PORTER, the ultimate online curator of luxury menswear, and Glenfiddich, the legendary Speyside [Scotch Whisky](#) distillery. This wonderfully unexpected collaboration has yielded a limited release single malt that's sure to wow the palates of anyone lucky enough to get their hands on a bottle.

For a little over a decade, MR PORTER has been a premier source for luxury menswear. The online retailer has garnered awards and worldwide acclaim as the go-to destination for some of the most popular fashion brands on the planet. Their creative director and whisky aficionado, Ben Palmer, teamed up with Glenfiddich's Malt Master, Brian Kinsman, to curate a single malt that would parallel the elevated taste that both of these iconic brands embody. The two tastemakers worked in tandem to hand-select the mix of New American oak, [ex bourbon](#), and European oak sherry casks to create a 20-year-aged single malt with a rich, golden color. This particular single malt is complex on the nose, with notes of vanilla, figs, crystallized ginger, and a hint of cinnamon. Its taste is equally rich and smooth, with a palate consisting of fudge, spiced oak, and caramelized Demerara sugar. Expect a long-lasting sweet finish to cap off this delectably indulgent single malt.

Continuing the bespoke motif of this collaboration, the scotch comes in a white, embossed casing (also designed by Palmer and Kinsman) that proudly features a monogram with the two iconic brand emblems. Given the collector's item status of this collaboration, there are only 1,500 bottles available worldwide, with each retailing at \$425. For the chance to purchase the MR PORTER X Glenfiddich Single Malt, prospective buyers must register their interest on Glenfiddich's website on November 3.

[PURCHASE: \\$425](#)

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## Is This America's Best Single Malt Whiskey?

In Partnership with [Westward Whiskey](#)  
[JACOB OSBORN](#), 24 NOV 2021 | SPONSORED

Spanning key regions and distilleries, American single malt whiskey represents a rapidly growing and promising trend. Just a reminder: “single malt” pertains to whiskey that’s made in a single distillery using water, yeast, and malted grain (traditionally barley). Comparisons to similar output from Scotland, Japan, Ireland, or Tasmania may seem inevitable, but that just means you haven’t tried America’s version yet, as the best of these stunning expressions exist in a class all their own. Amongst the leading single malt distilleries in America, Oregon-based [Westward Whiskey](#) has emerged as an absolute juggernaut. Taking zero shortcuts in their pursuit of perfection, they cultivate a flavour profile that’s quite unlike anything we’ve ever tried. It’s all the result of a unique production process, whereby the distillery brews their mash like a pale ale, distills it like a single malt, and ages it like a bourbon. One sip and you’ll quickly realise why this remains the highest-rated single malt in America. Rarely does a relatively new whiskey deliver such identifiable character as it does here. In the heart of Portland, Westward Whiskey plies their craft. Step 1 is brewing an artisanal American Ale from scratch using locally malted barley, ale yeast, and slow, low-temperature fermentation. Step 2 is distillation in custom low-reflux pot stills that were specifically designed with the goal of transforming fresh Ale into robust whiskey. Step 3 is maturation in new and lightly charred American Oak barrels, which were selected to enhance and accentuate the spirit’s natural characteristics. Step 4 involves blending the barrels in small batches to create a signature flavour profile. Again, it’s hard to overstate just how far this acclaimed distillery has come in relatively little time. Thanks to their careful production process, they’ve churned out a spirit of immediate and delicious distinction. Big notes of malt are counter-balanced by soft vanilla and silky texture whilst the beer-based origins lend an extra layer of rich flavour. Everything comes together on the finish, which delivers bold stout-like notes of coffee and chocolate and lingers on the palate in the best of ways. And that’s just their flagship statement. Currently, Westward Whiskey has three key offerings:



### American Single Malt

The distillery’s [flagship expression](#) stays truest to their initial vision, with a flavour profile that’s equal parts creamy and bold. Robust blasts of malted barley carry through from the nose to the mid-palate, but never to the point of oversaturation. The finish of chocolate and coffee is so instantly recognisable that you’d have no trouble picking this whiskey out during a blind taste test. Also present are notes of fruit, vanilla, tobacco, leather, and spice.

[Buy it here](#)



### American Single Malt Stout Cask

We already detected a stout-like essence from Westward’s flagship single malt, so just imagine what an extra year inside stout beer casks brings to the table. Inspired by both the distillers’ beer-making background and Portland’s thriving craft beer culture, this [single malt expression](#) goes big in every possible direction. Notes of toasted pecan, roasted grain, stone fruit, and milk chocolate trail out on a bold and dry finish.

[Buy it here](#)





### American Single Malt Pinot Noir Cask

Paying homage to Oregon's premier grape varietal, this American Single Malt is matured in pinot noir casks, the result of an exchange with local wineries. Packed full of dense and wondrous flavours like fig, chocolate, truffles, and berries, the whiskey reveals different layers with every sip.

[Buy it here](#)



### A Thriving Tradition

Westward kicked off in 2004 when former beer brewer and winemaker Christian Krogstad set his sights on American single malts. Culling direct inspiration from the Pacific Northwest—which hosts a diverse climate and abundance of natural resources—he took on the role of Master Distiller. At the time, there were approximately three dozen craft distilleries in the USA.

America's whiskey scene has changed in the years since, with over 2,200 independent producers to show for it. But Westward Whiskey stays true to their original template as they continue to draw from the local culture and climate alike. Krogstad and Thomas Mooney—who joined the team as co-founder and CEO in 2011—mature each expression to perfection in Oregon, where hot, dry summers and cool, wet winters make for world-class whiskey.

From humble beginnings to their impressive footprint today, Westward creates a truly unmistakable single malt. The whiskey's mashbill of 100% malted barley is quintessentially Oregonian whilst the single malt status makes it part of both a local tradition and a national niche. Yet

this is definitely no niche product, which helps explain the ongoing awards and growing international reach.

Speaking of international reach, this glorious whiskey is now available in Australia through [Dan Murphy's](#). Pick up a bottle to see what all the fuss is about and to stay ahead of the curve. Try it neat, on the rocks, or in an old-fashioned, and prepare yourself for a flavour experience like no other. Welcome to the pinnacle of America's growing single malt movement.

### Taste Test: The First Biodynamic Single Malt Scotch Shows the Promise and Limitations of Terroir for Whisky Can it actually affect flavor?

By [JONAH FLICKER](#)



Photo: courtesy Bruichladdich

Biodynamic is a well-known buzz word in the wine world, but it hasn't really been applied to [whisky](#) until now. The first two distilleries to tackle the concept have ties that explain why they are at the vanguard. Ireland's Waterford Distillery released the first biodynamic Irish whiskey this fall, so it makes sense that [Bruichladdich](#) would be the first Scottish distillery to follow suit. Mark Reynier, former CEO at [Bruichladdich](#) and now head of Waterford, was instrumental in laying down whisky made from biodynamic barley at the Islay distillery a decade ago. Bruichladdich is known for its intensive explorations into the effects of terroir on whisky by releasing single farm, single vintage whiskies, as well as expressions that are made from one type of barley like the Bere Barley 2011 release. The Biodynamic Project is said to be Scotland's first biodynamic whisky, but what exactly does that mean and how does it taste?

First of all, the term biodynamic in whisky means pretty much the same thing it does in wine—no chemical pesticides or fertilizers were used on the barley, and the soil where it grows is treated as part of an ecosystem that sustains itself through natural processes. But when it comes to whisky, there's a conundrum: the doubters and contrarians argue that the act of distillation negates the effects of terroir, which conceivably could apply to biodynamic practices as well. Yes, this might be an organic whisky made from barley grown sustainably, but can you actually taste the difference? That's difficult to say, although there have been [studies](#) that have provided proof of the effects of terroir, so why not biodynamics? Ultimately maybe it's beside the point, because if the whisky is good and it was made using methods that are environmentally friendly, isn't that a win-win?

And yes, Bruichladdich's Biodynamic Project is a tasty [single malt](#). It was aged for ten years in first-fill bourbon casks and was made from Westminister barley harvested in 2010 at Yatesbury House Farm in Wiltshire, England. This is unusual for Bruichladdich, which always uses Scottish barley to make its whisky, but there are no biodynamic barley producers in Scotland so they had to look elsewhere. The whisky is unpeated and, like all Bruichladdich whiskies, is bottled without chill filtration or any color added. There's a hint of spice on the

palate, but overall this is a lovely soft and sweet whisky with notes of honey, vanilla, peach, pear, raspberry and some caramel on the finish. The point for head distiller Adam Hannett and the Bruichladdich team was twofold. First, there was the sense of experimentation and boundary pushing within the world of [scotch](#) whisky that is often the Bruichladdich MO, as well as the joy of just tinkering with preconceived notions in an industry that has been set in its ways for decades. Then there's the environmental impact, or lack thereof, that biodynamic practices have on the soil and the world at large. The distillery touts a carbon audit that basically said the effects of the biodynamic practices at the farm had a carbon-positive effect—in other words, more carbon was kept in the soil than was emitted. That seems like no small feat given the looming (and very current) effects of climate change. But, as is always the case, flavor and quality of the whisky are paramount, because I doubt even the most eco-conscious distillery would want to promote a crap whisky. Fortunately, in this case, The Biodynamic Project is both good for the environment and good in the glass. Score: 86

excited to offer our customers a glimpse 'behind-the-curtain' and into the experimentations and cask-finishing trials we have been running recently. We have a really passionate and well-informed core customer base and I'm intrigued to see their reaction to these new expressions." Glasgow 1770 Single Malt Scotch Whisky distiller's notes: The 'Ruby Port Cask Finish' balances the sweet and fruity unpeated spirit with notes of strawberries and cream, complete with a sweet spicy finish of pink peppercorns, all gained from the fresh Ruby Port Cask. The 'Triple Distilled Tokaji Cask Finish' uses this decadent Hungarian dessert wine cask to impart sweet and honeyed notes combined with hints of toffee apples, poached pears and apricot preserve to the triple distilled spirit. The 'Sauternes Cask Finish' rounds off the peated whisky in this French dessert wine cask to give complexity and notes of sweet and smoky BBQ sauce, toffee and salted caramel with a deep earthy finish.

Uncover Jura whisky and the incredible island it comes from More than just whisky, Jura embodies the passion of its community. Their dedication and a unique distilling process make this single malt truly one of a kind.



PUBLISHED: FRIDAY 26TH NOVEMBER 2021

THERE'S SOMETHING TO be said about those who just do one thing really well. It's how expertise turns into mastery, and it's how the tiny isle of Jura, Scotland produces their extraordinary single malt scotch whiskies.

Originally opened in 1810 and then reinvigorated in 1963, the Isle of Jura Distillery Co. has been the beating heart and the lifeblood of this isolated island community for decades. Today, 212 big hearts call Jura home, and almost all of them have a family member who either works with the distillery or in whisky-related tourism. With just one road, one pub and one distillery, this is a community wholly dedicated to crafting the finest single malt scotch whisky. Going against a number of obstacles, they brought the tallest stills to the most "un-get-at-able" place, all to make their whisky taste superior.

As the island's major export, whisky is Jura's singular focus. This dedication, combined with an unmatched distillation process, is what has enabled them to create a single malt scotch unlike any other. Rather than making either a peated or unpeated whisky, Jura makes both. They wait until the time is just right, then blend together a heavily-peated and unpeated spirit. This incredibly unique process is what results in their whisky's signature character: bright, smooth and lively, just like the people of Jura who craft this delicious spirit.

The Glasgow Distillery Launches Three New Scotch Single Malts  
By [Gary Carter](#) / November 26, 2021

[The Glasgow Distillery](#) recently unveiled three new, limited-edition releases of its Glasgow 1770 Single Malt Scotch Whisky. They consist of three different whisky styles finished in three different cask types, sourced from three different countries. Each limited edition release is individually numbered and available [on the distillery's website now](#). They are Unpeated Ruby Port Cask Finish, the Triple Distilled Tokaji Cask Finish and the Peated Sauternes Cask Finish.



limited-edition releases of Glasgow 1770 Single Malt Scotch Whisky  
(image via Glasgow Distillery)

The 'Ruby Port Cask Finish' made 467 bottles at 56.2% ABV, 'Tokaji Cask Finish' turned out 380 bottles at 53% ABV, and 'Sauternes Cask Finish' has an outturn of 486 bottles at 53.7% ABV.

Each bottle comes with in-depth detail of the whisky within to showcase what's described as the journey of the spirit from the malt variety used to the distillation style, original cask filling, type of finishing cask used and final bottling date. All three Glasgow 1770 Single Malt Scotch Whiskies are non-chill filtered and natural in color. Liam Hughes, CEO and co-founder of the distillery, said in a prepared statement, "Something that sets us apart from most other distilleries is that we make three very distinct styles of single malt whisky at The Glasgow Distillery. Unpeated, peated and triple distilled spirit is a key feature of our annual production calendar and is characterized within our Glasgow 1770 Signature Range."

He said the goal with these three limited edition releases is to showcase the flexibility and versatility of their single malt by combining the different spirit styles with a range of interesting casks that they've been experimenting with at the distillery for the past couple years.

"I'm really proud to be able to offer these three releases as an insight into what we get to see every day working at the distillery – innovation, experimentation and above all a commitment to quality. I hope everyone who makes a purchase chooses to open and enjoy these really interesting expressions," Hughes added.

Mike Hayward, co-founder and director of Distillery & Brands, said of the different wine casks used to finish the three new releases ... "We're





Starting out its maturation journey in ex-bourbon American oak barrels enhances the new make spirit's light citrus and grassy style. Then, further maturation in hand-selected oak casks from Europe and around the world imparts even more flavour profiles for you to experience and enjoy.

Finishing in Oloroso sherry casks from Jerez de la Frontera, Spain gives the Jura 10 Year Old and the Jura 12 Year Old their sweet characteristics. To gain the layered complexity found in the Jura Seven Wood, a portion of the whisky is split between six different virgin oak casks from all over France. Each of these single malt scotch whiskies is made with the utmost care and craftsmanship by the people of Jura. Named the most "un-get-at-able" place by George Orwell when he spent a few months there writing his classic novel 1984, Jura is a special place with a unique energy. The Paps of Jura, three mountains on the west side of the island contribute to the unique landscape. The nature here is truly breathtaking, with 6,000 red deer roaming free. Offshore, the Corryvreckan is the third largest whirlpool in the world. Jura is more than just a whisky, it's a reflection of the people who make it and the beautiful, mystical island that they call home. The unwavering passion and tenacity of the islanders goes into every drop, making it taste even better because it matters so much to those who make it.

On the rocks, neat or in a delightfully warming hot toddy winter cocktail — there's no right or wrong way to drink Jura. Enjoy this special and unique spirit your way, with your people.

To learn more about Jura Single Malt Scotch Whisky, head to [jurawhisky.com](http://jurawhisky.com)

## How to Pair Whisky and Dried Fruit

NOVEMBER 29, 2021 | [STEPHEN BAUMONT](#)



Learn to pair your whisky with raisins, apricots, figs, and other dried fruits. (Photo by Jeff Harris)

We all like a bit of a nosh with our drinks, right? And while we know that maybe it's not best for us, when searching for such a snack we usually reach for something a bit salty, oily, or fatty. But what if our nibble was instead something healthy? What if it were dried fruits?

"They're nutritionally great," says Seattle-based registered dietitian nutritionist Ginger Hultin, owner of [Champagne Nutrition](#). "Dried fruit offers fiber, potassium, vitamin C, iron, magnesium, and B-vitamins." The key to such healthy snacking, says Hultin, is to keep an eye on how much you're consuming. "Dried fruit is more condensed in calories, so a half-cup of dried fruit is equal to a cup of fresh fruit," she adds. (The recommended serving of fruit is 1½ cups a day for women and two cups for men, and dried fruit does count toward those amounts, she notes.) Something else to watch for is fruit coated in unnecessary dry or liquid sugar, Hultin says, adding that "dehydrated fruit is sweet and flavorful on its own."

There is as much as 50% of your daily vitamin A requirement in a half-cup of dried apricots or ample calcium and iron in raisins, according to Hultin. The good news doesn't stop with the packed nutrients in various dried fruits: My tasting experiments revealed that many pair deliciously with whisky.

To provide focus to my tastings, I concentrated on the dried fruits people are most likely to eat on their own rather than use in cooking. While a shortcut to pairing is to focus on similar flavor notes in the whisky—the apricot in [Oban Little Bay](#) for instance, or the pineapple in [Knob Creek Cask Strength rye](#)—I learned that doing so risks missing out on more complex and often, more extraordinary partnerships. Two common varieties of raisins—Thompson and sultana—are actually derived from the same variety of grape, with Thompsons dried longer, making them darker and more intensely "raisiny" in flavor. For lighter sultanas, I liked a chocolaty single malt like [Dalmore 12 year old](#) to evoke the appeal of chocolate-covered raisins, while I noticed Thompsons worked better with a spicy straight rye, calling to mind traditional fruit-and-spice Christmas cake.

Dates are sweeter than sultanas, with more expensive medjools even sweeter than those labeled generically as "dates," usually of the deglet noor variety. With either, the richness of a big-bodied bourbon like Woodford Reserve creates a wondrous pairing, opting for the even bigger [Double Oaked](#) version with medjools. And speaking of sweetness, it doesn't get much sweeter than dried pineapple, which led me to create a contrasting partnership with a rye-heavy, but still soft and smooth Canadian whisky.

Dried apricots are relatively easy to pair, since their flavor is an oft-cited characteristic in all sorts of whiskies. Rather than doubling down on the fruitiness, however, I achieved greater satisfaction by adding complexity with the peatiness of an island malt, a technique that worked best with lighter, more herbal, but still robustly smoky examples.

Finally, thanks to their nuanced and generally unobtrusive character, I discovered figs are the most broadly whisky-friendly of all dried fruits. For regular pale figs, I enjoyed a softly fruity whisky that not only drew out their flavors, but also benefited from the light, fruity sweetness of the figs. For the darker, bolder Mission variety, I found deliciousness in a wheated bourbon partner.

### SUN-DRIED SWEETNESS

Dried Apricots and [Lagavulin 8 year old](#)

The herbal notes of the whisky accent the flavors of the fruit, while the smoke ties it all together beautifully.

Dried Figs and [Miyagikyo single malt](#)

The gentle flavors of the fruit are coaxied forward by the soft stone-fruit notes in the whisky.

Dried Pineapple and [J.P. Wiser's Triple Barrel Rye](#)

The spiciness of rye softened by three types of oak serves to tame the concentrated sweetness of the fruit and release its full flavor.

## The Balvenie Adds New Whiskies To Its Stories Collection

By [Gary Carter](#) / November 29, 2021

Scottish whisky brand [The Balvenie](#) recently unveiled its two latest additions for The Balvenie Stories Collection – The Tale of the Dog (42-year-old and 46-year-old liquids) and The Creation of a Classic. The new expressions, which debuted this month, are described as stories as told by the craftsmen at the distillery in Dufftown, Scotland, created to highlight and bring to life the many varied stories that come from a long-time distillery like The Balvenie.

The Tale of the Dog is depicted as a smooth, honeyed expression of [The Balvenie](#) that's available now at global travel retail outlets. The distillers note that the 46-year-old variation is rich where spice and subtle hints of licorice are met with dashes of bergamot. On the nose, it offers aromas and flavors reminiscent of roasted red currants and treacle, with hints of eucalyptus and menthol from the toasted oak. It tastes of silky honey and toffee sweetness.



#### ***Balvenie Tale of The Dog (image via The Balvenie)***

Distiller's notes show the 42-year-old domestic release offers a sweet fragrance of ripe dates with hints of toffee, and notes of geranium oil and a subtle mint musk. The dates and toffee coat the mouth in a light nutty spice with toasted oak flavors.

David Wilson, managing director for global travel, said in a prepared statement The Balvenie "Tale of the Dog" release is beyond its rarity as a single cask offering. "Our Malt Master David Stewart and Apprentice Malt Master Kelsey McKechnie selected this exceptional cask paying homage to our long-serving coppersmith Dennis McBain and his tireless service while revealing a little secret found within our distillery."

"The Creation of a Classic," meanwhile celebrates the story of The Balvenie's malt master – the longest serving malt master in the industry – David Stewart, who pioneered the first cask-finished whisky in 1983, The Balvenie Classic.

It was created by transferring Balvenie whisky matured in traditional oak barrels to sweet Oloroso sherry casks. This new expression in The Balvenie Stories range showcases the same process – the choice of wood, the warehousing, the testing and tasting all playing a part in its success.

Stewart said the distillery is built on stories. "It's what sets us apart and makes our whisky what it is. Each expression in the Stories range has a distinct narrative as to how it came to be, and each whisky tells its unique tale in liquid form through first-hand recollections of the many characters involved."

Stewart explained that the story behind "The Tale of the Dog" was inspired by the memories of Dennis McBain, a long-time coppersmith at The Balvenie Distillery.

As a young apprentice, fresh to the world of whisky-making, Dennis was asked by a brewer for a copper dog, which he soon discovered was a little copper tube used for secretly siphoning off whisky from the cask.

The copper dog would then be flattened and put back for its owner to be found as a way of calling out the illicit activity. Expressions such as "taking the dog for a walk" became common at the distillery, with whomever the copper dog had been sent to understanding full well that he'd been discovered but given a second chance.

This recollection went on to inspire McBain's suggestion of using dogs instead of unwieldy valinches for distillery tour tastings, a protocol which remains today.

Storytelling like this is carried through The Tale of the Dog, with its tale depicted on the whisky's packaging. The bottle is presented with a replica, flattened copper dog and encased in a wooden tube wrapped in leather, printed with a bespoke illustration, specific to the liquid, from British artist and printmaker Andy Lovell.

Whisky enthusiasts can hear the story of The Tale of the Dog and The Creation of a Classic through a specially recorded podcast series, featuring the craftspeople behind the expression, as well as The Balvenie Global Ambassador Gemma Paterson. This podcast will be available through Spotify and iTunes and via a QR code tag inside the pack, that consumers can scan using their smartphones.

The Tale of the Dog 46-year-old is available in 10 exclusive Travel Retail locations, with a suggested retail price of £16,500. Only 34 bottles, drawn from a single cask, will be available.

The Balvenie Creation of a Classic, suggested retail of £57, is now exclusively available in Global Travel Retail in select markets.

The Balvenie Stories distiller's notes:

***Tale of the Dog – aged 46 Years – 54.7% ABV***

- **Nose:** Rich, with flavors reminiscent of roasted red currants and treacle, wrapped in aromas of eucalyptus and menthol from toasted oak.
- **Taste:** Spice and subtle hints of licorice are soon met with dashes of bergamot. This richness soon surpasses to reveal silky honey and toffee sweetness.
- **Finish:** Long lasting, smooth sweetness.

***The Creation of a Classic – No Age Statement – 43% ABV***

- **Nose:** Aromatic and lively, aromas of vanilla and spice evocative of dried clove and chai are layered on a base of earthy, malty undertones reminiscent of Balvenie's own barley loft.
- **Taste:** A perfect complement of light oatmeal syrupiness and brittle toffee are followed by delicate hints of spice and a rich drying sensation from European oak.
- **Finish:** Lingering, lasting dry oak.

## **Glen Moray debuts 2008 Manzanilla Finish whisky**

01 DECEMBER 2021 By Nicola Carruthers

Speyside distillery Glen Moray has unveiled a UK-exclusive whisky finished in ex-manzanilla Sherry casks as the latest addition to its Warehouse 1 Collection.



The new 2008 Manzanilla Finish is the fourth Warehouse 1 whisky Glen Moray's Warehouse 1 Collection is named after the Elgin-based producer's Warehouse 1, which is home to 'innovative' maturing casks. Glen Moray 2008 Manzanilla Finish is the fourth expression in the range, following the release of a [Barolo wine cask-finished bottling](#) in



October 2021, a [Tokaji cask-finished whisky](#) in June 2021 and a single malt [matured in Sauternes wine casks](#) in November 2020. The new single malt is described as bringing together the 'soft Spey water of Glen Moray's spirit with the slightly sea-salt tang of manzanilla Sherry'.

The resulting liquid offers notes of 'sweet ripe pears, green apples and freshly cut grass'.

Glen Moray said manzanilla is the driest of all Sherries and is produced along the sea estuary of the Guadalquivir river. As such, it is said to offer tastes of the sea.

"As distillers, this notion of 'place' is endlessly fascinating, particularly as our home of Speyside is so much a part of the Glen Moray story," said brand ambassador Iain Allan. "We started to wonder what would happen if we brought Glen Moray spirit and Manzanilla casks together? "If Speyside met Cádiz in the barrel, what would the results be? Soft with salt? Citrus with herbaceous? Questions like these can get the team quite animated, to say the least, but only time can ever answer their restless curiosity – and these results have been worth waiting for. This is an exceptional whisky which represents the best of two very different worlds in one unique malt."

Allan added that the distillery is working on its next whiskies for 2022. Glen Moray Warehouse 1 2008 Manzanilla Finish is bottled at cask strength (54.6% ABV), non-chill-filtered and with natural colour. It is priced at RRP £74.95 (US\$99.80) and available in specialist whisky shops in the UK.



Photo: The Macallan

## The Five Types Of Scotch Whisky

Because Enjoying It One Way Isn't Enough

Single Malt: Per Scotch Whisky Association regulations, a [single malt](#) is a Scotch Whisky that is distilled at a single distillery from water and malted barley without the addition of any other cereals. They also have to be distilled in copper pot stills in the glorious nation of Scotland.

Blended Malt: A blended malt Scotch Whisky is a blend of single malt Scotch Whiskies at more than one distillery. These are among the most uncommon Scotches in the world.

Single Grain: A single grain scotch is distilled at a single distillery from water and malted barley. The key difference from a single malt is that single grains are distilled with or without whole grains of other malted or unmalted cereals.

Blended Grain: A blended grain Scotch Whisky is simply a blend of single grain whiskies at more than one distillery.

Blended: A [blended Scotch](#) Whisky, which represents the vast majority of Scotches on the market, is a blend of one or more single malt Scotch Whiskies with one or more single grain Scotch Whiskies.

The History Of Scotch In A Nutshell

A Distilled Primer For Scotland's Biggest Export

Scotch's story stretches to the 15th century. The earliest documented record of distilling in Scotland occurred in 1494 in the tax records called the Exchequer Rolls. An entry in the Rolls mentions "Eight bolls of malt to Friar John Cor wherewith to make aqua vitae." Whether it was to balance out the monotony of celibacy, or just a happy accident, Friar John's aqua vitae, the Latin term for "water of life," became the first official record of Scotch Whisky. From there, Scotch Whisky garnered steady popularity, eventually getting taxed in 1644 by the Scottish Parliament, which of course, led to the rise of bootlegging. Smuggling Scotch was the common way of moving the taxed spirit about the country for over 150 years until the Excise Act of 1823 passed, making the distillation of Scotch legal for a fee of ten pounds. From there, famed whisky giants like Tommy Dewar, Johnnie Walker, and James Chivas took Scotch out of its native land, leading it to become one of the most enjoyed spirits in the world by [the twentieth century](#). As the years progressed, Scotch only became more popular, hitting another boom in WWII due in part to Winston Churchill's penchant for the stuff. Fast forward to now, and Scotch has been enjoyed by hundreds of millions of people over the course of its more than 500-year-old life.

All right, we've covered the brief history and cultural significance of Scotch. Now for the moment you've all been waiting for: The Five Classic Regions of Scotch Whisky.



## The Ultimate Guide to the Classic Scotch Whisky Regions

[Adam Santa Maria](#) - Nov 18, 2021

Scotch is one of the most widely recognized spirits on the planet. The gold ambrosia is ubiquitous around the globe and has been celebrated and enjoyed by countless people for hundreds of years. This guide isn't just a comprehensive guide to [Scotch Whisky](#) regions, it's a celebration of its history, legacy, and cultural relevance both in Scotland and around the world.

We'll be covering the names of the regions, fun historical facts about them, their most well-known distilleries, the style/flavor profile of their scotches, and we'll highlight two shining examples of scotches that people can buy from each region: one ultra-premium for the swanky folks, and one moderately priced "people's pick" example that us common plebs can afford. It's no secret that the famed spirit has become a symbol of unabashed luxury, but it can and should be enjoyed by all who are curious about imbibing in the stuff.

Writing about Scotch can be a borderline incendiary topic to cover, so let us lay some ground rules. It's important to note that people have strong opinions on Scotch. In fact, Scotch Whisky is so important that there's actually a governing body to regulate what is and isn't a Scotch Whisky: the Scotch Whisky Association. Because they are a legitimate governing body, we choose to align ourselves with [the experts](#), so the definitions and categorizations in this comprehensive guide will fit within their parameters.

Now that we've covered our bases, let us get into the good stuff.

According to the Scotch Whisky Association, "Scotch Whisky is a distilled spirit made in Scotland from cereals, water, and yeast. It must be distilled and matured in Scotland for at least three years and bottled at a minimum alcoholic strength of 40% abv." Scotch Whisky is also spelled without the "e" as most [other whiskeys](#) made outside Scotland are spelled with the "e." Once the Scotch is distilled, it will be classified into one of five categories.





Photo: Shutterstock  
**Speyside**

**The Most Densely Populated Whisky Region In The World**  
Speyside is the most densely populated Whisky region in the world with more than 60 distilleries, and it's named after the River Spey. The Speyside region is where the first Scotch Whisky boom took place after King George IV made [a trip](#) to Edinburgh and fell in love with the whisky from the Speyside district. Its most famous distilleries are The Macallan, Dalwhinnie, Glenlivet, and Glenfiddich. Speyside whiskies are peaty, fruity, and commonly matured in sherry casks. Expect to taste notes of apple, pear, honey, and vanilla.



**PREMIUM PICK: THE MACALLAN RARE CASK SINGLE MALT SCOTCH**  
Coming from one of the most famous distilleries in the world, The Macallan Rare Cask Single Malt Scotch smells of vanilla, apple, and citrus with hints of root ginger and warm spices. Taste-wise the spices come through strong with a rich texture. The finish balances a warm, oaky mix of citrus, chocolate, and vanilla.  
[PURCHASE: \\$370](#)



#### PEOPLE'S PICK: GLENFIDDICH 12-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

Glenfiddich is the most popular distillery in the world for good reason. Its aroma is fresh and fruity with distinct notes of pear. Taste-wise, Glenfiddich 12 is smooth, balanced, and carries the [fruity aroma](#) to a sweet, mellow finish of butterscotch and oak.

[PURCHASE: \\$33](#)



Photo: Shutterstock

#### The Lowlands

Soft, Smooth, And Light In Character

The Lowland whisky region is one of the southernmost parts of Scotland, covering everywhere southeast of the Highland Boundary Fault. It has fewer than five distilleries, with its two most famous being Auchentoshan and Glenkinchie. In 1825, the Auchentoshan distillery broke new ground by instituting the practice of triple distilling all of their whiskies, which resulted in a smoother, silkier whisky that ended up defining the region's style. It's so light that it gave birth to the delicious term, "breakfast whisky." Lowland whiskies are generally softer, smoother malts with hints of honeysuckle, cream, ginger, and toffee. [These whiskies](#) are commonly preferred for pre-dinner drinks and are often lighter in character.



#### PREMIUM PICK: ROSEBANK SPECIAL RELEASE 21-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

Rosebank Special Release 21-Year-Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky features a mellow aroma that's sweet, fruity, and floral. On the palate, expect soft notes of vanilla, cream, and a light acidity that brings with it a gentle mouthfeel. Its finish leaves the drinker with a slightly acidic, smooth, and floral taste.

[PURCHASE: \\$2,000](#)





**PEOPLE'S PICK: AUCHENTOSHAN 12-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY**

The Lowland's trailblazing single malt smells of toasted almonds, toffee, and crème brûlée. Its palate is smooth with notes of tangerine and lime, and its finish is dry and gingery with a lingering nuttiness. Don't let the value price point fool you, this one's a keeper.

[PURCHASE: \\$58](#)



Photo: Shutterstock  
**Campbeltown**

**Varied And Full Of Flavor**

Campbeltown is a small area named after the Campbeltown bay, and it has just three distilleries: Springbank, Glengyle, and Glen Scotia. Despite its small size, Campbeltown was thriving in the nineteenth-century whisky boom. Unfortunately, seventeen of its distilleries closed in the 1920s due to the unquenchable demand for scotch. Simply put, the distilleries couldn't keep up. Campbeltown whiskies are varied and flavorful; expect robust bodies with hints of salt, smoke, fruit, vanilla, and toffee. Some even say that the Campbeltown whiskies have hints of [wet wool](#) (better than it sounds).



**PREMIUM PICK: SPRINGBANK 18-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY**

Springbank 18-Year-Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky has a boisterous aroma of toasted bananas and honey. It has a full-bodied, spicy palate with citrus and pine notes that will leave you with a lingering finish of salt, chocolate, and caramel. It's a luxurious example that proves this small region's distilleries can still make an elite whisky.

[PURCHASE: \\$220](#)



**PEOPLE'S PICK: GLEN SCOTIA 10-YEAR PEATED SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY**

The Glen Scotia 10-Year Peated Single Malt Scotch Whisky does its region proud. Its aroma is a mix of peaty, briny, and smokey notes, while its palate has a balanced taste of apple, cloves, lemon, and barley to even out the initial briny aroma. The finish is dry, gentle, peaty, and peppery.

[PURCHASE: \\$58](#)



Photo: Shutterstock  
Islay

#### Fiery, Spiced, And Peated

Islay is a tiny island consisting of fewer than eight distilleries. In fact, the island is so small that most of its inhabitants work in the distilleries. Notable distilleries from this wondrous region are Ardbeg, Laphroaig, and Lagavulin. Legend has it that [Irish monks](#) first introduced the art of distillation to Islay in the fourteenth century as the island was rife with peat, lochs, and rivers filled with pure soft water. While the island itself is small, Islay whiskies are known for being fiery and heavily peated.



#### PREMIUM PICK: ARDBEG TRAIGH BHAN 19-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

Ardbeg Traigh Bhan 19-Year-Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky sports a smoky aroma with bold notes of fennel and a light hint of cream. Its mouthfeel is salty while sporting notes of peanut brittle, smoked pineapple, and lime juice. The palate consists of a wonderful mix of aniseed, fudge, birch tar, and peat. Drinkers will be left with a savory and smoky lingering finish.

[PURCHASE: \\$246](#)



#### PEOPLE'S PICK: LAPHROAIG 10-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

Laphroaig 10-Year-Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky aroma opens with big, smoky, peaty notes. On the palate, Laphroaig leads with notes of Seaweed, while balancing the palate with hints of vanilla, oak, and peppery spices. Its finish is big and dry.

[PURCHASE: \\$44](#)



Photo: Shutterstock

#### The Highlands

##### It Covers The Spectrum

The Highlands refers to the part of Scotland northwest of the Highland Boundary Fault. It has 47 distilleries with its two most prominent being Dalmore and Glenmorangie. The Highlands and the Lowlands' main difference comes from the regions' history of taxation, not their geography. The Royal family favored the Highlands' whisky, which translated to the region developing a reputation for [high-quality](#) Scotch, while the Lowlands became known as producers of low-quality whisky. The Highlands boasts the biggest variety of flavor profiles, but overall, its Scotches tend to be on the spicier side with some mild sweetness.





**PREMIUM PICK: GLENMORANGIE 'THE QUARTER CENTURY' 25-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY**

Think of the Glenmorangie The Quarter Century 25-Year-Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky as a dessert for the soul. It has an aroma of Berry compote mixed with floral notes and stewed plums. Its palate is fruit-forward and creamy soft with a long, smooth, oaky finish that has just a hint of fruit.

**[PURCHASE: \\$850](#)**



**PEOPLE'S PICK: GLENDRONACH ORIGINAL 12-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY**

Sticking with the dessert for your soul theme, Glendronach Original 12-Year-Old Single Malt's aroma is a rich blend of raisin, cinnamon, and caramelized sugar. Its first taste is fruity, buttery, and jammy, but the notes of ginger and spices crescendo to a smoky finish with hints of toffee. Definitely a must-have for [any collection](#).

**[PURCHASE: \\$57](#)**

**NOTE ABOUT THE ISLAND REGION:** There are many who would argue that the Island Region is its own separate region; however, the Scotch Whisky Association chooses to include them in the Highlands region. With that said, here are two picks from distilleries in the Island Region for those pining for a sixth category.



**PREMIUM PICK: HIGHLAND PARK 30-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY**

How else can one sum up a 30-year-old Scotch other than "phenomenal?" The Highland Park 30-Year-Old Single Malt sports an aroma of peat and smoke with spicy notes. It features a full-bodied and robust palate, with hints of toffee, roasted nuts, and dried fruit. Given the weight of this bold spirit, the finishing taste lingers for a while with spicy notes of fruit, peat, and oak.

**[PURCHASE: \\$1,400](#)**



**PEOPLE'S PICK: TALISKER 10-YEAR SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY**

We're rounding out our list with the wonderful Talisker 10-Year Single Malt Scotch Whisky. It has a peaty, smoky aroma with a salty brininess to it. Like the Highland Park 30, it has a full-bodied taste with hints of dried fruit, malted barley, and smoke. Its finish will leave you with a warm, long-lasting peppery note.

**[PURCHASE: \\$50](#)**

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Photo: Shutterstock

## The Complete Guide To Whiskey Styles

[Gray Van Dyke](#) - Jul 9, 2021

Depending on where you are in the world, asking for a whiskey (or a whisky) at the bar will yield wildly different results. After all, the spirit makes for one of the most diverse distillations in the beverage industry, with everything from [single malt Scotches](#) to bonded American bourbons to blended Canadian ryes falling under the same grandiose umbrella. Sure, such dark liquors do share a lot in common; they're all made from a combination of malted grains like barley, corn, rye, and wheat, and they're almost always aged in some sort of barrel. However, the whiskey space is one that's chock-full of diversity, and each of the various styles comes with its own unique history, production processes, and overall drinking experience.

As such, the culture can prove pretty difficult to break into if you're only a novice in your whiskey enthusiasm; it's a lot of information for anyone to digest. To make matters worse, most seasoned drinkers have a tendency to be pretentious, eagerly displaying their [armchair expertise](#) at even the slightest invitation. You might have only asked someone for a simple explanation of Scotch, but before you know it, they'll have launched into a lengthy discourse on the merits of continuous distillation and why the Irish can't rightfully be credited with whiskey's creation. All that is to say: if you find yourself feeling lost without a plan of action, don't fret — we're here to help. Having familiarized ourselves with the ins and outs of whiskey styles from across the globe, we've put together this handy crash course to get you on your way. So buckle up and get ready for a wild ride; what follows is our complete guide to whiskey styles.



Photo: Shutterstock  
Whisky vs. Whiskey

The Age-Old Debate

Although the words 'whisky' and 'whiskey' are almost identical in spelling, the inclusion of the letter 'e' makes for an important distinction when it comes to their meaning. Of course, the spirits are fundamentally similar in style — you won't be confusing either one with a lighter option like vodka — but it would be incredibly reductionist to assume that their differences are only semantic. Between the geographical location, the production method, and the ingredients used, there's actually a lot that makes a whisky a 'whisky' and a [whiskey](#). So, while it might seem like an insignificant subtlety to an outsider, it's one that's critical to get right around passionate whiskey nerds. To use the words interchangeably is asking for a lecture; below, we explain each word's origins to save you from making such an error for yourself.

**Whisky:** This spelling comes from the Scottish translation of the classical Gaelic words 'uisge breatha' or 'usquebaugh,' meaning "water of life." When the British began colonizing America around the turn of the 17th century, the Scots brought with them their distillation process and accompanying terminology. Today, countries like Canada and Japan have adopted the -y spelling because of their relationships to Scottish tradition, with the former being one of heritage and the latter being one of inspiration.

**Whiskey:** This spelling, however, originates with the [Irish translation](#), adding an -ey as per the local dialect. While it's unclear when the word first entered the written language, the country is home to the oldest licensed whiskey operation in the world, The Old Bushmills Distillery, which has always abided by the spelling since its establishment in 1608. Whisky and whiskey were used pretty much interchangeably during colonial America, but between the government's 1791 Excise Whiskey Tax and the growing Irish immigrant population, the -ey spelling was eventually cemented for good.



Photo: Knappogue Castle  
Irish

### The Father Of All Whiskey

There's long been a debate as to who can claim parental rights: Ireland or Scotland. Up until a few years ago, the Scots could point to tax records as indisputable proof that they were making whisky in 1494. However, it was then discovered that the Irish actually have an even earlier reference, with an entry in the Annals of Clonmacnoise appearing as far back as 1405. Regardless of where you stand, know that the true origins of the spirit are far older. In fact, it's thought that distillation was originally brought to the British Isles by Irish Christian missionaries sometime around 500-600AD. Without [the vineyards](#) of Europe, they began fermenting grain mash instead, giving rise to some of the first whiskey ever created.

**Industry Decline:** Around the turn of the 18th century, Ireland was the single largest spirit producer in all of the United Kingdom. With demand being greater than ever, the market was booming, and Dublin was well on its way to becoming a bonafide whiskey capital (at one point, it even boasted the highest combined output in the world). It's a success that likely would have continued were it not for the invention of the Coffey Still by a certain Aeneas Coffey. Steadfast in their adherence to 'pure pot still' production, many Irish distilleries rejected the innovation in favor of what they believed to be a superior methodology. But between the changing tastes of drinkers, the Irish War of Independence, the subsequent trade embargoes with Britain, and Prohibition in the United States, the country simply couldn't keep its exports up enough to support the industry. So, while it may have had some 28 distilleries at its peak, by the 1970s, Ireland was down to



just two. In other words, Irish whiskey made a remarkable comeback since that time.

**Production Characteristics:** For a spirit to be considered an Irish whiskey, it needs to satisfy a couple of criteria as defined by the Irish Whiskey Act of 1950. Obviously, it must — above all else — be distilled in Ireland. But it should also feature a mashbill consisting of domestic malt and cereal grains, and it should have spent at least three years' time [aging in barrels](#). Malted or unmalted barley will depend on which type of whiskey is being made, and any number of different casks can be used for the finish. It's worth noting that if an Irish whiskey is to be classified as a traditional pot still spirit, it can only be triple-distilled in copper pots.



#### KNAPPOGUE CASTLE 12 YEAR SINGLE MALT IRISH WHISKEY

If you're looking for a solid introduction into the world of Irish whiskey, you can't go wrong with this 12-year from Knappogue Castle. An incredibly fruit-forward expression, it features notes of green apple and honeysuckle on the nose, red berries and grapes through the palate, and a lingering peachy-banana finish.

[PURCHASE: \\$50](#)

ADVERTISING



Photo: Forty Creek  
Canadian

#### The Great White North

John Molson is widely regarded as the father of [Canadian whisky](#), credited with the earliest commercial production of the spirit around the turn of the 19th century. Granted, the first distillery in Canada had been in operation since 1769, but drinkers had mostly been enjoying an ad hoc rum because of Britain's strong imperial sugar trade. However, once Molson purchased a copper pot still and demonstrated the capabilities of Canadian grain, it was no time at all before Scottish immigrants began to respond in kind. As the pioneers continued to settle the land and farming became a more viable prospect, whisky distillation also grew in scale. Thus, by the 1840s, Canada had well over 200 distilleries in operation.

**Rye Whisky:** So the story goes, that as Canadian whisky increased in its popularity, over time, distillers began adding small amounts of rye grain in order to impart some extra earthy flavor. It started off as an

experiment — an occasional handful here and there — but with drinkers routinely demanding this new special spicy spirit, it became a decidedly more regular feature. These days, rye is almost always used in Canadian whisky to some degree. So, while there may be some exceptions every now and then, there's really no distinction made between rye whisky and Canadian whisky (unlike its much more strictly defined American counterpart).

**Production Characteristics:** In contrast to the other spirits that we've included as a part of this guide, Canadian whisky is actually pretty lax in production requirements. In fact, it only needs to be made from a mash of cereal grain, aged for three years in barrels smaller than 700L, bottled at less than 40% ABV, and, of course, produced entirely within Canada. Apart from those few qualifiers, though, it's largely left up to the distillery. As such, you'll find any number of different mashbills, barrel types, and age statements appearing throughout the industry. In general, most Canadian whiskies are technically a blend of corn, barley, and rye, with each grain distilled separately before being combined in a single bottle.



**FORTY CREEK CONFEDERATION OAK RESERVE CANADIAN WHISKY**  
As a 2021 San Francisco World Spirits Competition Gold Medal Winner, Forty Creek's Confederation Oak Reserve is a whisky boasting some serious critical acclaim. Up front, it greets you with citrus fruit and mild vanilla, after which it transitions into a sweet-yet-nutty palate and a medium smoky finish.

[PURCHASE: \\$60](#)



Photo: Suntory  
Japanese

#### The Island Nation

Japan got its first taste [of whisky](#) back in 1853 when Commodore Matthew Perry forced an end to the Island Nation's trade isolation and left a 110-gallon barrel of brown liquor as a parting gift. In the coming years, the Japanese tried their best to recreate the spirit for themselves, but it wasn't until the 20th century that they had any kind

of success. At that time, two men by the names of Shinjiro Torii and Masataka Taketsuru came together in order to found Japan's first official whisky distillery: Yamazaki. As an established port wine wholesaler, Torii brought the business acumen, while Taketsuru, having studied at the University of Glasgow, provided the distillation expertise. On paper, the pair seemed like a perfect match, but their initial efforts weren't particularly well-received. Ultimately, it would take the thirst of the army during WWII for whisky to really gain favor amongst Japanese drinkers.

**Shortage:** Up until a few years ago, only the most diehard of whiskey nerds appreciated Japanese whisky for what it was. However, once the world caught wind of Bill Murray promoting Suntory in the 2003 film "Lost in Translation," the spirit was catapulted into mainstream popularity. Over the next decade, more and more drinkers began taking to the stuff, buying up Japan's existing stock and sending prices skyward. Thus, by the time Jim Murray had crowned a Taketsuru 17-Year "Best of the Year" in 2014, Japanese whisky had already become something of a hot commodity. Unfortunately, Japan wasn't exactly prepared for such an influx of new fans, meaning that this increased demand has since put quite the squeeze on the country's production output. As such, many distilleries have had to limit or discontinue the sale of their older-aged expressions altogether — they simply didn't create the necessary supply 10, 15, or even 20 years ago. Until they can catch back up, we'll have to make do with blends and younger or NAS varieties.

**Production Characteristics:** Prior to 2021, Japanese whisky didn't have any formal definitions for its production process, meaning that distillers could combine their product with spirits from overseas and it would still be considered authentic expression. But with the pressures of shortage, Japan has since enacted a new set of regulations which will take effect come 2024. In practice, this means that a spirit will have to be made from malted barley, use local water, and be fermented, distilled, aged, and bottled in Japan. What's more, it'll need to be aged in wooden casks for three years and bottled at a minimum of 40% ABV. As is the case with Scotch, Japanese whisky is available in [single malt](#), blended, and grain varieties. Rather than going into each one here, we'll take a closer look at them later in the following section.



Photo: Chivas Regal

## Scotch

### The Father Of All Whisky

As we've touched on above, the oldest written record of [Scotch whisky](#) occurred in the 15th century, with a reference made to the spirit appearing on the Exchequer Rolls around 1494. Again, in all likelihood, the Scots would have been actively distilling long before such a transaction took place, as monks are believed to have learned the process whilst traveling around Europe. In any case, as whisky continued to grow in popularity, it eventually caught the attention of those in power. Thus, seeing an opportunity for revenue potential, the Scottish Parliament passed the first tax on the spirit in 1644. Unsurprisingly, distillers didn't take too kindly to the penalty, and smuggling illicit whisky served as the SOP until a fairer arrangement was agreed upon some 150-odd years later. It was at that time that Aeneas Coffey patented his revolutionary continuous still, giving birth to a more approachable alternative to the strong single malts that had long reigned supreme: grain whisky.

**Production Characteristics:** Until the late 18th century, Scotch was almost exclusively distilled using malted barley. However, upon the introduction of the Coffey Still, many distilleries began experimenting with a variety of other grains too, incorporating wheat, rye, as well as color and flavor additives in their mash so that they could create more diverse expressions. Today, the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) mandates [that Scotch](#) must be distilled and matured in Scotland, aged in oak casks for at least three years, and bottled at a minimum strength of 40% ABV. Below, we break down each of the five distinct types of Scotch in more detail.

**Single Malt:** Single malts are those that have been produced by a single distillery using malted barley and a copper pot still. They tend to offer fuller flavor profiles than their blended counterparts and are notorious for their high price tags.

**Single Grain:** Though single grain whiskies must also be fermented at a single distillery, they can include unmalted cereals, whole grains, corn, as well as water. More often than not, you'll find this type of Scotch whisky in blends, but when bottled on its own, it makes for a lighter, leaner body than the above.

**Blended:** [Blended Scotches](#) are made from one or more single malts or single grains, and they can be produced entirely in-house or in collaboration with several different distilleries. In general, blends are both cheaper and easier to mix than single malts.

**Blended Malt:** This type of Scotch comprises two or more single malts (no grain) from at least two separate distilleries. Despite the added complexity, blended malts have always been a bit of a niche offering, and they would have disappeared from the market entirely were it not for a recent revivalist movement.

**Blended Grain:** Last but not least are blended grains. As you'd expect, these are Scotches that are made from a mixture of two or more single grain whiskies produced by at least two or more separate distilleries. While they're largely written off as "fillers," blended grains make for an affordable spirit with a unique flavor unto their own.



### SUNTORY HIBIKI HARMONY JAPANESE WHISKY

While the older expressions in Suntory's Hibiki line have become all but impossible to find, Harmony is a blend that's still readily available. Made using malt whiskies from the Yamazaki and Hakushu distilleries, it also incorporates a grain whisky from Chita, giving it a well-balanced flavor heaped with honey, rose, and sweet lychee.

[PURCHASE: \\$90](#)





#### CHIVAS REGAL 12-YEAR BLENDED SCOTCH

As one of the most ubiquitous Scotch brands on the planet, Chivas Regal is a name that needs no introduction. This 12-Year blend often gets overlooked in favor of more expensive expressions, but give it a taste and it's sure to impress with its refined herby palate, surprisingly full body, and excellent value for money.

[PURCHASE: \\$30](#)



#### ABERLOUR 18-YEAR DOUBLE CASK SINGLE MALT

However, if you're more in the mood for sipping on a single malt, this 18-year from Aberlour makes for an excellent alternative. The oldest expression in the distillery's Double Cask range, it combines notes of dried fruit and leather with a lengthy polished oak finish.

[PURCHASE: \\$175](#)



Photo: Knob Creek  
American

Prohibition Proven

Being the product of an immigrant nation, American whiskey has a history that technically begins with its Irish and Scottish ancestors. However, the most modern incarnation of the spirit can be traced back to the 18th century, when states like Virginia and Maryland switched their distillation methods to brew a more rye-based product. Moreover, as Irish immigrants flooded the hills of territories like [Tennessee](#) and Kentucky, they discovered that the land abounded with everything necessary for whiskey production, including corn for the mash and wood for the barrels. It's these such conditions that prompted the rapid development of the industry, with bottling becoming standard practice by the 1890s and stringent regulations like the "Bottled-In-Bond" act coming to ensuring the spirit's authenticity. Although the Prohibition era of the 1920s aimed to put a stop to alcohol consumption altogether, it was quickly discovered to be more of a hindrance to the economy than any kind of moral triumph. In fact, whiskey's return proved so well-received that Congress eventually declared it "America's Native Spirit" in 1964.

**Production Characteristics:** Because American whiskey is such a broad category of alcohol, there are only a few production requirements that apply to each of its various subtypes. In addition to being distilled in the United States, a spirit must be stored in oak containers, bottled at or above 40% ABV, and generally taste as an American whiskey should. This is obviously only a generalized definition, as each variety will have its own particular nuances. We outline them below.

**Bourbon:** Arguably the most notable of all American whiskeys, bourbon is also the strictest in its qualifications. For starters, it must contain no less than 51% corn in its mashbill, and it must be completely free of additives. Furthermore, it has to be aged in new charred oak, with the spirit entering the cask at 125 proof and being distilled to no more than 160 proof. Straight bourbons add to that a two-year maturation mandate, while [bonded varieties](#) require four-year aging, single-year single-distillery fermentation, as well as 100 proof bottling. Oh, and barrel-proof bourbons are exactly as they sound — they're bottled to the same strength at which the whiskey was aged.

**Rye Whiskey:** Rye whiskey is considerably more accommodating, as it only requires that the mashbill be comprised of at least 51% rye. Otherwise, it can feature corn, wheat, malted barley, and even other additives so long as it's not being classified as a straight rye. Rye malts are only slightly different in that they must be malted before distillation.

**Corn Whiskey:** This type of whiskey is similar to bourbon insofar as it has a high corn content; however, a mere 51% isn't enough — it must be made up of at least 80% corn grain. Though it can be bottled without maturation, if it's to be aged, it should be in used or uncharred oak.

**Other Whiskeys:** Other whiskeys like [malt and wheat](#) are effectively the same in their requirements as rye, only they need to feature a mashbill consisting of 51% of their namesake grain.



#### KNOB CREEK RYE WHISKEY

Pouring a light gold in color, this rye whiskey from Knob Creek features a flavorful nose befitting much higher rye expressions and a palate that's spicy without taking away from its smooth oaky finish. Sure, you might not be pulling this one out for special occasions, but it's widely available and affordable enough to be an everyday drinker at just \$40 a bottle.

[PURCHASE: \\$40](#)



#### ELIJAH CRAIG BARREL PROOF BOURBON

If you want to experience a bourbon as a master distiller would taste it, a barrel-proof expression is easily your best bet. This offering from Elijah Craig features a nose packed full of sweet fruit, a palate rich with cinnamon spice, and a finish that's so smooth you'll be reaching for another dram before you know it.

[PURCHASE: \\$100](#)

THE 15 BEST-LOOKING WHISKEY BOTTLES YOU CAN BUY



Now that you're well-steeped in the wide world of whiskey types, it's time to turn your attention to how the spirit is stored. If you're looking to give your bar cart an aesthetic upgrade, be sure to check out our guide to the [best-looking whiskey bottles you can buy](#).

#### Millennials Accelerate Growth In The Whisky Investment Market

By [Guest Post](#) / November 18, 2021

*Editor's Note – This guest post comes to us courtesy of Alistair Moncrieff, Managing Partner at [Whisky Investment Partners](#). This is not a paid advertisement.*

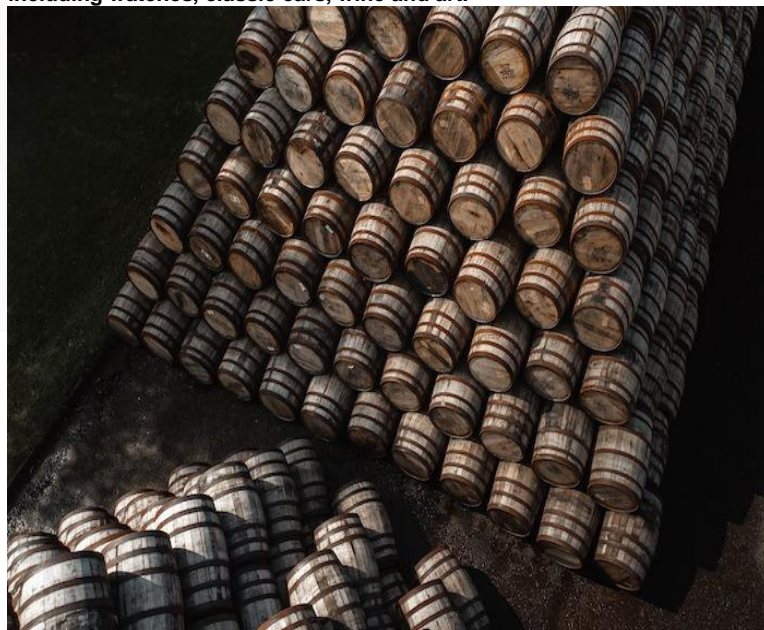
Savvy investors know that generalisations are dangerous things to make when it comes to money and how it's spent. But even so, it may still be surprising to find out that one of the monumental contributing factors pushing the growth in whisky investments is the participation of that most talked-about generational group – millennials.

“We're often told that millennials are drinking less alcohol than previous generations. However, it seems that while this is true, those that do drink are switching from lager and wine to spirits such as whisky,” Alistair explains.

“This interest in whisky isn't just for the taste, either. Whatever the traditional image of a whisky collector might be, the reality is trending younger.”

In a recent white paper, Whisky Investment Partners' research found that 11% of its investors are aged between 25-34, and 17% between 35-44, and of its current customers, one in three are in the millennial age bracket.

When asked about having other luxury investments, 64% of customers said their only luxury investment is in whisky, but 36% of millennial respondents spoke about other luxury investments they have – including watches, classic cars, wine and art.



*Some of these barrels could someday hold whisky invested in by Millennials (image via Whisky Investment Partners)*

This evidences that millennials are opting to invest their funds in tangible assets, as opposed to traditional investment funds or stocks. It is believed this is because millennials are increasingly interested in investing in something they can do their own due diligence on and own outright, as opposed to giving control of their money to a traditional investment house.

At a Sotheby's spirits sale in March 2020, 54% of bidders were under the age of 40, while data on [visits to auction sites](#) in general shows that the under-35s make up a larger percentage than those aged 50 to 64.

This is a sign that the demographics at auctions are shifting to millennials, and this has been seen across the board in the world of [real estate investments](#) too.

Millennials are bringing a more diverse investment crowd, like [32-year-old Jessica Anwar](#), a whisky aficionado and cask investor with a collection of more than 1,000 rare bottles from distilleries such as Brora, Lagavulin, Dalwhinnie and Port Ellen.

Millennial investors like Jessica trawl social media for news on limited edition releases as well as joining whisky clubs and visiting whisky bars to build up their knowledge.

Take 24-year-old [Douglas Lau from Hong Kong, another renowned cask investor, who believes: “Whisky has started to become fashionable with my generation. People don't see it as ‘boring’ anymore.”](#)

Why are millennials investing in Whisky?

With older millennials now approaching their 40s, how they invest their money is going to be increasingly significant for the global markets. Research shows they are more likely to spend on [alternative investments](#), rather than going down the traditional routes.

One survey found that [65% of millennials](#) say that living through the recession made them more conservative with how they spend their money, making them less likely to risk money on the stock markets and more likely to consider investments in tangible things, like whisky. As a generation that grew up in the shadow of the 2008 financial crisis and recession, and data shows that by growing up in the financial crisis, they saw first-hand how the most respected traditional investment houses and financial institutions crashed, losing life changing amounts of money. Which in turn, reduced their trust. As a result, when millennials became of age to decide if to make investments, it appears they opted not to follow the traditional paths their parents did for fear of history repeating itself in terms of financial



loss – so they have decided to invest in something they can control, own outright, and more importantly – understand.

Investing in assets millennials understand well, including assets such as simple memorabilia and collectors' cards, trainers, watches, or in this case, whisky, means that if there was ever such a downturn in the market, at the very least, they can consume and enjoy what they have invested in themselves.

Moreover, a recent study found that [85% of millennials](#) believe that they are old enough to be investors, with the average age of a millennial investor being just 28. As well as not wanting to take too many risks, millennials are also influenced by social factors, wanting to invest in ethical companies and sectors, which makes the traditional vintage image of Scotch whisky certainly appealing.

So, millennials have entered the whisky investment party and are seemingly here to stay. This can only be good news for all whisky investors as it increases the demand for the rare bottles and casks with a new, well-informed and affluent audience ready to spend big on the right collectors' items.

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## The 50 Best Scotch Whiskies Of 2021, Ranked

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

NOVEMBER 26, 2021

[Finding great scotch](#) to savor isn't particularly hard. There's a lot of it out there. The biggest barriers are picking which cool new bottles to mix in with [your rotation of classics](#) and, of course, the [price](#) point. Whether we're talking blended scotch or [single malts](#), this stuff can get spendy pretty quickly.

Cost aside, there were a lot of great releases this year that we got to try and we're eager to share the best of the bunch with you. Before we dive in, it should be said that 2021 was a good year for [Scotch whisky](#). We got a new Talisker 30 release for the first time since 2017, Diageo dropped a whole new line of [special releases](#), and Islay's Laphroaig and Ardbeg continued to wow with new drops. Not a bad time to be a fan of the famous tippie from Scotland.

As with [our bourbon list](#) of the year's 50 best, we're looking at one major factor for these scotches: Did they taste good? Beyond that, these needed to be 2021 new releases or 2021 versions of classics. Accessibility and affordability were not a factor — this is just about "best."

Let's dive in!

### 50. Dewar's Caribbean Smooth

BACARDI

ABV: 40%

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

The Whisky:

Rum cask finishing is nothing new, but it *is* all the rage. This blend from Master Blender Stephanie Macleod is a marriage of 40 whiskies that are vatted and finished in Caribbean rum casks. That final maturation gives the whisky a smooth feel, making it the perfect cocktail base.

Tasting Notes:

There's a clear sense of burnt brown sugars and grilled pineapple on the nose, with hints of cloves and vanilla and maybe some dry grass. The taste edges towards a dark molasses rumminess with a touch of dried fruit, more cloves, and a slight mango sweetness. The end really embraces the rummier aspects while holding onto the tropical fruitiness on a fast fade.

Bottom Line:

This new line from Dewar's is simple but delivers. The unique flavors shine through and make for a great highball whisky at a great price point.

### 49. SIA Blended Scotch Whisky

SIA

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$39](#)

The Whisky:

SIA Whisky is the result of Carin Luna-Ostaseski's passion for the good stuff from Scotland. Luna-Ostaseski successfully launched this whisky through Kickstarter, making the first crowd-sourced whisky. The actual juice in the bottle is a blend of Speyside, Highland, and Islay juices with a 60/40 grain whisky or malt whisky ratio.

Tasting Notes:

There's a marrying of bright orange zest with a five-spice note lurking beneath. The citrus really brightens things up as hints of vanilla pudding, honey, buttery toffee, and fatty nuts balance out the flavor

with a very distant wisp of that Islay smoke. The end is well-rounded, nutty, and full of vanilla cream, all finishing on a slightly sweet smoky note.

Bottom Line:

This blend continues to shine as something new in the world of blended scotch. I tend to use this pretty much just for highballs. But in that application, it always delivers.

### 48. Johnnie Walker High Rye

DIAGEO

ABV: 45%

Average Price: [\\$33](#)

The Whisky:

This whisky leans into the moment rye is having worldwide. The blend is 40 percent single malts from Diageo's stable of distilleries — particularly Cardhu, Glenkinchie, and Caol Ila — and 60 percent rye whisky aged in American oak. Those whiskies are vatted, proofed down, and bottled.

Tasting Notes:

The nose feels like the best of both worlds as a twinge of rye spiciness mingles with sweet smoky notes cut with orchard fruit and a hint of vanilla. The fruit drives the palate with tart apples spiked with clove and anise as a buttery caramel sweetens the sip. The finish moves on from that sweet note towards a dry sense of woody spices and a touch of dried and smoked apple slices.

Bottom Line:

This is a tasty whisky that will feel both familiar and new. The rye and American oak is present but veers into fruity and soft smoky Johnnie Walker territory and just works, especially on the rocks or in a highball.

### 47. Edradour Caledonia 12

SIGNATORY VINTAGE SCOTCH WHISKY COMPANY

ABV: 46%

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

The Whisky:

This is a classic Highland single malt. The peated juice started off as a one-off single-barrel pick that became a yearly release. The whisky aged in ex-bourbon for about eight years. It's then refilled into ex-sherry casks for about four more years of maturation before it's proofed and bottled.

Tasting Notes:

The nose on this is figgy pudding with stewed plums, Christmas spices, sultanas, and plenty of brown sugar syrup with a hint of sweet sherry-soaked oak lingering in the background. The palate settles into honey-roasted almonds next to a bowl of ripe red berries in cream with a drizzle of summer honey leading towards this hint of dried mushroom. That touch of umami leads towards a very distant whiff of campfire smoke on the far backend of this sip as it fades out.

Bottom Line:

This bottle feels rare but always delivers year after year. You can't go wrong giving this Highland malt a shot as 2022 arrives.

### 46. Tamdhu 12

IAN MACLEOD DISTILLERS

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$78](#)

The Whisky:

Speyside's Tamdhu upped their game a few years back by replacing their 10-year expression with this masterful whisky. The juice is aged for 12 years in a combination of American and European oak that held sherry first. They use both first-fill and re-filled barrels in the aging process before vating the results, proofing with Speyside's rich water, and bottling.

Tasting Notes:

There's a bit of a Christmas cake vibe with candied orange, plenty of dark spice (especially cinnamon sticks), a maltiness that feels bread-y, a touch of sweet oak, and maybe a hint of peppermint candy. The taste veers more into the ripe and red berries with that cinnamon still in play but the breadiness is more like a buttery sugar cake with sherry/plummy depth. The end offers an interesting fade — with everything dialed in, creating shortbread and raspberry jam that's just touched by the faintest wisp of fruity smoke.

Bottom Line:

Tamdhu is one of those distilleries that always feels like it's on the edge of blowing up. Their 12-year is a yearly masterpiece that deserves some attention, especially with its holiday vibes.

## 45. Balblair 15

**INTERBEV**

ABV: 46%

Average Price: [\\$122](#)

The Whisky:

This is a classic Highland single malt with a modern twist. These bottles were just relaunched in 2019 with age statements. Their 15-year was aged in both ex-bourbon and ex-sherry before marrying, proofing, and bottling in nice, squat bottles.

Tasting Notes:

You're met with an initial nose of high-end Niedderegger marzipan covered in dark chocolate (yes, that brand specifically) next to touches of powdered ginger, honeyed malts, and a touch of citrus. That marzipan note leans more into the dark chocolate as the taste amps up the spices and gets fruity while holding onto the malty nature of the sip. The end is medium-length and leaves you with creamy vanilla, damp wood, and plummy sweetness.

Bottom Line:

I personally think these have gotten better every year since 2019. That might just be me getting used to the flavor profile or there's a little refinement happening every year. It's probably both.

## 44. Glenfarclas 12

**J. & G. GRANT**

ABV: 43%

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

The Whisky:

Glenfarclas is a bit of an outlier. The whisky is distilled with old-school fire-heated stills (most stills use steam) to this day. The juice is then aged exclusively in ex-sherry casks for 12 long years.

Tasting Notes:

There's a rumminess to the nose that touches on molasses, prunes, nuts, and jam. The taste holds onto that vibe to the point of having an almost spiced rum sweetness and clear notes of holiday spices, plenty of dried fruit, and a roasted almond element. The end is long and spicy, leaving you with a Speyside hug.

Bottom Line:

Every year, Glenfarclas puts out their 12-year-old and it always delivers. This is a great gateway whisky for anyone looking to dip their toes in the world of Scottish single malts thanks to its softness and dialed-in flavor profile.

## 43. Old Pulteney Huddart

**INVER HOUSE**

ABV: 46%

Average Price: [\\$71](#)

The Whisky:

This peated malt ups the ante on the peatiness. The limited-edition juice is first aged in ex-bourbon barrels. That whisky is then transferred to second-fill bourbon barrels that aged heavily peated whisky for a finishing maturation.

Tasting Notes:

The whisky's nose sort of feels like someone dumped a handful of vanilla bean husks on a backyard campfire and then handed you an apple pie brimming with brown sugar, cinnamon, and drizzled with salted caramel. The taste keeps that pie filling vibe but the fruit mellows more towards a stonefruit as a hint of sea spray arrives on the back end of the smokiness. The finish really takes its time and leads you towards singed, dry moss and a final note of floral honey sweetness.

Bottom Line:

This year's release of Old Pulteney Huddart was another homerun. It's sweet and full of dried fruits but never overpowering, making it a great contender for mixing cocktails this season.

## 42. Compass Box Artist Blend Scotch Whisky

**COMPASS BOX**

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$38](#)

The Whiskey:

The lion's share of this blend — 45 percent — comes from a single grain whisky aged in ex-bourbon from Cameronbridge Distillery. 22 percent is a single malt aged in ex-bourbon that comes from Linkwood Distillery. The rest is a mix of French oak and ex-bourbon single malts and blended malts from the Highlands, Clyneilish, Linkwood, and Balmenach. Those whiskies are vatted and then proofed down before bottling.

Tasting Notes:

This opens with a very clear and concise note of apple candy with a hint of salted caramel ice cream cut with a touch of eggnog spices. There's a nice maltiness that leans into a creamy vanilla, soft holiday

spice mix, butter toffee, and a hint of milk chocolate near the end. The finish is warming with a whisper of tobacco next to a woody apple, spice candies (maybe ginger), and a final hint of cocoa and caramel.

Bottom Line:

This year's Artist Blend feels like quintessential scotch. The new label helped it stand out but it was that sweet and creamy juice in the bottle that elevated this release.

## 41. Arran Sherry Cask

**ISLE OF ARRAN DISTILLERS LTD**

ABV: 55.8%

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

The Whisky:

This Islands whisky is aged exclusively in sherry oak for an undisclosed amount of time. The casks are slightly small format, allowing more of the flavors from the oak to impart into the spirit. The whisky is then vatted and bottled without filtration or cutting.

Tasting Notes:

Eggnog nutmeg draws you in with a touch of dark cherry, meaty dates, and old leather on the nose. The palate shifts towards oatmeal cookies with a hefty dose of cinnamon and plenty of soft sultanas as a hint of ginger lurks in the background. Then this big sense of green pinewood arrives and veers the taste towards orange rinds and a chewy and warm buzz.

Bottom Line:

The more I try this, the more it reminds me of a sticky and woody bourbon. It starts off soft and fruity but veers dramatically into the woodpile, which is growing on me. It really blooms with some water or in a highball, so start there.

## 40. Talisker 10

**DIAGEO**

ABV: 45.8%

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

The Whisky:

This is one of the most awarded single malts ever. The juice is matured in ex-bourbon casks in Talisker's warehouse, which is literally feet away from the sea. The subtly peated malts take on a real seaside feel as those years tick past, creating a whisky that will not disappoint.

Tasting Notes:

There's a distance to Talisker that draws you in on the nose — I like to describe it as campfire smoke smelled from a few hundred yards down a rainy beach. The sea spray mellows the smoky peat to a fine point as oyster shell minerality dances with pears rinsed in seawater, dried apricot, and rich malt. The end doesn't overstay its welcome and reminds you of oysters, liquor, and that smoldering campfire two coves over.

Bottom Line:

This year's Talisker 10 came with a complete revamp of the packaging to edge the brand towards total sustainability in the glass, paper, and plastic being used for packaging. Did that change the juice in the bottle? No, that's still excellent. But it's a great step in a positive direction.

## 39. Jura Seven Wood

**WHYTE & MACKAY**

ABV: 42%

Average Price: [\\$86](#)

The Whisky:

This whisky from the Isle of Jura is a one-of-a-kind that highlights both expert barrel work and blending. The juice is aged in ex-bourbon for an undisclosed amount of years. The whisky is then re-casked in seven barrels: first-fill ex-bourbon from the U.S. and Vosges, Bertranges, Jupilles, Allier, Tronçais, and Limousin barrels from France. The ripple here is that all of those French barrels were new (never held wine) when the whisky went in.

Tasting Notes:

This is shockingly un-woody. Instead, you get a burnt coffee note next to a dark chocolate bar cut with candied ginger and, maybe, a hint of strawberry. Black licorice arrives with a note of burnt orange peels and grilled peaches with a drop of honey next to a wisp of beach campfire smoke. The end lingers for just the right amount of time as the distant smoke fades, leaving a hint of sea spray, cacao, and burnt fruit.

Bottom Line:

This is a complex dram that sort of betrays the idea of being woody for the beautifully nuanced flavor notes those woods are meant to impart. It's complex neat but really needs a little water to fully bloom.



### 38. BenRiach The Twelve Speyside Single Malt

BROWN-FORMAN

ABV: 46%

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

The Whisky:

Dr. Rachel Barrie's reimagining of [BenRiach](#) has been a stellar success. This dram marries 12-year-old malts that matured in ex-bourbon, ex-sherry, and ex-port casks before vatting, proofing, and bottling.

Tasting Notes:

Pear candy dominates the nose with hints of fresh maple syrup adding more sweetness as leather edges in next to ... blueberry? The taste circles back to the pear but stews them in holiday spices next to sherry-soaked plum pudding. The finish has a warm malty oatiness that mellows towards orange-infused marzipan covered in dark chocolate.

Bottom Line:

These releases continue to grow and refine as Dr. Barrie tinkers with the barrels at her disposal. While her smoky varieties often get all the adoration, these sweet Sepysides are always delightful.

### 37. Cardhu Gold Reserve

DIAGEO

ABV: 40%

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

The Whisky:

Cardhu is one of the oldest Speyside distilleries in the region. The juice in this bottle is a "cask selection" of their 12-year-old expression which basically means that these were the honey barrels that came together in the vat to create a heightened sense of the brand's style and structure.

Tasting Notes:

Soft rings through this whole sip as the nose gently expresses toffee-covered apples next to light yet tart berries and a touch of suede. The taste has this chewy oatmeal cookie with plenty of spice and dried fruits vibe next to dark chocolate-covered toffee and apple cores on the very backend.

Bottom Line:

This is one of those sips where you ask yourself, "is this getting better every year?" While Cardhu was almost exclusively sold in Spain for ages, it's finally getting the love it deserves in the U.S. And I do think this year's release was better than previous years (if the empty bottle on my shelf is any indication).

### 36. The Glenlivet Nàdurra

PERNOD RICARD

ABV: 61.3% (varies)

Average Price: [\\$121](#)

The Whisky:

Speyside's Glenlivet always hits it out of the park. Their Nàdurra expression ("natural" in Gaelic) takes an unfussed-with approach to whisky. The juice is aged for 16 years in ex-sherry barrels. Then it's bottled as is in small batches — no filtration and no cutting down to proof with water.

Tasting Notes:

Expect a nose full of raisins, nuts, cinnamon, and stone fruit with a hint of anise and maybe black licorice. The taste will dance between svelte vanilla cream, robust orange marmalade on buttered toast, and nutty dark chocolate that's more smooth than bitter. The end is long and touches on notes of dry cedar with a real sense of orange oils, spice, and chocolate-covered salted nuts.

Bottom Line:

This is one of those bottles I always get when it comes out every year. It's sweet and subtle and really leans into the beauty of soft, unpeated single malts.

### 35. Glenmorangie Nectar d'Or

LOUIS VUITTON MOËT HENNESSY

ABV: 46%

Average Price: [\\$82](#)

The Whisky:

This dram from Glenmorangie is a much-loved Highland malt. The juice is matured in ex-bourbon barrels for an undisclosed number of years.

The whisky is then transferred to French Sauternes barrels which held sweet dessert wines where it spends two more years finishing.

Tasting Notes:

This has that classic "shortbread cut with lemon and vanilla" vibe that makes some single malts so approachable. The sip has a buttery toffee nature that's layered with subtle oak, mild brown spices, and more fruits tied into a creamy pudding body. The spice then leans a little towards ginger with that buttery shortbread as it slowly fades out.

Bottom Line:

This is another one of those bottles that takes up real estate on my bar cart. While the 2021 release wasn't more refined or tinkered with, it was just as great as each year's bottle and that's the point.

### 34. Auchentoshan Three Wood

MORRISON BOWMORE DISTILLERS

ABV: 43%

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

The Whisky:

Auchentoshan is a great example of a Lowland malt that harkens back to the old days of varied oak aging. In this case, the triple-distilled whisky is aged in ex-bourbon oak for around 12 years and then is finished in ex-Olorosso and ex- Pedro Ximenez sherry casks.

Tasting Notes:

There's a fruitiness on the nose that speaks to blue and blackberries with slight tartness next to orange oils and a hint of prune. The taste has a toffee-covered-in-almond vibe, next to more of that dark fruit with an almost "maple syrup spiked with woody cinnamon sticks" note (hello, bourbon barrel). The end is surprisingly light, a little woody, and full of plenty of those berries as it slowly fades out.

Bottom Line:

The berries in this release seem to get more refined with each passing year. It's a nice change-up and keeps this whisky very bright and summery, making it perfect for a refreshing highball.

### 33. Lagavulin 16

DIAGEO

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$120](#)

The Whisky:

This is an "essential" scotch for any whisk(e)y drinker. The [Islay expression](#) harnesses local Port Ellen peated malts to create their smoky whisky. But it's more than that. Aging on the sea and masterful barreling and blending brings about an Islay whisky that's about much more than just smoke.

Tasting Notes:

The nose opens with a clear billow of smoke similar to an alder-fueled smoker (placed on a beach), dripping with brisket and salmon fats as it smokes those meats along with all the brown sugars, salts, and spices those meats were brined in. The palate holds onto those notes while drying out, a touch — with mild vanilla and fruit in the background. In the end, the sea salt, fatty smoked beef and salmon, and soft dry woods dominate the palate as this one fades slowly away.

Bottom Line:

Was 2021's Lagavulin 16 better than last year's? This year's certainly won more awards. Tasting the two next to each other recently, I'd say "a little." This year's release was slightly subtler with more American smoker fats and sugars that might speak to an American palate a little more.

### 32. Royal Lochnagar Aged 16 Years, The Spring Stallion

DIAGEO

ABV: 57.5%

Average Price: [\\$268](#)

The Whisky:

This eastern Highland whisky is another cask strength drop from Diageo. The juice was aged in refill bourbon barrels and left alone for 16 long years. There was no finishing cask. The whisky was simply vatted and bottled as-is.

Tasting Notes:

Soft, soft, soft. That could be the notes on the nose, palate, and finish and we could move on. More deeply, the nose is full of mild notes of dates next to tart apples and orange peels that turn into an apple cobbler of sorts as this very mellow, almost damp, mossy earthiness peek in. That tart apple and orange zest drive the palate towards a soft malted cookie frosted with light powdered sugar and vanilla frosting. The end warms up with a slight pepper tobacco vibe next to a distant idea of a dry woodpile next to that tart fruit.

Bottom Line:

I've only sampled this twice so far this year and it's growing on me. It's deeply hewn with distinct flavor notes. Adding a little water really lets that earthiness bloom, adding to the depth of this solid dram of whisky.

### 31. Ardbeg An Oa

LOUIS VUITTON MOËT HENNESSY

ABV: 46.6%

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

The Whisky:

This is a quintessential Islay peaty whisky. The juice is aged in a combo of Pedro Ximénez, charred virgin oak, and ex-bourbon casks before being married and rested again in Ardbeg's bespoke oak

“Gathering Vat,” allowing the whiskies to really meld into a cohesive dram.

**Tasting Notes:**

Imagine slow-smoked peaches, soft cherrywood on fire, and singed sage. That nose leads towards buttery but almost burnt toffee with hints of egg nog spices, savory leafy green veg with a bit of dirt, walnut shells, black tea, and a little bit of pancake syrup (the high fructose corn syrup kind). The finish is long, has hits of black licorice, and really brings the soft yet sweet smoke with an almost meat smoker edge.

**Bottom Line:**

Ardbeg An Oa seems to get better every year. Or I’m just really programming my palate to like this stuff. Either way, I found this year’s bottle far more palatable and enjoyable. Take that for what you will.

### 30. Aberfeldy 16

**BACARDI**

ABV: 40%

Average Price: [\\$120](#)

**The Whisky:**

[Aberfeldy](#) is at the heart of Dewar’s scotch. The juice here is a classic Highland whisky aged in American oak and finished in sherry casks. That whisky is then cut down to proof with water from Pitilie Burn, a bubbling stream with gold deposits next to the distillery.

**Tasting Notes:**

Aberfeldy is renowned for its honeyed nature and this shines through on the nose with hints of clove-studded oranges and a touch of that sherried wood. The palate holds onto the wet sherry wood while going full holiday cake with spices, nuts, dried and candied fruits, and a sweet maltiness. The end reveals a mild note of bitter dark chocolate next to the honey and spices as it fades fairly quickly.

**Bottom Line:**

Last year, I was all about the 18-year Aberfeldy. This year, the 16 felt like the sweet spot (no pun intended for the honey-laden whisky). This bottle was emptied pretty quickly in my house, mostly on the rocks (though in the occasional cocktail too).

### 29. AnCnoc 2009 Vintage

**INVER HOUSE**

ABV: 46%

Average Price: [\\$68](#)

**The Whisky:**

anCnoc (pronounced “a-nock”) is Knockdhu Distillery’s premiere line of Speyside whiskies. This new drop was distilled in 2009 and left to mellow in Spanish and American oak for 12 years. The juice was then bottled with no filtration or added color before proofing.

**Tasting Notes:**

Caramel apples, bourbon vanilla, and orange spiced cider draw you in on the nose. The palate leans into the apple with an equal measure of spicy (damn near hot) cider and apple candies next to light malts, butter toffee, a slight nuttiness, and a flutter of dark cacao. The finish lets that chocolate smooth out towards a sweet and almost creamy finish.

**Bottom Line:**

There are a lot of anCnoc whiskies out there and you’re safe in picking pretty much anyone of them. However, this year’s release is a winner all around with familiar notes for any bourbon drinker looking to expand their palate.

### 28. Aberlour 16

**PERNOD RICARD**

ABV: 40%

Average Price: [\\$109](#)

**The Whisky:**

This small Speyside distillery has been producing quality whisky for over 200 years. This expression is aged 16 years in both ex-bourbon and ex-Olorosso sherry casks. It’s then married and proofed with soft Speyside water from the Highlands and bottled.

**Tasting Notes:**

There’s a matrix of dried dark fruits next to powdery dark spices with hints of walnuts and dried florals that draw you in on the nose. The taste delivers on those notes while adding a deep plummy jam cut with clove and slightly sweet wood. The end really holds onto that jammy fruit and spice as it slowly fades across your senses, leaving a velvet texture in your mouth.

**Bottom Line:**

This was another one where I asked, “is this better than last year’s release?” So again, I got these out and tried them side-by-side. And, I really think there’s a little more refinement in 2021’s release. It’s a little deeper with the dark fruits and spices while having a slightly softer texture.

## 27. Clynelish 14

**DIAGEO**

ABV: 46%

Average Price: [\\$74](#)

**The Whisky:**

Up on the cold northern coast of Scotland, you’ll find a little town called Brora. There used to be a distillery there of the same name, which made peat monsters up until the 1980s. Clynelish took over the location and started making their own peated malts, this time while leaning more into the sea than the peat. And in this case, they’ve created a very lightly peated single malt that spends a decade and a half resting near that sea until it’s just right.

**Tasting Notes:**

This has a nostalgic sense of a cold, rainy beach. You’re not necessarily on that beach but you can remember to sea spray, the salt on your lips, the smell of dried seaweed, and a touch of old smoke from a nearly dead fire. The taste dances between notes of burnt orange peels, old leather tobacco pouches, and this soft mineral water mouthfeel that carries with it creamy vanilla just touched with sea salt. The end is medium-length, salty, and has this mildly bitter edge that’s akin to a cocoa bean pith.

**Bottom Line:**

This bottle needs to blow up in the U.S. because it’s delicious. I also asked a lot of American distillers what their favorite single malt is right now and this bottle came up a lot. The empty bottle on my shelf means that I agree.

## 26. Dalwhinnie 15

**DIAGEO**

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$74](#)

**The Whisky:**

This entry-point bottle to the wider world of Dalwhinnie is a hell of an easy drinker. The juice is aged in Scotland’s coldest distillery, making the maturation process a severe one. The juice spends 15 years hiding in those barrels as the temperatures dip well below freezing across all those winters.

**Tasting Notes:**

Imagine a bowl of pear and apple peels sitting next to an open jar of floral summer honey on the nose. Dots of citrus oils mingle with that honey as a smooth vanilla character arrives on the back of sweet brown bread bespeckled with smoked walnuts. The nuts, sweet bread, and floral honey all converge on the finish as it slowly fades towards a final billow of sweet smoke at the back of your mouth.

**Bottom Line:**

If you haven’t tried Dalwhinnie yet, go out now and do just that. This is, by far, one of the easiest drinking peated whiskies on the shelf. If this doesn’t get you into peated whisky, nothing will.

## 25. The Singleton of Glendullan Aged 19 Years, The Siren’s Song

**DIAGEO**

ABV: 54.6%

Average Price: [\\$182](#)

**The Whisky:**

This Speyside malt — which is getting pushed pretty hard on the U.S. market right now — is all about the honeyed and heather notes of the region. This expression rested in former bourbon barrels for nearly two decades before it was transferred to a cognac cask. After that final maturation, the whisky was bottled at cask strength.

**Tasting Notes:**

The nose on this is one of the fruitiest out there, with strong notes of apricot next to dried figs, orange oils, old raisins, and candied fruits that lead towards a rummy fruitcake with a tube of marzipan running through it and a light flourish of fresh heather flowers. The palate really holds onto the fruit with the candied fruits and citrus rinds leading the way as apple cores and stems veer the taste towards a woodier note of cedar with a slight echo of white grape juice. The mid-palate holds onto the sweetness of that juice as the malts kick in with a slight tobacco spice that’s *just touched* with a hint of dried and candied ginger.

**Bottom Line:**

I kind of can’t believe this brand new bottle from The Singleton is only 25th. It’s a good bifurcation point though. This is where things get stellar but still tied to whether you dig the peat or not. That being said, this unpeated whisky is a goddamn delight and turns into Christmas in the glass with a little water.



## 24. Bowmore Legend

BEAM SUNTORY

ABV: 40%

Average Price: [\\$36](#)

The Whisky:

Bowmore is Islay's oldest distillery, dating back to the mid-1700s. Their Legend expression, incidentally, is their youngest release. It's a peated malt that's aged for around five years in ex-bourbon casks before it's vatted, proofed down, and bottled.

Tasting Notes:

This doesn't feel young for such a relatively young scotch. The nose opens with a murky billow of smoke that's infused with sea spray and a hint of dry hay. There's a sweet and waxy saltwater taffy sweetness on the palate that's followed by rich and almost salmon-belly-fat smoke with a touch of floral honey and vanilla underneath it all. The end is short, leaving you with a bit of iodine and ash next to a soft mineral water smoothness.

Bottom Line:

It's another year and this means it's time for another Bowmore Legend. If you grew up near the ocean, this might be your new favorite whisky. It does lean into the peat pretty hard by the end, but it's tied to the ocean and fatty fish more than astrigent smoke.

## 23. Bunnahabhain Toiteach A Dhà

DISTELL GROUP LIMITED

ABV: 46.3%

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

The Whisky:

This smoky Islay peated malt means "smoky two." Well, that's what "Toiteach A Dhà" translates to anyway. The whisky is a peated malt that's matured in ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casks and then married with an eye cast towards the sea and all that sherry wood.

Tasting Notes:

There's a clear sense of sweet and stewed plums with a focus on cinnamon sticks and an almost spicy smokiness. The palate shifts towards a savory fruit (think pumpkin) with flourishes of dark chocolate next to meaty dates and lightly salted sardines. The end leans back into the spicy and very briny smokiness as the malts ebb and flow between sweet and dry with a plummy texture.

Bottom Line:

I don't know why this works but it just does. I don't reach for this that often, but it has its place. By that I mean, I pour a dram about once a year when the new bottle arrives and enjoy it/respect it but then go back to the sweet Speysides I love.

## 22. Kilchoman Sanaig

KILCHOMAN DISTILLERY

ABV: 46%

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

The Whisky:

Kilchoman is one of the newer distilleries on Islay, named after the creek near the stillhouse. The juice in the bottles is rendered from ex-bourbon and (primarily) ex-Olorosso sherry casks.

Tasting Notes:

There's a mix of toffee, espresso bitterness, and dark, almost savory tropical fruits on the nose that lead towards a very earthy (almost vegetal) note of spicy peat. The taste leans into peaches and cream with dark chocolate-covered raisins next to hints of tart red berries and more of that spicy smoke. The end is long and folds in a touch of sea salt into the spicy smoke and all that fruit.

Bottom Line:

This year's drop was much darker with the dried fruits and chocolate taking center stage. Then the smoke was more like burning spices, which was a nice touch.

## 21. Port Askaig 110 Proof

PORT ASKAIG

ABV: 55%

Average Price: [\\$76](#)

The Whisky:

Port Askaig selects prime barrels of peated Islay whisky for their drops. This expression is a cask-strength release of Islay peaty malts with a focus on ex-bourbon cask aging. The juice is then bottled as is — without any filtering, cutting, or added color.

Tasting Notes:

There's an old smoker vibe with all the burnt sugars, apple cider vinegar, and fatty brisket of years past coming through the smokiness. The palate pops with a rush of lemon-lime-orange oils as smoky bacon fat leads back towards a mix of cumin-forward spices and maybe a touch of dried mint. The finish is long and returns to the apple and burnt sugars as the fatty smoke builds and eventually fades.

Bottom Line:

This really feels like it's getting more and more dialed into a Texas BBQ palate with each passing year. That's not a slight. I dig that, a lot. This also works as a great pairing whisky for Tex-Mex.

## 20. Mortlach Aged 13 Years, The Moonlit Beast

DIAGEO

ABV: 55.9%

Average Price: [\\$182](#)

The Whisky:

This year's Mortlach leans into the "beast of Dufftown" moniker the brand has earned by being bold and unique. The whisky in the bottle is a spirit that spent 13 years aging in both refill bourbon casks and new oak. Those barrels were vatted to create this beast of a whisky and it was bottled at cask strength.

Tasting Notes:

This starts off very unexpectedly with a nose full of Thanksgiving dinner — the roasted turkey with sage, thyme, and rosemary leads towards a bowl of cranberry sauce cut with holiday spices and a touch of sweetness next to the bold tartness of the berries while candied fruits, floral honey, and varnished cedar round out the nose. The palate builds on that vibe and adds in a vanilla-chili note that attaches to a dry cedar box full of fruity and sticky tobacco. That spice really leans into freshly cracked black pepper as the fruitier notes from the nose return to mellow everything out on the long finish.

Bottom Line:

We made it to the top 20! This Mortlach release is perfect for right now. Though I can't see ever reaching for this outside of the holiday season, and that's the only reason it's top 20 and not top ten.

## 19. Compass Box Glasgow Blend Scotch Whisky

COMPASS BOX

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$38](#)

The Whisky:

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

Tasting Notes:

The nose draws you in with this subtle peaty malt that feels more kissed by a hint of smoke than drowned in it in a malting room. There's also a light stewed stone fruit vibe in play — kind of like a prune sitting next to a nutmeg bulb. Going back to the nose, a very faint cherry arrives. The first sip is "malty scotch!" That then leads to dry straw, very mild plum, the memory of opening up a bag of charcoal, and almond shells. The taste really leans into the malts. But again, you don't feel much smoke. Instead, you're left with a slightly sweet straw and a buzzing maltiness that is more reminiscent of a cleaned-out fireplace than "smoke."

Bottom Line:

Yes, this is blended scotch and 100 percent stand by it being ranked this high. This is a delightful dram that works neat, on the rocks, or as a cocktail base. It's also one of those "ah-ha!" drams that'll dial in your palate for great blends.

## 18. Aberlour A'bunadh

PERNOD RICARD

ABV: 56.2% (varies)

Average Price: [\\$95](#)

The Whisky:

A'bunadh (ah-boon-arh) means "the original" in Gaelic and the juice in this Highland bottle represents that for Aberlour. The whisky is matured in old Olorosso sherry casks exclusively. The juice then goes into the bottle at cask strength, unfussed with.

Tasting Notes:

That sherry plumminess is evident right up top, with hints of bright orange oils, clumps of dark chocolate, honey, and nuts, and a hint of oak. The taste shines with notes of dark, ripe cherries, prunes, more bright orange zest, dark chocolate, and a good measure of svelte vanilla. The slow finish leaves you with a creamy mouthfeel next to bitter chocolate next to sweet cherries and plums, all of which lead towards a warming spice on the tongue at the end.

Bottom Line:

This juice is just phenomenal. Each year, I fall more and more in love with this whisky, and 2021 was no different. I'd also argue this is the perfect whisky gift bottle.

## 17. The Dalmore 18

WHYTE & MACKAY

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$246](#)

The Whisky:

This is more than just an 18-year-old whisky. The juice in this case spent 14 years maturing in ex-bourbon casks. Then the whisky was filled into Matusalem sherry casks that held sherry for 30 (!) years for four more years of maturation. The casks, from Bodega González-Byass, are exceedingly rare and impart something truly unique into this whisky.

Tasting Notes:

Dried roses meet your nose as orange-zest bespeckled dark chocolate dances with hints of old book leather, vanilla husks, and sultanias. The taste holds onto the orange and chocolate tightly as a nutty, peppery, syrupy vibe takes over with a light touch of oakiness. The chocolate zeroes in its bitter qualities on the end, with a little bit more vanilla sweetness and a savory counterpoint that's kind of like saline (or wet salt).

Bottom Line:

There were a lot of great The Dalmore released to choose from this year. But, we're going classic with this year's 18 release. This is just one of those old-school whiskies that never ceases to wow. It's really hard to find a single fault in this bottle.

## 16. Johnnie Walker Black Label: The Jane Walker Edition

DIAGEO

ABV: 40%

Average Price: [\\$39](#)

The Whisky:

Master Blender Emma Walker created this blend with Cardhu — a Speyside distillery — at its core. Cardhu was famously founded and run by another female pioneer in whisky, Elizabeth Cumming, back in the 1800s. The juice is a blend of malts that aged at least ten years from the Diageo stable of Scotch single malts.

Tasting Notes:

The sip has a nose with a clean maltiness next to raisins and peach juice with a hint of leather coming in late. The palate is light, almost airy, with stewed apples floating in rich cream next to a touch of milk chocolate. The finish has a very faint hint of Johnnie Walker peat next to dry reeds, more malts, and a bitter chocolate powder.

The Bottom Line:

This is another blended scotch that lives up to the hype and [supports](#) important [women's issues](#) worldwide with every bottle sold.

## 15. Bruichladdich Port Charlotte 10

RÉMY COINTREAU

ABV: 50%

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

The Whisky:

Bruichladdich really has fun with peated whisky. This expression keeps the peat phenols in the mid-range, leaning high. The casking is a mix of first and second-fill bourbon barrels and second-fill French wine barrels. That utilization of second-fill oak means there's a very light touch of wood on this peated whisky.

Tasting Notes:

Imagine a dark chocolate orange drizzled in salted caramel and served on a wet leaf of seaweed and you'll be on the right track for the nose.

The smoke kicks in on the palate with a vibe that feels like those wet seaweed leaves thrown on a smoldering pile of pine to create a massive billow of smoke everywhere, as hints of buttery white wine and strawberry jam-covered scones linger in the background. The finish leans into the bready nature of the scones with a dry straw edge that's followed by a mouthful of the seaweed heavy grey smoke.

Bottom Line:

While this isn't exactly for my palate, I respect the hell out of it. It's complex, engaging, and really embraces the depth of Islay peat. Give it a shot, you might become enamored.

## 14. Highland Park Cask Strength Release No. 2

THE EDRINGTON GROUP

ABV: 63.3%

Average Price: [\\$105](#)

The Whisky:

This yearly drop is part of a new line from the Orkney Island's distillery. The juice is a blend of single malts that are aged exclusively in old American oak that previously held sherry. The barrels are married and bottled as is, to assure you're getting all the nuance and flavor of their malts meeting that oak.

Tasting Notes:

There's a light sense of wildflowers on the nose with a rich vanilla husk that leads towards a touch of peat. The taste is surprisingly silken (for a cask strength) with rich and buttery toffee next to honeysuckle, eggnog spices and creaminess, and a small dose of orange zest as a counterpoint. The end holds onto the creaminess and spices as the peat just edges in with a whisper of resinous pine smoke.

Bottom Line:

This late-summer drop continued Highland Park's excellent cask strength journey. This Viking-inspired whisky feels like the perfect balance of sweet and peated malts. Make sure to add a little water to let the citrus, spice, and fruit really shine through the smoke and you'll see what I mean.

## 13. The Balvenie DoubleWood Aged 17 Years

WILLIAM GRANT & SONS

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$155](#)

The Whisky:

[The Balvenie](#) continually hits it out of the park with their lineup. This expression spends 17 long years maturing in old American oak before it's transferred to old sherry casks for about a year more of maturation. The results are then proofed with that soft Speyside water and bottled in the brand's iconic, stubby bottle.

Tasting Notes:

You're greeted with a clear sense of Granny Smith apple peels that are still fresh, next to oily vanilla, fresh honey, and a slight touch of cedar. The taste indulges in the vanilla, creating a creaminess, while a deep Christmas cake vibe of dried and candied fruits, almonds, dark spice, and orange arrives. The end is long and luxurious with more of that spicy, nutty, and fruity holiday cake dancing through your senses on the slow fade.

Bottom Line:

This is an unparalleled single malt. It hits every note so clearly while building to a big yet comforting finish. It's also the perfect post-holiday-dinner dram.

## 12. Talisker Aged 8 Years, The Rogue Seafury

DIAGEO

ABV: 59.7%

Average Price: [\\$120](#)

The Whisky:

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

Tasting Notes:

You get this medley of smoked fruits on the nose — think smoked plum and apricot — that leads towards a rush of sea spray, iodine, and nori that braces your senses for this billow of wet forest and granite on fire like a mountain overlooking the ocean that's been set ablaze. The palate calms down only slightly with a pink sea salt that's been accented with dried roses while that smoke puffs through your sense with a green pepper spiciness and an almost sweet, wet fir tree bark with an earthy edge that almost feels like damp black dirt. That earthiness imparts a soft peatiness to the malt on the end with a slight tobacco chewiness followed by a final kick of spicy smoke.

Bottom Line:

This just goes to show you how much difference a year can make in Scotch whisky. Last year, Talisker 8 Special Edition was my favorite overall [Scotch dram of 2020](#). This year, it didn't crack the top ten. And this is still a stellar whisky, don't get me wrong.

## 11. Cragganmore Distillers Edition

DIAGEO

ABV: 40%

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

The Whisky:

Cragganmore is an iconic Scottish distillery. The whisky is matured in sherry casks for 12 years. It's then transferred into American oak casks that held port for a final maturation phase before proofing and bottling.

Tasting Notes:

Fennel leads to some dried fruits and fresh apples on the nose. The taste, on the other hand, leans into sweet oak, figs, pear candies, and a softness that's almost hard to believe. The end is full of sweet fruits and has just the right touches of oak, vanilla, and savory greens as it fades at a good clip.

Bottom Line:

These Distillers Editions just dropped (and were overshadowed by the Diageo Special Releases drops) so I'm still getting to know them. Still, this is my favorite hidden gem release of the year. It's so unique and truly delicious.



## 10. Ardbeg Traigh Bhan 19 Year Batch 3

LOUIS VUITTON MOËT HENNESSY

ABV: 46.2%

Average Price: [\\$360](#)

The Whisky:

This is Ardbeg's yearly release of special batches of 19-year-old peaty malt. The whisky is Ardbeg's signature peated whisky that's bottled during a "haar." That's a thick and briny foggy morning on Islay, which imparts that x-factor into the whisky as it goes into the bottle.

Tasting Notes:

You're drawn in with a super subtle waft of soft smoke with hints of sour cream, fennel, and cold-smoked salmon on a pine cutting board that's been washed in the sea. The palate holds onto that briny seaside vibe as it veers towards sea salt-laden dark bricks of fudge bespeckled with dried orange zest and lavender. The end circles back around to a sooty smoke that feels like a warm granite rock that's been dipped in the sea and then rolled around in the dying embers of a fire.

Bottom Line:

This year's Traigh Bhan was stellar. Again, I don't care for these peat monsters. But this was subtle and funky enough that it really entranced me. Please, don't take the peatiness as a sign that you won't like it. Give it a shot, you might be as surprised as I was.

## 9. Laphroaig Càirdeas 2021

BEAM SUNTORY

ABV: 58.9%

Average Price: [\\$120](#)

The Whisky:

Laphroaig is always innovating its line. This year's Càirdeas is a triple matured cask strength whisky. The whisky first mellowed in ex-bourbon casks before being moved to quarter casks and, finally, finished in Pedro Ximénez sherry casks. That whisky was then bottled as-is.

Tasting Notes:

There's a lot going on with this nose from a starting point of fresh Band-Aids to rich marzipan with plenty of rose water to apples stewed in holiday spices with hazelnut and caramel to a light touch of bourbon vanilla and maybe a hint of cherry tobacco. The palate takes that Band-Aid and turns it toward a sharp but very fatty smoked bacon vibe while a medley of smoke apples, salted licorice, and eggnog spices mingle beneath that bacon. The mid-palate leans into a very dry cedar as notes of nori, fennel, and sharper brown spices, almost Red Hots, warm the backend of the finish.

Bottom Line:

This is a big and very bold smoke monster. Still, that bacon fat, fruit, and botanical nature help make this bottle shine. Again, this isn't exactly for me and my palate but I respect the hell out of it.

## 8. Caol Ila Distillers Edition

DIAGEO

ABV: 43%

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

The Whisky:

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

Tasting Notes:

This really draws the peat far into the background as notes of smoked apricots, star anise, and honey-soaked almonds on the nose. The palate has a slight anchovy oil edge that leads towards a very distant whisp of smoke from a campfire far down a rainy beach next to orange oils, smoked salt flakes over buttery toffee, and a touch of more of those honey almonds. The end holds onto that nuttiness and sweetness with a good spray of seawater as the campfire smoke draws nearer and picks up a few more of those stone fruits along the way.

Bottom Line:

This year's distillers edition is among my favorite whiskies of the year overall. It's just a beautiful sip of whisky that truly highlights the distillery.

## 7. Dewar's Double Double 27 Year

BACARDI

ABV: 46%

Average Price: [\\$120](#) (half bottle)

The Whisky:

Master blender [Stephanie Macleod](#) created another masterpiece through this "Double Double" four-step aging process. Step one: aging single malt and single grain whiskies for 27 long years. The malts are then blended, the grains are blended, and they both rest again. Next, all of that is blended together in a vat and rested. Finally, the juice is finished in ex-Palo Cortado sherry casks.

Tasting Notes:

You can really tell this has an Aberfeldy backbone with a floral honeyed nose that imbues summer breezes full of fragrant flowers. That floral honey leads to an almost lemon-honey vibe with hints of cinnamon and cedar next to light pear tobacco and dry grass. The end turns into pure silk as the florals, honey, pear, and spice slowly flow across your tongue as it fades away.

Bottom Line:

This is one of the softest and most engaging blends of the year. Definitely worth checking out to experience the heights of a truly great blended whisky.

## 6. Johnnie Walker Blue Label Year Of The Ox

DIAGEO

ABV: 46%

Average Price: [\\$225](#)

The Whisky:

This is the mountaintop of Johnnie Walker's whiskies. The blend is a marriage of ultra-rare stock from extinct Diageo distilleries around Scotland. That's cooler than Brad Pitt wearing work boots and aviators on his motorcycle. This expression is all about barrel selection and the mastery of a great noser and blender working together to create something special.

Tasting Notes:

Dried fruit with a plummy sweetness mingles with a very soft and almost dry waft of smoke. The palate then veers in a completely different direction — folding in orange oils, marzipan, rose water, honeycombs, and even a dusting of bitter cacao once a drop of water is added. The end is slow, smoky, and full of dry fruits, nuts, with a malty nature.

Bottom Line:

This is Blue Label, sure. But this bottle is truly magnificent. The hand-painted art on the bottle is worth the price of admission alone. This really is a great collector's item with a stellar whisky inside.

## 5. The Macallan 18 Double Cask

THE EDRINGTON GROUP

ABV: 43%

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

The Whisky:

This single malt from Scotland's famed and stunning Highlands is matured for 18 long years in two separate cask programs. Part of the juice rests in American oak casks that were sent to Spain to hold sherry for a spell before they're sent up to Scotland to hold this whisky. The other casks are European oak that also held sherry in Spain before their trip to the Highlands. Each wood brings a unique character to the mix that helps this single malt really shine.

Tasting Notes:

There are very delicate notes of American oak on the nose with hints of dry vanilla, orange oils, and buttery toffee next to the finer European sherry woodiness, with candied fruit and a touch of eggnog spices, especially clove and nutmeg. The palate leans into the soft vanilla with a cut of raw ginger spice, golden sultanas, more orange, and a touch of salted caramel with a pure silk texture. The mid-palate hones those spice notes towards a mildly dry wood with the candied and dried fruit bringing a sweetness and velvet texture. The very end has a candied orange peel bitterness and sweetness that sits with you for a while, reminding you to go back for another sip sooner rather than later.

Bottom Line:

This is the year I became a convert to the very hyped The Macallan. I tried this year's release and was hooked. This really is the nectar of the whisky gods.

## 4. Talisker 30

DIAGEO

ABV: 45.8%

Average Price: [\\$845](#)

The Whisky:

Talisker's seaside vibes are on full display in this beautiful bottle. The last limited release was around 3,000 bottles, making this a very rare expression from the Isle of Skye distillery.

Tasting Notes:

The nose is shockingly subtle and soft with velvety notes of smoldering dried nori next to matchsticks that have been dipped in a buttery and rich dark chocolate with sea salt gently sprinkled all over. The palate leans into the dialed-back peat by bringing about a smoked cream with fire-seared peaches next to a hint of wet cedar, very old tobacco leaves, and a touch of almond or oat milk flecked with salt. That salt drives the mid-palate towards a finish that's like getting kissed by merfolk on a beach next to a campfire that's heating a cauldron full of spicy stewed peaches in more of that cream.

Bottom Line:

It's always an exciting year in whisky when we get a new Talisker 30. The very limited and randomly released whisky is the mountaintop of Talisker that bridges being both highly collectible and very drinkable. We'd argue that you should buy two — one to hide in the vault and one for celebratory pours throughout your life.

### 3. Lagavulin Aged 26 Years, The Lion's Jewel

DIAGEO

ABV: 44.2%

Average Price: [\\$2,220](#)

The Whisky:

This is a very rare and unique expression. First, it's the first 26-year-old Lagavulin released. Next, there are only 7,500 of these bottles in existence. Lastly, the whisky was built from a combination of first-fill Pedro Ximenez and Oloroso sherry casks. Those barrels were married after over two decades of mellowing and bottled at a very accessible cask strength of 44.2 percent.

Tasting Notes:

The nose on this opens as if you've taken a freshly emptied red wine barrel, torn the staves from the metal, and thrown those wet staves onto a campfire and then sat down to eat some figs wrapped in nori and drizzled with rich butterscotch while someone else threw an old boat rope onto that fire and then started up an outboard motor on the dock just a few feet away.

From there, the taste mellows out considerably as a vibe of smoked dates flaked with sea salt takes over and this clear sense of the oil from a sardine can arrives with plenty of salt and black pepper to help it go down easy. The finish mellows even further as this wet and earthy note arrives that's one part forest mushroom, one part wet green moss, and one part smoldering wet cedar branches with a slight peppery tobacco dryness and warmth on the very end.

Bottom Line:

This Lagavulin is mind-blowing. There's so much going on that all somehow works (try making a pairing of dates and sardines work on its own). What's amazing is that the peatiness of this whisky is so faint yet earthy and exact that it'll convert any peat-hesitant whisky drinker out there.

### 2. The GlenDronach Parliament Aged 21 Years

BROWN-FORMAN

ABV: 48%

Average Price: [\\$262](#)

The Whisky:

Don't let the name fool you. The "parliament" in this case is the collective noun for rooks — a type of European crow that nests above the distillery. That dark essence is rendered in the whisky through 21 long years of maturation in Oloroso and Pedro Ximenez sherry casks exclusively.

Tasting Notes:

There's a lot going on with this nose, starting with blackberry brambles hanging heavy with ripe fruit leading towards a well-spiced oatmeal cookie vibe and cut with hints of orange zest and vanilla. A sticky toffee pudding sweetness arrives (heavy on the dates) with flourishes of bitter dark chocolate notes and a sharp holiday spice matrix. The end is very long but very velvety with hints of dark fruits and spices warming your body as it fades away.

Bottom Line:

This whisky is perfect. Well, let's qualify that — "as an unpeated malt, this is perfect." This is definitely a bottle you want to enjoy and expand your palate with.

### 1. Oban Aged 12 Years, The Tale of Twin Foxes

DIAGEO

ABV: 56.2%

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

The Whisky:

Oban's location on the Scottish coast, next to both the Islands and Highlands, allows it to harness the best of both regions when making its whisky. This year's 12-year release is built on the backs of both ex-bourbon casks and refill bourbon casks, allowing the stronger notes of those new bourbon casks to get a light mellowing from the refill wood. The results are bottled at cask strength.

Tasting Notes:

Briny — that's the draw here. The nose has this mellow mix of spicy nori crackers that lead towards an old wooden cutting board that's slick with olive juice, fish oils, salt, and black pepper that you then take a heel of bread to mop up while a slight note of smoked haddock or cod lingers on the very backend. On the palate, a burst of citrus oils arrives to cut through all that umami, oil, and brine as a light malty fruitiness adds a little tart and sweet to the mix, with a sense of cedar chips soaked in mild chili oil driving a sense of warmth. The finish lets that spice build towards a dry pepperiness thanks to the wood as the

fruit ties itself to a very mild tobacco leaf and another note of that smoked fish sneaks in on the very end.

Bottom Line:

This was the shock of my year and sort of came out of nowhere. But, I do love Oban and this special release is everything anyone could want in a subtle, seaside whisky that has a pirate character with the softness of a grandparent's warm embrace on a cold day.

It's a whisky that conjures a whole dang story — that's special.

## Writers' Tears Introduces Limited-Edition Ice Wine Cask Finish Irish Whiskey

By [Gary Carter](#) / December 1, 2021

[Walsh Whiskey](#), makers of Writers' Tears and The Irishman, recently unveiled their newest creation of an ice wine cask finished Irish whiskey.

Writers' Tears – Ice Wine Cask Finish was made in collaboration with Inniskillin Winery in Niagara, Ontario, Canada's original estate winery and leading producer of ice wine.

The limited-edition release is a triple-distilled vatting of single pot still and single malt whiskeys, and was finished an additional 12 months in ice wine hogsheads, before being bottled at 46% ABV.



*Writers' Tears – Ice Wine Cask Finish (image via Walsh Whiskey)*

This, the 23rd expression from Walsh Whiskey founders Bernard and Rosemary Walsh, is the latest in their journey as Irish whiskey makers. And their journey took them to Canada's wine region, when the two visited the Niagara Peninsula in Ontario, in January of 2020.

There, they worked with Inniskillin Winery and Head Winemaker Bruce Nicholson (now retired), touring the vineyard and sampling fermenting wines before selecting 12 hogshead casks originally coopered by the Berthomieu Cooperage in France.

The dozen selected hogsheads were emptied of Inniskillin Ice Wine in March of 2020 and shipped to Ireland where they were filled with Writers' Tears – Copper Pot (at high strength) in May of that year. Checked at monthly intervals, the ice wine-casked Irish whiskey was bottled 12 months later, in May of 2021.

Bernard Walsh said in a prepared statement he first tasted ice wine in 2011, and plans for this expression have been fermenting in his head ever since. "With our core Writers' Tears – Copper Pot expression, we have a unique combination of predominantly spicy Single Pot Still married with Single Malt Irish whiskey. This core expression gets a whole new dynamic complemented beautifully by the intense natural sweetness imparted by Inniskillin's show-stopping ice wine."

He added that when touring the vineyard, Inniskillin's then head winemaker explained how they only harvest well-matured, thick-skinned Vidal grapes when the weather presents a window of opportunity between 17.6 and 6.8 °F.

"Based on what we have produced, Inniskillin Ice wine certainly contains that intense sweetness that can carry through in the wood to our whiskey," Bernard said. "The whiskey's nose delivers peach and apricot over a unique pot still spice. On the mouth, it offers floral blossom and nutty oak, with a fruity finish of mango and lychee."



In total, 3,500 bottles of Writers' Tears – Ice Wine Cask Finish are available in the US, Canada and Ireland, retailing for \$84.99.

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Column: There's Going To Be A New Wave Of Luxury NFT Whiskies.  
Here's Why.

By [Felipe Schrieberg](#) / November 30, 2021

Last month, Glenfiddich released a new whisky through blockchain-based technology of non-fungible tokens (NFTs). 15 NFT tokens, each representing a bottle of a 46 year-old Glenfiddich that spent 23 years of secondary maturation in an Armagnac cask, were sold for \$18,000 per bottle, paid for with the ethereum cryptocurrency. Selling in seconds, some of the ownership tokens were subsequently resold for increasingly higher prices. The token also includes a special image of the bottle that can be used for the purpose of showing off the purchase on social media. Once the token owner decides to claim their bottle from the distillery, the token is then deleted (or 'burned'). While this may just seem like an odd techie whisky story, NFTs are likely to represent a new frontier that luxury drinks brands. Co-founder of Blockbar Sam Falic, the company behind the Glenfiddich NFT whisky sales, [claimed in a Punch article](#) that all the major Scotch whisky corporations have been in touch: "We've had conversations with every major spirits group in the world—Diageo, LVMH, Whyte & Mackay, William Grant & Sons, Sazerac, Bacardi, Edrington—we've spoken to everyone."



Glenfiddich 1973 Armagnac Cask Finish Single Malt Scotch Whisky  
(image via Glenfiddich)

So what are NFTs exactly and how do they relate to whisky? It's fair to say NFTs themselves are an odd piece of blockchain technology. Now enormously popular, non-fungible tokens first began as a quirky way to protect the work of artists, especially work created and spread through digital media, by using blockchain technology to securely attribute authorship and ownership of a work and subsequently keep track of its distribution.

However, one of the creators of NFTs, Anil Dash, [claimed the system is slapdash and counterproductive](#). NFTs can only protect a specific link to where digital art is stored, they are not the work itself. Dash says that if the work itself is stored on the website of a startup, and the startup goes bust and takes its site down, that work can still be lost. Here's where the whisky side of things comes in. By using NFTs for physical assets, such as whisky bottles, this issue is neatly sidestepped, keeping the technology itself relevant. Because NFTs themselves have become speculative investment assets has also meant that prices for whisky offered on NFT platforms has quickly ballooned. Re-auctioned Glenfiddich NFTs are one example. Another is an NFT that represented ownership over [a cask of Macallan that sold for \\$2.3 million](#). However it is more likely, with global whisky brands now increasingly tying themselves to experiences and marketing around that trendy term 'aspirational lifestyles', that redeemed NFTs will serve in the future as a 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'-style golden ticket, combining physical products with unique experiences. Colombian rum brand Dictador [is leading the way here](#). Through BlockBar, Dictador's 10

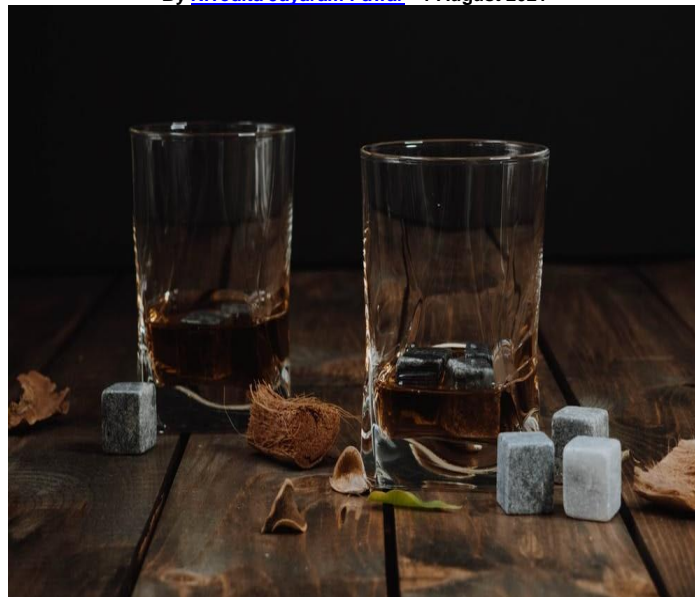
NFTs, initially priced at \$25,000 each, include not just a bottle of 45 year-old rum but also a visit of the Cartagena-based distillery, a city sightseeing tour, and a private dinner for two with distillery master blender Hernan Parra which also includes a VIP tasting and a stay at a five star luxury hotel. Little wonder that Dalmore, which has long oriented in this kind of direction, has just announced the launch of a single NFT which includes its Decades collection of 4 whiskies and a special VIP distillery visit experience for \$137,700.

This is in line with what whisky brands are already offering well-heeled customers, whether it's VIP tastings at the new Johnnie Walker Princes Street experience in Edinburgh, stunning meals at Glenturret's superb new restaurant, or other similar special whisky-based experiences. By entering the NFT scene, whisky brands have access to a new demographic of younger wealthy people who ordinarily may not have considered spending silly amounts of money on luxury whisky. Through NFTs various interconnected strands in whisky (overpriced luxury releases, VIP experiences and murky unregulated investment in bottles and casks), are united. With so much money to be made for the relatively little effort (and a large carbon footprint) required to create NFTs for products, little wonder so many whisky brands are eager to enter this new tech craze.

## 6 smooth whiskeys for first-time whiskey drinkers

From bourbon and rye to single-malt scotch, these are the essential bottles every whiskey newcomer should start with

By [Nivedita Jayaram Pawar](#) - 1 August 2021



*These tips will help you enjoy this spirit more*

[Whiskey](#) doesn't have to be intimidating even if you are a novice to the [spirit](#). And contrary to popular belief it's not harsh, complicated or meant to be consumed in a very particular way. Yes, the flavour profiles of different whiskeys indeed can be complex, but it's nothing you can't handle, especially if you're picking the right [bottle](#) to start with.

What Should You Look for When Picking a Whiskey?

Whiskey isn't just a strong drink; it's an investment in your evening. If you're new to the amber spirit, experts recommend staying away from the overly smoky, peated styles, which can be quite overpowering for the uninitiated. Instead, the best whiskey for your palate will likely be an easy-drinking, sweet and fruity dram (another word for 'small drink'). "Looking up the region the whisky is from is a good starting point," believes Alex Robertson, the head of heritage and education at Chivas Brothers. "Speyside in particular is a great starting point as the whiskies here are beautifully accessible with notes of fruits and fresh floral aromas. It's home to half of Scotland's distilleries and brands such as The Glenlivet, Aberlour, Strathisla, Chivas, Glenburgie and Ballantine's. Cask type is another option. An American barrel will enhance those fruity floral notes and give a sweet, vanilla creaminess on the palate. These whiskeys are perfect before dinner. A European oak barrel that has previously held Oloroso sherry will give spice and dark, fruity chocolate notes that are perfect for an after-dinner drink," adds Robertson.

### How to Drink Whiskey

Whiskey isn't a spirit you guzzle for the fun of it like you did tequila in college. Whiskey demands appreciation. A good whiskey is greatly enhanced by ice. Though experts suggest resisting the urge to toss ice into your glass of whiskey straightaway, adding one or two cubes to your first dram will help. It will lighten the harshness many complain about and will eliminate some of the burn, making it easier for you to enjoy your first sip. Obviously, as you begin to develop your appreciation for whiskey, you will most likely want to stop drinking it on the rocks. Note that, when using ice, it's ideal to use an ice ball or one large cube rather than standard cubes, since it melts slower and won't completely water your dram down. Also, if you are using cubes, try and avoid using more than two.

Robertson recommends introducing a few drops of water to the dram. "Like a garden on a dry day, rainfall opens the aromas. A drop of water will allow the aromas and flavours in your whiskey to reveal themselves. A drop at the time, until you find a level that suits you," says Robertson.

You could even ease into whiskey through a great whiskey cocktail suggests Nikhil Agarwal, CEO of All Things Nice. "I know many people who love their whiskey with water, soda, ginger ale or loads of ice—and that's fine. I'd recommend a small drop of cool water or a tiny cube of ice if you are new to whiskeys."

Ready for your first sip of whiskey? We spoke to spirit experts from around the world to get their recommendations on the best whiskey for beginners. Start with these if you are new to the spirit and branch out from there.

### Aberlour 16

This 16-year-old Speyside single malt is double-matured in both ex-bourbon and -sherry casks. This enriches the whisky with a breathtaking depth of flavours and richness. It's also a lot smoother and more refined than younger bottlings. "Beautifully balanced with the influence of American and European oak, it provides a wonderful flavour experience and an opportunity to understand the power of a European oak cask that has previously held Oloroso sherry. Aberlour 16 year old brings cinnamon spice, dark fruits and milk chocolate to the blackcurrant characteristic of Aberlour," says Robertson. Swirl it around your mouth and you get amazing velvety goodness. This dram has the potential to become a staple you return to again and again.



### Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey

Flavoured whiskeys are not for everyone and not every bottle produced is worth noting. But here's an exception. This is an amazingly smooth whiskey with a little bit of sweetness thanks to the honey liqueur that is blended with the famous Tennessee whiskey. Easy on the wallet, this is a good place to start experimenting with a great American classic. Jack Daniel's Tennessee Honey sips very well on its own and also works fabulously in an old-fashioned, manhattan or whisky sour.



### Jameson

This friendly and highly approachable whiskey is the number-one selling Irish whiskey in the world. And like many Irish whiskeys, Jameson is triple-distilled, which removes more "impurities" and gives it more of a light, clean flavour. "This is a great value-for-money blended whiskey from Ireland that is very easy on the palate, almost with a touch of sweetness," says Agarwal. Works beautifully on the rocks and is excellent as a cocktail base.





## Auchentoshan 12

Made in a distillery just outside of Glasgow, Scotland, Auchentoshan 12 is a triple-distilled whisky that has been aged for 12 years in oak barrels. What makes this whisky such a good try for first-timers is that it's remarkably smooth and slightly honeyed, perfect for those adjusting their palates to the flavours of whisky. It's also fruity and complex on the nose, but does not punch you with peat. The flavour is good enough to sip on, but also stands up in a cocktail.

Ballantine's 17 Year Old

This is an incredibly well made whisky that won't break the bank, believes Agarwal. The longer maturation of Ballantine's 17 Year Old gives an extra depth of flavour and character to the blend along with a subtle sensation of smokiness and a velvety texture.



## Chivas 12

Don't be fooled into thinking that the fun of Scotch is all about single malts, particularly if your palate isn't accustomed to them yet. Blended whiskies, such as the Chivas 12, offer an exciting world of flavours and can be more approachable for a first-timer. Expect a smooth mouthfeel and distinctive Speyside flavours of crisp orchard fruits in every sip. Enjoy it neat, on the rocks or in a strong or fruity cocktail; it's your choice. However, there's nothing more refreshing than a classic highball with a crisp soda and plenty of ice.



## Drams come true: Whisky is one of Scotland's biggest exports — and a major tourist draw, too

By Wing Sze TangSpecial to the Star - Fri., Dec. 3, 2021timer5 min. read



"The air in this room is *saturated* with whisky, so take a deep breath!" says our guide Jethro, as we step into the chilled chambers of the star attraction at Edinburgh's Scotch Whisky Experience: a trove of golden, amber and tawny elixirs, arranged on shelves from floor to ceiling, displayed behind glass and lit from below, like rare jewels strictly to be admired.

"The collection in total contains, and I want you to be impressed with this number, 3,384 bottles of whisky," announces Jethro with theatrical flair. "All of them are unique — and none of them have ever been opened." The very oldest is a Buchanan's dating back to 1897.

Believed to be one of the biggest whisky collections anywhere, the cache was once the idiosyncratic hobby project of Brazilian businessman Claive Vidiz, who amassed it over 35 years, after being gifted with a half-dozen bottles of Scotch in 1971. As for why he never sipped a single one: "He was told, 'Don't open them until you find someone who can appreciate them, until you have an occasion that's worth opening them for,'" quips Jethro.

Acquired by mega British liquor maker Diageo, the collection found its way back to its spiritual home in Scotland in 2009, where more than 1.5 million whisky enthusiasts have gawked at it since. It's a spectacle but also a priceless historical record for one of the country's defining goods.

More than 130 working whisky distilleries are sprinkled across Scotland, and while they all rely on the same three basic ingredients — barley, water and yeast — the flavours can be pushed in wildly different directions. There are five whisky-making regions in the country, each with their own personality. Sip a pale dram on the softer side and you might have a "Lowland lady." Sample a Scotch reminiscent of an ashtray and you might have a smoky Islay special.

It all sounds rather enigmatic to me, an untutored, casual-at-best enjoyer of whisky. But if there's anything I might learn at [Johnnie Walker Princes Street](#), Edinburgh's latest tourist attraction, it's that the spirit isn't reserved for staid and wizened aficionados who insist on sipping it neat by a roaring fire.

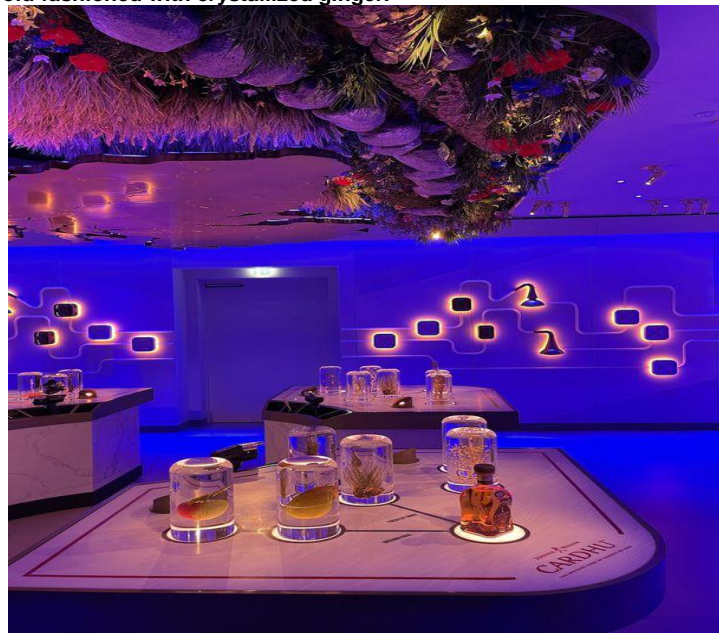




Opened in September, with Prince Charles among the earliest sightseers, the eight-floor destination is home to a glossy retail flagship with impossible-to-get-elsewhere cask editions and custom bottle engraving, a rooftop restaurant that gazes upon Edinburgh Castle next door, and a cocktail lounge where you can order a “Smoky Gigggle Juice” (whisky with a scoop of ice cream, in cheeky defiance of the purists).

The attraction also promises myth-busting and entertainment, with new twists on the traditional whisky tour: more high-tech, more tailored and more amusing. The 90-minute “Journey of Flavour” experience begins with a pop quiz on a tablet, to suss out my personal palate: “Can we tempt you with a piña colada?” it asks. (Only on holiday, I demur.)

The tool deduces that I prefer my drams smoky, which will guide the cocktails I’m served. The tour comes with three drinks of choice (any or all can be Seedlip-substituted to be non-alcoholic), like a fizzy, bonbon-sweet highball spiked with cold brew coffee and cream soda, or a spicy old-fashioned with crystallized ginger.



This isn’t your grandpa’s Scotch; it’s an effort to win over new fans, and draw ones from all over the world here, which shouldn’t require much persuasion. Pre-pandemic, tourism to the country’s distilleries had reached a high - a record 2.16 million visits in 2019, according to the Scotch Whisky Association.

The new Johnnie Walker attraction is part of Diageo’s overall £185-million (\$314-million) investment in supercharging whisky tourism.

Some of the dollars have been poured into revamping its distilleries, inside and out, and upgrading the visitor experiences.

A 40-minute drive from Edinburgh brings me to Glenkinchie, the first of a dozen Diageo distilleries to be spruced up. I’m welcomed by a statue of Johnnie Walker’s famous striding, hat-tipping figure, this one hand-painted with wildflowers by Edinburgh artist Angela Johnston. It’s a nod to the bucolic setting in East Lothian — known for its bounty of fruit orchards, fields of golden barley and blooms — which also inspired the distillery’s new, 35,000-square-foot garden space.



I’m here to try my hand at the cocktail masterclass, under the tutelage of our affable mixologist, Connor, who talks us through some more whisky history before schooling us in techniques. “The art of distilling came to Scotland from Ireland, mainly through a family of physicians called the Beaton in the 1300s,” he explains, “and what they were producing was meant to be consumed as medicine, but as you can see from the picture, they look like they’re having way too much fun.”

And why shouldn’t whisky be fun? I wonder as Connor demos the most advanced move of the day — agitating and aerating our own apple-cinnamon whisky sour with enough intensity to fluff up the aquafaba, which seems to call for full-body, up-down-all-around, giggle-inducing choreography with our Boston shaker (while trying to avoid accidentally dousing a neighbour).

My efforts leave no doubt that I shouldn’t quit my day job, but I come away with the lesson anyway: whisky need not be the strictly serious



endeavour of lifelong collectors or saved for special occasions. It can just be appreciated exactly as you like it, all in good fun.



#### Where to explore whisky in Scotland

Here, the differences between the five Scotch regions.

**Highland:** By sheer geographical size, this is the biggest whisky region in the country, and it's noted for the widest range of styles. [The Glenturret](#), which claims the title of Scotland's oldest working distillery (dating back to at least 1763), is here.

**Speyside:** If judging by production, this is the largest whisky region in Scotland, thanks to all the warm, dry, barley-nurturing weather. It's home to roughly half the country's distilleries — and the [Malt Whisky Trail](#) will point you toward nine key locations, all offering guided tours, including [Cardhu](#).

**Lowland:** Encompassing Edinburgh, this region is noted for its pretty countryside, as well as single malts on the light, sweet and floral side — hence the nickname “Lowland ladies,” to describe its whiskies. [Glenkinchie](#) is among the most popular distilleries.



**Campbeltown:** This is Scotland's littlest whisky-producing region; it's a small coastal town with just three distilleries left, including

historic [Springbank](#). But the uniqueness of its single malts, noted for robust, briny, sometimes peaty flavours, sets it apart.

**Islay:** For connoisseurs of the smokiest whiskies, the 40-kilometre-long, salt-sprayed isle of Islay (“eye-luh”) is the source. Known for its dramatic coastal landscape, it's famously peaty. The nine working distilleries include [Bowmore](#), founded in 1779.

Writer Wing Sze Tang travelled as a guest of Johnnie Walker, which did not review or approve this article. Travellers are reminded to check on public health restrictions that could affect their plans.

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#### The Macallan Opens A New Whisky Boutique In New York

By [Gary Carter](#) / December 4, 2021

[The Macallan Single Malt Scotch Whisky brand](#) recently partnered with Duty Free Americas to unveil a new retail experience at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York.

Based in Terminal 7, this is the first opening of the brand's global boutique program in the Americas.

The Macallan Boutique program has opened retail experiences in select cities and international airports, including Dubai International Airport, London Heathrow Terminal 5 and Taiwan Taoyuan International. This typically allows more whisky enthusiasts around the world to connect with the brand's home in Speyside and explore the range of whiskies from The Macallan's portfolio.



The new The Macallan retail location at JFK (image via Edrington Global Travel Retail)

The JFK Airport Boutique showcases a range of expressions, The Macallan Red Collection, The Macallan Fine and Rare Collection, The Macallan Boutique Collection, The Macallan Folio Series, The Macallan Anecdotes of Ages Collection, The Macallan Concept No. 3 and releases from The Macallan Exceptional Single Cask range.

The overall design of The Macallan Boutiques in the program is inspired by the brand's Speyside home, with a signature oak lattice centerpiece, providing a direct and visual connection to the unique roof of The Macallan Distillery Experience.

Jeremy Speirs, regional managing director for Edrington Global Travel Retail, said [in a prepared statement](#) that launching the brand's first boutique in the Americas is a major landmark for the distillery.

“Through this collaboration we are able to extend our program to one of the most prominent international air passenger gateways into North America,” he said. “We are delighted to bring to life the passion, vision and excellence for which The Macallan is renowned, in a truly iconic location like New York.”

Leon Falic, president, Duty Free Americas, said, “We're thrilled to build on our long-term partnership with The Macallan to offer travellers at JFK International Airport Terminal 7 an enhanced interaction and retail experience with one of the world's most exclusive luxury liquor brands. The Macallan Boutique underscores Duty Free Americas' commitment to expand our luxury retail environment, work with the best brands in the world and focus on technology and luxury merchandising.”

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## Douglas Laing Unveils Old Particular “Cheers to Better Days” Whisky Series

By [Gary Carter](#) / June 11, 2021

Independent Scotch bottler Douglas Laing & Co out of Scotland recently unveiled their Old Particular “Cheers to Better Days” whisky mini-series, with quite the line-up.

The mini-series is comprised of a Jura 12 Years Old Single Malt, Port Dundas 16 Years Old Single Grain, Linkwood 12 Years Old Single Malt and a Bunnahabhain 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky ... each from one single cask.

The family firm noted that its Cheers to Better Days Series has been bottled in “celebration of a brighter future ahead.” All four of the limited edition bottlings are visually-led by a bright orange label that features a bespoke, hand-drawn illustration intended to signify “joy, warmth, health and success.”



Douglas Laing Old Particular “Cheers to Better Days” (image via Douglas Laing & Co)

The set is described by Douglas Laing officials as having “distinct, different and divine” flavor profiles; the Jura release with notes of sea salt, rich toffee and charred oak, the Port Dundas revealing a palate of freshly baked pancakes, toasted nuts and juiced pineapples, the Linkwood with hints of tangy green fruits, thick cream and buttery oat biscuits, and the Bunnahabhain balancing a melody of zesty citrus juices and sweet spices. The series bottles clock in at 96.8 proof.

Cara Laing, Douglas Laing’s Director of Whisky, said in a prepared statement, “The light at the end of the tunnel, that we are all so desperately craving, has been truly and beautifully represented by this mini-series. The vivid orange label design is intended to stand on consumer’s shelves at home as a promising reminder that brighter days are just around the corner. The unique flavors that are encapsulated inside each and every one of these bottlings represent warmth, comfort and vibrancy – a taste of what’s to come.”

All four of the limited editions will be packaged in a premium gift tube. The Old Particular “Cheers to Better Days” Jura 12 Years Old Single Malt and Port Dundas 16 Years Old Single Grain releases are expected to retail at £65 and £85 respectively. The Linkwood 12 Years Old Single Malt bottling will retail at £75 exclusively [on douglaslaing.com](https://www.douglaslaing.com) and the Bunnahabhain 12 Years Old Single Malt edition is expected to retail at £70 exclusively in Asia.

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## The Balvenie Adds New Whiskies To Its Stories Collection

By [Gary Carter](#) / November 29, 2021

Scottish whisky brand [The Balvenie](#) recently unveiled its two latest additions for The Balvenie Stories Collection – The Tale of the Dog (42-year-old and 46-year-old liquids) and The Creation of a Classic.

The new expressions, which debuted this month, are described as stories as told by the craftsmen at the distillery in Dufftown, Scotland, created to highlight and bring to life the many varied stories that come from a long-time distillery like The Balvenie.

The Tale of the Dog is depicted as a smooth, honeyed expression of [The Balvenie](#) that’s available now at global travel retail outlets. The distillers note that the 46-year-old variation is rich where spice and subtle hints of licorice are met with dashes of bergamot. On the nose, it offers aromas and flavors reminiscent of roasted red currants and treacle, with hints of eucalyptus and menthol from the toasted oak. It tastes of silky honey and toffee sweetness.



Balvenie Tale of The Dog (image via The Balvenie)

Distiller’s notes show the 42-year-old domestic release offers a sweet fragrance of ripe dates with hints of toffee, and notes of geranium oil and a subtle mint musk. The dates and toffee coat the mouth in a light nutty spice with toasted oak flavors.

David Wilson, managing director for global travel, said in a prepared statement The Balvenie “Tale of the Dog” release is beyond its rarity as a single cask offering. “Our Malt Master David Stewart and Apprentice Malt Master Kelsey McKechnie selected this exceptional cask paying homage to our long-serving coppersmith Dennis McBain and his tireless service while revealing a little secret found within our distillery.”

“The Creation of a Classic,” meanwhile celebrates the story of The Balvenie’s malt master – the longest serving malt master in the industry – David Stewart, who pioneered the first cask-finished whisky in 1983, The Balvenie Classic.

It was created by transferring Balvenie whisky matured in traditional oak barrels to sweet Oloroso sherry casks. This new expression in The Balvenie Stories range showcases the same process – the choice of wood, the warehousing, the testing and tasting all playing a part in its success.

Stewart said the distillery is built on stories. “It’s what sets us apart and makes our whisky what it is. Each expression in the Stories range has a distinct narrative as to how it came to be, and each whisky tells its unique tale in liquid form through first-hand recollections of the many characters involved.”

Stewart explained that the story behind “The Tale of the Dog” was inspired by the memories of Dennis McBain, a long-time coppersmith at The Balvenie Distillery.

As a young apprentice, fresh to the world of whisky-making, Dennis was asked by a brewer for a copper dog, which he soon discovered was a little copper tube used for secretly siphoning off whisky from the cask.



The copper dog would then be flattened and put back for its owner to be found as a way of calling out the illicit activity. Expressions such as “taking the dog for a walk” became common at the distillery, with whomever the copper dog had been sent to understanding full well that he’d been discovered but given a second chance.

This recollection went on to inspire McBain’s suggestion of using dogs instead of unwieldy valinches for distillery tour tastings, a protocol which remains today.

Storytelling like this is carried through The Tale of the Dog, with its tale depicted on the whisky’s packaging. The bottle is presented with a replica, flattened copper dog and encased in a wooden tube wrapped in leather, printed with a bespoke illustration, specific to the liquid, from British artist and printmaker Andy Lovell.

Whisky enthusiasts can hear the story of The Tale of the Dog and The Creation of a Classic through a specially recorded podcast series, featuring the craftspeople behind the expression, as well as The Balvenie Global Ambassador Gemma Paterson. This podcast will be available through Spotify and iTunes and via a QR code tag inside the pack, that consumers can scan using their smartphones.

The Tale of the Dog 46-year-old is available in 10 exclusive Travel Retail locations, with a suggested retail price of £16,500. Only 34 bottles, drawn from a single cask, will be available.

The Balvenie Creation of a Classic, suggested retail of £57, is now exclusively available in Global Travel Retail in select markets.

The Balvenie Stories distiller’s notes:

*Tale of the Dog – aged 46 Years – 54.7% ABV*

- **Nose:** Rich, with flavors reminiscent of roasted red currants and treacle, wrapped in aromas of eucalyptus and menthol from toasted oak.
- **Taste:** Spice and subtle hints of licorice are soon met with dashes of bergamot. This richness soon surpasses to reveal silky honey and toffee sweetness.
- **Finish:** Long lasting, smooth sweetness.

*The Creation of a Classic – No Age Statement – 43% ABV*

- **Nose:** Aromatic and lively, aromas of vanilla and spice evocative of dried clove and chai are layered on a base of earthy, malty undertones reminiscent of Balvenie’s own barley loft.
- **Taste:** A perfect complement of light oatmeal syrupiness and brittle toffee are followed by delicate hints of spice and a rich drying sensation from European oak.
- **Finish:** Lingering, lasting dry oak.

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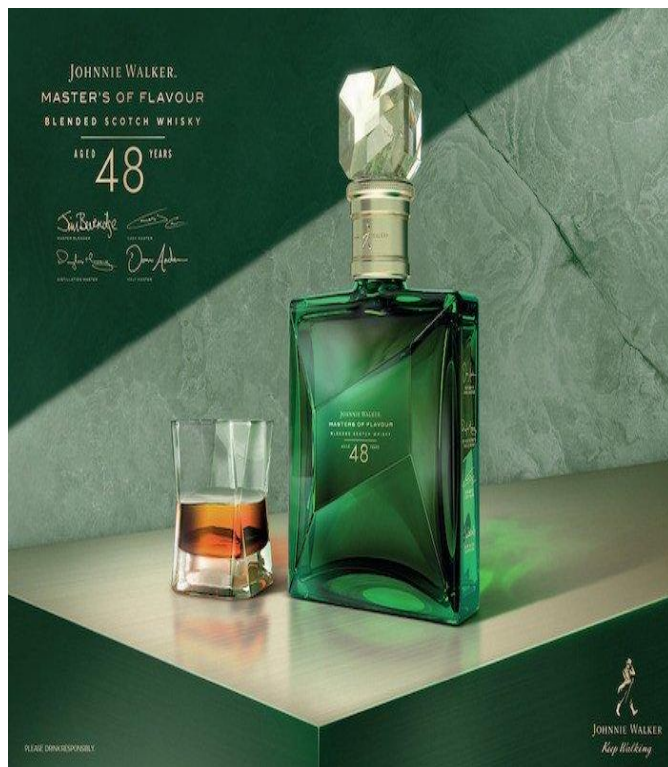
## Johnnie Walker Launches Extremely Rare ‘Masters Of Flavour’

By [Gary Carter](#) / November 30, 2021

Johnnie Walker is celebrating the fine art of whisky making with the recent launch of its latest in the Masters Series, the Johnnie Walker “Masters of Flavour.”

This Scotch is crafted from what’s described as some of the rarest maturing whiskies in the Johnnie Walker reserves, with all of the whiskies used to create Johnnie Walker Masters of Flavour aged for at least 48 years. Only 288 bottles will be released in total from this bottling.

Johnnie Walker Master Blender Jim Beveridge said [in a prepared statement](#) it is fascinating to craft a Scotch that pays tribute to each of the four main steps in whisky making – malting, distilling, cask maturation and blending. “And to shine a light on how each craft contributes something very special to the extraordinary flavors that Scotch has to offer, from grain to glass.”



*Johnnie Walker Masters of Flavour (image via Johnnie Walker)*

In one of his final releases before he retires at the end of the year, Beveridge brought together three masters of the whisky world who he’s teamed with over many decades ... Malt Master Donna Anderson, Cask Master James Carson and Distillation Master Douglas Murray ... to create this expression paying tribute to the skill of whisky making.

“This incredible blend showcases how masters of the art of whisky-making combine generations of Scotch knowledge and craftsmanship with their own expertise of malting, distillation, cask maturation and, of course, blending, to create a truly exceptional Scotch,” Beveridge said. Johnnie Walker Masters of Flavour is the third and final whisky in the Johnnie Walker Masters series of rare Scotch.

The series includes last year’s Johnnie Walker Master’s Ruby Reserve, a celebration of Jim Beveridge’s 30 years working in whisky. Before that, the John Walker Masters’ Edition was a whisky crafted using Scotch aged for a minimum of 50 years from distilleries that were operational during the lifetime of Johnnie Walker founder John Walker.

All three are presented in a Baccarat crystal decanter within a bespoke oak cabinet.

For Johnnie Walker Masters of Flavour, Beveridge and his team selected so called fleetingly rare expressions from the “ghost” distilleries of Glyn Albyn, Port Dundas, Brora and Glenury Royal, balancing them with the distilleries of Cameronbridge, Blair Athol and Dalwhinnie. Beveridge said that on the nose, Johnnie Walker Masters of Flavour has a soft and gentle smoke, reminiscent of seaweed and salty air, which then gives way to rich dried fruits. Notes of molasses linger with leather-bound books before smoke gently weaves back through the senses.

These aromas give way to fruit flavors bursting with currants before a gentle spice starts to build on the palate. Cinnamon-infused apples combine with star anise, crushed peppercorn and warming oak embers, enveloped in waves of baked caramel and rich butterscotch, before culminating in a gentle and warming smoke in the finish.

Johnnie Walker Masters Of Flavour comes in at 83.6 proof and has a suggested retail price of GBP 20,000 in the UK (including duties and taxes). It is also available in the United States for \$25,000.

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## Bimber begins building Scotch distillery

09 DECEMBER 2021 By Alice Brooker

Spirits producer Bimber has commenced construction of its Scotch whisky distillery in Dunphail, Scotland.



The distillery is expected to produce 200,000 litres of alcohol annually. The London-based Bimber team were [given planning permission by Moray council](#) to build the new facility in July this year. Construction of the site – located on the Dunphail estate, south of Forres – is projected to take a year, and will be built on a converted farm steading.

“We’re thrilled to be starting the construction of Dunphail Distillery,” said Bimber spokesperson Matt McKay.

“We fundamentally believe that the most characterful whiskies in the world are created from the finest ingredients and are crafted using authentic traditional processes.

“At Dunphail, we’ll be applying our established expertise in developing world-class whiskies and employing the traditions of the past to shape the whisky of tomorrow.”

In order to prioritise character and flavour ahead of yield, traditional processes such as on-site floor maltings, traditional kilning, long fermentations and direct-fired stills will be adopted during the production. Led by Bimber founder Dariusz Plazewski, the distillery is expected to produce 200,000 litres of alcohol annually. Distillation is projected to begin in 2022.

The new facility will also house a visitor centre. The Bimber team is also launching both the Dunphail Founders’ Club and an initial private cask offering to mark the beginning of the construction.

Club members will receive a bottle of the distillery’s inaugural single malt whisky, which is expected to be released in 2026, plus four exclusive bottlings.

Membership is priced at RRP £695 (US\$917) per person, and includes a 10% discount on online purchases, notice of future releases and a welcome pack containing branded nosing glasses.

The private cask programme can be accessed through [www.dunphaildistillery.com](http://www.dunphaildistillery.com) from 12pm GMT on 10 December with whiskies priced from RRP £3,800 to £6,400 (US\$5,016-US\$8,448). Earlier this year, Bimber [released a series of London Underground-themed whiskies](#) in partnership with Transport for London.

## Brown-Forman: ‘strong’ H1 despite supply chain issues

09 DECEMBER 2021 By Kate Malczewski

Jack Daniel’s owner Brown-Forman delivered a 9% increase in net sales in the first half of fiscal 2022, with a boost from premium Bourbon and Tequila.



Brown-Forman reported a ‘strong’ first half of fiscal 2022. During the first six months of its fiscal year, the Kentucky-based spirits firm posted net sales of US\$1.9 billion, jumping by 9% compared to the same period last year.

Its second quarter net sales grew by a modest 1% following a strong start to the year, with [first quarter net sales up by 20%](#).

“Despite the many challenges and ongoing uncertainties created by the pandemic, Brown-Forman’s business remains incredibly strong,” said Lawson Whiting, Brown-Forman’s president and chief executive officer. The company’s results were led by double-digit growth in its premium Bourbons and its Tequila portfolio.

The former category leader saw sales climb by 11%, led by the Woodford Reserve and Blended Malt Scotch Whisky. “We saw strong volume gains” and the return of the brand’s popularity.

Tequila registered a 16% increase in net sales, driven by Herradura and El Jimador.

Herradura posted increased volume sales in the US and Mexico, and El Jimador saw a rise in volumes in the US, Mexico and the UK – though these gains were partially offset by a drop in volumes for the Tequila-based RTD New Mix, which last year experienced a jump in sales due to supply chain issues in the beer industry.

Brown-Forman’s Jack Daniel’s portfolio grew net sales by 9% in the first half of fiscal 2022, registering higher volumes internationally and benefiting from the reopening of the on-trade.

Volumes grew for both Jack Daniel’s RTDs and for the brand’s Tennessee Honey spirit drink, and the ongoing rollout of its [Tennessee Apple](#) product contributed to the momentum, as well.

Meanwhile, travel retail sales climbed by 38% due to a favourable comparison with last year’s pandemic-impacted figures.

“We are pleased with the strong first half of the fiscal year and remain confident in our ability to deliver sustainable long-term growth, particularly given consumers’ increasing preference for premium spirits and our strength in the growing American whiskey and Tequila categories,” commented Whiting.

### Supply chain issues

Disruptions in Brown-Forman’s supply chains impacted the business’ performance in several markets, including the US, where net sales were flat.

The company saw growth of 26% in emerging markets, though these were also affected by supply chain issues.

“Currently, we are managing through the impact of [global supply chain disruptions](#), including glass supply, and have deployed a number of risk mitigation strategies to address the various constraints on our business,” Brown-Forman reported.

“While we expect supply chain disruptions to persist throughout the fiscal year, we believe the impact will become less significant in the second half of the year.”

The firm said it is ‘confident’ in its future performance, and has thus revised its full-year underlying net sales outlook from mid-single-digit to high-single-digit growth.



## Single Malt Scotches For Newcomers Who Want To Stay Away From Smoke

CHRISTOPHER OSBURN - DECEMBER 7, 2021

We don't blame you if you're new to [single malt Scotch whisky](#) and feeling a bit overwhelmed. There's no specific flavor you should expect from every bottle of [scotch](#). Depending on the grains used, the aging process, and the region where it's produced, the spirit can taste remarkably different. Very broadly, though, [Scotch](#) single malts do tend to break into two categories: Peated (or smoky) and unpeated (or sweet). While regions like [Speyside](#) might be more known for honeyed and fruit-forward whiskies (sometimes) and [Islay](#) might be almost synonymous with smoky peat-monsters (mostly), there are no hard and fast rules for what whisky tastes like what from where. That said, Scotch [whisky](#) beginners might not want to dive right into the fire that is peat-smoked single malts — it's a lot to tackle. That's why we decided to highlight some of the best "beginner" unpeated Scotch whiskies today, perfect for people who might not be ready for that smoky plunge. Keep scrolling to see our eight selections.

### Tomatin 12



**TOMATIN**

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$42](#)

The Whisky:

While it doesn't have the name recognition of some of the other beginner bottles on this list, Tomatin 12 is a great starter single malt. Aged in oak barrels before being finished for six to nine months in casks that previously held oloroso sherry from Spain, it's known for its mellow, sweet, accessible flavor.

Tasting Notes:

Complex aromas of dried cherries, raisins, almond cookies, and vanilla beans are prevalent on the nose. The palate is swirling with hints of candied orange peel, vanilla beans, buttery caramel, and a gentle, fruity, woody finish that leaves you craving more.

Bottom Line:

This single malt is known for its sweet, fruity, caramel flavors that make it both a great beginner bottle and one that you'll keep on your bar cart for years to come.

### Glenmorangie The Original 10



**GLENMORANGIE**

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$41](#)

The Whisky:

No beginner, smoke-free single malt Scotch list is complete without Glenmorangie The Original. The renowned distillery's flagship expression is known both for its quality as it is for its price. It's matured in a combination of first and second-fill American oak barrels for a decade creating potentially the best beginner whisky of all time.

Tasting Notes:

Fruit is front and center on this whisky's nose. There are notable aromas of orange peel, lemon curd, dried apricots, raisins, and slight spice. Sipping it reveals a symphony of sticky toffee pudding, toasted vanilla beans, caramel candy, and gentle wintry spices. The finish is a great combination of sweet malts and dried fruits.

Bottom Line:

This is a mellow, sweet well-balanced single malt. The caramel malt flavors pair perfectly with the ripe fruit flavors.

### Old Pulteney 12



**OLD PULTENEY**

ABV: 46%

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

The Whisky:

First released in 2018, this memorable expression was completely matured in ex-bourbon barrels. The result is a sweet, highly approachable whisky that should appeal to both beginner single malt Scotch drinkers as well as seasoned bourbon fans.

Tasting Notes:

A lot is going on with this whisky's nose with clover honey, toasted vanilla beans, butterscotch, charred wood, and just a hint of sea salt. The

palate is littered with flavors like salted caramel, almond cookies, candied orange peels, slight ocean brine, and a nice herbal backbone. The last few sips are warming and filled with hints of sea salt and buttery caramel.

**Bottom Line:**

Even for a beginner bottle, this is a complex whisky. Aging in bourbon barrels gives it an extra sweetness that's tempered well by the slight salinity.

## GlenDronach 12



**GLENDRONACH**

ABV: 40%

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

**The Whisky:**

This award-winning single malt whisky was first released in 2009. Aged for at least twelve years in Oloroso and Pedro Ximenez sherry casks, it's non-chill filtered and known for its creamy, sweet, fruity flavor. There's a reason it commonly makes both beginner and sherry bomb lists.

**Tasting Notes:**

The nose is highlighted by treacle, vanilla beans, cinnamon, holiday spices, and citrus zest. On the palate, you'll find sweet sherry, dried cherries, oaky wood, butterscotch, raisins, and slightly warming spice. At the very end, you'll find candied almond and dried fruit notes.

**Bottom Line:**

This is a great example of a sherried single malt whisky that's also a great beginner bottle. It's also the type of whisky that will propel you into trying the other expressions from this beloved distillery.

## Tamdhù 12



**TAMDHU**

ABV: 43%

Average Price: [\\$68](#)

**The Whisky:**

Even though it was founded in 1897, there's a chance you've never heard of Tamdhù. Named for the Gaelic word for "little dark hill", this Speyside distiller is well-known for its sherried single malts. One of its best is its

12-year-old express that was aged completely in first-fill and refill oloroso sherry casks.

**Tasting Notes:**

This whisky's nose is very vibrant with aromas of candied orange peels, dried cherries, sherry spice, and gentle oak. The palate is centered around woody oak, sweet sherry, raisins, ripe berries, and sweet, buttery caramel candy. The finish is a warming combination of toffee, fruit, and gentle Christmas spices.

**Bottom Line:**

While this whisky was aged for more than a decade in former sherry casks, its sweetness is tempered by spice and caramel.

## Aberlour 12



**ABERLOUR**

ABV: 40%

Average Price: [\\$42](#)

**The Whisky:**

Before you step up to the cask strength gem that is Aberlour A'bunadh, you have to start somewhere. We suggest the first step be with the distillery's double cask matured 12-year-old expression. The two casks it was matured in are white oak and sherry casks. The result is a mellow, sweet, fruity, memorable dram.

**Tasting Notes:**

Before you first sip, a nosing will reveal scents of caramelized sugar, toasted vanilla beans, ripe fruit, and gentle spices. The palate continues this flavor profile with chocolate fudge, sweet sherry, ripe berries, cherries, and butterscotch. The warming finish has both winter spices and fruity sweetness.

**Bottom Line:**

While it might not get the same press as Glenmorangie The Original, this is one of the best beginner bottles on the market. It's the best beginner option for sherry fans.

## Mortlach 12



**MORTLACH**

ABV: 43.4%

Average Price: [\\$67](#)

**The Whisky:**



Whisky aficionados know all about the prowess of Mortlach. If you're unfamiliar with the brand, it's time to get to know its 12-year-old expression. This award-winner is double casks matured in a combination of American and European oak barrels. The result is a rich, easy-to-drink, memorable whisky.

**Tasting Notes:**

This whiskey is highlighted by aromas of candied almonds, butter cookies, sticky toffee, and slight spice. On the palate, you'll be greeted with notes of raisins, prunes, vanilla beans, citrus zest, and toasted oak. The last few sips are warming with a nice mixture of candied orange peels and butterscotch pudding.

**Bottom Line:**

This is a truly memorable dram. It's loaded with spice, caramel, and slight fruitiness that make it a terrific dram on a cold winter night.

## Bruichladdich The Classic Laddie



**BRUICHLADDICH**

ABV: 50%

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

**The Whisky:**

You probably know that the Inner Hebrides Island of Islay is well-known for its peat-smoked, robust, campfire-like whiskies. But did you know that you can still find smoke-free options from the sheep-filled island?

Bruichladdich The Classic Laddie not only fits the bill, but it's also one of the best beginner whiskies on the market.

**Tasting Notes:**

Memorable aromas of manuka honey, caramel candy, orange zest, and slight ocean brine fill your nostrils before your first sip. On the palate, you'll be greeted with hints of cinnamon sugar, butterscotch, dried cherries, and slightly salted caramel. The finish is pleasingly warming with notes of treacle and ripe fruits.

**Bottom Line:**

There's no smoke, but it has enough ocean brine to pair well with the caramel and fruit flavors. A perfect sipper on a cold night in front of a roaring fire.

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## #10 • Wild Turkey Master's Keep One



- Rank: 10
- Year: 2021
- Score: 93
- Price: \$175
- ABV: 50.5%
- Style: Straight bourbon
- Place of Origin: Kentucky

There's a father-son dynamic at work between Wild Turkey's two master distillers on this release—with the patriarch Jimmy Russell preferring 8 to 10 years of aging and son Eddie favoring the older stuff. The final blend thus combines 8 to 10 year old and 14 year old bourbons, and that blend was then finished in a mix of toasted and new charred oak barrels.

Refined maturity becomes apparent on the first sip. It's creamy and well spiced, with flavors of chocolate-covered marshmallow, caramel, cotton candy, and marvelous touches of aged tobacco leaf. This is a big whiskey that carries its age with grace and balance. —*David Fleming*

## #9 • Compass Box No Name No. 3



- Rank: 9

- Year: 2021
- Score: 93
- Price: \$130
- ABV: 48.9%
- Style: Blended malt
- Place of Origin: Scotland

The third installment in Compass Box's gothic exploration of smoke, or the whiskies that shall not be named, builds upon their bewitching sequence of distillery duets. Pairing Ardbeg with Caol Ila, then Caol Ila with Talisker, blender James Saxon invited Laphroaig and Bowmore to dance for No. 3, underpinned by the familiar Compass Box foundation malts. There's a charming balance of sweetness and peat, as the hardy coastal smokiness of Laphroaig is quelled by the ripe tropical fruitiness of Bowmore. The mouthfeel is satisfyingly creamy, with orange fondant, chocolate, honey, and apricot flavors tightly bound together by tendrils of smoke. —*Jonny McCormick*

## #8 • Kentucky Peerless Double Oak



- Rank: 8
- Year: 2021
- Score: 93
- Price: \$85
- ABV: 54.35%
- Style: Straight bourbon
- Place of Origin: Kentucky

Double Oak was born of a happy accident, when a leaky barrel forced the distilling team to transfer its liquid to a new charred oak barrel. Exposure to that second barrel gave the whiskey amped-up flavors and lots more complexity. This is a bourbon that has gone into overdrive, and it handles the road just fine. Its syrupy sweet texture is checked by the oak influence, and the palate opens to flavors aplenty—dried peaches, warm apple pie, Christmas spice, gingerbread, raisin cake, chocolate, and pumpkin purée. Perfect as a holiday warmer or a backyard barbecue sipper, this is a whiskey for all seasons. —*David Fleming*

## #7 • Rampur Asava



- Rank: 7
- Year: 2021
- Score: 93
- Price: \$90
- ABV: 45%
- Style: Single malt
- Place of Origin: India

This is the world's first Indian wine cask-finished whisky, produced in the foothills of the Himalayas. Anup Barik, Rampur's master distiller, is in impeccable form here, re-casking mature whisky into Indian cabernet sauvignon barrels and monitoring them judiciously to find the perfect balance. Enticing aromas of damson, black currant, aromatic spices, vanilla essence, and pipe tobacco rise from the glass. The jammy autumnal fruits are immediate and compelling on the palate, developing red cherry, honey, peppery spice, and candied peel notes. Delectable expressions from this nation are flourishing, and with Asava, Rampur has beautifully captured the spirit of Indian whisky. —*Jonny McCormick*



## #6 • High Coast Hav



- Rank: 6
- Year: 2021
- Score: 93
- Price: \$50
- ABV: 48%
- Style: Single malt
- Place of Origin: Sweden

A culture of high-quality craftsmanship, innovation, and environmental consciousness sets Nordic whiskies apart from other world whiskies. Hav, Swedish for the sea, is part of High Coast's exceptional Origins series, and its flavor shorthand is oak spice. Wood spices, peat smoke, vanilla cream, and orange peel on the nose precede a lush palate of fruit and spice displaying sweet apricot, peach, honey, and dried tropical fruits, with a lengthy, spicy finish. Matured in bourbon casks, it mingles batches of peated and unpeated spirit, with some components receiving an accelerator period in 40-liter casks coopered from Hungarian and Swedish oak. —*Jonny McCormick*

## #5 • George Dickel 8 year old



- Rank: 5
- Year: 2021
- Score: 93
- Price: \$33
- ABV: 45%
- Style: Bourbon
- Place of Origin: Tennessee

Nicole Austin hasn't rested on her laurels since George Dickel Bottled in Bond won [Whisky of the Year in 2019](#), continuing to create great and affordable whiskeys at Cascade Hollow Distillery. This is notably a bourbon rather than a Tennessee whiskey, though the criteria for the two styles mostly overlap. The nose is nutty and well spiced, with caramel corn, toasted pecans, cinnamon graham crackers, cherry tart, and butterscotch candies. There is a friendliness to the palate that makes it ideal for outdoor imbibing, with notes of spearmint, mixed berries, nougat, and honey. Big spice on the finish makes this a memorable sip. —*Ted Simmons*

#### #4 • Jack Daniel's 10 year old



- Rank: 4
- Year: 2021
- Score: 93
- Price: \$70
- ABV: 48.5%
- Style: Tennessee whiskey
- Place of Origin: Tennessee

##### Place of Origin: Tennessee

This is Jack Daniel's first age-stated release in over a century, unveiled this summer to great excitement. Does the whiskey itself live up to the fanfare? Our verdict is that it most certainly does. Made from the same Jack Daniel's recipe used for the core Old No. 7, this liquid has aged well, and taken on lively, dynamic dimensions. Sweet cherry notes and wood spice swirl around the nose and palate, integrating with baking spice, brown sugar, candied orange, and melted butterscotch, all tempered by espresso and cedar chest. This will be an annual release, and the plan calls for it to reappear next summer. —David Fleming

#### #3 • Teeling Blackpitts



- Rank: 3
- Year: 2021
- Score: 94
- Price: \$75
- ABV: 46%
- Style: Single malt
- Place of Origin: Ireland

Peated whiskey is an ancient Irish style, but it's harder to make than you might think. Teeling's master distiller Alex Chasko ascertained that only malt as heavily peated as Ardbeg's would enable the peaty flavors to withstand the large fraction eliminated by triple distillation. That decision delivers a superb subtle smokiness, which when put together with bourbon and sauternes casks creates a moreish whiskey alive with orchard fruit, panna cotta, and sweet floral notes, plus tangy marmalade and peppery spice. As distillers in Ireland dig deeper into peaty whiskey, you can bet on this bottle of smoke to make your day. —Jonny McCormick



**#2 • Maker's Mark Wood Finishing Series 2021  
Release: FAE-01**



- Rank: 2
- Year: 2021
- Score: 93
- Price: \$60
- ABV: 55.15%
- Style: Straight bourbon
- Place of Origin: Kentucky

0 seconds of 1 minute, 46 seconds Volume 90%

Maker's Mark has resisted the rampant experimentation that defines some distilleries, but they appear to be making up for lost time with two 2021 releases in their Wood Finishing Series, which started in 2019. This release is enhanced by an American oak stave that has been toasted on only one side then added to the barrel. This innovation amps up the oak influence without going overboard. Fresh-sawn oak, earthiness, leather, and iced tea are balanced by caramel apple, toffee, and baking spice. A flavor-packed, oak-driven bourbon that wears its proof well. (ABV varies)

—Jeffery Lindenmuth

**#1 • Lagavulin 11 year old Offerman Edition:  
Guinness Cask Finish**



- Rank: 1
- Year: 2021
- Score: 95
- Price: \$80
- ABV: 46%
- Style: Single malt
- Place of Origin: Scotland (Islay)

0 seconds of 1 minute, 49 seconds Volume 90%

Inspired by actor and comedian Nick Offerman's devotion to Lagavulin single malt scotch, Islay distillery Lagavulin debuted its first Offerman Edition in 2019. A second Offerman release appeared in the spring of 2021—an 11 year old like the first, but with four months of finishing in Guinness casks. Amid a crowded field of ultra-aged, barrel proof, and many other formidable contenders, this stout cask-finished expression emerged from the pack to become our 2021 Whisky of the Year. While the 16 year old Lagavulin is generally considered the classic of the range, many Lagavulin fans prefer the younger expressions. The Lagavulin 12 year old, for example, has made frequent appearances in the

Diageo Special Releases annual series, and the 2017 version landed at number-four in our Top 20. But could an even younger expression—and one with a simple beer cask finish to boot—possibly compare to the stately, sherried depth of the oldest Lagavulins on the shelf? The answer was a resounding yes.

At first whiff, it's Lagavulin alright—but somehow brighter and more playful. The peat smoke and maritime salinity become wrapped in the freshness of fragrant citrus, melding with honeyed vanilla and white chocolate. On the palate, a subtle backdrop of peat embers harmonizes with flavors of toffee and baked orange, leading to a nimbly smoked finish that sings with notes of coffee and chocolate, and just goes on and on. That finish truly became the clincher for our tasters. It showed that while this whisky charts its own lively course, it is anything but straightforward—and loses none of Lagavulin's famed depth and complexity.

While peated scotch devotees are among the most loyal whisky fans in the world, we recognize that peat is not always for everyone. Yet with its artfully cheerful style and an abundance of captivating flavors, we believe this whisky bridges that divide. —David Fleming

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## Jim Beam Bourbon Cream liqueur hits shelves

10 DECEMBER 2021 By Kate Malczewski

Beam Suntory has expanded its Jim Beam range with a limited edition Bourbon-based cream liqueur.



The new bottling is priced at US\$19.99

Jim Beam Bourbon Cream marries cream liqueur with the brand's flagship Kentucky straight Bourbon whiskey.

Available for a limited time at select retailers in the US, the new product sits at 15% ABV and is priced at US\$19.99 per 750ml.

Jim Beam suggests serving the cream liqueur over ice or in a hot chocolate.

To coincide with the release, Jim Beam has launched a holiday campaign featuring Canadian actor Emily Hampshire, creating social content around the theme 'Get to the Good Stuff'. The campaign encourages people to relax and enjoy time with loved ones instead of focusing on holiday formalities.

The brand has also debuted Get to the Good Stuff kits, priced at US\$19.99, which include items such as 'the quickest wrapping paper', 'the shortest holiday story', 'the fastest board game' and 'the easiest, quickest recipes'.

"Jim Beam has been bringing people together for life's everyday moments, as well as the most meaningful ones – like family time over the holidays – for over 200 years. 'Getting to the Good Stuff' means more meaningful moments with family and friends, and Jim Beam Bourbon Cream is the perfect cocktail pairing to savor these moments," said Veronique Mura, vice-president of marketing for Jim Beam.

"Jim Beam's Bourbon Cream is the newest indulgent innovation that makes the perfect drink to toast to special moments with – like finally being able to savour time with family once that holiday to-do list is complete."

Over the summer, Beam Suntory [unveiled Jim Beam Orange](#), a Bourbon-based orange liqueur.

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## Glen Moray Reveals Its Final Scotch Whisky For 2021

[Hannah Kanik](#)

[Scotch](#) | December 9, 2021

[Glen Moray](#) recently released another expression from its Warehouse 1 line up just in time for the holiday season — the 2008 Manzanilla Finish.

Limited to only 1240 cask-strength bottles, the new Manzanilla Finish is said to bring together the Spey water of Glen Moray's spirits with the sea-salt tang of Manzanilla sherry, which is typically produced along the sea estuary of the Guadalquivir river.

Manzanilla is noted as being the driest of all sherries and is made in the bodegas of Sanlúcar de Barrameda in Cádiz, Spain.



Glen Moray 2008 Manzanilla Finish (image via Glen Moray)

"As distillers, this notion of "place" is endlessly fascinating, particularly as our home of Speyside is so much a part of the Glen Moray story," Glen Moray brand ambassador Iain Allan said [in a prepared statement](#). "We started to wonder what would happen if we brought Glen Moray spirit and Manzanilla casks together? If Speyside met Cádiz in the barrel, what would the results be? Soft with salt? Citrus with herbaceous?"

"Questions like these can get the team quite animated, to say the least, but only time can ever answer their restless curiosity – and these results have been worth waiting for. This is an exceptional whisky which represents the best of two very different worlds in one unique malt.

'I'm thrilled that it's closing out an exceptional year for the relaunched Warehouse 1. But of course, innovation doesn't take time off for Christmas – we're already well ahead in planning our 2022 expressions. We can't wait to share some very special whisky in the year ahead."

The Glen Moray Warehouse 1 2008 Manzanilla Finish is bottled at a cask strength of 54.6% and is non-chill filtered with natural color. It is a UK exclusive, available in 70cl bottles in specialist whisky shops for a recommended retail price of £74.95.



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## Glen Moray launches Homecoming Edition

13 DECEMBER 2021 By Nicola Carruthers

Speyside distillery Glen Moray has unveiled a limited edition whisky to mark the completion of Edinburgh Rugby's first permanent home.



Glen Moray Homecoming Edition is limited to 1,000 bottles

Glen Moray has been the official single malt for the Scottish professional rugby team [since the two companies partnered in January 2018](#).

The Scotch producer has released 15-year-old Homecoming Edition to celebrate the construction of Dam Health Stadium in Edinburgh, which was completed in February 2021.

The new whisky was fully matured in Sherry casks at the Elgin-based distillery, and features illustrations of the new stadium and its signature orange goal posts on the box. Only 1,000 bottles have been released.

James Collins, Glen Moray's UK marketing manager, said: "We're marking the moment with our very special Homecoming Edition – a glorious 15-year-old whisky that is a fitting tribute to this exciting new era for the club and for rugby in Edinburgh."

"It has been selected and bottled especially for the fans: a perfect pre- or post-match warmer for the cold winter nights, with all the rich, sweet notes you'd expect from Glen Moray's classic Speyside whisky when it has been matured in Sherry casks."

The expression has notes of figs, raisins, tobacco and leather on the nose, while the palate offers a 'nutty bouquet' and a 'mouth-coating sweetness'. Glen Moray Homecoming Edition (40% ABV) is priced at RRP £60 (US\$79.50) per 700ml bottle. It is available to buy in person from the Inverarity Morton bottle shop at Bonnie & Wild in Edinburgh.

In December 2018, Glen Moray launched an [exclusive single cask bottling in partnership with Edinburgh Rugby](#).

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## Laphroaig Unveils Third Installment In The Ian Hunter Series

[Gary Carter - Scotch](#) | December 10, 2021

Following the release of both Ian Hunter Book One and Book Two whiskies, [Beam Suntory's Laphroaig](#) recently announced the third installment in the Ian Hunter Series, "Book Three: Source Protector."

The 33-year-old whisky is matured in ex-bourbon barrels, which is said to allow the peated characteristics of Laphroaig to shine through and continues to honor the legacy of the last founding member of the Johnston family to run the Laphroaig Distillery.

The Ian Hunter Story consists of five annual releases, set into crafted books that document the story of Ian's rich legacy. Every year, a new chapter is unveiled, uncovering the full history behind Laphroaig and the characters who created it.



Ian Hunter: Book Three (image via Laphroaig)

Book One reflected on what's described as Ian Hunter's formidable character.

Book Two dedicated itself to the hours and hours of work Ian Hunter committed to the Laphroaig brand while at the helm. Book Three charts the history of the Kilbride Stream, as well as Ian's role in ensuring this source of raw beauty was protected, and the crucial role it played in keeping the spirit of Laphroaig alive.

After a long running dispute, Ian took a case to court, before eventually scrambling to buy the land all the way up to the source of the Kilbride Stream, converting the distillery to steam, ensuring that it was less reliant on water for power. The water was said to be secure, and so was Laphroaig's future as a single malt.

The distiller's notes show that the 2021 release of The Ian Hunter Series is a 33-year-old, non-chill filtered whisky with creamy licorice notes, fully matured in ex-bourbon barrels so the original character shines through.

"We are thrilled to share the release of Laphroaig's newest expression and third installment of the rare and collectable Ian Hunter Story; the third book in our series pays homage to Ian Hunter's unparalleled dedication to protecting Laphroaig's lifeblood – it's water source," said Simon Brooking, Beam Suntory's Global Scotch Ambassador, in a prepared statement. "The 33-year-old whisky matured in ex-bourbon barrels is a unique peated single malt whisky, making the release a wonderful addition to Laphroaig's rich collection."

The limited-edition whisky is available at [Laphroaig.com](#) and specialty retailers for a suggested retail price of \$1,250.

Book Three: Source Protector distiller's notes:

- **COLOR:** Deep copper.
- **NOSE:** Pears, peaches then apricots and lots of condensed sweetness open this delicious and vintage Laphroaig up. Followed by notes of honey and rose petal, a dash of nutmeg, and finishing with ashy-dry peat.
- **TASTE:** A sweet, syrupy, fruity mouthfeel to start, it climbs and coats the whole of your palate. It dips to a huge second wave of aniseed, followed by creamy licorice notes.
- **FINISH:** A long finish with lingering, alternating ashy vanilla and peaty aromas.
- **ABV:** 49.9%.

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## Membership and Dinner prices for 2021-2022

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

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## Reservation policy

- The agreement with the Kitchen's requires that we provide five (5) business days notice for them to guarantee accommodation for our requested numbers. To accommodate the Kitchen's needs and meet our obligation with them; our members are requested to respond to the emailed invitation five (5) business days prior to the respective dinner to guarantee a seat at the dinner. Following the RSVP date members will be placed on a waitlist.

- For these individuals the process will be as follows, using the Monday September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021 dinner date as an example:
- Dinner invitations will be sent out Friday August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Please respond to me ([rdifazio04@gmail.com](mailto:rdifazio04@gmail.com)) in the form of an e-transfer. I will then acknowledge that you have a seat. Please understand that if you do not receive a response you are not guaranteed a seat at the respective dinner. In such circumstances (e.g., computer glitches) please e-mail me again or call me (613-532-5285).
- Once payment is received I will send a confirmation and your seat will be guaranteed reserved.
- An RSVP only does not guarantee the seat and if there is a waiting list, you run the risk of losing your seat.
- Unless otherwise stated accommodation at the dinner will be guaranteed for all members who respond by Friday September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 @ 6pm or until capacity is achieved.
- Please keep in mind until further notice our maximum attendance will be capped at 40. So delays run the risk of you missing out.

### **Cancellation policy**

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

### **Dinner Payments**

- Please consider sending your payment by e-transfer 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.

### **Assigned / Reserved Seating**

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

### **Perfume / Cologne and Whisky**

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

Just a note because we care.

Please understand that for the purpose of each event you are advised to drink responsibly and refrain from excessive consumption. The

dinners hosted by the Kingston Single Malt Society are sampling events. By agreeing to pay and thereby attend the dinner you agree to release from legal responsibility and hold harmless Kingston Single Malt Society, its President Roberto Di Fazio, and any other volunteers from liability or claims arising from these events.



## **Kingston Single Malt Society**

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