



MICHAEL JACKSON **WHISKEY**



THE DEFINITIVE
WORLD GUIDE

SCOTCH BOURBON WHISKEY

NEW EDITION

MICHAEL
JACKSON
WHISKEY





MICHAEL
JACKSON
WHISKEY

UPDATED BY

DOMINIC ROSKROW • GAVIN D. SMITH



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DISTILLERS
LOCHRANZA
1995

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Michael Jackson

Michael Jackson (1942–2007) changed the face of drinks writing. His extensive journalism was known for its wit, and his commentaries on beer and whiskey during the 1970s and '80s were some of the first to truly address flavor and diversity, paving the way for so much that has subsequently been written. He won numerous awards for his drinks writing, including the Glenfiddich Trophy and the André Simon Award. Much of Michael's work centered on beer. His *World Guide to Beer* (1977) has become a much-reprinted classic, and his television series *Beer Hunter* (1989/90), which was screened in 15 countries, earned him global acclaim. Michael's books on whiskey include *The World Guide to Whisky* (1987) and *Malt Whisky Companion* (1989), both published by DK. The latter is now in its seventh edition. His most notable work was the award-winning *Whiskey: The Definitive World Guide* (2005), an authoritative and comprehensive guide to whiskey, covering not only the details of a production process that was largely unknown to the wider public, but also the stories behind distilleries from around the globe. This new edition continues his legacy.

Dominic Roskrow

Dominic Roskrow is the author of 12 books about whiskey. He has written about the drinks trade for more than 25 years, and about whiskey for more than 15 years. He is the former Editor of *Whisky Magazine*, *The Spirits Business*, *Whiskeria*, and *Pub Business*. He specializes in New World Whiskey—whiskey from non-traditional areas—and he has visited distilleries across the world. Dominic is a former Fortnum & Mason Awards Drinks Writer of the Year, and his book *Whisky: Japan* was awarded “Best in the World” status at the 2017 Gourmand International Culinary Awards. He was made a Keeper of the Quaich for his services to Scotch whisky, and a Kentucky Colonel for his services to bourbon. Dominic updated the chapters “Understanding Whiskey,” “The United States,” “Japan,” and “Cocktails.” He also wrote the “The New World of Whiskey” section.

Gavin D. Smith

Gavin has been working as a full-time professional writer for more than 20 years, always with whiskey as his specialist subject. He contributes on a regular basis to a wide range of publications and websites, and is author and co-author of nearly 30 whiskey-related titles. He acts as Contributing Editor, Scotland for *Whisky Magazine* and undertakes writing commissions for leading drinks companies, in addition to hosting whiskey events. He lives on the Scottish Borders and is a Keeper of the Quaich. Gavin updated the chapters “Scotland” and “Ireland.”

Davin de Kergommeaux

An independent whiskey expert, Davin de Kergommeaux has been writing about, talking about, and teaching about whiskey for nearly two decades. His book *Canadian Whisky: The New Portable Expert* is the definitive guide to Canadian whisky. Follow him on twitter and instagram @Davindek. Davin updated the chapter “Canada.”

Jürgen Deibel

Jürgen Deibel is a specialist author of numerous books and Germany's only professional spirits expert. He offers advice, seminars, and tasting on all spirits. Jürgen wrote the section on Germany.

ON THE ROAD

Traveling through the world's whisky regions, one finds many spectacular sights. This is Quiraing, on the Isle of Skye, Scotland.



**A FINE GLASS
FOR WHISKEY**

Whiskey, also known as *aqua vitae* (water of life), is not just a celebratory beverage best enjoyed in a long-stem tulip glass, it also has therapeutic properties.

FOREWORD

YOU ARE HOLDING ONE OF THE MOST LOVED AND HIGHLY
RESPECTED WHISKEY BOOKS EVER WRITTEN.

Yes, we know that is a bold statement, but it happens to be true. When we started working on this revision, we were amazed at how many people still had a copy of the original version, and still referred to it from time to time, even though the last edition was published in 2005. It is a crucial cornerstone for thousands embarking on their whiskey journey.

The drinks writer Michael Jackson was, fundamentally, a beer expert who all but invented the practice of writing about his passion for a living. And when he turned his attention to whiskey, too, he opened up a fascinating and complex spirit to people across the world. It is no exaggeration to say that if it had not been for Michael, writers like us would not have the opportunity to write about our passion now.

If you chance upon a copy of the last edition of *Whiskey: The Definitive World Guide*, you will quickly realize how much the world of whiskey has changed since the early part of the new millennium. Some of that book is now irrelevant or quaintly out-of-date, and some of it is overly intense and detailed, covering parts of the whiskey production process that are now widely understood and pretty much taken for granted.

Most significantly, great parts of today's whiskey story are missing. Michael talks about a trickle of new American craft distillers. That trickle has now become a flood, with hundreds of new distilleries taking American whiskey into new and uncharted territory. It is not just the US. In established whiskey territories such as Canada and Ireland a healthy new wave of distilleries has arisen to energize the sector, and there are whiskey distilleries springing up in the most unlikely of places. Who would have thought that we would be seeing whiskey from Argentina, Iceland, and Israel, for instance?

There can be no doubt, therefore, that this book needed an update, and a pretty radical one at that. In the last version of the book, the "Rest of the World"—a descriptor that is in itself redundant these days—is covered in just four pages. Today, a raft of countries, from Australia to Sweden, could justify that sort of space on their own.

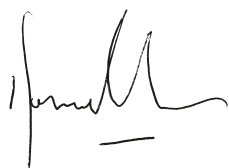
It is not just the number of distilleries that has changed. New distillers across the world are bringing innovation and fresh ideas to the whiskey sector. They are making whiskey with grains that have rarely been used before, such as quinoa and triticale; they are maturing their spirit in casks made of woods other than oak; and they are drying their grains over a variety of different materials.

This is not necessarily all good news. Some of the new producers are bending the rules governing whiskey making past the breaking point. While “whisky” has a strong definition in Europe, in other territories where the definition is more loosely interpreted, all sorts of flavored spirits made in a variety of weird ways are being branded with the name “whisky.” Moreover, there are some dreadfully made grain spirits laying claim to be our noble spirit when, quite clearly, they are not.

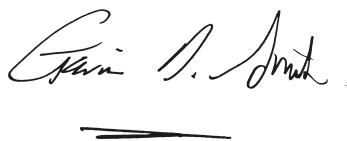
Overall, though, whiskey is in an exciting place, with interesting new products appearing almost daily. Michael would have immersed himself in this new wave of distilling. Having been at the forefront of the movement to bring Japanese whisky to the attention of the world, he would have embraced the whiskies of India and Taiwan, loved what is happening in Australia, and traveled enthusiastically to Scandinavia in search of the latest malts.

This updated version of *Whiskey: The Definitive World Guide* is still very much Michael’s book. We have carefully attempted to leave its core and tone as Michael intended it, and tried to update it without altering the feel and flow of his original, wonderful encyclopedia of whiskey.

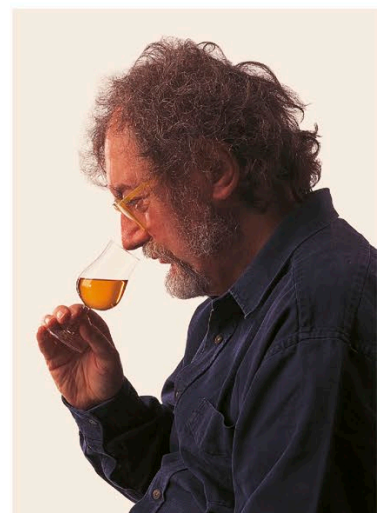
It is our pleasure to be able to spend so many hours reading Michael’s words again. We hope we have done justice to his legacy. And once again, we dedicate the book to his memory. We hope you enjoy it as much as we have.



DOMINIC ROSKROW



GAVIN D. SMITH



MICHAEL JACKSON

Originally a beer expert, Michael Jackson’s writing on whiskey introduced the spirit to a host of new drinkers.

Where is Whiskey Heading?

Dominic Roskrow

IN THE 12 YEARS SINCE *WHISKEY: THE DEFINITIVE WORLD GUIDE* WAS FIRST PUBLISHED, WHISKEY HAS UNDERGONE A DISTILLING REVOLUTION, AND THE TECTONIC PLATES ARE STILL SHIFTING RAPIDLY.

In the Parable of the Sower, a man scatters seeds in many soils. It is only in the good soil, where the earth is not rocky and there are no thorns, that the crops grow well and produce many times what was originally sown.

Start of a revolution

One of my fondest whiskey memories stems from around 2003, when Michael Jackson would have been working on the first edition of *Whiskey: The Definitive World Guide*.

No one knew it at the time, but the seeds had been sown in the world of whiskey for what was to be the start of not just a remarkable journey, but a whole whiskey revolution.

Scottish single malts were very much in the spotlight, and distillers had started to experiment with special finishes. Cask-strength whiskey was gaining traction, non-chill filtering was becoming popular, and more and more bottlers were moving to 43% and 46% ABV whiskies, rather than the standard 40% ABV. The likes of Compass Box and Jon, Mark, and Robbo's Easy Drinking Whisky Company were experimenting with flavors and dispensing with age statements on the label. Distilleries were being established or reopened. The sedate and orderly world of Scottish whisky was stirring, with dynamism and passion at its core.

MELBOURNE'S NEW WORLD DISTILLERY

The name says it all really. In Australia, a beast has stirred and whiskies from "Down Under" are at the forefront of the whiskey revolution.



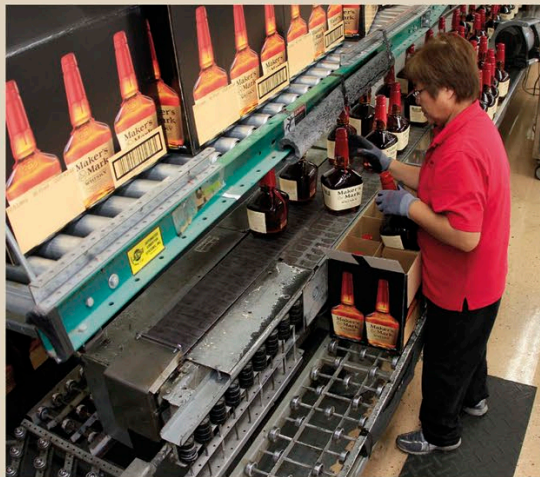
In Ireland, Cooley was stirring everything up, too, and challenging the view that Irish whiskey should be non-peated, triple-distilled, blended, and bottled at 40% ABV. Barry Walsh was mixing single malt and pot still whiskeys, and, within a few years, Irish Distillers would be setting the category alight with a series of superb and exciting pot still whiskeys, under its Redbreast and Powers brands. Japanese whisky had arrived on the world stage, not least because of the support and enthusiasm of Michael Jackson, but had yet to become the world's most exciting whisky genre.

Across the globe, the early signs of a distilling revolution had started to emerge. Sweden, India, France, Wales, and England were taking their first tentative steps into international whisky markets, and, in Australia, a big whisky beast was starting to stir.

Kentucky saga

Then there was Kentucky, home of bourbon—a state where history hangs heavy, and where tradition and heritage matter as much as anywhere else in the world.

Around this time, I had traveled over to write about Maker's Mark, and, as is the way with the folk of Kentucky, was invited to stay at the home



PACKAGING MAKER'S MARK

This distillery in Kentucky is long-established and steeped in tradition—as indicated by the hand-applied wax-sealed bottles—yet it is still able to be innovative and forward thinking.

of legendary whiskey maker Bill Samuels. Bill has retired now, but he is a genius, a creative force that, over his whiskey-making and marketing years, turned his dyslexia into a weapon of mass construction, generating one original idea after another, as he took his wheated, sweet bourbon brand, Maker's Mark, up the whiskey league table.

But Bill has the attention span of a goldfish, and he can be frustrating to have a conversation with. He is like a badly tuned analog radio playing your favorite song: clear, concise, and wonderful one minute, drifting away into the ether the next. And that is why one Saturday evening at his home counts as one of my favorite whiskey moments.

I am standing on the veranda by the swimming pool, brightly lit and very blue, sipping a Maker's on ice, looking out over the valley and down to the Ohio River. The sunset has turned the sky a chocolate-orange color, the valley is dark and intimidating, the air warm and humid.

And then Bill stands beside me, sharing the view, and starts to speak. He talks of the importance of the Ohio River in the history of the country, Kentucky's neutrality in the Civil War, how the communities were ripped apart, and about the terror gangs who would use Kentucky as a base to launch demoralizing and savage attacks into the North. He tells me how



“THE SEDATE AND ORDERLY WORLD OF SCOTTISH WHISKY WAS STIRRING, WITH DYNAMISM AND EXCITEMENT AT ITS CORE”



TRADITIONAL BLEND

Miltoduff malt has been a key component of Ballantine's blend since 1936.

the notorious James brothers had operated along the river and had come to Kentucky, and how after the war the James Gang continued its crime spree. He tells me that the James brothers were given sanctuary by his relatives, and how, when they were offered amnesties, they surrendered their arms on Samuels' land. Finally, he says, the brothers married into his family, so that he has James blood in his veins.

"That ain't good or bad. You can't choose your relatives," he says. Then, after a pause, "There will be a storm soon." And he heads back to the house.

Bill has Jesse James' gun in his house, as well as a letter from Abraham Lincoln sent to one of his relatives, thanking him for the suggestion that he enter politics, but suggesting he did not have what it takes. I often think about those moments in the calm before the storm, and how symbolic the ensuing deluge was; without a doubt, a worthy metaphor for what has happened in the world of whiskey since.

Importance of history

So why, in a chapter about where whiskey is heading, are we looking so far backward and talking about history, provenance, geography, and heritage? The answer is simple: in these times of massive changes, of new and exciting whiskey styles (and even new genres), it is

important to stop, take stock, remember where this wonderful whiskey world of ours comes from, and perhaps indulge ourselves in a series of clichés such as, "Don't throw out the baby with the bath water," "You can't see the forest for the trees," and even, "The more things change, the more they stay the same."

So much has happened in the world of whiskey since then, and, in some senses, this new edition of *Whiskey: The Definitive World Guide* is the story of those changes. The coming chapters will show how whiskey has evolved at varying paces. This book has retained as much of Michael Jackson's original work as was possible. However, great swathes of the text reflect the many changes that have swept over the world of whiskey, since it was first published. To put it in some context, there were about 150 whiskey distilleries of any note at the turn of the new millennium, 100 of them in Scotland, and the rest split up between the US, Canada, Japan, Ireland, and a scattering of new whiskey-producing countries. By 2016, these were in the region of 1,000, about 200 of them in what might be called the "traditional whiskey nations."

Changing scenario

It will not stay as such. The world of whiskey is dynamic and fluid, and it is nigh impossible to keep up with the speed of change. Barely a week goes by



without a new distillery project; barely a day goes by without a new whiskey product launch. It can be almost impossible to hear anything for all the noise. And it is not just new distilleries opening (long silent ones are being reestablished, too). At the time of writing, the prophetic words of the Parable of the Sower were making themselves heard. Some distilleries were lost before they even started growing; some shot up, but without laying down proper roots have withered away. Others have been swallowed up by bigger companies or strangled by corporate greed and short-term planning.

New distilleries—new questions

New distilleries face some weighty decisions from the start: What sort of a whiskey are you going to make? Are you going to bring in a trained whiskey maker, employ someone to learn as they go, or take a distiller's course? How will you approach the business of obtaining your distillery equipment and your distilling license? How long can you afford to leave your maturing spirit before you need to make a return on it? Should you try and fund whiskey maturation by launching gins, vodka, and liqueurs? Should you seek outside funding, give away some of your business, and risk being vulnerable to takeover? Are you going to be the whiskey maker, the managing director, or the global brand ambassador?

Each of these decisions will have a bearing on the future success of a given distillery project, and, as the market becomes more crowded, individuals look for unique points of difference. There is a danger that they will, at best, dilute what we know as whiskey and, at worst, break well-defined and traditional rules that are made not as a barrier to entry or to restrict practice, but to ensure the drink we know as whiskey meets certain quality standards.

Most of us have experienced whiskeys that have been badly made, or have not been matured for long enough, or have been matured in poor quality casks. Certainly, some of the whiskey makers at Kentucky's most famous bourbon distilleries have expressed fears that a new generation of potential bourbon drinkers may be put off by young bourbon drinks in premium packaging, which do not deliver in terms of flavor and quality.

There are now many whiskeys flavored with fruits, spices, maple, and honey. Many of them are very good, but they are not whiskeys. And yet the term "flavored whiskeys" is bandied around a lot.

And how are these spirit drinks different from a single malt that has a distinctly pink hue from the port cask it has been matured in? You cannot add anything to whiskey in Europe and still call it whiskey, but how much residue in a cask is permissible if you add whiskey spirit for maturation?

Should any of this matter? Well, yes, because if the makers of quality whiskey do not distance themselves from such projects, the world of whiskey risks the danger of falling into disrepute by association. And it is possible for serious whiskey producers to lose the plot and end up moving from the sublime to the ridiculous. Indeed, this has happened in Scotland, where



FRUITS FOR FLAVORING

Flavoring has become commonplace, but the whiskey industry must defend against the trend to still call these drinks whiskey—they are not.



ROLLING BARRELS

Ardberg maintains its traditional high standards while being innovative at the same time.

“SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
HAVE BEEN HARNESSSED FOR
WHISKEY PRODUCTION IN THE
UNLIKELIEST OF PLACES”

the rules governing whisky production are, quite rightly, stricter than almost anywhere else (only bourbon production is more stringently regulated). Some whisky companies (or the PR companies representing them) have gone to ridiculous lengths to differentiate their spirits.

At the time of writing this book, for instance, whiskey writers and bloggers received a Scotch single malt whisky sample accompanied by an orange and a plastic container of sea salt. There was no real explanation for this. Writers have received press releases about whiskies being distilled and matured while music is played to them, to explore the idea that music could add a different element to the flavor of the finished malt. Whiskies have been sent into orbit to see how gravitation affects maturation. Who knows what absurdities lie in front of us?

So where is whiskey heading? Are whiskey makers increasingly getting entangled in a race to the bottom, or are consumers facing an increasingly grim array of choices, with malt whisky alcopops, reedy under-aged malt, and spineless, two-dimensional corn (maize) spirit drinks all on the agenda?

Of course not—and the reason why can be found where the final part of the Parable of the Sower comes head to head with Bill Samuels and his history lesson: the seeds of whiskey’s future are sown in the fertile ground enriched by its heritage and provenance. In short, for every badly conceived whiskey project that withers and dies, four others are growing up gracefully and ensuring an exciting and inspirational future. So what next?

HELLYERS ROAD WHISKY

Maturation in unusual casks, such as this Pinot Noir–finished single malt, and stylish packaging from Hellyers Road in Australia, are helping to shake things up within the world of whiskey.



A NEW WORLD OF WHISKEY

The single biggest change since the last edition of this book has been the huge growth in the number of distilleries outside of the traditional whiskey-making countries. Science and technology have been harnessed to open up the possibility of whiskey production in the unlikeliest of places, and the new producers have not only overcome the hurdles of a hostile environment but have turned them into assets.

But we have only seen the tip of the whiskey iceberg so far. Many distilleries are still in their infancy, and many are still trying to find their feet as they seek to make quality whiskey. Some will not succeed, but many will, and they will do so by applying their own characteristics to their spirit, setting it apart from whiskeys made elsewhere.

And then there is the issue of maturation. The distillers of Australia, England, Taiwan, and India, many aided by climates that naturally accelerate the speed at which whisky takes color and flavor from the cask, are entering unknown territories, as their whiskies age into their teens and beyond. While they may be planning an 18-year-old or 25-year-old malt, they simply have no idea whether the whisky will hold up that long to the influence of the cask.

The success of distilleries in countries that have no previous history of making whiskey has already encouraged others to attempt to follow suit, and more will follow. Distillers are attempting to carve out their own niche by making unusual styles of whiskey.

It is too early to say whether any of the new whiskey nations will be defined by a common whiskey style or share common characteristics, but given the diverse range of whiskeys that the new producers are exploring, it is unlikely.

There would appear to be a number of future whiskey hotspots. These include:

Australia

There are two distinct whiskey “scenes,” one disparately spread across the mainland, the other a close-knit community on Tasmania, linked by Australia’s “godfather” of whisky, Bill Lark. Lark kicked everything off in the 1990s when he set up his own distillery, and



has been generous with his time and knowledge to pretty much everyone who has followed since.

The US

By 2016, the American Distilling Institute boasted 1,000 members. Not all of them are making whiskey, but in a country that allows whiskey to be made in minutes rather than years, a great many of them do. Not surprisingly it is a very mixed bag and there are some shocking US craft whiskeys (some cheekily claiming that they represent premium moonshine to a proven old timers' recipe—*utter nonsense*). On the other side of the coin, though, the US now produces some of the world's most creative and exciting new whiskeys.

Sweden

Sweden has everything needed to make whisky in abundance, and it happens to boast some of the most knowledgeable and enthusiastic whisky drinkers on the planet. Mackmyra led the way here and has made great whisky since the early part of the new millennium. Distilleries such as Spirit of Hven, Box, and Smögen have brought sophisticated and precise methods to their malts, and the country looks set to produce some stunning whisky in the future.

France

The French distillers are clever, resourceful, and passionate, and their diverse whiskeys are of high quality, and often unusual. Traditionally, they were mainly found in Brittany, but that is changing.

England

Scotland's southern neighbors took to whisky with a vengeance in the early part of the new millennium, and have a number of sizable and impressive distilleries. It is still very early days for all of them, with the exception of St. George's, which is now making and exporting world-class whisky. The likes of Cotswolds and The London Distillery Company are set to follow them to global success.

The Alpine nations

Many of the distillers of Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Italy, and Liechtenstein have centuries of distilling experience, and beer- and wine-making, but the techniques used for genever, brandy, *eaux de vie*, and schnapps did not cross to whisky making. In recent years, though, there has been a surge in quality whisky making across the whole Alpine region, and with big investment behind them, this area will be a major whisky-producing region a generation from now.

SPIRIT OF SWEDEN

Swedish distillers, such as Box distillery (pictured above), are making whisky for some of the most knowledgeable and enthusiastic fans in the world.

A NEW TAKE ON EXISTING RESOURCES

Whiskey may only be made with grain, yeast, and water, but it never ceases to amaze how much scope these basic ingredients give for making a wide range of different whiskey flavors and styles. But of course the three basic ingredients do not tell the whole story anyway. Both wood and peat are major contributors to a finished whiskey's taste or style.

The worldwide craft whiskey movement has even further accelerated a move into new and exciting areas. Part of this is as a direct result of using regional varieties of oak, peat, or barley. Part of it is due to the use of casks made of different woods, drying barley using different fuels, and the use of unusual grains. And part of it is as a result of innovation, intrinsic attention to detail, and tweaking the production process. In some cases, distilleries have even built their own unique stills.

Grain

Commercial distillers have tended to use the latest state-of-the-art grain for whiskey production, and over the years have regularly moved to higher-yielding barley strains, arguing that quality is maintained and does not get compromised.

But this has been questioned increasingly, even in Scotland. Dr. Bill Lumsden has experimented with old-style and specific regional

grains at Glenmorangie, and Bruichladdich on Islay has a whole program dedicated to using barley from different farms. Its former chief executive, Mark Reynier, has moved to Ireland and has been malting barley from individual farms. He has also produced Ireland's first organic whiskey. In Sweden, some distillers have returned to older styles of barley, sacrificing quantity for what they believe is higher quality.

Other grains, including oats, triticale, and quinoa, are being used to make whiskey, as well as buckwheat, which, strictly speaking, is not a grain, and, in Corsica, whisky is being made from distiller's beer containing chestnuts.

Drying methods

Traditionally, peat has been used to dry the barley before preparing it for the whiskey-making process. But because peat is made up of plant material crushed over centuries, its makeup is dependent on whatever grows in that region. Across the world, there are huge differences in the composition of peat. Even between the treeless islands and the "rootsy" Highland mainland the differences are stark, with the former producing a sweeter peat smoke.

But there are no rules on how a distillery dries its barley, and there are whiskeys being dried in a variety of ways. US craft distillers, such as

UNORTHODOX GRAINS

Quinoa, regarded as a "superfood," has been used to make whiskey in the US.



Corsair, have launched whiskeys smoked over a large number of different woods. In Sweden, it is common to use juniper twigs for smoking Swedish food and the practice has been transferred to whisky production. And Teeling in Ireland is smoking malt over beech wood.

Wood

In Scotland, malt spirit must be matured in oak casks and, because the tannins found in fresh oak will overpower the flavors of the spirit over three years or more, it is normal to use a cask that has previously contained something else—generally sherry or bourbon. In bourbon production, where corn (maize)-based whiskey is more robust, law dictates that the cask must be made of virgin white oak. The barrel is normally toasted and charred before it is filled with spirit, and this gives the distiller considerable scope for varying his spirit by using different toasts and chars. Even in Scotland there have been some whiskeys at least partially matured in virgin oak casks.

Although oak is the overwhelming wood of choice for making casks, oak varies massively in different parts of the world. Some countries have oak that leaks and is unsuitable for casks, some oaks are far less porous than others, and there is a huge difference between *Quercus alba* (white oak) and *Quercus rubra* (red oak).



CHESTNUT CASKS

Some more experimental distillers have matured whiskey in casks made of chestnut wood.

Outside Scotland, the rules over cask types are more liberal, and experiments have taken place with other wood types, including chestnut, maple, and cherrywood. But there is a reason why oak is so widely used. It is strong but flexible, hard but porous (meaning oxygen and moisture can pass in and out of it), and it has a magical relationship with spirit during maturation.

For all these reasons, there is huge potential for whiskey makers to explore new avenues into the future. The development of new whiskey styles and flavors would still seem to be in its infancy, but we have already witnessed some wonderful and creative ideas, and there will be plenty more to come.

One example could be cooperation between whiskey-producing nations, with whiskeys of varying styles produced in different countries being combined, as has happened with a few Irish-Scottish combinations and the ANZAC's (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) whisky Diggers & Ditch.

We are undoubtedly entering an exciting phase for whiskey, and it is becoming clear that as the world of whiskey grows, so does the potential for innovative drinks. Not all of them may be classified as whiskey, but they will have whiskey production at their core.

It promises to be quite a ride, so strap yourself in and let this book lead you to an ever more colorful and thrilling whiskey world.



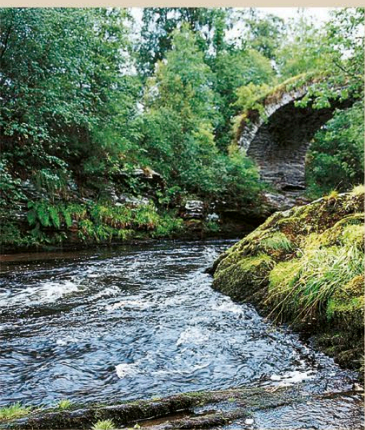




UNDERSTANDING WHISKEY

What is Whisk(e)y?

WHISKEY IS A GENERIC TERM, WHICH IS CLEARLY DEFINED IN CERTAIN MARKETS AS A DISTILLED SPIRIT MADE WITH GRAIN, YEAST, AND WATER. BUT SOME COUNTRIES HAVE A LOOSER INTERPRETATION THAN OTHERS.



RIVER LIVET

Fed by high rainfall and winter snow, it is the fast-flowing Livet on whose banks the modern whiskey industry was born.

The word whiskey is of Celtic origin, coming from the Gaelic expression *Uisge Beatha* (oosh-ga bay-ta), which means “water of life.” It indicates the spirits drink native to Scotland, Ireland, and the US, as well as their offspring elsewhere in the world. Whiskey is produced from various cereal grains, almost always including a proportion of malted barley (see p.22). It is distilled in such a way as to retain some of the aromas and flavors of the grain, and it develops a further complexity during a period of maturation in oak. Both “whisky” and “whiskey” are legitimate spellings and merely reflect how Scotland and Ireland chose to “anglicize” the words slightly differently.

Scottish whisky

Only if distillation and at least three years of maturation take place in Scotland may a whisky be labelled Scotch or Scottish whisky. Malt whisky is made only from malted grain. In Scotland, this

is always barley, distilled in a pot still. A single malt whisky is one that comes from just one distillery. It is normally a mixture of different casks from that one distillery, but it may come from just one cask, and this will be indicated on the label.

Wheat, corn (maize), or unmalted barley is column-distilled to make grain whisky. This contributes volume and lightness of body and flavor to blended Scotch whisky.

Irish whiskey

The most distinctive style of Irish whiskey is pure pot still. The use of a significant proportion of unmalted grain, normally barley, is the defining difference between Irish whiskey and Scotch whisky. Other common (but not obligatory) features of Irish whiskeys include a preference for blending grains in the mash tun and triple distillation (as opposed to double distillation, which is normally employed in Scotland).



POT STILLS AT GLENGOYNE

Distillation in copper stills is a key part of making single malt whisky.



WHITE OAK BARREL
Spirit must be matured for two years for it to be legally called "straight bourbon."

American whiskey

In production of American whiskey, the grains are mixed together at the beginning of the process, and not after the whiskey has been distilled. America is best known for bourbon, which must be made by using a minimum of 51 percent corn (maize) as well as smaller proportions of malted barley and rye or wheat. The original whiskey of the US was rye whiskey, made primarily of rye.

Most of the bourbon distilleries were historically in Kentucky, but there is no rule that they need to be. However, bourbon must be made in the US and must be matured in new white oak barrels, which have normally been charred or toasted. As soon as the whiskey is in the barrel it may be called bourbon, but it must be matured for at least two years to be known as "straight" bourbon. The term "sour mash" refers to the fact that the lactic residue at the end of the mashing process (*see p.29*) is added back in at the start of the next process. American whiskeys do not taste sour; their dominant characteristic is a vanilla sweetness imparted by the use of the new oak used in maturation.

The rules governing the production of bourbon are even stricter than those for Scottish single malt whisky. When making bourbon, nothing may be added at all to the basic ingredients of grain, yeast, and water, and a new barrel must be used for each fill. In Scotland, the use of coloring is permitted, and barrels can be filled multiple times.

To the south of Kentucky, in Tennessee, they make a style of whiskey that defines itself as "Tennessee whiskey." The process is all but identical to that of bourbon, but in Tennessee the distilled spirit is leached through sugar maple charcoal before it is matured. Whether Tennessee whiskey could be described as bourbon is a moot point, but it suits both the bourbon producers and the likes of Jack Daniel's, the biggest producer of Tennessee whiskey, to be able to market their whiskies as entirely different styles.

“BOTH ‘WHISKY’ AND ‘WHISKEY’ ARE LEGITIMATE SPELLINGS, AND MERELY REFLECT HOW SCOTLAND AND IRELAND CHOSE TO ‘ANGLICIZE’ THE ORIGINAL CELTIC WORD”



TEXAS BOURBON
The Texas distillery is one of a number of new whiskey makers proving that bourbon need not come from Kentucky.

Making Malt Whiskey

THE PROCESS OF MAKING MALT WHISKEY IS, IN THEORY, VERY EASY
INDEED. IN PRACTICE, MAKING GOOD MALT WHISKEY IS NOT EASY AT ALL,
AND THE RESULTING SPIRIT IS HIGHLY COMPLEX.

BARLEY

Barley is something of a miracle grain, having served myriad purposes over centuries. It was widely used to make food and beer by early African and Mesopotamian civilizations, while Ancient Greek athletes consumed it believing it would make them strong. It formed the basis of many diets—in Scotland, it was widely enjoyed as food until oats became more popular.

Barley is capable of fermenting naturally, and it is due to this that a primitive form of beer was made as far back as 7,000 years ago, providing the foundation for the brewing and distilling industries that we know today. Barley dominates whiskey production, and even in styles of whiskey where barley is not a major component, a small amount of it will be included in the grist. This is because it acts as an important catalyst in the whiskey-making process, containing high levels of starch and enzymes that speed the conversion of that starch into sugar and then alcohol.



HARVESTING BARLEY AT DAFTMILL

Barley is relatively easy to grow in many parts of the world. Daftmill is one of a number of distilleries that grows its own barley.

Barley for malting

These days, barley is mostly used as cattle feed or for the production of beer and whiskey and is less commonly eaten by people. It can be grown relatively easily in many parts of the world and has the advantage of being able to grow on harsh and relatively infertile land. Today, barley production is wrapped in technology, and scientists are regularly inventing new strains that are more efficient and higher-yielding.

Scotland can and does produce barley, and various types are grown in different parts of the country. However, due to the harsh climate (particularly in the north of Scotland), there was a period when not enough malting barley could be produced to meet the demands of the whiskey industry. At that time, Scotland's primary source of barley was East Anglia, in England.

The situation changed in the 1960s with the invention of "Golden Promise," a hardier strain of barley more suited to the Scottish climate.

TYPES OF BARLEY

There are two principal types of barley considered to be the most suitable for malting, referred to as two-row and six-row. This numerical reference indicates the number of rows of seeds, either two or six, arranged on either side of the ear of the barley.



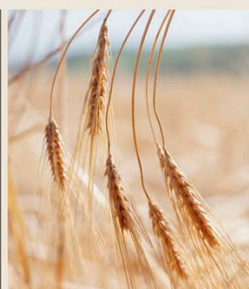
TWO-ROW BARLEY

This is the usual type cultivated in Europe, though it is also used by US distillers.



SIX-ROW BARLEY

Six-row barley is mainly cultivated in the US, with Chicago and Milwaukee being malting centers.



BERE

One of the original barley varieties, bere was traditionally cultivated in northern Scotland.

Since then, newer and higher-yielding strains of barley have overtaken “Golden Promise” and the strain has all but disappeared.

A new focus on barley

There is a view that barley does not have a huge influence on the final taste of whiskey, and that the key contribution a barley strain makes is the amount of liters of alcohol each ton of the grain yields. But some distillers do not share this view and are investing time and effort resurrecting older strains of barley that are not as high-yielding as modern strains, but that they believe make for a higher-quality malt spirit.

The focus on eco-friendly projects has resulted in organic whiskeys, and some distilleries, such as Bruichladdich and Glenmorangie, are increasingly pursuing experimental malts made with different varieties of barley on different soils.

YEAST

Yeast is where science enters the whiskey-making process—it is the fuel that feeds the engine room when it comes to converting starch and sugar into

alcohol. Yeast can be found naturally in the air, and some styles of beer can be made from wild yeast. However, commercial beer and whiskey production uses cultured yeast. Traditionally, the whiskey industry argued that yeast was no more than a facilitator, its contribution to flavor and aroma lost in the distillation process. But there is considerable debate over this, and many distillers are highly secretive about their strains of yeast.

The whiskey production process starts by making a liquid called wort. Water and grain in the form of flour are mixed together in a vessel known as a washback. All the sugars contained in the malted barley are washed out of the husks; the spent husks are strained off; and the distiller is left with a sweet, dark liquid to which the yeast is added.

The yeast feeds on the sugars in the liquid, converting them into alcohol and carbon dioxide. This process typically lasts between 40 and 50 hours, but other factors may mean it can take up to 100 hours or more. The liquid is monitored to make sure that the fermentation time is just right, and great care is taken to ensure that it is kept free of bacteria.

“YEAST IS
WHERE
SCIENCE
ENTERS THE
WHISKEY-
MAKING
PROCESS”



OPEN TO THE AIR

The fermentation is already well under way in these wooden washbacks; carbon dioxide produced by the process is vented into the atmosphere.



SOURCING WATER

To make quality whiskey you need a plentiful supply of cool water, so quantity is as important as quality.

WATER

Water is a crucial element in the whiskey-making process, and much is made of a distillery's water source and the elements it brings to the final whiskey. But its main contributions may be somewhat less romantic than they first appear and there is considerable debate as to what contribution water does make to the finished whiskey's taste.

Distillation is the separation of water from alcohol, and it has been argued that the stronger flavors of alcohol and the many new flavors imparted to the spirit during maturation override any influence from the water itself. That said, water is used throughout the fermentation and distillation process, and if this water has traveled for decades through peat bogs to its eventual destination, it is not unreasonable to believe that this will influence the flavor of a whiskey.

What is known about water is, when it comes to whiskey production, you need a lot of it—and preferably at a cool temperature. The largest volumes of water are used in the condensers to convert spirit back to liquid after distillation. Strict rules govern the rate at which the warmed water can be returned to the environment, and in recent years much effort has gone into developing methods of environmentally friendly heat conversion.

Soft or hard water?

Key to the issue of water is whether it is “soft” or “hard.” Soft water contains less calcium, zinc, iron, and magnesium, and is the most common type of water in Scotland, particularly in the region around the River Spey, known as Speyside. Traditionally this was important, but water is easily treated these days, and distilleries such as Glenmorangie and Highland Park operate successfully on hard water. Hard water aids the mashing and fermenting process, and in Kentucky it makes an essential contribution to the production of bourbon.

Water's most important role is in the distillation process. In the stills, the relationship between water and spirit is complex, with the alcoholic content of the wash rising then falling. The strength of the spirit is directly related to the amount of water it contains and this will impact the flavor (*see p.30*).

In Scotland, spirit is normally reduced from 65–75% ABV (alcohol by volume) to a casking strength of 63%. In the US, the spirit is casked at around 55–60% ABV (110–120 proof).

The impact of the changing climate has made some water sources increasingly unpredictable. At the start of the new millennium, there were two years when snow was all but absent in Scotland, depriving the region of its ski season; but then there were two years when snow

started falling as early as October and they were still skiing in June. Such extremes heavily affect the amount of water available in Speyside. Although they are loathe to talk about it, several distilleries have been forced to either close down during arid summer months or import water.

PEAT

When peat is used to dry barley during the malting process, it imparts assertive aromas and flavors. From the big-flavored Islay malts to more nuanced styles found in the Scottish Highlands, peat has a major influence on a whiskey's taste.

Peat was the traditional fuel used for drying barley across Scotland. During the industrial revolution, train lines were laid into the heart of Scotland, bringing coal to replace peat as the fuel used in the furnaces. But the tradition continued on the islands, and since the 1970s, when the malt-whiskey boom started, an increasing number of whiskey connoisseurs have sought out the smoky-, earthy-, medicinal-, seaside-flavored whiskeys.

What is peat?

Peat is decayed vegetation matter that has become partially carbonized—crushed under pressure and adapted by climate over millions of years. Most of it is found in the colder climes of the Northern hemisphere, and Scotland has more than 4,000 square miles (10,000 km²) of peat bogs.

The older and further down into the ground it is, the harder and denser the peat will be—coal is peat in a harder, denser form.

Peat is cut into three types: the top level can be crumbled like dried leaves. This burns quickest but produces a lot of smoke. The next level is like dried mud and produces less smoke but more heat. And finally, the bottom layer, which is called moss, looks like chocolate brownie when wet and like coal when dried. All three layers are burned, with the lightest peat burning fastest but making the most smoke, and the heavier coal-like peat burning slowly. Peat is cut in spring, left to dry over the summer, and moved to the distillery in autumn, with enough cut to last the year.

THE KILNING PROCESS

The traditional way of drying barley using peat-fueled furnaces produces the much sought-after smoky whiskeys.



AIR DRYING

Peat must lose some of its excess moisture before it can be used. These cut slabs of peat are left out in the open and will need at least four weeks to dry sufficiently.

Regional flavors

Because peat is made up of organic matter, there will be variations due to the different flora found in different regions. Scottish island peat contains few tree roots because trees are less common on the windy isles, so the heather and floral contribution makes for a sweeter peat smoke than Highland peat, where forestation has a greater influence.

On the other side of the world, Australians use peat in some of their whiskeys. It is one of life's ultimate treats to drink a peaty whisky while eating Tasmanian trout that you have caught and cooked over a peat fire.

Other countries, such as Japan and India, will import both peat and peated whiskeys, as required. Sweden's new distilleries are experimenting with different peat levels as well as using juniper twigs, while many craft distillers are using a range of woods to dry their barley and smoke it in the process. Alpine Europe (parts of Austria, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland) has also produced some astonishing "smoked" whiskeys.



The Whiskey-Making Process

IT HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS “THE MIRACLE” OR “BLACK MAGIC” OF MALT, DEPENDING ON WHERE ONE STANDS RELIGIOUSLY. HOW CAN THREE INGREDIENTS CREATE SO MANY DIFFERENT FLAVORS?

SINGLE MALT WHISKEY

The reason single malt whiskey is held up as such a special drink lies in the fact that the production process creates hundreds of different flavors despite using the same basic ingredients in pretty much the same way.

Single malt whiskey is made using only malted barley, yeast, and water, and is the product of one distillery. Every stage of the process is carried out meticulously. Other than caramel for coloring, nothing else may be added in the process.

Malting

The process starts by tricking the barley into growing. This is done by first steeping the grain in water two or three times. This process may take anywhere between 24 and 36 hours.

Once the grain has been steeped, it must be allowed to germinate. This was traditionally done within the distillery—the grain was laid out across a malting floor until it sprouted. During germination, the kernel of the grain

is broken down so that shoots can start to grow. This allows access to the grain’s starches and enzymes, which are used to feed the alcohol-producing yeast. Traditional malting floors are made of stone or concrete and are housed in sizable empty spaces with no features except for windows.

To ensure consistent germination the barley has to be turned. This was once done with a shovel, but in more recent times a number of mechanized methods have been developed. Nevertheless, this is often one of the most labor-intensive parts of the process.

HIGHLIGHT

BARLEY INTO MALT

One of the first visible signs that germination has begun is the appearance of rootlets extending from the grains of barley. Within each grain, the embryo starts to break down the wall surrounding the starch, which provides energy for further growth. Kilning halts the growth within the grains, which would otherwise continue to consume the starch and so reduce the eventual yield of alcohol for the distiller.



Germination takes between five and nine days, depending on the time of year and the temperature in the malting room. When the grain is judged to have reached the optimum point of germination (when the rootlets are about three quarters the length of the grain) the growing process needs to be halted so the grain's starches are not used by the growing plant. This is done with heat.

The grain is spread over a perforated steel or ceramic floor and heat is created beneath it. It is at this stage that peat fires may be used in the process, imparting the smoky flavors that dominate some whiskeys to the grain. Peated grains are measured in parts per million (ppm), and a heavily peated grain is one with a rating in excess of 50ppm.

Many distilleries have stylish and attractive pagoda roofs, even the ones that have never used peat. They have become an integral part of a malt distillery, and they serve a very practical purpose.

The design was invented by Elgin architect Charles Doig, who was commissioned in the late 1800s to make the drying process more efficient by increasing the air flow. The roof proved so successful that nearly all the distilleries



PAGODA ROOFS

Charles Doig designed the distinctive pagoda roofs to increase the air flow to the maltings.

in Speyside adopted it. Doig became famous throughout the whiskey industry, and scores of distilleries commissioned him to build roofs.

Doig had an amazing career, undertaking more than 1,000 commissions in his role as architect and surveyor. In addition to distillery roofs, he was responsible for farm buildings, shops, banks, and schools in and around the Speyside district.



FIELDS AT BALBLAIR

Malt whiskey is distilled from spring barley, which is sown from early March to early April, and harvested between July and September. Some varieties mature more quickly than others.

“COMMERCIAL MALTINGS ONLY CAME INTO FAVOR IN SCOTLAND IN THE 1970s, AS DEMAND FOR SCOTCH WHISKY GREW”

Commercial malting

Traditional maltings floors are highly unusual now—and where they do exist, only a part of the overall peating is done on site. This is because floor malting is an expensive way of producing spirits. It is also very difficult to successfully malt in summer, where warmer temperatures can result in damaged and moldy grain.

Established in the early part of the 20th century, commercial maltings were widely used in the US, Europe, and Canada. They only came into favor in Scotland in the 1970s, as demand for Scotch whisky grew and distilleries increased their output with the addition of new equipment. It was impractical to increase the size of maltings floors, and many distillers required the space for other parts of the process.

Commercial maltings can malt more grain with fewer people, and malting is carried out to the precise requirement of the distillery. Germination takes place in automated Saladin boxes or large drums.



DRUM MALTING

Temperature-controlled and ventilated, these large cylindrical drums are computer-operated and provide the ideal conditions for germinating barley.

Placing an order

Most distilleries are now supplied by independent commercial maltsters. Purchasing agreements with grain merchants or local farmers specify grain size, nitrogen, and moisture levels, all calculated to maximize the spirit yield. Purchasing more than one barley variety is a safeguard against potential problems with the harvest—if one variety has a bad yield that year, others may be less affected. Maltsters assess the grain's germination ability, and check for any mold or weevils.

Steeping, germination, kilning, and peating are all carried out by the maltster, according to requirements agreed with each distillery. Individual barley varieties are steeped separately, as different grain sizes take up water at different rates. Conical steeps have taken over from the traditional flat-bottomed style, as they require less water, and are easier to clean.

Kilning and peating

While kilning is computerized, it is still monitored by kilnsmen. Burning fuel to produce direct heat has largely been replaced by a method known as indirect heating. Air is heated by being conducted through pipes that are in turn heated by water from a boiler.

MACHINE POWER

Commercial malting companies often use mechanical equipment to turn the barley grains during malting.



Mashing

Mashing is the process used to remove the soluble sugars and the enzymes (which act as catalysts) from the grain husks and is similar to the way we make a cup of tea.

The dried grain is crushed into flour, known as grist, before a three-water (or sometimes four-water) mash is carried out. This involves mixing the grist with hot water (normally at 147°F /64°C), allowing it to rest for a while, then draining off the liquid. The second wash is at a higher temperature of 158–167°F (70–75°C). Again the liquid is siphoned off. Now, just a small amount of sugar is left in the grain. So a third wash of water at nearly 212°F (100°C) is added, but this time the liquid is siphoned off separately. It is cooled and is added back into the first wash of the next run. The liquid collected in the first two mashes is brown and sweet. The spent grains are often used for livestock feed.

Cooking grain

A different process is used in the making of most grain whiskeys and all the classic North American styles. Un-malted grains, especially, corn (maize), need to be cooked thoroughly

before mashing. This cooking breaks down the cellulose walls of the grain so that the starch is able to absorb water. The starch gelatinizes, which enables the enzymes present in the grain to convert the starch to sugar.

In some distilleries, the corn (maize) mash is fed into cooking vessels in a continuous process. In others, a vessel similar to a pressure cooker is used.

BARLEY MASH TUN

The mash tun used for malted barley is different to that used for other grains as the sugar in malted barley is more accessible than that in raw, un-malted grains.

HIGHLIGHT

UNDER PRESSURE

As barley starts to germinate, starch is converted into soluble sugars with the help of naturally occurring enzymes. However, cereals such as corn (maize) have to be cooked prior to mashing, as their sugars are not as easy to extract. For this, a combination of a high temperature and pressure cooking helps speed the process along. Their sugar content, which derives from starch, is made accessible by cooking the grains in large industrial pressure cookers, like the one shown here at the Hammerschmiede distillery in Germany.



METAL OR WOOD

There is considerable debate as to whether wooden or stainless steel washbacks make any difference to the end whiskey.



Fermentation

The liquid collected from the mash, known as wort, is moved to the washback, a sealable vessel made of wood or stainless steel. Distillers have differing views as to whether the vessel makes any difference to the process.

Yeast is added to the liquid and starts to feed on the sugars, creating alcohol and carbon dioxide. This can be a dramatic and violent process. Fermentation time may last from 40 to more than 100 hours, depending on the distillery. The resulting liquid is a form of beer, but it differs from commercial beer in that it is sour, like the Belgian speciality lambic beer. The process also creates fats and taste compounds that will influence the final taste of the spirit produced. These are known as secondary constituents or congeners. While the quantities are small, they have a marked effect on the taste, character, and quality of the spirit.

SHAPING SPIRIT

The size and shape of the still, the length of the neck, and the angle of the lyne arm will all affect the spirit collected.

Distillation

The liquid, known as wash, will have an alcoholic strength of between 7% and 11% ABV. It is now ready for distillation.

Distillation is the process of separating alcohol from water by using heat. Alcohol has a lower boiling point than water, so, when it is heated, it evaporates away from the water. Traditionally, a pot still, which is effectively a giant kettle, is used for this purpose. Each distillery has its own distinctly sized and shaped pot stills, each with an



onion or round shaped pot, a base, and extended tapering neck, leading into an arm, known as a lyne arm.

The still is heated from below. This used to be done with coal fires, and then gas, but is now often done with steam.

Distilleries will normally have a pair of stills or multiples of two. There are two types: the larger wash still and a spirit still. They are nearly always made of copper, a metal that conducts heat excellently and is easily shaped. Copper is also a rough metal, so as the spirit passes over it, it will trap heavier, fattier, and often unpleasant elements in the spirit, and will react with sulfur to form bright blue-green copper sulfate.

The size and shape of the stills are crucial to the type of spirit the distillery is making. The greater the contact between the copper and the spirit, the lighter the spirit will be as more impurities, fats, and other compounds will be removed. A long, tall still will mean that only the light spirit makes it all the way to the lyne arm, with the fattier, oilier spirits falling back into the base of the pot still. Small squat stills, often used for making Highland whiskies, will produce more robust, oilier, and often more flavorsome whiskies.

Double distillation

The wash is placed first in the wash still and is then heated. The alcohol, with a lower boiling point than water, evaporates, and the spirit travels up the still until it reaches the lyne arm. It will travel through the lyne arm into the condenser, where it is converted back into liquid and collected in a receiving tank.

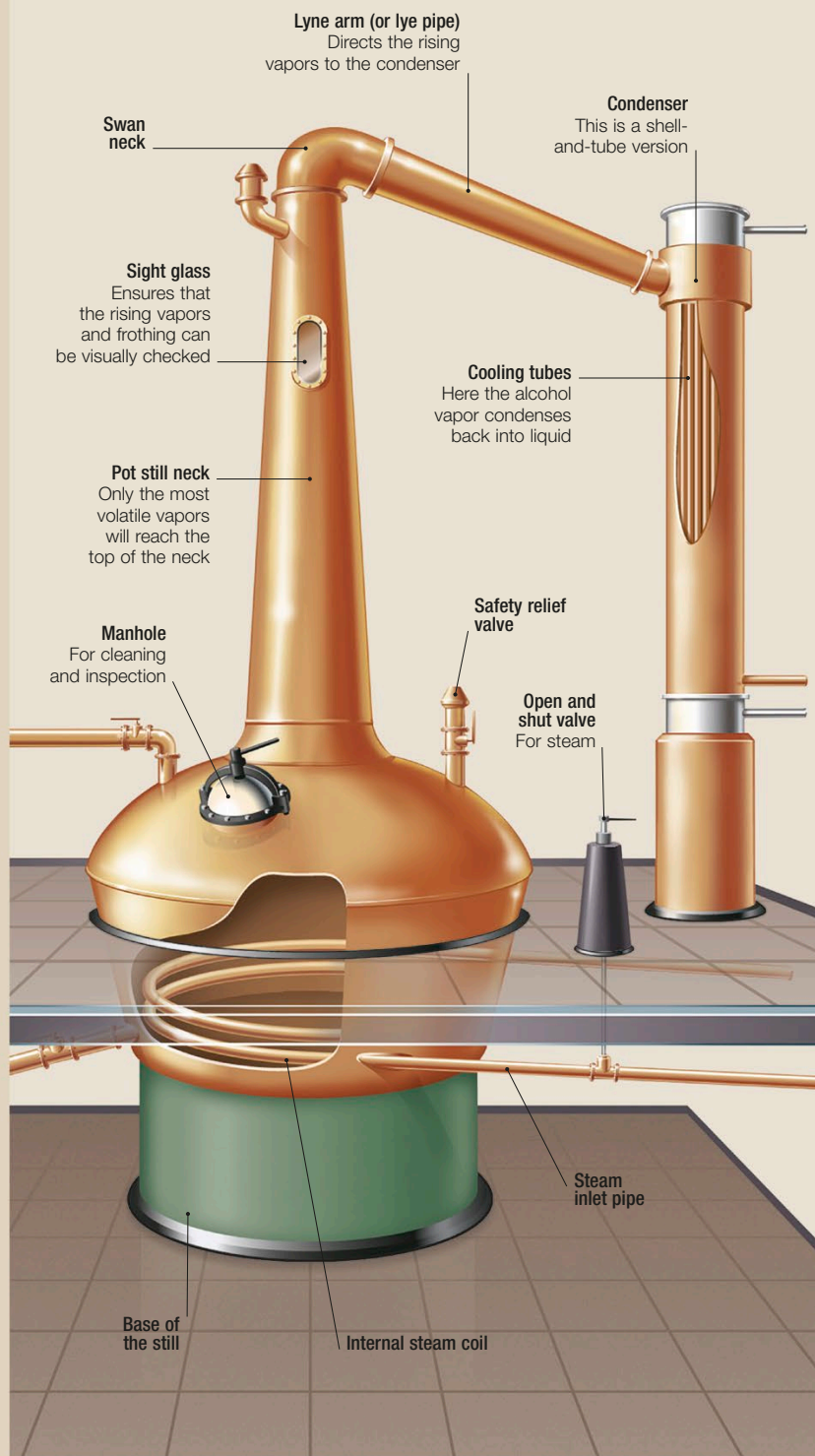
At this point, the liquid has an alcoholic strength of around 23–28% ABV. This is mixed with the residue from the previous spirit run and placed back in the spirit still and the process is carried out again. This is known as double distillation and is the norm for most single malt whiskies.

But the second run is distinctly different from the first. This time the distiller wants to collect a proportion of spirit to put into casks to mature into whiskey.

The first spirits off the still are the strongest, most dangerous, and most foul-tasting, so they are taken away and collected in a holding vessel. The length of time for this first stage varies from distillery to distillery, but can be anything

A TYPICAL POT STILL

The heart of every distillery is the pot still. Made of copper, their shape and size will be unique to each distillery. After boiling the wash in the pot, vapors travel up the neck and along the lyne pipe to a condenser. Nowadays, steam is used for heating. In Scotland, double distillation is carried out in most distilleries in a set of two stills, consisting of one wash and one spirit—or low wine—still. The latter are usually smaller in size. Irish whiskey is triple distilled in three stills.





TRADITIONAL WORM TUB

A coil of copper pipe (the worm) is immersed in a wooden tub filled with cold water, usually outside the distillery. The vapor is cooled as it works its way along the tube.

from five minutes to 45 minutes. This first spirit is known as the “heads” or “foreshots.” After a while, the stillman will be ready to collect the heart of the run, and he will direct the spirit flow into a second vessel. Over a period of hours the spirit will be collected. However, the strength of the spirit is continuously falling, and eventually it will become too weak to collect. This residue is collected in the same way as the initial part of the run, and is known as the “tails” or “feints.”

The foreshots and feints are returned to the spirit still for the next run. The heart of the run will have an alcohol strength of 65–75% ABV.

Triple distillation

The more times you distill, the more alcohol will be separated from water, so the stronger the spirit you produce. Extra distillation also removes more components from the spirit. The spirit will be lighter, more fragrant, and with distinctive floral and fruity notes.

Column stills and other grains

For years, distillers sought to improve the time-consuming and labor-intensive methods of pot still distillation. By 1830, a more efficient process had been developed by Robert Stein and Aeneas Coffey to distill grain. It used the column still, also known as the continuous or Coffey still. The system is altogether more industrial, and works by forcing grain mash against very hot, pressurized steam in the tall stills (*see p.40*). Coffey stills are faster, provide higher volumes of spirit, and are more versatile, as plates in the column can be adjusted to make a range of spirits. They also allow the use of grains not suited to pot still distillation.

Although the spirit the column still system creates is higher in strength than that produced in a pot still, it has less of the complexity and flavor profile of single malt whiskey. Scottish producers discovered that the new grain whisky could be added to single malt to make

SHAPELY NECKS

Pot stills are designed in a number of ways, depending on the style of whiskey required. Consequently, they look different at every distillery, and even similar ones will have slight variations. Generally, pot stills with long, tall necks produce lighter and more fragrant spirits, while those with short, wide necks produce oilier and heavier spirits. To slow down the distillation process, and prevent the froth from boiling over into the condenser, several refinements have been developed; these include the wide neck, the lantern neck, and the boiling ball, shown below.



WIDE NECK

The wide neck on this still at Lochnagar rises from the shoulders of the pot. It reduces the speed of the rising vapors as well as cooling the wash to prevent the froth from building up and boiling over.



LANTERN NECK

The lantern stills at the Jura distillery are very large, but their small necks restrict the vapors before they enter the wider space above: here they cool and slow down, and only the most volatile rise to the top.



BOIL, OR BOILING, BALL NECK

This ball neck at Old Pulteney has the same effect as a lantern still. The ball stops the liquid boiling over, and any froth is broken down. Once again, only the most volatile vapors reach the neck.

a smoother, more palatable blended whisky. It was from here that the world domination by Scotch whisky began.

Lomond stills

The Lomond still was developed in Scotland in 1955 and was designed to allow the stillman to make different styles of new-make spirit. Its key feature was three removable and adjustable rectifying plates in the neck of the still. These could be adjusted horizontally and vertically, or removed altogether, and could be water-cooled or left dry, affecting the amount of reflux (the spirit that re-condenses and falls back into the still before it is collected). Heavy levels of reflux will mean only the lightest spirits travel to the condenser, so that lighter or heavier spirit could be made as required. An adjustable lyne arm gave the distiller even more control. Over time, the stills developed problems as the plates clogged up with residue. Eventually, they fell out of favor.

Cooling systems

There are several quirky ways of re-condensing the spirit. In the most common method, it travels up the still, entering the lyne arm as vapor. The vapor then passes through a pipe surrounded by smaller copper pipes containing cold water. This cools the spirit to liquid temperature.

An alternative system is the worm tub, named because the pipe containing the spirit spirals its way downward through a tub of cold water. Worm tubs cool the spirit more slowly and are said to make a heavier spirit. Only a handful of distilleries use this method.

The final process

The spirit which has been collected is clear and has a strength of about 70% ABV. The common view is that the ideal casking strength is 63.5%, so water is added to the spirit prior to it being poured into the cask.



INTO THE CASK

The casks at Wolfburn are filled with the cooled spirit, before being sealed.

A DIFFERENT CLIMATE

The heat and high humidity that suits rice cultivation in Taiwan also benefits whiskey production there, by speeding up the maturation process.



THE EFFECT OF CLIMATE ON MATURATION

Since the turn of the new millennium the importance of climate has come sharply into focus as whiskey is made in ever more extreme places. Wherever whiskey is made there will be agriculture, and local grains will be used. In turn, grains are the product of their environment. Equally importantly, whiskey production requires a plentiful source of water.

But the environment plays a far greater role than just providing the physical raw materials for whiskey production. In recent years, the emergence of whiskey producers in countries with a dramatically different climate to that of Scotland—such as Australia, Taiwan, and India—has demanded closer examination of the effects of climate on maturation.

The key factors here are temperature and humidity. Heat causes the reaction between the oak cask and the whiskey spirit to be accelerated. In Scotland, maturation is slow and stately, and whisky will peak at any age between 10 and 25 years. In India, the same result will be achieved in six years.

There is another concern in hot countries—evaporation of the liquid in the cask will be exaggerated. Indian distiller Amrut once released a whisky called “Greedy Angels.” At just six years old, it tasted like a 30-year-old Scottish single malt—but three quarters of the cask were lost to the elements.

Humidity is another key factor. In Scotland, where the cool temperatures are accompanied by high humidity, more alcohol is lost to “the angels” than water, so the strength of the spirit gradually declines over time. In Kentucky, the issue of humidity and heat makes for an even more complex situation. The state has short and sharp freezing winters and very hot summers. Bourbon matures in high warehouses, and in summer, the temperature at the top can be well in excess of 110°F (40°C). The extremes between the worst of winter and the heights of

“SINCE THE TURN OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM THE IMPORTANCE OF CLIMATE HAS COME SHARPLY INTO FOCUS”



summer may be more than 122°F (50°C). Kentucky also has a dry climate, so while the strength of the alcohol in a cask in Scotland will decline with time, the opposite is true in Kentucky (at least at the higher levels of the warehouse), and the strength in the spirit goes up.

What is widely accepted is that the speed of maturation varies from country to country, region to region, and state to state. And as we will see, temperature and humidity are not the only factors involved either.

In recent years, there has been a much greater focus on age and what it means. Indeed, the age of a whiskey is being questioned as never before. An age on a bottle of whiskey is, as one Australian put it, like having a longitudinal unit without having a latitudinal one—without

additional information the age means very little on its own. And where Scottish distillers might have repelled such an argument once upon a time, they are now embracing it through no-age-statement (NAS) whiskeys, and its belief that greater understanding of cask management means that age is just part of the overall picture.

DEALING WITH COLD

Box is in northern Sweden where the extremes of climate are great. Although colder climates slow maturation, it is counteracting this through its use of unusual European oak.





CASK MAKING

The oak staves of casks must be planed so that they fit together without leaking. They are then held together with metal hoops.

THE INFLUENCE OF OAK

It is estimated that up to three quarters of the final taste of a malt whisky (and even more of an American whiskey) is contributed by the cask it was matured in. Malt spirit is quite delicate, so maturing it in a new barrel for a minimum of three years would result in the wood overwhelming the spirit. Distillers therefore use a cask that has previously been used for something else, as this will impart a subtler flavor than a new one.

Most Scottish whisky is matured in either ex-bourbon or ex-sherry casks, though sherry casks are increasingly hard to find and cost about 10 times the price of a bourbon cask. Residue from the cask's original contents will remain in the wood, and this will affect the color and flavor of the resulting whisky. But the process is a complex and only partially understood one, and no two casks will mature spirit in exactly the same way. This is the magic of malt.

In essence, four processes take place in the cask. Over time and temperature variation, the spirit will expand and contract, and circulate in the cask. So the cask will add flavor and color. But the wood will also take some elements—mainly negative ones—out of the spirit. And elements in the wood will react chemically with the spirit, creating the huge array of flavors that

we find in good malt whiskey. Finally, the oak breathes and some liquid evaporates. At the same time, oxygen is able to pass through the oak and into the cask meaning that the liquid is oxidized during the maturation process.

During maturation, the influence of the wood on the spirit will grow, too, and it is part of the whiskey maker's job to monitor this influence carefully, because at some point—it varies massively from cask to cask, distillery to distillery, and country to country—the wood will overwhelm and spoil the spirit.

Sherry casks

Britain's sherry trade with Spain is centuries old. In the cask, sherry was landed at the ports of Bristol (England) and Leith (Scotland), and was bottled there by merchants. The empty casks were purchased by Scottish distillers and transported to the north. Some of the most delicious whiskies tasted even more wonderful after they had matured in a sherry butt.

The cask shortage

In the second half of the 20th century, sherry presented distillers with two new problems: sales of sherry in Britain had diminished, and Spanish trade unions lobbied successfully for the bottling of Spanish wines to be carried out locally.

One solution, albeit expensive, was pursued by several distillers, most famously Macallan. They had casks made in Spain and lent them to sherry bodegas for a couple of years' seasoning with sherry.

This solved the problem for some distillers for a decade or so, until the sherry bodegas turned against their own oak. Concerned by the continuing fall in the sales of sherry, their response was to modernize sherry by making the drink lighter in body. To achieve this, they began, in the 1980s, to discard European oak in favor of American oak casks, which give the liquid a lighter, lemony hue.

Terms such as “heavily sherried” or “bourbon-aged” are unlikely to vanish any time soon, and recently there has been a trend, particularly



COLLECTING OAK

These days, most oak is taken from sustainable forests. It takes 100 years to grow a tree to make an oak cask from.

MIGHTY OAK

A trend toward producing “lighter” sherry popularized the use of American oak, shown here, over the traditional European oak.





A NATURAL BEAUTY

Sanding the barrel makes it more attractive and easier to handle. Most barrels are not painted, as paint prevents them "breathing" and stops the contents of the barrel interacting with the air outside it.

with no-age-statement (NAS) whiskeys, to highlight the wood used in the maturation of whiskey.

It is likely, too, that sherry will maintain a presence for two reasons. First, its devotees still believe that the wine itself is influential in imparting flavors. Second, whiskey makers get good use out of sherry casks; they can be re-used after their first fill, and many will be used for whiskeys that are aged for 18, 20, 25 years or longer.

Some blenders and distillery managers feel that sherry casks are something of a blunt instrument on the first fill. They take the view that the sherry influence is so strong as to be hard to deploy with subtlety. Second-fill casks are greatly favored for their balance and restraint. By the third fill, the cask should still be in good shape structurally and well worth using, but it will no longer be earmarked as a sherry cask.



HOT DRINK?

Fire is used to bend the oak staves into shape. This process led to the deliberate charring of barrels, as practised by bourbon distillers.

American oak sherry casks

Sherry casks made from American oak are a relatively new addition to the mix, having only been around since sherry makers decided to switch from European oak in the 1980s. In 2004, Macallan, having had a traditional approach to the use of European sherry casks, released a new range of six malts matured in American oak, under the name "Fine Oak Range." These, more than anything else, dispelled forever the belief that there was something inferior about American oak.

Skeptics were quick to dub the range "Macallan Lite," but were confounded when they tasted the whiskies. The complexity and individuality of Macallan malt whisky came singing through, and yet the whiskies were still enriched to a surprising degree by the oak. The vanilla, cream, and coconut expected from the American oak seemed to conspire in a nougatlike luxury: a taste that evoked Montélimar more than Missouri. Asked whether these American oak casks had previously contained sherry or bourbon, Macallan indicated that both types were used.

Bourbon barrels

When sherry butts first fell into short supply, bourbon and American whiskey barrels were an obvious alternative. Over the years, many bourbon and Scotch whisky distilleries have had links of ownership or distribution with US distillers. Classic styles of American whiskey must be matured in new oak, and this typically lasts for little more than four years. After their distillery debuts with American whiskey, the still young barrels are ready for a new life; and given the size of the American whiskey industry, there are a lot of barrels. The powerful, fruity, nutty flavors of sherry cannot be matched by bourbon, but its own vanilla spiciness works especially well with some delicate Scotch whiskies.

Bourbon barrels tend to be significantly cheaper than sherry barrels. And unlike sherry butts, which may be made of either European *Quercus robur* or American *Quercus alba*, bourbon barrels must, by law, be made of *Quercus alba*, or white oak.

SPIRIT SAMPLING

Spirit makers taste the whiskey at different points of maturation to ensure the flavor is developing as desired.



Bourbon

BOURBON WHISKEY MAY LEGALLY ONLY BE MADE IN THE US, AND, DESPITE THE SAME BASIC RAW INGREDIENTS OF GRAIN, YEAST, AND WATER, IS TO MALT WHISKY WHAT CHALK IS TO CHEESE.

Comparing single malt whisky to bourbon is like comparing Ed Sheeran to Metallica: just as both acts make music on guitars for big crowds, so both single malt whisky and bourbon are whiskeys made with grain, yeast, and water. However, bourbon is different from single malt whisky in just about every way possible. While single malt whisky is a one-grain solo artist, bourbon is a band. The finished product is

brasher, louder, and less subtle. Saying one style is better than the other is like saying Manchester United are better than the Indianapolis Colts; it is irrelevant and nonsensical because they are completely different to each other.

Mashing and cooking

The principal grain used in bourbon is corn (maize). At least 51% of the recipe must be made up of corn (maize); often the percentage is much higher. A small amount (roughly 10%) of the recipe will be malted barley because it acts as the catalyst for alcohol conversion. A third grain, normally wheat or rye, is also included.

In the bourbon-making process, the grain must be cooked prior to being mashed. This is done in a number of ways, but most often using what are effectively over-sized pressure cookers. Corn (maize) is cooked first at the highest temperature. Then the temperature is reduced and the rye or wheat is added, and finally, at a lower temperature still, malted barley is added.

Column stills

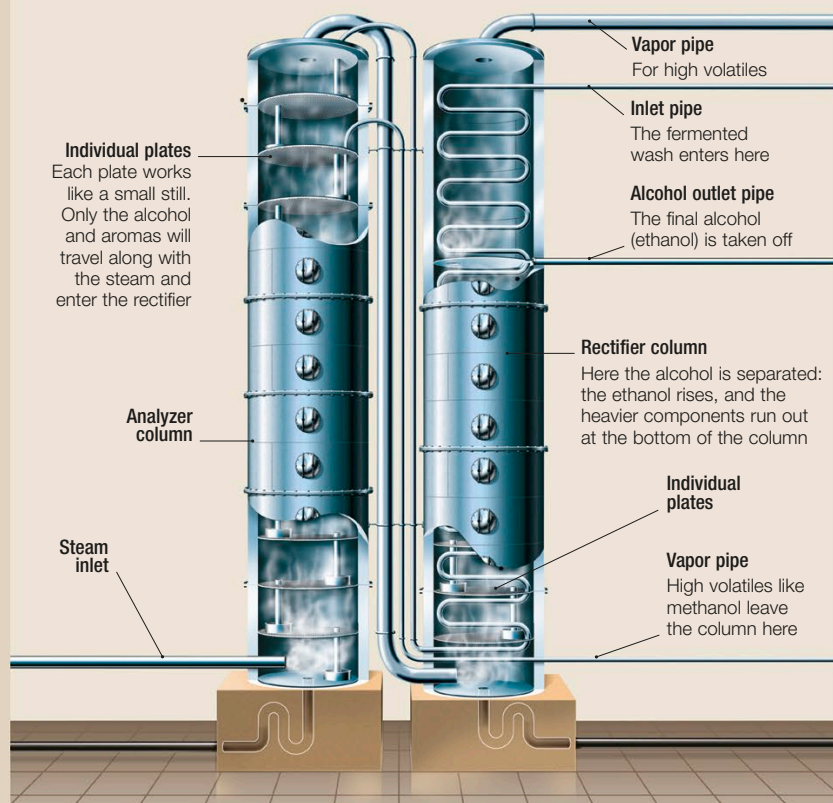
The first distillation takes place in a still known variously as a column, Coffey, continuous, or beer still. First invented by Scotsman Robert Stein and perfected by Irishman Aeneas Coffey, the column still is a highly efficient way of extracting alcohol from the mash. As the name implies, it is a continuous process and up to five stills can be operated in tandem with each other.

The stills are round, made of stainless steel and are often very large. Interspersed down the inside of the still are a series of copper plates, which are perforated to allow spirit and liquid to pass through them.

Alcohol is obtained by passing steam under extreme pressure, and therefore at extreme temperatures, through the column where it

A TYPICAL COLUMN STILL

The fermented wash comes in at the top of the rectifier (right), where it is warmed by the heat of the rising vapor. Once heated it enters the top of the analyzer. As it descends, the steam extracts the alcohol and aromas and takes them to the bottom of the rectifier. It starts to rise and gradually cools. When it is almost at the top, the desired quality and grade of alcohol is extracted for further processing.





meets the unfiltered mash. The alcohols evaporate, with the most volatile rising as vapor and the lower ones passing down to the lower part of the still where they are collected.

The process is repeated a second time and may be repeated two or three more times. On the latter runs the spirit, now drinkable alcohol, is collected. The second distillation is carried out in what is known as a doubler, which is usually pot-still shaped. It is from here that the liquid is collected at an alcoholic strength of 60–70% ABV (120–140 proof).

A very small number of distilleries replace the doubler with what is known as a thumper. This has a proportion of hot water in the bottom, and is designed to create another level of purity. When the vapors make contact with the hot water, a thumping sound is heard.

Maturation

The spirit, known as “White Dog,” is now put into a barrel to mature. In America, the law dictates that a new barrel made of white oak must be used for bourbon. It is toasted or charred by intense heat before the spirit is put in—the level of charring or toasting will vary depending on the bourbon being made. Nothing may be added to the spirit at any point.

Bourbon is normally matured in one of the giant rack warehouses that dominate many of Kentucky’s rural skylines. Bourbon can be matured for any length of time, but most distilleries will mature the spirit for considerably longer than the two years it legally requires to be called “straight bourbon.” Six years is a common age, and very few bourbons are matured for longer than 10 years.

It is often said that a key difference between whiskey production in Scotland and the US is that, during maturation, the strength of American whiskey will go up as the water evaporates; whereas in Scotland the strength of the spirit falls. This is only true for whiskey stored in the top half of warehouses in the US—the effect is far less marked further down, and on the bottom floors the strength of the spirit will fall as it does in Scotland.

After a barrel has been used once, it cannot be used for American whiskey production again, so many bourbon barrels find their way to the European whisky trade.

FILLING THE BARRELS

Distilled spirit is poured into barrels at the Buffalo Trace distillery. The law dictates that bourbon is matured in new barrels made of white oak.

“SINGLE MALT WHISKY IS
A ONE-GRAIN SOLO ARTIST,
BOURBON IS A BAND”

Blended and Blended Malt Whisky

BLENDED AND BLENDED MALT WHISKY (TWO DIFFERENT STYLES OF WHISKY) ARE MUCH MALIGNED, AND THEY REALLY SHOULD NOT BE. AT THEIR FINEST THEY ARE SHINING EXAMPLES OF THE WHISKY MAKER'S CRAFT.

Blending is the process of mixing whiskies together. Contrary to a widely held belief, most single malt whiskies also go through this process; very few are the product of one cask. A distillery will collect its malt whisky from casks of all shapes, sizes, and ages which have previously contained a variety of liquids, such as sherry or bourbon.

In Scotland, a blended whisky is a combination of malt whiskies from different distilleries mixed with grain whisky. This is the dominant style of Scotch around the world. If malts from different distilleries are mixed together but no grain is added, the whisky created is known as

blended malt whisky, but was once referred to as vatted malt whisky. Note the difference between a blended and a blended malt whisky. The dominant style of Irish whiskey is a blend of pot still whiskey, made with a grist consisting of malted and unmalted barley and unmalted grain, and grain whiskey.

Cask selection

Two identical casks containing spirit from exactly the same run and stored beside each other for exactly the same time will not produce identical whiskies. No two whiskies are the same and this is where the magic and mystery of whisky

should we clone out the apple logo on screen.

BLENDING FOR CONSISTENCY

Blenders will select a range of different casks to create their whiskies. Single malt whisky will normally be made from several casks from the same distillery. Blended whiskies are made up of grain and malt whisky from various distilleries.



stem from. There are many reasons for these differences, and it is the blender's skill to create a whisky where these variations are negated and the drink has a consistent taste from batch to batch.

Blending

A blended whisky will include whiskies from a broad range of distilleries; it is not uncommon to have 30 or 40 different whiskies (or even more) in a good blend. In recent times, some producers have made whiskies with just one grain and one malt in the recipe, but this is still a blended whisky.

The job of the blender is to create a flavor that will consistently be recognizable to the end consumer. This is an outstanding skill because after every batch has been made and shipped out, the blender must start again with a different set of casks. Some whiskies may cease to be available, and must be replaced by one or more other whiskies.

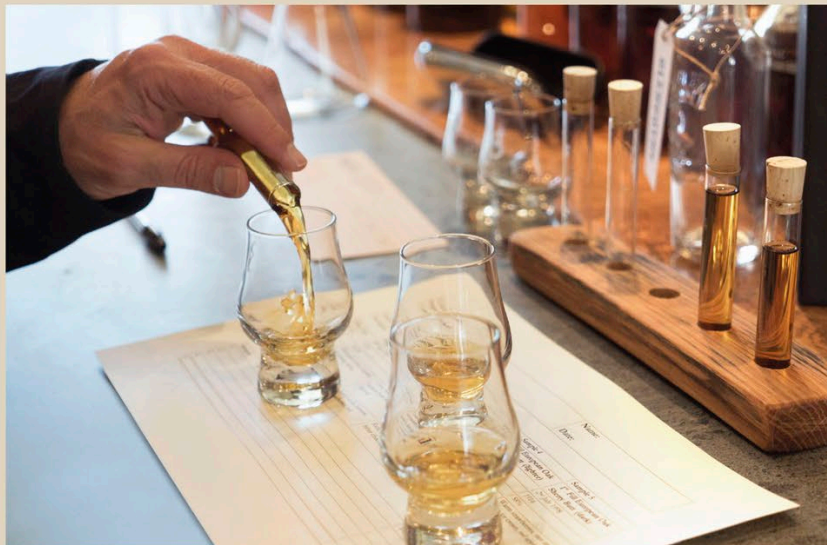
There are no rules as to how much grain or how much malt must be used for a blended whisky, and the grain content can vary from 5 percent to 70 percent. A high proportion of malt whisky is seen as a sign of quality, and it is assumed premium and deluxe blends have a higher malt content. This in itself is not enough, though; the quality of the malt whisky is obviously important, too.

Most blends are a complex mix of different whisky styles, and a typical blended whisky will include light- and heavy-malt whiskies from all the regions of Scotland. Color will vary from batch to batch, and so Scottish producers are allowed to use caramel as a coloring to ensure consistency.

The blending process for blended malt whisky is exactly the same, and these can contain anything from 2 to 50 different malt whiskies.

Controlling quality

Quality control is handled by experienced blenders and is done through nosing. In a typical day, samples from a few hundred casks will be nosed, often at a strength of about 20% ABV. A number of distilleries will also set up tasting panels for staff members, involving them in the process, and in doing so often discovering some astute and alert nosers.



At their best, blended whiskies are rather like an orchestra; a coming together of individual players to create a harmonious whole. Malts play different roles in a blend, with some acting as unsung heroes but holding the structure of the blend in place. Some will strongly influence the flavor, but none will dominate.

A new market

In recent times, two trends have bolstered blended whisky's popularity. The traditional whisky-producing nations have always respected and sought aged whiskies. As stocks of older single malt whiskies have become limited, there has been a greater emphasis on aged blends. Chivas Regal, Royal Salute, and Ballantine's all produce blends that have been matured for 17 years or more. Alongside the likes of Dewar's Signature and Johnnie Walker, these blends are all well regarded by connoisseurs and command high prices.

Secondly, young whisky drinkers in emerging markets are bolstering sales. After acquiring the taste for whisky from standard blends, it might be expected that these drinkers move on to the single malts that are commonly sought out elsewhere. However, this is not the case, and they have moved on to premium blends instead.

WHAT IS IN A BLEND?

A blended or blended malt whisky may contain up to 50 different whiskies.

“CONTRARY TO A WIDELY HELD BELIEF, MOST SINGLE MALT WHISKIES ALSO GO THROUGH THE BLENDING PROCESS”

How to Nose and Taste

HOW YOU NOSE AND TASTE YOUR WHISKEY IS ULTIMATELY UP TO YOU, BUT HERE ARE A FEW GUIDELINES TO HELP YOU ENJOY APPRECIATING WHISKEY.



THE TASTER'S GLASS

The tulip-shaped glass is ideal for tasting whiskey—the bowl shape allows the whiskey to be swirled, the narrowing top traps aromas for nosing, and the lip presents the liquid for tasting.

Whether we are aware of it or not, the enjoyment of whiskey, as with any drink, engages all our senses: hearing, touch, sight, smell, and taste. You hear the whiskey being poured, and you feel the texture of the whiskey as you sip it. Every sense contributes to your pleasure, with smell and taste being the most revealing.

The social drink in a pub or bar is not the best moment to deconstruct a dram, but to nose a whiskey at home can pay dividends. Learning to recognize aromas and flavors and to judge body, palate, and finish is fun. The knowledge and experience gained also heightens the enjoyment, and can perhaps be shared with others in a tasting evening arranged for friends.

For whiskey drinking, the traditional cut-glass tumbler or old-fashioned glass have their merits, but also some critical failings. The bevels in cut glass illuminate the color of the whiskey, but they also distort it. More importantly, the tumbler shape does a poor job of delivering the aroma.

The ideal tasting glass has no decoration on the bowl, so that the color of the whiskey can be appreciated to the full. It should have an inward curve, or a slightly pinched waist above the bowl, to hold in the aroma, and then a slight flair to direct the bouquet to the nose. A lid, to retain the aroma between sniffs and swallows, is useful but not necessary. Tulip-shaped glasses have been developed by whiskey critics, distillers, and glassware manufacturers for sale to the enthusiast. Scottish company Glencairn makes a standard tasting glass at a very reasonable price.

Water with whiskey

It is conceivable that the early romantic heroes of Scottish history drank their whiskey neat but, contrary to myth, today's Highlanders do not. Some zealots resist dilution on principle. Others feel that the texture of the bigger, richer sherryish malts is spoiled by water. The problem is that neat whiskey can numb the palate. This can be countered by drinking a glass of water after a whiskey.

However, adding water when tasting whiskey is to be encouraged. Just a small drop disturbs the molecular composition of the whiskey, and can open up the aromas and flavors.



NOSING A DRAM

Hans Kemenater, brewmaster at Slyrs, in Germany, noses a dram of whiskey. This gives a sense of how the whiskey will taste.

“THE ENJOYMENT OF WHISKEY ENGAGES ALL OUR SENSES: HEARING, TOUCH, SIGHT, SMELL, AND TASTE”

TASTING WHISKEY

Your tasting note is a personal reminder to you of how much you liked the whiskey. There are no right or wrong tasting notes.

Color

The color of the whiskey only provides clues to its age and style. A light lemony colored whiskey may be young, it might have been matured in an ex-bourbon cask, or it might have been matured in a cask that has been used more than once and has imparted less color to the malt. Dark whiskeys may well have been matured in an ex-sherry cask, but if it was a first-fill cask, the whiskey might still be very young.

Nose

Smell or “nose” the whiskey. Some professionals like to get their nose into the glass; others retreat slightly. You may experience the sweetness of malt, the smokiness of a peat fire, or the salt and seaweed resulting from maturation somewhere by the sea. Professional distillers often work only with their nose, without actually tasting the whiskey.

Palate


Taste the whiskey neat to get an impression of the body. Is it big, rich, creamy, firm, smooth, soft, gentle? Add water slowly to see how the aromas and flavors develop with dilution. Between sips, cleanse your palate with water. Whiskey writers tend to work slowly to build up a description. Blenders work more quickly and often dilute heavily from the start, to minimize the effects of the alcohol. They are usually monitoring familiar malts, checking for consistency and looking out for the occasional rogue sample.

Finish

Consider the aftertaste. Do the maltiness and smokiness linger? A great whiskey, with a complex finish, leaves the drinker in a reflective mood. A moment to think before writing your tasting note.

TYPICAL AROMAS AND FLAVORS

Some of the aromas and flavors generally found in whiskeys derive from the raw materials, others from the various stages of production—but opinions differ on their origins. All whiskeys are complex, but some are especially good examples of a certain characteristic.

FLAVOR PRODUCER	RESULTING FLAVOR
 GRAIN Cereal grains are members of the grass family, and different grains have their own accents. Barley can taste nutty; rye can be spicy or minty; wheat can be crisp; and corn (maize) can lend a creaminess.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassiness • Grassy • Sweetness • Lemon grass • Bison grass
 ROCK AND WATER The rock from which water rises is another contributor. In Kentucky, limestone makes for firm-bodied whiskeys, while the softness of some Speyside malts is attributed to granite.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft, clean • Iron, passion fruit • Chalky • Firm-bodied • Scorched earth
 PEAT Flavors of peat may be absorbed by water flowing over moors and bogs, or picked up in damp warehouses. Primarily they derive from the use of peat fires to dry the malt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoky • Fragrant • Tarlike • Burned grass
 FLOWERS AND HEATHER The flowery or honeyed characters of some whiskeys are often attributed to the heathery hillsides over which the water flows. A floral note may also be created during fermentation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violets • Heather • Honey • Ferns
 FERMENTATION A drink classed as whisky or whiskey cannot contain fruits or spices, but natural reactions in fermentation or maturation can result in flavors that mimic those of certain fruits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strawberries • Oranges/citrus fruits • Pears • Apples
 OAK New oak or first-fill, ex-bourbon barrels impart vanilla and coconut flavors. Sherry butts give “dark fruit” character. Musty smells mean that either the cask or the whiskey has been kept too long.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apples • Raisins • Apricots • Vanilla • Coconut
 WIND AND SEA The wind deposits vaporized sea water on the boggy shores of Islay, Orkney, and parts of the Scottish mainland. Either this water or the atmosphere of the warehouse can impart flavors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sea salt • Brine • Sand • Seaweed





WHISKY COUNTRIES





SCOTLAND

THE ASTONISHING DIVERSITY OF
SINGLE MALTS HAS AROUSED A NEW
PASSION, FROM ISLAY TO THE SPEY



GLENMORE BAY

Many of Scotland's distilleries stand in beautiful, remote locations. This view can be seen from the Ardnamurchan distillery in the southwest of The Highlands.

SCOTLAND

Scotland is a country with a population of around 5.3 million people, and an approximate landmass of 30,400 square miles (78,700km²). It represents 32 percent of the area of the UK, and the Scottish mainland has just over 6,000 miles (9,900km) of coastline.

Statistics are just statistics, however, and what is really significant is that Scotland's great geographical diversity helps shape the remarkable variety of single malt whiskies it produces. From the soft, barley-growing lands of the Borders and East Lothian in the Lowlands to the rugged mountains and lochs of the dramatic Highlands, from the peat-sodden Inner Hebridean island of Islay to vibrant yet historical cities such as Edinburgh and Glasgow; Scotland has character and scenic variety in spades.

It also punches way above its weight in terms of the number of distilleries it boasts, and stylistically their "make" ranges from quiet, delicate, polite single malts to loud, rough-and-ready, smoky bruisers. Truly, there is something for everyone.

The origins of Scotch whisky

The earliest written record of Scotch whisky is from 1494 in the Scottish Exchequer Rolls, where it is stated "Eight bolls of malt to Friar John Cor wherewith to make *aqua-vitae*." Cor was a friar at the Benedictine Order's Lindores Abbey in Fife. It seems likely, however, that distilling was taking place in Scotland for some considerable time prior to that key date, as eight bolls is the equivalent of around half a ton, and so the friars were distilling on quite a substantial scale.

The Irish claim to have been making whiskey long before the Scots, with some authors confidently stating that soon after King Henry II's invasion of Ireland in 1170, the inhabitants of the country were found to be drinking the spirit. It is also asserted that Sir Thomas Savage gave his troops "*Uisge Beathe*" in 1276 prior to going into battle against the English. Closer examination of the facts, however, reveals that this was actually a drink made from wine rather than grain.

What can be stated with certainty is that during the 14th century, Irish monks used distillation to produce medical remedies,

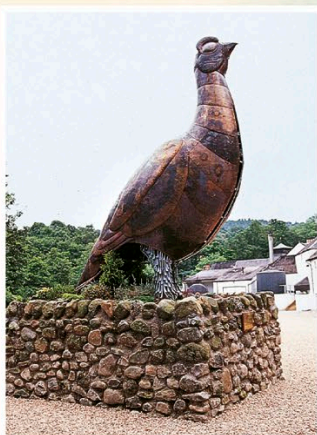
SCOTLAND'S DISTILLERIES

Almost every region in Scotland is home to a distillery: from the islands off its west coast to the Lowlands and Borders, and from the tip of Kintyre to the central Highlands, the north-eastern strip, and even Orkney. Speyside is covered on the next page.



1 BENROMACH

Brought back from the dead in 1998, Benromach has had such success in recent years that it was expanded in 2015, boosting output capacity by 40 percent.



2 GLENTURRET The grouse is the symbol of Scotland's favorite blend.



and by the time Queen Elizabeth I came to the throne in 1558, whiskey drinking was widespread in Ireland. It is sometimes claimed that the art of whiskey distillation spread from Ireland to Scotland via the Hebrides and the remote Kintyre peninsula. The fact is that nobody knows for sure, and there is a certain satisfaction in the early heritage of whiskey being shrouded in the mists of time.

Development and growth

Whatever its true origins, Scotch whisky became significant enough to be taxed for the first time by the Scottish government in 1644. While much licensed whisky making, particularly in the Highlands, was a small-scale and relatively localized affair, the development of major commercial distilling in the Scottish Lowlands accelerated following the passing of the Gin Act in 1736, which imposed heavy excise duty on gin in an effort to curb drunkenness while exempting whisky.

Two inter-married families, the Steins and the Haigs, were responsible for a great deal of this commercial distilling, creating distilleries that by any standards were vast in scale. Two of the

largest were Kennetpans and Kilbagie, situated in the county of Clackmannanshire, and both in the hands of members of the Stein family.

Meanwhile, successive governments introduced ever more elaborate excise legislation to regulate distillers' activities. The most historically important piece of legislation was the 1823 Excise Act, which encouraged legal distillation by dramatically cutting duty levels. As a result, the number of licensed distilleries in Scotland doubled in two years and production of duty-paid whisky rose from 2 million gallons (9 million liters) to 6 million gallons (27 million liters) per year. Meanwhile, illicit distillation fell dramatically during the next few years.

The birth of blends

Along with the Excise Act of 1823, arguably the other most important 19th-century piece of whisky-related legislation was the 1860 Spirits Act, which made it legal for the first time to mix together malt and grain whiskies from different distilleries while under bond. Pioneers such as Andrew Usher of Edinburgh began to develop blended whiskies, which lacked

GATEWAY TO SCOTLAND

The island of Arran, home to the Arran distillery, is near the Kintyre peninsula. It is thought that it was through this route that whisky arrived in Scotland.



CENTRAL SPEYSIDE'S DISTILLERIES

In Speyside, peat, water, a ready supply of barley, and generations of experience have come together to provide the greatest concentration of malt whisky distilleries in Scotland—and the world. Flowing from south to north, the river Spey and tributaries like the Livet and the Dullan provide the axis of this diverse and productive region.

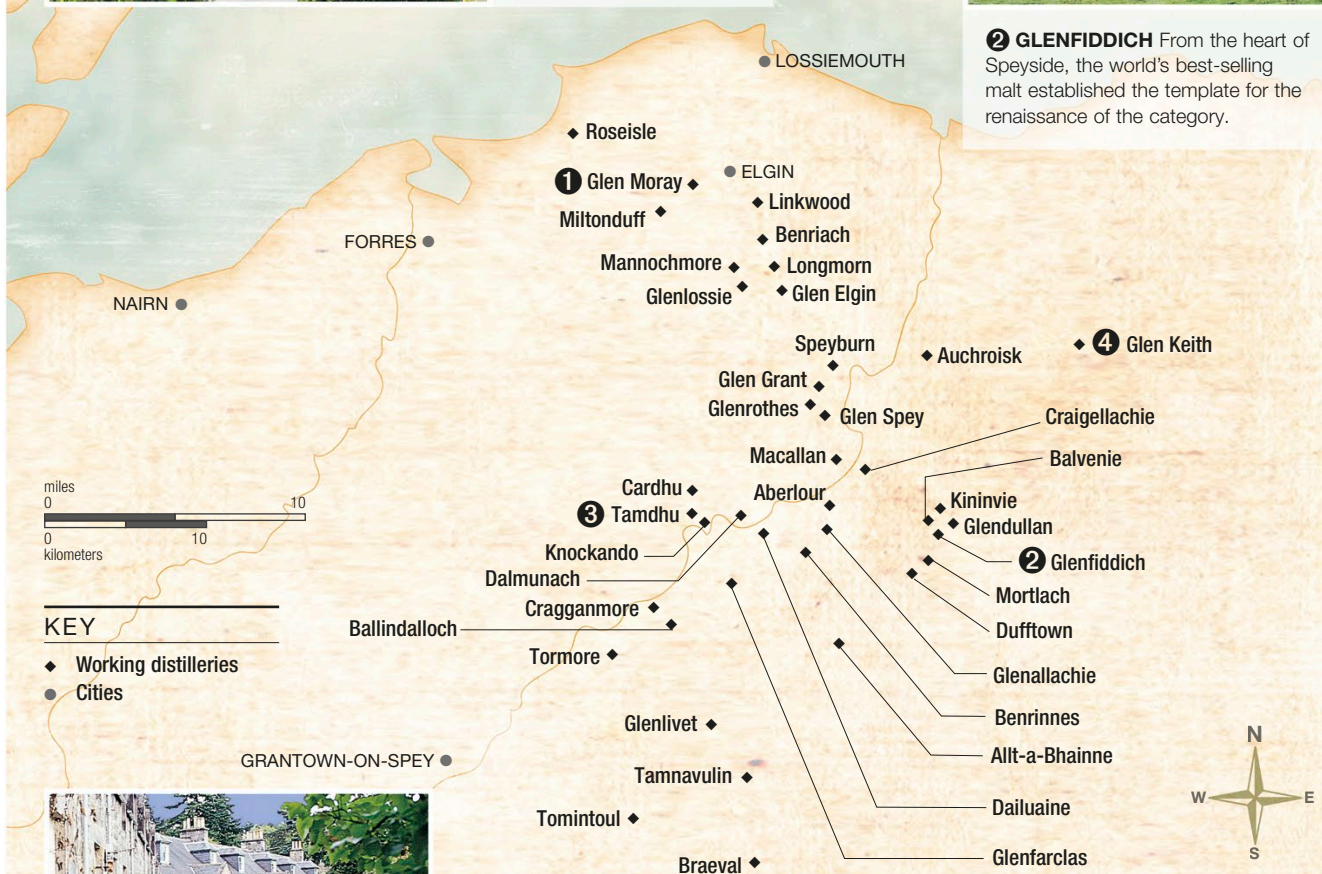


1 GLEN MORAY

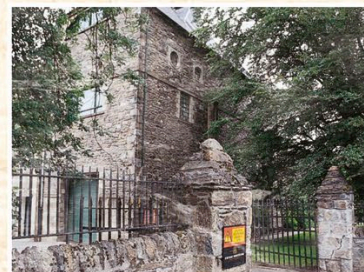
Situated on the banks of River Lossie on the outskirts of Elgin, Glen Moray was originally built as a brewery.



2 GLENFIDDICH From the heart of Speyside, the world's best-selling malt established the template for the renaissance of the category.



3 TAMDHU The old distillery houses at Tamdhu. At one time, all distilleries were self-contained communities.



4 GLEN KEITH This building used to be a mill. The distillery was one of the first to be opened after World War II.

“THE 1860 SPIRITS ACT MADE IT LEGAL TO MIX TOGETHER MALT AND GRAIN WHISKIES FROM DIFFERENT DISTILLERIES”

the perceived harshness and inconsistency of malt whiskies, being lighter in body and flavor, cheaper to make, and ideal as the base for a longer drink. Thanks to the efforts of buccaneering entrepreneurs such as Tommy Dewar, Peter Mackie (of White Horse), and James Buchanan (of Black & White), blended whisky was soon being consumed all over the world, and new distilleries sprang up across Scotland to supply malt whisky for blending purposes.

History has shown, however, that the whisky business is prone to periods of “boom” and “bust,” and over-production severely damaged the Scotch whisky industry at the turn of the 20th century. It was not until the 1950s and growing demand from the US that an upturn occurred, with new distilleries again being constructed. The “boom” lasted until the early 1980s, when over-production again led to distillery closures and cutbacks in output.

Scotch today

The story since then has largely been positive, with exports being made to a more diverse range of nations than ever before, while single malts have come to enjoy much greater popularity. The high point for Scotch whisky exports came in 2012, when they earned a record \$6.9 billion, representing an increase of 87 percent during the previous decade.

Two trends have emerged during this period of buoyancy for Scotch whisky. The first is a tendency for distillers to offer ever more new expressions without age statements—something that divides consumer opinion—and the second is an increased interest in single grain whisky, with leading companies, such as Diageo and William Grant & Sons Ltd, playing a prominent part in this development.

The last few years have also seen the construction of several large-scale distilleries by the industry’s major players, along with a plethora of smaller, independently owned whisky-making facilities, whose instigators are planning to add their own unique single malts to the vast tapestry of brands already available. These are undoubtedly exciting and dynamic times for Scotch whisky.

THE ISLAND OF PEATED WHISKY

Bruichladdich is situated on the banks of Loch Indaal in Islay, an island known for its peated whiskies.





LABELS OVER TIME

Whisky labels have been designed to have a wide range of shapes, sizes, and types, depending on how distilleries wished to market their whiskies.

Scotch whisky regions

According to the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA), which acts as the trade body for Scottish whisky making, “Malt whisky is usually classified in one of the five main categories—Highland, Lowland, Speyside, Islay, and Campbeltown—according to the geographical location of the distillery in which it is made.”

This categorization assumes that non-Island distilleries are included in the Highlands region, though many commentators now group them within a separate “Islands” category.

The formal separation between Highland and Lowland areas of single malt whisky production is delineated by an imaginary line between the Firth of Clyde in the west and the Firth of Tay in the east. Speyside embraces distilleries located within a “golden triangle” centered around the towns of Elgin, Keith, Rothes, and Dufftown, along with Glenlivet.

Various methods of sub-dividing Speyside have been attempted due to the sheer number of distilleries in the region, and here we have opted for a simple system based upon the proximity, or near proximity, of distilleries to six specific towns, villages, or distinct geographical areas.

Between them, the various malt-whisky-producing regions of Scotland are home to some 110 malt distilleries. That number seems to be increasing year-on-year, with no fewer than 16 new malt distilleries opening between 2005 and 2016. They vary in scale and potential capacity, from Abhainn Dearg in the Outer Hebrides (around 4,400 gallons/20,000 liters per year) to Roseisle on Speyside (3.3 million gallons/12.5 million liters per year).





ST. MAGDALENE

After over 100 years of production, St. Magdalene distillery fell silent in the 1980s. Some of its bottlings can still be found lurking in bars.

The Lowlands

THE REGION'S DISTILLERIES HAVE A LONG HERITAGE, BUT THEY DID NOT FARE WELL DURING THE 20TH CENTURY. FOLLOWING THE TURN OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM, NEW SHOOTS ARE BEGINNING TO APPEAR.

A formal division between Highland and Lowland distilleries was first introduced as part of the 1784 Wash Act, with differing levels of duty prevailing north and south of the "Highland line." In the Lowland region, excise duty was significantly lower, and was assessed on wash, rather than low wines, though two years later this was changed to a tax on still capacity, as was already the case in the Highlands. Duty was assessed on the assumption that stills would be charged some seven times per week, so it was clearly in the interests of the large Lowland distilleries for each of their stills to produce as much whisky as quickly as possible.

Accordingly, shallow, tall-headed stills were introduced, capable of being charged more than 40 times per week, and in some extreme cases up to 90 times in 24 hours! Inevitably, this made vast economic savings for the distillers. However, the resultant spirit was harsh and fiery, and did nothing for the reputation of Lowland whisky. During 1786, Lowland whisky production

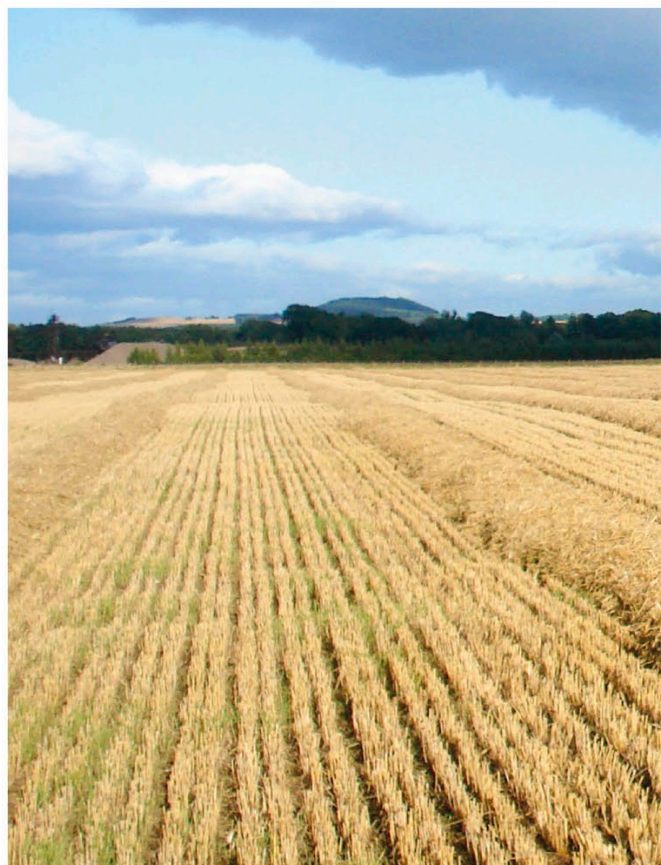
doubled, but the overall quality of spirit was extremely poor, and much was exported to England for rectification into gin. The true establishment of a major, commercial Lowland distilling industry can be said to date from the 1770s and '80s, with no fewer than 23 distilleries being built in the Lowlands during those two decades. Consumption of Scotch whisky virtually tripled between 1777 and 1779, as ever more people moved from the countryside into large towns and cities.

In 1797, there were 31 Lowland distilleries in operation, and together they produced 82 percent of the total of legally made whisky

HIGHLIGHT

DAFTMILL

The Cuthbert family, who farm near Cupar in Fife, established the first of the "new wave" of Lowland distilleries in 2003. Daftmill is based in converted farm buildings and is equipped with a pair of stills. Although the first spirit was produced in December 2005, the Cuthberts have still not released a single malt. When it opened, Daftmill was the first new Lowland distillery to be created since William Grant's Girvan grain plant was built in 1963.



distilled in Scotland that year. This was despite the fact that there were almost twice as many Highland distilleries.

Large-scale development

Lowland distilleries developed on a large scale because the Lowlands of Scotland grew vast quantities of grain, and there were abundant supplies of coal to fire the malt kilns and heat the stills. The use of coal, rather than peat in the malting process, as practised in the Highlands, was one factor that helped to define what was to become the quintessential Lowland style. Additionally, triple distillation was often employed to produce a whisky comparatively light in flavor and body.

When the Glenkinchie distillery was founded in 1837, it was one of no fewer than 115 licensed Lowland distilleries. However, history has not dealt kindly with the region, and by the late 1990s, only Glenkinchie and Auchentoshan remained in production, with St. Magdalene in Linlithgow having closed in 1983, followed a decade later by Rosebank, Littlemill, and Bladnoch (though Bladnoch was to re-open in 2000).



ONGOING ATTRACTION

Although Rosebank distillery was closed in 1993, the area now pulls in many visitors with other attractions.

The 21st century has already seen a welcome revival for Lowland malt distilling, with six newcomers commencing production from the start of the decade to 2016. At the time of writing several more are under construction. The future for Lowland whisky looks to be bright once more, which is fitting considering that the first written reference to Scotch whisky distillation in 1494 alludes to Lindores Abbey. Lindores in Fife is most definitely in “The Lowlands,” and distilling is to be revived on the site in the near future.



SEASON BY SEASON

Operations at Daftmill are seasonal, in classic old-fashioned farm distillery style, with whisky making scheduled in around agricultural activities.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

GLENKINCHIE

FOUNDED 1837

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 550,000 gal
(2.5m liters)

Glenkinchie

THE SCOTTISH LOWLANDS AND BORDER AREAS HAVE TRADITIONALLY PRODUCED GENTLER-TASTING WHISKIES. OF THE HANDFUL OF DISTILLERIES WORKING IN THESE AREAS IN THE 19TH CENTURY, ONLY GLENKINCHIE SURVIVED.

Glenkinchie distillery is located some 15 miles (25km) southeast of Edinburgh and is one of the great survivors of the Lowland genre, having been established under the Milton distillery name in 1825 by the farming brothers, John and George Rate. The name “Glenkinchie” was adopted in 1837, with “Kinchie” being a corruption of “de Quincey.” The de Quincey family were major landowners in the area during the 14th century.

Glenkinchie stands in the shadow of the Lammermuir Hills at the heart of prime malting barley farmland, and the Rate brothers would have had plentiful supplies of the raw materials required for distilling, with the Kinchie Burn providing the perfect water source. Once made, the Rates’ whisky would not have had to be transported far to find thirsty drinkers in Scotland’s capital and surrounding areas.

VISITOR ATTRACTION

Glenkinchie distillery looks more like a mill than a distillery. Its proximity to the Scottish capital, Edinburgh, and its idyllic location amid rolling barley fields ensures a steady stream of visitors.



Despite the apparently ready market, Glenkinchie fell silent in 1853, and the Rate family sold the premises, which were used for a time as a sawmill. Thanks to the boom in blended whisky and demand for spirit, however, distilling recommenced in 1880–1881, under the auspices of the Glen Kinchie Distillery Co., which became a limited company in 1890.

The new owner completely rebuilt the distillery, creating the four-story redbrick structure that still stands. It was licensed to John Haig & Co., commencing a link to the once hugely popular Haig brand that continues to this day.

Scottish Malt Distillers

In 1914, Glenkinchie was one of the five Lowland distilleries (along with Clydesdale, Grange, Rosebank, and St Magdalene) that merged to form Scottish Malt Distillers (SMD). Membership of SMD probably helped Glenkinchie survive the difficult trading years of World War I



A BIG STILL

The Glenkinchie distillery is home to the largest wash still in the UK.

and its aftermath. In 1925, SMD was acquired by the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL). In 1986, Glenkinchie was chosen as the Lowland representative in the new “Classic Malts” collection in preference to Rosebank, and today, in excess of 40,000 people visit Glenkinchie each year. Among the distillery’s unique features are its Museum of Malt Whisky Production. This was established in the former malt houses during 1969, a year after they became redundant, and offers an absorbing insight into the whisky-making process in times past.

Glenkinchie is also notable for being one of the very few Scottish distilleries to continue producing spirit during World War II, and for having the largest wash still in the country, while condensation takes place in rare copper-tubed worm tubs. The principal bottling was a 10-year-old, until a 12-year-old replaced it in 2007, while an amontillado-finished Distillers Edition variant has been available since 1998.

“THIS DISTILLERY IS ONE OF THE GREAT SURVIVORS OF THE LOWLAND GENRE”



TASTING NOTES

Glenkinchie’s large pot stills produce a spirit that is relatively light in body and floral in character, but it has complexity and is an ideal aperitif whisky.

GLENKINCHIE 12-YEAR-OLD 43% ABV

Nose Fragrant, with honey, tangerines, and a grassy note.
Body Relatively light.
Palate Stewed fruits and background oak.
Finish Medium and grassy.



GLENKINCHIE
12-YEAR-OLD

GLENKINCHIE DISTILLERS EDITION 2003 43% ABV

Nose Light ginger, apricots, and almonds.
Body Smooth.
Palate Soft spices, walnuts, caramel, vanilla, and a hint of sherry.
Finish Lingering spicy orange, developing slight oakiness.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

KINGSBARNs

FOUNDED 2014

OWNER Wemyss
Vintage Malts

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 130,000 gal
(600,000 liters)

EDEN MILL

FOUNDED 2014

OWNER Paul Miller

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 18,000 gal
(80,000 liters)

INCHDAIRNIE

FOUNDED 2016

OWNER John
Fergus & Co.

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 440,000 gal
(2m liters)

ANNANDALE

FOUNDED 2014

OWNER Annandale
Distillery Co.

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 110,000 gal
(500,000 liters)

The Lowlands Revival

ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE OLD MALT WHISKY DISTILLERIES OF THE SCOTTISH LOWLANDS ARE NOW SILENT, IN RECENT YEARS THERE HAS BEEN A DISTILLING RENAISSANCE.

Three of the latest entrants to the ranks of Lowland malt distilling are located in the county of Fife, with two being established in previously disused structures, while the third is a newly built development. Fife is best known in distilling circles for Diageo's vast Cameronbridge grain distillery, dating back to 1824. Along with providing grain spirit for blending, Cameronbridge also supplies the whisky for Diageo's popular, single grain Haig Club whisky. A fourth recently opened distillery in the Lowlands is situated near Annan in Dumfries and Galloway. It utilizes buildings that had previously been used for distilling purposes until 1919.

Kingsbarns

Kingsbarns distillery is located some 6 miles (10km) from the golfing mecca and historic university town of St. Andrews on the Fife coast, and has been created within an 18th-century

farmstead on the Cambo Estate. The idea of establishing a distillery on the site dates back to 2008, and planning permission was granted in 2011. However, fund-raising was a major stumbling block for the project's chief exponent Douglas Clement. The situation improved when the Scottish government granted the project \$1.1 million in 2012. This led the family-owned Fife whisky bottler Wemyss Vintage Malts to become involved in purchasing Kingsbarns. Construction work took place from June 2013 onward, with the first casks being filled in March 2015. Kingsbarns is well equipped to cater to visitors, with a café, shop, and a range of tour options on offer.

Eden Mill

Like Kingsbarns, Eden Mill is located just a few miles from St. Andrews, in the village of Guardbridge. The distillery also utilizes disused

A CHARMING DISTILLERY

Kingsbarns, just 6 miles (10km) from St. Andrew's, in Fife, is built in an 18th-century farmstead. It caters well to visitors.



buildings, in this case part of a former paper mill. Drinks industry veteran Paul Miller established Eden Mill Brewery in 2012 and, in March 2014, decided to add a craft distillery to the operation.

During the next few months, brewing capacity was increased from the existing five-barrel setup to a 20-barrel operation in order to create enough wash for distillation. Three distinctive copper pot stills were manufactured by Hoga in Portugal, and the production of gin and whisky commenced, with the first cask of whisky being filled in November 2014.

Stylistically, the whisky made is described by Miller as “Coastal Highland and robust.” Rather than filling this spirit into casks that formerly held bourbon, Eden Mill fills mainly into ex-Oloroso sherry casks, and the first official whisky bottlings from Oloroso hogsheads are due around 2020.

Inchdairnie

Headed by Ian Palmer, who has over 40 years’ experience in the whisky industry, Inchdairnie was developed on the outskirts of Kinglassie in Fife. Some of the whisky produced will be laid down for ultimate release as an Inchdairnie single malt—perhaps around 2029—while the remainder will be used for blending purposes by Inchdairnie’s “strategic partner,” MacDuff International.

According to the Inchdairnie team, the distillery incorporates five “flavor innovations,” including the highly unusual use of winter as well as spring barley, a unique yeast recipe, a

mash filter and hammer mill instead of the customary mash tun, high gravity fermentation, and stills with double condensers—intended to ensure greater copper contact. As with Eden Mill, the aim is not to create an archetypal Lowland single malt, but a “full-bodied and complex whisky with a slightly sweet edge.”

Annandale

Annandale differs from the rest of its *nouveau* distillery rivals in Scotland in that it is actually the revival of a long-lost whisky-making enterprise on its original site, using as many of the existing buildings as possible.

Annandale—located just 7 miles (11km) north of the England-Scotland border—was originally established in 1830, and ultimately came into the hands of the great blending house of John Walker & Sons. It was mothballed in 1919 and closed for good two years later. Some of the structures were subsequently used for agricultural purposes, while others fell into complete disrepair.

Then in April 2007, Professor David Thomson and his wife Teresa Church purchased Annandale, with the intention of restoring it to production. After much reconstruction work, spirit flowed once more in November 2014.

Both peated and unpeated spirit is being produced, and new-make bottlings of both are available under the “Rascally Liquor” label. Thomson earned some valuable publicity for Annandale in February 2015 when he announced that he was prepared to sell the very first cask of spirit filled for \$1.5 million!



THE “NEW MAKE”

At the Eden Mill distillery, “new make” is filled into ex-Oloroso sherry casks, rather than casks that previously held bourbon.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

GIRVAN

FOUNDED 1963
OWNER William Grant & Sons Ltd
METHOD Column stills
CAPACITY 25m gal (115m liters)

AILSA BAY

FOUNDED 2007
OWNER William Grant & Sons Ltd
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 2.6m gal (12m liters)

BLADNOCH

FOUNDED 1817
OWNER David Prior
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 22,000 gal (100,000 liters)

The Western Lowlands

IN THE BEAUTIFUL COUNTRYSIDE OF SOUTHERNMOST SCOTLAND CAN BE FOUND THREE EXTREMELY DIFFERENT DISTILLERIES: ONE GRAIN AND TWO MALT.

Girvan

Having decided to bolster their much-vaunted independence by building their own grain distillery in the early 1960s, Glenfiddich distillers William Grant & Sons Ltd finally settled on a site at Girvan on the Ayrshire coast.

Construction work started on April 14, 1963, and proceeded at a remarkable rate, with the first cask being filled on January 8, 1964, and grain spirit distilled on December 25, 1963. Distilling for the first time on Christmas Day was a nod to the company's heritage, as it was on Christmas Day 1887 that William Grant and his sons had initially fired up the Glenfiddich stills.

In 2013, Grant's launched a 25-year-old single grain whisky under the Girvan Patent Still banner, followed in 2014 by a 30-year-old and the no-age-statement Patent Still No. 4 Apps, named after the distillery term for "apparatus." A Proof Strength edition, bottled at 57.1% ABV was subsequently added to the line-up.

Over the years, Girvan has grown significantly, and in 2007 a malt distillery—named after Ailsa Craig, the large granite rock in the Atlantic Ocean off the Ayrshire coast—was commissioned.

Ailsa Bay

The Ailsa Bay stills were modeled on those at William Grant's Balvenie distillery with similar pot size, shape, and lyne-arm angles. A distinctive feature of the distillery is its unique, octagonal spirit safe.

In 2013, the distillery underwent a major expansion project with the six original stills being augmented by a further eight, along with a second mash tun and an additional 12 stainless steel washbacks. Two of the wash stills and two spirit stills are fitted with stainless steel rather than copper condensers, allowing for the production of a heavier style of spirit.

Most of Ailsa Bay's production is of a "Balvenie style" spirit, but a more sulphury and weighty whisky is also produced using the stills with stainless steel condensers, and lightly and heavily peated batches of spirit are also made. The first Ailsa Bay single malt expression appeared in 2015.

Bladnoch

Bladnoch recently joined many of its Lowland contemporaries in silence. However, this situation was happily temporary, and the distillery has now reopened after extensive refurbishment.

Bladnoch is one of Scotland's oldest and most photogenic distilleries, located on the banks of the River Bladnoch, just over 50 miles west of Dumfries and a mile from the bibliophiles' mecca of Wigtown—Scotland's officially designated "National Book Town."



HI-TECH DISTILLERY

Girvan may be lacking in the looks department, but it is without doubt Scotland's most high-tech distilling plant.



Bladnoch was established as a farm distillery in 1817 by brothers John and Thomas McClelland, gaining its first license in 1825. It then changed hands several times and experienced a number of periods of closure. It was owned by the Belfast distiller Dunville & Co. Ltd, who operated it until 1937, though there were several periods of inactivity during the economically troubled interwar years.

Whisky making recommenced in 1956 under the auspices of AB Grant & Co., and then Ian Fisher and McGowan & Cameron, with Inver House Distillers owning the distillery from 1973 to 1983. That same year, it was purchased by Arthur Bell & Sons Ltd of Perth, but was taken over by Guinness two years later, and Bladnoch subsequently found itself absorbed into the United Distillers (UD) empire. In 1993, UD closed Bladnoch along with fellow Lowland distilleries Rosebank at Falkirk, Pittyvaich in Dufftown, and Balmenach near Grantown-on-Spey.

Despite the fact that Bladnoch appeared to be “the distillery that would not die,” this time the situation seemed terminal. Then, Northern Irish entrepreneur Raymond Armstrong and his brother Colin acquired the site in October 1994, initially with no intention of recommencing distilling. However, an agreement was reached with UD in 2000, whereby Armstrong was allowed to distil a maximum of 22,000 gallons (100,000 liters) of whisky a year at Bladnoch, and the distillery was re-equipped, with the first spirit flowing in December 2000.

Fate was to continue being unkind to what was Scotland’s most southerly distillery (until the reopening of Annandale in 2014), however, with whisky making ceasing in 2009.

In 2014, the Armstrongs—who traded as Co-ordinated Developments Services—placed Bladnoch into administration. Once again, the distillery refused to be killed off, and in July 2015 Australian businessman David Prior acquired it and set about writing the next chapter in Bladnoch’s checkered history.

WHISKY SCHOOL

Bladnoch distillery not only produces excellent floral malt, it also has a whisky school that teaches the craft of distillation.

TASTING NOTES

Girvan’s grains are light and fruity in character, offering a significant contrast to the peaty first release from neighboring Ailsa Bay. Bladnoch is a classic, light-bodied, and floral Lowland single malt.

GIRVAN

GIRVAN PATENT STILL 30-YEAR-OLD
42% ABV

Nose Linseed, vanilla, and ripe peaches.

Body Soft.

Palate Light and gentle, orchard fruits, and mature spices.

Finish Relatively short, with gingery oak.

GIRVAN PATENT STILL NO. 4 APPS
42% ABV

Nose Grassy, with lemon and vanilla.

Body Light.

Palate Fresh and sweet, with tropical fruit and vanilla fudge.

Finish On the short side, sweet fruits, with a sprinkling of black pepper.

AILSA BAY

AILSA BAY SINGLE MALT
48.9% ABV

A peated, no-age-statement expression. The spirit was initially matured for between six and nine months in Hudson Baby bourbon casks, varying in capacity from 5 gallons (24 liters)

to 22 gallons (100 liters), then in a combination of first-fill and refill American-oak and virgin-oak casks.

Nose Smoky and sweet, pepper, almonds, and grilled bacon.

Body Full.

Palate Spicy peat, citrus fruit, plump cereal, and char.

Finish Lengthy, with cocoa powder and gentle oak.



AILSA BAY
SINGLE MALT

BLADNOCH

BLADNOCH SAMSARA
46.7% ABV

This is matured in first-fill bourbon barrels and Californian red wine hogsheads.

Nose Initial savory notes give way to spice and peaches and cream.

Body Supple.

Palate Smooth, with mango, passion fruit, and vanilla notes.

Finish Quite long, with spicy fruit notes, then mild tannins develop.



BLADNOCH
SAMSARA

DISTILLERY DETAILS

AUCHENTOSHAN

FOUNDED 1823

OWNER Morrison
Bowmore (Suntory)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 440,000 gal
(2m liters)

GLASGOW DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 2014

OWNER Glasgow Distillery
Company Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 22,000 gal
(100,000 liters)

Auchentoshan and Glasgow

ALTHOUGH ONCE ENCIRCLED BY AROUND 20 MALT-WHISKY PRODUCERS, NUMBERS HAVE DWINDLED UNTIL ONLY AUCHENTOSHAN REMAINED. IN RECENT YEARS, A NEW DISTILLERY HAS APPEARED IN SCOTLAND'S SECOND CITY.

For some years, Auchentoshan was promoted as “Glasgow’s malt whisky,” but there is now another contender for that title. Auchentoshan distillery is not actually located in Scotland’s second city, but at Dalmuir, some 9 miles (15km) from the city center and in the shadow of the Erskine Bridge, which spans the River Clyde. The newest distillery in the area, The Glasgow Distillery, is located not far from the heart of the city.

Auchentoshan

When Littlemill closed in 1994, Auchentoshan became the last Scottish distillery to still carry out the traditional Lowland practice of triple

distillation. This features a wash still, an intermediate still, and a spirit still—giving a lower yield than with two stills, but a refined new-make spirit with the high strength of 81% ABV. By no means did all Lowland distilleries practice triple distillation, and Auchentoshan itself was equipped with just a pair of pot stills during the late Victorian period. Although we associate the three-still system with lighter-bodied Lowland whiskies, the mighty Talisker from Skye was triple distilled until 1928.

Distilling is thought to have begun at Auchentoshan around 1800, though the first license was granted in 1823. The distillery was in the hands of various owners and underwent substantial reconstruction in 1875. For much of the 20th century, Auchentoshan was in the ownership of various brewing interests, most notably the famous Glasgow firm of J&R Tennent. It suffered damage during a devastating raid by German bombers on neighboring Clydebank in March 1940.

In 1969, Tennent’s became part of Charrington & Co. Ltd. Auchentoshan was purchased from what later became Bass Charrington by Eadie Cairns Ltd, which carried out a substantial upgrading program. The distillery was acquired by Stanley P. Morrison in 1984 for \$425,000 and a decade later Morrison Bowmore was absorbed by the leading Japanese distilling company Suntory Ltd.

Subsequent investment was made in the distillery, including the creation of a nice visitor center and conference facilities during 2004. In recent years, the Auchentoshan range of single malts has been dramatically expanded, with a dedicated travel retail range alongside the core expressions and regular limited editions.

TASTING NOTES

Until the arrival of Glasgow distillery, Auchentoshan was the last Clydeside single malt plant in existence. Its triple-distilled spirit is relatively light in body, but with many subtle nuances that prevent it from ever seeming bland.

AUCHENTOSHAN AMERICAN OAK 40% ABV

Nose Vanilla, Madeira, peaches, and allspice.

Body Smooth.

Palate Spicy peach, coconut, vanilla, and a hint of chili.

Finish Medium length, persistently spicy.



AUCHENTOSHAN
AMERICAN OAK

AUCHENTOSHAN 12-YEAR-OLD 40% ABV

Nose Soft toffee, almonds, and kiwi fruit.

Body Medium.

Palate Citrus fruit, ginger, and cereal notes.

Finish Nutty and slowly drying.

AUCHENTOSHAN THREE WOOD 43% ABV

It is matured in three different cask types—initially bourbon barrels, then Oloroso sherry casks, and finally Pedro Ximénez sherry casks.

Nose Sherry, rum and raisin ice cream, and Jaffa oranges.

Body Full and slick.

Palate Hazelnuts, light cinnamon, and golden raisins steeped in sherry.

Finish Plain chocolate, sweet oak.



AUCHENTOSHAN
THREE WOOD



Glasgow distillery

Scotland's largest city has boasted a total of more than 20 whisky distilleries at various points of history, and today grain spirit is produced at the Chivas Brothers' Strathclyde distillery in the Gorbals district, while Diageo's parallel Port Dundas grain facility closed in 2010.

It has been claimed that until Glasgow distillery came on stream in March 2014, no malt whisky had been made in the city since 1903. However, that is untrue, as the Kinclaith malt distillery operated within Strathclyde between 1958 and 1975.

Nonetheless, the opening of a new distillery in Glasgow was a cause for celebration. This was possible due to experienced drinks industry professional Liam Hughes and his business associates, who revived the Glasgow Distillery Company, which had operated the Dundashill distillery during the 19th century.

Hughes and Co. initially planned to produce just gin; their Makar gin proved extremely popular. Thoughts then turned to making whisky as well, and the businessmen called on the expertise of David Robertson, whisky investment consultant and one-time Macallan distiller.

The distillery is housed in an anonymous former wine warehouse within a secure complex at Hillington, just off the M8 motorway. All the distilling equipment was supplied by the Stuttgart family firm Carl, which specializes in fabricating artisan distilling and brewing kits. The spirit being produced has a creamy, even oily character, and displays mostly fruit and malt flavors.

Meanwhile, courtesy of Morrison Glasgow Distillers, Glasgow is to get a third whisky distillery. Morrison Glasgow Distillers is spending some \$13 million converting the historic Pump House beside the Clyde into a 110,000 gallon (500,000 liter) per year malt distillery and visitor center, using the Clydeside distillery name.

TRIPLE DISTILLATION

Auchentoshan continues to produce whisky by the triple-distillation method, rarely used in distilleries today. The technique results in a crisp, fruity malt.

GLASGOW CITY CENTER

George Square is in the center of Glasgow and is surrounded by several significant landmarks, including the Glasgow City Chambers and the Sir Walter Scott Memorial Column (both seen here).



DISTILLERY DETAILS

LOCH LOMOND

FOUNDED 1965

OWNER Loch
Lomond Group

METHOD Pot, hybrid,
and column stills

CAPACITY 1.1m gal
(5m liters) of malt spirit,
4m gal (18m liters) of
grain spirit

GLENGOYNE

FOUNDED 1833

OWNER Ian Macleod
Distillers Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 240,000 gal
(1.1m liters)

OBAN

FOUNDED 1794

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 190,000 gal
(870,000 liters)

BEN NEVIS

FOUNDED 1825

OWNER Asahi Group
Holdings

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 440,000 gal
(2m liters)

ARDNAMURCHAN

FOUNDED 2014

OWNER Adelphi
Distillery Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 110,000 gal
(500,000 liters)

The Western Highlands

DESPITE POSSESSING SOME OF SCOTLAND'S MOST SPECTACULAR SCENERY, THE WESTERN HIGHLANDS HAVE A LOW DISTILLERY COUNT. THOSE THAT HAVE SURVIVED THE CENTURIES OFFER A WIDE VARIETY OF STYLES AND FLAVORS.

While the fertile eastern Highlands of Scotland, with easy access to high-quality malting barley, are home to many distilleries, the much less fertile western Highlands are more sparsely populated with whisky-making operations.

Loch Lomond

Loch Lomond is never going to win prizes for its aesthetics, but it is arguably Scotland's most diverse and flexible distillery. It is equipped with one traditional pair of pot stills, three pairs of pot stills topped with rectifying heads, one Coffey still used to produce grain spirit from 100 percent malted barley, and an adjacent grain distillery, capable of turning out some 4 million gallons (18 million liters) of spirit per year. Not surprisingly, Loch Lomond can offer around a dozen different permutations of malt spirit, some of which is sold to third-party customers, while the main house bottlings are of Loch Lomond Single Grain Whisky, Loch Lomond Original, and 12- and 18-year-old single malts, Inchmurrin

12- and 18-year-old, and Madeira Wood Finish single malts. The principal difference between the two ranges is that Loch Lomond is a mix of standard pot still and rectifying-head still spirit, with a small amount of peated spirit added, while Inchmurrin is totally unpeated and produced exclusively in stills fitted with rectifying heads. This makes Inchmurrin a lighter, cleaner spirit than those produced in traditional pot stills.

Glengoyne

Glengoyne occupies a unique place—quite literally—in Scottish distilling, as the distillery itself is located in the Highland region of malt whisky production, while the warehouses, across the A81, are technically in the Lowlands. The distillery enjoys a notably scenic location in a small glen at the foot of Dumgoyne Hill in the Trossachs area, though Glasgow is a little more than a dozen miles to the south.

Unusually, Glengoyne is equipped with one wash still and two spirit stills, and owner Ian Macleod Distillers Ltd proudly declares that these are “the slowest stills in Scotland,” leading to a “smooth, hugely complex spirit.”

Glengoyne has taken the business of entertaining visitors to a new level, and offers a comprehensive menu of options, from the “standard” 45-minute tour to a 5-hour, \$195-per-head Masterclass during which participants create their own individual expression of Glengoyne. The whisky itself has certainly not been neglected at the expense of tourism, with the range of bottlings on offer having been steadily increased during recent years. Today, the principal variants are 10-, 12-, 15-, 18-, 20-, and 21-year-olds.

HIGHLIGHT

ARDNAMURCHAN

Ardnamurchan distillery is situated in remote countryside some 40 miles (65km) southwest of Fort William and was built in 2013 by independent bottlers Adelphi Distillers Ltd to create its own branded single malt. The first spirit was filled to cask in July 2014.

Production is split 50/50 between unpeated and peated spirit, with the style being described as typically Highland—sweet, fruity, and spicy.





Oban

Oban is one of Scotland's oldest distilleries. Once a modest fishing village, the Argyllshire town grew around the distillery, becoming a tourist mecca and lifeline ferry port for many of the Inner Hebridean islands. Indeed, Oban is one of the few distilleries to be located in the center of a bustling town, and much of its early development was due to the work of the distillery's founders, John and Hugh Stevenson.

Oban is one of Diageo's smallest distilleries in terms of annual output, equipped with just one pair of stills. As a single malt, it has been available since the 1880s. The brand was chosen as the Western Highland representative in the United Distillers' 1988 lineup of "Classic Malts."

Given the relatively modest amount of Oban whisky available, the range on offer has always been small in scale, and today it includes the no-age-statement Little Bay, launched in 2014; a 14-year-old; and a Montilla Fino sherry-finished Distillers Edition bottling.

Ben Nevis

As the name suggests, Ben Nevis distillery stands in the shadow of Britain's highest mountain, close to the popular tourist town of Fort William. It has been in Japanese ownership since 1989, and some 50 percent of the spirit distilled is exported directly to Japan for use in Nikka's blends. A small amount of heavily peated spirit is distilled each year in addition to the "standard" offering.

The single pair of Ben Nevis stills is capable of turning out up to 440,000 gallons (2 million liters) of spirit per year, and the difference in output compared with Oban, which produces less

than half of that amount, is partly due to the fact that Ben Nevis practices 48-hour fermentations, while most fermentations at Oban last 110 hours.

Like Oban, Ben Nevis expressions have always been few in number, with a 10-year-old long being the core bottling. Since 2011, it has been accompanied by McDonald's Traditional Ben Nevis, a peated no-age-statement variant intended to replicate the style of whisky made in the 1880s.

A SCENIC AREA

Surrounded by low-lying hills, Glengoyne distillery is located in one of the most beautiful West Highland regions of Scotland.

TASTING NOTES

The Western Highlands offer a wide stylistic variety of whiskies, from the robust, full-bodied, and even smoky, to the delicate and floral, with occasionally just a hint of sea air.

LOCH LOMOND

LOCH LOMOND 12-YEAR-OLD
46% ABV

Nose Ripe apricots, vanilla, a suggestion of peat smoke.

Body Full.

Palate Rich, with early orchard fruit, developing malt, and mild peat.

Finish Lengthy with spicy pears, then drying, with light tannins at the close.



LOCH LOMOND
12-YEAR-OLD

GLENGOYNE

GLENGOYNE 10-YEAR-OLD
40% ABV

Nose Freshly peeled apples, malt, bourbon, and subtle sherry.

Body Smooth, quite light.

Palate Grassy, with sweet cereal notes, more apple and vanilla.

Finish Lengthy, with oriental spices.



GLENGOYNE
10-YEAR-OLD

OBAN

LITTLE BAY
43% ABV

Matured in a mix of European oak ex-sherry casks, refill casks with new oak cask ends, and refill American oak hogsheads. Ultimately married in small oak casks.

Nose Rich and malty, with apple, honey, and spicy caramel.

Body Smooth, quite full.

Palate More malt and apple, with developing lively oak and cloves.

Finish Spicy, relatively dry.



OBAN
LITTLE BAY

BEN NEVIS

BEN NEVIS 10-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Initially quite perfumed, with nutty orange and allspice developing.

Body Firm.

Palate Slightly oily, with caramel, coffee, and light peat.

Finish Coffee, plain chocolate, and mildly smoky oak.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

SPRINGBANK

FOUNDED 1828

OWNER Springbank
Distillers (J&A Mitchell
& Co. Ltd)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 165,000 gal
(750,000 liters)

Campbeltown

FORMERLY SCOTLAND'S PREMIER DISTILLING TOWN, CAMPBELTOWN BECAME AN ISOLATED WHISKY OUTPOST. HOWEVER, SINCE THE TURN OF THE 21ST CENTURY, THE REGION HAS BEGUN TO ACHIEVE A HIGHER PROFILE AS A CENTER FOR WHISKY-MAKING EXCELLENCE.

The “whisky city”

Campbeltown is one of the largest towns in Argyll and Bute, but is a three-hour drive along unforgiving roads from Glasgow. The A83 snakes down the Kintyre peninsula, with the Isle of Arran to the east and Islay to the west. Reputedly the seat of the Scottish Parliament set up by King Fergus in 503BCE, the town, originally known as Kinlochkilkerran, was renamed in the 1600s by local landowner the Earl of Argyll. Elizabeth, Duchess of Argyll, was instrumental in the creation of the first harbor there during the early 1700s.

Fishing became a major source of employment and prosperity, and when the 19th-century herring fishing bonanza was at its height, as many as 600

boats worked out of the harbor. The port even boasted its own shipyard until 1980. Illicit distillation was rife on the remote Kintyre peninsula during the 18th and early 19th centuries, when there were more than 50 working illicit stills, but the 1823 Excise Act led to a proliferation of legal enterprises.

Between 1823 and 1844, 29 licensed distilleries were established in Campbeltown, and although only three distilleries operate today, whisky making has actually taken place on some 35 sites in the former royal burgh. When the journalist Alfred Barnard stayed in Campbeltown during 1885, visiting whisky-making establishments that would ultimately be featured in his epic

THE ERSTWHILE “WHISKY CITY”

Campbeltown is a small and peaceful Scottish town located on the beautiful peninsula of Kintyre.



to me *Whisky Distilleries of the United Kingdom*, he toured no fewer than 21 distilleries, and proclaimed Campbeltown the “whisky city.”

Fall from prominence

But the boom times were to be followed by “bust,” as the intense, full-bodied malts of Campbeltown fell out of favor with blenders, and US Prohibition (1920–1933) dealt the town an additional blow. By 1935, only Glen Scotia and Springbank were operational, with both having previously been silent for a time.

By 1998, only Springbank was working, with fellow survivor Glen Scotia mothballed, and the Scotch Whisky Association decided that Campbeltown no longer justified the designation of a malt whisky-producing region in its own right. Happily for traditionalists that changed with the reopening of Glen Scotia the following year, and the decision by Springbank’s owner Hedley Wright to redevelop the long-silent Glengyle distillery into a new whisky-making enterprise, which came on stream in 2004. Campbeltown has defied pessimists and not only survives, but thrives as a producer of iconic whiskies, and is also now host to an annual whisky festival staged a week before Islay’s legendary Feis Ile.



Springbank

The oldest surviving distillery in Campbeltown, Springbank, is also unquestionably one of the most individualistic whisky-making sites in Scotland. The distillery itself is superbly idiosyncratic, continuing to malt its own barley on traditional malting floors and to bottle on site. Three distinct types of spirit are produced, namely Springbank (distilled two and a half times, with a peating level of 12–15ppm), Longrow (distilled twice and peated to 50–55ppm), and Hazelburn (unpeated and triple-distilled). The wash still is unique in being heated by internal steam coils and direct-fired by oil as well.

Unlike many of its competitors, Springbank rarely makes a song and dance about its new releases, meaning that sharp eyes are often required to spot fresh bottlings before they are sold out. The current core range comprises 10-, 12-, 15-, 18-, and 21-year-old Springbanks; Longrow, Longrow Red, and Longrow 18-year-old; and 10- and 12-year-old Hazelburns. Limited editions are also offered from time to time, and these, plus many independent bottlings, are available in Campbeltown from

MALTING FLOORS

The Springbank distillery malts its own barley on traditional malting floors. A workman is seen here raking the malting floor, which creates shallow grooves that gently aerate the barley and allows the heat to dissipate.

“ALFRED BARNARD TOURED
CAMPBELTOWN DURING 1885, AND
PROCLAIMED IT THE ‘WHISKY CITY’”

DISTILLERY DETAILS

GLENGYLE

FOUNDED 2004
OWNER Mitchell's
 Glengyle Ltd
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 165,000 gal
 (750,000 liters)

GLEN SCOTIA

FOUNDED 1832
OWNER Loch
 Lomond Group
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 175,000 gal
 (800,000 liters)

Cadenhead's Whisky Shop (wmcadenhead.com) located in Reform Square. Cadenhead's was founded in 1842 and has been owned by Springbank's proprietors J&A Mitchell & Co. Ltd since 1972.

Glengyle

The "original" Glengyle distillery operated between 1872 and 1925 and was restored to working order during the early years of the 21st century by Springbank owner Hedley Wright, who is passionate about all things Campbeltown and provides significant employment in the town.

Glengyle features a pair of modified stills formerly used by the Ben Wyvis malt distillery at Invergordon and is operated by Springbank staff, using malt made in the floor maltings. Quantities of spirit distilled vary significantly from year to year and the distillery is keen on experimenting, with peated malt having been used at times while quadruple distillation has also been performed.

The output of Glengyle is named Kilkerran single malt because the "Glengyle" title had already been registered. Having issued annual "work in progress" bottlings since 2009, Glengyle finally came of age in 2016, with the release of a core 12-year-old expression.

Glen Scotia

Springbank has experienced periods of silence during its long history, but these pale into insignificance beside the turbulent times endured by fellow Campbeltown distillery, Glen Scotia. In recent years, the distillery was closed from 1984 to 1989 and again from 1994 to 1999, and presented a less than appealing face to the world.

Under the ownership of Glen Catrine Bonded Warehouse Ltd for two decades from 1994, Glen Scotia received much-needed investment and a new range of single malts, ranging from 10 to 21 years of age, which were released in 2012.

In 2014, the Loch Lomond Group acquired Glen Scotia from Glen Catrine along with Loch Lomond distillery itself, and the transformation since then has been highly commendable. In terms of the distillery, new washbacks and a new spirit safe have been installed, while roofs have been replaced and all equipment upgraded. At last, the distinctively styled stills shine, having been closer in color to black than copper for a very long time. A tasteful shop and sampling area have been added, and the actual whisky range has been changed to feature Double Cask, 15-year-old, and Victoriana.

TASTING NOTES

The whiskies of Campbeltown were traditionally robust and full-flavored, with plenty of character and usually a note of peat. Today's Campbeltown single malts continue in the fine tradition of individuality and presence.

SPRINGBANK

SPRINGBANK 10-YEAR-OLD

46% ABV

Nose Brisk and briny, warm earth, and citrus fruit.

Body Oily.

Palate Sweet and nutty, with vanilla fudge and more brine.

Finish Coconut, drying peat, and lengthy.



SPRINGBANK
10-YEAR-OLD

SPRINGBANK 15-YEAR-OLD

46% ABV

Nose Peat, black tea, rich fruitcake notes, a hint of tobacco.

Body Full.

Palate Dried fruits, soft spices, a hint of sherry, almonds, and a whiff of smoke.

Finish Malty, then peat embers and slightly dry oak.

LONGGROW 18-YEAR-OLD

46% ABV

Nose Early savory and earthy notes give way to oiled leather and cloves.

Body Supple.

Palate Sweet, peppery, with abundant peat.

Finish Spicy peat, slowly drying.



LONGGROW
18-YEAR-OLD

HAZELBURN 10-YEAR-OLD

46% ABV

Nose Mildly floral, toffee and malt, pear drops.

Body Relatively oily, supple.

Palate Sweet barley, spicy orchard fruits.

Finish More fruit, plus aniseed, cocoa, and mild oak.



HAZELBURN
10-YEAR-OLD

GLENGYLE

KILKERRAN 12-YEAR-OLD

46% ABV

Nose Floral, with butterscotch and brine, then peaty fruit.

Body Oily.

Palate Peaches, earthy peat, licorice, pepper, and cinnamon. Mildly medicinal.

Finish Medium in length, with black pepper, licorice, and drying oak.

GLEN SCOTIA

GLEN SCOTIA DOUBLE CASK

46% ABV

Nose Smooth, with caramel, vanilla, and red berries.

Body Smooth.

Palate Ginger, sherry, and more vanilla.

Finish Relatively long, with brine and spicy sherry notes.



GLEN SCOTIA
DOUBLE CASK

**GHOST AMONG
THE STILLs**

Glen Scotia is a distillery with a checkered history. Story has it that the distillery is haunted by the ghost of its former owner, Duncan MacCallum.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

BOWMORE

FOUNDED 1779

OWNER Morrison
Bowmore (Suntory)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 440,000 gal
(2m liters)

Islay

GAELIC SCHOLARS HAVE LONG DEBATED WHAT ISLAY MEANS; MANY BELIEVE THAT THE NAME SIMPLY MEANS “THE ISLAND.” MOST WHISKY LOVERS WOULD HEARTILY CONCUR. FOR THEM, IT IS “THE” ISLAND.

The Inner Hebridean island of Islay is synonymous with a certain style of single malt whisky—namely strongly flavored and heavily peated—but as we shall see, there are many stylistic variations within the Islay appellation.

Islay is the southernmost of the Western Isles, connected by air from Glasgow and by car ferry from Kennacraig, near Tarbert in Argyll. Ferries arrive at either Port Ellen in the south of Islay or Port Askaig in the north. The “capital” of Islay is Bowmore, roughly equidistant between the two ferry terminals. Islay has a population of around 3,200 inhabitants and 130 miles (210km) of coastline, while the sea loch of Loch Indaal cuts deep into the west of the island.

The coast of Ireland is just 19 miles (30km) to the south, and there is a persuasive theory that if the art of distillation traveled to Scotland from Ireland, as is often claimed, then the Kintyre peninsula and the island of Islay would

probably be the first places where whisky making was practised, before the knowledge spread to the Scottish mainland.

Successive generations of Campbells owned Islay from 1726 onward, and they were agricultural “improvers” introducing new strains of barley that yielded bigger and better quality crops. Illicit distilling was rife on the island, which was not surprising, given that it did not have a resident excise officer until 1797.

Daniel Campbell established the town of Bowmore during the 1760s. Bowmore’s own distillery, the first licensed whisky-making facility on the island, was founded in 1779 by David Simpson. Once Walter Frederick Campbell took over the family’s Islay estates in 1816, he played a significant part in stimulating the island’s distilling industry, most notably by establishing a steamer service between Port Ellen and Glasgow, via Loch Fyne.

AN OLD FRIEND

Islay’s oldest licensed distillery, Bowmore looks across Loch Indaal toward Bruichladdich on the far shore.



Before the Campbell estates were sold off in 1847, he had assisted in the establishment or legalization of up to a dozen Islay distilleries, including numerous farm-based stills that had formerly operated illicitly. In total, there may have been as many as 18 licensed farm distilleries on Islay at various times during the 19th century, and whisky making was an integral part of the agricultural cycle.

With the exception of Bowmore and the early-21st-century Kilchoman, all of Islay's eight working distilleries were established during the 19th century, and are scattered widely around the island. Every year, during the last week of May, they collaborate to stage Feis Ile—The Islay Festival of Music and Malt—with each distillery having its own dedicated day and offering a special limited edition bottling for the occasion.

Bowmore

Islay's oldest licensed distillery sits on the shores of Loch Indaal, close to the center of the eponymous island capital, with its distinctive white-harled round church standing at the top of the main street. The church dates back to 1769 and the earliest foundations of Bowmore as a town. It is said that the church was constructed in the round in order to deny the devil any corners in which to hide.

Distillery founder David Simpson was the local postmaster and a ferry operator, who had previously distilled at Killarow, near Bridgend,

“ON-SITE FLOOR MALTINGS ARE NOW A RARITY IN SCOTTISH DISTILLERIES, BUT ISLAY BOASTS THREE OUT OF THE HANDFUL THAT ARE STILL OPERATIONAL”

three miles from Bowmore. Simpson operated Bowmore until 1837, when he sold it to Glasgow-based W. & J. Mutter, previously proprietor of the Jura distillery. A later notable Bowmore owner was J. B. Sherriff & Co., who ran it from 1925 to 1950. It is now in the hands of Suntory Holdings Ltd, which also owns Laphroaig.

Today, despite being the second-best-selling Islay single malt after Laphroaig, Bowmore is one of the smaller Islay distilleries in terms of capacity. On-site floor maltings are now a rarity in Scottish distilleries, but Islay boasts three out of the handful that are still operational. Around 40 percent of Bowmore's malt requirements are obtained from its three malting floors, with the remainder being sourced from maltsters on the mainland and peated to the same level of 25ppm. This places Bowmore in the middle of Islay single malts in terms of peating levels, although it is sometimes described as the “smokiest” of all the Islays.

All spirit produced at Bowmore is destined for single malt bottling, rather than use in blends and it is filled into a mixture of cask types, with the distillery using around 20 percent ex-sherry casks and 80 percent ex-bourbon barrels.

The core Bowmore offers a diverse range of styles and ages, starting with the no-age-statement Legend expression and progressing through Bowmore No. 1, matured in first fill, ex-bourbon casks; 12-year-old; and 15-year-old, aged in a combination of ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casks before a final three-year period ageing in Oloroso sherry casks. The lineup concludes with an 18-year-old and a 25-year-old.

During the last few years, Bowmore distillery's “empire” has expanded from the distillery itself to embrace six holiday cottages and, most recently, The Harbour Inn, located in the center of Bowmore, a stone's throw from the distillery. These provide the perfect accommodation for visitors to the distillery, who number around



AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

In the 1700s, the Campbells introduced new strains of barley on Islay that resulted in better-quality crops.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

BRUICHLADDICH

FOUNDED 1881

OWNER Rémy Cointreau

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 330,000 gal
(1.5m liters)

KILCHOMAN

FOUNDED 2005

OWNER Kilchoman
Distillery Co.

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 44,000 gal
(200,000 liters)

18,000 each year. Bowmore is also home to the Islay Whisky Shop (www.islaywhiskyshop), while the neighboring Lochside Hotel offers as comprehensive a selection of local drams as you will find on the island.

Subject to financing, a new distillery is to be created at Saltpan Point, close to Bowmore, using the name of Gartbreck. It is the brainchild of Jean Donnay, who developed Glann ar Mor Distillery in Brittany, and the intention is to heat the pair of stills with live flame and generally employ traditional whisky-making techniques.

Bruichladdich

Bruichladdich distillery is located on the shores of Loch Indaal and near the head of the peninsula known as the Rhinns of Islay. The village of Port Charlotte is 2 miles (3km) beyond Bruichladdich, and between 1829 and 1929 Lochindaal distillery operated in the village. Some remnants of it remain, including a pair of warehouses, now used by Bruichladdich.

Bruichladdich itself was a product of the Victorian Scotch whisky boom, constructed in 1881 by the Harvey family of Glasgow. The Harveys remained major shareholders in

Bruichladdich until it fell silent in 1929. It subsequently reopened in 1936. Bruichladdich was acquired two years later by Joseph Hobbs and Associates. Following a number of further changes in ownership, Bruichladdich was bought by Invergordon Distillers Ltd in 1968, and a second pair of stills was installed seven years later.

After Whyte & Mackay took over Invergordon in 1993, Bruichladdich was considered surplus to requirements. It worked for a few months in 1998, but then returned to mothballs before being purchased in 2000 by the independent bottler Murray McDavid Ltd for \$9.5 million.

Under the new regime, headed by Mark Reynier and highly experienced and charismatic Master Distiller Jim McEwan, Bruichladdich gained a reputation as something of a “maverick” distillery, never afraid to experiment and push the whisky envelope, while at the same time being passionate about integrity and provenance. The release program was prolific, to say the least, and in 2003 the only bottling line on Islay was installed at the distillery.

The first distillation when Bruichladdich reopened was on May 29, 2001, and comprised heavily peated spirit, christened Port Charlotte. On October 23 of the following year the world’s most heavily peated single malt (80ppm) was distilled, and was subsequently given the name Octomore.

Along with unpeated Bruichladdich, Port Charlotte and Octomore became the core bottlings, with Scottish Barley and Islay Barley ultimately emerging as the principal expressions of each. Some 40 percent of all barley used by the distillery is now grown on the island.

In 2012, Bruichladdich lost its much-vaunted independent status when acquired by the French beverage company Rémy Cointreau for \$91 million. But traditionalists and mavericks alike have had no cause for concern—the French giant seems happy to leave the “Laddie” team to their own devices, apart from investing in an expensive renovation of the original cast-iron mash tun, a second bottling line, and additional warehousing.

LIGHTHOUSE ON THE LOCH

Located near Port Charlotte, Loch Indaal
Lighthouse is found just along the coastline
from Bruichladdich distillery.





CASKS IN WAITING

These empty casks sit outside the Bruichladdich warehouses waiting to be filled. Their painted barrels make it easier to identify different batches.

Kilchoman

Islay's newest distillery—at the time of writing—is Kilchoman, located some 6 miles (10km) to the northwest of Bruichladdich along narrow back roads at Rockside Farm. Some of the barley used in distilling is grown on the Rockside Farm and subsequently malted on site.

Kilchoman is the first new distillery developed on Islay since Malt Mill at Lagavulin in 1908, and was created by former independent whisky bottler Anthony Wills and his family, with the first casks being filled on December 14, 2005.

Raising the funds proved the most challenging aspect of the project for Wills. After obtaining \$1.75 million from private individuals, the local enterprise board, and bank, a further \$6.2 million was required within 2–3 years of starting the project in order to complete the work. Although miniature bottles of new-make spirit were marketed from the outset, the first release of what could legally be termed Scotch, single malt whisky was a 3-year-old in 2009. A variety of limited editions followed, then, in 2012, the first core release was offered, names Machir Bay. Now the sherry-cask-matured Loch Gorm and 100% Islay—made entirely from barley grown on the island—are also regularly available, along

TASTING NOTES

This trio of Islay distilleries offers a wide variety of styles, from the unpeated Bruichladdich to the smoky might of Octomore, the traditionally heavily peated Kilchoman, and the less intense and more fragrant Bowmore.

BOWMORE

BOWMORE 18-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Peat and sherry, dried fruits, and caramel.

Body Rounded.

Palate Sherry, overt peat smoke, milk chocolate, toffee, discreet oak.

Finish Chocolate, black pepper, and oak. Nutty and peaty.



BOWMORE
18-YEAR-OLD

Palate Vanilla, toffee, apricots, and ripe peaches, plus salty spice.

Finish Drying and nutty, with sea spray.

**BRUICHLADDICH PORT
CHARLOTTE SCOTTISH
BARLEY**
50% ABV

Nose Bonfire smoke, farmyards, caramel, hot tar, and licorice.

Body Smooth.

Palate Buttery, salty, with citrus fruit, caramel, and bold peat.

Finish Long and peppery.



BRUICHLADDICH
PORT CHARLOTTE

BOWMORE NO. 1
40% ABV

Nose Cinnamon, honey, and vanilla, with ozone and peat.

Body Rich.

Palate Citrus fruits, coconut, brine, and mellow peat.

Finish Lingering peat and a hint of lime.

BRUICHLADDICH

**BRUICHLADDICH
THE CLASSIC LADDIE**
50% ABV

Nose Baked apple and linseed.

Body Medium.



BRUICHLADDICH
THE CLASSIC LADDIE

KILCHOMAN

**KILCHOMAN 100% ISLAY—
FIFTH EDITION**
50% ABV

Nose Lemon juice, black pepper, smoked fish, ripe apples, brine.

Body Supple.

Palate Soft fruit, pepper, and peat.

Finish Long, with more pepper and peat.



KILCHOMAN
100% ISLAY

DISTILLERY DETAILS

CAOL ILA

FOUNDED 1846
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 1.4m gal
(6.5m liters)

BUNNAHABHAIN

FOUNDED 1881
OWNER Burn Stewart
Distillers (Distell Group)
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 590,000 gal
(2.7m liters)

LAPHROAIG

FOUNDED 1815
OWNER Beam Suntory
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 725,000 gal
(3.3m liters)

with Sanaig, named after a small rocky inlet northwest of the distillery. Sanaig has a predominantly sherry cask influence, due to significant time spent in Oloroso sherry hogsheads. Kilchoman has expanded capacity—to 44,000 gallons (200,000 liters) per year—in order to meet demand, as sales have grown internationally and the brand has gradually taken its place as an established Islay single malt, respected among its elders.

Caol Ila

Caol Ila distillery stands by the northwestern shores of Islay, overlooking the Sound of Islay—from which it takes its Gaelic name—to the neighboring island of Jura, beyond. The distillery is reached via the A846 road from Bowmore to the ferry terminal of Port Askaig, and is situated in a small cove at the foot of a hill. Along with nearby Bunnahabhain, it is one of Islay's most remote distilleries.

Caol Ila was founded in 1846 by distillery magnate Hector Henderson, and came into the ownership of the Glasgow blending firm of Bulloch Lade & Co. in 1863. It was subsequently expanded during 1879, and had the distinction of being the first building on Islay to be constructed from concrete.

In 1927, Caol Ila became part of the ever-expanding Distillers Company Ltd's portfolio of distilleries, and between 1972 and 1974 the entire plant was rebuilt in modern style at a

cost of \$2.3 million, with six large, new stills being installed in place of the original pair. The stillhouse may lack the coziness of its demolished 19th-century predecessor, but its glass front allows stunning views across the Sound of Islay. Only the warehouse of the old distillery was left intact, though today all the spirit of Caol Ila is transported by road tanker to the mainland for filling into casks and maturation in the central belt of Scotland.

Caol Ila has long enjoyed an excellent reputation as a blending malt, playing a significant part in owner Diageo's Johnnie Walker family of blends. It is the largest distillery on Islay in terms of capacity, being capable of making up to 1.4 million gallons (6.5 million liters) of spirit per year. Output was expanded during 2011, when two additional washbacks were installed as part of a \$5.4 million upgrade program.

Although the bulk of spirits produced at Caol Ila is relatively heavily peated, since 1999 there have been annual runs of unpeated "Highland-style" spirits, which have been released in limited quantities since 2006. Diageo has promoted Caol Ila as a single malt quite energetically during the past few years, with a variety of expressions joining the 12- and 18-year-olds launched in 2002.

Bunnahabhain

Caol Ila's closest neighboring distillery enjoys an even more remote location. When it was established by brothers William and

DELIVERY BY SEA

While remotely located, Caol Ila's waterfront position ensured boats could arrive to collect whisky and drop off barley and coal during the early years.



James Greenlees and William Robertson in 1881, a row of staff cottages and a schoolroom for the community's children were also constructed, along with a pier.

The location might have been remote, but the site was selected on account of the local availability of pure water and high-quality peat, along with its sheltered coastal area that was ideal for communication by sea. Distilling commenced in 1883, and four years later Bunnahabhain became part of the newly formed Highland Distilleries Company Ltd, with whom it remained until 1999, when Edrington took control of what was then known as Highland Distillers. Output was doubled in 1963 when a second pair of stills was added. In 2003, Edrington sold Bunnahabhain distillery to Burn Stewart Distillers for \$17.9 million.

Under the Burn Stewart regime, quantities of more heavily peated spirit have been distilled annually at Bunnahabhain, and a number of peated expressions have been released. These include the 10-year-old Toiteach (a mix of younger, peated whisky and older, unpeated whisky), which is part of the core range along with 12-, 18-, and 25-year-old traditional Bunnahabhains.

At the time of writing, Caol Ila and Bunnahabhain are set to get a new neighbor—Glasgow-based independent bottler Hunter Laing & Co. It is in the process of constructing its own distillery at Ardnahoe, near Port Askaig.

Laphroaig

Heading along the coast road from the village and southern ferry terminal of Port Ellen, the first of the Kildalton distilleries to be encountered is Laphroaig. Like its neighbors, Lagavulin and Ardbeg, it presents a white-painted frontage to the sea, with the distillery name boldly painted in black.

Laphroaig was established by brothers Alexander and Donald Johnston in 1815, and the distillery continued in family ownership until 1954, when the last Johnston family member, Ian Hunter, died having run the operation since 1927. He was succeeded in the role of managing director of D. Johnston & Co. Ltd by Bessie Williamson, who had previously worked as his personal assistant.

Having acquired an interest in Laphroaig in 1952, Long John blended Scotch distiller Seager Evans & Company purchased D. Johnston & Co. in its entirety in 1972. Ultimately, Laphroaig, along with the Ardmore distillery, was purchased by the US-based Jim Beam Brands. In 2014, Suntory Holdings Limited acquired Beam Inc., meaning that Laphroaig is now a stablemate of fellow Islay single malt Bowmore.

Laphroaig continues to operate four floor maltings, which provide around 15 percent of the distillery's total malt requirements. Laphroaig is equipped with three wash stills and five spirit stills, with the fifth still being added in 1967 to increase capacity. The spirit distillation boasts the longest foreshots run of any Scottish distillery, a practice designed to eliminate the sweet esters that flow early from the spirit still and which are not part of the Laphroaig character profile.

That profile is showcased in a range of single malts that includes 10-year-old expressions in both 40% ABV and cask-strength formats, along with Quarter Cask (where aging is accelerated by the use of 80-liter casks), Triple Wood (matured in ex-bourbon casks, quarter



WAREHOUSE STANDARD

Each cask that arrives at Bunnahabhain is inspected to ensure it can imbue the right flavor to the maturing whisky.

TASTING NOTES

Both of these east coast Islays have become better known in recent years, and Caol Ila's oily, maritime, aperitif style contrasts with the sweeter, nutty, and sometimes heavily peated malts of Bunnahabhain.

CAOL ILA

CAOL ILA MOCH 43% ABV

Nose Vanilla, lemon, brine, and slight smokiness.

Body Lightly oily.

Palate Toffee, vanilla, salted butter, and light wood smoke.

Finish Drying, with ginger, and a sooty note.

CAOL ILA 12-YEAR-OLD 43% ABV

Nose Floral, with iodine, and smoked bacon.

Body Oily.

Palate Peat smoke, malt, and a squeeze of lemon.

Finish Drying, peppery, and peaty.



CAOL ILA
12-YEAR-OLD

BUNNAHABHAIN

BUNNAHABHAIN 12-YEAR-OLD 46.3% ABV

Nose Brisk and smoky, with leather, and sherry.

Body Firm.

Palate Toffee, almonds, and fruity peat.

Finish Coffee, vanilla, and light smoke.

BUNNAHABHAIN TOITEACH 46% ABV

Nose Peat embers, hard toffee, and lively spices.

Body Medium.

Palate Big peat notes, caramel, dried fruits, and brine.

Finish Relatively long, peat smoke, and oak.



BUNNAHABHAIN
TOITEACH

DISTILLERY DETAILS

LAGAVULIN

FOUNDED 1816
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 540,000 gal
 (2.45m liters)

ARDBEG

FOUNDED 1815
OWNER The Glenmorangie Company
 (Moët Hennessy)
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 285,000 gal
 (1.3m liters)

casks, and Oloroso sherry casks), and an 18-year-old and a 25-year-old. In 2014, a non-age-statement version, matured in five different cask types, and named Select was added to the range.

The whisky's devoted following among fans is nurtured by the Friends of Laphroaig organization, and the "Friends" now number almost 700,000, representing some 190 countries!

Lagavulin

Lagavulin was first licensed in 1816, just a year after Laphroaig, and it is the "middle" Kildalton distillery, situated just over 1 mile (1.5km) east of Laphroaig and a mile from Ardbeg. For many years, the distillery was associated with Peter Mackie, who owned it from 1889 and created the White Horse blended Scotch, with Lagavulin

at its heart. Lagavulin became part of the mighty the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1927, eventually passing into the hands of successor company Diageo in 1997.

In 1908, Mackie created a second, small-scale distillery beside Lagavulin, called Malt Mill, in which he produced a notably smoky, old-style spirit, which made liberal use of peat rather than coal. In 1962, the pair of stills from Malt Mill was transferred into Lagavulin, and today the maltings of Malt Mill serve as the Lagavulin visitor center.

Lagavulin is equipped with four stills, two of which are in the same pear-shaped style as those transferred from Malt Mill back in the early 1960s. The stills are run slowly and, unusually, the spirit stills are filled almost to their full capacity in order to ensure minimal copper contact between spirit and copper, leading to the whisky's characteristically robust nature.

When the Classic Malts range was launched in 1988, Lagavulin 16-year-old became the Islay representative in the lineup. A decade later, the 16-year-old variant was joined by a Distillers Edition expression, with secondary maturation taking place in Pedro Ximénez sherry casks. A cask-strength 12-year-old was added to the portfolio in 2002, and many subsequent editions at that age have followed in Diageo's annual Special Releases program. In 2016, two bicentennial commemorative bottlings were launched, namely an 8-year-old and a 25-year-old, with the latter being limited to a total of 8,000 bottles.

Ardbeg

Ardbeg distillery was initially licensed to John MacDougall in 1816, and after effectively being in private hands for more than 150 years, it was jointly purchased by Hiram Walker & Sons Ltd and the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1973, with Hiram Walker assuming full control four years later.

Ardbeg was mothballed from 1982 to 1989, becoming part of Allied Distillers when Hiram Walker was taken over by them in 1987, and whisky making was undertaken on a modest basis from 1989 until 1996, when the distillery finally closed in July. The following year, Ardbeg was acquired by The Glenmorangie Company, who spent in excess of \$16.5 million buying and restoring the site.

TASTING NOTES

The three surviving Kildalton distilleries offer classic, complex, intense, peaty Islay drams. The essence of the island at its most extreme.

LAPHROAIG

LAPHROAIG SELECT 40% ABV

Nose Peaches in peat smoke, pipe tobacco, and medicine cabinets.

Body Medium.

Palate Peat, nutmeg, blackcurrant, and an undertone of vanilla.

Finish Quite short and drying.



LAPHROAIG
SELECT

LAPHROAIG QUARTER CASK 48% ABV

Nose Maritime, with rock pools, lemon, raisins, toffee, and warm tar.

Body Oily.

Palate Smoky orchard fruits, with peat intensifying, iodine, chili, plus background malt.

Finish Lengthy, fruity, with rich peat smoke.

LAGAVULIN

LAGAVULIN 12-YEAR-OLD CASK STRENGTH (2015 SPECIAL RELEASES) 56.8% ABV

Nose Fruity peat, grilled fish, with lemon and vanilla.

Body Medium.

Palate Quite oily, lots of smoke, mixed nuts, and malt; slightly herbal.

Finish Lengthy, with ashy peat.

LAGAVULIN 16-YEAR-OLD 43% ABV

Nose Bold smoke notes, sherry, vanilla, medicine cabinets.

Body Rich.

Palate Sweet orchard fruit and peat notes, sherry, and malt.

Finish Long, with golden raisins, dates, and ever-present peat, plus mild oak.



LAGAVULIN
16-YEAR-OLD

ARDBEG

ARDBEG 10-YEAR-OLD 56.8% ABV

Nose Soft peat, coal tar soap, smoked fish.

Body Medium.

Palate Peat embers, citrus fruit, licorice, and malt.

Finish Lengthy, with iodine, and drying peat.

ARDBEG CORRYVRECKAN 57.1% ABV

Nose Earthy, with ginger, salted herring, and iodine.

Body Viscous.

Palate Spicy and nutty, slightly savory, with licorice, brine, and citrus fruit.

Finish Lengthy, with spicy peat.



ARDBEG
CORRYVRECKAN



Looking at the well-presented distillery today, and knowing just what a cult malt Ardbeg has become, it is hard to imagine that Ardbeg suffered several periods of silence in its relatively recent history, and could well have been lost forever.

Under Glenmorangie, a plethora of new releases have appeared, many without age statements. It may be argued that Ardbeg has given greater credibility and respectability to the no-age-statement trend among distillers, such has been the quality of “NAS” expressions released.

The current “core” Ardbeg range includes a 10-year-old, Uigeadail (with a sherry cask influence), and Corryvreckan (with an influence of new French oak). Ardbeg has a Committee, operating along the same lines as Laphroaig’s “Friends” organization, and the Ardbeg variant now boasts more than 100,000 members.

Ardbeg’s Old Kiln Café is renowned throughout the island for the quality of its home-baking, which tempts locals and visitors alike. The distillery is equipped with one pair of stills, and the malt used to produce Ardbeg spirits is the most heavily peated of the Kildalton trio of distilleries.

Port Ellen

Some “lost” distilleries are almost unmourned; all traces of their existence obliterated by supermarkets, parking lots, or housing developments, with bottles of the unsophisticated spirits they produced turning up from time to time at specialist whisky auctions.

This is most definitely not the case, however, with the “lost” distillery of Port Ellen. It was established on the shores of the eponymous village in 1825 by Alexander Kerr Mackay, and for much of its existence was owned by members of the Ramsay family before being acquired in 1920 by Buchanan-Dewar, passing to the DCL when Buchanan-Dewar merged with it in 1925. Five years later the distillery closed.

It was to receive a second lease of life, however, when after 37 years of silence, the site underwent an 18-month-long, \$1 million rebuilding program, with spirits flowing again in 1967. Six years later, a vast new “drum” maltings plant was constructed beside the distillery by the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL), and today, in the ownership of Diageo, it supplies most of Islay’s distilleries with peated malt.

Port Ellen distillery was not to survive and thrive, however, with the last spirit flowing in May 1983. Most of the 1960s distillery has now been demolished, and what remains are the two original pagodas, maltings, stone-built warehouses, and some other structures that have been converted into business units.

During recent years, Port Ellen single malt has achieved cult status, most notably through Diageo’s annual Special Releases, with the 16th such bottling (37-year-old) appearing in 2016.

THE ISLAY AESTHETIC

Like many of the Islay distilleries, Lagavulin sits at the waterfront, white-washed, and with its name emblazoned on its side in large, dark letters.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

JURA

FOUNDED 1810

OWNER Whyte & Mackay
(Emperador, Inc.)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 485,000 gal
(2.2m liters)

Jura

ALTHOUGH JURA IS ISLAY'S NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR,
ITS LANDSCAPE COULD NOT BE MORE DIFFERENT. WILD
AND REMOTE, JURA HAS JUST ONE OF EVERYTHING—ONE
ROAD, ONE TOWN, AND ONE DISTILLERY.

The island of Jura is located to the northeast of Islay, and in contrast to its relatively fertile neighbor—where malting-quality barley can be grown—Jura is quite barren yet bleakly beautiful. You might expect the whisky distilled there to reflect its location and be more Islay-like than the most macho of Islay whiskies. Stylistically, however, this is far from the case.

The island is accessible from Islay by a small car ferry, which operates between Port Askaig and Feolin on Jura. From Feolin, the island's only public road crosses to the east side of the island, where the bulk of its 200 inhabitants live. They are greatly outnumbered by deer; with around

6,000 of the animals at the last count, the chances of not seeing a red deer stag while spending time on the island are very remote! The name “Jura” is believed to have been derived from the Norse for “Deer Island.”

A history of distilling

The only settlement on Jura is Craighouse, which boasts a hotel, shop, and post office, as well as the Jura single malt whisky distillery. It has been claimed that prior to its official establishment in 1810, illicit distilling took place in a cave on the distillery's site, which can be traced back as far as the 1600s.

The distillery was founded by Archibald Campbell, and operated under a number of different owners, being taken over in 1876 by James Ferguson & Co., and renamed Small Isles distillery. Distilling ceased in 1901, due to a dispute between Ferguson and his

“THE NAME ‘JURA’ IS BELIEVED
TO HAVE BEEN DERIVED FROM THE
NORSE FOR ‘DEER ISLAND’”

COASTAL DISTILLATION

The buildings of the Jura distillery are clustered around the rocky seashore, presenting a typical Scottish coastal distillery scene.



landlord, Colin Campbell. Ferguson stripped the distillery of its equipment, and Campbell removed the roofs of the buildings in 1920 to avoid having to pay tax.

A '60s revival

That apparently was an end to distilling on Jura, but in 1960, at the behest of local estate owners who were concerned about depopulation, Charles Mackinlay & Co. set out to restore whisky making on the island, utilizing the old distillery site and some of its remaining buildings.

Stylistically, the whisky distilled in the old Jura distillery had been heavily peated, like that of its Islay neighbors. But the new Jura distillery (designed by William Delme-Evans) was equipped with taller stills and used lightly peated barley to produce a spirit closer to the Highland style. This spirit would be perfect for any premium blend, and as the whisky industry evolved and single malts became more and more popular, the new style helped Jura to become one of the most sought-after single malt whiskies today.

The first spirit flowed in 1963, by which time Mackinlay & Co. had become part of Scottish & Newcastle Breweries Ltd, which ran the distillery until its acquisition by Invergordon Distillers Group plc in 1985. The first single malt was released in the early 1970s, and four years later a second pair of stills was added. In 1993, Invergordon

TASTING NOTES

Jura single malts are relatively light in body, and offer a clear contrast to most of their Islay neighbors. However, expressions with an element of peatiness have met with popular approval.

JURA ORIGIN 10-YEAR-OLD 40% ABV

Nose Delicate, with resin, oil, and pine notes.

Body Light to medium.

Palate Malt and drying saltiness.

Finish Nutty and malty, with more salt, and a hint of smoke.



JURA ORIGIN
10-YEAR-OLD

JURA PROPHECY 46% ABV

Nose Smoked haddock cooked in butter, plus brine and licorice.

Body Supple.

Palate Peat smoke, succulent citrus fruits, mild spice, becoming ashy and quite dry.

Finish Drying, with ashy peat and spice.



JURA PROPHECY

Distillers was taken over by Whyte & Mackay (Emperador, Inc.), which has run the distillery ever since.

Jura today

In recent years, Whyte & Mackay has done much to raise the profile of Jura single malt, extending the core range and introducing peated expressions, along with regular limited-edition releases. Jura has now grown to become the fourth-best-selling single malt in the UK after Glenfiddich, Glenmorangie, and Glenlivet. The Jura line-up includes the 10-year-old Origin, the 16-year-old Diurach's Own, Superstition (made with a proportion of peated spirit), and the fully peated Prophecy.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

ARRAN

FOUNDED 1993

OWNER Isle of
Arran Distillers

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 165,000 gal
(750,000 liters)

Arran

ARRAN HAS A LONG HISTORY OF WHISKY MAKING (MOST OF IT ILLICIT), BUT IT WAS ONLY AT THE END OF THE 20TH CENTURY THAT THE ISLAND FINALLY GOT ITS FIRST PROPER DISTILLERY.

When the Arran distillery came on stream in 1995, it represented a return to (legal) distilling on the island for the first time since 1837. Although Arran is less than 20 miles (32km) long and 10 miles (16km) wide, it is thought that as many as 50 distilling ventures were active during the 19th century. Most ran without the formality of licenses, but three were officially sanctioned, with the last of these, at Lagg, operating until 1837. Arran is the largest island in the Firth of Clyde, and its proximity to the Ayrshire coast and the thirsty industrializing towns of the west of Scotland meant that illicit distillers thrived there, producing their highly regarded “Arran water.”

Former Chivas Brothers managing director, Harold Currie, was the man behind the project to restore distilling on Arran, having had long associations with the island and an attraction to the idea of restoring legal whisky making after a gap of more than 150 years.

He chose to establish the distillery at Lochranza in the north of the island in 1993, although most of the 19th-century distilleries had been based in the south. The principal reason for the new distillery’s location was the discovery of a water source ideal for the purposes of whisky making.

The Currie family devised a novel way of funding their distillery venture, selling 2,000 bonds, each of which entitled the bondholder to an amount of whisky after five years and again after eight years.

Arran was created as a two-still distillery, and was designed from the outset to be aesthetically pleasing, with mock pagodas and whitewashed buildings, which blend well with the island’s older architecture. As all the production processes take place within one room, it is also ideally suited for the reception of visitors.

First releases

The very first release from Arran was a 1-year-old spirit, back in 1996, designed to whet the appetite of consumers. The first bottling which could legally be called Scotch whisky appeared as a 3-year-old in 1998, followed by a 4-year-old, several single-cask editions, and a 1996 vintage.

The distillery also launched a variety of cask finishes, with the 1996 vintage serving to broaden the brand’s range and thereby its shelf presence in retailers. The first raft of “finishes” appeared in 2003, commencing with calvados, followed by Cognac, Marsala, and port. For a time, up to six different finishes were released each year, though that has been scaled back, with just Amarone, port, and Sauternes finishes now being part of the permanent portfolio.

SET AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

The location at Lochranza is spectacular—set among the mountains could not be more apt.





By the time of the launch of the 10-year-old in 2006, the Curie family were no longer involved in the distillery, but it was still in private ownership. Over the following years, 12-, 14-, and 16-year-olds would be added to the core range, and finally an 18-year-old bottling appeared in early 2016. Other core bottlings include the no-age-statement Lochranza Reserve and Robert Burns Malt.

In addition to its unpeated spirit, Arran also distills annual batches of lightly peated and heavily peated whisky, and markets its peated expressions as Machrie Moor, named after a peat bog in the west of Arran. Machrie Moor is released in batches, commencing in 2010, and has contained whisky dating back to 2004 and 2005, peated to a level of 14ppm. However, more recently, the peating level has been increased to 20ppm, and each year a quantity of heavily peated (up to 50ppm) spirit is also produced. Having initially made 2,200 gallons (10,000 liters) of peated Arran each year, that amount was subsequently doubled.

Arran distillery is a notably popular tourist attraction, and such has been the growth in demand for Arran single malts that a second pair of stills was installed in 2016 to expand the capacity, along with upgrading of the mash tun, while a fifth warehouse has also been added to the site. The year 2016 was a busy period for

Isle of Arran Distillers, as the company also announced plans to build a new distillery at Lagg, with a potential capacity of 330,000 gallons (1.5 million liters) per year.

This facility would ease visitor pressure on the existing site and would also provide extra storage and warehousing facilities. The intention is to transfer all peated spirit production to the Lagg distillery, freeing up Lochranza for increased output of unpeated whisky. The new distillery would also reinforce the historic link with Lagg, where the island's last whisky-making enterprise was located.

CHECKING THE SPIRIT

Distillers regularly sample maturing whisky from casks in their warehouses to ensure that the ageing process is progressing well.

TASTING NOTES

These belong to a traditional Highland style of single malt, which shows pleasing complexity as it ages. As with Jura, the peaty variants have been notably successful.

ARRAN 10-YEAR-OLD 46% ABV

Nose Relatively light, with butterscotch, honey, and almonds, plus green apples.

Body Slightly oily.

Palate Sweet, with ripe melons, vanilla, and honey.

Finish Medium in length, with vanilla and white pepper.



ARRAN
10-YEAR-OLD

ARRAN 18-YEAR-OLD 46% ABV

Nose Fragrant and floral, with soft fruits and almonds.

Body Rounded, viscous.

Palate Vanilla, sherry, orange marmalade, and fruits and spices.

Finish Lengthy, drying, with licorice and dark chocolate.



ARRAN
18-YEAR-OLD

DISTILLERY DETAILS

TALISKER

FOUNDED 1831
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 590,000 gal
(2.7m liters)

TORABHAIG

FOUNDED 2016
OWNER Mossburn
Distillers Ltd
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 110,000 gal
(500,000 liters)

Skye

DRAMATIC AND ROMANTIC, SKYE IS RICH IN TALES OF MAGIC AND BRAVERY, BUT THE TRUE ISLAND CLASSIC IS TALISKER, A WARM AND RUGGED SINGLE MALT DISTILLED BY THE SHORES OF LOCH HARPORT.

Skye is the largest of the Inner Hebridean islands, and the second-largest Scottish island after Lewis and Harris. Its landscape is dominated by the famous and spectacular Cuillin mountains, while the island capital of Portree—known as Kiltraglen until the 16th century—was developed as a fishing port by local laird Sir James Macdonald from 1771. Since 1995, Skye has been joined to the mainland by a road bridge, which has proved a great convenience, but has also taken away some of the romance of crossing “over the sea to Skye,” as the old song has it.

In terms of whisky making, Skye was home to seven licensed distilleries (and numerous illicit ones) in the early 19th century, but none of these have survived. Skye is, however, home to one of Scotland’s great single malts, namely Talisker. It is distilled in the hamlet of Carbost, situated on the shores of Loch Harport, in the remote northwest of the island, some 24 miles (39km) from the village of Broadford.

Talisker

Talisker dates back to 1830, when the farming tenants of Talisker House, Kenneth and Hugh MacAskill, leased a site and established their whisky-making operation, spending \$14,000 on its creation. In 1854, Talisker was sold for a third of its construction price, and numerous changes of ownership followed, with Roderick Kemp owning it in partnership from 1880. In 1892, he sold up and headed for Speyside, where he acquired another distillery that was to gain a formidable reputation as a single malt. Its name was The Macallan.

Back at Carbost, in 1894, The Talisker Distillery Co. Ltd was founded, and four years later, Talisker merged with Dailuaine-Glenlivet Distillers and Imperial Distillers to create the Dailuaine-Talisker Distilleries Ltd. In 1916, the company was acquired by a consortium made up of the Glasgow blenders and brokers W.P. Lowrie & Co., John Walker & Sons Ltd, and John Dewar & Sons Ltd, ultimately passing into the hands of the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1925.

Surprisingly for a notably characterful malt once described as “the lava of the Cuillins,” triple distillation was practised until 1928. While single malt whisky was something of a rarity outside the Highlands and islands, Talisker already enjoyed an enviable reputation, with the novelist Robert Louis Stevenson writing in 1880, “The King o’drinks, as I conceive it, Talisker, Isla or Glenlivet!”

Most 19th-century distilleries feature at least one fire in their histories and Talisker is no exception. In 1960, a valve on the coal-fired number one spirit still was accidentally left open during distillation, and spirit escaped from the still and caught fire, resulting in serious damage. The stillhouse was destroyed, but was subsequently

TASTING NOTES

Talisker is unique—no other single malt compares with it. According to the late Michael Jackson, it is “volcanic.”

TALISKER STORM 45.8% ABV

Nose Maritime notes, sea salt, wood smoke, vanilla, and honey.

Body Relatively full.

Palate Peppery peat smoke, red berries, and lively spices.

Finish Spicy, with peat and citrus fruit notes.

TALISKER 10-YEAR-OLD 45.8% ABV

Nose Smoked fish, rock pools, orchard fruits, and peat.

Body Rich.



TALISKER
10-YEAR-OLD

Palate Salty peat, ginger, lemon, toffee, and black pepper.

Finish Dark chocolate and chili.

TALISKER 18-YEAR-OLD 45.8% ABV

Nose Peat sprinkled with black pepper, seaweed, and ozone.

Body Creamy.

Palate Rich, fruity, confident and rounded, with peat and sweet oak.

Finish Lengthy, with warming pepper and peat.



TALISKER
18-YEAR-OLD



rebuilt and equipped with new stills that were exact copies of the originals except for being fitted with steam heating coils instead of open fires.

Those five stills are singular in design, with the three tall wash stills being equipped with lyne arms featuring u-bends and purifiers. Condensation takes place in traditional wooden worm tubs.

Talisker whiskies

A 10-year-old Talisker was one of the founding Classic Malts when owner United Distillers created the range in 1988. United Distillers has since become part of Diageo, and the visitor center at Talisker is the most visited of all those in the Diageo portfolio.

The idiosyncratic, peppery, and oily Talisker is peated to around 18–20ppm, and is customarily bottled at the unusual strength of 45.8% ABV. Diageo has invested heavily during the past few years in expanding the range, which now includes 10-, 18-, 25-, and 30-year-old whiskies, along with the no-age-statement Storm, introduced in 2013. At the same time, Talisker launched Dark

Storm—exclusive to travel retail outlets, and the peatiest Talisker to date—and Port Ruighe, which is finished in ruby port casks. 2015 saw the addition of Talisker Skye, again without an age statement and intended as a less “bold” alternative to the 10-year-old and Storm.

Torabhaig

In 2016/17, Talisker’s claim to be the only distillery on Skye was lost with the creation of Torabhaig on the Sleat peninsula of southwest Skye. The distillery boasts a capacity of some 110,000 gallons (500,000 liters) per year and has been developed by Mossburn Distillers. However, the site, in an old farmstead, had first been granted planning permission for a distillery in 2002 at the behest of the late Sir Iain Noble, a local landowner and Gaelic language activist. Noble established Pràban na Linne Ltd, the Gaelic Whiskies, in 1976, offering the MacNaMara and Té Bheag blended Scotches, along with Poit Dhubh blended malt. The firm continues to operate from its headquarters on Skye.

DISTILLERY ON SKYE

Located on the shores of Loch Harport, Talisker is only a short distance from Skye’s dramatic Cuillin mountain range.

“IN 2016/17, TALISKER’S CLAIM TO BE THE ONLY DISTILLERY ON SKYE WAS LOST WITH THE CREATION OF TORABHAIG”

DISTILLERY DETAILS

TOBERMORY

FOUNDED 1798

OWNER Burn Stewart
Distillers (Distell Group)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 220,000 gal
(1m liters)

Mull

THOUGH LARGE AND WITH A HERITAGE OF WHISKY MAKING,
TODAY THE ISLAND OF MULL HAS ONLY A SINGLE DISTILLERY,
SITUATED IN ONE OF THE PRETTIEST TOWNS TO BE FOUND
IN THE INNER HEBRIDES, TOBERMORY.

After Skye, Mull is the second-largest of the Inner Hebrides, and is located less than an hour's ferry crossing from Oban, on the Argyllshire coast. The island capital of Tobermory was created as a fishing port by the British Fisheries Society in 1788, and its distinctive, multicolored harbor-front properties inspired the popular UK children's television series, *Balamory*.

In 1798, a decade after the formal establishment of Tobermory, a local kelp merchant by the name of John Sinclair founded a distillery close to the center of the village, naming it Ledaig—"safe haven" in Gaelic. Kelp was actually Sinclair's main source of income, with it being shipped in large quantities to glass and soap factories on the mainland.

The story goes that Sinclair was discouraged from making whisky as the islanders had a reputation for eager consumption of the spirit, and during the 18th century, up to 25 percent of cereal grown on Mull was destined for distillation. The authorities suggested Sinclair brew beer instead.

However, at some point before 1823, when the current buildings were constructed and licensed, Sinclair did start making whisky, and continued to do so until his death in 1837, at which point the distillery closed.

A century of stops and starts

It remained silent until 1878, and a dozen years later John Hopkins & Co. acquired the plant, with that firm being taken over by the Distillers

A VIEW OF THE HARBOR

Tobermory, with its fondant-icing-colored row of seafront houses, is a magnet for sailors, tourists, children, and whisky-lovers alike.



“TOBERMORY’S MULTICOLORED HOUSES INSPIRED THE UK CHILDREN’S TELEVISION SERIES, *BALAMORY*”

Company Ltd (DCL) in 1916. Many Scottish distilleries were shut down during the economically bleak period between the two world wars, and Tobermory shut its doors in 1930, later serving as a canteen for sailors and as a power station. In 1972, the Ledaig Distillery (Tobermory) Ltd reopened under its original name, owned by a Liverpool shipping firm and the Spanish sherry producer Domecq.

Just three years later, however, Ledaig Distillery (Tobermory) Ltd filed for bankruptcy and the distillery fell silent once more. In 1979, the Kirkcaldy Property Company Ltd of Yorkshire took on Tobermory, but it fared little better, and the distillery was inactive yet again between 1982 and 1989.

Kirkcaldy proceeded to sell off the distillery’s only warehouse for conversion into apartments, at which point the future for Tobermory seemed bleaker than ever. However, production recommenced in 1989, and four years later its future was secured when it was acquired by Burn Stewart Distillers for the sum

of \$1 million, plus a further \$325,000 of stock. Today, Burn Stewart is owned by Distell Group Ltd, with the South African company having acquired it in 2013 from the previous proprietors, Trinidad-based CL Financial.

New ownership

Under Burn Stewart, a heavily peated (around 40ppm) variant of Tobermory was introduced using the Ledaig name in 1996, and today production from the two pairs of stills is split 50/50 between peated and unpeated spirits. Burn Stewart has worked hard to raise the profile and improve the image and quality of the single malts, which are now offered un-chill-filtered at a strength of 46.3% ABV. A former tun room was developed into a small warehouse during 2007 so a portion of the spirit being made could be matured in its island home.

Today, the core 10- and 15-year-old bottlings of Tobermory can be hard to come by, as demand during recent years has outstripped supply, while Ledaig 10- and 18-year-old expressions are somewhat easier to locate. Both Tobermory and Ledaig bottlings at the grand old age of 42 years have also been released.



HIGH-NECKED STILL

The Tobermory distillery has stills with long necks that produce particularly light, clean, and fragrant spirits.



TASTING NOTES

Tobermory distillery has a split personality, with its 50/50 divide between unpeated and peated spirits. Its whisky is a herbal, aperitif malt, while Ledaig offers something altogether fuller and smokier.

TOBERMORY 10-YEAR-OLD 46.3% ABV

Nose Zesty and nutty, with toffee and citrus fruit.

Body Supple.

Palate Textured, with orchard fruits, honey, malt, and nuts.

Finish Slightly salty, with plain chocolate and a citric tang.



TOBERMORY
10-YEAR-OLD

LEDAIG 10-YEAR-OLD 46.3% ABV

Nose Sweet peat, malt, dried fruit, and smoked fish.

Body Lightly oily.

Palate Sweet, with iodine, soft peat, heather, and black pepper.

Finish Pepper, brine, licorice, and peat.



LEDAIG
10-YEAR-OLD

DISTILLERY DETAILS

ABHAINN DEARG

FOUNDED 2008
OWNER Mark Tayburn
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 4,400 gal
(20,000 liters)

ISLE OF HARRIS

FOUNDED 2015
OWNER Isle of Harris
Distillers Ltd
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 50,500 gal
(230,000 liters)

Lewis and Harris

ABHAINN DEARG AND ISLE OF HARRIS ARE TWO OF SCOTLAND'S MOST REMOTE DISTILLERIES, BUT THE TRIP TO THE OUTER HEBRIDES IS WELL WORTH THE EFFORT.

Lewis and Harris are actually one island, divided east to west, with Lewis to the north and Harris to the south. Lewis occupies the larger landmass and boasts a bigger population than its southern neighbor. The bustling fishing port and ferry terminal of Stornoway is the capital of Lewis, while the village of Tarbert is the principal center of population on Harris, and the terminal for car ferries to Uig in the north of Skye.

Although there was no shortage of illicit distilling in the many wild and remote areas of the island, it was not until 2008 that Lewis and Harris got their first distillery in modern times, with the only previously licensed distillery on the island operating in Stornoway between 1825 and 1840. In 2015, Harris added another whisky-making facility to the island, and in

doing so helped to create an unofficial “whisky trail” from Skye to Harris and Lewis, and back to the mainland.

Abhainn Dearg

The most westerly distillery in Scotland, Abhainn Dearg takes its name from the Gaelic for “Red River.” It is located on the Atlantic coast of Lewis, some 35 miles (55km) west of Stornoway. It was developed in a disused salmon hatchery by Lewis native and recycling merchant Mark “Marko” Tayburn, who was passionate to see legal distilling return to the island.

Abhainn Dearg is equipped with two mash tuns and two wooden wash backs, along with what is probably the most unusually shaped pair of stills in Scotland. They feature

necks that are best described as being like witches’ hats, with lyne arms that descend precipitously into wooden worm tubs.

In addition to the steam-heated “formal” pair of stills, Abhainn Dearg also boasts a genuine former illicit still, which takes an 18-gallon (80-liter) charge and is used from time to time, with the make being filled into ex-Oloroso sherry casks.

Tayburn undertakes periods of peated distillation, and while the majority of Abhainn Dearg’s output is filled into ex-bourbon casks, sherry, Madeira, virgin oak, red- and white-wine casks have also been used from time to time.

In 2011, Mark Tayburn released 2,011 bottles of 3-year-old Single Malt Special Edition, having offered Spirit of Lewis, briefly aged in sherry casks, the previous year.



ABHAINN DEARG CASKS

The spirit at Abhainn Dearg is warehoused close to the Atlantic Ocean, and time will tell whether the whisky is influenced by that maritime environment.



All barley used at Abhainn Dearg is now grown on Lewis, and the distillery has its own herd of Highland and Highland x Shorthorn cattle, which eat the draff produced during whisky making.

Isle of Harris

Isle of Harris distillery opened for business in September 2015, initially making gin, with whisky following some three months later. The distillery is situated in the village of Tarbert and was the creation of Anglo-American musicologist and Harris devotee Anderson Bakewell, who first came up with the idea of developing a distillery on the island almost a decade ago. The \$17.2 million build cost was partly funded by a Scottish government grant and partly by private investors.

“IT WAS NOT UNTIL 2008 THAT LEWIS AND HARRIS GOT THEIR FIRST DISTILLERY IN MODERN TIMES”

Visitors to the distillery are met by a traditional Hebridean peat fire, and the venture is predicated as a “social distillery,” with the future of the island and its people at the heart of everything it does.

The single malt is produced in a pair of Italian-made stills. Once it is legally whisky, it will be named The Hearach, after the Gaelic term for an inhabitant of Harris. It is medium-peated (12–14ppm), and is being filled into ex-bourbon and ex-Oloroso sherry butts. The first release will run to 1,916 bottles, nominally one for every Harris resident.

DISTILLERY ON HARRIS

Situated on the coast in the village of Tarbert, the Isle of Harris distillery looks back toward the Scottish mainland.

TASTING NOTES

It is a little too soon to say how this malt will turn out as it matures, but the youthful style is sweet and makes a perfect aperitif.

ABHAINN DEARG SINGLE MALT SPECIAL EDITION 46% ABV

Nose Linseed, ginger, apricots, and fudge.

Body Light.

Palate Zesty spices, honey, vanilla, and hazelnuts.

Finish Quite short, with nutty toffee notes.



ABHAINN DEARG SINGLE MALT SPECIAL EDITION

SPIRIT OF LEWIS 46% ABV

New spirit filled into ex-Pedro Ximénez sherry casks for a three-month period of maturation.

Nose Canned pears, sweet cereal, grassy, and slightly herbal.

Body Light to medium.

Palate Barley, developing maltiness, and spicy background sherry.

Finish Fruit and nut chocolate, and persistent spice.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

HIGHLAND PARK

FOUNDED 1798

OWNER Edrington

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 550,000 gal
(2.5m liters)

SCAPA

FOUNDED 1885

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 285,000 gal
(1.3m liters)

Orkney

THE MOST NORTHERLY OUTPOST OF DISTILLING IN SCOTLAND,
ORKNEY IS A REPOSITORY FOR MYRIAD CIVILIZATIONS
AND IS HOME TO TWO OF SCOTLAND'S FINEST MALTS.

If Gaelic culture and language have shaped the Hebridean islands to the west of Scotland, then very different influences were at work in the Orkneys. The group of some 70 islands was part of the Norse empire for seven centuries, and the Viking stamp on Orkney is reflected in place names such as Birsay, Harray, St. Ola, and Holm. Although part of Scotland since the late 15th century, the Orcadians tend to have an independent spirit and do not consider themselves “British.” Indeed, it is not uncommon to see Norwegian flags being flown in the islands during international soccer tournaments!

Orkney has been populated for around 6,000 years and its Neolithic heritage is evident in many ancient monuments, stone circles, and tombs, such as the settlements

at Skara Brae and Maes Howe, the Ring of Brodgar, and the Standing Stones of Stenness. Mainland, Orkney, is home to the two principal towns of Kirkwall and Stromness, with both of the islands’ current whisky distilleries being located close to Kirkwall.

However, between 1817 and 1928, Stromness, or Man O’Hoy distillery, operated close to the waterfront in Stromness, producing the Old Orkney brand of whisky. Today, this distillery is no more, demolished in 1940 and lost beneath a local authority housing development.

Highland Park

In terms of single malts with outstanding global reputations, few can match Highland Park. The name may seem a trifle generic—it could, after all, refer to almost any distillery north of Perth—but there is nothing generic about the whisky produced there. Highland Park 18-year-old was named the “Best Spirit in the World” by the US writer F. Paul Pacult in his Top Spirits List of 2005 and 2009, while the distillery’s 25-year-old achieved the same accolade in 2013.

Along with turning out highly regarded whiskies, Highland Park has a great backstory in terms of its origins. It was established in 1798 by David Robertson on the site where local church officer Magnus Eunson had previously operated an illicit still, hiding kegs of his whisky beneath the church pulpit!

The Borthwick family owned the distillery from 1826 until 1895, when Glenlivet proprietor James Grant acquired it, doubling the capacity three years later by installing two additional stills.

NEOLITHIC ISLANDS

The Orkney Islands possess a large number of Neolithic sites. This house is at Skara Brae, on the west coast of Mainland, Orkney.





A HILLSIDE DISTILLERY

Highland Park sits up high, overlooking the windswept town of Kirkwall. Many of the staff have whisky in their blood—they are following in the footsteps of previous generations who have devoted their life's work to whisky making.

For a distillery with its origins in the 18th century, Highland Park has actually had relatively few owners, and from 1937 until 1999 it was in the hands of Highland Distilleries Ltd, later Highland Distillers Ltd. That company invested heavily in promoting the single malt brand and also opened a visitor center in 1986. In 1999, Highland Distillers was acquired by Edrington, whose other “jewel in the crown” is The Macallan.

Edrington continues to take great care of Highland Park, and has operated an energetic release program, with many limited editions. It has taken inspiration from Viking history and mythology for these bottlings, which bear names such as the Valhalla Collection—comprising Thor, Freya, Loki, and Thorfinn.

The core Highland Park range embraces 12- to 50-year-old expressions, along with the no-age-statement Dark Origins, introduced in 2014.

Highland Park is Scotland's northernmost distillery, and some 30 percent of its malt is produced on its own malting floors, being

peated to 30–40 ppm. It is then mixed with unpeated malt sourced from the mainland. The peat used in the Highland Park kiln is cut from Hobbister Hill, giving the whisky its characteristic heathery, smoky profile. The use of Oloroso sherry-seasoned casks also contributes to Highland Park's stylistic “USP.”

Scapa

Scapa distillery is located some 2 miles (3km) west of Highland Park, close to the shores of Scapa Flow, which was the principal base of the British Grand Fleet during World War I and the scene for the spectacular scuttling of 52 ships of the German High Seas Fleet in June 1919. Scapa Flow also played an important strategic part in World War II, and in October 1939 a German submarine torpedoed HMS Royal Oak, with 833 British sailors perishing as a result.

Today, looking out across the peaceful Flow from the doors of the stillhouse at the Scapa distillery, it is difficult to imagine that such events took place here. However, since 2015, members of the public



LAST OF LOMOND

Scapa has the last Lomond still that remains in operation. These stills were once found in a number of Scottish distilleries.

“ONE UNIQUE FEATURE OF THE SCAPA DISTILLERY IS SCOTLAND’S SOLE SURVIVING, WHISKY-MAKING LOMOND STILL”

have been able to share that view and contemplate the events that occurred in those waters, as the previously reclusive Chivas-owned distillery finally allowed visitors to experience what is all too often dismissed as Orkney’s “second” distillery.

While Highland Park has shone as a single malt, Scapa toiled to fill the blending vats of its various owners, but happily the whisky is gaining a higher profile, with Skiren (a no-age-statement whisky matured exclusively in first-fill bourbon casks) and Glansa (a no-age-statement whisky finished in peated casks) now available.

Scapa distillery was established in 1885 by the Glasgow firm of Macfarlane and Townsend. After several changes of ownership, it closed in 1934 when the Scapa Distillery Company Ltd went into voluntary liquidation. Production resumed two years later under Bloch Brothers Ltd, owner of Glen Scotia and Glengyle distilleries in Campbeltown. In 1954, Scapa was bought by Hiram Walker & Sons (Scotland) Ltd. A rebuilding program was instigated in 1959 and further upgrades took place in 1978.

In 1988, Hiram Walker merged with Allied Vintners to become Allied Distillers Ltd, and in 1994 Scapa was deemed surplus to requirements and mothballed. Three years later, occasional periods of distillation were undertaken by Highland Park staff on behalf of Allied. Scapa’s fortunes improved in 2004, when around \$3.8 million was spent restoring the rundown site, and the following year the distillery passed into the hands of Chivas Bros Ltd, who released a 14-year-old bottling in 2006. This was superseded by a 16-year-old in 2009.

Scapa is Chivas Brothers’ only malt distillery to be located outside its Speyside heartland. One unique feature of the distillery is Scotland’s sole surviving, whisky-making Lomond still. A Lomond still has a tubular neck with adjustable plates that can be moved to create different styles of spirit for blending purposes. The Lomond wash still at Scapa was installed in 1959, having initially been at Milnorduff on Speyside. Today the plates have been removed to allow conventional distillation.

TASTING NOTES

Highland Park has such a unique character profile that it has tended to overshadow Scapa, but for many Orcadians the latter, with its more restrained character, is the dram of choice.

HIGHLAND PARK

HIGHLAND PARK 12-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Sweet smoke, a suggestion of sherry, toffee, spice, and heather in bloom.

Body Supple.

Palate Honey, malt, wood smoke, and citrus fruits.

Finish Long, warming, and softly peaty.



HIGHLAND PARK 12-YEAR-OLD

HIGHLAND PARK 18-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Aromatic and floral, with honey, oak, peat, and a little salt.

Body Rounded.

Palate Sweet peat, more honey, plus ginger and cocoa powder.

Finish Peat, oak, and drying spice.



HIGHLAND PARK 18-YEAR-OLD

DARK ORIGINS

46.8% ABV

Nose Malt, bananas, Jaffa oranges, milk chocolate, and a hint of coal dust.

Body Silky.

Palate Autumn berries, peppery peat, dry sherry, and dark chocolate.

Finish Quite lengthy, smoky, with black pepper.

SCAPA

SCAPA SKIREN

40% ABV

Nose Apples, pear, almonds, cinnamon, a little licorice, and leather.

Body Medium.

Palate Tropical fruits, honey, and vanilla.

Finish Lively spices and citrus fruits, becoming slightly bitter.

SCAPA 16-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Nose Malt and honey, with a hint of ozone.

Body Full and smooth.

Palate Honey, malt, citrus fruit, and light peatiness.

Finish Long and drying, citric, and slightly smoky.



SCAPA 16-YEAR-OLD

ON THE SHORE

Scapa enjoys a unique location overlooking Scapa Flow, which links the North Sea to the Atlantic.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

PULTENEY

FOUNDED 1826

OWNER Inver House
Distillers Ltd (Thai
Beverages plc)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 400,000 gal
(1.8m liters)

WOLFBURN

FOUNDED 2013

OWNER Aurora
Brewing Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 30,000 gal
(135,000 liters)

Pulteney and Wolfburn

THE NORTHEAST OF SCOTLAND IS HOME TO SOME OF
THE COUNTRY'S MOST IDIOSYNCRATIC MALT WHISKY DISTILLERIES,
MANY OF WHICH ARE RELATIVELY UNKNOWN. OUR VOYAGE OF
DISCOVERY STARTS WITH THE MOST ISOLATED OF ALL.

Caithness is the northernmost mainland county of Scotland, more influenced by Norse than Gaelic heritage. Until the opening of Wolfburn distillery at Thurso, Pulteney in Wick could claim to be the most northerly distillery on the UK mainland. There has long been a friendly rivalry between the two principal towns of Wick and Thurso.

Old Pulteney

Pulteney—or Old Pulteney as it is often known after the brand name of its popular single malt—takes its name from Sir William Pulteney, Governor of the British Fisheries Society at the time when it was decided (in the very early years of the 19th century) to develop a new fishing port alongside the borough of Wick. The settlement was called Pulteneytown and as the century progressed and the herring-fishing industry developed over

the course of the century, it came to be home to as many as 1,000 vessels at a time when the herring season was at its height. It was, without doubt, the most productive fishing port in Europe.

The fisherfolk were renowned for their thirst, and illicit distiller James Henderson saw the advantages of moving from Watten into Wick and becoming a licensed whisky maker, setting up in Pulteneytown during 1826. The Henderson family owned the distillery for almost a century, eventually selling it in 1920 to James Watson & Co. Ltd of Dundee.

This was a time in which the Temperance movement was developing a strong following in the port. With the fisherfolk's drinking getting out of hand, the population of Wick and Pulteneytown voted to go "dry" (an act that would not be repealed until 1947). The distillery was now in a town where the purchase of alcohol was banned.

In 1925, James Watson & Co. Ltd became part of the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL), who closed down Pulteney in 1930 as part of a policy of cutting back the whisky industry's "deadwood."

The distillery remained silent for just over two decades, reopening in 1951 in the ownership of Banff lawyer Robert "Bertie" Cumming, who sold the distillery just four years later to Hiram Walker & Sons (Scotland) Ltd. It is due to its total reconstruction programme of 1958–59 that the Pulteney distillery offers a somewhat stark, utilitarian face to the world today.

Externally, Pulteney may be stark, but inside its single pair of stills it is idiosyncratic, to say the least, with the wash still being equipped with a large "boil ball" and a top that appears to have been chopped off.

AN ENORMOUS SPIRIT STILL

Visitors are amazed by the enormous spirit still at Old Pulteney, which looks as though it might be a giant's tuba or sousaphone. Connoisseurs of distilling will find a great deal to intrigue them at this fishing port distillery.





ONGOING MATURATION

Although there have been successful early bottlings of young Wolfburn whisky, there is a large amount maturing in the warehouse for older releases in the future.

Hiram Walker only kept its shiny new distillery for two years before passing it on to Allied Breweries Ltd, for whom it contributed to the Ballantine's blend. Independent bottlings of Old Pulteney were undertaken by Gordon & MacPhail of Elgin, and examples of its 8-year-old bottled in the 1970s are seriously drinkable.

Allied—now in the guise of Allied Domecq plc— sold Pulteney to Inver House Distillers Ltd in 1995, and the Airdrie-based subsidiary of Thai Beverages plc has made a great success of the single malt, led by the flagship 12-year-old, introduced in 1997. The range now includes a no-age-statement expression named Navigator and aged variants up to 35-year-old. The brand is also active in the travel retail arena, offering a number of exclusive bottlings. Marketing focuses around Wick's seafaring heritage and employs the strapline "The Maritime Malt."

Wolfburn

Although Wolfburn was commissioned during early 2013, this is actually the second Wolfburn distillery. The original operated just west of Thurso between 1821 and the late 1850s in the hands of the Smith family. Tax records from the early 19th century reveal that Wolfburn was once the largest distillery in Caithness, turning out some 27,500 gallons (125,000 liters) of spirits during 1826, when it was one of the nine operational distilleries in the county. The "new" Wolfburn distillery is situated just a few yards from the first, and draws its water from the same

source, namely the Wolf Burn. The site on Thurso Business Park comprises bland, modern production buildings and warehouses, with one pair of stills in situ.

Wolfburn has not been shy in offering its young spirits to the public, with a 2016 release of 3-year-old single malt, matured in a mix of Spanish- and American-oak quarter casks previously used by an Islay distillery. This was followed by The Kylver Series—entirely matured in bourbon casks—and Aurora, aged in a mix of ex-Oloroso sherry and ex-bourbon casks.

TASTING NOTES

Old Pulteney's character reflects its maritime location, with fresh, salty, and appetizing notes.

OLD PULTENEY

OLD PULTENEY 12-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Floral, with malt, pine, and a grassy note.

Body Lightly oily.

Palate Sweet and spicy, with fresh fruit, and a hint of salt.

Finish Medium in length, nutty.

OLD PULTENEY 17-YEAR-OLD
46% ABV

Nose Floral, polished oak, sandalwood, and kitchen herbs.

Body Delicate, sparkling, sweet.

Palate Honeycomb, chocolate, assorted



OLD PULTENEY
12-YEAR-OLD

candy, traces of oak and spice, and orange.

Finish Long, gentle, complex, traces of incense and oak, subtle, tender, and long finish.

WOLF BURN

WOLF BURN SINGLE MALT
46% ABV

Nose Soft, with lemon, ginger, and vanilla.

Body Light to medium.

Palate Grassy, then progressively fruitier, with white pepper and more ginger.

Finish Medium to long, slightly smoky.



WOLF BURN
SINGLE MALT

DISTILLERY DETAILS

CLYNELISH

FOUNDED 1819

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1m gal
(4.8m liters)

Clynelish

THE NORTHEAST'S INDIVIDUALITY IS REINFORCED AT THE SECOND OF ITS DISTILLERIES. BLENDERS HAVE LONG KEPT THE UNIQUE OILY AND WAXY-TEXTURED MALTS THAT ARE DISTILLED THERE FOR THEMSELVES.

It is a little ironic that the Clynelish distilling site, found on the outskirts of the Sutherland town of Brora, is best known among aficionados for a single malt that was last produced there in 1983, namely Brora. This whisky has achieved something close to cult status thanks to its regular appearances in Diageo's annual Special Releases range, though when it was being made, most of the whisky was destined for the blending vats of then-owner The Distillers Company Ltd (DCL).

The distillery—some 50 miles northeast of Inverness—is one of the oldest in the Highlands, being established as Clynelish in 1819 by the Marquis of Stafford, later the 1st Duke of Sutherland, principally to provide an outlet for barley grown by the estate's tenants.

The Duke became one of the principal villains of Highland history due to his role in the infamous Highland Clearances.

These involved the removal of tenants from relatively fertile land to provide good grazing areas for sheep (which were altogether more profitable than the people they replaced). Many of the displaced ultimately emigrated.

Several changes of ownership occurred at Clynelish during the 19th century before DCL bought shares in 1912, being joined four years later by John Walker & Sons Ltd, which would become part of DCL in 1925. Clynelish was silent from 1930–1939. After World War II, it went on producing blended malt for DCL. The upturn in the fortunes of Scotch whisky that characterized the 1960s led DCL to build an entirely new Clynelish distillery alongside the existing plant.

Architecturally, the contrast could hardly have been greater, with the six-still 1967 version of Clynelish featuring the same glass-fronted stillhouse design that appeared during

FROM THE SAME SOURCE

The "new" Clynelish distillery continues to use the original water supply from Clynemilton Burn to ensure the quality of its single malt remains unchanged.



“ONCE ‘NEW’ CLYNELISH WAS UP AND RUNNING, THE OLD DISTILLERY WAS BRIEFLY MOTHBALLED”

that decade at other DCL-owned distilleries such as Aberfeldy, Glen Ord, Caol Ila, Teaninich, and Royal Brackla.

New Clynelish

Once “new” Clynelish was up and running, the old distillery was briefly mothballed. It was then re-christened Brora in 1969 and given over to the production of heavily peated single malt, as DCL was concerned about a shortage of peated Islay-style spirit for blending purposes.

The key period of heavily peated Brora lasted from 1969 to 1973, though occasional batches were also produced early in the next decade, before Brora closed forever in 1983. It was one of no fewer than 11 malt distilleries shut down by DCL that year due to over-production within the industry, and a further 10 were to be lost two years later.

Unlike many of its contemporaries that closed at the same time, Brora distillery remains structurally intact and even contains its pair of stills. Although these have been cold now for well over three decades, some 6,000 casks of Clynelish are currently maturing in the two original Brora

warehouses. Meanwhile, “new” Clynelish has spent most of its existence turning out spirit for use in the Johnnie Walker family of blends, with its waxy character being highly prized by blenders.

Gradually, however, it has gained a higher profile as a single malt, beginning with the launch of a 14-year-old in 2002, followed four years later by a Distillers Edition finished in Oloroso sherry casks. Two no-age-statement “Select Reserve” bottlings subsequently appeared in Diageo’s Special Releases series in 2014 and 2015.

Dornoch

The county of Sutherland gained another distillery in 2016, when the Thompson family, which owns Dornoch Castle Hotel, opened a small-scale whisky-making operation in a nearby 135-year-old former fire station. Crowd-funding was used to finance the venture, which features a pair of Portuguese-built stills that can be directly gas-fired. The plan is to use “heritage” varieties of floor-malted barley and brewers’ yeast, with the intention of replicating an older style of single malt whisky.



A SILENT DISTILLERY

The old Brora distillery is now silent, but its name lives on in special bottlings of its fine whisky.



TASTING NOTES

Clynelish has long been a favorite with blenders, but has developed a keen following as a single malt. It is notable for its spicy, “mustard-and-oil” character, with a hint of seaside. Brora, at its peatiest, offers a remarkable contrast.

CLYNELISH

CLYNELISH 14-YEAR-OLD 46% ABV

Nose Fragrant and spicy, waxy, with malt and mild smoke.

Body Smooth.

Palate Citrus fruits and honey, spicy peat, and brine.

Finish Salt, and tropical fruits.

CLYNELISH SELECT RESERVE (DIAGEO SPECIAL RELEASES 2015) 56.1% ABV

Nose Fragrant, with dry grass, orange peel, and vanilla fudge.

Body Waxy.



CLYNELISH
14-YEAR-OLD

Palate Peppery peach and orange, toffee, and cinnamon.

Finish Long, with milk chocolate and ginger notes.

BRORA

BRORA 38-YEAR-OLD (DIAGEO SPECIAL RELEASES 2016) 48.6% ABV

Nose Bung cloths, ashy peat, lemon, and malt.

Body Oily.

Palate Peaty toffee, sweet fruit notes, and ginger.

Finish Lengthy and smoky, with plain chocolate, licorice, and charred oak.



BRORA
38-YEAR-OLD

DISTILLERY DETAILS

BALBLAIR

FOUNDED 1790

OWNER Inver House
Distillers Ltd (Thai
Beverages plc)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 400,000 gal
(1.8m liters)

GLENMORANGIE

FOUNDED 1843

OWNER The Glenmorangie
Company

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.4m gal
(6m liters)

Balblair and Glenmorangie

A LOOK AT A LITTLE-KNOWN GEM, AND HOW ONE OF
BRITAIN'S BEST-SELLING MALTS REINVENTED ITSELF,
CREATING A NEW CATEGORY OF WHISKY.

Balblair

Heading south from Brora, the main A9 road crosses the Dornoch Firth. A right turn at the roundabout after the bridge leads into the small village of Edderton, home to one of Scotland's oldest distilleries. Indeed, whisky making may have taken place here as long ago as 1749, though its legal history dates from 1790, when John Ross established a distillery at Balblair Farm, about half a mile from the current site.

The distillery was rebuilt in 1872, but the present structure dates from 1894–95 and was the work of Inverness wine merchant Alexander Cowan. He took on the lease of Balblair distillery from its owners the Balnagowan Estate, and chose a new location for the operation, beside the Inverness to Wick railway line in order to facilitate deliveries to and from the site. Balblair was silent from 1915 until 1947, when Banff solicitor Robert “Bertie” Cumming purchased it for \$192,000, recommencing distilling the following year. In 1970, Cumming sold Balblair to the Canadian distilling giant Hiram Walker &

Sons Ltd, which already owned five Scottish distilleries (it is now owned by Inver House Distillers, part of the Thai Beverages plc portfolio).

The following year saw a dramatic change to the distillery's single malt range with the existing Balblair Elements (with no age statement), and 10- and 16-year-old expressions being discontinued and replaced by a number of vintage releases, which change on a regular basis.

Since 2012, Balblair has boasted an atmospheric visitor center, which includes a “Time Capsule” room where visitors can learn more about the distillery's history and experience the sights and sounds of particular years in the past when key Balblair vintages were created.

Glenmorangie

Situated just 5 miles (8km) from Balblair on the shores of the Dornoch Firth, close to the historic town of Tain, Glenmorangie is one of the best-known names in the world of single malt Scotch whisky.

The prevailing style is floral, fruity, and relatively light, partly due to the fact that Glenmorangie famously boasts the tallest stills in Scotland, based on the design of the ex-gin stills from London that were installed when the distillery was founded during the 1840s.

The distillery was actually developed by William Mathieson between 1843 and 1849 when the first spirits flowed, and existing parts of the defunct Morangie Brewery were utilized. In 1887, the Glenmorangie Distillery Co. Ltd was formed

A VIEW OF THE HILLS

The picturesque Balblair distillery sits near the village of Edderton and the waters of the Dornoch Firth.





and the plant was entirely rebuilt at that time. Glenmorangie became one of the first distilleries in Scotland to use steam rather than coal to heat its stills.

Macdonald & Muir Ltd, owner of the Highland Queen blended whisky brand, took a majority share in Glenmorangie during 1918 and continued to own it until 2004. In that year, The Glenmorangie Company, as it is now known, was bought by the French luxury goods organization Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy (LVMH) for \$580 million.

A major expansion project was completed during 2008–09 when \$6.5 million was spent on the installation of a supplementary mash tun, four new washbacks, and four more stills, taking the total to 12. This development increased the potential capacity from 880,000 gallons (4 million liters) per year to 1.3 million gallons (6 million liters). Today, Glenmorangie is the second-best-selling single malt in the UK after Glenfiddich, and globally occupies the number four position.

Glenmorangie was at the forefront of developing the practice of wood “finishes”—there are currently three in the core range, namely Lasanta (sherry), Quinta Ruban (port), and Nectar d'Or (Sauternes). They sit alongside the 10-year-old Original and 18- and 25-year-old expressions, plus the highly individualistic Signet, which contains a proportion of “chocolate malt.”

The company has also been innovative in its “Private Collection” bottlings, which see a limited edition of a new expression released on an annual basis. In 2017, the eighth Private Collection release was launched, named Bacalta, which is finished in Madeira casks.

Additionally, Glenmorangie became the first distiller to embrace crowdsourcing, which led to the bottling in 2014 of Glenmorangie Taghta, after aficionados had been invited to participate in all elements of developing the new expression. They began by choosing the liquid from three preselected samples, followed by deciding on the whisky’s name and packaging design. In recent years, Glenmorangie has also launched itself with enthusiasm into the travel retail-exclusive sector, releasing bottlings such as Dornoch, Duthac, Tayne, and Tarlogan.

DISTILLERY BY THE WATER

The Glenmorangie distillery is found along the Dornoch Firth coastline from Balblair, as one travels east toward the North Sea.

TASTING NOTES

Balblair is a light, subtle malt, though capable of holding its own during sherry-cask maturation. Glenmorangie is equally subtle, but also sufficiently characterful to cope with a variety of wood finishes.

BALBLAIR

BALBLAIR 2005
46% ABV

Nose Milk chocolate, vanilla, and a suggestion of ozone.

Body Oily.

Palate Voluptuous, with citrus fruit, honey, and spicy toffee.

Finish Spice and malt combine, medium in length.



BALBLAIR 2005

Palate Sweet and spicy, with more orange and cocoa, plus vanilla.

Finish Fruity, and slowly drying.

GLENMORANGIE
10-YEAR-OLD ORIGINAL
40% ABV

Nose Butterscotch, fruit salad, and fudge.

Body Soft.

Palate Vanilla, toffee, hazelnuts, and gentle spice.

Finish Fruity, with ginger in the spicy finish.



GLENMORANGIE
10-YEAR-OLD ORIGINAL

GLENMORANGIE

GLENMORANGIE SIGNET
46% ABV

Nose Cocoa powder, Jaffa oranges, honey, and sherried oak.

Body Silk-smooth.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

DALMORE

FOUNDED 1839
OWNER Whyte &
Mackay Ltd
(Emperador Inc.)
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 880,000 gal
(4 liters)

TEANINICH

FOUNDED 1817
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 2.2m gal
(9.8m liters)

Dalmore and Teaninich

GRAIN PRODUCTION, OIL RIGS, AND ODD-LOOKING STILLs, THE CENTRAL PART OF NORTHEAST SCOTLAND HAS A FASCINATING HISTORY; IT IS ALSO RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GROWTH OF WHISKY MAKING.

Dalmore

Not many distilleries established during the 19th century were bankrolled with money made in the drug trade. However, Dalmore was founded by Alexander Matheson, who had made a fortune selling opium to the Chinese before retiring from commercial life and buying up estates in the Scottish Highlands.

Matheson employed tenants to run his distillery, located on the shores of the Cromarty Firth and the outskirts of the village of Alness, some 14 miles (22km) southwest of Glenmorangie. In 1867, the Mackenzie family, headed by Andrew, took on the running of Dalmore, and in 1891 they purchased the

distillery from the Matheson family for \$70,000. By that time, the number of stills had been doubled to four, and Dalmore had become the first Scotch malt whisky to be exported to Australia (in 1870).

The distillery remained in the Mackenzie family until 1960, when Mackenzie Brothers (Dalmore) Ltd merged with the Glasgow firm of Whyte & Mackay, who had long been customers of Dalmore single malt for its blending requirements. In 1966, with Scotch whisky booming, another four stills were installed to double capacity. The twin stillhouses at Dalmore are well worth a visit in their own right, as the idiosyncratically shaped stills are fitted with unusual copper cooling jackets; the jacket on "number two spirit still" dates back to 1874. Although offering a core range, starting with a 12-year-old expression, no other Scotch single malt has managed to be as upwardly mobile as Dalmore during the last couple of decades, transforming a solid, sturdy, but unglamorous whisky into a dram on every oligarch's wish list.

Under the control of third-generation master blender Richard Paterson, Dalmore has come to vie with The Macallan in terms of setting auction house records and producing extremely rare and collectable whiskies. The

TASTING NOTES

Dalmore is a robust whisky, ideally suited to sherry-cask aging; rich, flavorful, and perfect with an after-dinner cigar. The underrated Teaninich is grassy in style, yet relatively robust.

DALMORE

DALMORE 12-YEAR-OLD 43% ABV

Nose Orange marmalade, ginger, sherry, and malt.

Body Smooth and quite full.

Palate Sherry, allspice, and citrus fruit notes.

Finish Long and spicy, with vanilla and orange.



DALMORE
12-YEAR-OLD

DALMORE 1263 KING ALEXANDER III 40% ABV

Matured in a mix of Oloroso butts, Madeira butts, cabernet sauvignon barriques, and bourbon barrels.

Nose Vanilla, milk chocolate, raisins, ripe plums, and toffee.

Body Medium.

Palate Orange, vanilla, sherry, hard toffee, and wild berries.

Finish Quite lengthy, with licorice and spice.

TEANINICH

TEANINICH 10-YEAR-OLD (FLORA & FAUNA) 43% ABV

Nose Grassy, with vanilla and pineapple.

Body Quite full.

Palate Slightly oily, with barley, spice, and cocoa powder.

Finish Drying with black pepper.



TEANINICH
10-YEAR-OLD

“DALMORE BECAME THE
FIRST SCOTCH MALT
WHISKY TO BE EXPORTED
TO AUSTRALIA”

Constellation Collection was launched in 2012 (at the same time the visitor center received an extreme makeover), exemplifying the direction Dalmore has taken with its luxury offerings. It comprises 21 individual expressions, and the first collection was sold for \$255,000.

Dalmore has continued to rake in large sums ever since, with just three bottles of 64-year-old Trinitas being produced, one of which sold for \$160,100. In 2013, a single set of a dozen bottles, named The Paterson Collection, was offered for sale through the Harrods store in London, with an asking price of \$1.6 million!

Teaninich

Compared to Dalmore, Teaninich is utilitarian, located on Alness Industrial Estate, which possesses all the allure the name suggests. The two distilleries may be situated less than 2 miles (3km) apart in terms of geography, but in every other way they could not be further apart.

Teaninich is a more workaday distillery than Dalmore, but the role it plays in the Scotch whisky industry is no less valuable, as its make is a key component of some of Diageo's best-selling blends.

Despite presenting a 1970s appearance to the world, Teaninich was established in 1817 by local landowner Captain Hugh Munro, partly in an attempt to thwart the activities of prolific local illicit distillers. The distillery changed ownership several times, and was modernized and extended in 1899, before being sold to the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1933.

As the Scotch whisky industry began to recover and expand in the decades following World War II, two additional stills were installed at Teaninich in 1962, and, in 1970, an entirely new production unit, known as the "A Side" and equipped with six stills, was added. This gave the distillery an annual capacity of 1.4 million gallons (6 million liters).

Overproduction in the industry meant that the old "B Side" was mothballed in 1984, and the newer "A Side" followed suit a year later. The latter reopened in 1991, but the "B Side" was decommissioned in 1999 and subsequently demolished. The changing fortunes of the Scotch whisky



business meant that in 2015 Teaninich received a vast capital injection as the distilling regime was doubled to 20 washbacks and 12 stills, while a new mash filter was also installed.

This replaced the earlier one, fitted in 2000, as an alternative to a mash tun. Teaninich remains one of only two distilleries in Scotland, along with Inchdairnie, to use a mash filter (more common in the brewing industry), which reduces the mashing time and offers greater processing efficiency.

A LOCAL DISTILLERY

A large traditional distillery, Dalmore is run by a small band of stillmen, who come from local families.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

GLEN ORD

FOUNDED 1838

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 2.4m gal
(11m liters)

ROYAL BRACKLA

FOUNDED 1812

OWNER John Dewar &
Sons Ltd (Bacardi Limited)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 880,000 gal
(4m liters)

TOMATIN

FOUNDED 1897

OWNER Tomatin
Distillery Co. Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.1m gal
(5m liters)

Inverness

THE HIGHLAND CAPITAL STANDS ON THE RIVER NESS, AND CLOSE TO LOCH NESS, HOME TO THE “MONSTER” THAT DRAWS MILLIONS OF PEOPLE TO THE LOCH’S SHORES EACH YEAR.

Glen Ord

Glen Ord distillery, located near the Inverness-shire village of Muir of Ord, is another Scottish distillery that has seen potential capacity boosted on a dramatic scale in recent years. However, the focus is not purely on creating large quantities of blending spirit, but also bolstering its owner’s ambitious plans to make The Singleton the world’s best-selling single malt.

The brand comprises Singleton of Glendullan, Singleton of Dufftown, and Singleton of Glen Ord, and together the trio currently occupies the fifth spot in the global malts’ league table. Of the three, the Glen Ord variant, exclusive to Asian markets until 2015, is the most successful in terms of sales.

The distillery was established in 1838 by Thomas Mackenzie in the fertile farmlands of the so-called “Black Isle” peninsula, north

of Inverness. Several changes of ownership followed before, in 1923, it was sold to John Dewar & Sons Ltd, who changed the name of the single malt produced there from Glen Oran to Glen Ord.

The year 1925 saw Dewar’s absorbed into the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL), and Glen Ord was subsequently transferred to DCL’s malt-distilling subsidiary Scottish Malt Distillers (SMD), later becoming part of United Distillers, ultimately becoming part of Diageo.

The distillery was largely rebuilt during the 1960s, when the number of stills was increased from two to six. A state-of-the-art drum maltings plant was constructed adjacent to the distillery in 1968, and, in addition to Glen Ord, the facility also supplies malt to a number of other Diageo distilleries, including Clynelish, Talisker, and Teaninich.

LOCAL SUPPLY

Glen Ord is surrounded by fields that supply many distilleries with barley. The crops flourish in the dark, fertile earth that gives the Black Isle its name.



Two years later, the already expanded distillery underwent a major upgrading program, which left it equipped with two mash tuns, 22 wooden washbacks, and 14 stills. Its capacity of 2.4 million gallons (11 million liters) per year places it in the top half-dozen largest Scottish single malt distilleries.

Royal Brackla

Until the 1980s, the Highland capital of Inverness boasted three distilleries, namely Glen Mhor, Glen Albyn, and Milburn, but all fell victim to DCL's rationalization program during that doleful decade for Scotch whisky.

Royal Brackla distillery is located some 15 miles (25km) northeast of the city, at Cawdor, close to the Moray Firth holiday resort of Nairn. After decades of neglect as a single malt, the much underrated whisky it makes is finally being taken seriously in its own right. The year 2015 saw the release of 12-, 16-, and 21-year-old expressions, as part of owner John Dewar & Sons' "Last Great Malts Collection" project.

One of the older distilleries in the Highlands, Royal Brackla was established in 1812, in an area notorious for illicit distillation, by local landowner Captain William Fraser. It is one of only three Scottish distilleries to have been permitted to use the "royal" prefix or suffix, the others being Glenury and Lochnagar. Brackla was the first to be granted a Royal Warrant, with King William IV bestowing the honor in 1834 for the brand named "The King's Own Whisky."

Several changes of ownership took place at Royal Brackla, and the distillery was rebuilt twice, firstly in 1897 and again in 1965/66, when then-owner DCL added a second pair of stills. Whisky making ceased in 1985, but resumed six years later. In 1997, then-owner United Distillers & Vintners invested \$3.3 million in upgrading Royal Brackla once again. However, the following year it was sold to John Dewar & Sons Ltd, for whom it has provided valuable malt spirit for the company's US best-selling blend, Dewar's White Label.

Tomatin

About 15 miles (25km) south of Inverness, Tomatin stands just off the main north-south A9 road in ruggedly impressive scenery.

TASTING NOTES

Glen Ord is spicy and malty, while Royal Brackla is fruity. For a "classic" rich Highland malt, look to Tomatin.

GLEN ORD

GLEN ORD 12-YEAR-OLD
40% ABV

Nose Milk chocolate, orange, peaches, honey, and malt.

Body Rounded.

Palate More malt, with sherry and cinnamon.

Finish Spicy and slowly drying.



GLEN ORD
12-YEAR-OLD

GLEN ORD SIGNATURE
40% ABV

Nose Sweet, with banana, red apples, vanilla, and soft ginger.

Body Supple.

Palate Fruit notes carry over from the nose, while cloves and nutmeg emerge.

Finish Medium length, with spicy fruit.

ROYAL BRACKLA

ROYAL BRACKLA 12-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Creamy notes, with ripe peaches and spicy malt.

Body Quite full.

Palate Orchard fruits, a hint of smoke, and rich spices.

Finish Softly spiced, medium in length, with cocoa.

TOMATIN

TOMATIN LEGACY
43% ABV

Nose Vanilla, honey, lemon, and under-ripe melons.

Body Supple.

Palate Sweet barley, pineapple, white pepper, and cake mix.

Finish Medium in length, with ginger and mild oak.



TOMATIN
LEGACY

Established by Tomatin Spey Distillery Company, Tomatin operated a single pair of stills until two more were added in 1956, and expansion over the next two decades was relentless. By 1974, no fewer than 23 stills were in place, theoretically able to produce some 2.6 million gallons (12 million liters) of spirit per year, making it by far the largest distillery in Scotland by capacity.

However, that capacity was never utilized, due to overproduction throughout the Scotch whisky industry, and owner Tomatin Distillers closed down the "number two side" of the stillhouse before entering receivership in 1985. The following year, Tomatin became the first Scottish distillery to be entirely owned by Japanese interests, and now operates as part of Marubeni Corporation. Eleven stills were removed in 2002, leaving six working pairs.

In recent years, Tomatin has worked hard to focus on single malt sales, and the core range has expanded to include the no-age-statement Legacy, the 12-, 18-, and 36-year-olds, as well as 14-year-old Port Finish expression and a 1988 vintage. The distillery releases many limited editions and also offers a range of peated single malts under the Cù Bòcan label, which is named after a legendary local hellhound.



SINGLETON CASK

Of the trio of "Singleton" malts offered by Diageo, Glen Ord is the most successful.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

SPEYSIDE

FOUNDED 1990

OWNER Speyside Distillers
Co. Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 132,000 gal
(600,000 liters)

DALWHINNIE

FOUNDED 1897

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 485,000 gal
(2.2m liters)

Speyside and Dalwhinnie

WHILE SPEYSIDE IS ONE OF THE MORE RECENT DISTILLERIES TO COME ON STREAM, DALWHINNIE BEGAN PRODUCTION ALMOST A CENTURY EARLIER, DURING THE GREAT VICTORIAN WHISKY BOOM.

Speyside

Despite its name, Speyside distillery is usually considered to be within the “Highlands” category of single malt production. The distillery is actually the second in the area to use the Speyside name, as one operated in the nearby village of Kingussie for a decade from 1894.

The present-day Speyside distillery has its origins in 1956, when Glasgow-based distiller and whisky broker George Christie purchased a plot of land at Drumguish, close to the River Spey, through his Speyside Distillery & Bonding Company Ltd. The site had previously been home to a barley mill.

Six years after purchasing the land, Christie commissioned local dry-stone waller Alex Fairlie to construct a distillery on the site. It took no fewer than 34 years from Christie buying the land to the first spirit flowing from the new distillery in December 1990.

After 10 years, the ownership passed to a group of private investors, including George Christie’s son, Ricky, by which time a single malt, under the Drumguish label, and an 8-year-old Speyside had been launched.

The year 2012 saw the distillery sold to Harvey’s of Edinburgh, headed by John Harvey McDonough, who for almost two decades had been buying spirit from the distillery and selling it under the Spey label in Asia. In 2015, a new core Spey range was revealed, comprising the tawny port-cask-



LOCAL WATER

A classic Victorian distillery, Dalwhinnie stands in a stunning landscape. The local icy cold water is essential for creating the unique character of Dalwhinnie’s whisky.

“PAINTED WHITE, WITH MALT KILN PAGODAS,
DALWHINNIE STANDS AGAINST STARKLY
SPECTACULAR HIGHLAND SCENERY”

finished Tenné, 12- and 18-year-olds, and the multi-vintage Chairman's Choice and Royal Choice.

Dalwhinnie

Dalwhinnie distillery is located some 15 miles (25km) south of Speyside via the A9, and overlooks Dalwhinnie village. As a Scottish whisky-making facility, this distillery is as classical a showpiece as one could wish for.

Painted white, with gleaming copper-topped malt kiln pagodas and a pair of traditional wooden worm tubs at the fore, Dalwhinnie stands against starkly spectacular Highland

scenery, at an altitude of 1,164 feet (355 meters) above sea level. It was established in 1897 as Strathspey distillery, and changed hands several times before being acquired by the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1926. It has remained in the hands of DCL and successor companies ever since.

The distillery boasts a single pair of stills, which produce a slightly sulphury new make, which is desirable as part of the jigsaw of flavor components available to Diageo's blenders. Dalwhinnie was licensed to DCL subsidiary James Buchanan & Co. as soon as the distillery was acquired by DCL, and its output remains a staple of the Buchanan Blend, which enjoys great popularity in South America.

As a stand-alone single malt, Dalwhinnie is one of Diageo's bestsellers, with the principal expression being a 15-year-old matured in refill bourbon casks. The whisky needs relatively lengthy periods of maturation to remove the sulphur element. There is also a Distillers Edition, finished in Oloroso sherry casks, and, since 2015, a no-age-statement expression named Winter's Gold.



HARD-WORKING STILLS

Only one pair of stills is in operation at Dalwhinnie, with the spirit produced being condensed in traditional worm tubs.



TASTING NOTES

Spey is adaptable enough to cope with maturation and finishing in a variety of cask types. Smooth elegance is the primary characteristic of house Dalwhinnie.

SPEYSIDE

SPEY 12-YEAR-OLD

Finished for six months in new American oak casks.

40% ABV

Nose White pepper, malt, and barley, with a faintly savory note.

Body Medium.

Palate Creamy vanilla, Jaffa oranges, hazelnuts, and cloves.

Finish Black pepper, toffee, and zesty oak.



SPEY
12-YEAR-OLD

DALWHINNIE

DALWHINNIE 15-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Fresh, with heather, vanilla, and pine.

Body Soft.

Palate Fruity, with honey, malt, and a hint of peat.

Finish Elegantly drying, medium in length.



DALWHINNIE
15-YEAR-OLD

DISTILLERY DETAILS

GLEN MORAY

FOUNDED 1897

OWNER La Martiniquaise

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.2m gal
(5.7m liters)

MILTONDUFF

FOUNDED 1824

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.3m gal
(5.8m liters)

GLENLOSSIE

FOUNDED 1876

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 810,000 gal
(3.7m liters)

MANNOCHMORE

FOUNDED 1971

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.4m gal
(6m liters)

ROSEISLE

FOUNDED 2019

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 2.7m gal
(12.5m liters)

Speyside: Elgin

THE TOWN OF ELGIN ITSELF IS HOME TO ONLY ONE DISTILLERY, BUT ITS HINTERLAND IS PEPPERED WITH WHISKY-MAKING VENTURES THAT FOCUS ON SUPPLYING MALT SPIRIT FOR BLENDING.

Glen Moray

Glen Moray distillery is located on the outskirts of Elgin. The town was the historic administrative capital of the Moray region, which encompasses much of the Speyside classification of single malt production. Glen Moray is in the ownership of the French company La Martiniquaise, whose Label 5 blended Scotch is one of the top 10 best-selling whiskies worldwide.

The ongoing growth of Label 5 and the parallel increase in popularity of Glen Moray as a single malt, now the best-selling whisky in the UK, has led to large-scale expansion of the distillery. From an annual capacity of 440,000 gallons (2 million liters) in 2009, potential output had risen to 1.2 million gallons (5.7 million liters) by 2016, with major expansion having taken place during 2015/16. Glen

Moray now has a new full-lauter mash tun; 14 external, stainless steel washbacks; and 9 stills.

The distillery was established in 1897 around the former West Brewery of Henry Arnot & Co., which dated back to 1815. The new whisky-making enterprise traded as the Glen Moray Glenlivet Distillery Co. Ltd.

The distillery was forced to close in 1910, and apart from a brief flurry of activity two years later, it was silent until 1923, when operations recommenced under new owner Macdonald & Muir Ltd. Macdonald & Muir changed its name to Glenmorangie plc in 1996. In 2004, the company was acquired by Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy. During 2008, the Glen Moray distillery and single malt brand were sold to French drinks company La Martiniquaise, which has proved to be an excellent custodian.

A DIFFERENT LOOK

The present appearance of Miltontduff owes much to a mid-1970s reconstruction project.



TASTING NOTES

Glen Moray is a charming and drinkable whisky, now achieving deserved international acclaim. The other three whiskies are a trio of hard-to-find, underrated drams, each with a grassy, aromatic style.

GLEN MORAY

GLEN MORAY CLASSIC PEATED 40% ABV

Nose Vanilla, with peat smoke for attention, and a hint of new leather.

Body Relatively light.

Palate Spicy vanilla and sweet peat.

Finish Quite lengthy, with lots of spice.



GLEN MORAY
CLASSIC PEATED

GLEN MORAY 12-YEAR-OLD 40% ABV

Nose Vanilla, pear drops, and sweet oak.

Body Smooth.

Palate Summer fruits, allspice, and vanilla.

Finish Medium in length, with spicy orchard fruits.

MILTONDUFF

MILTONDUFF CASK STRENGTH EDITION 16-YEAR-OLD (1998) 52.9% ABV

Nose Soft toffee, vanilla, and a suggestion of cinnamon.

Body Supple.

Palate Cocoa powder, Jaffa orange, and walnuts.

Finish Lengthy, with citrus fruit.

GLENLOSSIE

GLENLOSSIE 10-YEAR-OLD 43% ABV

Nose Light, with vanilla, cereal, and new-mown hay.

Body Voluptuous.

Palate Ginger, barley sugar, and sweet oak.

Finish Grist, black pepper, and light oak.



GLENLOSSIE
10-YEAR-OLD

MANNOCHMORE

MANNOCHMORE 12-YEAR-OLD 43% ABV

Nose Fresh and light, with citrus fruits.

Body Medium.

Palate Floral, with vanilla and ginger.

Finish Medium length, with almonds.

Miltonduff

Just under 4 miles (6km) southwest of Elgin, Miltonduff distillery is located in the rich barley-growing countryside where Pluscarden Abbey stands. The area was once home to some 50 illicit distilling ventures, one of which was called Milton. This distillery turned legal in 1824 when Robert Bain and Andrew Peary took out a license, and was renamed Miltonduff.

Since 1936, Miltonduff has been a key component of the Ballantine's blended Scotch brand despite a succession of owners that culminated in Chivas Brothers, who have held it since 2005. Ballantine's is the world's second-best-selling blend after Johnnie Walker.

Today's Miltonduff distillery bears little or no resemblance to the original, having been rebuilt in 1974. The six large stills produce a relatively heavy and slightly oily spirit, which is very elusive as a single malt bottling.

Glenlossie

Glenlossie is situated in Birnie, less than 5 miles (8km) south of Elgin, and dates back to 1876. A controlling interest passed to the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1919, and the distillery has been owned by DCL and successor companies ever since.

As the post-World War II growth in Scotch sales gained momentum, a third pair of stills was installed at Glenlossie in 1962. The distillery is notable for the fact that the three spirit stills are

fitted with purifiers, which are partly responsible for the relatively light style of the whisky they produce. Traditionally, Glenlossie has been a component of the Haig blend, and its single malt bottlings are some of Diageo's hardest to find.

Mannochmore

As demand for Scotch grew in the 1960s and '70s, an entirely new distillery was built by DCL alongside Glenlossie. Named Mannochmore, it shared the Glenlossie workforce, but took its water from a different source to its elder sibling.

The Glenlossie/Mannochmore site is home to 14 warehouses that are capable of holding up to 250,000 casks of maturing whisky; they serve a wide range of Diageo's distilleries. A biomass facility was also created within the complex in 2012/13, and there is also a dark grains plant to process pot ale into cattle feed.

Roseisle

Roseisle distillery cost \$58.5 million to construct, and is adjacent to Diageo's Roseisle Maltings, close to the Moray Firth coast and some 5 miles (8km) from Elgin. Construction took place between 2007 and 2009, with the first production run occurring in January 2009.

Roseisle is flexible in terms of the spirit character it can produce, majoring in a relatively light Speyside style, but with periods of more robust spirit production being undertaken through its 16 stills. Three wash and three spirit

DISTILLERY DETAILS

LINKWOOD

FOUNDED 1821
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 1.2m gal
(5.6m liters)

LONGMORN

FOUNDED 1894
OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 989,000 gal
(4.5m liters)

BENRIACH

FOUNDED 1897
OWNER BenRiach
Distillery Company
(Brown-Forman Co.)
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 615,000 gal
(2.8m liters)

GLEN ELGIN

FOUNDED 1898
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 600,000 gal
(2.7m liters)

BENROMACH

FOUNDED 1898
OWNER Gordon &
MacPhail
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 150,000 gal
(700,000 liters)

TEMPERATURE CONTROL

Longmorn operates four pairs of stills fitted with subcoolers. The wash stills feature heat exchangers to maximize efficiency.

“IF ROSEISLE IS DIAGEO’S LATEST SHOWPIECE DISTILLERY, THEN LINKWOOD IS ONE OF ITS OLDEST”

stills are equipped with stainless steel condensers to allow for the distillation of spirit with a slightly sulphury dimension.

Roseisle was created to supply malt spirit for blending purposes, especially for the Johnnie Walker blend. Consequently, no single malt release has been forthcoming to date.

Linkwood

If Roseisle is Diageo’s latest showpiece distillery, then Linkwood is one of its oldest. Established in 1821, it was founded by Peter Brown, factor for the Seafield Estates, with the first spirit flowing in 1825.

A program of major refurbishment was undertaken in 1962 by then owner the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL), followed nine years later by a reconstruction project that created a new stillhouse, with four stills. This was named “Linkwood B,” while the old, two-still unit was “Linkwood A.” The former closed in 1985, but reopened in 1990, and, until 1996, its intermittent output was mixed with that of its newer sibling to create a relatively complex malt, much loved by blenders.

Between 2011 and 2013, major changes occurred at Linkwood, with some of the original distillery buildings being demolished, while the stillhouse was extended and a third pair of stills was installed.

Longmorn

One of the three distilleries located close to the main A941 road south of Elgin, Longmorn was built at a cost of \$97,000 by Glenlossie creator John Duff & Company in 1893/94, with the first spirit flowing in December 1894. It has been owned by Pernod Ricard subsidiary Chivas Brothers since 2001.

The number of stills at Longmorn was increased to eight during the 1972 and 1974 expansion programs, and until 1994 the wash stills continued to be coal-fired. The year 2012 saw a major overhaul of Longmorn, when capacity was increased by almost a third to 990,000 gallons (4.5 million liters) per year.

BenRiach

BenRiach stands close to Longmorn, and was built by John Duff & Company in 1897, though it only operated for three distilling seasons before falling victim to the downturn in whisky production that occurred at the turn of the 20th century.

Remarkably, Benriach (as it was originally called) stood silent until 1965, when it was substantially rebuilt by The Glenlivet Distillers Ltd. A second pair of stills was added in 1985, but the distillery was mothballed in 2002. Two years later, a consortium of businessmen led by ex-Burn Stewart Distillers’ director Billy Walker bought the distillery and established the BenRiach Distillery Company Ltd, soon recommencing production.

Under their regime, the distillery was renamed “BenRiach,” and issued a veritable torrent of expressions, both permanent and limited. The single malt brand was soon firmly established. Both peated and unpeated variants were released at a variety of ages, from the no-age-statement Heart of Speyside to a 35-year-old. In 2016, the US spirits giant Brown-Forman Co. acquired the BenRiach Distillery Company Ltd, for \$405 million.



Glen Elgin

Like BenRiach, Glen Elgin came on stream just as the whisky industry was about to turn from “boom” to “bust.” Production commenced in May 1900, but Glen Elgin worked for a mere five months before closing. It reopened in 1904 and ultimately became part of DCL in 1930.

Much of the present distillery dates from a 1962 rebuilding program, when the number of stills, equipped with worm tubs, was increased from two to six. An upgrading venture in 2012 involved the installation of three additional washbacks, taking the total to nine, and allowing for a 50 percent increase in potential output.

Benromach

In terms of distilleries within the Elgin area, Benromach could best be termed an “outlier,” being situated close to Forres, a dozen miles west of Elgin.

The distillery was established in 1898 by the Benromach Distillery Company, and came on stream in May 1900. It proceeded to have several different owners before being purchased in 1953 by DCL.

Benromach was one of the casualties of DCL's draconian program of distillery closures during the 1980s, ceasing production in 1983. A decade



later, Elgin independent bottler Gordon & MacPhail acquired the distillery and set about restoring and re-equipping the site, and whisky-making began once more in 1998.

The bespoke stills were considerably smaller than their predecessors, and were designed to produce a relatively full-bodied spirit. The malt at Benromach is peated to some 12ppm.

Expressions released range from a core 10-year-old to a remarkable 55-year-old, and since 2006, an Organic variant has also been available. Such is the success of the Benromach brand that 9 new washbacks were installed in 2015, taking the total to 14, and allowing for a theoretical 40 percent increase in output.

WAREHOUSES AT BENROMACH

Each new warehouse constructed at Benromach is fitted in traditional “dunnage” style, with casks stacked no more than three high on wooden runners.

TASTING NOTES

The underrated Linkwood is fruity and floral, while Longmorn and Glen Elgin are after-dinner indulgences. BenRiach varies in style, but is best as an afternoon dram.

LINKWOOD

LINKWOOD 12-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Fragrant and grassy, with mixed nuts.

Body Slightly oily.

Palate Sweet, with almonds, vanilla, and marzipan.

Finish Relatively lengthy, with citrus fruits.



LINKWOOD
12-YEAR-OLD

LONGMORN

LONGMORN THE DISTILLER'S CHOICE

40% ABV

Nose Spicy toffee, apples, and red berries.

Body Soft.

Palate Caramel, spice, white pepper, and milk chocolate.

Finish Toffee, more pepper, and developing tannins.

BENRIACH

BENRIACH 10-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Early earthy notes give way to vanilla, ginger, and green apples.

Body Rounded.

Palate Smooth, with gentle spice, apricots, and walnuts.

Finish Spicy and nutty.

GLEN ELGIN

GLEN ELGIN 12-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Sherry, figs, and spice, with heather honey.

Body Medium to full.

Palate Malt, honey, and gingery orange.

Finish Lengthy, with spice and soft oak.

BENROMACH

BENROMACH 10-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Lightly peated and medium-bodied, Benromach is a reminder of what many Speyside single malts were like in times gone by.

Nose Smoky and buttery, with ginger and toffee.

Body Slightly oily.

Palate Citrus fruits, spice, malt, and subtle wood smoke.

Finish Relatively long, with bonfire embers.

BENROMACH ORGANIC

43% ABV

Nose Vanilla, malt, and spicy-fresh oak.

Body Soft.

Palate Toffee, orchard fruits, oak, and cloves.

Finish Fruity, with newly planed wood.



BENROMACH
ORGANIC

DISTILLERY DETAILS

GLEN GRANT

FOUNDED 1840

OWNER Gruppo Campari

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.3m gal
(6.2m liters)

GLEN SPEY

FOUNDED 1878

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 300,000 gal
(1.4m liters)

SPEYBURN

FOUNDED 1897

OWNER Inver House
Distillers (Thai
Beverages plc)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 920,000 gal
(4.2m liters)

GLENROTHES

FOUNDED 1878

OWNER Berry Bros. &
Rudd (Edrington)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.2m gal
(5.6m liters)

Speyside: Rothes

THERE HAS BEEN A SETTLEMENT WHERE ROTHES NOW STANDS SINCE AS FAR BACK AS 600CE. ALL THE VILLAGE'S DISTILLERIES WERE ESTABLISHED IN THE 19TH CENTURY.

The village of Rothes is situated around the A941 road between Elgin and Craigellachie, close to the River Spey. As a distilling community, it is home not only to four whisky-making operations, but also to the renowned coppersmiths Forsyth's of Rothes. On the outskirts of the village is the Rothes CoRDe Ltd biomass-fired plant, which takes in 115,000 tons of wet draff from local whisky distilleries each year, along with 60,000 tons of wood chips. The plant generates 7.2 MWe—enough to supply 9,000 homes with electricity.

Glen Grant

Glen Grant was the first distillery to be built in Rothes and undoubtedly enjoys the highest profile, with attractive visitor facilities. The distillery was established in 1840 by brothers John and James Grant, and in 1872 it was inherited by James Grant's son, also James, who was frequently referred to as "The Major." He was an archetypal Victorian Highland laird, traveler, and big-game hunter as well as a shrewd businessman who oversaw the continuing growth and prosperity of Glen Grant whisky. Among The Major's achievements was the development of Glen Grant's woodland garden, which remains popular with visitors even today. It was planted with new and exotic species not usually found in the north of Scotland, and equipped with a "dram safe" in the rocky bank of the burn, which flows through the distillery grounds.



THE MAJOR'S GARDENS

Designed by "The Major," the Glen Grant gardens have been beautifully restored. The "dram safe" may still be unlocked for very special visitors.

Toward the end of the 20th century, a century after The Major had inherited Glen Grant, family ownership of distilleries was becoming a thing of the past. In 1977, Glen Grant was acquired by Canadian distilling giant the Seagram Company, before being passed on to Pernod Ricard in 2001. Five years later, it became the first Scotch whisky distillery to be owned by an Italian company, when Gruppo Campari spent \$100 million acquiring the Glen Grant business.

Subsequently, a \$8.3 million bottling hall was developed in 2013 and a second line was added in 2015. The following year saw a revamp of the Glen Grant single malt range, with the existing no-age-statement Major's Reserve and 10-year-old expressions being joined by 12- and 18-year-olds, along with a non-chill-filtered version of the 12-year-old, exclusive to travel retail outlets.

The distillery is equipped with eight stills, and the wash stills have unusual vertical sides, which means they are often referred to as "German helmets." All the stills are fitted

“GLEN GRANT WAS THE FIRST DISTILLERY TO BE BUILT IN ROTHES AND ENJOYS THE HIGHEST PROFILE, WITH ATTRACTIVE VISITOR FACILITIES”

with purifiers, which create a great deal of reflux, giving the spirit its characteristically delicate style.

Glen Spey

The second distillery to be established in Rothes after Glen Grant, Glen Spey was created in 1878 by Macallan licensee James Stuart & Co. The distillery originally traded as Mill of Rothes, as the building was converted from an oatmeal mill.

In 1887, London distiller W&A Gilbey Ltd became the first English company to buy a Scottish distillery, paying James Stuart \$53,000 for the privilege.

Ultimately, Glen Spey became part of Grand Metropolitan Hotels and, in 1997, “Grand Met” and Guinness merged to form Diageo plc, with Glen Spey becoming part of the distilling giant’s portfolio. The distillery is equipped with a single pair of stills fitted with purifiers, and the only “house” bottling is a Flora & Fauna 12-year-old.

Speyburn

Like so many of its Speyside neighbors, Speyburn was established during the last decade of the 19th century, when the fever of whisky speculation was rife. Though the stillhouse was not completed in the winter of 1897, the distillery manager insisted on firing up the stills in order to be able to say in future that the new distillery had some spirit produced during the year of Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee.

Ownership of Speyburn passed to the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1916, and the distillery proceeded to make “blending” malt for DCL until 1991, when it was acquired by Inver House Distillers Ltd. It began to market the whisky as a single malt, which enjoys strong and growing sales, especially in the US.

Such was the momentum behind Speyburn, that \$6 million was spent in 2014/15 to double the distillery’s output.

Glenrothes

Glenrothes distillery is located by the Rothes Burn in the shadow of the village graveyard. The first spirit flowed in December 1879. From 1887, Glenrothes was part of Highland Distilleries, later Highland Distillers. By the time Edrington acquired Highland Distillers in 1999, the distillery boasted 10 stills, and its “make” was a staple of the Cutty Sark and Famous Grouse blends.

The first single malt bottlings had only been undertaken five years earlier, and the concept of offering “vintage” releases was developed in association with Cutty Sark owner



TEN-STILL DISTILLERY

The stillhouse at Glenrothes boasts five pairs of stills. Distillation is undertaken at a very slow rate.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

CRAIGELLACHIE

FOUNDED 1891

OWNER John Dewar
& Sons (Bacardi Limited)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 900,000 gal
(4.1m liters)

THE MACALLAN

FOUNDED 1824

OWNER Edrington

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 2.42m gal
(11m liters)

“NOT ONLY IS CRAIGELLACHIE HOME TO THE EPONYMOUS DISTILLERY, BUT IT ALSO BOASTS TWO OF THE BEST WHISKY BARS IN SPEYSIDE”

and leading London society wine merchant Berry Bros. & Rudd. A number of no-age-statement bottlings, such as Select Reserve, Vintage Reserve, and Peated Cask Reserve, have followed more recently, and in 2010 Edrington sold the Glenrothes single malt brand to Berry Bros. while retaining the distillery. In return, Edrington acquired Cutty Sark.

Craigellachie

The small village of Craigellachie, located by the confluence of the River Spey and the River Fiddich, punches well above its weight in the world of Scotch whisky. Not only is it home to the eponymous distillery, but it also boasts two of the best whisky bars in Speyside, in the shape of The Highlander Inn and the famous Quaich Bar in the nearby Craigellachie Hotel. As if that was not enough, the renowned Speyside Cooperage, with its excellent visitor facilities, is to be found on the outskirts of the village.

Craigellachie distillery was originally built by the Craigellachie Distillery Company Ltd in 1891, but today's distillery is the product of a total reconstruction program undertaken by the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1964/65, when the number of stills was doubled from one pair to two. Craigellachie was one of four distilleries sold to John Dewar & Sons' parent company, Bacardi Limited, by Diageo in 1998.

Craigellachie had an ultra-low profile as a single malt until 2014, when a series of expressions, led by 13-, 17-, and 23-year-olds, was launched as part of Dewar's "Last Great Malts" project.

The Macallan

The Macallan is one of those single malt brands that is known worldwide and has become a byword for the finest sherry cask-matured whiskies. It is the third-best-selling Scotch malt globally after fellow Speysiders Glenfiddich and Glenlivet. The distillery is located high above the River Spey at Easter Elchies. It was first licensed to Alexander Reid in 1824 and was taken over in 1868 by James Stuart, who went on to establish

Glen Spey in nearby Rothes, and in 1892 by Roderick Kemp, who undertook a program of expansion. The Roderick Kemp Trust, later a limited company, operated The Macallan from 1909, and in 1965 the complement of stills was doubled from 6 to 12. In 1974, that number rose to 18, and the following year saw the addition of three more stills.

In 1986, the Japanese distiller Suntory acquired 25 percent of the stocks in what was now Macallan-Glenlivet plc. A decade later, Highland Distilleries Ltd bought the rest of the stocks, and the Kemp family's involvement came to an end. In 1999, a partnership of Edrington and William Grant & Sons Ltd purchased Highland Distilleries, going on to form The 1887 Company.

During 2008/09, a disused stillhouse, containing six stills, was recommissioned, giving the distillery a 30 percent increase in capacity, but in 2015



work started to construct an entirely new distillery alongside the existing one. Its unique design comprises five landscaped “production pods,” which will contain a total of 30 stills.

This may seem a lot, but The Macallan boasts the smallest spirit stills in Speyside, with one wash still for every two spirit stills. On top of this, a very narrow “cut” is taken from the squat stills to produce a rich, sweet, and oily spirit.

Since 2004, the traditional Sherry Oak range has been accompanied by a Fine Oak range, where there is less emphasis on maturing the spirit in ex-sherry, European oak casks. In 2012/13, the 1824 Series was introduced, comprising four no-age-statement expressions, which now form the core offering, along with 12-year-old Double Cask, launched in 2016.

The Macallan also offers many limited editions of rare and old single malts, and is renowned for achieving record sales prices. In 2010, a 1949 Macallan in a Lalique Cire Perdue decanter was sold at a charity auction for the grand sum of \$460,000!



TASTING NOTES

Glen Spey and Speyburn are all relatively light in body, and make good aperitifs. On the other hand, Glen Grant, Craigellachie, and The Macallan are generally full-bodied, complex, post-prandial malts.

GLEN GRANT

GLEN GRANT
12-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Fruity, with oranges and lemons, then fudge and vanilla notes emerge.

Body Medium.

Palate More fresh fruit, with spicy honey and caramel.

Finish Medium length, cinnamon, nutmeg, and delicate oak.

GLEN GRANT
18-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Floral, with barley, spice, and soft-oak notes.

Body Firm.

Palate Vanilla, malt, spicy golden raisins, and raisins.

Finish Lengthy, spicy, and nutty, with light tannins.



GLEN GRANT
18-YEAR-OLD

GLEN SPEY

GLEN SPEY
12-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Malt and tropical fruits.

Body Slight oiliness.

Palate Fresh fruits, toffee, and vanilla.

Finish Nutty, oaky, and slightly smoky.



GLEN SPEY
12-YEAR-OLD

SPEYBURN

SPEYBURN
10-YEAR-OLD
40% ABV

Nose Soft, with mixed nuts and fragrant spices.

Body Medium.

Palate Smooth, vanilla, spice, and more nuttiness.

Finish Medium in length, slowly drying.



SPEYBURN
10-YEAR-OLD

GLENROTHES

GLENROTHES SELECT RESERVE
43% ABV

Nose Toffee, spice, and ripe fruits.

Body Medium to full.

Palate Creamy vanilla, soft spices, sherry, and citrus fruit.

Finish Orange, spicy, and drying.

CRAIGELLACHIE

CRAIGELLACHIE
13-YEAR-OLD
46% ABV

Nose Savory, burned matches, green apples, and hazelnuts.

Body Quite full.

Palate Toffee apples, honey, faint smoke, and sawdust.

Finish Cranberries, spice, gentle smoke, and mildly herbal.



CRAIGELLACHIE
13-YEAR-OLD

THE MACALLAN

THE MACALLAN GOLD
(1824 SERIES)
40% ABV

Nose Peaches, fudge, dark chocolate, and a hint of new leather.

Body Relatively light.

Palate Green apples, malt, spice, and oak.

Finish Spicy oak.



THE MACALLAN
GOLD

THE MACALLAN
DOUBLE CASK
40% ABV

Nose Earthy sherry and old leather, polished oak, and cherry blossom.

Body Medium to full.

Palate Sherry, cocoa, nutty vanilla, orange peel, and developing wood spices.

Finish Insistent spices, more cocoa, and tangy oak.

SMALL STILL

The small stills give the whisky The Macallan's distinctive style.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

STRATHISLA

FOUNDED 1786

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 550,000 gal
(2.5m liters)

GLEN KEITH

FOUNDED 1957

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.4m gal
(6m liters)

STRATHMILL

FOUNDED 1891

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 570,000 gal
(2.6m liters)

AULTMORE

FOUNDED 1896

OWNER John Dewar &
Sons (Bacardi)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 700,000 gal
(3.2m liters)

Speyside: Keith

THE TOWN OF KEITH IS SITUATED MIDWAY BETWEEN INVERNESS
AND ABERDEEN, AND BOASTS A RICH TEXTILE HERITAGE,
AS WELL AS BEING HOME TO THREE WHISKY DISTILLERIES.

The town of Keith is located 17 miles (28km) southeast of Elgin and has its origin in the 8th century, when it was a significant center for cattle trading. It sits beside the River Isla, and is home to three distilleries while also serving as a major base for Chivas Brothers' maturation activities.

Strathisla

Of Keith's three distilleries, Strathisla is the oldest, and is possibly the oldest in the Highlands. It was established by George Taylor and Alexander Milne in 1786, initially using the name Milltown. In 1825, it officially became known as Milton, and the Strathisla name was adopted in 1870, only to be changed back to Milton in 1890. The year 1949 saw Strathisla distillery being sold to the Seagram Company's newly acquired Chivas Brothers' subsidiary at an auction for the sum of \$200,000, which began to restore the somewhat dilapidated enterprise. The name reverted to Strathisla in 1951, and during 1965 the complement of stills was doubled to four. In 2001, the Chivas Group, along with Strathisla, was acquired by Pernod Ricard. Strathisla distillery is marketed as the "Home of Chivas Regal," and Strathisla remains the blend's "signature" malt.

Glen Keith

Glen Keith was one of the first new distilleries to be built after World War II, and was developed between 1957 and 1960 on the site of a former corn mill, just across the river from Strathisla. It was commissioned by Strathisla's owner, the

Seagram Company, as demand for the Chivas Regal blend was growing strongly in the US at that time.

Glen Keith was the focus of much innovation over the years, becoming the first Scottish distillery to have its stills heated by gas (1970), while a decade later it became one of the first distilleries in Scotland to install a microprocessor to control the processes of mashing and distilling.

Glen Keith fell silent in 1999 and only just reopened in 2013, after \$11–13 million had been spent upgrading and expanding the distillery, resulting in an increase

STRATHISLA IN SPRING
With its twin pagodas and waterwheel, Strathisla is unquestionably one of the most attractive distilleries in the Highlands.



in potential output of 550,000 gallons (2.5 million liters) to around 1.4 million gallons (6 million liters).

Strathmill

Strathmill is situated by the River Isla, less than a mile south of Strathisla. Like many of the other low-profile, Diageo-owned Speyside distilleries, such as Marnochmore and Glen Spey, it is difficult to find a Strathmill single malt.

Strathmill dates from 1891/92 and was originally christened Glenisla-Glenlivet distillery. It was located in a former flour mill, and was subsequently acquired by London-based gin distiller and owner of Glen Spey, W&A Gilbey Ltd in 1895 for \$46,000, which adopted the Strathmill name at the time of purchase. Through a series of takeovers and mergers, the distillery ultimately became part of the Diageo portfolio.

In 1968, a second pair of stills, fitted with purifiers to create a relatively light-bodied whisky, was installed. Purifiers were also fitted to the existing two stills. The whisky continues to be closely associated with the J&B blend, as it has since the early 1960s.

“THE TOWN OF KEITH HAS ITS ORIGINS IN THE 8TH CENTURY, WHEN IT WAS A SIGNIFICANT CENTER FOR CATTLE TRADING”

Aultmore

Like Strathmill, Aultmore was always hard to find as a single malt away from its hometown of Keith, but that situation changed when owner John Dewar & Sons Ltd launched 12-, 18-, 21-, and 25-year-old expressions in 2014/15.

The distillery is situated some 3 miles (4km) northwest of Keith, beside the B9016 Keith to Buckie road. It was established in 1896/97 by distillery entrepreneur Alexander Edward, who was the cofounder of Craigellachie distillery and owner of Benrinnes.

In 1923, Aultmore was sold to John Dewar & Sons Ltd, and two years later Dewars became part of Distillers Company Ltd (DCL). Aultmore was entirely rebuilt in 1971, when virtually all of the original structures were demolished, and capacity was doubled. Aultmore returned to the



DISTILLERY DETAILS

GLENTAUCHERS

FOUNDED 1897

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 920,000 gal
(4.2m liters)

AUCHROISK

FOUNDED 1974

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.3m gal
(5.9m liters)

KNOCKDHU

FOUNDED 1893

OWNER Inver House
Distillers Ltd (Thai
Beverages Inc.)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 440,000 gal
(2m liters)

INCHGOWER

FOUNDED 1871

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 715,000 gal
(3.2m liters)

ownership of John Dewar in 1998, when it was one of the four distilleries sold by Diageo to Dewar's parent company, Bacardi Limited.

Glentauchers

The single malts of Glentauchers and Auchroisk distilleries are also hard to find, as both are principally reserved for blending purposes by their respective industry-leading owners.

Glentauchers is situated some 4 miles (6km) west of Keith via the A95, and the distillery dates from the dying years of the great Victorian whisky boom, being built in 1897/98 by blended whisky pioneer James Buchanan and Co. Ltd and Glasgow whisky merchant W.P. Lowrie & Co. Ltd. When what had become Buchanan-Dewar Ltd was absorbed into the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1925, Glentauchers also entered its vast portfolio, and when the next period of "boom" hit the whisky industry in the 1960s, the distillery was significantly upgraded and expanded. During 1965/66, the complement of stills trebled from two to six, and the stillhouse, mash house, and tun room were reconstructed. Despite this, Glentauchers was silent from 1985 to 1989, when it was purchased by Allied Distillers. The distillery subsequently

became part of Chivas Brothers following its acquisition of Allied Domecq assets in 2005.

Auchroisk

Auchroisk is located at Mulben, 2½ miles (4km) west of Glentauchers. The site has importance beyond its supply of malt spirit for the J&B blend—it is home to a warehousing complex that stores maturing whisky from a number of Diageo's distilleries. Other malts are vatted on site and then transported south by road tanker for blending.

Auchroisk boasts four pairs of stills and was built between 1972 and 1974 for International Distillers & Vintners' (IDV) subsidiary Justerini & Brooks Ltd, owner and namesake of the popular J&B blended Scotch brand. The white-harled distillery is a striking mix of traditional and modern architecture, which includes decorative Scottish vernacular-style circular towers.

In 1986, some of the first year's production from the distillery was bottled as a 12-year-old single malt and marketed as The Singleton, as it was feared that the word "Auchroisk" (Oth-rusk) would prove beyond the ability of potential consumers to pronounce.

Knockdhu

Both Knockdhu and Inchgower may be considered "outliers" within the definition of "Keith area" distilleries. Knockdhu is located at Knock, 9 miles (14km) west of Keith, and is highly unusual in that its single malt brand does not take the distillery name. Rather it is called anCnoc, to avoid confusion with Knockando, though since the name was adopted in 1993, anCnoc has arguably gained a higher profile than its Diageo competitor. Knockdhu has the distinction of being the only distillery constructed for Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) rather than acquired as part of a takeover or merger. It was created in 1893/94, principally to supply malt spirit for the popular Haig brand.

BLEND OF AGES

Architecturally, Auchroisk is a clever blend of traditional and modern, giving it a timeless quality.



TASTING NOTES

Of the Keith whiskies, Inchgower and Auchroisk are aperitifs, while Strathisla and Aultmore are after-dinner malts. Glen Keith, anCnoc, and Strathmill (as well as Strathisla) are all fruity whiskies, and Glentauchers is described as “soothing.”

STRATHISLA

STRATHISLA 12-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Sherry, malt, and spicy-stewed fruit.

Body Medium to full.

Palate Honey, soft toffee, hazelnuts, and oak.

Finish Gingerly oak and a hint of smoke.



STRATHISLA
12-YEAR-OLD

GLEN KEITH

GLEN KEITH 19-YEAR-OLD CASK STRENGTH EDITION (DISTILLED 1995)
56.3% ABV

Nose Figs, ripe banana, and malt.

Body Viscous.

Palate Sherry, vanilla fudge, and slight pepperiness.

Finish Lengthy, gently drying.



GLEN KEITH
19-YEAR-OLD

STRATHMILL

STRATHMILL 12-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Shy and grassy, nutty, with vanilla.

Body Medium.

Palate Vanilla, mixed nuts, and allspice.

Finish Drying, with white pepper and developing oak.



AULTMORE
12-YEAR-OLD

AULTMORE

AULTMORE 12-YEAR-OLD
46% ABV

Nose Fresh and fruity, with peaches, new-mown hay, and a hint of coffee.

Body Soft and rounded.

Palate Orchard fruits, brittle toffee, and subtle spice.

Finish Spicy fudge, cream, and coffee.

GLEN TAUCHERS

GLEN TAUCHERS 17-YEAR-OLD—1998 (GORDON & MACPHAIL)
56.8% ABV

Nose Malt, ripe apples, and ginger.

Body Voluptuous.

Palate Black pepper, hazelnuts, figs, and cloves.

Finish Peppery and slightly herbal.

AUCHROISK

AUCHROISK 10-YEAR-OLD (FLORA & FAUNA SERIES)
43% ABV

Nose Light and floral, with spicy malt.

Body Soft.

Palate Fresh fruit, milk chocolate, and sweet biscuit notes.

Finish Medium in length, raisins, and very mild peat.



AUCHROISK
10-YEAR-OLD

KNOCKDHU

ANCNOC 12-YEAR-OLD
46% ABV

Nose Sweet and floral, with white pepper and cereal notes.

Body Medium.

Palate Boiled sweets, mixed spices, barley, and orchard fruits.

Finish Medium in length, with spice and fruits.

INCHGOWER

INCHGOWER 14-YEAR-OLD (FLORA & FAUNA SERIES)
43% ABV

Nose Light, with spicy pear and a suggestion of brine.

Body Relatively light.

Palate Malty and grassy, then drying.

Finish Brine and spices, quite short.



INCHGOWER
14-YEAR-OLD

It quietly worked away for the best part of nine decades before being closed in 1983. Five years later the distillery was acquired by Inver House Distillers Ltd, who recommenced whisky making the following year.

Recent years have seen a significant amount of marketing spend devoted to the anCnoc brand, which now boasts core 12-, 18-, and 24-year-old expressions, along with a peated range, which was introduced in 2014.

Inchgower

Inchgower is found on the outskirts of the Moray Firth fishing port of Buckie, and its output has long been associated with the Bell's blend, which is the UK's second best seller.

The distillery was established by Alexander Wilson & Co. in 1871. When Wilson's company was declared bankrupt in 1936, Buckie Town Council stepped in and acquired the distillery for the sum of \$2,800. When it sold Inchgower

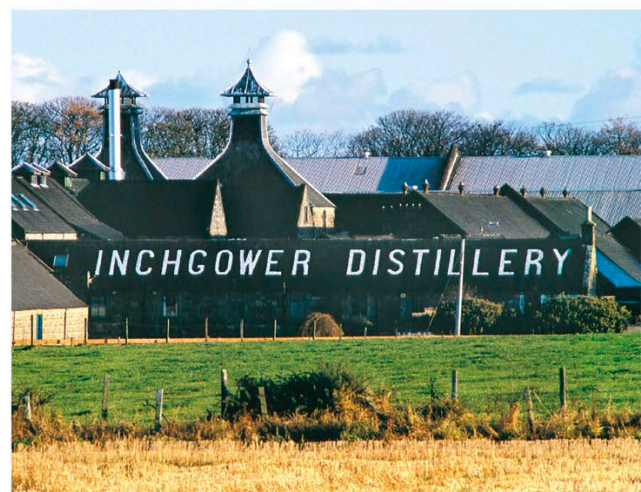
to Perth distiller and blender Arthur Bell & Sons after two years, the council trebled its investment.

Inchgower's capacity was doubled in 1966 by the installation of a second pair of stills, and when Guinness acquired Arthur Bell & Sons in 1985,

Inchgower was one of the malt distilleries included in the deal. Bells was absorbed into the Guinness empire in 1985, and Inchgower subsequently passed into the hands of Diageo.

KEEPING A LOW PROFILE

One of Diageo's lower-profile distilleries, the distinctive style of Inchgower's whisky makes it a desirable component in a number of blends.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

ABERLOUR

FOUNDED 1879

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 840,000 gal
(3.8m liters)

DAILUAINE

FOUNDED 1852

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.1m gal
(5.2m liters)

DALMUNACH

FOUNDED 2015

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 2.2m gal
(10m liters)

GLENALLACHIE

FOUNDED 1967

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 880,000 gal
(4m liters)

Speyside: Aberlour

THIS AREA OF SPEYSIDE IS HOME TO SEVERAL DISTILLERIES WITH LONG HISTORIES AND STRONG REPUTATIONS FOR THEIR SINGLE MALT OFFERINGS. DALMUNACH AND BALLINDOCH ARE TWO RELATIVE NEWCOMERS WITH VERY DIFFERENT PROFILES.

The village of Aberlour straddles the A95 road from Elgin to Grantown-on-Spey, and stands close to the River Spey. Its full name is Charlestown of Aberlour, and it was established by local landowner Charles Grant of Elchies in 1812, and named after his son, Charles.

Aberlour

The distillery was established by local entrepreneur James Fleming, who acquired land on the western outskirts of Aberlour, including the all-important water source of St. Drostan's Well, and, in 1879, proceeded to build a distillery.

This was really Aberlour's second distillery, since Peter Weir and James Gordon had founded one during 1826, but it was destroyed by fire while Fleming was constructing his rival venture. Fire was an ever-present threat in distilleries, due to the existence of so much flammable material, and, in 1898, Fleming's distillery was severely damaged by fire, too.

By that time, Aberlour had been acquired by Robert Thorne & Sons Ltd, which brought in the Elgin-based doyen of distillery architecture, Charles Doig. It remained in various independent hands until 1974, when Pernod Ricard purchased it. The previous year, capacity had been expanded when two new stills were installed to complement the existing pair.

The gates at Aberlour were closed to visitors until late 2002, but now the distillery offers tours aimed at whisky connoisseurs.

Aberlour is the best-selling single malt in France, and offers a comparatively wide range of expressions, including 12-, 16-, and 18-year-olds, along with the redoubtable A'bunadh, matured in ex-Oloroso sherry casks and bottled at cask strength.

Dailuaine

Dailuaine distillery is located close to the hamlet of Carron, a mile south of Aberlour, and, unlike the Chivas-owned distillery, Dailuaine's

IMPERIAL REMAINS
Although little trace is left today, the Imperial distillery occupied Dalmunach site from 1897 to 2013.



production is almost entirely devoted to Diageo blends. It was founded in 1852 by local farmer William Mackenzie, and in 1884 the plant was significantly expanded. Five years later, the Dailuaine maltings became the first in Scotland to be equipped with Charles Doig's elegant and practical "pagoda roof" ventilator.

It became part of the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1925 and the complement of stills was expanded from four to the present six in 1959/60. Owner Diageo invested \$10 million in a state-of-the-art bio-energy plant at Dailuaine in 2013.

Dalmunach

Dalmunach was established by Chivas Brothers 1.5 miles (2.4km) from Dailuaine to the north of the River Spey. It is on the site of the old Imperial distillery, which had been demolished in 2013 after a 15-year silence.

Dalmunach is equipped with four pairs of stills. An old Imperial still style was copied, but slightly increased in scale, with the

“DALMUNACH WAS BUILT USING THE LATEST ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY INNOVATIONS”

intention of providing a relatively rich, fruity spirit, destined for the blending vats and a role in key Chivas brands, such as Chivas Regal, Ballantine's, and Royal Salute.

The distillery was built using the latest environmentally friendly innovations, and the first spirit flowed from the stills at Dalmunach in September 2014.

Glenallachie

A mile and a half (2.4km) south of Aberlour, off the A95 road and in the shadow of Ben Rinnes, you will find Glenallachie distillery. It was built in 1967/68 for the Scottish & Newcastle Breweries subsidiary Mackinlay-McPherson Ltd.

Glenallachie, along with Jura distillery, was acquired by the Invergordon Distillers Group in 1985, and production at Glenallachie



DISTILLERY DETAILS

BENRINNES

FOUNDED 1826

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 770,000 gal
(3.5m liters)

GLENFARCLAS

FOUNDED 1836

OWNER J&G Grant

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 770,000 gal
(3.5m liters)

CRAGGANMORE

FOUNDED 1869

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 485,000 gal
(2.2m liters)

BALLINDALLOCH

FOUNDED 2014

OWNER The Macpherson-
Grant family

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 22,000 gal
(100,000 liters)



BOOM DISTILLERY

Glenallachie was one of the many distilleries built in modern style during the Scotch whisky boom of the 1960s and '70s.

ceased two years later. In 1989, Campbell Distillers, part of Pernod Ricard, acquired the distillery for \$5.6 million, and capacity was doubled with the introduction of a second pair of stills. The distillery was principally bought to supply malt for the Clan Campbell blend, which remains a strong seller for Pernod Ricard in its home market of France.

Benrinnes

Benrinnes takes its name from the eponymous hill, which is a significant landmark in the Aberlour and Dufftown areas of Speyside. The distillery is situated some 700 feet (210 meters) above sea level on the edge of Ben Rinnes, and is one of 11 distilleries that use water from the hill for production purposes.

The first Benrinnes distillery, known as Lyne of Ruthrie, was founded in 1826 by Peter McKenzie. It survived for just three years before being badly damaged by a flood, and, in 1834, a new plant was established close to the gutted original.

In 1896, fire was to destroy that version of Benrinnes, too, necessitating a major rebuilding program. The present distillery dates from 1955/56, when it was entirely rebuilt, with capacity being doubled from three to six stills a decade later.

Benrinnes is equipped with two wash and four spirit stills, and a generously wide spirit cut is made. That, plus the use of cast-iron worm tubs, creates a meaty, slightly sulphury spirit for Diageo's blenders to work with.

Glenfarclas

Situated 5 miles (8km) south of Aberlour in the shadow of Ben Rinnes, Glenfarclas is a rare beast among established Scottish distilleries in that it remains in family ownership.

The distillery was established in 1836 by Robert Hay and was purchased by father and son, John and George Grant, on Hay's death in 1865. Initially, Glenfarclas was

“GLENFARCLAS IS A RARE BEAST
AMONG ESTABLISHED SCOTTISH
DISTILLERIES: IT REMAINS IN
FAMILY OWNERSHIP”

leased only to John, but when he left to establish nearby Cragganmore five years later, it began to be operated by the other Grants, and has been ever since.

Whereas most distilleries indirectly heat their stills (these days by means of steam), Glenfarclas persists in “direct-firing” (using gas). Once distilled, the new-make spirit is filled predominantly into second-fill ex-Oloroso sherry butts, and the brand’s principal markets are France, Germany, the UK, and the US.

Glenfarclas was able to undertake the remarkable feat of launching single-cask bottlings of 43 consecutive years in 2007, representing the period from 1952 to 1994. New expressions have been added as others have been depleted, and the line-up currently stretches from 1954 to 2001. Meanwhile, core bottlings range from eight years upward, and 30-, 40-, 50-, and even 60-year-old variants have been released.

Cragganmore

Cragganmore is a delightfully traditional Speyside distillery, producing spirit that perfectly sums up the elegance, yet substance, of an archetypal single malt from the region.

The distillery was established in 1869 by John Smith, who had previously leased Glenfarclas from the Grant family. Smith leased Ayeon Farm

from the Ballindalloch Estate and proceeded to build his distillery on the site. One of the reasons for the choice of location was its proximity to a line operated by the Great Highland Railway.

The Smith family owned Cragganmore until 1923, when the Cragganmore-Glenlivet Distillery Company was formed by White Horse Distillers and Sir George Macpherson-Grant, laird of Ballindalloch. Four years later, White Horse Distillers was absorbed into the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL), but the Macpherson-Grant family held onto its share of Cragganmore until as late as 1965, when DCL bought them out.

In 1998, a 12-year-old Cragganmore was chosen by DCL’s successor, United Distillers, to be the Speyside representative in the newly formed Classic Malts portfolio.

Ballindalloch

The Macpherson-Grant family may have given up its Cragganmore shares in 1965, but in 2014, just under half a century later, it was back in the whisky-making business, courtesy of the Ballindalloch Single Estate distillery.

The Macpherson-Grant family has inhabited Ballindalloch Castle since 1546, and Guy Macpherson-Grant, the driving



DISTINCTIVE STILL

There are two pairs of stills at Cragganmore. They are notable for being flat-topped with relatively short necks.



TRADITIONAL SET UP

The warehouse constructed within the Ballindalloch complex is of the old-fashioned dunnage style, with casks stacked no more than three high.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

CARDHU

FOUNDED 1824
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 750,000 gal
 (3.4m liters)

TAMDHU

FOUNDED 1896
OWNER Ian Macleod Distillers Ltd.
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 880,000 gal
 (4m liters)

KNOCKANDO

FOUNDED 1898
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 300,000 gal
 (1.4m liters)

force behind the distillery project, is a member of the 23rd generation of his family to live there.

The distillery has been established in a converted and restored 19th-century farmstead, and is highly traditional in operation. The plant boasts washbacks and a pair of relatively small stills with short necks, to help achieve the desired, heavy Speyside style of whisky, in tandem with a pair of worm tubs.

Cardhu

Cardhu is one of Diageo's best-selling single malts and is also a major component of the Johnnie Walker family of blends. Indeed, a lavishly appointed "Brand Home" is located in the former kiln area.

The distillery stands close to the River Spey, near the hamlet of Knockando, and in the shadow of Mannoch Hill. Originally named Cardow, it was first licensed by John Cumming in 1824. Following John's death in 1846, his son, Lewis, and daughter-in-law, Elizabeth, ran the distillery, and when Lewis died in 1872, Elizabeth, a pioneering female distiller, took charge.

Elizabeth rebuilt the distillery in 1884, and, in 1893, Cardhu was acquired by John Walker & Sons of Kilmarnock for \$99,000, becoming part of the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1925. In 1960/61, the distillery was largely rebuilt, with the number of stills being increased from four to six.

Tamdhu

One of Cardhu's two distilling neighbors is Tamdhu, which was a product of the great 1890s distilling boom. It cost the equivalent of \$26 million in today's money, and was established by a consortium comprising some of the leading Scotch-whisky distillers of the day.

The initial distillation of 64 gallons (290 liters) occurred on July 21, 1897, and Tamdhu was designed to produce bulk malt spirit for blending. The distillery fulfilled this role, and only launched a single malt in 1976, which it produced until it was mothballed by then-owner Edrington in 2009. Glengoyne distillery owner, Ian Macleod Distillers Ltd, acquired the distillery in June 2011 and went on to relaunch Tamdhu single malt into the market.



VINTAGE OR AGED?

For many years, Knockando single malt was offered principally as a series of vintages rather than with age statements. Now the range includes 12-, 15-, 18-, and 21-year-old expressions.

A significant amount of the spirit produced is filled into first-fill sherry casks. The "standard" version of Tamdhu on offer is a 10-year-old, matured in a mix of first-fill and re-fill ex-sherry casks.

Knockando

Knockando is situated almost next door to Tamdhu, and was constructed shortly after the neighboring distillery. Knockando began to produce spirit in May 1899, just before the end of the great Victorian whisky



VISITORS WELCOME
 Cardhu is a popular tourist site for those visiting the Speyside region.



adventure, and the distillery was in production for less than a year before closing down.

However, it was acquired in 1904 by London-based gin distiller W&A Gilbey Ltd for just \$17,000, and whisky making recommenced in October of that year. Much later, in 1962, as consolidation became a major force in the Scotch whisky industry, Gilbey's joined forces with United Wine Traders to form International Distillers & Vintners (IDV), and ultimately Knockando entered the IDV portfolio.

Knockando's nutty and floral malt has long been an important element in the popular J&B Scotch blend, although single malt sales have been ongoing since 1976, and the brand enjoys strong sales in France and Spain.

TASTING NOTES

The Aberlour area produces a variety of whisky styles. Light-bodied drams are found in the Glenallachie, Cardhu, and Knockando ranges, while heavier options are provided by Benrinnes and Glenfarclas. Aberlour, Dailuaine, and Tamdhu are notable for their ex-sherry-cask maturation.

ABERLOUR

ABERLOUR 12-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Nose Sherry, honey, and a note of citrus.

Body Rich.

Palate Sweet, with ripe apples, vanilla, and caramel.

Finish Black pepper and soft oak.

DAILUAINE

DAILUAINE 16-YEAR-OLD (FLORA & FAUNA SERIES)

43% ABV

Nose Dry sherry, nuts, and barley.

Body Relatively full.

Palate Sherry, malt, Jaffa oranges, and wood spice.

Finish Lengthy, with cedar, almonds, and lingering sherry.



DAILUAINE
16-YEAR-OLD

GLENALLACHIE

GLENALLACHIE 18-YEAR-OLD (CASK STRENGTH EDITION—1989)

58% ABV

Nose Spicy, with sherry, fudge, and nutmeg.

Body Medium to full.

Palate Spicy orange, honey, and dark chocolate.

Finish Lengthy, with lingering sherried spice.

BENRRINNES

BENRRINNES 15-YEAR-OLD (FLORA & FAUNA SERIES)

43% ABV

Nose Caramel, sherry, buttery shortbread, then peppery and quite savory.

Body Full and viscous.

Palate Savory notes carry over from the nose, along with peppery dark chocolate.

Finish Spicy and slightly smoky.

GLENFARCLAS

GLENFARCLAS 10-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Rich sherry notes, Christmas cake, and subtle orange.

Body Medium to full.

Palate Ripe orchard fruits, toffee, and slightly peaty oak.

Finish Relatively long, with sweet ginger notes.

GLENFARCLAS 40-YEAR-OLD

46% ABV

Nose Floral, with caramel, sweet sherry, and almonds.

Body Full.

Palate Nutty sherry, orange, and milky coffee, plus developing oak.

Finish Long, with tannins and licorice.

CRAGGANMORE

CRAGGANMORE 12-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Nose Fragrant, with hard toffee, light sherry, and a hint of wood smoke.

Body Firm.

Palate Elegant, malty, and herbal, with orange.

Finish Long, drying, and a wisp of smoke.



CRAGGANMORE
12-YEAR-OLD

CARDHU

CARDHU 12-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Nose Floral, with ripe apples, pears, dry nuts, and a suggestion of peat.

Body Medium.

Palate Sweet and malty, with more subtle peat.

Finish Lengthy, with dry smoke.

TAMDHU

TAMDHU 10-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Soft sherry, almonds, marzipan, and new leather.

Body Smooth.

Palate Sweet sherry, gentle spice, and citrus fruit.

Finish Spice, black pepper, and more leather in the lengthy finish.

KNOCKANDO

KNOCKANDO 12-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Fragrant, with malt and old leather.

Body Light to medium.

Palate Honey, malt, and ginger, plus red apples.

Finish Medium in length, lingering ginger.



KNOCKANDO
12-YEAR-OLD

DISTILLERY DETAILS

GLENFIDDICH

FOUNDED 1886

OWNER William Grant
& Sons Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 3.1m gal
(14m liters)

BALVENIE

FOUNDED 1892

OWNER William Grant
& Sons Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.2m gal
(5.8m liters)

KININVIE

FOUNDED 1990

OWNER William Grant
& Sons Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1m gal
(4.8m liters)

Speyside: Dufftown

THE “MALT WHISKY CAPITAL OF SCOTLAND” BOASTS
A FORMIDABLE ARRAY OF WHISKY-MAKING POTENTIAL,
WITH SIX DISTILLERIES TO ITS NAME.

Dufftown is located 50 miles (81km) northwest of Aberdeen and stands at the foot of the Conval Hills, close to the Rivers Fiddich and Dullan. The first to settle in this area were the Picts, with the earliest Christian community being established in 566CE, when St. Moulag founded Mortlach Church, one of the oldest Christian settlements in Scotland. Dufftown itself was established as a settlement in 1817 by James Duff, Fourth Earl of Fife, with the purpose of providing employment in the years following the Napoleonic wars.

The old rhyme declares that “Rome was built on seven hills, Dufftown stands on seven stills,” and though the number has now fallen to six, Dufftown’s status as the “Malt Whisky Capital of Scotland” seems secure. In addition to its six distilleries, Dufftown also boasts a fascinating Whisky Museum and the almost perfectly preserved shell of Parkmore distillery, which operated between 1894 and 1931.

Glenfiddich

The biggest and best-known of Dufftown’s distilleries is Glenfiddich, which has been getting bigger of late. An ambitious expansion plan to create an entirely new distillery on the site—with five wash stills and 10 spirit stills—will take the overall production capacity to a mighty 3.1 million gallons (14 million liters) per year. The existing distillery already boasts 31 stills in two stillhouses!

This is all a far cry from its modest origins when in 1886/87, after Mortlach, Glenfiddich was only the second distillery to be built in Dufftown. The first spirit flowed on Christmas Day, 1887.

Glenfiddich is Gaelic for “valley of the deer,” and the distillery was the creation of former Mortlach manager, William Grant, who built and equipped it for the absurdly modest sum of \$4,000 with the help of his immediate family.

In order to work within Grant’s extremely tight budget, second-hand stills and other pieces of equipment were acquired from Cardhu distillery to equip the fledgling operation.

The timing of the Grant family’s creation was ideal, and the operation thrived. Today, William Grant & Sons Ltd is the largest family-owned distilling company in Scotland, having expertly blended tradition with innovation over the years, allowing it to stay ahead of most of the competition.

The company was the first to make a concerted effort from the early 1960s to market single malt in England and abroad at a time when single malts were not even drunk much in Scotland.



Today, Glenfiddich vies with The Glenlivet for the role of the world's best-selling single malt. Glenfiddich is a notably popular tourist destination, with an attractive range of tour options on offer and a broad portfolio of expressions, headed by the iconic 12-year-old.

Balvenie

The success of Glenfiddich led William Grant to build a second distillery on adjacent land, in order to satisfy demand for his whisky from blenders. Production commenced in May 1893, and one notable feature of Balvenie distillery was that Grant utilized the disused mansion of Balvenie New House as maltings for his new operation.

A more conventional maltings regime was introduced later. The distillery was upgraded and capacity was increased during the 1950s and '60s, with new stills being added in 1957, 1965, and 1971. Today, five wash stills and six spirit stills are in situ.

Balvenie single malt was first officially bottled in 1973. Sales have grown significantly during recent years, as the number of available expressions has been extended.

“‘ROME WAS BUILT ON SEVEN HILLS, DUFFTOWN STANDS ON SEVEN STILLs’ – THOUGH THE NUMBER HAS FALLEN TO SIX, DUFFTOWN’S STATUS AS THE ‘MALT WHISKY CAPITAL OF SCOTLAND’ IS SECURE”

The distillery is one of the very few using traditional on-site malting floors, and they generate around 10 percent of Balvenie's total malt requirement, with the rest being bought in from commercial maltsters. Bottlings range from the 12-year-old DoubleWood up to a rare 60-year-old, with many variants in between.

Kininvie

Just as Balvenie was constructed to augment Glenfiddich in terms of spirit for blending, Kininvie was added to Grant's Dufftown portfolio almost exactly a century later for the same purpose.

Kininvie is, in essence, merely a stillhouse, equipped with three wash and six spirit stills. Wash is pumped from nearby Balvenie distillery,



GLOBAL GIANT

One of the great names in the world of single malt whisky, Glenfiddich is a large-scale distillery and is set to get larger.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

MORTLACH

FOUNDED 1823
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 840,000 gal
(3.8m liters)

DUFFTOWN

FOUNDED 1896
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 1.4m gal
(6m liters)

GLENDULLAN

FOUNDED 1897
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 1.1m gal
(5m liters)



MORTLACH OLD AND NEW

Though largely rebuilt during the 1960s, Mortlach retains some traditional elements, such as the old warehouses shown here.

where Kininvie has its own dedicated stainless steel mash tun and 10 Douglas Fir washbacks.

Kininvie is a key component of the blended malt Monkey Shoulder, along with Glenfiddich and Balvenie. For many years, Grant's resisted the temptation to release a Kininvie single malt. The first to appear was a now highly collectable 15-year-old, under the name Hazelwood, which was intended to commemorate the 105th birthday of Janet Roberts (at the time, Scotland's oldest living person). The first expression to carry the Kininvie name was a 23-year-old, which was launched in 2013. Late 2015 saw the release of three First Drops, single cask, 25-year-old expressions, and it is clear that Kininvie will continue to make limited appearances for its owner in the future.

Mortlach

Mortlach was Dufftown's first distillery, and was one of many across Scotland to be established in the immediate aftermath of the 1823 Excise Act, which made legal distilling economically more attractive.

Mortlach was founded by James Findlater. George Cowie would become co-owner in 1853, and the Cowie family ownership lasted longer than any other in the distillery's history.

The number of stills was increased from three to six in 1897, during a period of expansion and upgrading. The Cowie link lasted until Mortlach was sold to John Walker & Sons in 1923, and then became part of the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) two years later.

In 1963/64, a major rebuilding program was undertaken, leading to the present external character of the distillery.

Mortlach produces a relatively "meaty," heavy style of spirit, partly due to the use of worm tubs and partly because of an extremely complex distillation regime, which involves one of the spirit stills—known as "The Wee Witchie"—redistilling the charge twice. Mortlach say that, in effect, their spirit is distilled 2.8 times!

In 2014, Diageo invested a significant amount of marketing spend in replacing the existing 16-year-old Flora & Fauna bottling with four new, higher profile expressions, namely Rare Old, Special Strength, 18-year-old, and 25-year-old.

Dufftown

The sixth distillery to be built in the eponymous village, and the fourth to be established during the last decade of the 19th century, Dufftown

distillery was converted from a meal mill by a group of businessmen, including the mill owner, John Symon. Owned by Arthur Bell & Sons, it became part of the Diageo portfolio in 1997.

Between 1968 and 1979, the number of stills was gradually increased from two to six. After a number of years of relative obscurity, Dufftown single malt is now widely available as part of Diageo's Singleton brand, which also incorporates nearby Glendullan and Glen Ord in Inverness-shire.

The first Singleton of Dufftown was a 12-year-old, which appeared in 2006 and was exclusive to Europe, but the expanded range is now available globally. A number of travel retail-exclusive expressions have also been released.

Glendullan

Like its nearby neighbor Dufftown distillery, Glendullan has gained a previously unimaginable level of exposure as part of the Singleton brand, first released as a US exclusive in 2007.

Glendullan distillery stands beside the River Fiddich, just outside Dufftown village, and not far from the confluence of the Fiddich and the Dullan. It was the seventh distillery to be built in Dufftown, and was



TAKEN OFF TAP

"Old" Glendullan (seen above) closed in 1985, 13 years after a new distillery was built nearby.

owned by the Aberdeen-based whisky blender William Williams & Sons, passing to DCL in 1926.

The year 1962 saw major reconstruction work being undertaken in Glendullan, and a decade later, a completely new distillery with a classic DCL glass-fronted stillhouse was built close to the existing plant. Both ran simultaneously until "old" Glendullan was closed in 1985, though the buildings survive.

TASTING NOTES

Glenfiddich, Dufftown, and Glendullan provide dry, fruity drams. Balvenie and Mortlach are more luxurious after-dinner whiskies. Kininvie is medium-bodied and floral.

GLENFIDDICH

**GLENFIDDICH
12-YEAR-OLD**
40% ABV

Nose Fresh, floral, and fruity.
Body Medium.
Palate Elegant and malty, with orchard fruit and walnuts.
Finish Slight smokiness.



GLENFIDDICH
12-YEAR-OLD

**GLENFIDDICH 21-YEAR-OLD
GRAN RESERVA (FINISHED IN
RUM CASKS)**
40% ABV

Nose Malt, orange marmalade, honey, and milk chocolate.
Body Supple.
Palate Vanilla, malt, spicy oak, and ginger.
Finish Oak and milky cocoa.

THE BALVENIE

**THE BALVENIE DOUBLEWOOD
12-YEAR-OLD**
40% ABV

Nose Orange, sherried malt, nuts, and spices.
Body Relatively full.
Palate Sherry, vanilla, more orange, soft fruit, and cinnamon.
Finish Spicy and long.



THE BALVENIE
DOUBLEWOOD
12-YEAR-OLD

KININVIE

KININVIE 25-YEAR-OLD, 1990
61.4% ABV

Nose Slightly herbal, nutmeg, and apple.
Body Firm.

Palate More apple, vanilla, and black pepper, plus a hint of ginger.
Finish Medium to long, with spicy orchard fruit notes and a hint of oak.

MORTLACH

MORTLACH RARE OLD
43.4% ABV

Nose Peaches, apricots, and milk chocolate-coated caramel.
Body Supple.
Palate Fruity and nutty, with cinnamon and vanilla.
Finish Quite lengthy, with fruit spices.



MORTLACH
RARE OLD

SINGLETON OF DUFFTOWN

**SINGLETON OF DUFFTOWN
12-YEAR-OLD**
40% ABV

Nose Floral, sweet, and malty.
Body Smooth.
Palate Rich and spicy, with orchard fruit.
Finish Medium length, spicy fudge, and a hint of sherry.

THE SINGLETON OF GLENDULLAN

**THE SINGLETON OF
GLENDULLAN
12-YEAR-OLD**
40% ABV

Nose Vanilla, hazelnuts, spicy sherry, and fudge.
Body Rich.
Palate Citrus fruit, spicy vanilla, caramel, and sherry.
Finish Drying, with pepper.



THE SINGLETON
OF GLENDULLAN
12-YEAR-OLD

DISTILLERY DETAILS

THE GLENLIVET

FOUNDED 1824

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 2.3m gal
(10.5m liters)

BRAEVAL

FOUNDED 1973

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 880,000 gal
(4m liters)

ALLT-A-BHAINNE

FOUNDED 1975

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 880,000 gal
(4m liters)

TAMNAVULIN

FOUNDED 1966

OWNER Whyte & Mackay
(Emperador, Inc.)

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 880,000 gals
(4m liters)

STILLS MADE TO MEASURE

Every distillery boasts a unique style, shape, and size of still. Those at The Glenlivet are copied precisely whenever expansion takes place.

Speyside: Glenlivet

THIS WILD AND RUGGED COUNTRYSIDE IS HOME
TO ONE OF THE BEST KNOWN OF ALL THE SCOTCH
MALT WHISKY DISTILLERIES.

Glenlivet is a remote valley located to the east of Grantown-on-Spey and north of the village of Tomintoul, which is frequently the first place in Scotland to be cut off by snowfall in winter. The remoteness of Glenlivet meant that it was an ideal location for illicit distillation, especially as it also boasted pure water, abundant peat, and easy access to malting barley.

The Glenlivet

It is said that there were as many as 200 illicit stills operating in Glenlivet during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The high quality of whisky made in the locality meant that it fetched a premium when sold in nearby towns, having been transported out of the glen by ponies carrying small casks, or ankers.

The Excise Act of 1823 served to make legal distilling much more attractive, and the first person to be granted a license under the new legislation was George Smith, whose family had been distilling illicitly on their farm at Upper Drumin in Glenlivet since 1774. Needless to say, this decision was not met with approval by his illegally distilling neighbors, and they threatened to burn the distillery to the ground with Smith inside. Happily, for both Smith and future generations of whisky drinkers, they did not succeed.

In 1840, Smith's son, William, took over the operation at Upper Drumin. However, demand for Smith's whisky necessitated the construction of a new, larger distillery at Minmore, in 1858, which was named Glenlivet.

Such was the fame of Glenlivet whisky that many other and perhaps "lesser" distilleries tried to capitalize on its reputation by using the Glenlivet name, and the area gained the tongue-in-cheek title of "the longest glen in Scotland." In 1880, legal action by John Gordon Smith resulted in only his Glenlivet distillery being allowed to use the definite article in front of its name, all other distillers had to use "Glenlivet" as a hyphenated prefix or suffix.

The distillery remained in the hands of members of the Smith family until George & J.G. Smith Ltd merged with J&J Grant and Glen Grant Ltd to form Glenlivet & Glen Grant Distillers Ltd in 1953. In 1972, that company became part of The Glenlivet Distillers Ltd. Glenlivet passed to the Pernod Ricard subsidiary Chivas Brothers in 2001, via the ownership of The Seagram Company.

As Chivas' most famous and best-selling flagship single malt, The Glenlivet has for years vied with Glenfiddich for the prize of the world's leading single malt brand. The year 2014 saw The Glenlivet take the title for the first time,





GARDEN VIEW

The new production area at Glenlivet is equipped with six stills and windows that look out to the glen beyond.

but Glenfiddich regained it the following year. In order to cope with demand, an entirely new production unit was built alongside the existing distillery during 2009/10, with six new stills to complement the existing eight. Just as Glenfiddich began to expand its operation in 2016, The Glenlivet took the same approach. The ultimate intention is to have two new distilling operations, each with seven pairs of stills, meaning that one day The Glenlivet could boast an annual output of more than 6.5 million gallons (30 million liters) of spirit.

In terms of the expressions on offer, the entry-level bottling is a no-age-statement version named Founder's Reserve, but a variety of aged expressions are also available, right up to a limited edition 50-year-old.

Braeval

Braeval, Allt-a-Bhainne, and Tamnavulin—all featured here—were part of the 1960s and '70s Scotch whisky industry expansion, and they are among the most remote whisky-making operations in Speyside. Braeval—originally Braes of Glenlivet—was constructed at Chapelton close to a tributary of the River Livet. It was built as Chivas Regal brand owner The Seagram Company developed a shortage of spirit for their headline luxury blend, and was based on the design of the company's Four Roses distillery in Kentucky.

From the outset, Braeval was designed as a one-man-operation unit, with a centralized control panel to run the entire operation. Although silent between 2002 and 2008, today six stills provide whisky for a variety of blended whisky brands produced by current owner Chivas Brothers.

Allt-A-Bhainne

Allt-a-Bhainne—from the Gaelic for “Burn of Milk”—was built for the same purpose as Braeval by The Seagram Company, and is located on the lower slopes of Benrinnes, 5 miles (8km) from the distilling center of Dufftown and 8 miles (13km) from The Glenlivet. Like Braeval, its architecture was strikingly modern at the time of construction, yet somehow fits well into its rugged landscape.

Allt-a-Bhainne was built to be half the size of Braeval, but in 1989, capacity was doubled with the installation of a second pair of stills. The distillery was silent between 2002 and 2005.

In recent years its output has comprised 50 percent unpeated and 50 percent peated malt, as owner Chivas Brothers has no Islay distillery to supply peated malt for blending.

Tamnavulin

Tamnavulin is situated, somewhat confusingly, by the hamlet of Tomnavoulin, between Dufftown and Tomintoul. The distillery was established in 1966 by the Tamnavulin-Glenlivet Distillery

DISTILLERY DETAILS

TOMINTOUL

FOUNDED 1965

OWNER Angus
Dundee Distillers plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 725,000 gal
(3.3m liters)

TORMORE

FOUNDED 1958

OWNER Chivas Brothers
(Pernod Ricard)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 965,000 gal
(4.4m liters)

BALMENACH

FOUNDED 1824

OWNER Inver House
Distillers (Thai
Beverages plc)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 615,000 gal
(2.8m liters)

Company, which was a subsidiary of Invergordon Distillers Ltd. Whyte & Mackay acquired Invergordon in 1993 as the result of a bitterly fought takeover battle, principally in order to acquire its eponymous grain distillery on the Cromarty Firth, and May 1995 saw Tamnavulin mothballed. It did not fully reopen until 2007, and between 2010 and 2013 short periods of heavily peated spirit production were undertaken.

The output of Tamnavulin's three pairs of stills is almost entirely devoted to blending purposes, and after a 12-year-old bottling was discontinued, there was no "house" expression available until 2016, when the sherry-finished, no-age-statement Double Cask appeared in the UK.

Tomintoul

The distillery was constructed in 1964/65 by Tomintoul-Glenlivet Distillery Co. Ltd, which was a company set up by whisky blenders and brokers Hay & Macleod & Co. Ltd and W&S Strong & Co. Ltd. The site, on the east side of the River Avon and in the valley between the Glenlivet Forest and the hills of Cromdale, was selected after a year's search for the optimum water source, with the Ballantruan Spring eventually serving this purpose.

The location, in the parish of Glenlivet and 6 miles (10km) from the village of Tomintoul, is spectacular, but Tomintoul is the highest settlement in the Highlands, and winters in the area can be extremely harsh. During construction

of the distillery, the contractors kept several weeks' worth of building materials on site, just in case snowfalls made the local roads impassable. The distillery came on stream in July 1965.

When ownership passed to Scottish & Universal Investment Trust Ltd (SUITS) in 1973, it installed a second pair of stills, and by the mid-1970s began to market Tomintoul as a single malt. SUITS also acquired Whyte & Mackay, which operated Tomintoul until London-based blender and bottler Angus Dundee Distillers purchased the distillery in 2000. Expressions of what is marketed as The Gentle Dram range from 10–25 years of age, along with peated Old Ballantruan variants.

Tormore

Standing beside the Elgin to Grantown-on-Spey road, Tormore is impossible to miss. Architecturally, it is an award-winning, and remarkably effective, blend of post-war and traditional-style distillery architecture. Due to its relative remoteness, Tormore was developed as a true distilling community, complete with a community hall, a row of staff houses, and even a curling pond, which could also provide water in the event of fire.

Tormore was one of the first new distilleries to be created in Scotland after World War II, being commissioned by the Long John Distilleries Ltd subsidiary of US company

AWARD-WINNING ARCHITECTURE

A green-roofed, modernist extravagance, complete with musical clock, Tormore is one of Scotland's most distinctive distilleries.





MOVING BARRELS

Today, all spirit made at Tormore is taken away by road trucks and filled into barrels at Keith Bond, a maturation and blending facility, before being returned for maturation.

Schenley Industries. Tormore, equipped with two pairs of stills, first produced spirit on October 18, 1959, and, as demand for Scotch grew, four more stills were added in 1972.

The 1970s were also a time when a number of major brewing companies diversified into Scotch, and, in 1975, what was by then Long John International Ltd, complete with its distilleries, was acquired by Whitbread & Co. Ltd. Tormore ultimately came into the hands of Pernod Ricard's Scottish distilling subsidiary Chivas Brothers Ltd in 2005, via ownership by Allied Lyons, later Allied Domecq.

Today, most of Tormore's output is destined for the Ballantine's and Chivas Regal blends, but 14- and 16-year-old single malt variants are now available.

Balmenach

If Tormore was built during the spirit of optimism and growth that informed the Scotch whisky industry after World War II, then much the same could be said about Balmenach in relation to the liberalizing Excise Act of 1823.

It is thought that illicit distilling was taking place at this remote location near the River Spey for some time prior to the licensing of Balmenach. The distillery was in the hands of the founding MacGregor family until the 1920s, when difficult economic conditions forced its sale in 1922, and three years later Balmenach became part of the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL).

TASTING NOTES

The Glenlivet region provides a wealth of floral and light aperitif-style whiskies. Balmenach, meanwhile, is a big, slightly savory whisky that pairs well with food. Several of the whiskies mentioned here come from independent bottler Deerstalker.

THE GLENLIVET

FOUNDER'S RESERVE

40% ABV

Nose Fresh, with vanilla, pineapple, and honey.

Body Medium.

Palate Toffee, ginger, and tropical fruit.

Finish Fudge and mild spices, medium in length.



THE GLENLIVET
FOUNDER'S
RESERVE

21-YEAR-OLD ARCHIVE

43% ABV

Nose Honey, pine, and cereal notes.

Body Rich.

Palate Golden raisins, figs, walnuts, and allspice.

Finish Lengthy, with soft oak.

ALLT-A-BHAINNE

DEERSTALKER

18-YEAR-OLD

48% ABV

Nose Soft fruit, honey, malt, and toffee bonbons.

Body Slightly oily.

Palate Vanilla and peppery orange.

Finish Long and spicy.



DEERSTALKER
18-YEAR-OLD
(ALLT-A-BHAINNE)

BRAEVAL

DEERSTALKER 20-YEAR-OLD

48% ABV

Nose Herbal, with green apples, planed timber, and developing vanilla.

Body Smooth.

Palate Apricots, ripe peaches, and chili spice.

Finish Lengthy, with mild oak.

TAMNAVULIN

TAMNAVULIN DOUBLE CASK

40% ABV

Nose Toffee, apple, honey, light sherry, and marzipan.

Body Medium.

Palate Ripe pears, peaches, pineapple, and milk chocolate.

Finish Smooth, and medium in length.



TAMNAVULIN
DOUBLE CASK

TOMINTOUL

TOMINTOUL 10-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Nose Fresh and fruity, with spice and gentle malt.

Body Relatively light.

Palate Orchard fruits, cereal, and fudge.

Finish Nutty, spices, and soft oak.

TORMORE

TORMORE 14-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Lemon, vanilla, and subtle spice.

Body Relatively full.

Palate Tropical fruits, milk chocolate, and nutty toffee.

Finish Lengthy, with black pepper.

BALMENACH

DEERSTALKER 12-YEAR-OLD

46% ABV

Nose Sherry, orchard fruits, and a slightly savory note.

Body Smooth.

Palate Fruity, with sherry and black pepper.

Finish Chili and dark chocolate.

The complement of stills was increased from four to six in 1962, and DCL also undertook subsequent reconstruction and upgrading work on the distillery. However, its successor company, United Distillers, mothballed Balmenach in June 1993. Inver House Distillers Ltd (now part of Thai Beverages plc) purchased the distillery in 1997, and whisky making resumed the following year. Since 2009, Caorunn gin has also been produced on the site.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

MACDUFF

FOUNDED 1960

OWNER John Dewar & Sons Ltd (Bacardi Limited)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 725,000 gal
(3.3m liters)

GLENGLASSAUGH

FOUNDED 1875

OWNER Brown-Forman Co.

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 240,000 gal
(1.1m liters)

GLENDRONACH

FOUNDED 1826

OWNER Brown-Forman Co.

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 308,000 gal
(1.4m liters)

ARDMORE

FOUNDED 1898

OWNER Beam Suntory, Inc.

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1.2m gal
(5.5m liters)

GLEN GARIOCH

FOUNDED 1798

OWNER Morrison
Bowmore
(Beam Suntory, Inc)

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 300,000 gal
(1.37m liters)

East of Speyside

THE AREA TO THE EAST OF SPEYSIDE OFFERS A QUINTET OF INDIVIDUALISTIC DISTILLERIES, NAMELY MACDUFF, GLENGLASSAUGH, GLENDRONACH, ARDMORE, AND GLEN GARIOCH.

Macduff

Macduff stands close to the River Deveron, just to the south of the historic Moray Firth port of Banff, and dates from 1960. Although the distillery is named Macduff, the single malt it produces was long sold under the Glen Deveron label. Since 2015, the “Glen” has been dropped in favor of just “The Deveron.”

Today, Macduff is owned by the Bacardi Limited subsidiary John Dewar & Sons Ltd. Along with providing malt spirit for the Dewar’s blends, Macduff also plays an important role in the increasingly popular William Lawson blend.

In 2015, Dewar’s began to market a range of aged The Deveron expressions as part of its “Last Great Malts” program and 10-, 12-, and 18-year-old variants are now available.

Glenglassaugh

Glenglassaugh distillery was built between 1873 and 1875 by the Glenglassaugh Distillery Company at a cost of \$54,000. Until recent years, the subsequent history of the distillery was more about silence than activity, being closed from 1908 until 1957, apart from a few years of whisky making during the 1930s. The present (somewhat utilitarian) distillery structures date from a reconstruction program undertaken between 1957 and 1960.

Glenglassaugh then worked until 1986, when it was mothballed once more. The Scaent Group acquired

it from Edrington for \$7.3 million in 2008, and set about bringing it back into commission.

Scaent then sold Glenglassaugh to The BenRiach Distillery Company Ltd in 2013. The year 2016 saw Glenglassaugh, along with BenRiach and GlenDronach distilleries, acquired by Brown-Forman Co., owner of the Jack Daniel’s brand.

GlenDronach

GlenDronach distillery was established in 1826 by a consortium of farmers and local business figures headed by James Allardice. From 1960, GlenDronach was owned by William Teacher &



FORGUE VALLEY

Situated in the valley of the River Forgue, GlenDronach is only a few miles from the market town of Huntly.

Sons. It subsequently became part of Allied Breweries Ltd in 1976, along with the rest of Teacher's assets. It passed into the hands of Pernod Ricard subsidiary Chivas Brothers in 2005.

Glendronach was silent from 1996 to 2002, and in 2008, Chivas sold Glendronach to the BenRiach Distillery Company Ltd, which rebranded it GlenDronach. The new owner then proceeded to restore the reputation of GlenDronach as one of Scotland's leading sherry-cask-matured single malts.

In 2016, the Brown-Forman Co. acquired the BenRiach Distillery Company Ltd, and with it GlenDronach. Today, the core portfolio ranges from the 8-year-old "The Hielan," to the 25-year-old "Grandeur."

Ardmore

Ardmore distillery is situated some 15 miles (25km) south of GlenDronach. Like that distillery, a significant part of Ardmore's heritage is linked to the Teacher family. Indeed, Ardmore was built by Adam Teacher, son of William, in 1897/98, to provide malt spirit for Teacher's Highland Cream blend.

William Teacher & Sons continued to own Ardmore until the firm's takeover by Allied Breweries in 1976, by which time capacity had been increased from the initial two stills to a total of eight. Ardmore was subsequently acquired in 2005 by Jim Beam Brands (now owned by Beam Suntory, Inc) and production was increased. In recent years, Ardmore has developed a stronger identity as a single malt, with its characteristically medium-peated style of spirit attracting a growing following.

Glen Garioch

Glen Garioch is one of Scotland's oldest surviving distilleries, with records dating back to 1798, when it was owned by Thomas Simpson. After several changes of ownership, Glen Garioch became part of the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1937, and DCL closed the distillery in 1968, as it felt there was insufficient water available for distillation.

Despite this apparent drawback, Stanley P. Morrison Ltd purchased the distillery two years later and proceeded to dig a new well, which solved the problem.

The distillery was silent from October 1995 to August 1997, by which time what had become Morrison Bowmore Distillers Ltd was owned by the Japanese distiller Suntory. In 2009, there was a revamp of the single malt range, with the introduction of the no-age-statement Founder's Reserve, a 12-year-old, and two vintages. Several more vintages have subsequently been released, along with the expression Virgin Oak.

SPIRIT OF OLDENDRUM

Glen Garioch distillery is located close to the center of the village of Oldendrum, some 18 miles northwest of Aberdeen.



TASTING NOTES

The region East of Speyside provides fruity drams in the form of The Deveron and Glenglassaugh, the latter becoming delightfully complex with age. The other distilleries provide real stylistic diversity, from the big, sherried beasts of GlenDronach to the medium-peated Ardmore and the fragrant and spicy Glen Garioch.

THE DEVERON

THE DEVERON 12-YEAR-OLD
40% ABV

Nose Sweet and fruity, with vanilla and apple blossom.

Body Supple.

Palate Butterscotch, malt, and nutty vanilla.

Finish Drying, with spicy oak.

GLENGLASSAUGH

EVOLUTION
57.2% ABV

Nose Toffee, vanilla, ginger, and orchard fruits.

Body Light to medium.

Palate Soft fruits, caramel, and ginger.

Finish Brittle toffee and soft spices.

GLENDRONACH

GLENDRONACH 12-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Rich Christmas cake aromas, toffee, sherry, and wild berries.

Body Rich.



GLENDRONACH 12-YEAR-OLD

Palate Sherry, dried fruits, almonds, and mild oak.

Finish Nutty, drying, with dark chocolate.

ARDMORE

LEGACY (80% PEATED AND 20% UNPEATED SPIRIT)
40% ABV

Nose Caramel, vanilla, and peat.

Body Medium.

Palate Vanilla, honey, ginger, plus drier peat.

Finish Spicy, with drying smokiness.

GLEN GARIOCH

GLEN GARIOCH 12-YEAR-OLD
48% ABV

Nose Vanilla, malt, sherry, heather, and tropical fruits.

Body Relatively full.

Palate Fresh fruit, spice, and crème brûlée.

Finish Lengthy, with drying oak.



GLEN GARIOCH 12-YEAR-OLD

DISTILLERY DETAILS

LONE WOLF

FOUNDED 2016
OWNER BrewDog plc.
METHOD Pot stills and
hybrid pot stills
CAPACITY 99,000 gal
(450,000 liters)

ROYAL LOCHNAGAR

FOUNDED 1845
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 110,000 gal
(500,000 liters)

FETTERCAIRN

FOUNDED 1824
OWNER Whyte & Mackay
(Emperador Inc.)
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 700,000 gal
(3.2m liters)

GLENCADAM

FOUNDED 1825
OWNER Angus Dundee
Distillers plc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 285,000 gal
(1.3m liters)

ARBIKIE

FOUNDED 2015
OWNER The Stirling Family
METHOD Pot stills and
a column still
CAPACITY 44,000 gal
(200,000 liters)

The Eastern Highlands

DESPITE ITS WHISKY-SMUGGLING PAST AND ROYAL CONNECTIONS,
WHISKY PRODUCTION IN THIS AREA HAS BEEN DECIMATED.

Lone Wolf

BrewDog is one of Scotland's great entrepreneurial success stories of recent years. Less than a decade after founding their brewing operation in 2007, James Watt and Martin Dickie were presiding over the largest independent brewery in the UK, located at Ellon, in Aberdeenshire.

In 2016, they opened a distillery adjacent to the brewhouse with the intention of producing white spirits along with a variety of whisky styles. These are set to include bourbon, rye, malt, and grain.

The distillery is equipped with two pot stills, complete with rectification columns, a third pot still for the distillation of gin and brandy, and an 11-gallon (50-liter) "pilot" pot still to be used for experimental purposes.

Royal Lochnagar

If Lone Wolf has an edgy, experimental, "punk" ethos, as befits the distilling arm of maverick beer-maker BrewDog, then Royal Lochnagar is to be found at the opposite end of the establishment

spectrum. Apart from anything else, it has "Royal" in its name! Located close to the Royal Family's Highland retreat, Balmoral Castle, Lochnagar is the smallest of Diageo's 28 operational malt distilleries in terms of capacity, being equipped with two relatively modest-sized stills attached to worm tubs for spirit condensation.

The distillery, initially known as New Lochnagar, was built in 1845 by John Begg. Along with Royal Brackla, Lochnagar is one of only two surviving Scottish distilleries to be permitted use of the regal prefix.

Lochnagar remained in the hands of the Begg family until 1916, when it was sold to Perth distiller and blender John Dewar & Sons Ltd. Dewar's became part of the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1925, and so Royal Lochnagar ultimately joined the Diageo portfolio.

Fettercairn

Fettercairn was established in 1824 by Sir Alexander Ramsay, who had it converted from a corn (maize) mill on his Fasque estate. The first recorded licensee, in 1825, was James Stewart & Co. Five years later, Ramsay sold his estate to Sir John Gladstone, father of the future British Prime Minister, William Ewart Gladstone, and the distillery was included in the deal.

The Gladstone family remained a leading player in the Fettercairn story until 1926, when it closed due to the prevailing economic climate. The future of the distillery looked perilous, until its acquisition in 1939 by distilling entrepreneur Joseph Hobbs' Associated Scottish Distillers Ltd.

Ultimately, Fettercairn came into the ownership of Whyte & Mackay, now owned by the Philippines-based drinks group Emperador, Inc.

FETTERCAIRN BARRELS

On the outskirts of the eponymous village, Fettercairn is 5 miles (7.5km) west of the main A90 road between Aberdeen and Dundee.





Fettercairn boasts a unique feature in the shape of self-cooling spirit stills, where cold water flows externally down the still necks. This increases reflux, making for a lighter spirit. Since 2010, the principal single malt expression has been the no-age-statement FIOR, which is made using a high proportion of unpeated 14- and 15-year-old whiskies, with the addition of 15 percent of 5-year-old peated spirit matured in first-fill bourbon barrels.

Glencadam

Glencadam was established in the historic Angus in 1825 by George Cooper, and ultimately came into the possession of Allied Lyons in 1987, with Allied Lyons later becoming Allied Domecq plc.

Allied Domecq operated Glencadam until it was deemed surplus to requirements in 2000. Three years later, the silent distillery was purchased by London-based blending company Angus Dundee Distillers, which also owns Tomintoul distillery.

Just three or four percent of the output of Glencadam distillery's two stills is destined for single malt sales, but, under the stewardship of Angus Dundee Distillers, a core range of 10-, 15-, and 21-year-olds was developed. The year 2016 saw six new additions to the line-up, ranging from the no-age-statement Origins 1825 to a 25-year-old.

Arbikie

Arbikie was established near Lunan Bay in the county of Angus by members of the Stirling family, which can trace its agricultural roots as far back as 1600 on the west coast of Scotland. Bill Stirling moved across the country to Arbikie during the 1920s, and today members of the

fourth generation of the Stirlings at Arbikie head up the enterprise, with commercial director John being based at the farm and distillery. The Arbikie distillery actually constitutes the resurrection of whisky making on the farm, as there are records of an Arbikie distillery in 1794.

Malting barley is grown on site, while gin and potato vodka provide an income stream, as the whisky matures. The whisky is principally "highland and coastal" in style, and robust enough to stand up to lengthy sherry-cask maturation.

However, the Stirlings have also made and laid down some rye whisky, which they expect to be ready to bottle after four to five years maturation.

BRECHIN'S ONLY DISTILLERY

Brechin had two distilleries until Port North closed in 1983. Now Glencadam is the sole whisky-making operation in the town.

TASTING NOTES

Nutty, earthy, and easy drinking by reputation, Fettercairn brings something different to the party. Glencadam's berry and cream characteristics make it ideal with dessert. Save Royal Lochnagar for after dinner.

FETTERCAIRN

FIOR
42% ABV

Nose Sherry, ginger, Jaffa oranges, vanilla, and smoky toffee.

Body Relatively full.

Palate Orange, sherry, treacle toffee, and light smoke.

Finish Licorice and spicy oak.

GLENCADAM

GLENCADAM 10-YEAR-OLD
46% ABV

Nose Floral, with vanilla and sweet pears.

Body Medium, smooth.

Palate Citrus fruits and softly spiced oak.

Finish Medium to long, persistently fruity.

ROYAL LOCHNAGAR

ROYAL LOCHNAGAR 12-YEAR-OLD
40% ABV

Malt, fruit and spice feature in this after-dinner dram.

Nose Toffee, newly-planed oak, and light smokiness.

Body Medium.

Palate Dry sherry, caramel, spice, and subtle fruit notes.

Finish Malt, then licorice and a whiff of smoke.



ROYAL LOCHNAGAR 12-YEAR-OLD

DISTILLERY DETAILS

EDRADOUR

FOUNDED 1825

OWNER Signatory Vintage
Scotch Whisky Co. Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 28,000 gal
(130,000 liters)

BLAIR ATHOL

FOUNDED 1798

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 615,000 gal
(2.8m liters)

ABERFELDY

FOUNDED 1896

OWNER John Dewar &
Sons Ltd (Bacardi Limited)

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 770,000 gal
(3.5m liters)

GLENTURRET

FOUNDED 1775

OWNER Edrington

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 75,000 gal
(340,000 liters)

Perthshire

THE COUNTY OF PERTHSHIRE IS RICH IN DISTILLERIES AND
DISTILLING HISTORY, WHILE THE CITY OF PERTH WAS FORMERLY
A GREAT CENTER FOR WHISKY BLENDING.

Edradour

In appearance, Edradour is the quintessential Highland distillery. This, a cluster of venerable, lime-washed, and red-painted farm-style buildings, is grouped around a burn in the hills, a couple of miles from the Perthshire tourist center of Pitlochry.

Inside, production methods are highly traditional and feature a small cast-iron, open mash tun dating from 1910, a pair of Oregon pine washbacks, and two stills linked to a 100-year-old worm tub.

Edradour came into being in 1825 when a distilling cooperative of local farmers was established, and, in 1841, this was formalized into John MacGlashan & Co. In 1922, William Whiteley & Co. Ltd purchased Edradour to provide malt for its blends, which included King's Ransom and House of Lords.

In 1982, Edradour was acquired by the Pernod Ricard subsidiary Campbell Distilleries, who introduced a 10-year-old bottling in 1986. Then, in 2002, it declared Edradour surplus to requirements, following its acquisition of The Seagram Company's extensive Scotch whisky operations.

At this point, Edradour was purchased for \$8.7 million by the independent bottler Signatory, headed by Andrew Symington, and five years later it was decided to move the entire Signatory operation from Edinburgh to Edradour. Accordingly, a new bottling hall was constructed, along with a dunnage-style warehouse.

Perhaps the most significant product innovation of the Signatory regime has been the introduction of the heavily peated spirit (in excess of 50ppm) Ballechin, named after a long-lost Perthshire farm distillery that was once nearby. Ballechin was first distilled in 2003, and, after a series of limited edition releases matured in a variety of wine casks, a Ballechin 10-year-old appeared in 2014.

The core Edradour range includes a 10-year-old, as well as the 12-year-old Caledonia, and the 15-year-old Fairy Flag, which are both finished in Oloroso sherry casks. The demand for Edradour single malt in all its variety has led to plans for the construction of an entirely new distilling unit on the site, which will be equipped with replica mash tun, washbacks, stills, and worm tub, doubling potential capacity.

“ABERFELDY IS INTEGRAL TO THE
HISTORY OF PERTH'S SECOND GREAT
BLENDING DYNASTY, THAT OF JOHN
DEWAR & SONS LTD”



Blair Athol

Located on the outskirts of Pitlochry, Blair Athol distillery is one of the few Scottish distilleries to have its roots back in the 18th century, being founded under the Aldour name by Robert Robertson and John Stewart. The name Blair Athol was adopted in 1825, when Robertson expanded the operation.

The distillery was mothballed in 1932, and the following year it came into the possession of Perth blender Arthur Bell & Sons Ltd. Production did not resume until 1949, and the distillery was substantially rebuilt in 1973, when the complement of stills was doubled from two to four.

Following the takeover of Bell's by Guinness plc in 1985, Blair Athol subsequently became part of United Distillers, and is now in the hands of successor company Diageo, who promotes it as the "brand home" of Bell's.

Aberfeldy

Aberfeldy distillery was established almost exactly a century after Blair Athol, and is located close to the River Tay on the outskirts of the holiday center of Aberfeldy, some 15 miles (25km) southwest of Pitlochry.

Just as Blair Athol has a long association with the Perth blender Arthur Bell & Sons Ltd, Aberfeldy is integral to the history of Perth's

second great blending dynasty, that of John Dewar & Sons Ltd. The distillery was constructed to supply spirit for blending purposes, and the firm's White Label blend—now the best seller in the US—first appeared on the market the year after the distillery came on stream.

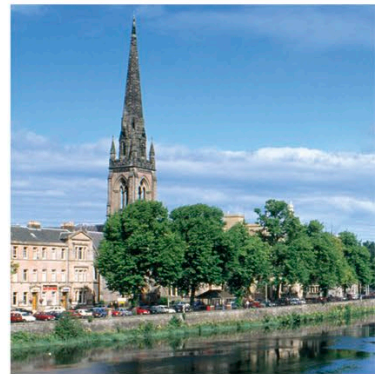
What had become Buchanan-Dewar Ltd merged with the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1925, and when the next period of boom hit the Scotch whisky industry during the 1960s and '70s, Aberfeldy was subsequently expanded, with a new stillhouse and tun room being constructed in 1972, when the number of stills was doubled from two to four.

In 1998, Aberfeldy was one of four distilleries sold by DCL's successor company, Diageo, to John Dewar & Sons Ltd, itself owned by Bermuda-based Bacardi Limited.

In 2000, the innovative, interactive "Dewar's World of Whisky" visitor center opened in the former distillery maltings, though this has now been rebranded as Dewar's Aberfeldy Distillery Visitor Centre.

Glenturret

Located 3 miles (5km) north of the historic town of Crieff via the A85, Glenturret is one of the distilleries that laid claim to



THE RIVER TAY AT PERTH

The Tay is the longest river in Scotland, renowned for the excellence of its trout and salmon fishing.



FARMHOUSE DISTILLERY

With its blissful, farmhouse feel, Edradour is surely one of the prettiest and most-photographed distilleries in Scotland.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

STRATHEARN

FOUNDED 2013

OWNER Tony Reeman-Clark

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 6,600 gal
(30,000 liters)

TULLIBARDINE

FOUNDED 1949

OWNER Picard Vins & Spiritueux

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 660,000 gal
(3m liters)

DEANSTON

FOUNDED 1965

OWNER Burn Stewart Distillers (Distell Group)

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 660,000 gal
(3m liters)



being the oldest working whisky-making operation in Scotland, with illicit distilling taking place there in 1775.

Indeed, The Turret Burn, beside which the distillery stands, was popular with illicit distillers, who were operating in the area by 1717.

Glenturret was first licensed to John Drummond, as Hosh, in 1818, and the Glenturret name was adopted in 1875. The distillery fell silent in 1921, and, eight years later, the equipment was removed, with the buildings subsequently being given over to agricultural use.

Businessman James Fairlie acquired the premises in 1957 and proceeded to re-equip it for distilling, with production recommencing two years later. Ownership passed to Rémy Cointreau in 1981. In 1990, it entered the portfolio of Highland Distillers, now part of Edrington.

Since 2002, Glenturret has been branded as "The Famous Grouse Experience," and has provided a highly innovative and interactive visitor center for the blend. The Experience offers a wide range of tour options, even allowing the truly dedicated whisky lover to become a stillman for the day.

In 2015, a new range of Glenturret single malt expressions was introduced, with the existing 10-year-old being joined by Triple Wood, Sherry, and Peated variants. Since 2009, the distillery has produced batches of heavily peated malt each year.

TULLIBARDINE VISITOR CENTER

Like so many distilleries today, Tullibardine welcomes the public, and its location beside the busy A9 road ensures many people stop off for a tour.

Strathearn

While Glenturret is notable as one of Scotland's oldest distilleries, its "neighbor," Strathearn, which is just under 12 miles (19km) to the east along the A85, is one of the country's newest. It was established in 2013 in a former farm steading, initially producing gin, while the first casks of whisky were filled in October of that year.

The small pair of copper stills were fabricated in Portugal, and are traditional "alembics" in style. Most of the casks being filled at Strathearn are 11–22 gallons (50–100 liters) in size, and are virgin French oak, virgin American oak, or ex-sherry casks. Both peated and unpeated spirit are produced.

The first release which could legally be called Scotch whisky appeared in December 2016, with 1 pint (100 x 500ml) bottles from a single octave cask being sold by online auction. Bottle number one achieved the remarkable price of \$5,100.

Tullibardine

When Tullibardine distillery in the Perthshire village of Blackford began to produce spirit during 1949, it marked a significant moment in the history of Scotch whisky, as Tullibardine was the first new distillery to have opened in Scotland since 1900.

The Tullibardine name had been used during the late 18th and early 19th centuries for a distillery at a now unknown location in the area, and the post-war Tullibardine venture was operated by Glasgow whisky broker Brodie Hepburn Ltd from 1953, until the firm was taken over by Invergordon Distillers Ltd in 1971.

Tullibardine's capacity was subsequently increased by the installation of a second pair of stills in 1973, and when Invergordon was acquired by Whyte & Mackay Ltd in 1993, the Perthshire plant was considered surplus to requirements, closing the following year.

This could have spelled the end for whisky-making on the site, situated alongside the A9 dual carriageway between Stirling and Perth. The day was saved, however, by a business consortium that purchased Tullibardine from Whyte & Mackay for \$2 million in 2003, with production recommencing before the year's end.

In 2011, Tullibardine was sold to the third-generation family-owned French wines and spirits company Picard Vins & Spiritueux, based in Chassagne-Montrachet, Burgundy. The core range now comprises the no-age-statement Sovereign, and 20- and 25-year-old expressions, along with a 2004 cask-strength edition named The Murray. There are also three core finished expressions, namely 225 Sauternes, 228 Burgundy, and 500 Sherry.

In 2015, Tullibardine launched its Custodians' Collection with a 1952 expression, and followed this up in 2016 with a 1970 Vintage. In the same year, a bottling line, vatting hall, laboratory, and cooperage opened on the site, along with additional warehousing.

Deanston

Deanston was part of the post-World War II Scotch whisky expansion program, which saw new distilleries created for the first time since the turn of the 20th century.

Deanston was converted from a cotton mill, which stands beside the River Teith, and a turbine makes the distillery self-sufficient using hydroelectric power.

Deanston is located 1 mile (2km) from the town of Doune, and the mill dates back to 1785. One of the distillery warehouses occupies the striking, vaulted former weaving shed, constructed in 1836.

TASTING NOTES

Edradour, Blair Athol, and Aberfeldy all offer rich and fruity whiskies. Glenturret whiskies are light when young, but become full-bodied with age. Deanston is clean, malty, and sweet, while Tullibardine is elegant, creamy, and sweet, with notes of spice.

EDRADOUR

CALEDONIA 12-YEAR-OLD

46% ABV

Nose Fruity and leathery, with figs, golden raisins, and cloves.

Body Full.

Palate Rich, nutty, and orangey, with up-front spice.

Finish Slowly drying, developing oak.

BLAIR ATHOL

BLAIR ATHOL 12-YEAR-OLD (FLORA & FAUNA SERIES)

43% ABV

Nose Rich, sherried, and fragrant, with brittle toffee.

Body Smooth.

Palate Rich Christmas cake flavors and spicy sherry.

Finish Dries slowly, with a suggestion of smoke.



BLAIR ATHOL
12-YEAR-OLD

ABERFELDY

ABERFELDY 12-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Nose Honey, stewed fruit, slightly smoky orange.

Body Mildly oily.

Palate Malty, with orange and cheesecake base.

Finish Long, warming, and spicy.



ABERFELDY
12-YEAR-OLD

GLENTURRET

TRIPLE WOOD

43% ABV

Nose Slightly savory, with vanilla, caramel, and soft oak.

Body Medium to full.

Palate Spicy toffee, mixed nuts, and orchard fruits.

Finish Relatively lengthy, spicy, and herbal, with oaky coffee.



GLENTURRET
TRIPLE WOOD

TULLIBARDINE

SOVEREIGN

43% ABV

Nose Floral, with vanilla fudge and freshly cut hay.

Body Medium.

Palate Fruity, with malt, marzipan, milk chocolate, and soft spice.

Finish Vanilla, cocoa, and hints of citrus and cinnamon.



TULLIBARDINE
SOVEREIGN

DEANSTON

DEANSTON 12-YEAR-OLD

46.3% ABV

Nose Malty, with honey and orchard fruits.

Body Smooth.

Palate Ginger, honey, and cloves.

Finish Lengthy, mildly herbal.

Deanston distillery was established in 1965/66 by Brodie Hepburn Ltd, owner of the Tullibardine distillery, and James Finlay & Co., trading as Deanston Distillery Co. Ltd. In 1972, Invergordon Distillers acquired Deanston, and oversaw the bottlings of the distillery's first single malt in 1974.

Deanston was silent from 1982 until 1990, when Glasgow-based Burn Stewart Distillers acquired it for \$4 million, and production resumed the following year. The profile of both the distillery and its single malt have risen in recent years, with a visitor center opening in 2012.

Blended Malts

ONCE THE POOR RELATION OF SINGLE MALTS, THE BLENDED MALTS CATEGORY HAS BEEN GAINING GREATER RESPECT DURING RECENT YEARS.

The Scotch Whisky Regulations (SWR) 2009, which came into force on November 23 of that year declared, “‘Blended Malt Scotch Whisky’ means a blend of two or more single malt Scotch whiskies that have been distilled at more than one distillery.” The new regulations outlawed official use of the terms “vatted” malt and “pure” malt, with the former having earlier been employed most frequently.

“THIS GENRE OF WHISKY HAS ITS ORIGINS IN THE MID-19TH CENTURY AND IT WAS EFFECTIVELY THE FORERUNNER OF BLENDED SCOTCH”

Blended malts have often been regarded as the “also-rans” of the Scotch whisky world. Single malts were seen as the epitome of malt whisky, with blended malts being considered something of a second-rate compromise. If you have one good single malt, the argument went, why mix it with others? The category has now been embraced by several more players, however, and the quality of whiskies on offer has caused many previously cynical consumers to rethink their views on blended malts. In times when supplies of single malts may be scarce, blended malts allow the producer or bottler the same sort of flexibility as no-age-statement whiskies.



MALT FOR BLENDING

Although primarily known for its single malt, Glenfiddich whisky is also used in a variety of blends.

The origins

This genre of whisky has its origins in the mid-19th century and it was effectively the forerunner of blended scotch. For many years, the “vatted malts” sector was largely comprised of a handful of brands, most notably Strathconan (produced by the Distillers Company Ltd [DCL] and comprising four 12-year-old malts); Glencoe; and Gordon & MacPhail’s Pride of Orkney, Pride of Strathspey, and others in a similar vein.

Then in 2002 The Easy Drinking Whisky Company was established with backing from Edrington to produce blended malts, which were named after descriptors in an attempt to “de-mystify” Scotch whisky. Accordingly, expressions appeared as “The Rich Spicy One,” “The Smokey Peaty One,” and “The Smooth Sweeter One.” Despite initial success, the company closed in 2010.

Growing popularity

The Asian market, and Taiwan in particular, embraced blended malts, with Johnnie Walker Green Label being launched in 1997 very much with Asia in mind. It was discontinued everywhere except Taiwan in 2012, but the 15-year-old was reintroduced globally in 2016 due to popular demand.

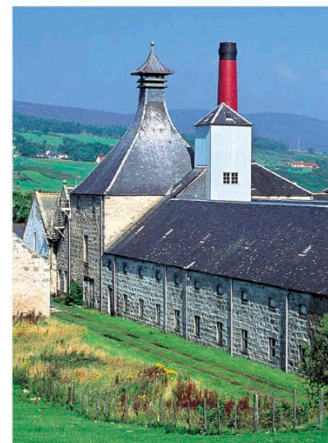
Another major player to embrace blended malts was William Grant & Sons Ltd, which introduced Monkey Shoulder in 2005. Sometimes producers and bottlers are reluctant to divulge the “palate” of component malts, which they use to create their blended malts, but Grant’s is quite open about the contents of Monkey Shoulder, which it describes as “Triple Malt” featuring spirit from the company’s three Speyside malt distilleries—Glenfiddich, Balvenie, and Kininvie. It has proved particularly desirable and fashionable as a base for whisky cocktails.

Newer players

More niche operators have entered the blended malt arena, perhaps most notably the innovative Compass Box Whisky Co., who launched the Clynelish-rich The Spice Tree in 2005, though this expression incurred the wrath of the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA) for its use of French oak inner staves. It was subsequently withdrawn, then reintroduced in 2009 with a form of maturation in place that did not breach SWA regulations.

Meanwhile, the family-owned Wemyss Malts was established in Fife in 2005 and offers three blended malts in its core range, namely Smooth Gentleman (Speyside), Spice King (Highland), and Peat Chimney (Islay). In each instance, the component malts are chosen to give diverse and specific aroma and flavor characteristics.

Older-established independent bottlers have also made a success of blended malts, most notably Glasgow-based Douglas Laing & Co Ltd. The firm’s regular lineup includes Big Peat (Islay), Timorous Beastie (Highlands), Scallywag (Speyside), and Rock Oyster (Islands). Laing has also thought outside the box, as it were, with its Double Barrel range, which pairs two stylistically diverse single malts, such as Bowmore and Inchgower, and Ardbeg and Craigellachie.



WATER FROM THE BURN

Situated in the coastal town of Brora, Clynelish uses water from the Clynelilton Burn to make its single malt whisky, which is known for its oily and waxy texture.

TASTING NOTES

A small selection of some of the best blended malts currently on the market.

ANGELS' NECTAR—RICH PEAT EDITION

46% ABV

Nose Wood smoke, orchard fruit, vanilla, and new leather.

Body Supple.

Palate Ripe apples, brittle toffee, and dark chocolate.

Finish Smoky peat and more dark chocolate.



ANGELS' NECTAR—RICH PEAT EDITION

DOUGLAS LAING BIG PEAT

46% ABV

Nose Smoky citrus fruit, milk chocolate, light leather, iodine, and brine.

Body Medium.

Palate Big peat notes, more citrus fruit, black pepper, and spice.

Finish Short to medium, warm soil, smoky peat, and licorice.

MONKEY SHOULDER

40% ABV

Nose Ripe apples, honey, and vanilla.

Body Smooth.

Palate Spicy toffee, vanilla, fruit, and nut-milk chocolate.

Finish Vanilla, toffee, and tropical fruits.

COMPASS BOX SPICE TREE

46% ABV

Nose Malt and maritime notes, milk chocolate, and peat.

Body Oily.

Palate Honey, ginger, vanilla, and almonds, plus spicy orange.

Finish Oak tannins and fruity spice.



COMPASS BOX SPICE TREE

WEMYSS MALTS PEAT CHIMNEY

40% ABV

Nose Malt, tar, smoked haddock, and coal soot.

Body Balanced.

Palate Cooking apples, caramel, and a hint of oak.

Finish Drying, with gentle peat and fading malt.



WEMYSS MALTS PEAT CHIMNEY

THE SIX ISLES

43% ABV

Nose Fragrant smoke, mandarins, and lemon.

Body Firm.

Palate Sweet fruits and smoky malt.

Finish Smoky and drying, with spicy citrus fruit.

Great Blends

HAVE YOU TASTED THE TALISKER IN JOHNNIE WALKER, THE ARDBEG IN BALLANTINE'S, THE ABERFELDY IN DEWAR'S? THESE MALTS WOULD NOT HAVE SURVIVED WERE THEY NOT KEY ELEMENTS IN BLENDS.

Blended Scotch whisky is defined by the Scotch Whisky Regulations (SWR) 2009 as consisting of "A blend of one or more single malt Scotch whiskies with one or more single grain Scotch whiskies." Despite the growth of single malt sales during recent years, some 90 percent of all Scotch whisky sold is blended. For most of the world, blended Scotch is Scotch whisky, yet the notion persists in some quarters that blends are inferior to single malts. This is demonstrably untrue. We have all sampled very bad single malts and very good blends.

The role of the master blender is one of the most skillful in the entire business of producing whisky. It is often likened to that of a musical conductor, working to create something that is greater than the sum of its parts. A high-quality blend may have as many as 30 different malts and three or four different grains in its composition, and the percentage of older whiskies will be higher, as will the proportion of malt to grain spirit.

Blending history

Both the best-selling Johnnie Walker and Ballantine's brands boast lengthy histories, as do many of their rivals. It was the creation



THE MYSTERY OF BLENDING

The role of a master blender is part artist, part technician. His or her objective is to recreate their company's branded blends, as identically as possible, time after time.

of the continuous still, refined and simplified by Irishman Aeneas Coffey who patented his design in 1830, that paved the way for the development of blended whisky. Initially, much of the comparatively characterless spirit produced in Scotland's Coffey stills was exported to England and rectified into gin, but all that was to change during the middle of the 19th century.

Private blending of batches of malt whisky was routinely carried out by merchants and publicans in order to achieve greater conformity for their customers, and the Forbes-Mackenzie Act of 1853 made it legal to vat, or mix, malt whiskies from the same distillery while "under bond."

As already noted, one of the first people to exploit this new legislation was Edinburgh wine and spirits merchant Andrew Usher, who, with his son Andrew, launched Usher's Old Vatted Glenlivet (OVG). By combining Glenlivet whisky distilled in different years, OVG offered much greater consistency than was previously possible.

THE TOP TEN

This list comprises the global best-selling blended Scotch whiskies as of 2016.

1. JOHNNIE WALKER
2. BALLANTINE'S
3. CHIVAS REGAL
4. GRANT'S
5. J&B RARE



JOHNNIE WALKER

6. WILLIAM LAWSON'S
7. FAMOUS GROUSE
8. WILLIAM PEEL
9. DEWAR'S
10. LABEL 5



CHIVAS REGAL

However, the search for ultimate consistency reached its apotheosis in 1860, when William Gladstone's Spirits Act went a stage further, by allowing malts and grains "under bond" to be blended for the first time. In the wake of the Spirits Act, Andrew Usher Jr. converted OVG from a "vatted malt" to a true blended whisky.

Andrew Usher Jr.'s son, Sir Robert, noted that comparatively little whisky was sold in England prior to 1860. However, after that date "... the trade in Scotch whisky increased by leaps and bounds, the reason being, to my mind, that the blend is lighter and more easily digested, and thus more suited to the public taste. My personal opinion is that the pot still is improved and made more wholesome when blended with patent."

Inevitably, the Ushers were not alone in developing blended Scotches; William Robertson, William Sanderson, and Glasgow whisky-broker W.P. Lowrie were all early blending entrepreneurs,

as was Charles Mackinlay, whose company produced Old Vatted Ben Vorlich, and ultimately, the well-known Mackinlay's blend.

The global success enjoyed by blended Scotch was aided to a significant degree by the havoc wreaked on the French brandy industry by the insect *Phylloxera vastatrix*, which destroys vines by attacking their leaves and roots. It was first identified in France in 1863. During the 1880s, it caused the production of Cognac to cease almost entirely, with brandy drinkers in England soon requiring a substitute.

At this point, a new breed of entrepreneur took to the Scotch whisky stage, and with imagination, innovation, and brilliant salesmanship, they began to establish Scotch whisky as a drink for the world. The group of distillers whose fortunes were made during the blended whisky boom included James Buchanan & Co. Ltd (producers of the Black & White



REGAL WAREHOUSE

It is possible to taste drams straight from the casks within the Chivas Regal cellar at the Strathisla warehouses.

brand), John Dewar & Sons Ltd, John Walker & Sons Ltd, and Mackie & Co Ltd (of White Horse fame), while the already well-established whisky house of Haig grew in importance and prosperity.

The most colorful of this disparate group of blending pioneers was undoubtedly Tommy Dewar. Along with his brother John, Dewar inherited his father's Perth licensed grocers' emporium, established in 1846, and while John tended to focus on administration, Tommy was renowned as one of the most flamboyant figures in the Scotch whisky industry.

"Whisky Tom" sailed yachts and bred racehorses, but was also a hard-working and charismatic ambassador for the family whisky business, once visiting no fewer than 26 countries in two years to increase its network of agencies. From 1896–98 the Dewar brothers built Aberfeldy distillery to supply malt for the increasingly popular Dewar's White Label blend.

Tommy was also notable for his many "Dewarisms," including "We have a great regard for old age when it is bottled," and "A teetotaler is one who suffers from thirst, instead of enjoying it."

Blends today

When it comes to current popularity, way ahead of all the competition is Diageo plc's old favorite Johnnie Walker "family" of blends, which between them accounted for 21.5 percent of all blended Scotch sales in 2015. In second place was Chivas Brothers' Ballantine's brand, with 7 percent of the market share.

Most of the "top 10" blends listed previously—like Johnnie Walker and Ballantine's—have their roots in the 19th century, but two brands that are likely to be unfamiliar to British consumers are William Peel and Label 5.

Both are, however, well-known in France, the world's leading market for blended Scotch. William Peel is owned by French drinks group Belvédère, which uses 18 different malts and grains in its production, while La Martiniquaise's Label 5 provides strong competition. It boasts a high proportion of Speyside single malt in its composition, probably due to the fact that La Martiniquaise owns Glen Moray distillery in Elgin.

Niche blends

"Deluxe" blends have long been a feature of the Scotch whisky scene, most obviously exemplified by Johnnie Walker Black Label (12-year-old) and the similarly aged Chivas Regal. In recent years, however, we have seen Johnnie Walker rise to a new level with the likes of its Blue Label, while Chivas Regal's 25-year-old provides keen competition.

In the same ownership as Chivas Regal is Royal Salute, first produced to celebrate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. This has become a firm favorite in Asian markets and ranges from the "entry level" 21-year-old up to Tribute to Honour, which comprises just 21 jewel-encrusted decanters of a 45-year-old blend.

Part of the trend for more exclusive blends has led to the creation of "niche" or "small batch" blends, designed to appeal to consumers who want something just that bit different. One notable example is Compass Box Great King Street Artist's Blend, launched in 2011.

The Great King Street range focuses on the use of quality grain spirit, a high percentage of malt, excellent casks, natural color, no chill-filtration, and presentation at 43% ABV. Unlike most of the larger companies creating blends, Compass Box is happy to share details of the component whiskies and casks, noting that the Great King Street Artist's Blend is 45 percent Lowland grain whisky, 45 percent Northern Highland single malts, and 10 percent Speyside single malt.



WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Compass Box has chosen the Great King Street name for an ongoing series of distinctive blends with provenance. Artist's Blend was followed by the fuller-bodied, smokier Glasgow Blend.



BLEND ONLY

The modern, Diageo-owned Roseisle distillery was built specifically to provide malt for blends.

When it comes to maturation, Compass Box specifies that it has used 66 percent first-fill American oak barrels, 8 percent first-fill sherry butts, and 26 percent “new French oak finish,” in the form of barrels with toasted oak heads. Also, a peatier version of Great King Street, named Glasgow Blend, is now available.

Meanwhile, in the Aberdeenshire market town of Huntly, independent bottler Duncan Taylor & Co. Ltd decided in 2008 that it was time to create a “house” blend with a difference. It took the name Black Bull, which had first been used in the 1860s, and created Black Bull 40-year-old, which features a malt-to-grain ratio of nine to one and is bottled at 50% ABV. Subsequently, other expressions of Black Bull have been added to the range.

TASTING NOTES

Here, we have shown a selection of some of the most diverse and interesting Scotch whisky blends such as Teacher's, Bell's, and Compass Box.

TEACHER'S HIGHLAND CREAM

Nose Peaty grain, brine, caramel, and soft smoke.

Body Firm.

Palate More peaty grain, sherry, figs, and mild licorice.

Finish Medium in length, slightly oily, and ashy.

BELL'S ORIGINAL

Nose Fragrant, with honey, fudge, and grain notes.

Body Medium, mildly oily.

Palate Fudge, grain, ripe apples, soft, and nutty spice.

Finish Short, fruity, and slightly smoky.



BELL'S ORIGINAL

CUTTY SARK

Nose Light, floral, citrus fruits, and vanilla.

Body Rounded.

Palate Caramel, vanilla, and sweet barley.
Finish Malty, medium to long.

COMPASS BOX GREAT KING STREET ARTIST'S BLEND

Nose Apple, vanilla, and sweet cereal.

Body Medium, firm.

Palate Spicy apple, cake mix, and coconut.

Finish Long, sweet, and spicy, with pleasing oak.



GREAT KING
STREET ARTIST'S
BLEND

BLACK BULL 40-YEAR-OLD

Nose Ripe apples, pineapple, caramel, tobacco, and warm leather. Complex.

Body Rich.

Palate Pineapple, vanilla, caramel, then dark berries emerge.

Finish Ginger spices, medium to long.

Closed Distilleries

SOME “LOST” DISTILLERIES HAVE FOUND NEW USES, PERHAPS FOR HOUSING OR ENTERTAINMENT PURPOSES. SADLY FOR SCOTLAND’S WHISKY HERITAGE, MANY OTHERS HAVE DISAPPEARED ENTIRELY.

SCOTLAND’S LOST DISTILLERIES

Given that the production of Scotch whisky is a commercial activity prone to periods of expansion and contraction, it is inevitable that over the years some distilleries have fallen silent, either to be recommissioned at a later date, or lost forever. Thanks to the efforts of a few mainstream producers and many independent bottlers, those whiskies can still be found and savored, but as the years go by their scarcity (and price) increases, so try them while you can.

Brora

(see *Clynelish*, pp.96–97)

Caperdonich

Caperdonich was founded in 1897, sitting opposite Glen Grant on the main road through Rothes. It was designed to supplement the output of that distillery. However, when the prevailing Victorian whisky “boom” turned to “bust,” the plant fell silent in 1902. It was only to become productive once more in 1965 after a program of reconstruction.

Ultimately, Caperdonich came into the hands of Pernod Ricard in 2001, and the distillery was deemed surplus to requirements, closing once more in 2002. Eight years later, Caperdonich was sold to the notable still-maker, Forsyth’s, whose premises adjoined the Caperdonich site, and the distillery was subsequently demolished.

Caperdonich has a fruity, creamy style and is best as an after-dinner whisky.

Littlemill

A distillery that once stood on the north bank of the River Clyde at Bowling, 12 miles (19km) from Glasgow, the first official record of Littlemill is dated 1772. After numerous owners, Barton Brands Inc. of Chicago bought a share in Littlemill Distillery Co. Ltd in 1959, going on to assume full control in 1971, when it began to trade as Barton Distilling (Scotland) Ltd.

New stills had been installed during the 1920s, which were equipped with rectifying columns instead of normal pot still necks, and had outer necks constructed of aluminum; the aim was to create a whisky that would mature more quickly than traditionally distilled pot still spirit.

Ultimately, Glen Catrine Bonded Warehouse Co. Ltd owned Littlemill, but, in 1996, the distillery’s death sentence was passed when all production equipment was stripped off and the warehouses were demolished. The distillery was knocked down during late 2005/early 2006, and the site

“PRODUCTION OF SCOTCH WHISKY IS PRONE TO PERIODS OF EXPANSION AND CONTRACTION”



is now occupied by a residential development. Littlemill is best as a restorative, or perhaps with dessert. It is marshmallow soft.

Millburn

Established in 1805, Millburn was the oldest of a trio of Inverness distilleries, which included Glen Mhor and Glen Albyn.

Millburn became part of the Distillers Company Ltd (DCL) in 1937, and Millburn's fellow Inverness distilleries—Glen Albyn and Glen Mhor—were also owned by DCL, which acquired them in 1972. The twin distilleries stood close to the Caledonian Canal, with Glen Albyn dating from 1844, and Glen Mhor from 1892.

Both Glen Albyn and Glen Mhor closed in 1983 as part of DCL's radical downsizing of whisky production. Millburn survived for a further two years. Today, some of the distillery structures remain intact, having opened as a Beefeater Steakhouse in 1989.

Millburn has a smoky, aromatic style and is best as a nightcap.

Port Ellen

Situated on the outskirts of Port Ellen village on the southern shores of Islay, Port Ellen distillery was established in 1825. It was acquired in 1920 by Buchanan-Dewar Ltd, passing to DCL five years later. However, the distillery closed in 1930.

Remarkably, as with Caperdonich, Port Ellen was to achieve a second lease on life several decades after closure. The distillery underwent

an 18-month-long, \$1.1 million rebuilding program during which it changed quite dramatically both internally and externally. It finally became operational once again in April 1967, but fell victim to DCL's 1980s cutbacks, closing its doors for the last time in 1983.

The old distillery warehouses are still in use, though most of the more modern parts of the distillery were demolished in 2005/06, leaving the original maltings and pagodas situated around a courtyard.

Port Ellen is seaweedy, peppery, and salty. Drink it as a nightcap.

Rosebank

For many aficionados, Rosebank remains the quintessential Lowland single malt, although the distillery stopped producing spirit in 1993. Michael Jackson described the triple-distilled Rosebank as "the finest example of a Lowland malt" and considered its demise "a grievous loss."

Rosebank distillery is located beside the Forth-Clyde Canal at Camelon, on the outskirts of the industrial town of Falkirk, midway between Edinburgh and Glasgow. Its origins are confused, with claims being made for an establishment date of 1798.

In 1914, Rosebank—along with the fellow Lowland distilleries of Clydesdale, Glenkinchie, Grange, and St. Magdalene—merged to form Scottish Malt Distillers (SMD), which was acquired by DCL five years later. When DCL was taken over by Guinness plc in 1986, Rosebank was absorbed into United Distillers (UD), and ultimately became part of Diageo.

In May 2002, the distillery was purchased by British Waterways, which subsequently sold off some of the property for conversion into a series of canal-side apartments.

Rosebank is aromatic, with suggestions of clover. Enjoy it as an aperitif.

COLLECTIBLE MALT

Single malt from Port Ellen has become the most desirable spirit from any closed distillery, and owner Diageo's Annual Release bottlings are eagerly awaited.



ROSEBANK

The distillery lost out to fellow Lowlander Glenkinchie when it came to selecting a regional example for the Classic Malts range, partly because its location was less scenic.







IRELAND

THE CHARM, THE WELCOME, THE
CRAIC, THE SONGS, AND STORIES ...
LUBRICATED BY THE PURE
POT STILL WHISKEY



GLENDALOUGH LAKE

One of Ireland's newest distilleries takes its name from the "Glen of Two Lakes" in County Wicklow. The lake was home to the great monk St. Kevin, who died there in 617CE at the age of 120.

IRELAND

Ireland and Scotland are the two original great whiskey nations, and when the last edition of this book appeared in 2005, Michael Jackson wrote, "... the surprise, perhaps, is that while Scotland has almost 100 distilleries, Ireland nowadays has only three, albeit producing 25 to 30 different whiskeys."

What a difference a decade makes! While the number of malt distilleries in Scotland has risen to around the 116 mark, the Irish scene has exploded into life, with 15 whiskey distilleries active in 2017, and at least a dozen more on the drawing board, at the planning stage, or under construction.

Perhaps most significantly, the world's leading distiller, Diageo, has returned to Irish whiskey production, initially with a blend by the name of Roe & Co., which commemorates one of the great historic distilling names of Dublin.

Although Irish soil tends to be peaty, its whiskeys are not, perhaps because both brewing and distilling became large industries in Ireland early on, long before peat cutting was mechanized, and so the distilleries used wood or coal.

The Romans or Normans may have brought a grape distillate to Ireland called *aqua vitae* (water of life), translated by the Irish as *uisce beatha*. This term is said to have been corrupted by the invading soldiers of England's King Henry II to "ushky," and later to "whiskey." In the early 1800s, a tax on malt led some distillers to use large proportions of raw barley and this has remained a defining element in the flavor of today's Irish whiskeys.

Distillation methods

As distillers sought to improve their product, double and triple distillation systems were added, but the latter came to be more common in Ireland. The Irish distillers that grew and prospered were in the port cities: Cork, Dublin, Belfast, and Londonderry. The technique that revolutionized all distillation, the column still, was perfected by an Irishman, Aeneas Coffey, in the early 1800s (*see p.32*), but his countrymen were ambivalent about it. The column still appealed to distillers who wanted to produce whiskey cheaply and quickly, but it threatened to undermine a product

IRELAND'S DISTILLERIES

Ireland was once the greatest whiskey-producing nation, shipping the drink to a thirsty export market—especially the US—from its many ports. Some of its famous, historic labels survive, while others have been revived.



1 LIVING LEGEND

This flesh-and-blood distillery mascot is a descendent of the Brown Bull of Cooley, over which a battle was fought almost 1,000 years ago.



2 TEMPLE BAR, DUBLIN

The Temple Bar is the name of a pub and a lively neighborhood in the city center. The pub is known for its selection of whiskeys.



KEY

- ◆ Working distilleries
- Cities

that had luxury status. The Irish distillers' devotion to pure pot still whiskeys was still very evident until the mid-1960s, when the production of blends started to become more common. More recently, pure pot still whiskeys, such as Redbreast and Green Spot, have returned to the fore, with a connoisseur following seeking a "retro" taste. Indeed, Irish Distillers launched its ongoing Single Pot Still collection in 2011, and a number of Ireland's newest distilleries favor single pot still distillation.

The Bushmills distillery produces only malt whiskey, but did not bottle a single malt until 1987. Since then, versions either finished or aged wholly in unusual woods have begun to appear. In 1989, a new independent producer, Cooley distillery, emerged to challenge what at the time was Irish Distillers' total monopoly on Irish whiskey making. It is difficult to believe that until relatively recent times the Irish whiskey industry had shrunk to such a shadow of its former self. Happily, today, nothing could be further from the truth.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

MIDLETON

FOUNDED 1825

OWNER Irish
Distillers (Pernod-Ricard)

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY 4.4m gal
(20m liters)

Midleton

COUNTY CORK, HOME OF THE MIDLETON DISTILLERY, IS A TRADITIONAL CENTER OF BREWING AND DISTILLING, AND IS LIKELY THE REGION IN WHICH DISTILLATION ARRIVED IN IRELAND FROM MOORISH SPAIN.

What they call “the flavor of the Republic” resides in one small town. Until recently, all pure pot still Irish whiskey produced in the traditional manner was made by a single extraordinary distillery in Midleton, County Cork. The distillery, named after the town, also produces blends based on “pure”—or as the distillers prefer “single”—pot still whiskey.

The town of Midleton is less than 15 miles (24km) from Cork city. Near the town church, a short road leads to the original Midleton distillery, first opened in the 1820s. On the hill behind the distillery is the current Midleton

distillery, opened in 1975. This new distillery produces several blends of whiskey, including the Jameson’s range, but only two that bear the Midleton name.

Whiskey styles

Midleton produces the light, blended Irish Dunphy’s brand, originally only available in the US, and the classic Cork blend Paddy, first made in Ireland’s second city by the Cork Distilleries Company. Irish Distillers owned Paddy, the world’s fourth-largest Irish whiskey brand, until 2016 when it sold to the Louisiana-based, family-owned Sazerac.

THE BIG STILL

Built in 1825, and retired from use with the old Midleton distillery, this mighty beast—a wash still—could accommodate 33,638 gallons (152,966 liters) and is the world’s largest still.



Until 2011, the Midleton name was only applied to Midleton Very Rare, a vintage-dated blend, which was added to the range when the new distillery was opened. Early vintages contained some whiskey from the old distillery; that is all gone now, and all of the Very Rare is from the new distillery. At the beginning of the 21st century, the whiskeys included in the blend ranged from 12- to 25-year-olds. The emphasis is on first-fill bourbon casks. The aim is to produce a whiskey that is complex in aromas and flavors, but relaxed and approachable. It varies slightly from one vintage to the next, but tends to be elegantly sweet.

In 2011, the Midleton brand was applied to a new expression of whiskey—Midleton Barry Crockett Legacy, which celebrates the second-generation Midleton master distiller. It comprises a selection of pot still whiskeys, which have been matured exclusively in American oak bourbon barrels, along with a subtle contribution from a pot still distillate, which has been aged in new American oak barrels.

A third Midleton expression appeared in 2015 and was given the name Dair Ghaelach—Irish for “Irish oak.” This is a single pot still whiskey initially matured in American oak bourbon barrels, and uniquely finished in virgin Irish oak hogsheads that are made from timber harvested on the Ballaghtobin Estate in County Kilkenny.

Jameson range

The label of Midleton Very Rare bears (in very small type) a reference to John Jameson and Son. Crested Ten is another whiskey that proclaims its own brand name, but is discreetly labelled as part of the Jameson range. Then there is Jameson itself, with other versions such as Jameson Caskmates and Black Barrel.

Jameson, Power’s, Redbreast, and Green Spot whiskeys are produced at Midleton, although historically all have their origins in Dublin.

The mergers that housed many of these products under one roof had already taken place before the present stillhouse was commissioned. It was therefore designed with a view to flexibility. No other distillery produces so many styles of spirit.

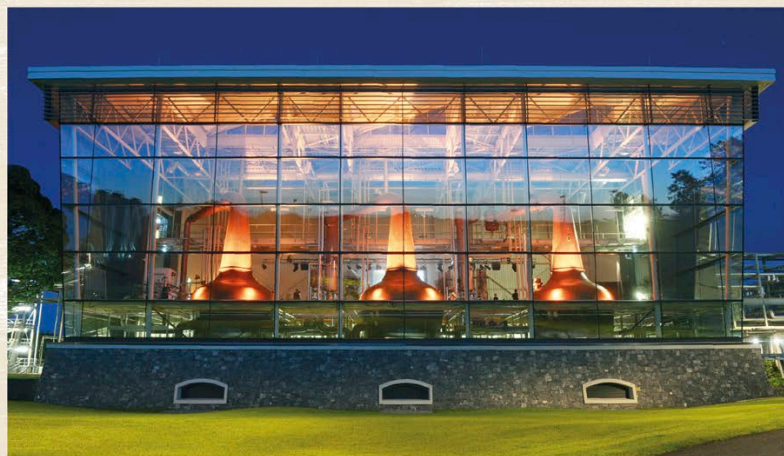
Versatile distillery

Nowhere else in the world of whiskey is there such a stark contrast between old and new as at Midleton. On adjoining sites, you can see a

HIGHLIGHT

THE GARDEN STILLHOUSE

The decision by Irish Distillers in 2011 to dedicate finances and marketing effort to the promotion of an expanding range of single pot still whiskeys led to the opening, two years later, of a brand new stillhouse at Midleton, equipped initially with three pot stills, each with a capacity of 18,000 gallons (80,000 liters). It was named The Garden Stillhouse, and 2017 saw the installation of a further three pot stills, giving the facility a potential annual output of 18 million gallons (80 million liters).



distillery so old that it once ground its grain with millstones (and still has them), and another so high-tech that it routinely produces a dozen spirits in one stillhouse. In fact, it could do far more. These 12 spirits are blended in different ways to produce more than 20 principal products.

The old distillery looks up at the new one, which stands at a respectful distance, screened by poplars, on the hillside behind. The new distillery is a steel-skin structure, which resembles a small power station or a missile silo. Inside, a row of four pot stills follows the line of the structure. Behind them, set against the wall, is a row of modernist spirit safes. Opposite these, against the other wall, is a row of six column stills. These are large stills, capable of holding 16,500 gallons (75,000 liters) each.

It is not unknown for pot and column stills to live together on one site like this, but it is unusual, and nowhere else in the world is there cohabitation on this scale. No other whiskey distillery is so versatile.

The pot stills

Given the company’s emphasis on triple distillation, a configuration of three pot stills might better tell the story, at least visually. However, the old distillery has four pot stills,

of which two act as wash stills for the first run. The other two (the feints still and the spirits still) are used for the second and third runs.

The first run turns wash into what are called low wines, at 22–50% ABV. These low wines are then run through a second distillation in the feints still. They emerge as pot feints, at 50–78% ABV. These pot feints, in turn, run through the third distillation, emerging as new spirit at 63–85% ABV. Midleton is quite unconventional in that runs are collected at different strengths in order to produce spirits of different character. As might be expected, spirits at the upper end of the alcohol range are lighter in body and flavor. Those at the lower end are heavier in body and fuller in flavor. The differences are very evident in new spirit, but they evolve further during aging. Once aged, these Midleton whiskeys are used in many of the blended whiskies produced in Ireland. The blender's specifications refer to light, medium, and heavy versions of whiskey from Midleton. There are also intermediate variations.

The giant wash still in the old distillery might sneer at the more manageable size of the four pot stills in the new one, but they are still bigger than anything in Scotland. They are a broad-

based onion shape, with a slight downward angle on the lyne arm. The wash stills carry a confusion of additional plumbing. First, there is a small chamber with no plates or tubes that spins the vapor to remove solids. This is called a cyclone. Next comes a very small rectifying column, with a reflux pipe linked back to the pot. Finally, a third chamber can again link back to the pot or to the column stills. A further refinement on the pot stills is a valve to vent aldehydes. All of this hardware can be used to fine-tune the flavor of the spirit.

The pot stills are occasionally used to produce pure malt whiskey, providing the blender with an alternative style to Bushmills. Usually, the pot stills are charged with a wash made from a blend of raw and malted barley. This is the pot still whiskey of Irish tradition. The two forms of barley meet in the mash tun. The company regards 40–50 percent malted barley as traditional, but as little as 20 percent is used in some products.

Midleton's light pot still whiskey can be more assertive than it sounds. The body is light, but the flavors can be leafy, dry, spicy, and peppery. Heavier styles develop more of a cereal-grain character, an oiliness, and estery flavors from cedar to lemon, among others.

TASTING NOTES

The Midleton name is increasingly being associated with single pot still expressions.

MIDLETON VERY RARE 2016 40% ABV

Matured exclusively in American oak barrels.

Nose Malt and fresh fruit, with honey, sherry, and nutmeg.

Body Waxy.

Palate More malt, cereal notes, butterscotch, and allspice.

Finish Succulent fruits, pepper, and developing oak.

MIDLETON BARRY CROCKETT LEGACY 46% ABV

Nose Orchard fruits, vanilla, and a hint of pepper.

Body Smooth.

Palate Chewy fruits and ginger plus vanilla, increasingly spicy, then drying.

Finish Licorice and black pepper, and mild oak.



BARRY CROCKETT
LEGACY

MIDLETON DAIR GHAELACH 58.2% ABV

Nose Orange, honey, milk chocolate, and milky coffee, plus sweet oak.

Body Creamy.

Palate Citrus fruits, pipe tobacco, char, and more oak.

Finish Tobacco, and freshly ground coffee.



DAIR GHAELACH

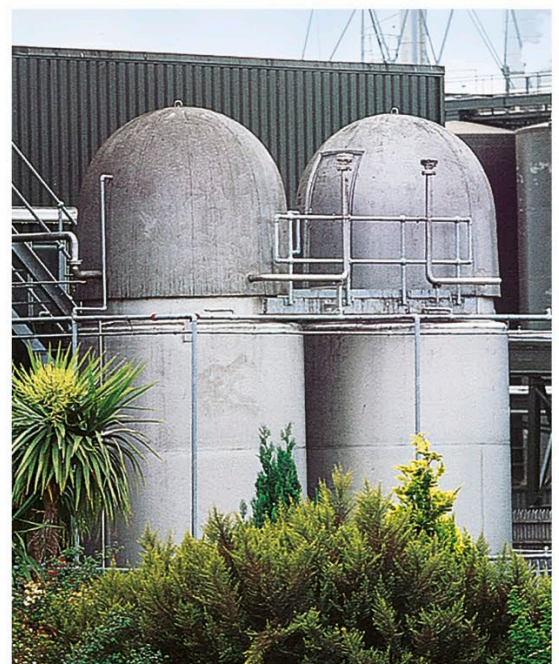
PADDY 40% ABV

Nose Oily grain, nuts, and a hint of honey.

Body Light.

Palate Soft and malty, with chewy toffee.

Finish Medium in length, ultimately quite dry.



CORN SILOS

Corn (maize), the main ingredient in Midleton's triple-distilled grain whiskey, is kept on site in these large silos.

“NOWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD OF WHISKEY IS THERE SUCH A STARK CONTRAST BETWEEN OLD AND NEW AS AT MIDDLETON”

The column stills

The grain whiskey distilled at Middleton is usually produced from corn (maize), though unmalted barley and wheat are both used occasionally. A proportion of malted barley is also used, to contribute the necessary enzymes. This varies from 5 to 20 percent, depending on the rest of the grist.

The grain whiskey is also triple distilled. Three different types of column still are used. The first run is through a beer column. Confusingly, the distillate collected from this, at about 70% ABV, is called high wines. The second run is through an extractive column, to remove fusel oils and other unwanted higher alcohols. In this process, water is introduced, and the alcohol level drops back to 20% ABV. The final run is through a rectifying column, which produces spirit at 94.5% ABV. The grain whiskey is matured at 63% ABV, like the malt and pot still whiskeys.

Maturation

Sherry wood is an essential element in some regular products at Middleton, notably versions of Jameson, and the company supervises the production in Spain of sherry casks made to its own specification of size and shape.

The overwhelming majority of casks, however, are former bourbon barrels, acquired in a complete restocking of cooperage that began in the late 1970s and early 1980s and was completed in the 1990s. Most of these barrels were acquired from the Wild Turkey or Heaven Hill distilleries. There are also some Tennessee whiskey barrels from Jack Daniel's. Middleton has more than 25 warehouses, most with a capacity of over 30,000 casks.

STACKING UP

Middleton was one of the first companies to stack casks upright on pallets, which is done in both the old and new warehouses. Three original warehouses at the old distillery are still in use.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

TULLAMORE D.E.W.

FOUNDED 1829

(New distillery
founded 2013)

OWNER William Grant &
Sons Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 800,000 gal
(3.6m liters)

KILBEGGAN

FOUNDED 1757

OWNER Beam
Suntory, Inc.

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 30,790 gal
(140,000 liters)

Tullamore and Kilbeggan

THESE NEIGHBORING TOWNS GIVE THEIR NAMES TO WHISKEYS
FROM RIVAL COMPANIES. CONFUSINGLY, TULLAMORE'S
ORIGINAL STILLS ARE NOW AT KILBEGGAN.

Situated in barley-growing country in the Midlands of Ireland, the town of Tullamore had several distilleries by 1790. Today, there remains only one, Tullamore, but it produces Ireland's second-largest whiskey brand, Tullamore D.E.W., with well-established markets in European countries, notably France, Germany, and Denmark.

The original Tullamore distillery was founded in 1829. The company passed to the family of its general manager, Daniel E. Williams. His initials formed a useful acronym and the company's whiskey became known as Tullamore Dew. Its advertising slogan was, "Give every man his Dew."

The whiskeys

The original Tullamore Dew was triple-distilled, and was said to have been one of the lighter Irish pot still whiskeys. The pot still character may also have been masked, though probably not hidden, by the sherry butts and port pipes used in maturation.

Tullamore Dew was a big name in the heyday of Irish whiskey, and the first to offer a change of style when it seemed appropriate. As a result of a visit to the US in 1947, Daniel E. Williams' grandson added a new product, Tullamore Dew Blended Whiskey. It had a relatively high proportion of pot still whiskey (60 percent) but was the first blended Irish whiskey. However, the distillery closed in 1954, by which time the firm was concentrating on its Irish Mist whiskey liqueur.

Stocks of whiskey lasted until 1963, at which point the brand name Tullamore Dew was sold to John Powers & Son. Three years later, Powers had merged with Jameson and the Cork Distillers Company. Less than a decade after that, the merged companies, under the name of the Irish Distillers Company, were producing all their whiskeys, including Tullamore Dew, in Middleton, County Cork.

Fast forward to 2010, however, and, with the Irish whiskey scene thriving, William Grant & Sons Ltd acquired Tullamore Dew, which had grown to be Ireland's second largest whiskey brand after

TASTING NOTES

Tullamore whiskeys now range from the soft, fruity, "standard" expression blend to richer and more complex single malts.

TULLAMORE

TULLAMORE D.E.W.

40% ABV

Triple distilled and a blend of single pot still, single grain, and single malt whiskey.

Nose Whole grain toast, walnuts, and brittle toffee.

Body Light to medium.

Palate Green apples, honey, vanilla, and a hint of sherry.

Finish Warming, with a hint of char and toffee.

TULLAMORE D.E.W. 14-YEAR-OLD

41.3% ABV

Triple-distilled, single malt whiskey, finished in bourbon, port, Madeira, and Oloroso sherry casks.

Nose Strong aromas of orchard and tropical fruits, with vanilla, and creamy oak.

Body Smooth and supple.

Palate Full and malty, with vanilla, and red grapes.

Finish Subtle sherry and oak tannins, relatively lengthy.



TULLAMORE
D.E.W.
14-YEAR-OLD

TULLAMORE D.E.W.

18-YEAR-OLD

41.3% ABV

Single malt whiskey finished for up to six months in bourbon, port, Madeira, and Oloroso sherry casks.

Nose Toffee apples, sweet oak, sherry, and cinnamon.

Body Soft.

Palate Red apples, Jaffa oranges, vanilla, sherry, and a hint of pipe tobacco.

Finish Citrus notes, with rum and raisin and milk chocolate.

KILBEGGAN

KILBEGGAN TRADITIONAL IRISH WHISKEY

40% ABV

Produced at Cooley distillery.

Nose Slightly oily, nutty, with pear drops and vanilla.

Body Light to medium.

Palate Smooth and malty, with orchard fruits.

Finish Relatively short, with drying oak.



KILBEGGAN
TRADITIONAL
IRISH WHISKEY



Jameson. It re-branded the company as Tullamore D.E.W., and 2013 saw the start of construction on an aesthetically pleasing and large-scale distillery at Clonminch, on the outskirts of Tullamore.

Initially, pot stills were installed, but phase two will involve the construction of a grain distillery, and further expansion of the pot still operation from the present complement of six stills is also envisaged. Both pot still and malt whiskey are being produced.

Thus, distilling has returned to Tullamore after 60 years. The Tullamore Dew Heritage Centre is housed not in the new distillery, but in an 1897 bonded warehouse that was part of the original Daniel E. Williams distillery in Tullamore itself.

Locke's Kilbeggan distillery

John Locke's distillery stands by the River Brusna, as it has done since 1757. At that time, there were several local distillers, working on a very small scale, in the area. The peaty water, rising from limestone, was one attraction, argues Andrew Bielenberg, in *Locke's Distillery: A History*. Another was the plentiful corn (maize) grown in the area. According to Bielenberg, small whiskey makers in this period would employ a single still, but run each batch through it three times.

The distillery was leased by the Locke family in 1843, and later purchased. John Locke married into the Smithwick brewing family of Kilkenny, and later used their yeast at Kilbeggan.

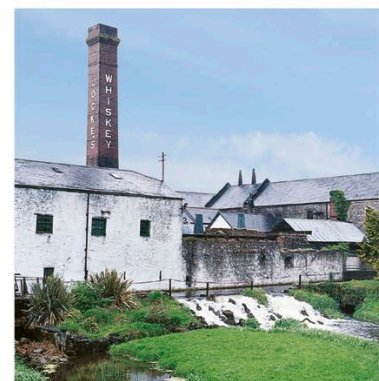
The distillery was developed considerably between the 1860s and the 1880s, and much of the equipment dates from that period.

Distilling stopped in 1953, during the time when all Irish whiskeys were experiencing difficulties. The stills were sold for scrap, but three sets of millstones survive, as well as four wooden washbacks and other pieces of machinery. Kilbeggan became one of Ireland's several ghost distilleries. Around the country, there are vestiges of 20 or more. Some are recognizable distillery buildings, abandoned, overgrown, or converted to incongruous purpose. Since 1982, however, there has been considerable investment in the restoration of the Kilbeggan distillery, and in the yard are the three stills that once produced Tullamore Dew. They were acquired by entrepreneur John Teeling, the driving force behind Cooley and Kilbeggan, with a view to their one day working again at Kilbeggan.

The old Tullamore stills may not be in production, but since 2007, whiskey has once more been made at Kilbeggan, as Teeling installed a pair of pot stills, one of which is 180 years old, while the other was newly made by Forsyth's of Rothes in Scotland. A wide variety of small-scale distillations have taken place since 2007, with the launch of a limited edition 3-year-old Kilbeggan Distillery Reserve in 2010. Kilbeggan's four stone-built warehouses are home to casks of whiskey produced at Cooley (see p.160).

THE OLD DISTILLERY

The Heritage Centre is located in one of the few surviving parts of the original Tullamore Dew distillery, and stands beside the Grand Canal.



BACK UP AND RUNNING

After a long period of silence, Kilbeggan distillery is again producing spirit, and the place once again has a real sense of life.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

TEELING

FOUNDED 2015

OWNER The Teeling
Whiskey Company

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 220,000 gallons
(1m liters)

Dublin

ONCE HOME TO GREAT NAMES LIKE JAMESON, DUBLIN HAD NO OPERATIONAL DISTILLERIES BY THE END OF THE 1970s. THE OPENING OF THE TEELING DISTILLERY IN 2015 HAS HAILED WHISKEY-MAKING'S TRIUMPHANT RETURN TO THE CITY.

One of the most memorable aromas of Dublin is the sweet smell of success: malt being kilned or infused at the Guinness brewery, on the south bank of the River Liffey.

Where cities grew on one side of a river, industries like the milling of grain, malting, brewing, distilling, and tanning were often banished to the opposite bank. This was certainly the case for Dublin, and the area became known as “The Liberties.” This part of the city once accommodated the Powers distillery, producer of the biggest-selling whiskey in Ireland. The distillery looked across the river at its rival, Jameson, which was in the Smithfield district, and was always more oriented toward exporting.

James Power founded his distillery in 1791, and it flourished under his son, John, who was knighted despite being a friend of the Irish patriot Daniel O’Connell. Its great local rival was founded in 1780 by John Jameson, a Presbyterian from the brewing town of Alloa in Scotland. The Jameson family had connections with the Haigs and the Steins—it was a Scottish-Irish distilling dynasty. One of the most successful Jamesons was a unionist who subsequently served in the Senate of the Free State. Today, the scale of the former distillery buildings recalls the industry at the height of the Victorian era, when all 32 Irish counties were part of the UK. In the 1880s, the Jameson distillery covered 5 acres (20,000m²), and made 1 million gallons (4.5 million liters) of spirit per year. It is now home to a visitor center named The Old Jameson Distillery. Jameson is now the best-selling Irish

whiskey worldwide, and is growing. The names of Powers and Jameson still appear on labels, though the whiskeys are now distilled at Midleton, County Cork. Both are distinctive in character.

Powers

The Irish favorite, Powers Gold Label, highlights the character of the distillate, rather than the wood. It has been a blend since the 1960s, but retains a notable pot still accent. About three-quarters of the blend is pot still whiskey, albeit of the medium rather than the heavy style. The Powers Gold Label blend has now been joined by a trio of single pot still expressions, namely Three Swallow Release, Signature Release, and Powers John’s Lane Release.

DUBLIN'S DISTILLERY

Located in the heart of the city,
Teeling is the only operational
distillery in Dublin.



Jameson

The Jameson whiskeys appear as a range. They are accented toward pot still whiskey, again of medium intensity, but with 50/50 being a more typical ratio. An especially significant Jameson characteristic is the interplay between spirit and wood. This is emphasized throughout the range. First-fill bourbon is very influential, and a certain amount of sherry wood is used. The Jameson core range now stretches to eight bottlings, including Original, Crested, Caskmates, Black Barrel, 18-year-old Reserve, Distiller's Safe, Cooper's Croze, and Blender's Dog.

Redbreast

This is traditional Irish pot still whiskey at its richest—well-matured, and with a generous slug of sherry. Since Irish Distillers began to promote its single pot still whiskeys in 2011, the Redbreast range has expanded to include a 12-year-old Cask Strength edition, 15- and 21-year-olds, plus Redbreast Sherry Finish Lustau Edition.

Green and Yellow Spot

Green Spot (in no-age-statement and Château Léoville Barton Bordeaux wine-finish variants) survives from a range produced for the Dublin wine and spirit merchant, Mitchell and Son.

There were originally a number of different colored “Spots,” and Yellow Spot has been revived in a 12-year-old format.

Teeling

The first new distillery in Dublin for 125 years, Teeling was established in The Liberties, first producing spirit in 2015. The distillery is equipped with three pot stills (made by Frilli in Italy), a 4.4-ton Steinecker full-lauter mash tun, and two pine and four stainless-steel washbacks. The principal output is single pot still whiskey, but the Teeling brothers devote 25 percent of their distilling time to what they describe as “innovation.” Teeling will offer a range of expressions distilled at Cooley until the Dublin-made spirit is ready for bottling.

TASTING NOTES

These whiskeys all originally came from Dublin, but most are now made in Midleton, County Cork, as copies of the original styles. Teeling is currently distilled in Cooley.

POWERS

POWERS GOLD LABEL

40% ABV

Nose Pronounced pot still esters. A hint of peppermint.

Body Oily.

Palate Dances lightly onto the tongue and off again. The middle palate is brief, but big and tasty. Nutty, cereal grains, and some underlying malty sweetness.

Finish Toast and honey, but also herbal and bittersweet.

JAMESON

JAMESON CASKMATES

40% ABV

Finished in stout-seasoned barrels.

Color Deep gold.

Nose Milk chocolate, malt, hops, and subtle spice.

Body Medium to full.

Palate Sweet, with vanilla, hops, and a hint of char.

Finish Relatively short, drying, with black pepper.

REDBREAST

REDBREAST 12-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Nose Clean, fresh, hint of linseed, nuts, and cake.

Body Expansive.

Palate By far the biggest of this selection.

Assertive and complex, with lots of development and seemingly infinite dimension, ginger cake, Brazil nuts, and treacle.

Finish Licorice-like sherry notes.

GREEN SPOT

GREEN SPOT CHÂTEAU LÉOVILLE BARTON

46% ABV

The first Irish single pot still whiskey to be finished in Bordeaux wine casks, after aging in new American oak, Oloroso sherry casks, and bourbon barrels.

Nose Delicate, with orange, strawberry, and subtle spice.

Body Medium.

Palate Vanilla, honey, apricots, and an herbal note.

Finish Mildly earthy, with roasted nuts and drying oak.

TEELING

TEELING SMALL BATCH

46% ABV

A blended whiskey with a high malt content, finished in rum barrels.

Nose Spicy green apples and grain.

Body Creamy.

Palate Apple pie, cloves, dark rum, black pepper, and oak.

Finish Peppery grain, medium in length.



JAMESON
CASKMATES



TEELING
SMALL BATCH



DISTILLERY DETAILS

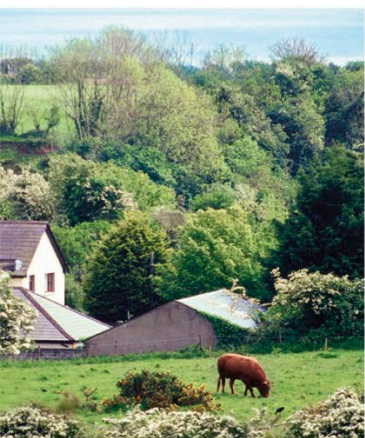
COOLEY

FOUNDED 1987

OWNER Beam Suntory, Inc

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY 715,000 gal
(3.25m liters)



THE BROWN BULL OF COOLEY

Long ago, a battle was held between the armies of Queen Medb of Connacht and the Ulster cattle lord Dáire mac Fiachna over a single bull—the Brown Bull of Cooley. The distillery marks the event, known as the “Cattle Raid of Cooley,” by having a red bull on site as a mascot.

FEEDING COOLEY

The Cooley Mountains in County Louth are the source of the distillery's soft water, which is piped from a reservoir.

Cooley

THE MOUNTAINS OF MOURNE, IN NORTHERN IRELAND, LOOK ACROSS AT CARLINGFORD LOUGH, WHICH FORMS PART OF THE BORDER WITH THE REPUBLIC. ON THE OTHER SIDE IS THE COOLEY PENINSULA.

The buildings of Cooley distillery may be softened by a coat of green paint, but they are in an industrial style, with steel-framed windows that speak of the period interrupted by World War II.

A brave new enterprise

While studying for a doctorate at Harvard in the early 1970s, John Teeling had made an analysis of the state of the whiskey industry in his native Ireland, and decided there was a niche he could exploit. His opportunity finally came when he and his business partners were able to acquire the Cooley distillery in 1987, but it needed adapting. The distillery had originally produced alcohol as a fuel to supplement petrol, using potatoes as the raw material, and later had made alcohol for, among others, Smirnoff Vodka.

The Cooley Mountains can be seen from the distillery, which is built around a series of metal platforms and stairs, linked by walkways. The rectifying column that made Smirnoff is still used, but a wash column has been added, as

have a pair of pot stills, previously used at the Old Comber distillery in Belfast and the Ben Nevis distillery in Scotland.

The revivals

Cooley has thus far not produced a pure pot still whiskey in the Irish sense of mixing raw and malted barley. Its pot stills are used to produce malt whiskey, and its column stills to make grain whiskey. Teeling has explained that, faced with the challenge of a monopoly, in the form of Irish Distillers, he wanted to take as few chances as possible. He opted for the simplest distillation system, and bought stills that had been proven to work well; doing so was also less costly.

In its previous incarnations, Cooley had not required capacity for maturation. Partly to solve this shortcoming, it bought Locke's Kilbeggan distillery (see p.157) and now uses the distillery's 200-year-old stone-built warehouses for that purpose. As the Cooley distillery is not especially attractive as a showpiece, Kilbeggan fulfills that role, too.



The Cooley name was unknown in Irish whiskey, but buying Locke's at Kilbeggan provided an instant heritage; both names have been used for Cooley whiskeys, two of several revived by the firm. Another is Millar's, a blend that until 1988 was offered by Millar's bonded warehouse in Dublin. A further, vigorous ghost is the single malt Old Tyrconnell, originally made by the distillery in the city and county known to republicans as Derry and to unionists as Londonderry. This also revives the name of an ancient kingdom and a previous owner's celebrated racehorse of the 1870s, depicted on the label.

The new names

As Cooley started to gain a more confident foothold, the company began to increase its own brand names. The most distinctive of these products is Connemara, launched in 1995/96. It is not the first peated Irish whiskey, but certainly the first revivalist one. Connemara is named after the rugged region of western Galway, and malt from both Ireland and Scotland is used. The peating level is modest, at 15ppm, but the nose and the palate of the whiskey suggest more. The original Connemara has now been joined by a 43% ABV Distillers Edition, as well as 12- and 22-year-old expressions.

In 2011, Cooley lost its much-vaunted independent status when the distillery and its brands were acquired by Beam Inc. for \$95 million. This was a major investment in the Irish whiskey sector by a US distiller, and it has been followed



TASTING NOTES

The whiskeys produced at Cooley range in style from a light single grain to the peaty, rich Connemara.

KILBEGGAN SINGLE GRAIN 8-YEAR-OLD, 40% ABV

A single grain whiskey. The whiskey itself is very light in flavor, leaving the wood to do the talking. Bourbon casks are used, and their vanilla character is quite assertive.

Nose Sweetly appetizing, toasty, and lemony.

Body Light, smooth.

Palate Clean, sweet, vanilla, some resinous and lemon peel notes, and honey.

Finish Firm, dryish.



KILBEGGAN
SINGLE GRAIN

TYRCONNELL SINGLE MALT 40% ABV

This whiskey has developed considerably since its Cooley launch. First-fill bourbon and re-charred barrels are both important influences.

Nose Fruity with lime skins. It's very scented.

Body Grainy and oily.



TYRCONNELL
SINGLE MALT

Palate Grainy, vanilla pods, creamy, oily, and slightly smoky, like roasted peppers.

Finish Crisp, herbal, vine leaves, parsley, and mint.

CONNEMARA PEATED SINGLE MALT 40% ABV

Made entirely with peated malt.

Nose Pungent, smoky rather than peaty. Aromas and flavors are young and fresh.

Body Light to medium, firm.

Palate Mouth-filling, sweet grass, roasted nuts, earthy, and some phenol.

Finish Dry and toasty, with sesame oil and spice.



CONNEMARA PEATED
SINGLE MALT

CONNEMARA 12-YEAR-OLD 40% ABV

Nose Oily lemon, developing floral notes, salt, vanilla, and malt.

Body Soft and rounded.

Palate Earthy peat, honey, pipe tobacco, and nutty toffee.

Finish Citrus fruit, spice, and bonfire embers.

by Brown-Forman Co.'s \$50 million construction of a new distillery on the Slane Castle estate, some 30 miles (48km) north of Dublin.

Meanwhile, when Beam was purchased by Japanese distilling giant Suntory in 2014, Cooley became part of what was renamed Beam Suntory, Inc. Under the new regime, third-party bottling, which had long been an important part of Cooley's business, was halted in order to build up stocks for projected growth, particularly of the Kilbeggan blend, which Beam Suntory, Inc. see as its flagship Irish product. The name of the company has been changed from Cooley to The Kilbeggan Distilling Company, as "Cooley" did not resonate with consumers and lacked obvious heritage.

The focus is now on four particular brands, namely Tyrconnell, Connemara, Kilbeggan blended Irish, and Kilbeggan Single Grain—formerly marketed as Greenore. The no-age-statement Kilbeggan blend has now been joined by a limited edition 21-year-old variant, matured in a mix of ex-bourbon, port, Madeira, and sherry casks.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

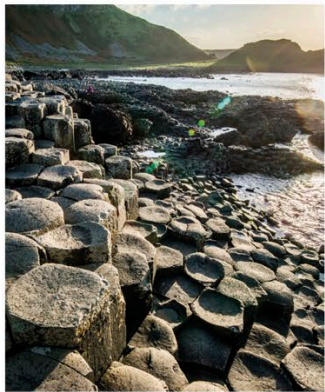
OLD BUSHMILLS

FOUNDED 1608

OWNER Casa Cuervo

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 990,000 gal
(4.5m liters)



STAIRWAY TO THE SEA

Follow the stepping-stones to Staffa and enjoy a giant-sized whiskey in Fingal's Cave.

Bushmills

ONE OF THE BEST-KNOWN NAMES IN IRISH WHISKEY IS FOUND NORTH OF THE BORDER, NORTH OF BELFAST, IN THE NORTHEASTERN TOWN OF BUSHMILLS IN COUNTY ANTRIM, A STONE'S THROW FROM THE GIANT'S CAUSEWAY.

It is Irish and triple distilled in pot stills. So why is Bushmills not an Irish pot still whiskey? Because it is an Irish malt whiskey. Here, in the northeastern corner of Ireland, beyond the university city of Coleraine, is what might be the oldest known distillery in the world.

The northeast of Ireland has the boldest Gaelic legends and the strongest associations with St. Patrick and St. Columba, and this is especially true of County Antrim. It is also, significantly, the county geographically and culturally closest to Scotland. Scotland lies 25 miles (40km) across the sea from the County Antrim coast, and the nearest shores are Kintyre and the island of Islay, both synonymous with Scottish whisky.

If you had legs long enough, you could walk across the Giant's Causeway to the southernmost Scottish islands. On Staffa, you would find Fingal's Cave, on Iona, an abbey founded by St. Columba, and, on Mull, a working distillery.

Bushmills was once dedicated to the Irish style of pot still whiskey, but has for more than a century now specialized in malt whiskey made by triple distillation. For decades, this malt whiskey remained a secret and was used in Irish blends, famously one called simply Bushmills Malt, and a maltier big brother labelled Black Bush. However, in recent years, the secret has been exposed with the bottling of several single malts.

In this far northeastern region of Ireland, the colors of town and country seem less rich and dense than other parts of the country, more cautious. Presbyterian churches are more in evidence, as are church halls. Alongside whiskey production, the traditional industries in Antrim are tourism, linen, and farming. The farmers' fields are larger, shared with fewer siblings, and the countryside open and undulating as a result.

HOLY WATER?

St. Columba's Rill flows into the distillery's dam, then joins the River Bush in search of the sea.



The oldest distillery

A stream known as St. Columb's Rill flows for 10 miles (16km) over basalt rock and peaty land before filling the Bushmills distillery's dam, and then joins the river Bush shortly before it passes through the town and reaches the sea.

Historical references were in the past appropriated by Bushmills to support its claims to great age. These included a reference to *aqua vitae* (water of life) in the 1400s, and the granting of a license to distill in Antrim in 1608. The licensee does indeed seem to have been in the right part of Antrim, but the link with Bushmills is far from clear.

The distillery was formally registered in 1784. So, on that basis, it is the oldest working distillery in Ireland, if not, as some claim, the oldest whiskey distillery in the world.

Dramatic history

Almost every distillery has in its history a fire; whiskey is a highly flammable product, and there are endless dramatic stories of exploding barrels and of blazing whiskey flowing down the millrace. Bushmills' fire occurred in 1885, and it was in the subsequent rebuilding that the Scottish influence on the distillery became more pronounced. It may also have been at this time that Bushmills switched to malt distillation.

TASTING NOTES

Bushmills offers a diverse portfolio of whiskeys, ranging from the flavorful but easy-drinking "standard" blend to the much more complex aged single malts, but all share a familial style.

BLACK BUSH

40% ABV

Demonstrates how malt can sometimes be enhanced by a leavening of grain.

Nose Fresh, oaky, vanilla, softened with sherry, and toffee nut crunch.

Body Rounded.

Palate Full of flavors, fudgy, buttery, with that Bushmills' rosewater character.

Finish A grainy, but moreish, dryness, long and lingering.

BUSHMILLS IRISH WHISKEY

40% ABV

Well-balanced and easily drinkable, but with plenty of flavor.

Nose Fresh linen, toast, lemon.

Body Lightly syrupy.

Palate Lively, sweetish, rosewater, Turkish delight, and marzipan.

Finish Becoming drier, nutty, pistachio nuts.

BUSHMILLS 10-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Nose Light and fragrant, honey and peach blossom.

Body Soft.

Palate Summer fruits, milk chocolate, and subtle black pepper.

Finish Oak tannins and more pepper.

BUSHMILLS 16-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Aged for at least 16 years in a combination of bourbon casks and Oloroso sherry butts, before being vatted and married for nine months in port pipes.

Nose Tropical fruits, honey, vanilla, a hint of olive oil.

Body Smooth.

Palate Spicy peaches, port, malt, cocoa, and milk chocolate.

Finish Becoming more bitter, with licorice and persistent oiliness.

BUSHMILLS 21-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Matured in American oak bourbon and Oloroso sherry casks for at least 19 years, followed by two more years marrying in Madeira wine casks.

Nose Oily and fragrant, with plain chocolate.

Body Quite full and rounded.

Palate Fruity, with malt, brittle toffee, blackcurrant cough drops, and developing spiciness.

Finish Dries to oily, bitter chocolate, tannic oak, and a hint of chili heat.



BUSHMILLS
16-YEAR-OLD



BUSHMILLS
10-YEAR-OLD



BUSHMILLS
21-YEAR-OLD



The former maltings, in Tyrone red brick, pre-date the fire, while the pagodas affecting the classic design of Scottish architect Charles Doig were added much later.

During maintenance in 2001, a stained-glass window was uncovered and restored in the mash house, a small building with open, metal beams. Here, a red-painted, cast iron mash tun, with brass trim and a copper hood, accommodates 9.4 tons of malt. A three-water system is used. Each water is 9,460 gallons (43,000 liters), with the third becoming the first of the next run. The last wooden washbacks were retired in 1994 and replaced with stainless steel.



Triple distillation

Although Bushmills makes a point of triple distillation, this is not clear from the layout of the crowded stillhouse. It is equipped with two wash stills, four “feints” stills, and four spirit stills, while six spirit safes monitor and control their interactions. Computerization means that one man per shift runs fermentation and distillation processes.

The spirit is distilled to 25–30% ABV on the first distillation, then to 70% ABV and 84% ABV, respectively, during the second and third distillations.

Production takes place seven days a week. In terms of sales, Bushmills is the third-best-selling Irish whiskey after Jameson and Tullamore D.E.W.

The whiskeys

There is no Irish-style pot still whiskey in the Bushmills’ blends, yet neither do they quite taste “Scottish.” They are unusual, although not unique, in being blends of whiskeys from only two distilleries—Bushmills and nearby Coleraine, which only produces grain whiskey. Such a duopoly is not exclusive to Ireland, although these two distilleries are deeply rooted, north and south, in their native island.

In general, Irish grain whiskeys are on the light-bodied side. They are also less malty than some of their Scots counterparts, but are arguably more floral and fragrant. The idea is that they should harmonize with the gentler character of modern Irish pot still whiskeys, especially those used in blending.

The blends

The Bushmills Irish Whiskey blend comprises 35–40 percent malt whiskey, all of which comes from its own distillery. This component is mainly six to seven years old. The remainder of the blend is composed of just one grain whiskey, from Midleton distillery. Of the several whiskeys produced there, a lighter example, with an emphasis on floral, fragrant notes, is chosen. The grain whiskey is aged for

BUSHMILLS STILLHOUSE

Production takes place seven days a week to meet demand for the third-best-selling Irish whiskey.



BUSHMILLS BARRELS

Decorative barrels sit outside the warehouse at the Bushmills distillery.

four or five years, mainly in bourbon casks from Wild Turkey. The wood imparts some excellent vanilla notes and some toastiness.

Black Bush is very unusual, even as a deluxe blend, for its high proportion of malt—80 percent at eight or nine years. Again, this is all from Bushmills distillery. This time, there are two grain whiskeys included, both a little sweeter than average, and one has a touch of malty, butterscotch character. The intention is that the sweetness and butterscotch will help the grain stand up to the somewhat hefty proportion of well-matured malt.

Such an uncommon, malty blend deserves the devoted following that Black Bush has. Over the years, it has inspired many myths and legends, especially in the days when drinks companies were more secretive about the properties of their products. As its malty magic became better understood, whiskey lovers began to wish for a single malt, and their prayers were answered when one finally appeared in the form of Bushmills 10-year-old.

The single malts

Perhaps the long wait had heightened expectations, but this Bushmills Malt initially seemed to lack excitement. The distillery manager at the time explained later that the idea was to let the house character shine through and not to be too elaborate with wood. It is an easily drinkable, gentle, well-balanced malt,

perhaps with half an eye on the Irish market. Bushmills might have a conservative following in Ireland, but its supporters elsewhere in the world are more likely to see themselves as individualists, and for this reason the distillery needed to develop and export a single malt that was more robust. Since it first put its toe into the water, Bushmills has made giant strides in its offering of single malts. These have included, in its core range, a 16-year-old matured in three woods (bourbon; Oloroso sherry; and, finally, port), and a 21-year-old, aged for a minimum of 19 years in bourbon and Oloroso sherry casks before being transferred to Madeira casks for a further two years of extended finishing.

Ownership

In 2005, ownership of Bushmills passed from Irish Distillers Group to Diageo, and the world's largest distiller proceeded to invest heavily in the site and the Bushmills brand. Given this investment, and the increasing popularity of Irish whiskey as a category, it came as something of a surprise when, in 2014, Diageo sold Bushmills to Casa Cuervo, producer of Jose Cuervo tequila. The Mexican company intends to spend some \$46.7 million doubling distillery capacity to around 2 million gallons (9 million liters) per year, and in total expects to invest an average of \$4 million in capital expenditure on the distillery every year over the next 10 to 15 years.



AN ICON?

Bushmills is a keen advocate of triple distillation, as illustrated by this stained-glass window showing a trinity of pot stills.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

CONNACHT

FOUNDED 2016
OWNER Connacht Whiskey Company
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 66,000 gal (300,000 liters)

DINGLE

FOUNDED 2012
OWNER The Dingle Whiskey Distillery
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 13,000 gal (60,000 liters)

ECHLINVILLE

FOUNDED 2013
OWNER Shane Braniff
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 11,000 gal (50,000 liters)

GLENDALOUGH

FOUNDED 2011
OWNER Glendalough Distillery
METHOD Hybrid still
CAPACITY Not given

GREAT NORTHERN DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 2015
OWNER The Irish Whiskey Company
METHOD Pot and column stills
CAPACITY 800,000 gal (3.6m liters) of pot still spirit/malt whiskey and 1.8m gal (8m liters) of grain spirit

THE SHED DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 2014
OWNER The Shed Distillery of PJ Rigney Drumshanbo
METHOD Pot and column stills
CAPACITY 55,000 gal (250,000 liters)

WATERFORD

FOUNDED 2015
OWNER Renegade Spirits
METHOD Pot and column stills
CAPACITY 660,000 gal (3m liters)

New Irish Distilleries

THE IRISH WHISKEY SCENE IS GROWING AT A DRAMATIC PACE, AND WHILE MORE DISTILLERIES ARE CERTAIN TO APPEAR IN THE FUTURE, HERE ARE THOSE WHICH ARE NEWLY PRODUCING SPIRITS.

The injection of almost \$14.5 billion into the Irish whiskey industry by distillers and entrepreneurs over a 10-year period is a response to the increasing global thirst for "Irish," led by the US, which has long been the spirit's largest market, accounting for almost half of what has become the world's fastest-growing brown spirit. Existing distilleries have been expanded, and the new crop of whiskey-making operations will ultimately add to the amount and variety of Irish whiskey on offer.

Connacht Whiskey Company

Connacht distillery is located on the banks of the River Moy at Belleek, near Ballina, County Mayo, in the west of Ireland, and boasts three Canadian-built pot stills. Both malt and single pot still whiskey are being produced, along with poitín, gin, and vodka. There is a visitor center at the former bakery. A 10-year-old cask strength single malt Irish whiskey is being marketed by Connacht, under the Spade & Bushel label.

Dingle

Situated in the remote southwest of County Kerry, Dingle distillery was the brainchild of the late Oliver Hughes, founder of The

Porterhouse Brewing Company, which opened Ireland's first brewpub in Dublin in 1996. Dingle distillery is located in a converted former sawmill and operates three pot stills and a gin/vodka still. The first whiskey was distilled in late 2012, and the initial limited release of triple distilled single malt from the second barrel to be filled took place early in 2016. It was succeeded by an ongoing cask strength expression.

Echlinville

When it opened in 2013, Echlinville became the first new, licensed distillery in Northern Ireland for over 125 years. Echlinville is located on the Ards peninsula of County Down, and was established by Shane Braniff, owner of the Feckin' Irish Whiskey brand. Both single pot still and malt whiskey are being produced, using grain grown locally and malted on site. Braniff and his associates also produce vodka, gin, and

SAMPLE COLLECTION

A distiller at Dingle distillery draws samples of spirit from the casks to check it is maturing as desired.





poitín, and they have revived the historic Dunville's Irish whiskey brand, one of the great names in Northern Irish distilling.

Glendalough

Glendalough started out as an independent bottler, initially with poitín and whiskey sourced from Cooley, but in 2015 it established its own distillery, installing a Holstein still from Germany. At first, white spirits were produced before whiskey began to flow. While waiting for its "own" whiskey to mature, the Glendalough team is offering 7-year-old and 13-year-old single malts and a Double Barrel blend, matured for three and a half years in bourbon casks before a six-month-long finish in former Oloroso sherry casks.

Great Northern Distillery

The Great Northern Distillery is located in what was formerly Diageo's Great Northern Brewery in Dundalk. When Diageo vacated the site in 2013, John Teeling, family members, and former Cooley distillery directors spent \$38.1 million buying and converting the operation into a pot still and grain spirit distillery. The distillery boasts three pot stills and three column stills, and is now the second largest distilling operation in Ireland after Midleton. The bulk of spirit produced is destined for own-label brands.

The Shed Distillery

The Shed Distillery in the village of Drumshanbo, County Leitrim, opened in 2014 and was the brainchild of drinks industry veteran and serial entrepreneur PJ "Pat" Rigney, who established it in association with International Brands Ltd. Distillation equipment was sourced from Arnold Holstein in Markdorf, Germany, and comprises three pots and a gin still, plus two column stills, though the early focus is on making single pot still and single malt whiskey. Of the spirit, 80 percent is filled into ex-bourbon casks, and 20 percent into former Oloroso sherry casks.

Waterford

Waterford distillery is located in a former Guinness brewery and was created by ex-Bruichladdich supremo Mark Reynier. The plant was converted to whiskey making during 2015, with the first spirit from the pair of ex-Scottish pot stills flowing in January 2016.

A NEW FACE

The launch of Echlinville has provided Northern Ireland with a second whiskey-making operation to stand alongside Bushmills.

“WHEN IT OPENED IN 2013, ECHLINVILLE BECAME THE FIRST NEW LICENSED DISTILLERY IN NORTHERN IRELAND FOR OVER 125 YEARS”

DISTILLERY DETAILS

WALSH WHISKEY DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 2016

OWNER Walsh Whiskey
Distillery Ltd

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY 550,000 gal
(2.5m liters)

WEST CORK

FOUNDED 2004

OWNER West
Cork Distillers

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given



A column still for grain whiskey production has also been installed, but malt whiskey is the priority for the foreseeable future. Reynier is a great advocate of barley provenance, and at Waterford he has created what he terms “A Cathedral of Barley” to house batches of barley grown on 46 Irish farms. Each batch is individually distilled.

Walsh Whiskey Distillery

Walsh Whiskey Distillery at Royal Oak in rural County Carlow was purpose-built by Bernard Walsh, in association with Italian drinks company Illva Saronno. Walsh is owner of The Irishman and Writers Tears Irish whiskey brands, currently distilled at Midleton. The creation of Walsh’s eponymous distillery is intended to secure spirit supplies for the future. Distilling equipment consists of three pot stills and one column still. The Irishman range comprises some single malts and Founder’s Reserve, which is made up of 70 percent single malt whiskey and 30 percent single pot still whiskey, while Writers Tears also contains single malt and single pot still whiskeys.

West Cork Distillers

West Cork Distillers was established in 2004 at the Union Hall in West Cork, but moved to its present distillery site at Skibbereen in 2013. The distillery is equipped with four pot stills, and is highly unusual in malting some of its barley on site. White spirits and liqueurs are produced, along with malt whiskey and grain whiskey. West Cork offers a blend and a 10-year-old single malt, plus The Pogues Irish Whiskey. This was launched in 2015 in association with the eponymous Irish band.



WALSH DISTILLERY POT STILL

These shiny new pot stills sit in the Walsh distillery, completed nine years after Bernard Walsh released his first whiskey in 2007.



BANTRY BAY

Just a 30-minute drive north of West Cork Distillers is this idyllic bay.

TASTING NOTES

All these bottlings are currently sourced from makers, while their distillers wait to have mature stock of their own with which to work.

CONNACHT

SPADE & BUSHEL 57.5% ABV

Nose Roast cereal, peppercorns, then vanilla fudge, and finally melons and grapefruits.

Body Unctuous.

Palate Fresh fruit notes, backed up by honey, black pepper, digestive biscuits, and spicy oak.

Finish Long, peppery, and slightly drying.

ECHLINVILLE

DUNVILLE'S THREE CROWNS 46% ABV

A blend of 4-year-old single grain, 10-year-old single malt, and Oloroso cask-finished 15-year-old single malt whiskey.

Nose Caramel, vanilla, honey, and cinnamon.

Body Smooth.

Palate Cereal, malt, milk chocolate, and soft oak.

Finish Vanilla, golden raisins, mixed nuts, and soft spice.



DUNVILLE'S
THREE CROWNS

GLENDALOUGH

GLENDALOUGH 7-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT 46% ABV

Nose Bright, fresh fruit notes, old leather, and vanilla.

Body Oily.

Palate Sweet orchard fruits, malt, developing nutmeg, plus plain chocolate.

Finish Long, with spicy oak, becoming very dry.

GLENDALOUGH 13-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT 46% ABV

Nose Rich malt, butterscotch, cinnamon, and wood polish.

Body Full and oily.

Palate Citrus fruit, brittle toffee, vanilla, cloves, and black pepper.

Finish Lively pepper lingers, along with oak notes, and spicy malt.



GLENDALOUGH
13-YEAR-OLD
SINGLE MALT

WALSH

WRITERS TEARS 40% ABV

Nose Honey, butterscotch and almond, tangerine, and sweet hay.

Body Medium.

Palate Caramel, vanilla, malt, and ginger.

Finish Drying oak.

THE IRISHMAN FOUNDER'S RESERVE 40% ABV

Nose Apple pie, ripe peaches, cinnamon, and white pepper.

Body Smooth.

Palate Rich, with orchard fruits and butterscotch.

Finish Lengthy, with soft spice.



THE IRISHMAN
FOUNDER'S RESERVE

WEST CORK

WEST CORK 12-YEAR-OLD SINGLE MALT 43% ABV

Finished in Pedro Ximénez sherry casks.

Nose Sweet leather and spices, linseed oil, vanilla, and fragrant fruit.

Body Supple.

Palate Toasted cereal notes, oily, mild black pepper, milk chocolate, and dark sherry.

Finish Raisins, dry oak, and persistent pepper.

THE POGUES 40% ABV

Nose Cereal, malt, vanilla, and white wine.

Body Smooth.

Palate Toffee apples, honey, and milk chocolate.

Finish Medium in length.



THE POGUES





CANADA

THE SECRET GIANT
OF NORTH AMERICAN WHISKIES
COMES FROM NORTH OF
THE US/CANADIAN BORDER



FEEDING THE DISTILLERY

Pristine glacial lakes in Canada's Rocky Mountains feed aquifers from which Alberta's distilleries draw their water.

CANADA

Beginnings

Since many of Canada's early settlers were Scots, it would seem logical to assume that Canadian whisky traces its origins back to Scotland. However, though Scottish immigrants did begin distilling in the 17th century, their primary goal was to make potable alcohol. Whether it was whisky, rum, or something else mattered little because the distillate was not matured. Rather, it was consumed soon after it was distilled. In those days, the most readily available sources of fermentable sugar were apples (which grew abundantly, especially in Nova Scotia) and molasses that arrived by ship from the Caribbean. Rather than whisky, Canada's Scottish settlers made two other kinds of alcohol: applejack and rum.

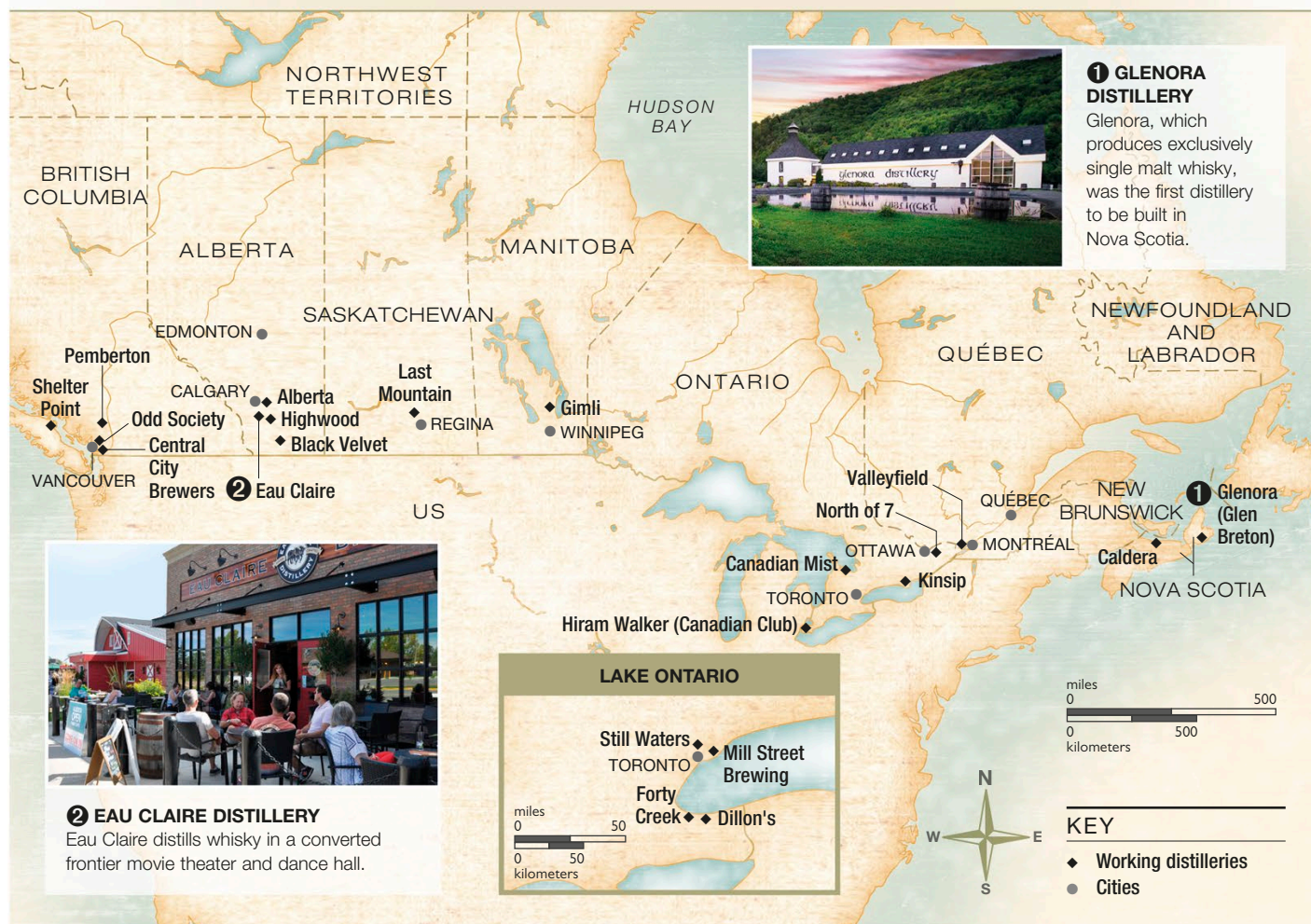
At that time, Canada was a tangle of barely penetrable forests, forcing people and goods to travel mainly by boat. Seagoing vessels, laden with Caribbean molasses, traveled as far inland as Montreal on the Saint Lawrence River, and distillers with access to the river made rum. An English brewer, Thomas Molson, was right on

the geographic cusp when, in 1821, he established the first Canadian whisky distillery of any consequence in Montreal. Beyond Montreal, the transition to making whisky happened abruptly. From that point inland, distillers mashed grain instead. Most often, those early whisky makers were flour millers who distilled as a sideline in order to convert waste grain into money by making whisky spirit and feed for cattle and hogs. Almost always the grain they milled and distilled was wheat. Wheat whisky, then, and not rye was the norm in Canada's early days of distilling. This remained the case until German and Dutch immigrants, remembering rye schnapps from home, suggested that millers should throw a few shovelfuls of rye flour into their all-wheat mashes. Suddenly, a new whisky style was created and people quickly abandoned "straight whisky" (as the all-wheat spirit was called) in favor of the new "rye."

That earliest Canadian rye whisky was nothing at all like the whisky we know today, but it set Canada's distillers on the path to

CANADA'S DISTILLERIES

The oldest whisky distilling companies in Ontario, and therefore Canada, had their roots in farming and grain milling in the mid-1800s. The western stills came later, taking advantage of the prolific prairies. In palate, the best Canadian whiskies have at least some of the spicy, bittersweet character of rye, which is lightened with the blending spirit.



developing the distinctive contemporary Canadian whisky style. An early and important step on that journey came in 1887, when Canada introduced the world's first law requiring that whisky be aged. The cachet of having the government guarantee the age of Canadian whisky greatly increased its popularity at home and abroad.

Loved in the US

Some distilling lore tells us that American Prohibition was another beneficial turning point for Canadian whisky, but this was not the case. When Prohibition was enacted in 1920, the US was already the biggest market for Canadian whisky. Demand withered during Prohibition,

reducing sales in the US to a trickle, and driving some Canadian distilleries to bankruptcy. In fact, the enduring popularity of Canadian whisky in the US was due to another event, one that took place three generations before Prohibition. The American Civil War so disrupted distilling in the US that Americans were forced to look north for their spirits, and by 1865 Canadian whisky had become the US's best selling style of whisky. It was only in 2010 that sales of bourbon finally caught up with Canadian whisky, which had dominated the market for an astounding 150 years. Even today, the US consumes 70 percent of all the whisky made in Canada.

“EVEN TODAY, THE US CONSUMES
70 PERCENT OF ALL THE WHISKY
MADE IN CANADA”

Feeding the rye frenzy

When the American rye craze took off several years ago, US-based whiskey companies looked to Canadian warehouses for whisky. Masterson's is one example, and it is one of the US's best-selling rye whiskey brands. The 3-Badge Beverage Corporation buys its all-rye flavoring whisky from Alberta and has it trucked out to Sonoma, California, to be brought down to bottling strength. The people who run 3-Badge are winemakers and their vintner's care shines through in their Masterson's whiskeys. WhistlePig distillery in Shoreham, Vermont, is filling its bottles with 10-year-old 100 percent rye from Alberta Distillers until its own home-distilled whisky is ready. The result has been so popular

that Raj Bhakta and Dave Pickerell who developed the WhistlePig concept and distillery have decided to continue bottling Canadian rye even after their own product is ready.

US bottlers

Pendleton is a particularly popular Canadian whisky in the US, where it is bottled. American producer, Hood River Distillers has mature Canadian whisky shipped from Canada to Pendleton's home in Hood River, Oregon. There, it is brought down to bottling strength with glacial water from nearby Mount Hood. With a story based on the Pendleton Rodeo, and strong sponsorship support of rodeo riders, the whisky is especially popular among cowboys and westerners.

The Sazerac company of New Orleans is best known for its Sazerac American rye whiskey. Owned by Kentucky's Brown-Forman Co., Sazerac also releases a significant range of Canadian whiskies, which it buys from



various distilleries in Canada. Sazerac has recently purchased an underused distillery in Montreal and is currently gearing up to begin making whisky there. At the top end of the Sazerac range are Caribou Crossing, Royal Canadian, and Rich & Rare Reserve, while Canadian Hunter is a popular session ready-to-drink whisky.

Distinctly Canadian

A single key attribute sets Canadian whisky apart from whisky made in other countries: in Canada, each grain type is mashed, distilled, and matured separately, and then brought together (blended) as mature whisky. Simply put, in the US, the grains are blended in a mash bill before distillation; in Canada, the grains are blended as mature whisky.

More than that, Canadian distillers produce two whisky “streams.” For “base whisky,” corn (or sometimes rye) is distilled to about 94% ABV,

in tall column stills that remove most of the flavors of the grain and the yeast. When matured in used barrels, this lighter spirit emphasizes flavors that arise from oxidation and other chemical interactions that take place in the spirit itself during maturation. A second stream, called “flavoring whisky,” is made from rye, corn, wheat, or barley, which has been distilled to about 65% ABV in pot stills or short columns called beer stills. These stills concentrate the flavors of the grain and yeast. This flavor-rich spirit is then matured in new or once-

used barrels that give it hugely robust flavors. The master blender brings various mature base and flavoring whiskies together in a style unique to Canadian rye. And that is the law. To be called Canadian whisky, it must not only be aged a minimum of three years (though most are aged much longer), it must also have the flavor characteristics of Canadian rye whisky.

A changing landscape

Most of the 280 million bottles of Canadian whisky sold annually come from just eight distilleries. This is down from over 20 major distilleries prior to the great consolidation of the 1980s. Today’s “Big Eight” traditional distilleries contribute more than 99 percent of Canada’s annual production. However, the remaining fraction of a percent is an important and promising story. What began in 1989 with Glenora, a tiny single malt distillery in rural Nova Scotia, has in recent years turned into a burgeoning micro-distillery movement across the whole country. Caldera and Glynnevan, also in Nova Scotia, are recent additions, as are Last Mountain in Saskatchewan and Eau Claire in Alberta. Still Waters in Toronto brought micro-distilling to Ontario in 2009, followed in 2012 by Mill Street Brewing in the heart of Toronto’s old Distillery District (former home of Gooderham & Worst), 66 Gilead (now called Kinsip) in Ontario’s Prince Edward County, and North of 7 in Ottawa, the nation’s capital. Brilliant single malts are emerging from Two Brewers distillery in Canada’s Yukon Territory. More recently Vancouver has become a hotbed of micro-distilling, with as many as a dozen other new single malts maturing in warehouses around the city.

Crown Royal, Wiser’s, Canadian Club, Forty Creek, Black Velvet, Alberta Premium, plus a few others are global Canadian brands, each made in its own distillery. But listing these tells only part of the story, since well-known brands are also produced by independent Canadian bottlers. For example, Gibson’s Finest is a core Canadian whisky, but Gibson’s is a brand without a distillery, and must buy its whisky from others.



HARDSHIP TO SUCCESS

Once a struggling micro-distillery, Forty Creek has breathed new life into the Canadian whisky sector.



INTENSE & MILD

The cold temperature of Canada’s intense, snowy winters is conducive to producing the milder style of whisky the country is known for.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

VALLEYFIELD

FOUNDED 1945

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Column and
pot stills

CAPACITY 6.4m gal
(29m liters)

FORTY CREEK

FOUNDED 1992

OWNER Gruppo Campari

METHOD Column and
pot stills

CAPACITY 1.5m 2-gal
(9-liter) cases

CANADIAN MIST

FOUNDED 1967

OWNER Brown-Forman Co.

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY Not given

HIRAM WALKER & SONS

FOUNDED 1858

OWNER Pernod Ricard

METHOD Column and
pot stills

CAPACITY 12m gal
(55m liters)

The Big Eight: East

CANADA'S FOUR BIG WHISKY PRODUCERS IN THE EAST ARE ALL
LOCATED ON THE SAINT LAWRENCE SEAWAY, WHICH CONNECTED
THE COUNTRY'S FIRST DISTILLERIES BACK IN THE 1800s.

Canada does not have whisky regions in the traditional sense. Instead, each distillery has its own grain preferences, production methods, and house styles. Given that the two most distant of the major distilleries are nearly 2,300 miles (3,700km) apart, it makes sense to look at the "Big Eight" traditional distilleries geographically. Let us start in the east and work west.

Valleyfield

The town of Salaberry-de-Valleyfield is about an hour's drive from the heart of Montreal. Although the sign on the front door tells us this is now "Diageo Global Supply—Valleyfield," the historic water tower still shouts "Schenley," encapsulating the history of this much-storied distillery. After service making industrial alcohol during World War II, Quebec Distillers, as it was then called, was sold to Schenley and rebuilt in its current configuration. Like so many other distilleries, Schenley succumbed to market pressures and, in 2008, it was acquired by Diageo, who renamed the distillery Valleyfield. By this point it had become a key producer of base whiskies for Diageo products, such as

Seagram's VO, Crown Royal, and a range of regional brands. Today, its 18,000-gallon (80,000-liter) pot still mostly sits silent, as Valleyfield specializes in column distillation and maturing base whiskies to blend with flavoring whiskies that are produced in Gimli, Manitoba. It also blends and bottles a range of Diageo Canadian whiskies and other spirits.

Forty Creek

In 1992, John K. Hall bought a struggling Ontario micro-distillery in Grimsby, Ontario, and within 20 years had turned it into the Canadian whisky powerhouse named Forty Creek. It was Forty Creek that led the renaissance that Canadian whisky is currently enjoying. Hall's whisky-making philosophy was to make each of his whiskies just a little bit more robust than other brands in the same price range. Years spent pouring his whisky after hours for bartenders paid big dividends, as little-known Forty Creek emerged as one of Canada's fastest growing brands. Located about an hour's drive from Toronto, the distillery, unlike most in Canada, welcomes drop-in visitors. In 2014, Hall was rewarded when Italy's Gruppo Campari bought the family-owned distillery for \$171 million. Campari has maintained Hall's obsession with quality and, as sales continue to grow, intends to take the whisky into global markets.

Canadian Mist

The Canadian Mist distillery in Collingwood, Ontario, was built near the shores of Lake Huron in 1968, specifically to make Canadian whisky to sell in the US market. At the distillery, corn base whisky and all-rye flavoring whisky are distilled in stainless steel columns (packed with copper) and matured in assorted barrels to be blended after three years into the popular mixing whisky

FORTY CREEK

Some of the barrels in the Forty Creek "aging cellar" are made from 150-year-old oak harvested just miles from the distillery.





HIRAM WALKER & SONS DISTILLERY

A favorite of Prohibition bootleggers, this distillery has been in continuous operation on the south shore of the Detroit River since 1858.

called Canadian Mist. More recently, it has begun to blend longer-aged versions of these two whiskies, then let them rest in marrying tubs with maplewood staves. This new sipping whisky, dubbed “Collingwood,” is characterized by its black cherry notes and is popular with drinkers looking for a more robust style.

Hiram Walker & Sons

For over a century, the Hiram Walker distillery was synonymous with Canadian Club whisky. Then, following a series of corporate sales, takeovers, and conglomerations, the distillery became the property of Pernod Ricard, and is managed by Corby Spirit and Wine, the maker of Wiser’s whiskies. Nothing has changed about Canadian Club. However, the distillery is now home to a range of other wonderful whiskies as well. Under the leadership of master blender Dr. Don Livermore, Corby is introducing whisky lovers to the breadth of flavors available in Canadian whisky. To the ever-popular Wiser’s range, Livermore has added a small batch series, which includes top-winning whiskies, such as Lot No. 40, Pike Creek, Wiser’s 18-year-old, and Gooderham & Worts.

TASTING NOTES

Production practices differ among these four eastern distilleries, yielding whiskies with distinctly Canadian flavor profiles, yet easily distinguished from each other.

FORTY CREEK

FORTY CREEK COPPER POT RESERVE

43% ABV

Nose Eucalyptus, cinnamon, butterscotch, and wet slate.

Body Mouth-filling and chewy.

Palate Soothing toffee and searing chili peppers in balance, cinnamon hearts, dried figs, and sweet citrus.

Finish Long on fruits, pepper, and citrus pith.



FORTY CREEK
COPPER POT
RESERVE

CANADIAN MIST

COLLINGWOOD

40% ABV

Nose Peaches, black cherries, sweet flowers, and hints of pipe tobacco.

Body Juicy and muscular.

Palate Earthy, with peach juice and pits, ripe cherries, and tingling pepper.

Finish Long and spicy.

HIRAM WALKER & SONS

CANADIAN CLUB SMALL BATCH CLASSIC 12-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Nose Fragrant, lush, sweet, and fruity.

Body Slippery, syrupy, smooth.

Palate Creamy toffee, gingery pepper, black fruit, and a pleasing oakiness.

Finish Fades slowly on spices, toffee, and wood.



CANADIAN CLUB
SMALL BATCH CLASSIC
12-YEAR OLD

GOODERHAM & WORTS 44.4% ABV

Nose Pansies, red cedar, and dark fruit.

Body Luscious and round.

Palate Spicy, dusty grain, cereal, orange peel, and hints of caramel.

Finish Lingering cereal notes, with glowing spices.



GOODERHAM
& WORTS

DISTILLERY DETAILS

GIMLI

FOUNDED 1969

OWNER Diageo plc

METHOD Column stills
and a Coffey still

CAPACITY 7.3m gal
(33m liters)

ALBERTA DISTILLERS LIMITED

FOUNDED 1946

OWNER Beam
Suntory, Inc.

METHOD Column and
pot stills

CAPACITY 4.4m gal
(20m liters)

HIGHWOOD

FOUNDED 1974

OWNER Highwood
Distillers Ltd

METHOD Column and
kettle stills

CAPACITY 220,000 gal
(1m liters)

BLACK VELVET

FOUNDED 1933 (current
distillery opened
in 1973)

OWNER Constellation Brands

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY 4m gal
(18m liters)

The Big Eight: West

EACH YEAR, CANADA'S WESTERN DISTILLERIES TURN HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF TONS OF LOCAL GRAIN INTO SOME OF THE COUNTRY'S FINEST WHISKIES.

Gimli

Whisky legend Sam Bronfman built Gimli distillery in 1969, exclusively to make Seagram's VO. Today, Diageo owns the distillery, and 1.6 million barrels of Crown Royal sit slowly maturing in its 50 warehouses. It is subtle irony that the quirky distillery that makes Canada's runaway best-selling whisky now bears the dull corporate moniker "Diageo Global Supply—Gimli." Four massive, square, open fermenters along with a battery of more traditional covered ones, and North America's last remaining Coffey still, set Gimli apart. And while Canada's other distilleries distill each grain type separately, this is not always the case at Gimli. Here, an identical mash of 64 percent corn (maize), 31.5 percent rye, and 4.5 percent barley is used to make both bourbon-style and rye-style

flavoring whiskies. The remarkable differences between the two arise in the stills. Their bourbon style spirit is distilled in short column stills, while rye is distilled in the Coffey still.

Alberta Distillers Limited

Alberta Distillers Limited, in Calgary, sits at the western edge of the Prairies in the shadow of the Rocky Mountains. It can be so dry there that, until recently, rye was about the only grain that would grow reliably.

Rye can be miserable to work with, and Alberta Distillers is likely the only major distillery in the world able to make whisky from 100 percent rye grain, 365 days a year. The trick? Broad-spectrum enzymes, grown right on site, convert nearly the entire rye kernel to sugar.



DANGEROUS WATERS

The gentle Highwood River turned savage in 2013, forcing a month-long evacuation of Highwood distillery and the town of High River.



STORING GRAIN AT LETHBRIDGE, ALBERTA

Dried Prairie grain is held in round metal bins until it is hauled to central elevators for distribution—or to a nearby distillery.

Not all its whiskies are made exclusively from rye, but the range of flavors in those that are showcase the skill of a remarkably talented distillery team. Many people simply cannot believe that the simple mixer, Alberta Premium, and the ultra-robust Alberta Premium Dark Horse, both come from the same distillery and exactly the same grain—100 percent rye.

Highwood

Highwood distillery—like its hometown, High River, Alberta—is aptly named. In 2013, the smallest of Canada’s traditional distilleries was all but wiped out when the Highwood River burst its banks and flooded the town. After a year-long recovery period, the distillery is back on track. Built in 1974, as Sunnyvale distillers, Highwood was designed to ferment and distill wheat, so it buys its rye spirit from nearby Alberta Distillers, and corn (maize) whisky from elsewhere.

Highwood makes the luscious Ninety 20-year-old corn (maize) whisky and is also the source of some of the oldest Canadian whisky in commercial release; Canadian Rockies 35-year-old, and the soon-to-be-released Canadian Rockies 40-year-old. Highwood also makes an unusual and popular, fully aged white whisky called White Owl. After a decade in barrels, this elegant cocktail mixer is filtered through charcoal to remove the color, but not the whisky flavors.

Black Velvet

In Canada, it is normal practice to ferment, distill, and mature each grain type separately, then bring them together in a blend when each is at its peak.

“... DESPITE THEIR PROXIMITY TO EACH OTHER, EACH OF ALBERTA’S DISTILLERIES HAS ITS OWN WAY OF DOING THINGS”

This way, distillers can fine-tune each process to optimize the specific qualities of the grain. Black Velvet distillery, in Lethbridge, Alberta, does things a little differently. Yes, the grains are distilled separately, but then “blended at birth,” a process in which 2-year-old rye flavoring whisky is mingled with newly distilled corn (maize) base whisky, then put in barrels to mature. In addition to its Black Velvet brand, the distillery is also home to a range of others including Newfoundland’s favorite, Golden Wedding. If Alberta Distillers specializes in rye and Highwood in wheat, Black Velvet makes most of its whisky from corn (maize), demonstrating that despite their proximity to each other, each of Alberta’s distilleries has its own way of doing things.

TASTING NOTES

Canada’s western distilleries have dissimilar house styles because each makes its whisky from different grains.

GIMLI

CROWN ROYAL NORTHERN HARVEST RYE 45% ABV

Nose Complex and beautifully integrated. Stewed fruit, rye spices, floral notes, and vanilla, and cereal.

Body Buttery smooth.

Palate Sweet and peppery, with citrus notes, dark fruits, rose petals, barrel notes, and crisp lingering wood.

Finish Long, spicy, and silky, with hints of oak.



CROWN ROYAL RYE

ALBERTA DISTILLERS LTD

ALBERTA PREMIUM DARK HORSE 45% ABV

Nose Charcoal, burnt wood, vanilla, lilac, and marigolds.

Body Lush, then slightly pulling.

Palate Vanilla, toffee, hot ginger, dark fruits, and refreshing grapefruit pith.

Finish Long, with heat and dried dark fruit.

HIGHWOOD

NINETY 20-YEAR-OLD 45% ABV

Nose Maple cream, dark fruits, Granny Smith apples, corn (maize) syrup, cloves, and nutmeg.

Body Creamy and mouth-filling.

Palate Butterscotch, candy cane, hot spices, corn (maize) cobs, and milk chocolate. An earthy tone, with pulling tannins.

Finish Long, sweet, and spicy, with hints of clean wood.

BLACK VELVET

BLACK VELVET DELUXE 40% ABV

Nose Ripe fruit, ginger, rye spices, and caramel.

Body Clean and elegant.

Palate Creamy caramel, sintering pepper, and citrus zest. Simple, but satisfying.

Finish Sweet and peppery fading on citrus pith.



BLACK VELVET DELUXE

DISTILLERY DETAILS

GLENORA

FOUNDED 1989

OWNER Lauchie MacLean

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 4.4m gal
(20m liters)

STILL WATERS

FOUNDED 2009

OWNER Barry Stein &
Barry Bernstein

METHOD Column and
pot stills

CAPACITY 5,500 gal
(25,000 liters)

TWO BREWERS

FOUNDED 2009

OWNER Bob Baxter &
Alan Hansen

METHOD Hybrid still

CAPACITY 1,400 gal
(6,200 liters)

SHELTER POINT

FOUNDED 2011

OWNER Patrick Evans

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 32,000 gal
(146,000 liters)

PEMBERTON

FOUNDED 2008

OWNER Tyler &
Lorien Schramm

METHOD Column and
pot stills

CAPACITY 790 gal
(3,600 liters)

ODD SOCIETY

FOUNDED 2013

OWNER Gruppo Campari

METHOD Column and
pot stills

CAPACITY 8,800 gal
(40,000 liters)

WELL-TRAVELED STILLS

Scottish-made copper pot stills reached Shelter Point distillery in British Columbia via the Panama Canal.

Single Malts and 100 Percent Rye

ROBUST SINGLE GRAIN WHISKIES ARE GAINING HEADWAY IN
A LAND THAT, BY TRADITION, FAVORS BLENDED WHISKY.

Canada is best known for its blended whiskies, be they light, quaffable mixers, such as Canadian Mist, or complex monsters, such as Gooderham & Worts (*see p.177*). Canada grows tons of plump flavorful malting barley, but almost all of this goes into making beer. Simply put, except the two short-lived malt distilleries in pioneer-era Perth, Ontario, Canada does not have a tradition of making single malt whisky. When Glenora distillery began producing single malt in 1989, it was a double aberration. It was not only the first whisky distillery in Nova Scotia, the most Scottish of Canada's provinces, but was also the first successful single malt distillery in all of Canada.

It took 19 years before another distillery began to find success with single malt whisky. In 2009, Barry Bernstein and Barry Stein began making malt at Still Waters, their micro-distillery in Toronto's north end, which became the second Canadian distillery to succeed with single malt.

Micro-distilling moves west

Whisky is all about time, and great single malt takes years to mature. Most Canadian distilleries simply have not been around long enough to reach the world-class level in this domain. Nevertheless, a brewery in Whitehorse, Yukon, creatively named Two Brewers has quietly been



laying down malt whisky, while focusing on its primary beer business. In 2016, it released a 7-year-old malt whisky to wide acclaim, followed by three more releases the same year. Already quite tasty, Two Brewers single malt shows great potential for further development as time goes by.

The rest of Canada's single malt producers are clustered well south of the Yukon in southern British Columbia. There, Shelter Point, with its traditional Scottish-style pot still distillery, has released several worthy single malts, with more on the way. Meanwhile, in the Pemberton Valley, Tyler Schramm makes organic single malt whisky from locally grown and micro-malted barley at the Pemberton Distillery. A half dozen Vancouver distilleries have malt whisky maturing, and early releases from Odd Society Distillery and Lohin McKinnon single malt from Central City Brewers promise a great whisky future for Vancouver and for Canadian malt whisky.

The new rye

But why would anyone set out to make malt whisky in Canada, where long, frigid winters mean it takes even longer for whisky to mature than it does in Scotland? Why would anyone set out to make single malt whisky when other countries have already perfected it? These are questions that many new distillers have to ask themselves, and some have begun to gravitate to making all-rye whisky. Although Still Waters continues to make the landmark Stalk & Barrel single malt that established it on Canada's whisky scene, more than half of its production has now been taken over by rye whisky. Its Stalk & Barrel rye whisky is made from nothing but rye grain, and it is a doozy, winning award after award in head-on competition with the Big Eight.

In fact, all-rye grain whisky looks like the next big thing to come out of Canada. Other micro-distillers, such as Dillon's in Beamsville and Kinsip (formerly 66 Gilead) in Prince Edward County (both in Ontario), have discovered that not only does rye mature more quickly than malt, the end product is bursting with flavor. These new micro-distilled ryes are the first real contribution of Canada's micro-distillers to the Canadian whisky palate, and, best of all, they have their own distinct flavor



GRAD PROJECT

Heriot-Watt distilling graduates Joshua Beach and Gordon Glanz founded Vancouver's Odd Society spirits distillery.

profile. This is important because Canada's major distillers have also ramped up production of 100 percent rye whisky. The result has been some spectacular new releases. Hiram Walker & Sons have produced several "high-rye blends" and two-time Canadian Whisky of the Year, Lot No. 40 (*see p.177*). Elsewhere, there have been a raft of independent releases from Pendleton, Masterson's, WhistlePig, Jefferson's, and a range of small independents. These join the long-time favorite session (easy-drinking) whisky, Alberta Premium (*see p.175*), which has been filling cowboys' campfire tin cups for nearly seven decades.

TASTING NOTES

Canada's micro-distillers are creating new flavors in single malt whisky and 100 percent rye.

STILL WATERS

STALK & BARREL
100% RYE
46% ABV

Nose Spices, rose water, vanilla, earthy tones, and dark rye bread.

Body Medium.

Palate Linen, oilcloth, linseed oil, high fruity esters, bracing peppery spices, soft malt, barley sugar, and breakfast cereal.

Finish Long and fading, with butterscotch and tingling pepper.



STALK & BARREL
100% RYE

MASTERSON'S

MASTERSON'S 10-YEAR-OLD
STRAIGHT RYE
45% ABV

Nose Cereal, linseed oil, sweet flowers, leather, tobacco, and burlap.

Body Full bodied.

Palate Earthy, with loads of vanilla, fragrant flowers, ginger, pipe tobacco, cereal, and linseed oil. Very complex and beautifully balanced.

Finish Long slow fade on floral notes and citrus pith.



MASTERSON'S
10-YEAR-OLD





THE UNITED STATES

A MASSIVE NEW WAVE OF SMALL
CRAFT DISTILLERS IS CHANGING THE
FACE OF WHISKEY ACROSS THE US



GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS

The water bodies of the Great Smoky Mountains (above) are one of the main sources of hard water for the Kentucky distilleries.

THE UNITED STATES

US whiskey has undergone a revolution since the turn of the millennium—and you could say “it’s about time, too.”

The US has always been a mass of contradictions in many areas, and alcohol is certainly one of them. For a country that celebrates Happy Hour with hedonistic zeal and bombards its citizens with alcohol advertisements, it has a drinking history with a surprisingly puritanical streak. The US gave birth to bourbon and the cult of cocktails, lifting the martini to legendary status; but it also allowed an extreme experiment with Prohibition in the 1920s to obliterate saloons and taverns, decimate indigenous whiskey styles, and corrupt its drinking culture.

Overcoming prohibition

The Evangelical movement cast a prohibitive shadow over the states in the Midwest and the South for the rest of the 20th century. There are whiskey men in Kentucky who say bourbon only recovered with the new millennium. Since then, though, we have seen a dramatic and unparalleled rebirth of US spirits. There has

been an explosion in craft distillers attempting to make all styles of whiskey and in a myriad of new, exciting, and innovative ways. When the last edition of this book was published in 2006, “micro-distilleries,” as they were referred to, were a mere footnote and were covered in four pages. It is impossible to accurately say how many there are now, but in 2016 the American Distilling Institute announced its 1,000th member.

The traditional distillers, mainly in Kentucky, but also in Tennessee, Virginia, San Francisco, and Oregon, did not stand still and get swept away. Excellent new whiskeys have come to the market and, as Michael Jackson predicted in 2006, aged whiskeys—particularly rye whiskeys—have been resurrected and embraced.

In the late 1980s, the US consumer, becoming tired of mass production and the dumbing down of US food and drink, began to rediscover the quality and complexity of aged US whiskey. Following on from the success of Scottish single malts, distillers started to select their finest whiskeys and bottle them as premium spirits. Distilleries lured tourists

DISTILLERIES OF THE UNITED STATES

Until the onset of Prohibition in 1920, whiskey making thrived in many US states. Kentucky remains the state with the most stills with 10 (there were 55 in 1960). The popularity of premium bourbon at an affordable price has marked a resurgence in the native spirit.



with handsome visitor centers, and began to integrate their whiskeys into food and quality cocktails while the tourist industry started to promote them as destinations, establishing the Kentucky Bourbon Trail.

A new age of whiskey

The US now boasts some of the best whiskey bars in the world, and its mixologists have taken to using whiskey in their cocktails with aplomb.

It is still very early days for the craft-distilling industry and quality remains an issue. Many may fall by the wayside, but their spirits have been welcomed by visionary restaurateurs and educated consumers, particularly in the progressive states.

Regional pride and sustainable agriculture are often integral to the craft distillers' philosophy, and focus groups are blessedly ignored. Small is beautiful in this culture of good food and drink. US spirits have truly been born again.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

A. SMITH BOWMAN

FOUNDED 1935

OWNER Sazerac

METHOD Column still
and copper doubler

CAPACITY Not given



A COPPER DOUBLER STILL

The second distillation of Virginia Gentleman takes place in an elaborate copper doubler still at the A. Smith Bowman distillery.

Virginia

WHEN THE HISTORIC GEORGE WASHINGTON DISTILLERY
STARTED PRODUCING IN 2006, WHISKEY WAS ON
ITS KNEES IN VIRGINIA. NOW, IT IS THRIVING.

George Washington—the most famous of all Virginians—in addition to his many military and political duties was a successful farmer, fisherman, miller, and owner of one of the largest commercial distilleries in colonial times.

Indeed, whiskey seemed always to be touching on his life in one way or another, although that may be testimony to the social and economic importance of the spirit in those times. As a general, Washington emphasized the importance of troops being supplied with spirits to sustain them when tired or facing the vagaries of weather. During the American Revolution, he held the view that whiskey was “essential to the health of the men,” and commended it as “very refreshing and salutary.”

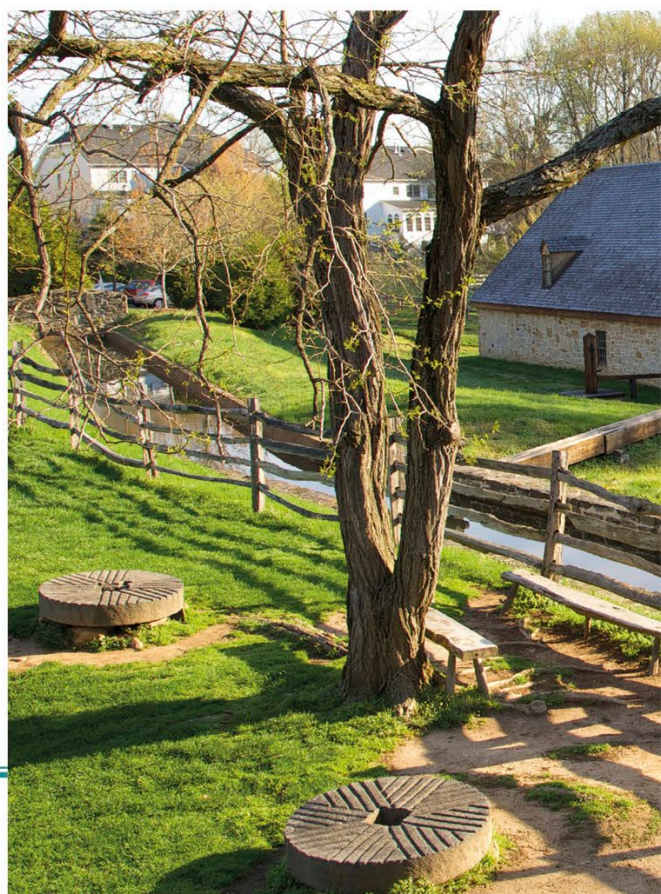
Washington's distillery

Washington inherited the Mount Vernon farm in Fairfax County, Virginia, from his brother's widow in 1761 and expanded it to a plantation of 8,000 acres (3,200 hectares) comprising five farms, each a complete unit with overseers, slaves, and laborers. His Mount Vernon plantation was highly efficient, and wheat was at the heart of his diversified farming operation.

The gristmill for Washington's milling enterprise was built in 1771 on a piece of land about 2½ miles (4km) south of the Mount Vernon mansion. Visitors to Washington's home today can see an impressive working reconstruction of the mill on the original site, its water wheel, and two sets of milling stones powered by Dogue Creek, which wraps around the property. Today, the site is also home to a project that exemplifies the integral role that spirits played in colonial America—the reconstruction of Washington's distillery. Archeologists and historians have unearthed a fascinating story of George Washington, commercial distiller.

In October 1797, Washington recorded in his weekly farm journal that carpenters began “hewing the timber for the still house.” According to the archeologists on site, the distillery was a one-story stone building with a loft. Its floor measured 75×30ft (23×9m). There were 50 mash tuns and five copper stills, the smallest of which had a 106-gallon (480-liter) capacity.

John Anderson, the son of Washington's Scottish farm overseer, James Anderson, ran the distillery with five or six slaves. The mash bill for Washington's rye recipe was 60 percent rye, 35 percent corn (maize), and 5 percent barley, giving an indication of the established regional whiskey style at the end of the 18th century. The distillery produced 11,000 gallons (50,000 liters) of rye- and corn- (maize) based whiskey in 1799, the year of Washington's death, yielding a profit of \$7,500. The whiskey was sold unaged, both at



the distillery, where customers included some of Virginia's most prominent families, and to local whiskey merchants.

In the early part of the new millennium, a replica of the distillery was built with financial backing from the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States. It is now producing whiskey again and is a popular tourist attraction. The distillery is designed to show visitors the distilling process, from crop to finished product.

A. Smith Bowman Distillery

Before the current craft-distilling revolution, Virginia had only one distillery partially in operation. Despite its heritage of whiskey making (legal and otherwise), Virginia's whiskey-distilling business was on its knees. The state now has more than 25 new distilleries.

The A. Smith Bowman distillery sits in an industrial park by the charming colonial town of Fredericksburg, in Spotsylvania County. Virginia Gentleman Bourbon has a pedigree that goes back to the end of Prohibition, when the distillery was founded by the Smith Bowman family. In 2003, it was sold to the Sazerac Company of New Orleans, owner of the Buffalo Trace distillery in Frankfort, Kentucky. For many years, since A. Smith Bowman moved to its current site, Buffalo Trace distillery (formerly Ancient Age) has been fermenting and

TASTING NOTES

The original Mount Vernon recipe, which has been recreated by this distillery, is surprisingly sweet, fruity, and rounded for a rye whiskey.

MOUNT VERNON STRAIGHT RYE WASHINGTON'S WHISKEY

Nose Sweet sandalwood, coconut, sweet spice, musty and dusty, and unusual.

Body Quite thin and light. Gentle and quite smooth.

Palate Sweet plum, apricot, grape, fig, trace of mint, leaf tea, and black pepper.

Finish Short, with some fruit and chili spice.

MOUNT VERNON STRAIGHT RYE WASHINGTON'S WHISKEY



distilling the first run of Virginia Gentleman. A second run, a slow one through a copper doubler still, is still carried out at Fredericksburg.

In the past, the whiskeys have had a high corn (maize) content. With a mash bill of 85 percent corn (maize), 8 percent rye, and 7 percent barley, the whiskey has a higher corn (maize) content than most bourbons, and just enough rye to give a ticklish character and depth to its sweet, corn (maize) whiskey character.

The Smith Bowman range includes Bowman Brothers Small Batch Straight Bourbon, triple distilled and at 90 proof; John J. Bowman Single Barrel Straight Bourbon, containing the distillery's oldest whiskeys bottled at 100 proof; and Abraham Bowman Straight Bourbon Small Batch, a special limited edition bottling with a unique taste.



THE GRISTMILL

Constructed in 1970, the gristmill at Mount Vernon produces 5,000–8,000 pounds (2,300–3,600kg) of flour and cornmeal per day. An earthen canal brings water down from a man-made pond.

“NEW
DISTILLERS
HAVE
BROUGHT
RYE BACK
TO THE
STATE, AND
WHISKEY
PRODUCTION
IS THRIVING”

Pennsylvania and Maryland

ONCE THE HEARTLAND STATES OF US RYE WHISKEY, PRODUCTION
HERE HAD STOPPED ENTIRELY. CRAFT DISTILLING
HAS RETURNED, BUT SOME OF THE REGION'S HERITAGE
BRANDS HAVE MOVED ELSEWHERE.

It was rye whiskey that forged a patriotic identity during and just after the American Revolution (1775–83), and its cradle was the Pennsylvania Dutch country in southeast Pennsylvania. The German-speaking settlers brought with them a heritage of distilling rye-based schnapps and they discovered that rye grain adapted well to the rich farmlands they settled. By the time of the American Revolution, a distilling community was well established, with copper pot stills produced by skilled craftsmen in thriving towns.

By the end of the war, whiskey from the Monongahela valley in western Pennsylvania had become a highly respected dram in Philadelphia and down the Ohio river. Just south of Pittsburgh, where the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers meet to form the great Ohio, the valley farmland was

filled with Scots-Irish and Pennsylvania Dutch settlers. Here, a full-bodied rye whiskey, Monongahela “Red” fetched a dollar a gallon in Philadelphia and was considered as good as currency by the frontier farmer distillers. The Monongahela farmers planted corn (maize) in addition to rye, and it is likely that the grain was added to the mash bill, softening and sweetening the rye whiskey. That it was termed a “red” whiskey indicates at least a minimum aging period in charred oak casks. (Burning the inside of an oak cask was an early and effective method of sanitation.)

A defining flavor

What the rye grain gives to bread it also imparts to whiskey. Rye whiskey has that same hint of bitterness. It is reminiscent of a bittersweet

THE CHESAPEAKE BAY, MARYLAND

Whiskey and spirit production was a large industry in the Chesapeake Bay area and across Maryland during the 18th and 19th centuries. In the last century, distillation has significantly tailed off.



fruit—perhaps a hint of apricot—spicy, a little oily, almost peppermint. The bitterness arouses the appetite, like that of quinine in tonic water or hops in beer. The peppermint palate, which adds a digestive quality, is especially evident in samples of rye whiskey from the first two or three decades of the 20th century.

Pennsylvania distilleries

One or two “Pennsylvania” ryes survive, as products of Kentucky. The once-famous Rittenhouse Rye, associated with Philadelphia, is alive and well and enjoying a fresh wave of popularity. It is being produced by Heaven Hill’s Bernheim distillery in Louisville. Bottled at 100 proof (50% ABV), Rittenhouse (51 percent rye, 37 percent corn/maize, 12 percent barley) is a bold, emphatically spicy example of the style.

There is no sadder project to a serious drinker than a silent distillery that most likely will never produce whiskey again, more so if the distillery has a heritage of producing some outstanding examples. So it is with Michter’s distillery in Schaefferstown, in the heartland of Pennsylvania Dutch country. The distillery is a National Historic Landmark, but it has passed through several different hands and is now a pale replica of its former self.

The Michter’s brand has been sold, and whiskeys are currently on sale under that name. However, they are now made at a new Michter’s distillery in Louisville, Kentucky,

and not the original distillery in Pennsylvania. The current whiskeys are good, but they are not made in Schaefferstown.

All is not lost, though. New craft distillers (*see pp.210–221*) have brought rye back to the state, and whiskey production is thriving. It is too early to know whether the state will ever make great “red” whiskeys again, but there is hope.

Maryland whiskeys

Although the appearance of craft distilleries such as White Tiger (*see p.221*) has returned whiskey production to Maryland, distant memories of places are all that is left of much of Maryland’s proud heritage. Chesapeake, Preakness, Pimlico, Baltimore, and Cockeysville ryes were all imbued with Maryland character and whiskey tradition. But Kentucky once again saves face with Pikesville Supreme Rye Whiskey, named after the community just outside Baltimore and distilled by Heaven Hill. An 80 proof (40% ABV) straight whiskey with 51 percent rye, it is a lighter, fruitier “Maryland” rye, with touches of spice, mint, and vanilla.

Prohibition—and a predilection for lighter whiskeys thereafter—pummelled the robust ryes of Pennsylvania and Maryland, but there is life in the spicy grain yet, as it has become the darling of cocktail makers across the world and can be found in properly mixed Manhattans, Old Fashioneds, and Sazeracs in most discerning bars. Two formidably sturdy straight ryes have been made in Kentucky since the 1940s: Jim Beam Rye is the world’s best-selling straight rye and has more than 80 percent rye in the mash bill; Wild Turkey Straight Rye faithfully delivers its trademark kick at 101 proof (50.5% ABV).

Well-aged ryes come in limited bottlings and are more difficult to track down, but they are certainly worth the effort. Seek out Van Winkle’s splendid 13-year-old Family Reserve Rye and Buffalo Trace’s limited release Sazerac 18-year-old—a mountain of a whiskey. And there are Fritz Maytag’s Old Potrero bottlings in San Francisco. Made from 100 percent rye malt in a pot still, these rebellious, rambunctious whiskeys have turned the category inside out.



MICHTER’S FROM KENTUCKY

Whiskey from Michter’s sits maturing in the warehouse in Kentucky. When the Michter’s name was sold, production moved to Kentucky.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

BUFFALO TRACE

FOUNDED 1812

OWNER Sazerac

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY 11.8m gal
(54m liters)

Kentucky: Frankfort

WHERE BUFFALO ONCE ROAMED, A SUPERB RANGE OF SPECIALITY
BOURBONS HAVE FOUND THEIR SPIRITUAL HOME IN ONE OF
KENTUCKY'S OLDEST FRONTIER SETTLEMENTS.

Stony Point, an elegant limestone mansion, overlooks the whiskey landscape of Buffalo Trace distillery, formerly known as Ancient Age. The distillery site is located at an ancient buffalo crossing, where the animals forded the Kentucky River. It was part of the Great Buffalo Trace, a pathway or trail carved out by the buffalo as they thundered from salt lick to salt lick.

The present distillery site became a settlement in 1775 when Hancock and Willis Lee set up a camp here. The Leestown

settlement eventually became an established stopping place for travelers and by 1790 was home to a thriving population. The first modern distillery was built on the Buffalo Trace site in 1857, and was the earliest to incorporate steam power into the production of bourbon whiskey.

Colonel E.H. Taylor, Jr., one of Kentucky's original bourbon aristocrats, bought the distillery in 1886 and introduced a number of innovations, including the first use of steam pipes to heat a warehouse in winter. The Buffalo Trace site encompasses 110 acres (270 hectares) and 110 buildings, representing three centuries of American history, and 200 years of whiskey production.

Colonel Blanton

On the way down the hill from the mansion to the distillery courtyard is a gray, stone-carved statue of a dapper Kentucky gentleman, Colonel Albert Bacon Blanton. Starting as an office clerk in 1897, Blanton became distillery manager and eventually part-owner with George T. Stagg. Colonel Blanton retired in 1952 after 55 years of service, and the distillery has been using the same recipes ever since. Buffalo Trace bourbons are rich in corn (maize)—and thus in sweetness—and a high priority is placed on its purity and cleanliness. The barrels have a heavy char, with a 55-second burn, and the mature spirit is chill-filtered before bottling, rather than using activated charcoal. This leaves more flavor in the spirit, according to the distillery.

THE WATER TOWER

This water tower at the Buffalo Trace distillery stands sentinel over 200 years of whiskey production and 300 years of American frontier history.



In 1984, master distiller Elmer T. Lee, who died in 2013 shortly before his 94th birthday, was given the honor of selecting individual barrels for the introduction of Blanton's, a full-bodied, honey-sweet whiskey regarded as the world's first commercially marketed single-barrel bourbon.

The distillery's namesake whiskey, Buffalo Trace Kentucky Straight Bourbon, is now the company's flagship brand and is widely available in many world markets.

Special collections

As well as Blanton's, Buffalo Trace's Single Barrel Collection includes a number of other bourbon brands, each one different by recipe, by proof strength, or by warehouse aging. They include Eagle Rare 10-year-old; W. L. Weller, a wheated bourbon (meaning wheat is the small grain used, along with malted barley and the majority corn/maize); Rock Hill Farm; and Elmer T. Lee, named after the original distiller.

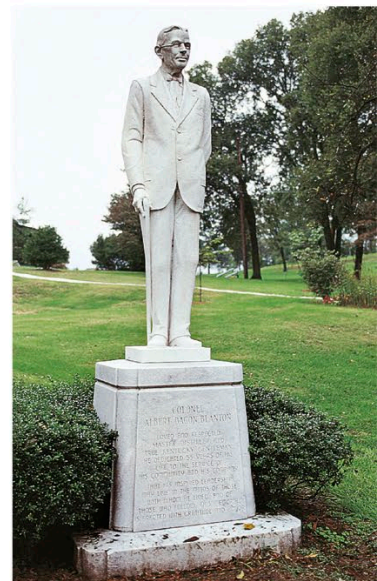
Each autumn, Buffalo Trace also produces the much-anticipated Antique Whiskey Collection. It includes W. L. Weller, Sazerac Rye, Eagle Rare, and George T. Stagg, all aged 17 years or older. The Antique Collection bottlings are selected from a small batch of around 27 barrels each, enough to make 300 cases of whiskey.

Experimental collection

Buffalo Trace has a small still where it has, for some years now, experimented with different mash bills, and has dedicated a special warehouse for experiments with charring and toasting casks and different types of wood. There are more than 5,000 experimental barrels currently on site, and in recent years a select few of them have been bottled under the "Experimental Collection" moniker. Many of them are of a great age, and offer a fascinating insight into the bourbon-making process.

Van Winkle

Buffalo Trace also acts as distributor and partner for the Van Winkle family's sophisticated range of aged whiskeys. Van Winkle bourbons are truly small batch—only about three or four barrels are used per bottling. The first Van Winkle Family Reserve was introduced in 1984. It was designed to be an after-dinner sipping whiskey. Bottlings include well-aged bourbons and some stunning straight ryes, but they are in limited supply.



COLONEL ALBERT BACON BLANTON

As the manager and part-owner, Blanton gave 55 years of service to the Buffalo Trace distillery, and his name to a fine single barrel whiskey.

“BUFFALO TRACE BOURBONS ARE RICH IN CORN (MAIZE), AND THUS IN SWEETNESS, AND A HIGH PRIORITY IS PLACED ON PURITY”

TASTING NOTES

Buffalo Trace has made a concerted effort in recent years to become a leader in speciality whiskeys. Today, the distillery's portfolio offers a wide range, including single barrel, well-aged, rye, and wheated whiskey.

BUFFALO TRACE 90 PROOF, 45% ABV

Nose Complex, aroma of vanilla, mint, and molasses.

Body Medium.

Palate Sweet notes of brown sugar and spice, oak, leather, toffee, and fruit.

Finish Long, dry, and deep.



BUFFALO TRACE

GEORGE T. STAGG SPECIAL RELEASE 2016 130 PROOF, 65% ABV

Nose Spicy, powerful, intense, complex, with cherry, dark chocolate, and sherry berries.

Body Very intense, rich, and full.

Palate Cherry liqueur, Camp coffee, milk chocolate, honeycomb, some sawdust, oak tannin, and spice. Fabulous and complex.

Finish Long and warming, with a balance between fruit, spice, and oak.

BLANTON'S ORIGINAL SINGLE BARREL (2016) 93 PROOF, 45% ABV

Nose Pepper, pear, cherry candy, sawdust, scented, and waxy.

Body Mouth-coating, sweet, firm, and smooth.



GEORGE T. STAGG
SPECIAL RELEASE

Palate Spicy oak, pine needles, grapes, touch of lemon, fruity, and not too cloying.

Finish Vanilla and candy notes shine through the spice and wood.

E. H. TAYLOR SINGLE BARREL 2016 100 PROOF, 50% ABV

Nose Savory, slightly rustic vanilla and fruit mix, and lemon meringue.

Body Creamy and balanced.

Palate Bold, vintage bourbon, with vanilla, orange, and yellow fruits, some oak, leather, polished church pew, dusty office, and some floral notes.

Finish A long, beautiful balance of fruits.



E. H. TAYLOR
SINGLE BARREL

DISTILLERY DETAILS

WILD TURKEY

FOUNDED 1869

OWNER Gruppo Campari

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY 11m gal
(50m liters)

FOUR ROSES

FOUNDED 1865

OWNER Kirin Brewery Co.

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY 1.8m gal
(8.1m liters)

Kentucky: Lawrenceburg

THE WHISKEYS AND DISTILLERIES OF ANDERSON COUNTY ARE A CONTRAST IN STYLE—FROM THE ASSERTIVELY TRADITIONAL AND ROBUST WILD TURKEY TO THE SOFT AND DANGEROUSLY EASY FOUR ROSES.

If you wanted proof that bourbon has been in a great place in recent years, it came with the expansion of the Wild Turkey distillery in Lawrenceburg in 2011—the biggest upgrade of a distillery that Kentucky had seen in decades. The bourbon, now owned by Gruppo Campari, benefited from a \$50 million state-of-the-art distillery capable of allowing the iconic brand to double production of its bourbons and ryes.

Wild Turkey distillery

The new 134,000 square foot (12,500m²) facility makes Wild Turkey one of the biggest distilleries in North America, capable of producing

11 million gallons (50 million liters) of liquid annually, up from 5 million gallons (23 million liters) at the previous distillery.

At the same time, Eddie Russell, son of the legendary master distiller Jimmy, confirmed his increased role in Wild Turkey with the launch of Wild Turkey 81—a lighter whiskey than the iconic 101—to meet the demands of consumers for a bourbon with an ABV of less than 50.5 percent.

According to distillery sources, the Wild Turkey name originated in the early 1940s when Thomas McCarthy, president of the New York-based Austin Nichols company, selected some

A STRIKING STRUCTURE

The Four Roses distillery was built in Spanish Mission Revival style architecture and dates back to 1910.



straight, 101 proof (50.5% ABV) bourbon from his company stocks as his contribution to a wild turkey hunting trip. Austin Nichols bought the company in 1970, which was then taken over by French drinks company Pernod Ricard in 1980. Gruppo Campari bought it in 2009, new production came on line in 2016, and the range has been completely repackaged.

Wild Turkey does not disclose its mash bill, but according to Jimmy Russell it uses the lowest amount of corn (maize) in its bourbon recipe of all commercial bourbons.

Traditionally, all the richly colored bottlings of Wild Turkey, with the exception of its rye whiskey, use the same grain mash bill and yeast strain. The flagship whiskey is Wild Turkey 101 proof (50.5% ABV) Kentucky Straight Bourbon, a traditional, full-bodied, and uncompromising southern dram, smooth and heavy with vanilla and caramel flavors in the aroma and taste.

When the distillery released Wild Turkey Rare Breed Straight Bourbon in 1991, it bottled the whiskey at an even higher strength than the 101. Rare Breed, a seamless super-premium bourbon, is a marriage of 6-, 8-, and 12-year-old stocks from Wild Turkey, bottled at the strength it comes out of the barrels.



TASTING NOTES

The two traditional distilleries in this region offer very distinct styles of bourbon. Wild Turkey is robust and heavy, while Four Roses is soft and light. To meet changing tastes, Wild Turkey now markets an 81 proof (40.5% ABV) version of its legendary Wild Turkey 101.

WILD TURKEY

WILD TURKEY 101
101 PROOF, 50.5% ABV

Nose Vanilla and caramel, peaches, peppery spice, and leather.

Body Full, robust, heavy.

Palate Profound bourbon flavors, balanced: vanilla, spice, oak, and fruit.

Finish Toasted oak and fruit.



WILD TURKEY 101

WILD TURKEY RARE BREED
112.8 PROOF, 56.4% ABV

Barrel-proof bourbon. A marriage of 6-, 8-, and 12-year-old stocks.

Nose Complex, fruity, flowery, spicy, and nutty.

Body Full, rich.

Palate Big, smooth, rich, with notes of peppermint and citrus, tobacco, and vanilla.

Finish Lingerin, toasty, spicy.

FOUR ROSES

FOUR ROSES
80 PROOF, 40% ABV

Nose Soft, delicate, fruity, notes of vanilla, nutmeg, and citrus.

Body Medium, rounded.

Palate Rich, creamy, pleasant balance of honey, caramel, and oak.

Finish Soft, smooth.

FOUR ROSES SMALL BATCH
90 PROOF, 45% ABV

Nose Clean, fresh, very fruity, with orange and citrus.

Body Rich, full, and assertive.

Palate Very fruity, fruit peel, vanilla, cinnamon, a slight trace of rye, and chewy grains. The fruit is checked by some thrusting spices and tannins.

Finish Long and fruity.



FOUR ROSES
SMALL BATCH

Four Roses distillery

Across highway US127, on the other side of Lawrenceburg, is the Four Roses distillery in as pretty a production site as you will find in Kentucky. Here, fruity, creamy whiskey is a counterpart to its robust neighbor. In 2002, the Kirin Brewery Company of Tokyo, Japan, bought the distillery from the Seagram Company. In 2004, with a redesigned yet distinctive label, the bourbon was reintroduced to Kentucky. A visitor center was added to the plant.

Four Roses whiskeys are aged for 5 and often 6 years, and are soft and easy drinking. Their lightness and smoothness make them different from other bourbons.

Four Roses is the only company that uses five different yeasts and two mash bills, giving it 10 core whiskey styles in its standard bottling. One mash bill recipe has 60 percent corn (maize) and 35 percent rye. The yeasts were chosen to give soft, smooth flavors, like a blended whiskey. The 10 individual bourbons with the different yeasts and mash bills are mingled to create one consistent flavor. The distillery also releases a small batch whiskey, featuring four of the whiskeys, and a single barrel version. In recent years, there have been a series of stunning special releases.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

WOODFORD
RESERVE

FOUNDED 1812

OWNER Brown
Forman Co.

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

Kentucky: Versailles

CONCEIVED AS A TRIBUTE TO HAND-CRAFTED BOURBON,
WOODFORD RESERVE'S THOROUGHbred DRAM PRODUCED
IN THE HEART OF BLUEGRASS HORSE COUNTRY IS THREE
TIMES DISTILLED IN COPPER POT STILLs.

The agricultural bounty of this farming state is gathered in autumn: corn (maize) is harvested for whiskey, tobacco and hams cure in wooden barns, and the Kentucky communities celebrate with festivals and fairs.

Woodford Reserve distillery

About an hour's drive from Louisville, the journey through Woodford County to Woodford Reserve distillery is a tranquil one. The landscape is dotted with substantial farmhouses and corrals enclosed by white wooden fences. Thoroughbred racehorses graze on the fertile Kentucky bluegrass, shaded by white oak, maple, and dogwood trees.

In this horse country heartland, on the banks of Glenn's Creek, are the limestone buildings of the Woodford Reserve distillery, a National Historic Landmark. Reborn on October 17, 1996, Woodford was conceived by its owner, Louisville-based Brown Forman Co., as a tribute to the history and tradition of hand-crafted bourbon distillation in Kentucky. The refurbished distillery was called Labrot & Graham until October 2003.

The smallest "major" distillery currently operating in Kentucky, Woodford creates "small batch" whiskey from start to finish, producing 45–50 barrels a day. It is the only major bourbon distillery to use exclusively copper pot stills, and employs the rare method of triple distillation to do so. Crafted in Scotland, the pot stills are just one of several historic links between the spirits of Kentucky and Scotland at this unique distillery, where Scottish and Irish roots run deep.

The "cradle" of bourbon

Elijah Pepper, whose hilltop home overlooks the distillery, began making whiskey on the Glenn's Creek site in 1812. Elijah brought his distilling

skills from Virginia in 1797, settled in Versailles (pronounced "Versales"), the Woodford County seat, and began making corn (maize) whiskey behind the county courthouse. In need of abundant, pure limestone for a growing business, he moved the operation and built his cabin on the site at nearby Glenn's Creek.

The distillery site has been called the "cradle of bourbon" due, in large part, to the scientific achievements of James Christopher Crow, a Scottish physician and chemist. Elijah Pepper's son, Oscar, hired Crow as head distiller in the 1830s, and he spent most of his career perfecting the craft of bourbon distillation at the distillery. Dr. Crow recognized the importance of producing a consistent and reliable product from batch to batch. His scientific training helped him understand the sour mash process, used by all distillers today, and the benefits of charred oak for maturation.

A visitor center and crafts shop overlook the distillery, housing informative displays and photos outlining the history of the distillery and Kentucky bourbon. The distillery has also become an important culinary and educational destination for tourists and whiskey drinkers, but the glory of Woodford lies in the wood and limestone distillery buildings of Glenn's Creek hollow, 300ft (90m) down the hill.

Triple distillation

The mash bill for Woodford Reserve is 72 percent corn (maize), 18 percent rye, and 10 percent barley malt. The cooked grains ferment in small 5cm- (2in-) thick cypress wood fermenters for five to seven days, creating a beer of around 18 proof (9% ABV). As you descend the steps from the brew house to the spacious stillhouse, the bonny sight of three graceful pot



SAMPLING THE BLEND

A stillman at the Woodford Reserve distillery is seen here collecting "finished" whiskey for sampling.



stills working away would make single-malt lovers, or makers, catch their breath. Built in Scotland by Forsyth's, the coppersmiths of Rothes in Speyside, they produce America's only triple-distilled whiskey. The long, slender-necked stills stand nearly 16ft (5m) tall, and comprise a beer still, a high wines still, and a spirit still. They are heated by steam injection. Most Scottish single-malt distillers would be content with the spirit that comes off the second, high wines still, but Woodford distills it one more time, in the spirit still. The spirit from the third still comes off at 158 proof (79% ABV), just two points below the legal limit.

The stillhouse overlooks the cask-filling station, where the spirit goes into medium-charred oak barrels at 110 proof (55% ABV), using demineralized water. The barrels are rolled a short distance to the distillery's limestone warehouse. The walls are 3ft (1m) thick, and embedded in the limestone blocks are thousands of fossilized sea creatures; a prehistoric reminder of the ancient inland sea underneath Kentucky's soil. There are four floors inside, with three barrel tiers on wooden ricks per floor.

Woodford Reserve is mostly six to seven years old and handsomely packaged at 90.4 proof (45.2% ABV). The Woodford whiskey has traditionally been mixed with a proportion of

Old Forester whiskey from the Brown-Forman distillery in Louisville, though how much is the subject of debate. Robust "honey" barrels from upper floors and sunny exposures are the ones destined for Woodford, where they are cut with water and aged. Woodford Reserve is a robust and spicy whiskey with sweet maple fullness and a lingering finish.

A whiskey aged in the bluegrass alongside stud farms would not be complete without a racehorse connection. Woodford has been the official bourbon of the US's two premier horse racing events, The Breeders' Cup and the Kentucky Derby, and has been building up a stable of racing partners the likes of Australia and the UK—a thoroughbred dram indeed.

THE VISITOR CENTER

Located in Kentucky's bluegrass horse-breeding region, Woodford Reserve has a stylish visitor center and offers informative tours.

TASTING NOTES

Woodford Reserve is the father of the current American trend in innovative and revolutionary new craft distilling. It broke away from traditional column-still production to produce spirits in Scottish pot stills.

WOODFORD RESERVE DISTILLER'S SELECT

90.4 PROOF, 45.2% ABV

Nose Sweet, maple fullness, with hints of vanilla and honey.

Body Rich, full, and a little oily.

Palate Complex. Citrus notes, spice, floral, balanced, and round.

Finish Long, spicy, and smooth.



WOODFORD RESERVE
DISTILLER'S SELECT

DISTILLERY DETAILS

HEAVEN HILL

FOUNDED 1890

OWNER Constellation
Brands, Inc.

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY Not given

BARTON

FOUNDED 1879

OWNER Sazerac

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY Not given

Kentucky: Bardstown

KENTUCKY'S "WHISKEY CAPITAL" MIGHT WELL BE BARDSTOWN, AN HISTORIC NELSON COUNTY TOWN IMBUED WITH BOURBON HERITAGE AND ITS OWN FESTIVAL CELEBRATING THE CORN (MAIZE) SPIRIT.

My Old Kentucky Home, fondly remembered in the song by Stephen Foster, is a substantial Georgian building in its own grounds, the most visited attraction in Bardstown. A community of about 15,000 people, Bardstown sits along the Blue Grass Parkway from Lexington, and south of Louisville. Other attractions include the relatively new, award-winning, and informative Heaven Hill visitor center, the Oscar Getz Museum of Whiskey, and the Talbott Tavern, which dates back to 1785. September is the time to visit, since Bardstown is host to the annual, week-long Kentucky Bourbon Festival, the greatest whiskey celebration in America, and a mandatory experience for devoted followers of the corn (maize) spirit.

Whiskey is the lifeblood of Bardstown and Nelson County, and this area has perhaps the best claim to being the center of Kentucky's distilling industry, not only geographically but also historically. Nelson County once had more than 20 distilleries, and the whiskey archaeologist can explore a handful of silent distilleries in and around the town. The Museum of Whiskey is a few blocks from the former courthouse, in an old college building called Spalding Hall. During summer it is open all day, Monday to Saturday, and also on Sunday afternoons, but hours are reduced slightly in winter. It is well worth a visit for its documentary material, whiskey displays, and examples of early whiskey advertising.



CHECKING THE FILL

The "new make" is piped from a holding tank into oak barrels, which are then stored in warehouses for maturing. A workman at the Barton distillery is seen here regulating the filling process.

Heaven Hill distillery

The Heaven Hill company was founded in 1935 by Gary, Ed, George, Moses, and David Shapira, and is operated today under the direction of second- and third-generation family members.

The distillery near Bardstown was founded in 1890. Today, production of the company's wide range of whiskeys is done at the Bernheim Distillery in Louisville, which was bought from Diageo in 1999. Three years earlier, Heaven Hill had suffered a huge fire that almost destroyed the plant.

Heaven Hill is the nation's largest independent, family-owned marketer and producer of distilled spirits products. It stores in excess of 600,000 barrels in its traditional, ironclad warehouses in and around Bardstown, and a state-of-the-art visitor center is also sited on the edge of the town.

Heaven Hill specializes in higher-proof, older bourbons packed with complexity, full traditional body, and a spicy, sweet character. Its extensive portfolio of splendidly affordable specialty bourbons includes whiskeys that belong in the cabinet of every serious drinker, including Evan Williams Single Barrel, the super-premium Elijah Craig 12-year-old, Rittenhouse and Pikesville Supreme Ryes, Fighting Cock, Very Special Old Fitzgerald 12-year-old, and Bernheim Original Wheat Whiskey.

Barton distillery

The whiskeys from Barton are notably dry and aromatic. The company's main national label is Very Old Barton, which is a 6-year-old whiskey and is available at various proof strengths. Also from here are the Kentucky Gentleman and Tom Moore. The present distillery, largely built in the 1940s, is an industrial, factory-like affair with redbrick buildings. It uses its own yeast in a sour mash of backset, malt, and rye. Despite their



FERMENTATION TANKS

The Barton distillery uses high-tech, outdoor-indoor tanks for the fermentation process.

flavorful palate, the whiskeys are also very clean, perhaps because the distillate is run through the column twice.

Kentucky Bourbon Distillers

Many other brands lay claim to being distilled in Bardstown, and chances are they were sourced from the Kentucky Bourbon Distillers, which includes in its roster the likes of Rowan's Creek, Johnny Drum, Old Bardstown, and Noah's Mill. After years of hard work, a distillery was opened on the site and the company now produces spirits for a range of companies under license.

TASTING NOTES

Heaven Hill specializes in higher-proof, older whiskeys packed with body and spicy, sweet character. Barton leans toward younger, drier bourbons.

HEAVEN HILL

EVAN WILLIAMS 7-YEAR-OLD
86 PROOF, 43% ABV

Nose Complex, sweet butterscotch, caramel, vanilla, and peppermint.

Body Medium, balanced.

Palate Spicy, sweet vanilla, toasted oak, and toffee.

Finish Warm leather and tobacco.



EVAN WILLIAMS
7-YEAR-OLD

ELIJAH CRAIG 12-YEAR-OLD
94 PROOF, 47% ABV

Nose Classic bourbon, caramel sweetness, vanilla, spice, and fruit.

Body Full, gutsy.

Palate Rich, warming, sweetness and oak, caramel and rye, in robust harmony.

Finish Heavy sweetness, licorice, vanilla, and spice; emphatic finish.



ELIJAH CRAIG
12-YEAR-OLD

BARTON 1792

1792 SINGLE BARREL
98.6 PROOF, 49.3% ABV

Nose Vanilla, honey, grapefruit, toffee, and smoky leather armchair.

Body Full and mouth-coating.

Palate Quite spicy, assertive, Amaretto cake, marzipan, citrus and orange fruits, and concentrated rumtopf fruit. Nicely weighted.

Finish Very rich, fruity, long, and full.

1792 FULL PROOF
125 PROOF, 62.5% ABV

Nose Beautiful and welcoming. Sweet fruit candy, peach, apricot, and berries. Big and inviting.

Body Oily, full, and demanding.

Palate Flavored gummies, cake shop, and lemon sherbet. Very fresh, lively, rounded, and enjoyable.

Finish Full, rich, fruity, sweet, and more-ish.

“HEAVEN HILL IS THE
NATION'S LARGEST
MARKETER AND
PRODUCER OF
DISTILLED SPIRITS”

DISTILLERY DETAILS

MAKER'S MARK

FOUNDED 1805

OWNER Beam Suntory, Inc.

METHOD Column and
pot stills

CAPACITY 1.8m gal
(8.2m liters)

Kentucky: Loretto

AMERICA'S FIRST PREMIUM, SPECIALITY BOURBON OF THE MODERN ERA, A SOFT AND EASY DRAM, LIES HIDDEN IN THE ROLLING HILLS OF MARION COUNTY. THE DISTILLERY SITE IS ONE OF KENTUCKY'S OLDEST.

Amid the rolling hills of Marion County, in a broad and fertile hollow with sycamore trees standing sentinel, is the organic cluster of buildings that comprise Maker's Mark distillery.

Maker's Mark occupies one of Kentucky's oldest whiskey-making sites, dating back to 1805, and is designated a National Historic Landmark. The black and red-trim buildings straddle the banks of Hardin Creek, the stream that dissects the serene valley floor of Star Hill Farm. On the road leading down to the creek, the visitor passes "The Quart House," one of America's oldest remaining "retail package stores." In a period before the dark cloud of Prohibition, Marion County neighbors would swing by in their horse and buggy and have their quart jugs filled from the whiskey barrels inside.

A special Southern alchemy takes place at Maker's Mark, an alchemy that creates a truly handmade whiskey, America's first premium quality bourbon of the modern era.

The president of Maker's Mark is Rob Samuels, who took over from the charismatic and inventive Bill Samuels Jr. in 2011. Samuels is an eighth-generation Kentucky bourbon maker, and the link stretches back to his ancestor Robert Samuels of the 1780s, neighbor of Baptist preacher, entrepreneur, and pioneering whiskey maker Elijah Craig.

Premium bourbon

In 1953, Bill Samuels Sr. bought the Star Hill Farm; 200 acres (80 hectares) of fertile farmland with an old country distillery on site, and a deep,

CASK ROTATION

Maker's Mark is one of the few distilleries that still painstakingly rotates barrels, in its black and red-trim, metal-clad warehouses.



spring-fed lake on the hill above it. Bill Sr. had no interest in selling the “pedestrian” bourbon of his competitors, so he scrapped the old family recipe and set out to produce a premium sipping bourbon.

“My dad’s goal was to create a bourbon that was more refined, palatable, and yet flavorful,” explains Bill Jr. “Something that did not have the hot aftertaste traditionally associated with bourbon. The purpose was not about money; it was about bringing good taste to bourbon, and he designed it for a palate of one—himself.”

Bill Sr. experimented with different grains for the bourbon, developing a recipe based on locally grown corn (maize), winter wheat (softer and gentler flavor than traditional, spicier rye), and malted barley.

Mrs. Samuels, meanwhile, came up with the name Maker’s Mark, based on the tradition of English pewter makers who put their marks on their finest pieces. The mark of Bill Samuels still decorates every bottle, as does another Mrs. Samuels innovation: the hand-dipped wax seal that spills down the neck of the Maker’s Mark bottle.

By 1958, the first barrel of Maker’s Mark handmade whisky (spelled without an “e” in

tribute to the Samuels’ Scottish ancestry) was ready for the market. Sales of the early Maker’s were gradual and local, spreading slowly by word of mouth among the whiskey connoisseurs of Kentucky.

“By 1980, Maker’s Mark had become a Kentucky icon,” Bill Samuels Jr. says, “and then *The Wall Street Journal* ran a front-page article about us that year, and the phone rang off the hook. The article was huge for us. It created consumer interest outside Kentucky and gave the brand credibility.”

The distillery today

Maker’s Mark was acquired by Beam Global some years back, and is now part of Beam Suntory, Inc.

Maturation is in black, metal-sided warehouses ranging from three to six stories, and Maker’s is one of the rare distilleries that rotates barrels in the same warehouse, a costly and labor-intensive process.

In the early part of the new millennium, the company broke from tradition with a wonderful new whisky: Maker’s Mark 46. The number does not refer to the strength—it is 94 proof or 47% ABV—but to the specific toasting and charring of the wood used in the maturation process, which involves emptying the cask, adding French oak staves, and refilling for further maturation.

Maker’s Mark has a stylish modern visitor center and gift shop, which includes a wax-dipping booth so visitors can dip and seal their own bottle.



THE HAND-DIPPED WAX SEAL

Each bottle of Maker’s Mark is dipped in wax by hand, and visitors can fill and dip their own bottles.



TASTING NOTES

Maker’s Mark uses red winter wheat instead of rye in its mash bill. The result is a softer, gentler whiskey. Maker’s fresh distillate enters the barrel at a low 55% ABV.

MAKER’S MARK
90 PROOF, 45% ABV

The original, handmade, super-premium whisky, spelled without the “e.”
A “wheated” bourbon.

Nose Sweet, caramel, vanilla, fruit, and clean.

Body Medium, soft.

Palate Soft and round, buttery, seamless medley of sweetness, vanilla, and caramel.

Finish Smooth, clean, with gentle afterglow.



MAKER’S MARK

DISTILLERY DETAILS

JIM BEAM

FOUNDED 1795

OWNER Beam
Suntory, Inc.

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY 8.8m gal
(40m liters)

Kentucky: Clermont

THE BEAM FAMILY, A BOURBON DYNASTY, HAS WHISKEY ROOTS DATING BACK MORE THAN 200 YEARS IN NELSON COUNTY. TODAY, JIM BEAM IS THE BIGGEST-SELLING BOURBON IN THE WORLD.

It seems no one remembers from where in Germany the original Mr. "Boehm" came when he emigrated to Maryland, or at what stage the name was Americanized to "Beam." We do know that the Beam family has supplied proprietors and employees for several of the best-known distilleries to be founded in the US during the past 200 years.

The Beams' American roots are located in Bardstown, Nelson County, and two or three adjoining counties. The first distiller in the family was Jacob Beam, who set up in Washington County in 1795. His great-grandson, David Beam, established a distillery in the mid-1800s at Clear Springs, just up the hollow from the distillery that would bear the name of his son Jim, at Clermont, in Bullitt County. The Jim Beam distillery at Clermont was established after Prohibition ended in 1933. Along the way, the company also acquired a distillery about 9 miles (14km) away, at Boston, in Nelson County. The James B. Beam distilling company was acquired in 1967 by the conglomerate American Brands, which became Fortune Brands. This

became Beam Global in the first decade of the new millennium. It was bought by Suntory in 2014, and the new Beam Suntory, Inc. is now the third biggest drinks company in the world.

The plain, somewhat industrial Clermont distillery, a 30-minute drive south of Louisville, is a major tourist attraction, and home to Jim Beam's American Outpost, where visitors can learn about the Beam whiskey heritage and view the historic family home. Improved visitor facilities were added as part of a general expansion of the distillery in 2012.

The company uses its own "sweet" yeast with hops. There is plenty of rye in the mash and backset in the cooker and, in an especially large proportion, in the fermenters. Beam distills and barrels at notably lower proofs than other bourbon distillers, which makes a significant contribution to its taste character.

Jim Beam whiskeys

The principal Jim Beam version is 4 years old and 80 proof (40% ABV). It is an innocuous dram, soft, medium-bodied, with understated sweetness, vanilla, and spice. Jim Beam Black, aged for eight years and at 86 proof (43% ABV), is different and distinctive. It is complex and overflowing with oak, vanilla, and fruit, and is a long and balanced dram.

In the early 1990s, Jim Beam launched the Small Batch Bourbon Collection, giving loose definition to a sub-category of bourbon that has energized the industry. The Small Batch Bourbon Collection had the great good fortune to have Booker Noe, grandson of Jim Beam, as its roving brand ambassador. Booker passed away in early 2004 after 50 years of making and supervising the production of Beam whiskey; his son, Fred, has carried the torch for the whiskeys ever since.

JIM BEAM WHISKEY

The distillery's standard 4-year is innocuous and medium bodied, the 8-year-old is different and distinctive.





Booker Noe's eponymous whiskey was introduced in 1988 as an uncut, natural proof, and non-chill-filtered bourbon. In 1992, the complex, oaky, Booker's was joined by three more bourbons in the collection: 7-year-old, 107 proof (53.5% ABV) Baker's, a fruity, toasty dram named after Clermont alumnus Baker Beam, Booker's cousin; Basil Hayden's, an 8-year-old, 80 proof (40% ABV), spicy, peppery whiskey with twice as much rye in its mash bill; and the balanced and robust Knob Creek, a 9-year-old, 100 proof (50% ABV) whiskey named after Abraham Lincoln's childhood home in Kentucky.

A triumvirate of Kentucky's most historical bourbons are also produced at the Clermont and Boston distilleries, although they are less promoted than their Beam label cousins. Old Grand-Dad, which honors early whiskey distiller Basil Hayden on the label, is formulated with more rye in the mash bill. It is a gutsy, spicy 86 proof (43% ABV) whiskey. Old Crow, a 4-year-old bourbon named after Scottish chemist and pioneering 19th-century Kentucky distiller James Christopher Crow, is bottled at 80 proof (40% ABV). The current recipe, with citrus and spice dominating, dates back to the 1960s,

and is not the one that receives accolades from a plethora of early American poets and writers. Old Taylor, a traditional, robust 6-year-old bourbon, commemorates Colonel Edmund Haynes Taylor Jr., whiskey aristocrat and the force behind the Bottled-In-Bond Act of 1897. In a major victory over the adulterous rectifiers of the time, the Act guaranteed that any bottle with a government seal would be at least 4 years old and a full 100 proof (50% ABV).

THE MASTER DISTILLER

The statue of Booker Noe, legendary Jim Beam master distiller, is situated at the front of Fred's Smokehouse and the tasting room. Noe was known for his generous hospitality, and the statue shows him in a typically welcoming and relaxed mood.

TASTING NOTES

The bourbons from Jim Beam use plenty of rye in the mash and backset in the cookers and fermenters. They are put in the barrel at lower proofs than most bourbons.

JIM BEAM BLACK LABEL 8-YEAR-OLD

86 PROOF, 43% ABV

Nose Rich fruitcake, allspice, vanilla, and a trace of menthol and licorice.

Body Full, rich, and chewy.

Palate More fruitcake, ginger drizzle, raisins, berry fruits, woody tannins, spice, and rye.

Finish Perfectly balanced, long, and lingering.



JIM BEAM BLACK
LABEL 8-YEAR-OLD

KNOB CREEK 9-YEAR-OLD 100 PROOF, 50% ABV

Introduced in 1992 and named after President Abraham Lincoln's childhood home in Kentucky.

Nose Toasted nuts, maple, oak, and balanced.

Body Full, rich.

Palate Classic, robust bourbon aromas; oak sweetness, spice, fruit, and vanilla.

Finish Long, rich, and glowing.



KNOB CREEK
9-YEAR-OLD

DISTILLERY DETAILS

BROWN-FORMAN

FOUNDED 1891

OWNER Brown-Forman Co.

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY Not given

BERNHEIM

FOUNDED 1992

OWNER Heaven Hill
Distilleries, Inc.

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY 1.9m gal
(8.5m liters)

Kentucky: Louisville

ONCE HOME TO A DOZEN IMPOSING DISTILLERIES, LOUISVILLE LOST ALL BUT TWO OF ITS MAJOR PRODUCERS. IN RECENT YEARS, DISTILLING HAS RETURNED TO THE CITY'S "WHISKEY ROW."

Louisville is a busy riverport city on the Ohio River that has been described as the southernmost northern city and the northernmost southern city in the US. In sailboat days, Louisville made rope from hemp, which grows wild in Kentucky. The city grew on the trade of tobacco and the occasional Kentucky ham, and down by the riverfront is a plaque honoring Evan Williams, who in 1783 was the city's first distiller (and perhaps the state's, too).

The edge of town, to the southwest, past Churchill Downs and astride Dixie Highway, is the area known as "Whiskey Row." The distilleries of Louisville were big industrial plants, the growth of which continued through the post-war recovery years of the 1950s. At the height of competition in the bourbon business there were a dozen distilleries. Now there are just two major producers, Brown-Forman and Bernheim. However, the development of the Urban Bourbon Trail and the opening of the

Evan Williams Bourbon Experience, an interactive museum with a mock-up of a working distillery, has brought bourbon very much to the fore once more.

Brown-Forman distillery

Formerly known as Early Times, the Brown-Forman distillery is home to Old Forester Bourbon and Early Times Kentucky Whisky (spelled, unusually, without an "e"). In 1870, George Gavin Brown, a young pharmaceuticals salesman in Louisville saw the need for a consistently high-quality whiskey that met medicinal standards. At this time, whiskey was the best anesthetic available, and was prescribed for a host of ailments.

Branded barrels were sold in bulk, and some retailers adulterated this whiskey. In response, Brown and his half-brother, J.T.S. Brown, began selling Old Forester Bourbon Whisky in sealed glass bottles to ensure its quality. Early Times

was the name of a settlement elsewhere in Kentucky, and the label originated there in 1860 before finding its way to Louisville in 1933 after Prohibition ended. The mash bill for Old Forester is 72 percent corn (maize), a substantial 18



RIVER TRANSPORT

The river systems that course through Kentucky and her neighboring states brought many frontier settlers and provided easy transportation for frontier spirits.

“DEVELOPMENT OF THE URBAN BOURBON TRAIL AND THE OPENING OF THE EVAN WILLIAMS BOURBON EXPERIENCE HAS BROUGHT BOURBON TO THE FORE ONCE MORE”

percent rye, and 10 percent malted barley; it undergoes a five-day fermentation, and has 12 percent sour. Early Times’ mash bill is 79 percent corn (maize), 11 percent rye, and 10 percent barley malt, with a three-day fermentation and 20 percent sour.

The yeast strains are different for each whiskey. New make or “white dog” (the spirit from the final distillation) of Early Times is grainy, with some spice and very little fruit. The yeast strain from Old Forester produces a robust, fruity white dog, with spicy notes, and citrus and ripe cherry aromas. After passing through the beer still, both are redistilled in a vaporous state in a thumper (*see p.41*). Old Forester is poured into new, charred oak barrels and is straight Kentucky bourbon, but some Early Times is partially aged in used oak, which is why it has “Kentucky whisky” on its label, and not “Kentucky bourbon.” The spirit in used barrels ages for a minimum of three years, and this is mingled with 5-, 6-, and 7-year-old straight whiskey from new charred barrels. The style of this whiskey dates back to 1981 to compete with lighter, popular Canadian whiskies. Early Times exports its straight bourbon to a few foreign markets.

Brown-Forman whiskeys

Old Forester is traditional, well-crafted bourbon, with lots of body up front, fruit in the nose and palate, and all the right notes of vanilla and oak. There is an 86 proof (43% ABV) six-year-old bottling, a complex cracker of a 100 proof (50% ABV) bottling aged over eight years, and limited edition bottlings released to commemorate George Garvin Brown’s birthday. These are often experimental and innovative.



Bernheim distillery

Over in the gritty 10th ward of the city is Heaven Hill’s 300-barrel-a-day, equally efficient, Bernheim distillery, named after Isaac Wolfe Bernheim. A considerable whiskey businessman at the turn of the 19th century, Bernheim was founder of I.W. Harper Bourbon, now owned by Diageo plc. Heaven Hill makes all its whiskeys here, but prefers to age them in Nelson county, rather than in the behemoth brick warehouses at Bernheim.

CASK MAKING AT BROWN-FORMAN

Old Forester is matured in new, charred barrels. Early Times whisky is matured in used barrels.

TASTING NOTES

The mash bill, fermentation time, and yeast strains are different for Old Forester and Early Times, yet both are produced at Brown-Forman distillery. Early Times is low in fruit character, while Old Forester is fruity.

OLD FORESTER 43% ABV

Nose Complex, ripe fruit, vanilla, anise, mint, and chocolate cream.

Body Full, creamy.

Palate Apples and peaches, caramel, oak, and a hint of nutmeg.

Finish Sweet, soft fruit, and lingering.



OLD FORESTER

EARLY TIMES KENTUCKY WHISKY 40% ABV

Nose Spicy, nutty (walnuts and pecan), clean, and sweet.

Body Smooth, medium.

Palate Soft, clean, nutmeg, nuts, and honey.

Finish Sweet spice, brief.



EARLY TIMES KENTUCKY WHISKY

DISTILLERY DETAILS

JACK DANIEL'S

FOUNDED 1866

OWNER Brown-Forman Co.

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY Not given

Tennessee

PUMMELLED BY PROHIBITION AND STILL “DRY” IN MANY OF ITS COUNTIES, TENNESSEE MAINTAINS A PROUD WHISKEY HERITAGE AND A DISTINCT STYLE OF SOUR MASH.

Among those famous whiskeys that are always asked for by name, rather than being identified by their category, Jack Daniel's is pretty close to the top of the pile. People always ask for a Jack Daniel's, not a Tennessee whiskey. In fact, Tennessee whiskey is a specific style, the essence of which is captured by Jack Daniel's. The distinctive feature of the Tennessee whiskey style is the filtration process, a leaching or mellowing of the raw spirit through vats of sugar maple charcoal before it is barrelled. The significance of the mellowing being done before barrelling is that a cleaner whiskey spirit goes into the

wood. It is thus a different character of spirit that extracts flavors from the barrel, and the end result has its own distinctive balance.

The big two

Within the Tennessee whiskey category, there are five major products made by just two large distilleries: Jack Daniel's and George A. Dickel. In general, the whiskeys from Jack Daniel's are a little heavier, with a slight pleasant oiliness of body. The Dickel whiskeys are lighter, very aromatic, sweet with the typical vanilla bouquet of the barrel, and have a soft aftertaste. Jack

HISTORY AND TRADITION

The visitor center at the Jack Daniel's distillery exhibits his life story, many of his belongings, and the history and tradition of the place.



Daniel's principal product, Old No. 7, with its familiar black label, is marketed at 86 proof (43% ABV). Gentleman Jack, a soft, 80 proof (40% ABV) whiskey is charcoal-mellowed twice, before and after aging. The Single Barrel weighs in at 94 proof (47% ABV), a full-bodied, complex whiskey. George Dickel's No. 8 Black Label is a clean, slightly sweet dram at 80 proof (40% ABV), and the No. 12, in a parchment label, is aromatic and dry at 90 proof (45% ABV). Both bottlings may have whiskey aged more than 10 years.

The two distilleries welcome visitors, and are close to each other—only 10 miles (16km) apart. They are very much a part of the tourist route that is centered on Nashville, the busy state capital and country music mecca. The landscape around the distilleries is dotted with horse farms, home to the famous Tennessee Walking Horses—instantly recognizable by their strange gait and cricked tails. This is Tennessee whiskey country, and yet visitors here may have to settle for a soft drink rather than savoring the local spirit as most of the state is “dry”—

“THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURE OF THE TENNESSEE WHISKEY STYLE IS THE FILTRATION PROCESS”

and also very devout. The small towns are dotted with Primitive Baptist, Presbyterian, Church of the Nazarene, and Church of God churches.

In 1825, the first distillery is said to have been established in the area where Jack Daniel subsequently started his operation. By the 1890s, Tennessee was a major force in commercial distilling, but the shadow of Prohibition was spreading. One or two states had already gone dry, and in 1909 Tennessee followed suit 10 years before the National Prohibition Act. Distilling was not legal again in Tennessee until 1938—five years after the rest of the US—only in three of the state's 95 counties, and only to produce whiskey to be sold in other states. Tennessee's distilleries are in dry counties, although a little moistness



creeps in here and there. You can buy whiskey in the towns of Tullahoma and Manchester in Coffee County, but not in the rural areas.

But craft distilleries have brought a fresh look to the state, and a good range of whiskey is now being made.

Lynchburg

The name Lynchburg seems incomplete without the parenthetical (Pop. 361). That was the town's population when it first featured in the famous series of advertisements for Jack Daniel's, and both parties have agreed that is how it will stay, regardless of births, deaths, and, a few years ago, a change in boundaries. Lynchburg and Jack Daniel's have helped make a name for each other. After all this time, they need each other, too.

Vignettes of life in Lynchburg, etched simply in modest monochrome spaces and conjuring a life gone by, have been a running story in glossy American magazines for decades. They have whimsically reminded people of the small-town foundation on which the United States is built, and that has struck a chord.

Lynchburg is little more than a square of shops and cafés set around Moore County Courthouse. The layout is that of any small town in the South. The shops mostly date

from the 1920s, although there are some sun-faded 1940s brick buildings. The courthouse is a stylish, small Georgian structure with a memorial to the Confederate dead.

Some of the shops sell Jack Daniel's souvenirs. The Lynchburg Hardware and General Store is owned by the distillery. It sells branded clothing, whiskey paraphernalia, cooking equipment, barbecue merchandise, and wood tools.

Jack Daniel's distillery

Lynchburg stands in open country among high, sweeping hillsides. One rock face opens into a cave, about 20ft (6m) high and 26ft (8m) wide, which narrows so quickly an explorer would have to crawl to get into it. The channel the water flows from has been investigated to 5,900ft (1,800m), but no further. If it were an underground stream, it would have a big natural basin, which could be up to 5,000 acres (20km²) in area. The cave supplies the water used to make Jack Daniel's whiskey.

The distillation process

A little backset is used in the atmospheric cooker; the yeast, of which Jack Daniel's is proud, is a very vigorous, two-cell strain, which is recovered from each fermentation, kept in jugs on ice, and

CHARCOAL MELLOWING

Distillate is filtered through hard sugar maple charcoal that has been tightly packed into vats. This removes some of the bitterness from the liquid.



mashed in rye and lactic malt. The 16 fermenters are all open and made of stainless steel, and the original, pre-Prohibition still stands alongside four copper column stills with doublers. The stillhouse, a narrow, redbrick, seven-floor building, is covered in ivy. The old mellowing house is overgrown, too. The wooden mellowing vessels are sunk into the floor. They are packed with 10 ft (3m) of charcoal, resting on a wool blanket. Immediately above the top surface of the charcoal is suspended a crisscross of copper pipes, about 1 in (2cm) in diameter. These pipes are perforated, and the whiskey is fed on to the charcoal through the holes. It drips, never even managing a dribble, let alone a flow. There are several dozen of these vessels.

The burning ceremony

After three months, the charcoal is unusable and more has to be made. To maintain an adequate supply, the distillery burns a batch of hard sugar maple once or twice a week. First, the maple is cut into planks about 4ft (1.2m) long, like giant matchsticks. They are stacked neatly to a height of about 8ft (2.5m). Then the rick is set ablaze, and the flames roar into the canopy above. The canopy sucks away the smoke and afterburns it, as a measure against pollution. When the flames are at their highest and the wood is burning with a fierce red glow, the rick is thoroughly hosed with water. It stubbornly resists extinction, hissing in fury, and spitting the smoke of a hundred dragons before it is extinguished. When they have cooled down, the black, crumbly remains of the planks are ground down into something resembling charcoal. They are then packed into the mellowing vats and given a grudging drink.

The burning ceremony is watched by tourists standing in a semi-circle at a safe distance. Behind them you can see the warehouses, full of whiskey slowly maturing. It is a phenomenon: the town, the distillery, the rites, and the shrewd way in which it has all been presented to the consumer.

The Louisville-based distillers Brown-Forman own the phenomenon, but cannot be said to have orchestrated it. The company still lists Lem Motlow, the nephew of Jack Daniel, as proprietor, and the rural climate of his family and friends still prevails.



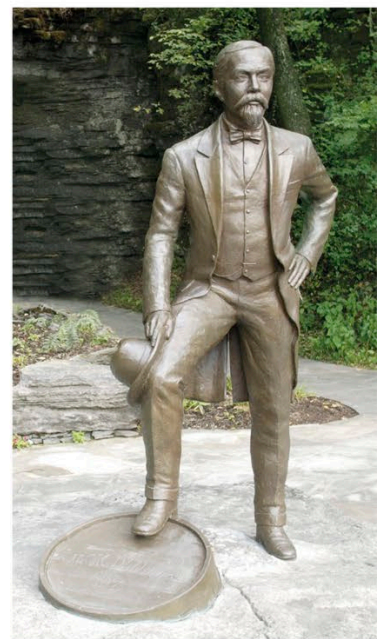
MAPLE BURNING

To maintain a continuous supply of charcoal, the distillery burns a batch of hard sugar maple every week. This process is witnessed by hundreds of visitors each year.

Romantic history

The romantic story that is Jack Daniel's began with Joseph Daniel, an Englishman who worked as a coachman for a wealthy Scottish family. He fell in love with their 15-year-old daughter, and, in 1772, the couple eloped to America, where Joseph fought against the British in the American Revolution. They settled in North Carolina, then moved to Tennessee. Their grandson Jack Daniel, the youngest of a family of 10, was born around 1846. Jack didn't get on with his stepmother so he left home at the age of seven and moved in with an uncle. He got work doing chores and making whiskey for 17-year-old Dan Call, a Lutheran lay preacher and farmer who ran the local store and sold corn (maize) whiskey made from a wooden still.

Call decided to become a preacher permanently and sold the whiskey business to 14-year-old Jack. Call's distiller was Nearest Green, a slave, and it was Nearest who taught Jack the art of making whiskey. Jack eventually moved his still to the Cave Spring Hollow by Lynchburg, the site of the present distillery. It was registered with the government after the Civil War, in 1866.



VISITOR ATTRACTION

Jack Daniel's statue, with the cave spring behind, is one of the main attractions for visitors to the distillery.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

GEORGE A. DICKEL
& CO.

FOUNDED 1870
OWNER Diageo plc
METHOD Column stills
CAPACITY 1.1m gal
(5m liters)

Jack Daniel's No. 7

There are several stories about the origin of the Jack Daniel's No. 7 brand name, introduced in about 1887. The nearest to an authorized version is that Daniel was inspired by the success of a Jewish merchant he met who had built a chain of seven retail stores. It would seem that seven was nothing more than an inspirational number. Daniel also used the designation "Old" for his whiskey. If he aged it, or affected to, that was unusual at the time, and may have helped him develop a certain cachet. Normally, whiskey was supplied to bars in the barrel and the aging was then their responsibility.

From his earliest days in the whiskey business, rather than selling from a store, Daniel favored distribution by horse and wagon. This undoubtedly helped spread the fame of his spirits. But his breakthrough came when he took his whiskey to the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis, Missouri; the Gold Medal for the best whiskey in the world went to someone pointed out as "that little guy from Tennessee in the stovepipe hat."

Jack Daniel's normal attire was a broad-brimmed planter's hat and a formal, knee-length frock coat; he was a dandy, but a tiny one, at only 5 ft 2 in (1.6m). He was the most eligible bachelor in the county, but he never married. Toward the end of his life, Daniel became a

Primitive Baptist. He died in 1911 from blood poisoning, which he allegedly developed after kicking a jammed safe. After Prohibition, which lasted 28 years in Tennessee, no one else in the state was interested in restarting production, but Daniel's nephew Lem Motlow, who was already 69, decided to extend and rebuild the distillery. He died in 1947, and passed the distillery on to his four sons. However, none of them had successors, and so the family sold the business to Brown-Forman.

Tullahoma

If the Tennessee whiskey business has a historic center, it is the town of Tullahoma (population 25,000). This was the home of Alfred Eaton, who is credited with developing the charcoal-leaching process in 1825. Then, as now, Tullahoma, which is in Coffee County, was the main town for a large stretch of countryside, and Eaton's distillery was in the hollow subsequently occupied by Jack Daniel's.

In the small towns that make up the heartland of the United States, there are several classic layouts: the town set around the courthouse; the one-street town; and the town where the railroad runs down the middle of the main street, the way it still runs in Tullahoma. Not only did the railroad offer people in Coffee and Moore Counties access



THE "OLD NO. 7"

In Lynchburg, they claim it was divine inspiration that led Jack Daniel to add "Old No. 7" to the name of his whiskey.

TASTING NOTES

Tennessee whiskeys are mellowed through vats packed with sugar maple charcoal, removing some of the heavier fusel oils for a cleaner new spirit.

JACK DANIEL'S

JACK DANIEL'S OLD NO. 7

86 PROOF, 43% ABV

Nose Balance of caramel, vanilla, licorice, and coffee.

Body Medium, round.

Palate Oak, with soft fruit-stewed apples, caramel, and sooty vanilla.

Finish Dry, charcoal smoke.

GENTLEMAN JACK

80 PROOF, 40% ABV

Charcoal-mellowed twice, once before and once after aging.

Nose Caramel and fruit—blackcurrant and tangerine.

Body Soft, silky.



GENTLEMAN
JACK

Palate Delicate, balanced, more caramel and fruit laced with vanilla and smoke.

Finish Gentle wisps of smoke and currants.

GEORGE A. DICKEL

GEORGE DICKEL BARREL SELECT

86 PROOF, 43% ABV

Nose Sweet, vanilla, and notes of chocolate and cocoa.

Body Clean, balanced, light-to-medium.

Palate Hint of sweetness, round, apples, pears, and vanilla oak.

Finish Abrupt, notes of spice and charcoal.



GEORGE DICKEL
BARREL SELECT



to Nashville and Chattanooga, it also helped make Tullahoma into a resort town. The railroad was itself a curiosity, but all the more so when a town was built around it. Tullahoma had a spa with limestone water, too.

George A. Dickel

Among those attracted to the town was George A. Dickel, a successful merchant and German immigrant living in Nashville. He visited Tullahoma with his wife, August, in the late 1860s and decided to stay and produce Tennessee whiskey. In 1870, he established the firm George A. Dickel & Co. and the Cascade distillery was founded in 1877. The original distillery owner named the distillery after its location, Cascade Hollow. Dickel marketed the whiskey through his business in Nashville. In 1888, Dickel's business partner and brother-in-law, Victor Schwab, acquired controlling interest in the Cascade distillery along with the exclusive right to bottle and sell what was then called Cascade Tennessee Whiskey.

The distillery continued to operate after Dickel's death in 1894, and only then did the whiskey bear his name. It closed, along with a few other Tullahoma distilleries, in 1910 when Tennessee outlawed whiskey. Schwab moved the company to Louisville, Kentucky. After repeal, the Dickel and Cascade names were acquired in 1937 by the national drinks company Schenley. Then, in 1958 the company decided to reunite the brand with its geographic origins, and built the present distillery about $\frac{2}{3}$ mile (1km) from its original location. Standing alone in a long,

winding valley fringed with trees, the silence broken only by birdsong and the fast-flowing creek, the distillery is a charming place for a visit.

Production began the following year using the same water and recipes as the original Cascade whiskey, and the first bottles reached the shelves in 1964. George Dickel remained a Schenley property until 1987, when it was acquired by Guinness, now part of Diageo.

The distillation process

Dickel uses atmospheric batch cooking and its own original yeast, a low-fusel-oil-producing culture developed by Schenley. There are three- and four-day natural fermentations in stainless steel fermenters, and the whiskey is double-distilled, going into the doubler as a liquid. Before mellowing the charcoal in stainless steel tanks, the new spirit is cold-chilled. The warehouses are made of galvanized metal on wooden frames, with insulated walls and roofs. All the houses are on a hill, 985 ft (300m) above sea level.

Outside the distillery, the hard-sugar maple, from which the charcoal is produced, is piled up. Because the distillery is smaller than its famous neighbor, Dickel has fewer bonfires, but the charcoal is used in the same way by both the distilleries. Back in Tullahoma, Alfred Eaton would be pleased.

A SPA TOWN

The limestone water, bucolic countryside, and arrival of the railway turned Tullahoma into a spa town. George Dickel's country store, located above the fast-flowing creek, is still open for business today.

“IN 1904, OLD NO.7 WON
THE GOLD MEDAL AT THE WORLD'S
FAIR IN ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI”

DISTILLERY DETAILS

ST. GEORGE SPIRITS

FOUNDED 1982
OWNER Jörg Rupf
METHOD Column stills
CAPACITY Not given

ANCHOR DISTILLING CO.

FOUNDED 1994
OWNER Anchor Brewers
and Distillers
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

CLEAR CREEK

FOUNDED 1985
OWNER Steve
McCarthy
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

American Craft Distilleries

ENCOURAGED BY A GOVERNMENT THAT VIEWS THEM AS SMALL BUSINESS STARTUPS, JOB CREATORS, AND TAX GENERATORS, CRAFT DISTILLERS HAVE SPRUNG UP ACROSS THE WHOLE OF THE US.

There is no bigger story in whiskey than the growth of the craft-, or micro-distilling industry in the US.

While the American whiskey industry was, for all intents and purposes, based around the iconic distilleries of Kentucky and the monolith that is Jack Daniel's in Tennessee, the US has always had a smattering of other distilleries peppered around the country. But the explosion of new distilleries at the start of the new millennium was unprecedented and has fundamentally changed the face of distilling in the US, with new producers operating across most states. The movement is still in its infancy,

and there is no knowing how many distilleries will eventually grace the cities and plains of the US. Indeed, there is no real way of knowing how many there are at present. But if we look at the American brewing revolution, which was a forerunner of the distilling one, then we can predict that it is likely a large number will fall by the wayside, others will be swallowed up, some will be bought out by the biggest drinks companies, and a few will join the big boys as established and respected whiskey producers.

The craft distilling movement has mutated significantly from the earliest pioneering days, but its roots go back to the late 1980s. At that

COLUMN STILLS AT ST. GEORGE

Distinctive porthole windows
in the stills allow the
distillation to be monitored.



time, the American consumer, tired of mass production and the dumbing down of their food and drink, rediscovered the quality and complexity of aged American whiskey. The bourbon makers and their speciality bottlings were joined around this time by a new breed of alchemist: the micro-distillers of the west coast.

Some of these distillers followed tradition, but many chose not to, and like their microbrewing brothers and sisters before them, had the pioneer's instinct to innovate, creating a mini revolution within the distilling industry. Gin, rum, vodka, grappa, fruit brandies, and whiskey have been revisited and reconstructed in stills from Nantucket to San Francisco, and from Texas to Vermont.

They were at the tail end of a larger gastronomic revolution in the US; their audience was the visionary restaurateurs and educated consumers in the cities of San Francisco, Seattle, and Portland. Regional pride and sustainable agriculture are often integral to their production philosophy, and focus groups are ignored. Small is beautiful in this culture of good food and drink.

THE OLD SCHOOL: PRE-2005

St. George Spirits, Alameda, California

Jörg (pronounced "Yorg") Rupf is the founder and master distiller of St. George Spirits, the first and foremost distiller of *eau-de-vie* in the US. He began distilling in 1982 and has acted as a mentor for many of the craft distillers since then. Born in the Alsace region of northeast France, he was raised in Germany's Black Forest and came to the US in 1978 to study law at the University of California at Berkeley. He gave up a career as a lawyer to pursue the craft of distillation, and has enriched his adopted city of San Francisco with his enormous skill and grace.

Rupf says he is attempting to combine traditional European methods with the modern environment, and he makes single malt and *eau-de-vie* in Holstein copper pot stills.

Anchor Distilling Company, San Francisco, California

Fritz Maytag is regarded as the godfather of modern micro-distilling and something of a distilling legend. He began distilling on Potrero Hill in 1994, but has a gastronomic pedigree reaching back to 1965, when he bought the

venerable Anchor Steam Brewery in San Francisco. His father created Maytag Blue Cheese at the family-run farm in Newton, Iowa. He makes wine and port-style wine under the York Creek label and lives on a vineyard that straddles the prime wine counties of Napa and Sonoma.

The Anchor distillery, tucked into the rear end of the brewery, produces the delightfully aromatic Junipero gin, which is made with a large number of special herbs and botanicals, and a range of barrel-strength, pot still rye whiskeys, made from 100 percent rye malt. They include: Old Potrero Single Malt Whiskey, a peppery, oily dram with mint and chocolate notes that is aged for one year in new, uncharred barrels; Old Potrero Single Malt Rye whiskey, spicy, buttery, and sweet, it spends three years in new, charred-oak barrels; and Old Potrero Hotaling's Whiskey, a dusty, oily, citrus, and grainy delight, with some delightful fragrant and woody notes.

Maytag, born in 1937, sold the Anchor business in 2010 and retired, but the whiskeys remain as enigmatic as they always were.

Clear Creek, Portland, Oregon

In Portland, Oregon, Steve McCarthy's Clear Creek distillery was set up in 1985 with the intention of making European-style distillates, such as *eau-de-vie*, brandy, grappa, and liqueurs. But he also began distilling in his Holstein pot still a peated, unhopped barley wash made by the city's Widmer Brothers brewery. Aged for a minimum of three years in several kinds of oak, McCarthy's Oregon Single Malt Whiskey is one of craft distilling's earliest and boldest whiskeys, with remarkable balance, smooth body, and rich, smoky flavors.



PORTLAND LIGHTHOUSE

Portland is one of the main US cities where the craft distillery movement took shape.

“THE CRAFT DISTILLERY MOVEMENT HAS FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGED THE FACE OF DISTILLING IN THE US”

DISTILLERY DETAILS

EDGEFIELD

FOUNDED 1998
OWNER McMenamins
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

STRANAHAN'S

FOUNDED 2003
OWNER Proximo Spirits
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

TRIPLE EIGHT

FOUNDED 2000
OWNER Cisco Brewers
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

CATOCTIN CREEK

FOUNDED 2009
OWNER Scott and
Becky Harris
METHOD Column stills
CAPACITY Not given



DESTINATION DISTILLERY

The Edgefield distillery sits next to the golf course, up the hill from the cinema, brewery, and winery.

Edgefield, Portland, Oregon

McMenamin's Edgefield is a hedonistic hotel/brewery/cinema/winery just outside Portland. The owner added a distillery up by the nearby golf course, which it also owns. After some years of experimentation, the distillery has settled on a core range of products, plus the odd special release.

These include Hogshead, an unusual and exciting whiskey, combining malty spirit—reminiscent of the malted barley grain that began the process—and the smoky, vanilla sweet-wood of the cask.

Special releases include Devil's Bit from 2016—a 4-year-old Hogshead, with Hammerhead grain bill, aged in an Edgefield Black Widow beer barrel, and with a six-month finish for the whiskey.

Stranahan's Colorado Whiskey, Denver, Colorado

Stranahan's distillery was the result of what turned out to be a happy accident. When George Stranahan's barn caught fire, voluntary fire fighter and neighbor Jess Graber came to the rescue, and a friendship was struck. The two new friends discovered they shared a love of whiskey and Colorado's great outdoors. Stranahan's Colorado whiskey is a single malt whiskey made in small batches, with each batch different to the next, but all of them instilled with a smooth, rounded, and rich flavor. The distillery also releases a few special batches such as Snowflake, which is varyingly finished in an ex-wine, -sherry, -rum, or -tequila barrel. George Stranahan also owns the Flying Dog Brewery.

Triple Eight, Nantucket, Massachusetts

Triple Eight distillery was opened in 2000 on the tiny island of Nantucket, 30 miles (48km) off the coast of Massachusetts. There had been a winery on the site since 1981, and Cisco Brewery opened in 1995. The distillery makes two whiskeys—a bourbon and a highly respected single malt whiskey, which is called The Notch (not Scotch). The whiskey is a 10-year-old, is bottled at 46% ABV, and has won numerous awards.

The distillery is in the process of expanding, with a new 4,000-cask warehouse, increased production, and plans to link up with other US single malt producers to create the first American vatted or blended malt whiskey, featuring malts from several distilleries.

NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK

The surge in the craft distilling movement in this century is a classic example of American entrepreneurship and opportunism. Spurred on by a government that has encouraged independent businesses because of the positive effects they have on tax, job creation, and tourism, the new distillers were quick to make their mark. But, from a whiskey-lover's perspective, most exciting of all is not that they are distilling, but that many of them are seeking out new and exciting ways of fermenting, distilling, and maturing whiskey using a range of grains, wood types, and drying materials. Some have even created unique whiskeys.

It would be impossible to cover all of the new distillers—even if there were space in this book to do so, the list would be out of date a day after it was written. Instead, we have covered the topic by whiskey styles to demonstrate just how dynamic and vibrant the US distilling world is. We have used some of the new distilleries as examples of each style.



One point that should be stressed about these youthful distillates is that in many cases they have extremely limited availability and distribution. In some cases, less than a barrel a day is produced. Local citizens are the beneficiaries of most of the production, although bottles from some of the distilleries have reached international markets.

Rye Catoctin Creek, Purcellville, Virginia

Scott and Becky Harris founded Catoctin Creek in 2009 after a dramatic career switch. Scott had worked as an engineer for a government contractor for over 20 years, and Becky was a chemical engineer who was looking to re-enter the workforce after a decade of taking care of their two children. Then, Scott said he wanted to give up his six-figure salary to open a distillery. Much to his surprise, Becky agreed, and began using her expertise as a chemical engineer to make fine handmade spirits in Virginia.

The couple set out to make whiskey true to the state's roots, and they came up with Roundstone Rye, which uses a mash bill of 100 percent rye consistent with the style of whiskey made in the early Virginian distilling days, and never chill-filtered.

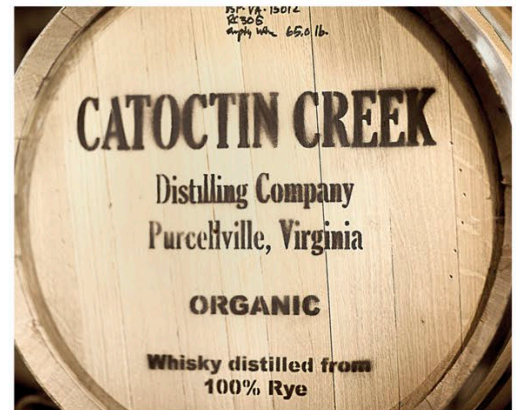
The distillery makes a range of rye products including Roundstone 80 Proof, a highly awarded whiskey aged in Minnesota white-oak barrels and the Roundstone Rye 92 Proof, known as the "Distiller's Reserve" for the notable difference in the aging process of the barrel.

"Each whiskey is a single-barrel whiskey," says Scott.

"Therefore, we do not blend across barrels. When one barrel develops a richer, more mature flavor, we bottle it separately at a higher proof so as not to disrupt the consistency of the Roundstone Rye flavor."

Catoctin Creek is determined not to stand still in the future. It has introduced innovative new products, such as Rabble Rouser, designed to show off the whiskey's rye influence, and has been working with Adroit Theory Brewing, a local brewery known for avant garde and experimental beers.

"We will bring their fearlessness and creativity to the traditional charm of Catoctin Creek to create a truly spectacular malt whiskey," the couple say. "The new whiskey has chocolate and caramel notes typical of a porter, with a crisp whiskey finish from the barreling process."



CATOCTIN CREEK BARREL

Any whiskey in a Catoctin Creek bottle will have come from a single cask, meaning flavor varies across bottles of the same expression.



CATOCTIN CREEK DISTILLERY AND TASTING ROOM

The distillery is in a brick, "industrial chic," 1920s-era case building, situated in the center of the town of Purcellville.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

VENUS SPIRITS

FOUNDED 2014
OWNER Sean Venus
METHOD Alembic still
CAPACITY Not given

BALCONES

FOUNDED 2008
OWNER Balcones
Distilling Company
METHOD Pot and
column stills
CAPACITY 44,000 gal
(200,000 liters)

CHICAGO DISTILLING COMPANY

FOUNDED 2010
OWNER Chicago
Distilling Company
METHOD Column stills
CAPACITY Not given

COPPERWORKS DISTILLING COMPANY

FOUNDED 2013
OWNER Copperworks
Distillery Company
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

Venus Spirits, Santa Cruz, California

Many states across the US still have laws that make the distilling and selling of strong liquor difficult. But as distillers act more responsibly, legislation is being relaxed. This is certainly the view of Sean Venus, founder of Venus Spirits, Santa Cruz, California.

“The number of new distilleries will continue to rise around the world, and especially here in the US, as legal barriers to entry continue to fall away,” Venus says. “For example, California has passed new laws allowing distillers to charge for tastings, serve cocktails, and sell bottles to individuals, all of which were still illegal in early 2013.”

Venus Spirits was founded in 2014, just blocks away from the ocean in Santa Cruz. Venus spent several years in brewing before moving on to the natural foods industry in 2006. Venus Spirits was inspired by his love for whiskey and is driven by his passion for high-quality spirits. The distillery is currently producing organic, small-batch whiskey, gin, aquavit, and blue agave spirits that are distributed throughout California. The distillery makes three types of Wayward Whiskey: rye, single malt, and bourbon.

“We are not just trying to replicate traditional American whiskey,” says Venus. “Our goal is to push the boundaries and develop new flavors and expressions while highlighting traditional approaches.”

Single malt whiskey Balcones, Waco, Texas

In a few short years, Balcones has established itself as a whiskey pioneer, but its journey has not been without incident. Indeed, its history might serve as a warning to would-be distillers looking to expand rapidly.

Original whiskey maker Chip Tate had carved out something of a world reputation for his whiskeys at Balcones when an internal dispute with his shareholders saw him being ousted from the distillery, and that acrimonious conflict still echoes a few years on. Chip has since built his own distillery and will no doubt be back among the sector’s main players in the years ahead.

Whatever your take on the dispute, it is hard to argue that Balcones dropped the ball after the quarrel—it continues to produce fine and ground-breaking whiskey. Balcones’ output falls into two distinct camps: there is the distillery’s single malt core brand, which has led to Balcones being included in the single malt whiskey category, as well as a collection of whiskeys made with blue corn (Hopi maize) as the key ingredient.

The distillery’s No.1 Texas Single Malt core range is one of the first “new wave” American single malt whiskeys that can hold its head high on the world stage. In recent years, there have been a string of special and cask-strength releases that have only augmented Balcones’ global reputation.

On the blue-corn (Hopi maize) side, Baby Blue was the country’s first legal Texas whiskey, and was followed by a family that includes True Blue, True Blue 100, the highly distinctive and award-winning Brimstone, and, most recently, Texas Blue Corn



SPANISH INFLUENCE

Every spirit made at the Venus Spirits distillery is distilled in copper Alembic stills especially imported from Spain.



CHICAGO RIVER

Located in Logan Square in the heart of Chicago, Chicago Distilling Company runs true to the spirit of the area: it is lively and social.

bourbon. Balcones has now expanded and moved into a new distillery in Waco. “Long term we hope to solidify supply of our core range, and continue the process of exploration, which is really what keeps us engaged day in and day out,” says distillery ambassador and brand manager Winston Edwards.

“Hopefully our recent expansion will allow us to address supply issues and get more whiskey in the hands of folks, and allow us the flexibility and capacity to keep doing new product development as we look for the next gem.”

Chicago Distilling Company, Chicago, Illinois

The Chicago Distilling Company grew out of its owner’s love for top-quality craft beers. Using the grains that it particularly liked in beer, it is releasing small batches of single malt whiskey. Among its creations so far are *Stouted*, a whiskey based on a stout mash bill, with chocolate, cocoa, and nutty notes; *Dunkel*, which is based on a wheat beer recipe and has hints of clove; *Belgian Dark Strong Style*, with biscuity notes, dried fruits, and toffee; and *Rauch*, which is the nearest of the set to a Scottish single malt and, as the name implies (*Rauch* is German for *smoke*), has a smoky quality to it.

Copperworks Distilling Company, Seattle, Washington

When Copperworks co-founders Jason Parker and Micah Nutt decided to use their brewing experience and extend it into whiskey making, they did not go about it in halves. They commissioned four custom-built copper stills from Scotland and installed them in a prime location in Seattle’s downtown waterfront. The whiskey, first released in 2016, is made using barley from Washington state, and the spirit is matured for two and a half years in full-size charred new American oak barrels.

The resulting whiskey is excellent—a delicate, spicy, and floral malt with an incense-like quality. It is markedly different from the malt whiskies produced in Scotland.

“THE SURGE IN THE CRAFT DISTILLING MOVEMENT IN THIS CENTURY IS A CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF AMERICAN ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND OPPORTUNISM”

DISTILLERY DETAILS

FEW SPIRITS

FOUNDED 2010
OWNER Paul Hletko
METHOD Column and
hybrid stills
CAPACITY Not given

III SPIRITS

FOUNDED 2014
OWNER III Spirits
METHOD Pot and
hybrid stills
CAPACITY Not given

SANTA FE SPIRITS

FOUNDED 2010
OWNER Colin Keegan
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

WESTLAND DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 2011
OWNER Rémy Cointreau
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 58,000 gal
(260,000 liters)

FEW Spirits, Evanston, Illinois

FEW Spirits has made rapid progress since it was launched in 2010, and its whiskeys and gins have found their way to bar shelves across the world.

Nestled in a tiny space in an alleyway in the Chicago suburb of Evanston, FEW is a true grain-to-glass distillery, fermenting, distilling, aging, and bottling all of its products from scratch on site.

"FEW is all about local," says the national public relations manager Jason Hope. "All the grain—corn (maize), wheat, rye, and barley—used in our products is grown in the Midwest, and some other ingredients are sourced from even closer: I planted Cascade hop vines at the distillery, which we use in FEW American Gin. If we cannot grow it ourselves, we buy it locally, and if we cannot buy it locally, we buy it from friends."

FEW makes a bourbon using a high-rye mash bill to give it extra spice and kick, and a rye whiskey, made with a French wine yeast to give it extra fruitiness. But arguably the star of the roster is an American single malt whiskey—a distinctive smoky whiskey with some chocolate notes. Its unique taste is partly due to the fact that some of the barley used is dried over a cherrywood fire.

"Our entire philosophy is based on the fact that we are small," says Jason. "We make in a month what a brand like Jack Daniel's spills on the floor every day. All of our products are unique in one way or another, from the unusual yeasts that ferment our bourbon and rye to the unusual botanicals that go into our gins."

III Spirits, Talent, Oregon

III Spirits is the brainchild of enthusiasts Todd Kemp and Alex Turner and is a tiny craft distillery aiming to make high-quality, small-batch whiskeys. The distillers take their influences from Scotland and make two different malt whiskeys. The first is an all-malt interpretation of a Highland single malt whiskey and is made from three different North American brewers' malts

and aged for one year in small, American oak barrels. It is finished in French oak, Oregon Syrah wine barrels.

The second is an Islay-style, peated whiskey. Made with heavily peated malt from Scotland, the spirit spends anywhere from six months to a year in many different small American oak barrels, some new and some first-fill ex-corn (maize) and rye-whiskey barrels.

The distillery also makes a whiskey called Jefferson Gold, which is a blend of malted barley, flaked corn (maize), and rye.

Santa Fe Spirits, Santa Fe, New Mexico

One of the greatest aspects of the craft distilling revolution is the way it has created heroes from the unlikeliest of sources.

Colin Keegan is originally from Newcastle upon Tyne in England and his journey to become a whiskey distiller in New Mexico is an odd one.

THE STILL AT FEW SPIRITS
The distillery prides itself on using local products to produce genuine grain-to-glass spirits.



“Colin was an architect who designed high-end homes in Santa Fe,” explains marketing manager Adam Vincent. “He designed a house in a four-acre apple orchard and, when the client pulled out, he decided to build it for himself.

“After a bumper apple crop one year, he ended up with 500 gallons (1,900 liters) of cider—more than any reasonable home owner can consume! Someone suggested he distill it, so he made a small still and used it to produce brandy.

“When the economy crashed in 2008, Colin’s architecture work dried up and he decided to take a distillation course. We started with apple brandy and we released our Silver Coyote un-aged malt whiskey to the public as it was aging.”

The distillery’s flagship spirit is Colkegan Single Malt Whiskey. Because Keegan is originally from the UK, he wanted to create a spirit that paid tribute to the Scotches he loved, but with a uniquely American twist. He achieved this by smoking a portion of the grain with mesquite wood and aging a portion of the spirit in new American oak. The result is a whiskey that has a mild, almost meaty smoke taste, and a sweetness that appeals to the American palate.

“Also, because we age at elevation (7,000ft/2,100m) in the desert, we see a high rate of evaporation,” says Vincent. “While this is not ideal for us, it does help accelerate the aging process, helping our 4-year (current batch) whiskey taste more mature.”

The distillery continues to sell the un-aged Silver Coyote single malt. It is an easy drinking spirit that is pleasant to sip, with notes of nuts, earthiness, and fruit.

Westland Distillery, Seattle, Washington

Of all categories of whiskey the US micro-distillers are keen to conquer, single malt is growing in popularity the fastest. With an abundance of the raw materials needed to make American single malt whiskey, many have been tempted. But it is not an easy style to make well, and in the planning for this book, several whiskeys supplied by distillers were rejected.



Westland Distillery, in Seattle, was not among them. In fact, the distillery has been receiving accolades ever since it launched its core range of three whiskeys, and it is not surprising—they are excellent.

“A new American category of single malt is taking root, one that offers us the chance to make a mark in the world of whiskey,” says the distillery. “It must be led by our own ideas, done on our own terms, and realized through our own hard work. We have the ingredients here to inspire us to pursue our own unique single malt to rival the finest whiskeys in the world.

“With each expression, we work to create something that both honors the traditions of distilling that we admire, and adds something worthwhile at the same time, something new and distinctly American.”

The distillery’s three core bottlings are influenced by Scotland, are rich and full in flavor, and hold up well against Scotland’s single malts. But they are distinctly different, too. First is American Oak, a single malt whiskey made using Washington state barley and matured for

QUICK OFF THE MARK

Westland distillery’s malt whiskeys are so good that they won world appraisal early on, and the company is now owned by one of the world’s drinks giants.

“ONE OF THE GREATEST ASPECTS OF THE CRAFT DISTILLING REVOLUTION IS THE WAY IT HAS CREATED DISTILLING HEROES FROM THE UNLIKELIEST OF SOURCES”

DISTILLERY DETAILS

IRONROOT REPUBLIC

FOUNDED 2013

OWNER Jonathan and
Robert Likarish

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY Not given

ANGEL'S ENVY

FOUNDED 2013

OWNER Henderson family

METHOD Pot still
and doubler

CAPACITY Not given

JOURNEYMAN DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 2010

OWNER Bill Welter

METHOD Hybrid stills

CAPACITY Not available

KOVAL

FOUNDED 2008

OWNER Robert and
Sonat Birnecker

METHOD Column stills

CAPACITY Not given

two years in new American oak. Then there is Peated, which uses some of the most heavily peated barley anywhere, and is matured in new and first-fill American oak casks. The final core bottling is Sherry Wood, which is matured in high-quality ex-Pedro Ximénez and Oloroso sherry casks.

In 2017, Westland Distillery was bought by French drinks producer Rémy Cointreau.

Corn (Maize) Whiskey

Ironroot Republic, Denison, Texas

Brothers Robert and Jonathan Likarish have made an immediate impact on the world of distilling. Their whiskeys come in stunning, weighty, and impactful bottles, and are big and bold in flavor. The brothers immediately started picking up awards, and their coming of age occurred when Berry Bros. & Rudd of London approached them with a view to creating a Texas bourbon for its premium spirits range. There is a long link between the state of Texas and the London family-owned vintner and spirits retailer because, after Texas declared independence from Mexico in 1836, it set up its legation above the London shop in St. James's Street. A plaque now marks the spot. Doug McIvor of Berry Bros. worked with the Likarish brothers to create a special

Texas Legation Bourbon Whiskey, which is made up of three different batches of bourbon. It is lively, bold, and tasty, and packed with fruit, toffee, honey, and vanilla notes.

"One of the most wonderful things about being a craft distiller is to play with tradition and innovate," says Likarish. "Whether that is with oak types, specialty toast and char levels, different heirloom corns (maize), or yeasts, pushing yourself to try something new is integral to what we do on a daily basis at the Ironroot distillery."

Special Finishes

Angel's Envy, Louisville, Kentucky

Angel's Envy straddles the two worlds of traditional American distilling and the modern craft version. It was originally set up by former Woodford Reserve master distiller Lincoln Henderson, and is now run by his sons, Kyle and Wes. It fully came of age when the brothers opened a state-of-the-art distillery in downtown Louisville, bringing whiskey production back into the heart of Kentucky's whiskey city.

The brothers pride themselves on innovation, and they have created three truly remarkable and moreish whiskeys.

Angel's Envy is a smooth, nuanced, and refined bourbon made in small batches of 8 to

FAMILY BUSINESS

At the Angel's Envy distillery three generations of the Henderson family have come together to produce exciting and innovative takes on traditional American whiskey.



12 barrels at a time. The whiskey is given depth and fruitiness from the time each batch spends in ex-ruby port casks.

Angel's Envy Rye is made with 95 percent rye and 5 percent malted barley. It is aged for at least six years in new American charred oak barrels and then finished in ex-Caribbean rum casks. Angel's Envy Cask Strength is aged for up to seven years and was named "best spirit in the world" by revered whiskey writer F. Paul Pacult in 2013.

Now that they have a distillery worthy of their products, expect more innovations from the brothers in the future.

Special and Mixed Mash Whiskeys

Journeyman Distillery, Three Oaks, Michigan

The name "journeyman" is an apt one when it comes to Bill Welter and his lengthy path to becoming a distillery owner.

It started in 2000 when Bill traveled to Scotland to learn more about golf and came across Greg Ramsay, a Tasmanian with a long association with whiskey. Ramsay is now the owner of the New Zealand Whisky Company. Back then, though, he was master barman at the Road Hole Bar at St. Andrews in Scotland.

The two became friends, and over the coming years, Welter would travel out to Tasmania and work in various distilleries, flirt with the hospitality business, and, finally, look to build his own distillery. Throughout this time, Ramsay was always on hand to offer advice.

That was 2010, and today the Journeyman Distillery is up and running, making a range of whiskeys, both traditional and more unusual. Examples include Kissing Cousins; the distillery's regular Featherbone bourbon, finished in Wyncroft Winery Cabernet Sauvignon barrels; and Three Oaks, made from 100 percent malted barley and aged for 18 months in Featherbone bourbon barrels, followed by 15 months in Road's End rum barrels, and finished for three months in used port barrels. Silver Cross is equal parts rye, wheat, corn (maize), and malted barley, and is named after a medal from the early days of the British Open Golf Championship. Not A King is a replication of George Washington's original rye whiskey recipe, but with the distillery's own twist.

"Our aim in making whiskey is to make the highest quality product available," says Welter. "All of our whiskies, with exception of the Kissing Cousins, are certified organic and kosher. Using locally harvested grains, we have sustainability in mind and want to support other local, small, family-owned businesses. We are using modern-day distillation equipment and techniques with old world methods and recipes."

Koval, Chicago, Illinois

When it opened in 2008, Koval was the first new distillery in Chicago since the mid-1800s. It produces organic whiskey, liqueurs, and speciality spirits. Founders Sonat and Robert Birnecker chose to leave their academic careers to bring the distilling traditions of Robert's Austrian family to the US.

"We vowed to make organic spirits from scratch and to change the way people understand whiskey by creating a new, signature style," says the couple. "We use only the heart's cut of the distillate—affording a brighter, cleaner take on whiskey."

Koval makes a line of unique, single-barrel whiskeys using a combination of both alternative and traditional grains. On the more traditional side of things, it produces a 100 percent rye whiskey. But it also produces the only American



SOLID FOUNDATIONS

Lincoln Henderson (above) founded the Angel's Envy distillery. Henderson was the master distiller at Woodford Reserve.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

CORSAIR DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 2008

OWNER Darek Bell,
Andrew Webber,
and Amy Lee Bell

METHOD Pot still

CAPACITY Not given

STILL 630

FOUNDED 2012

OWNER David Weglarz

METHOD Column still

CAPACITY Not given

WHITE TIGER

FOUNDED 2013

OWNER White Tiger

METHOD Column pot still

CAPACITY Not given

WOODS HIGH MOUNTAIN DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 2012

OWNER PT and Lee Wood

METHOD Pot still

CAPACITY Not given

“OF ALL CATEGORIES OF WHISKEY THE AMERICAN MICRO-DISTILLERS ARE KEEN TO CONQUER, SINGLE MALT IS GROWING IN POPULARITY THE FASTEST”

whiskey made entirely of millet, and other whiskeys in the distillery’s product line include Bourbon (51 percent corn/maize, 49 percent millet), Four Grain (oat, rye, wheat, and malted barley), and 100 percent oat and 100 percent white rye whiskeys.

Corsair Distillery, Nashville, Tennessee

With some of the coolest labels on whiskey bottles anywhere in the world, some marvelously named whiskeys, a highly innovative and creative approach to production, and some fine spirits at the end of it all, it is hard not to fall in love with Corsair.

The distillery has produced scores of whiskeys, and not all of them hit the mark—with one or two bottlings you wonder why it bothered. But when the distillery gets it right, it is a match for any craft distillery in the world. Nothing seems off limits here—malt is dried over fires made up of a variety of woods and strange types of peat. Corsair produces the expected core whiskeys, such as bourbon, rye (Ryemageddon), and single malt whiskey. But there are also whiskeys made using grains such as quinoa and oats, as well as whiskeys that literally have no comparison: Wildfire uses hickory-smoked barley, while Hydra uses barley smoked over pecan, apple, sugar maple, black walnut, and persimmon wood. In its experimentations with grain, examples of Corsair’s creations include Green Man, made from green malt, and Oatrage, which is distilled from oats and barley.

Still 630, St. Louis, Missouri

The intriguingly named Still 630 is located in an old fast-food restaurant in downtown St. Louis. Founded in 2012, it is owned by David Weglarz, a self-taught distiller prepared to dabble in a wide range of spirits including whiskey.

“I am having the time of my life chasing my dream of making the best damn whiskey and rums that I can, as well as other spirits,” he says.

Weglarz’s experimentation has led him to create whiskey liqueurs infused with both honey and ginger, but it is ryes and rye offshoots that have been turning heads.

The distillery’s initial flagship spirit is Single Barrel RallyPoint Rye, which was named the Best Rye Whiskey in the US under two years old by the American Distilling Institute. But the distillery also produces a special range of spirits under the title Brewery Collaboration Series.

“Capitalizing on the idea that whiskey is distilled beer, we have been working with great local breweries to take a delicious and interesting beer of theirs, distill it into a whiskey, and age it,” says Weglarz. “We then release it alongside the same beer, which the brewery has been aging in our used RallyPoint Rye Whiskey barrels. This line has some really different and incredible spirits.”

One of the distillery’s most unusual spirits, though, is S.S. Sorghum Whiskey, which is made from 100 percent local Sorghum Syrup, and which boasts wonderful sorghum, fig, and spice notes that make it almost a hybrid rum-whiskey in taste. “It is our most awarded spirit (four medals from the American Distilling Institute and the American Craft Spirits Association, including Best of Category), and we have more batches planned,” says Weglarz.

TRYING SOMETHING NEW

Experimentation at the Still 360 distillery is paying off, with several awards for its unique whiskeys.





White Tiger, Stevensville, Maryland

White Tiger is not strictly making whiskey because it is making spirit with rice—effectively Japanese shochu, though the spirit is aged in American oak barrels.

The recipe is an old one from Laos, which belonged to the Ounnarath family. It had been handed down through three generations. “I rediscovered the family secret and brought the whiskey formulations back to life,” says White Tiger president and owner Itsara Ounnarath. “Today, we pride ourselves as the first handcrafted Laotian rice whiskey using the latest techniques and highest quality grains to produce the finest rice whiskey in America.”

So far, the distillery has produced Copper, aged for six months; Gold, aged for one year; and Platinum, aged for two years.

Woods High Mountain Distillery, Salida, Colorado

No doubt like many others across the world, the Wood brothers, PT and Lee, had long dreamed of becoming distillers. But for a long time it remained just that—a dream.

And then a slice of luck and a big dose of going back to the future changed all that and distilling became a reality.

“In 2007, we began to put pen to paper to see what it would take to actually realize our dream,” says PT. “As often happens, luck would intervene and through a friend in Salida we were introduced to ‘Ashley,’ an antique German pot still built around the 1880s. She had been brought to the US in 1960, and sat unused for 50 years before we were kindly allowed to put her back into service.”

It took years of gathering equipment, know-how, and a search for a home before the brothers settled on their present location in historic downtown Salida, Colorado.

“In 2012, we began distilling our small-batch handcrafted spirits—just under a year after peering through the window of the former auto body shop that occupied our future home,” says Lee. The brothers are now making two distinctive whiskeys.

Tenderfoot Malt Whiskey is made with a range of different malts—two-row malt, chocolate malt, cherrywood malt, malted wheat, and malted rye. It is a big malt whiskey with flavors of rye spice, leather, chocolate, fruit, oak, vanilla, and a hint of sweetness and smoke.

Alpine Rye Whiskey is made from 73 percent malted rye, 13.5 percent chocolate malt, and 13.5 percent cherrywood-smoked malt. The brothers describe it as a “truly unique rye whiskey with smoking dark chocolate, rye spice, cherries, sweet malt, pipe tobacco, oak, and toffee.”

UNUSUAL METHODS

Corsair distillery makes a large number of innovative whiskey styles using unusual grains and drying methods.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

KNOXVILLE WHISKEY WORKS

FOUNDED 2015

OWNER Knoxville Distillers

METHOD Copper still

CAPACITY Not given

OOLA DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 2010

OWNER Kirby Kallas-Lewis

METHOD Hybrid stills

CAPACITY Not given

White Whiskeys/Un-Aged Bourbon

Knoxville Whiskey Works, Knoxville, Tennessee

Knoxville lies in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains and has a long association with whiskey making. Folklore has it that NASCAR (The National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) has its roots in the practice of moonshiners pimping up their cars to outrun local and federal lawmen. “Our forklift is hardly equipped to outrun anything ... but it does a fine job of putting our barrels of bourbon securely in their racks,” jokes the distillery’s Phil Perkins. The distillery makes Old City Heirloom Corn Whiskey, which it says is a true bushel-to-barrel spirit. The corn (maize) is harvested just 30 miles (48km) away and is then stoneground locally before being delivered to Knox Whiskey Works, where it is mashed, fermented, and distilled in a scaled-up version of the process that the distillery says was used for decades to produce moonshine—with two passes through a copper head still made from a retired dairy vessel.

“Although our yield may suffer a little, we still favor quality and authenticity over quantity,” says Perkins. “Some people make the mistake of referring to our White Whiskey as ‘moonshine,’ but it is really un-aged bourbon ... and it probably wins awards because of that.

The same spirit rests in American oak casks, slowly turning into bourbon, and samples from our smaller casks (which mature faster) are showing tremendous promise for more awards to come.”

Knoxville’s corn (maize) whiskey is being matured in three differently sized barrels. The distillery will follow that with a single malt whiskey in the future.

Style Hybrids

OOLA Distillery, Seattle, Washington

“The conversation gets all the more intriguing when there are diverse opinions bellied up to the bar.”

So says OOLA Distillery owner Kirby Kallas-Lewis on one of the bottles in his Discourse Whiskey Series, an ongoing series of experimental whiskeys that the distillery has produced.

Kallas-Lewis comes from an arts background, but set up OOLA Distillery in 2010 where he saw the potential for a community-based project based around great food and spirits.

“I saw the power that great food, wine, art, cocktails, and social interaction have in creating connections to places and people,” he says.

“The distillery produces a bourbon called Waitsburg, named after a small town near where our grain comes from in eastern Washington. It is a wheated bourbon with a high rye content mash bill.”

The distillery’s other whiskeys are grouped together in the Discourse Whiskey Series. “This refers to ‘conversations’ in whiskey-making traditions that are treated in innovative and unconventional ways,” says Kallas-Lewis. “The first in the series, Discourse C, was our 4- to 5-year-old Waitsburg Bourbon aged for an additional 10 months in a Cabernet Sauvignon French oak barrel. This was, of course, exploring the dialogue between a whiskey aged in American oak and a French oak finish. How do these very different casks affect the spirit?”

Kallas-Lewis says that the whiskey was fantastic and sold out quickly, giving him the confidence to move on with more. The second whiskey in the Discourse Series is the Discourse Smoked Whiskey. This benefits from two different smoky flavors from two different whiskeys, which are blended

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS

The Knoxville distillery is nestled in the picturesque foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains in Tennessee.





OOLA

The Seattle distiller's Discourse Series explores unusual and innovative ideas to create new whiskey tastes.

together: a sweet, smoky (think barbecue) American whiskey using malted barley, some smoked with cherrywood and some smoked with northwestern hardwoods and pieces of used bourbon casks; and a Highland Scotch. Says Kallas-Lewis, "The goal with this spirit is a subtle dialogue between two very different smoky notes—the classic peated note from the Scotch and the upstart sweet smoke of our smoked whiskey. The resulting Discourse Smoked Whiskey is a hit amongst bartenders, as it gets the creative cocktail ideas flowing immediately."

The third whiskey is Three Shores World Whiskey, a reference to the three different countries referenced to create it: American whiskey (with a bourbon mash bill); along with a deep, rich, high-rye Canadian whisky; and another Highland Scotch.

"The goal was to create whiskey where the sum is better than the parts," says Kallas-Lewis proudly. "This is a lovely whiskey where each of the components can shine, but none overpower the others."

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

What will happen to the American craft distilling industry? Many are looking toward the equivalent brewing revolution

for clues, but while there are similarities, there are two big differences between brewing and distilling.

Firstly, it is much easier to enter brewing than distilling and, presumably, much easier to just give up. If you have invested in expensive distilling equipment and then waited for months for a finished spirit, then chances are that if at first you do not succeed ...

Secondly, distilling was, and still is, governed by stricter laws. Even today, there are several dry states, or states with prohibitive laws making creating and selling liquor difficult. But, as more distillers act responsibly across the US, state legislation is being relaxed.

One widely held view is that, as with the brewers, the number of distillers will peak in the coming years, and many will fall away. This may well happen to some extent, but at the time of writing there are absolutely no signs that the distillery craze will ease off any time soon.

“A WIDELY HELD VIEW IS THAT THE NUMBER OF DISTILLERS WILL PEAK IN THE COMING YEARS, AND MANY WILL FALL AWAY”





JAPAN

FROM THE LAND OF QUALITY IN CARS,
COMPUTERS, AND CAMERAS ...
A NEW WAY WITH WHISKY



PAGODA POWER

This Buddhist temple, built in 730 CE, is Yakushi-ji, not far from Yamazaki. Such temples inspired the appearance of the vents on Scottish maltings, designed by Charles Chree Doig in the 1880s and 1890s.

JAPAN

Japanese whisky has had an amazing few years. There is nothing new about it, with a history officially stretching back nearly a century, and unofficially a lot longer than that. However, until the turn of the millennium, it was rarely consumed outside Japan.

How times have changed! The world of whisky has well and truly woken up to the country's exotic, nuanced, and outstanding single malts, blended malts, and blended whiskies. The new demand has made them hard to find and often very expensive, but this has merely added to their mystique.

The meteoric rise of Japanese whisky in the early years of the 21st century can be attributed to a series of events. As early as 2001, Nikka had a bottling of its Yoichi Single Malt judged "Best of the Best" in an international tasting

event organized by *Whisky Magazine*. The 100 whiskies selected had been category winners in the magazine's regular tastings over a period of three years. They were assembled and tasted by panels in Scotland, Kentucky, and Japan. By this time, some whisky writers had started to take an interest and were alerting a growing army of whisky enthusiasts about the wonderful whiskies coming from the East.

The commercial breakthrough stemmed largely from the Hollywood film *Lost In Translation* in 2003, which featured Bill Murray making an advertisement for Japanese whisky, Suntory.

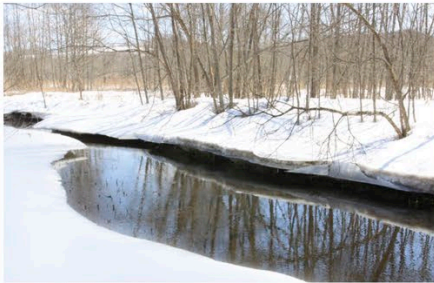
Newfound confidence

Beam Suntory is now one of the world's biggest drinks companies. Before the link with Beam, Suntory had already been in business for a century. In the film, both the Japanese and the Americans are the butt of its jokes, and by colluding in its making, Suntory risked loss of face—a fate worse than death in Japan. That the company was prepared to take this risk was a sign of a newfound confidence. It was no coincidence that the release

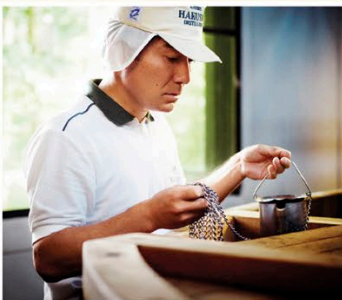
“UNTIL THE TURN OF THE
MILLENNIUM, JAPANESE WHISKY WAS
RARELY CONSUMED OUTSIDE JAPAN”

JAPAN'S DISTILLERIES

Most of Japan's distilleries are found on its main island, Honshu. Traditionally, the coastal distillery Yoichi was the only one found on the northern island of Hokkaido, but it has recently been joined by a new distillery, Akkeshi.



1 TEMPERATURE VARIATION Akkeshi distillery is in the Kuroishi region of Japan, where there is a significant variation in temperature over the course of the year. This is thought to speed up the maturation process.



3 WOODEN WASHBACKS In Japan, wooden fermentation vessels, or washbacks, are used widely. Here, the distiller at the Hakushu distillery is checking the ongoing fermentation process.



2 Yoichi

SAPPORO

AOMORI

Miyagikyo

SENDAI

HONSHU

Chichibu

TOKYO

3 Hakushu

Mars-Shinshu

4 Fuji Gotemba

Shizuoka

KYOTO

OSAKA

Yamazaki

White Oak

HIROSHIMA

SHIKOKU

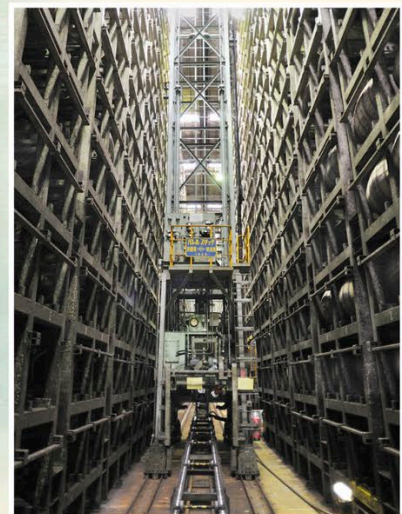
FUKUOKA

KYUSHU

NAGASAKI



2 STRIKING RED ROOFS Scottish though it otherwise looks, Yoichi's red roofs might strike an excessively cheery note to a dour Scot.



4 FUJI-GOTEMBA COOPERAGE Fuji-Gotemba is one of the few Japanese distilleries to have its own cooperage and bottling plant.

KEY

- ◆ Working distilleries
- Cities

miles
0 150
kilometers
0 150



SPRIT TASTING

Suntory's preference for direct firing and smaller stills gives a distinct flavor to the whiskies.

of *Lost In Translation* coincided with the launch in the UK, the US, and several other international markets of whiskies from Suntory's two malt distilleries, Yamazaki and Hakushu.

Although most Japanese whisky is made in the same way as its Scottish inspiration, the products of these distilleries do not have a hint of tartan or bluebells in their packaging. The Kanji characters, in bold, calligraphic style on their labels, stand out with a flourish on the shelves of back-bars. Their flavors are often restrained, but complex. In recent years, the use of unique Japanese oak has given some of the country's whiskies a more evident local accent.

Before the interest and eventual demand from the West, Suntory and its rival Nikka had been bottling single malts for about 20 years, but in the Western world they were mainly restricted to bars, restaurants, and shops with a Japanese flavor. In their own way, the Japanese knew they were making good whisky, but felt that in consumer perception they could never quite match their counterparts in Speyside and the Scottish islands.

The start of a love affair

On the principle that the lands most suited to whisky spirits are in cold, northern countries, Japan is in the right place. Its northernmost island, Hokkaido, is often compared with Scotland. Japan's main island, Honshu, which accommodates most of Japan's distilleries and by far the majority of people, is extremely mountainous. Only volcanic Kyushu and semi-Mediterranean Shikoku might argue for some other type of drink.

As a cereal-growing country, Japan has its own traditional, grain-based drinks. It grows rice, which is fermented to make saké and distilled to produce shochu. Buckwheat and sweet potatoes are also used to make shochu.

The introduction of drinks based on malted barley came during the steamship era, a time when Western nations began to seek commercial opportunities in what we now call the Pacific Rim. The most assertive manifestation of this was the visit of the United States Navy in 1853. The smoky vessels are still remembered in Japan as Commodore Matthew Perry's "Black



INFLUENCE OF CLIMATE

Miyagikyo's humidity, intense winter, and fresh water are ideal for producing mild and soft whiskies in the region.

Ships.” This initiative led to a trading treaty between the two countries. A few years later an American brewery was established in Yokohama, and this later became a Japanese enterprise under the name Kirin. Japan became yet more open to Western ideas with the ascent of a new emperor and the beginning of the Meiji Restoration in 1868. While the US was admired as a bold modernizer, Western European countries, such as the UK, the Netherlands, and Germany, were respected for their culture. Perhaps the US and the UK were seen as the modern Rome and Athens. It is hardly Greek tragedy, but the writing of Scotsman Arthur Conan Doyle is almost an obsession for many Japanese, as is rugby union, with its arcane rules. Most of all, the Japanese remain inescapably bunkered in their love for the Scottish sport of golf. Would any of this be complete without a whisky?

Early attempts at whisky making greatly frustrated the Japanese. No matter what herbs and spices they used, they could

not produce the authentic aromas and flavors. This phase gave rise to stories of blends proclaiming whisky to be “made with Scottish grapes,” although they may be apocryphal.

In search of authenticity

The man who revealed the secret of authentic whisky was Masataka Taketsuru, the 25-year-old son of a saké-making family. He attended Glasgow University, consulted with distilling expert J.A. Nettleton, and worked briefly at the Hazelburn distillery in Campbeltown, and at Longmorn in Speyside. He lodged with the widow of a doctor in Kirkintilloch and befriended her daughter, Rita. World War I had just ended and her fiancé had died in Damascus. Masataka gave her a gift of perfume, and she responded with a collection of Robert Burns’ poems. Soon afterward they married, without the approval of either family. Masataka took his wife to Japan where she worked as an English teacher, and through her clients established many contacts that helped her husband’s career.

Whisky in Japan today

Masataka Taketsuru helped Suntory establish its first whisky distillery, and went on to create a distillery of his own: Nikka at Yoichi. Nikka is now owned by the brewer Asahi. The Kirin Brewing Company also owns a whisky distillery, at Gotemba, near Mount Fuji. Suntory and Nikka both own two distilleries, and there is a smattering of other distilleries across the country, including Chichibu, a small but influential new distillery.



IMPORTED POT STILLS

To produce whisky using traditional Scottish methods, the Akkeshi distillery has imported two straight-headed, onion-shaped pot stills from Scotland.



HIGHLIGHT

THE MAN WHO SAID “MINE’S A DOUBLE”

One man brought to realization the Japanese dream of whisky making. After studying and working in Scotland, Masataka Taketsuru had the know-how to work with Suntory on the setting up of Yamazaki, Japan’s first authentic whisky distillery, on the island of Honshu in 1923. A few years later, he founded his own distillery, Nikka Yoichi. He thus played a critical role in establishing both of Japan’s principal producers.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

YAMAZAKI

FOUNDED 1923

OWNER Beam
Suntory, Inc.

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY 2m gal
(8m liters)

Yamazaki

JAPAN'S FIRST AUTHENTIC WHISKY DISTILLERY HAS LONG COME OF AGE. MATURE AND VERSATILE, IT ROLLS FORWARD—NOT FAST LIKE THE SHINKANSEN, BUT GRADUALLY, WITH BUDDHIST PATIENCE.

The most familiar symbol of Japanese technology, the Shinkansen (Bullet Train), runs right past the country's first whisky distillery, in the village of Yamazaki. Yamazaki is a remarkably rural location considering that it lies between two of the world's biggest urban agglomerations: Tokyo/Yokohama and the Kansai region (Kyoto, Osaka, and Kobe).

Siting the distillery

The potential size of the market must have seemed very attractive when Suntory planned its distillery in the early 1920s. A further reason for its location was its proximity to Osaka, Japan's second city, a major port and commercial center, and the home of Suntory. The company's founder, Shinjiro Torii, was very much a child of the outward-looking Meiji Restoration. He began by importing Spanish wines and later built up a successful business making dessert drinks based on Japanese plums. Construction of the Yamazaki distillery began in 1923, and its first whisky was marketed in 1929.

Early photographs show a Scottish-looking but rather industrial site. Over the years, Yamazaki distillery has evolved, and its present redbrick buildings have a 1950s appearance.

As is the case with almost all of the distilleries of Japan, the site is kept beautifully. It is surrounded by flower beds and shrubberies, and each plant is identified by both its Japanese and Latin names.

It is rare to visit the distillery without seeing parties, often including schoolchildren, being shown around. Over the years, Suntory has become ever more aware of the value of these visits to the education of the consumer on the qualities of the products it makes. The visitor center at Yamazaki is lined with samples of malt whiskies of various vintages, and there are opportunities to nose and taste, and begin to understand the blender's art.

Imported malt

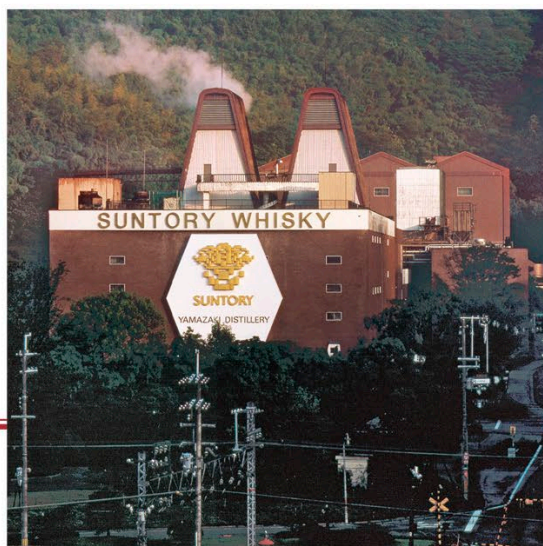
Although some malting barley is grown in Japan, much more is imported. Australia is a relatively convenient source, but imports also come from North America and Scotland. Peat from Japan or Scotland has occasionally been used, but more often ready peated malt is imported. The Suntory whiskies are, in general, very lightly peated.

Yamazaki stopped making its own malt in 1971. Its source of water is less likely to change. In its mineral content the water is comparable to that of Glenmorangie, and it is drawn from several wells amid the bamboo-forested hills behind the distillery. The hills are laced with small streams winding their way to the valley below, where the rivers Katsura, Uji, and Kizu meet. A temple once stood on the hillside, and there is still a shrine on the site of the distillery. Within the shrine, as an offering to the gods, are two casks of whisky.

As in Scotland, distilleries in Japan have long been used primarily to make malt for blending. The Japanese blended whiskies have, for decades, been of an excellent quality, but they have lacked complexity. The reason for this is quite simply that Japan has so few malt distilleries. Nor does the Japanese business ethic make it easy for rival companies to operate by swapping malts as the Scots do. As the first malt distillery in Japan, Yamazaki could add complexity only by using small amounts of imported Scottish malt whisky.

ART DECO RADIO?

Even the villagers say the Yamazaki distillery looks like a giant radio surrounded by forest. Hakushu's location is even more sylvan.





Home-grown complexity

It is believed that small proportions of Scotch whisky are still used in this way, but in recent years, Yamazaki has added complexity of its own creation. The distillery has been developed in such a way as to make it very flexible. For example, both traditional mash tuns and lauter systems have been used. The duality has operated in fermentation, with both wooden and stainless steel washbacks. The distillery has also experimented with different yeast cultures. Such a regime is not unusual, but in the early 1990s Suntory began to tackle the sizeable subject of still design. Where once seven pairs of matching stills stood in symmetrical grace, there is now a selection of shapes and sizes to please the most earnest devotee of diversity. Each pair produces a spirit of slightly different character. Most recently there has been some partner swapping, resulting in yet further offspring.

More variations can be achieved by the use of different woods in the casks. This was always true, but Suntory has developed a particular range, incorporating not only Spanish and American oak, but also Japanese oak.

Traditionally, Yamazaki has also used two distinct barrel sizes: Puncheon and American barrel. With the possibility of using first, second, or third fill, and a modest amount of re-charring, Yamazaki can produce a substantial range of mature whiskies for its blends, and increasingly for bottling as single malt. And since the 1980s the second distillery, Hakushu, has been available to contribute.

The traditions of consensus and gradualism that typified Japanese management for so long are changing rapidly. To the Japanese these changes seem dramatic. Attempts to harmonize taxes and duties during the late 1980s meant that the traditional Japanese whiskies became less competitive on price in their local market. However, with a greater variety of malts emerging from Yamazaki's flexible stillhouse and the recent successes of the highly awarded Hibiki blend, the whiskies have become firmly established in export markets.

EXHIBITING WHISKIES

The "whisky library" at the Yamazaki distillery exhibits several thousand bottles of different whiskies and also has a tasting counter for visitors.

TASTING NOTES

Yamazaki 12-year-old was a pioneering malt in Japan. Since then, a number of other bottlings have been tasted, including a highly regarded 18-year-old with a juicy overlay of first-fill dry Oloroso, award-winning Yamazaki Bourbon, Yamazaki Sherry, and Yamazaki Mizunara.

YAMAZAKI SINGLE MALT WHISKY 12-YEAR-OLD 43% ABV

In its early days, it was rounded and delicate, as though wary of offending anyone. Now it seems more intense, confident, and elegant.

Nose Flowery, fresh herbs, and biscuity.

Body Smooth and lightly syrupy.

Palate Lightly clean, sweet, honeyed, and intense.

Finish Burst of concentrated, perfume sweetness, balanced by drier, cereal-grain notes, and Japanese oak.



YAMAZAKI SINGLE
MALT WHISKY
12-YEAR-OLD

YAMAZAKI SINGLE MALT WHISKY 18-YEAR-OLD 43% ABV

Nose Honey, some oak, sweet treacle, black coffee, and molasses.

Body Rich, soft, and full.

Palate Complex mix of oaky tannins, dried fruits, soft plum and summer fruits, topped off by increasingly assertive spices, dark chocolate, rum, and raisin.

Finish Long with lots of fruit, oak, and spice.



YAMAZAKI SINGLE
MALT WHISKY
18-YEAR-OLD

DISTILLERY DETAILS

HAKUSHU

FOUNDED 1970

OWNER Beam Suntory Inc.

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY 880,000 gal
(4m liters)

Hakushu

AMONG THE WORLD'S BIGGEST MALT DISTILLERIES AT FULL CAPACITY,
HIGHER AND MORE REMOTE THAN ANY IN SCOTLAND ... AND WITH
A BIRD SANCTUARY THAT IS HOME TO MORE THAN 60 SPECIES.



For the half-century during which it was Suntory's only distillery, Yamazaki had no choice but to be versatile, feeding blends such as Suntory White Label, Reserve, Royal, and Old. During the height of the demand for these products, in the post-war recovery period, the company decided it needed a second malt distillery at Hakushu.

A showpiece distillery

Suntory was thinking big. The Hakushu distillery would be a showpiece, and the world's biggest malt distillery. It would occupy a spectacular site in a beautifully managed environment at the center of a plateau between the three mountain ranges that are known collectively as the Japanese Alps, just to the north and west of Mount Fuji, Japan's most sacred landmark.

Planned in the 1960s, Hakushu was built in the 1970s. From a purely geographical viewpoint, with no particular reference to the aromas and flavors of the whiskies, Yamazaki might be deemed a Lowland distillery and Hakushu a Highlander. In fact, Suntory's technical team was expecting Yamazaki's honey-ish whiskies to gain a lighter partner from Hakushu. The water is much softer and smaller, sleeker stills were installed.

The influence of *terroir*?

The whisky did turn out to be light in body, but it is very firm, with a full flavor. No one was sure why, but there were several new circumstances, some of which had not been experienced before, such as the altitude, distance of the distillery from the sea, and the influences of the landscape in which it is set.

SPRING WATER

Soft, slightly sweet spring water flows down from the granite-based Mount Kai-Komagatake to the Hakushu distillery in Japan.



HAKUSHU STILLS

Chunky lantern-style stills and two tiny stills with downward arms line up at Hakushu.

In terms of remoteness, Hakushu outdoes anything Scotland has to offer. From Tokyo (or from anywhere on the coast), it is a journey of about three hours. No Scottish distillery is more than about an hour from the sea. Throughout the journey, a striking feature of the scenery is the constant crossing of shallow rivers, their beds washed with sand, scree, and large pebbles, all sparingly white on sunny days. The name Hakushu means “White Sand Bank,” an allusion to the source of water. How white is the sand? A little poetic license may have been used, but it is very pale indeed. The poetic license may be God-given: white is the most sacred color in Japan’s blend of Shinto and Buddhism. Rivers carve an alluvial path over the local granite, with a notable absence of the peat that would be found in Scotland.

At 2,300 ft (700m), Hakushu is twice as high as the most elevated Scottish distillery. It is also higher than another distillery built in this part of the mountains by its competitor, Gotemba.

When the company established the distillery, it bought a large area of the surrounding forest to ensure (in its words)

“the purity of the water source and environment.” The forest is dense with Japanese varieties of spruce, pine, maple, and sawtooth oak. Tarlike spruce and resinous, leafy, herbal, “forest floor” flavors seem to permeate the whisky during maturation.

Production methods

Hakushu uses a traditional mash tun, with copper hood, wooden washbacks, and stills heated by direct flame. The elevation of Hakushu makes a significant difference in terms of temperature and atmospheric pressure, and that in turn affects the work of the condenser in the distillery. This means that the new make of Hakushu may well be even cleaner and creamier than those produced in the mountain distilleries of Scotland. When Hakushu was built, its two distilling lines made it the world’s biggest producer of malt whisky. It soon became even larger with the addition of a second distillery on the site. The second distillery was initially known as Hakushu East. Eventually the main distillery fell silent and only the second distillery was used. The “East” part of the name has been dropped. As at Yamazaki, the original stillhouses were uniform in design, and have since been restyled in order to achieve a variety of characteristics in aroma and flavor.

TASTING NOTES

Hakushu, having started later than Yamazaki, has released fewer malts. It now has others in the pipeline, having begun with a 12-year-old.

HAKUSHU SINGLE MALT WHISKY 12-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

A beautifully structured, appetizing whisky. Interesting balance of sweetness and dryness, with the latter narrowly winning.

Nose Honey, heather, camomile, perfumy, and some vanilla.

Body Light to medium and slight viscosity.

Palate Firm, honeyish, heathery, and delicate touch of peat.

Finish Long, warming, marshmallow, sweet grass, and lemon.



HAKUSHU SINGLE
MALT WHISKY
12-YEAR-OLD

HIBIKI HARMONY

43% ABV

Nose Floral, polished oak, sandalwood, and kitchen herbs.

Body Delicate, sparkling, and sweet.

Palate Honeycomb, chocolate, assorted candy, traces of oak and spice, and orange.

Finish Long, gentle, complex, traces of incense and oak, subtle, tender, and long finish.



HIBIKI
HARMONY

DISTILLERY DETAILS

YOICHI

FOUNDED 1934

OWNER Nikka

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY 440,000 gal
(2m liters)

Yoichi

WEST OF SAPPORO, THIS FAMOUSLY PRETTY DISTILLERY
EMERGES FROM ITS ROMANTIC PAST, AND SCORES HIGHLY
WITH A WORLD-CLASS PEATY WHISKY.

Whisky lovers in Japan like to point out that the country's northern island, Hokkaido, is almost exactly the same size as Scotland in both land area and population. A further affinity is its tendency to have windy, cold, and snowy weather. In other respects, notably a pioneering spirit, Hokkaido more persuasively resembles Alaska. In the long history of Japan, the settlement of the island is comparatively recent, having taken place mainly after the Meiji Restoration.

The debate between adopting and adapting was one of the reasons Masataka Taketsuru left Suntory, and established the Nikka distillery in Yoichi, Hokkaido. The two companies make much of their difference in style. Suntory's adaptations result in an open freshness and an airy aroma and flavor, and the whisky is intended to be more Japanese than Scottish. Nevertheless, in blind tastings with Scottish whiskies, Suntory's products have generally

YOICHI SNOWED UNDER

Situated on Hokkaido, Japan's northern island, with mountains on three sides and the sea in front of it, Yoichi's weather often resembles that of Scotland.



not been unmasked. Nikka's whiskies were traditionally bigger and firmer in maltiness, peatier, and more robust.

Visiting the distillery

It is an extraordinary experience to look beneath the decorative battlements of a stone arch (inspired by Glen Grant?) and see the Yoichi distillery; it is the most attractive and distinctive distillery in Japan. Under the gatehouse arch, a path curves through a lawn dotted with miniature pines. To either side, at a respectful distance, a series of small, neat, stone buildings follows the line of the path. Each building has a red roof (very un-Scottish) and all have ornamental pagodas. Each has, or had, its own whisky-making function: steeping, germination, kilning, milling, mashing, fermentation, distillation, and maturation.

The production process

The maltings last worked in 1970. When they were in use, the malt was kilned over Hokkaido peat. A pile of the peat remains from those days. Today, malt is imported from Scotland. A well at the distillery provides very soft water. These two elements meet in a traditional mash tun, which seems set to work for some time.

The history of Yoichi

The creation of the Yoichi distillery as a transplanted slice of Scotland has its poignant aspect. Founder Masataka Taketsuru had a whirlwind romance during his brief stay in Scotland when lodging with the widow of a doctor in the small town of Kirkintilloch. In a matter of months, he fell deeply in love with her daughter Rita, whose fiancé had recently died in World War I. They married in 1920 without seeking the approval of either family. Masataka—well-educated, handsome, and from a prosperous family—would have been expected to accept an arranged marriage, and Rita knew nothing of a woman's place in Japanese society, nor did she speak the language. The couple did their best to tackle these problems, but their years at Yoichi were difficult.

As Japan approached war with China, and subsequently the Western allies, Rita found herself living in a country in conflict with her



DIRECT HEATING DISTILLATION

Yoichi whiskies get their rich and peaty character from direct heating distillation, a traditional method in which the pot stills are heated with coal.

own. In addition, there was a shortage of supplies and barley was rationed. These constrictions put the couple under enormous strain just at a time when Masataka was trying to realize his dream: his own distillery, making authentic whisky in Japan. By the time the business was well established, Rita's health was failing, and she died in the early 1960s. Masataka died in the late 1970s. Their bungalow at the distillery is still maintained in their memory.

Their nephew Takeshi, whom they adopted as a son, ran the business for a time. The company had the backing of the brewer Asahi, who eventually bought Nikka, Yoichi distillery's owners.

TASTING NOTES

Nikka has recently changed its policy on single malts, at least in the short-to-medium term. The company now has just two NAS single malts, one from each of its distilleries. But you can still find Nikka "Pure Malt," which includes both Yoichi and Miyagikyo (see p.236) whiskies in a single, blended malt whisky.

NIKKA YOICHI SINGLE MALT

45% ABV

Nose Fresh, coastal breeze, some wood smoke, sweet fruits, particularly citrus and orange, and touch of licorice.

Body Firm, full, mouth coating, and rounded.

Palate Delicious mix of salty coastal notes, peat smoke, nuts, and green fruits. Delightfully peaty.

Finish A rewarding mix of smoke and fruit, with the peat and malt notes lingering.



NIKKA YOICHI
SINGLE MALT

NIKKA PURE MALT BLACK

43% ABV

Part of the color trilogy (the others are "Pure Red" and "Pure White"), this is the most aggressive and "grungy" of the three.

Nose A pleasant mix of oily peat smoke, damp leaves, and dark golden syrup.

Body Rich, full, and assertive.

Palate Evolves on the palate, with cherry lozenges, earthy peatiness, canned peach and apricot, and traces of savory spice.

Finish Surprisingly well behaved, with the peaty notes giving way to the fruits and spice, so it enters like a lion and leaves like a lamb.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

MIYAGIKYO

FOUNDED 1969

OWNER Nikka

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY 660,000 gal
(3m liters)

Miyagikyo

MORE HINTS OF SCOTLAND ... THE TOPOGRAPHY COULD BE SPEYSIDE, BUT THE WHISKIES TASTE MORE LIKE LOWLANDERS. THEY ARE MALTY, SWEET, AND DESERVE TO BE BETTER KNOWN.

The romantic story that led to the making of whisky in Yoichi, the remarkably pretty appearance of the distillery there, and its location in a fishing village tend to overshadow Nikka's second distillery, Miyagikyo, at Sendai. Miyagikyo is also in the north of Japan, but on the main island, Honshu. While not as famous for high gastronomy as Kyoto, this northern region has an elaborate cuisine, and local delicacies include oysters and flatfish.

Although Sendai is not especially well-known to the rest of the world, it is one of Japan's major cities. It was founded in the 1600s, became a city in the Meiji Restoration, and was largely destroyed in World War II, after which it was rebuilt with a new harbor. It has more than a million inhabitants, is a center for education, and is the regional capital for a large northern slice of Honshu.

The city is roughly halfway between Tokyo and the northern tip of Honshu. It has, over the years, absorbed half a dozen surrounding towns.

Although the Miyagikyo distillery is in Greater Sendai, it is about half an hour's drive west of the city itself in the broad, wooded valley of the Hirose River. The countryside here has some parallels with Speyside. The Ou Mountains give rise to a system of rivers that flow between rolling hills and across plains until the land descends to the Pacific.

Siting the distillery

Masataka Taketsuru spent three years in the area, looking for a site. He is said to have been persuaded when he tasted the water of the Nikkawa River, and a plaque marks the spot where the historic drink was enjoyed. Taketsuru also felt that the humidity generated

PICTURESQUE MIYAGIKYO

Miyagikyo, Nikka's second distillery, is set among the foothills of the Miyagi Prefecture. Story has it that as soon as Masataka Taketsuru tasted the local water, he declared this site fit for distilling.



by the adjoining rivers would be conducive to good maturation. Like Suntory's Hakushu distillery, which it preceded, Miyagikyo was intended to produce large volumes of mildly malty whisky to bulk up the company's blends. The distillery was established in 1969, and expanded in 1979 and 1989.

Although Taketsuru had already made a tribute to the architecture of Scottish distilleries when he built Yoichi, he obviously continued to hold them in awe. The greater size of Miyagikyo and the more recent construction create a more industrial impression, but it is clear that every effort was made to sustain a sense of Scottish tradition and rural ambiance. An imposing entrance off the road continues down a winding drive fringed with oak trees. To add to the charm, a grassy slope leads to a lake with swans.

The distillery itself is a sizeable, chunky construction of handsome, dark red brick, with a decorative malting kiln in traditional style. After the bright red rooftops of Yoichi, the more restrained russet of Miyagikyo makes a distinctive impression.

The production method

The site has both pot and column stills in separate buildings. The pot stills are, as might be expected, used to produce malt whiskies. More than one style is made, to provide different



TASTING NOTES

Traditionally Miyagikyo has produced a light, fresh, clean grain whisky as well as a bigger, oilier example. Some older malts, if you can find them, are deliciously creamy, flowery, and even slightly smoky. Nikka Pure Malt Red contains whisky from this distillery.

NIKKA MIYAGIKYO SINGLE MALT 45% ABV

Nose Intense fruit, but with some lighter floral notes, some honey, and a fresh maltiness.

Body Light, pleasant, easy-drinking, and accessible.

Palate Makes a stately progression through fresh spring meadows, light malt, some licorice, and elegant, light red berry, and orange fruits. Ordered and unassertive, but very accessible and easy drinking.

Finish Medium, soft, and floral, with a hint of citrus fruits and cooked apple.



NIKKA MIYAGIKYO
SINGLE MALT

NIKKA PURE MALT RED 43% ABV

Nose Clean, fruity, and with sweet chocolatey and honey notes. Very welcoming.

Body Medium mouth feel, but clean, fresh, and sweet.

Palate There are rich cocoa and dark chocolate notes here, but they come up against a wave of fruit and then some oak notes. Later there is an almost meaty component. Intriguing but delightful.

Finish Pleasant, medium in length, and with honeyed, fruity notes.



NIKKA PURE
MALT RED

notes for the blender. The columns also produce a malt distillate mainly for blending, but their principal function is as a grain distillery.

The malt distillery has two full-lauter tuns, which are operated to different degrees of clarity, depending on the style of whisky that is being made. Fermentation is in stainless steel, and a number of different yeasts are used. In the original configuration, two pairs of stills are mounted on a redbrick platform set in a marble-floored stillhouse. This arrangement was repeated when the distillery was expanded.

The well-designed grain distillery is very elegant-looking: in a square-sided tower, with its galleried walkways protected by bright green railings, it has a Coffey still and two rectifying columns. There are also further columns for the production of grain-neutral alcohol. Miyagikyo has more than 20 warehouses, maturing spirits mainly in American oak hogsheads. American barrels and sherry butts are also used. The butts are stacked only two high, and a handful of warehouses are in traditional dunnage style.

The whiskies

Miyagikyo's malt whiskies have a good cereal-grain character, a notably honeyed sweetness, and some aromatic floweriness. Despite their northerly origin and the comparisons with Speyside, they are perhaps more reminiscent of some of the great Scottish Lowland whiskies when they are at their best.



MIYAGIKYO SENTRIES

Well-polished, muscular stills stand as alert as sentries at Miyagikyo. The distinctive boil ball, between the bulbous base and the neck, helps to cool the vapors slightly so that the heavier volatiles fall back. This contributes to the delicate character of the whiskies.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

FUJI-GOTEMBA

FOUNDED 1973
OWNER Kirin
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 440,000 gal
(2m liters)

MARS-SHINSHU

FOUNDED 1985
OWNER Hombo Shuzo
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 8,800 gal
(40,000 liters)

CHICHIBU

FOUNDED 2008
OWNER Venture Whisky
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 17,600 gal
(80,000 liters)

WHITE OAK

FOUNDED 1919
OWNER Eigashima Shuzo
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 10,340 gal
(47,000 liters)

AKKESHI

FOUNDED 2016
OWNER Kanten Co. Ltd
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 66,000 gal
(300,000 liters)

Japan's Smaller Distilleries

AFTER THE BIG TWO, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF MUCH SMALLER PRODUCERS, EMERGING FROM BEER-, WINE-, AND SAKÉ-MAKING BACKGROUNDS. HERE IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THEM.

Fuji-Gotemba

The main base for visitors to Mount Fuji is the town of Gotemba, where this distillery is found. Malt is imported from Ireland and Scotland at various levels of peating. Emphasis is placed on achieving as clear a wash as possible. The house character of the new make spirit is clean and estery, with notes of sweet plums and orange flower water. Maturation is mainly in bourbon wood and warehousing is in a modern, racked block.

Mars-Shinshu

Mars-Shinshu is sited at Yamanashi, which is in the Chubu region on the main island, Honshu. Owner Hombo Shuzo obtained a whisky-making license in 1949, but did not start producing whisky until

1960. At that time the distillery was run by Kejiro Iwai, who had worked with Masataka Taketsuru. It is believed that Iwai adopted Taketsuru's whisky-making blueprint. He made a heavy, peaty style of whisky and it was a failure. In the coming years, production would stop and start, and the distillery would move locations as the company struggled to hit upon a winning formula.

The most recent foray in the market came in 2015 when the company started releasing whiskies, though the initial release was a blended malt mixing old Mars stock with Scottish single malt. The year 2016 saw the first release of a new single malt from the distillery. The plans are to produce a range of whiskies using both peated and unpeated barley.

MIZUNARA WASHBACKS

Chichibu is the only distillery in the world that uses Mizunara—Japanese oak—washbacks. This gives the whiskies a distinct vanilla flavor.



Chichibu

Whisky pioneer and innovator Ichiro Akutu has shaken up Japanese whisky and, both directly and indirectly, he has played a major role in making it much more outward-looking. Having bought up all the remaining stock of closed distilleries Karuizawa and Hanyu, he then set about building his own distillery and has brought innovation and a healthy freshness.

Chichibu is tiny, but in a very short period of time it has shaken up the local whisky industry, overcoming considerable odds to pump new thinking and ideas into Japanese whisky. As a result, anything with Ichiro Akutu's signature on it—and he is responsible for a number of different projects—has become massively sought after and is highly collectable.

From the beginning, Chichibu has built up a reputation for quality whisky. From 2011, there have been a series of releases in various styles, from heavily peated whiskies to light fruity ones.

Whisky making at Chichibu is very hands-on and traditional. Spirit is tasted from the spirits safe to decide when to make the cut, and the mash is stirred manually by Akutu and a small team of enthusiastic youngsters.

White Oak

Eigashima (White Oak) Shuzo is primarily a saké and shochu producer; whisky is something of a sideshow, though production has been increased in recent years.

It was the first Japanese distillery to be granted a whisky license in 1919, but it did not start making whisky until the 1960s and even then it did so infrequently. Its first single malt was released in the 1980s. The distillery does offer tours of all three of its production areas, but you are advised to book a visit in advance.

New kids on the block

While several new and small distilleries are planning to produce whisky, only two are in a position to release a single malt in the foreseeable future: Akkeshi and Shizuoka.

Akkeshi is at an early stage of being founded, but the company behind the project has a website in English as well as Japanese, and is assured in its thinking. It is in a remote area of Hokkaido in the northern part of Japan and is on the coast. This location was chosen because

the owner felt that the region was reminiscent of Scotland's home of peaty whiskies, Islay. It has a variety of different peat bogs and the air can be cold and salty.

Although initially the barley will be imported, the plan is to find land to grow domestic barley and then to experiment with peat types to create an Islay-style whisky. The owner is hoping for a distinctively original Akkeshi characteristic, too.

The temperature in this part of Japan can dip to as low as -4°F (-20°C) in winter and peaks at around 68–75°F (20–24°C) in the summer, so there is a big variation and maturation is expected to be quite fast.

Shizuoka is located close to the city of Shizuoka, on the Pacific coast in central Honshu. It is a mountainous and attractive region; the coast here is called “the Japanese Riviera.” There is a plentiful supply of water from the nearby River Abe and the site is convenient for Tokyo. Barley is grown locally.



JAPAN'S NEWEST DISTILLERY

Located in the remote area of Hokkaido, Akkeshi is one of Japan's newest distilleries. Akkeshi's owner hopes that its whisky will taste good with local oysters and cheese.

TASTING NOTES

Other than Karuizawa, whose stock is now sold by Chichibu, each of these distilleries produces a full range of whiskies. Those shown here are representative examples.

FUJI-GOTEMBA

FUJI-GOTEMBA 15-YEAR-OLD
43% ABV

Nose Strange; part shredded wheat and part freshly baked bread.

Body Delicate and gossamer-like.

Palate Floral, sweet and clean, honey, vanilla ice cream, some sweet spice and oak notes late on.

Finish Rich and sweet.



FUJI-GOTEMBA
15-YEAR-OLD

CHICHIBU THE PEATED 2015
62.5% ABV

Nose Big, growling peat notes, fresh young malt, and a trace of citrus.

Body Rich, assertive, mouth coating, and oily.

Palate Full-on smoke and peat, lemon and grilled trout, distinctly Islay-like, coastal, sweet.

Finish Long and peaty. Not keen to leave any time soon.



CHICHIBU THE
PEATED 2015

CHICHIBU

CHICHIBU THE FIRST
61.8% ABV

Nose Sweet, vanilla, fruity, light.

Body Rich and full.

Palate Sweet and easy drinking. Vanilla notes, chewy fruits. With water, a complex mix of lemongrass, lemon, lime, and exotic spices.

Finish Sweet, fruity, medium, and more-ish.

KARUIZAWA

KARUIZAWA 17-YEAR-OLD
40% ABV

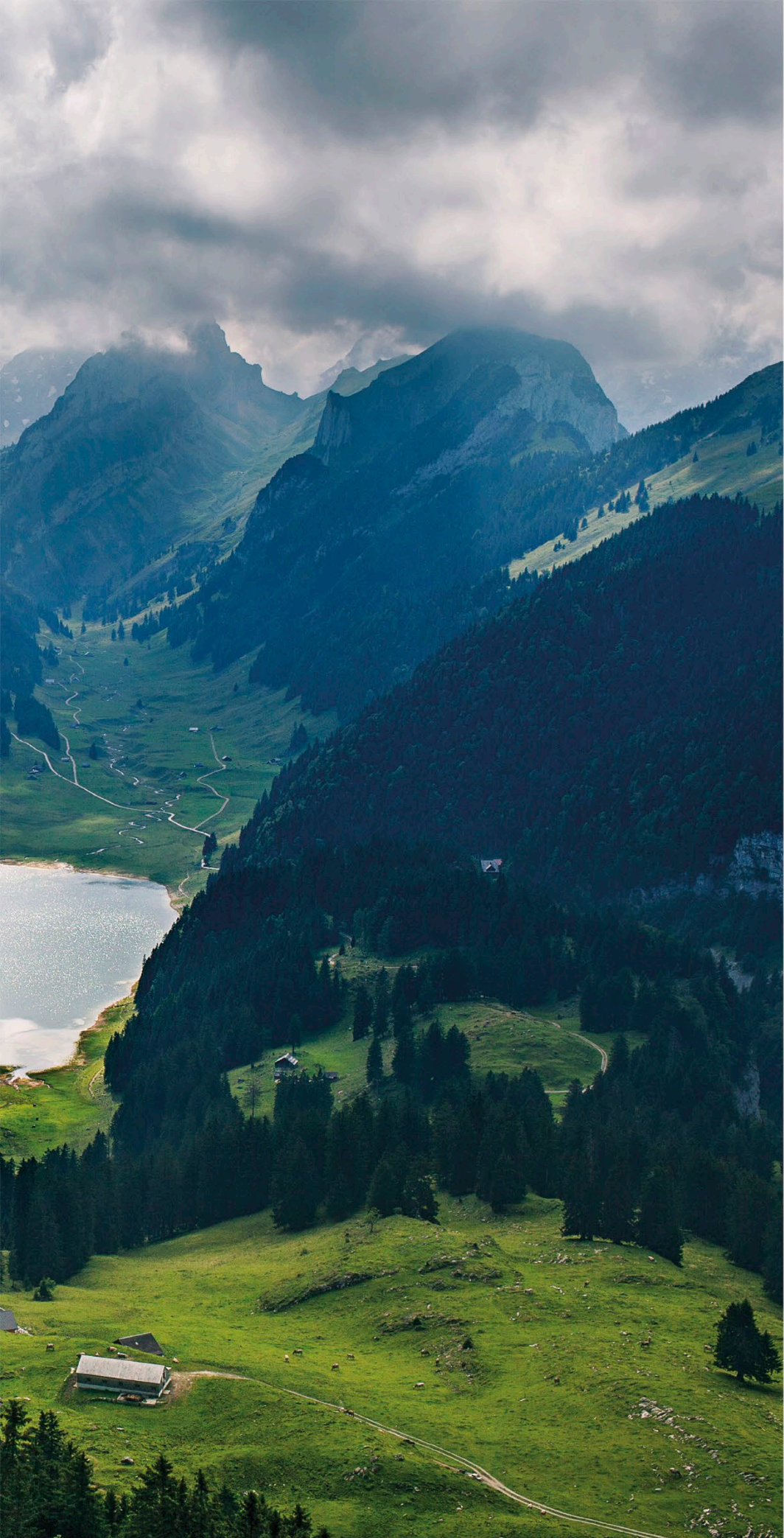
Nose Slow to open, earthy, riesling, linseed oil, eventually pears, strawberries, and gummy candies.

Body Easy, light, rounded, and smooth.

Palate Sweetish, chocolatey, sliced and toasted almonds.

Finish Warming and soothing.





THE NEW WORLD OF WHISKY



WHISKY FROM THE MOUNTAINS

Some of the world's best new whiskies are being made in Alpine Europe.

THE NEW WORLD OF WHISKEY

Non-traditional whiskey-producing countries are enjoying the best of both the old and new worlds of whiskey. They are producing a wide range of whiskeys that match the old world for quality—some traditional, some exciting and innovative to attract new drinkers.

To get a sense of the enormity of the explosion in world whiskey from territories not traditionally associated with the drink, you just need to go back to the first edition of this book, published in 2005. That edition gave just four pages to the subject: two on Europe, and one each on Asia and Australasia. Even the chapter heading “Rest of The World” seems hopelessly dated and redundant, though some whiskey writers still choose to use it. The implication that there are five “premium” whiskey-making regions and that all others are part of a second division is now archaic.

Changing attitudes

In 2005, however, it was quite understandable. The “Rest of the World” category stemmed from the many drinks awards that had sprung up at the turn of the new millennium. Most entries slotted conveniently into a category covering the “old world”—those from countries with long-established whiskey distilling histories. However, by the early part of the new millennium there was a dribble of whiskies from elsewhere: the odd Indian one here, a couple of Australians, a Swedish malt, and something from Wales. These were few in number for two reasons: one, because most were made by small distilleries that could not afford the awards’ entrance fees; and two, they were so small that any success would have created a demand for their whiskeys that they were not ready to meet.

But change was coming, and fast! Australia, in particular, was sowing the seeds of a new whiskey scene. The Australian distillers made it

clear that they had no time for whiskey magazines that lazily dumped them into a category with whiskies from Sweden and India. What was the connection, they argued?

That argument became more pertinent when more and more distilleries from new countries started exporting to traditional whiskey countries, and Europe and Australia, in particular, provided enough distillers to warrant their own judging categories.

The Australians changed attitudes in other ways, too. What was the point of an age statement on a whisky bottle if you knew nothing about the size, type, and age of the cask? Or if you did not consider the climate and humidity of the country the whisky was being produced in? These days, when no-age-statement whiskies are common (and even the norm), it is hard to appreciate how controversial the idea of making whisky without an age on the bottle was back in the early 2000s. In London, Compass Box was making innovative and award-winning boutique whiskies of great quality, but the company's owner John Glaser was repeatedly trying to justify the fact that the whiskies bore no age. Jon, Mark, and Robbo's Easy Drinking Whisky Company attempted to sell whisky by flavor, rather than by age, but it was a struggle.

Developing character

It is still early days for all the regions that have recently started to produce whiskey, but some characteristics are already starting to take shape. Nowhere is the comparison more pronounced than between the confidently experimental "Aussie rules" approach from Australian distillers, and the meticulous and scientific approach taken by the Swedish.

Very early on, for instance, the Australians started producing big, heavy-hitting styles of malts, with character, guts, and originality bursting out in every direction. The new whiskies had a lot to do with the artisanal nature of the distilleries; the country's climate, which is a great deal more diverse than many in the

“THE IMPLICATION THAT THERE ARE FIVE ‘PREMIUM’ WHISKEY-MAKING REGIONS AND THAT ALL OTHERS ARE PART OF A SECOND DIVISION IS NOW ARCHAIC”

Northern Hemisphere might imagine; and the natural ingredients used to make whisky spirit. Tasmanian peat, for instance, is very different to that found in Scotland and Ireland.

So small was production at Lark distillery in Tasmania that at one time the barley was dried over a tiny peat fire made in a beehive. Peter Bignell at Belgrove, also in Tasmania, started distilling whisky on a homemade, environmentally friendly still fired by used cooking oil. Due to their small-scale production and starved of a supply of sherry casks, the Australians turned to their port industry, cutting 100-year-old port barrels into small quarter casks.

The resulting whiskies are often vastly different from those produced in the Northern Hemisphere. They are not better or worse, just different. Perhaps no other country would have the confidence to stand up to the traditional territories that initially mocked their efforts.



THE SHED DISTILLERY

Australian whisky makers have made a virtue of creating whisky their own way and adapting to climate and circumstances, such as the Timboon distillery, which operates out of an old railway shed.



NOSING AHEAD

Mackmyra, in Sweden, was in the vanguard of the New World revolution, and learned fast from its early releases.

In Sweden, a very different approach has been adopted. Sweden has to be among the most passionate whiskey territories in the world. It boasts scores of whiskey clubs, and it looks to Scotland with the deepest of respect. Many of its whiskey drinkers are drawn to smoky and peaty whiskeys, and Swedish whiskey enthusiasts take pride in knowing as much as they possibly can about their hobby.

Sweden's Mackmyra was at the vanguard of the New World revolution, and grew up in public, exhibiting in its earliest days at Whisky Live London. It would have been a little bit like a baby seal swimming into a bay full of Great Whites, even if the whiskey fraternity is a little more good-humoured and welcoming. Mackmyra's cause was not particularly helped by its strange spirit, which was a bit like chewing fir trees in salt, leaving those who tasted it bemused. It is fair to say that few expected great things from the Swedish distillery on the basis of this sample.

But those early bottlings were never designed to be anything more than "works in progress," as the names "Privus" and "Preludium" indicate. And Mackmyra learned fast from its initial experiments. Using a two-pronged policy of mainstream launches on the one hand, and esoteric small batch offerings on the other, it has firmly established Swedish whiskey on the world stage, and has been followed by a string of other small and exciting Swedish producers.



The initial Swedish approach may have been to pay reverential homage to Scotland, and to attempt to emulate the country's finest single malts. In doing so, the new wave of producers have dissected classic Scottish single malts, sparing no expense in their attempts to make something as good as them. They are experimenting with their own and eastern European oaks, drying barley over an array of burning materials, and even seeking out long redundant barley strains that they believe will increase quality at the expense of quantity.

Looking further afield

Both Sweden and Australia will be at the forefront of the burgeoning New World scene for decades to come, but almost certainly so will the distilleries in the Alpine countries of Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, Italy, and Switzerland.

There are more than 100 distilleries producing malt spirit over this region, a disparate bunch with their roots and history in beer, fruit liqueur, schnapps, genever, and even wine production. Some are tiny and make whisky occasionally for their local communities or even just for friends. Others are substantial operations that have been making spirits for generations or have recently been built by established food and drink companies.

Very few of these distilleries have traditionally made whisky that would catch the attention of the connoisseur, mainly because the distillers attempted to make whisky using the distilling techniques used to produce their other spirits. And, as they quickly found out, it did not work very well. But, in recent years, they have addressed the issue, and with the help of training and support from the trade organization Alpine Spirits Producers, they have started producing world-class whisky that is still in its infancy, but will certainly be making waves in the coming decades.

France, too, is developing a fascinating and diverse range of whisky producers, though they have, until this point, brought very few of their products to the world stage.

DISTILLERIES BIG AND SMALL

European distilleries vary massively in size, from tiny farm operations to big, export-friendly ones. Stauning, in Denmark, is a relatively small operation.



HYBRID DISTILLATION

Alpine whisky makers have adapted their distilling methods to suit malt whisky—some with stunning results.

Elsewhere, Argentina, Belgium, England, Finland, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Norway, South Africa, Taiwan, Wales—the list goes on and on—are not only producing whisky but are establishing international markets for it.

A varied playing field

So, a great deal has changed since 2005. What is fascinating, though, is the speed with which it has changed. In fact, the New World of whiskey has three distinct groupings. The first consists of pioneer distilleries that have been established since the very start of the new millennium and are, in some cases, bottling and exporting whisky as old as many of Scotland's distilleries. The likes of Lark, Bakery Hill, and Limeburners in Australia; Amrut in India; Mackmyra in Sweden; Belgian Owl in Belgium; Kavalan in Taiwan; St. George's in England; Penderyn in Wales; and Zuidam in the Netherlands are all well-established, with strong distribution channels and access to international markets.

But there are now scores of distilleries in new whiskey territories that are the next level down, just starting to bottle their spirit and going through growing pains. Most of the new distilleries are set up by individuals who make

whiskey themselves. As they expand, they bring in employees and become companies and at that point the founders must decide what "hat" they want to wear going forward. They might wish to stay as a distiller, operate as the managing director, or become the company's global brand ambassador.

Exciting times

Such is the speed of change, it would be impossible to cover all the new distilleries in a book like this, even if there were space to do so. But over the coming pages we look at territories across the world and highlight the distilleries making whiskey that is worth seeking out and that there is, no matter where you are reading this book, at least some chance of you finding.

Last time this book was published, there were no more than 200 whiskey distilleries of any note, half of them in Scotland. Now there are at least three times that number in the US alone, another 100 or more in Alpine Europe, and dozens already in operation (or about to be) across the rest of the globe.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

BRAENDERIET LIMFJORDEN

FOUNDED 2013
OWNER Ole Mark
CAPACITY 330 gal
(1,500 liters)

BRAUNSTEIN

FOUNDED 2005
OWNER Michael and
Claus Braunstein
CAPACITY 11,000 gal
(50,000 liters)

FARY LOCHAN

FOUNDED 2009
OWNER Jens Erik
Jorgensen
CAPACITY Not given

STAUNING

FOUNDED 2006
OWNER Stauning Whisky
CAPACITY 3,300 gal
(15,000 liters)

TEERENPELI

FOUNDED 2002
OWNER Anssi Pyysing
CAPACITY 35,000 gal
(160,000 liters)

THE HELSINKI DISTILLERY COMPANY

FOUNDED 2014
OWNER Mikko Mykkänen,
Kai Kilpinen, and
Séamus Holohan
CAPACITY 2,600 gal
(12,000 liters)

EIMVERK

FOUNDED 2012
OWNER Thorkelsson family
CAPACITY 22,000 gal
(100,000 liters)

Northern Europe

SOME OF MALT WHISKY'S MOST SERIOUS CONNOISSEURS LIVE IN NORTHERN EUROPE, AND IT SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE THAT THEY ARE NOW PRODUCING THEIR OWN WHISKY.

The distillers of Northern Europe—and by that we mean Scandinavia—are among the most intense, serious, and inquisitive on the planet. Swedish distillers, in particular, seem to be in the process of dismantling the Scotch whisky model, analyzing it, and reconstructing it in their own unique fashion.

This part of the world can lay claim to more whisky clubs than any other, and the thirst for knowledge (as well as great whisky) is pretty much unparalleled. Scandinavian whisky lovers and producers manage to add a passion, respect, and enthusiasm for Scottish single malt while constantly seeking ways of bettering it.

There is no obvious Scandinavian whisky style yet, and possibly there never will be. But all the countries in this region place great emphasis on the use of local produce and production methods. Some producers will use local or eastern European oak; local peat (which is significantly different to that found in Scotland); or traditional drying methods, such as using juniper twigs to give their whiskies a

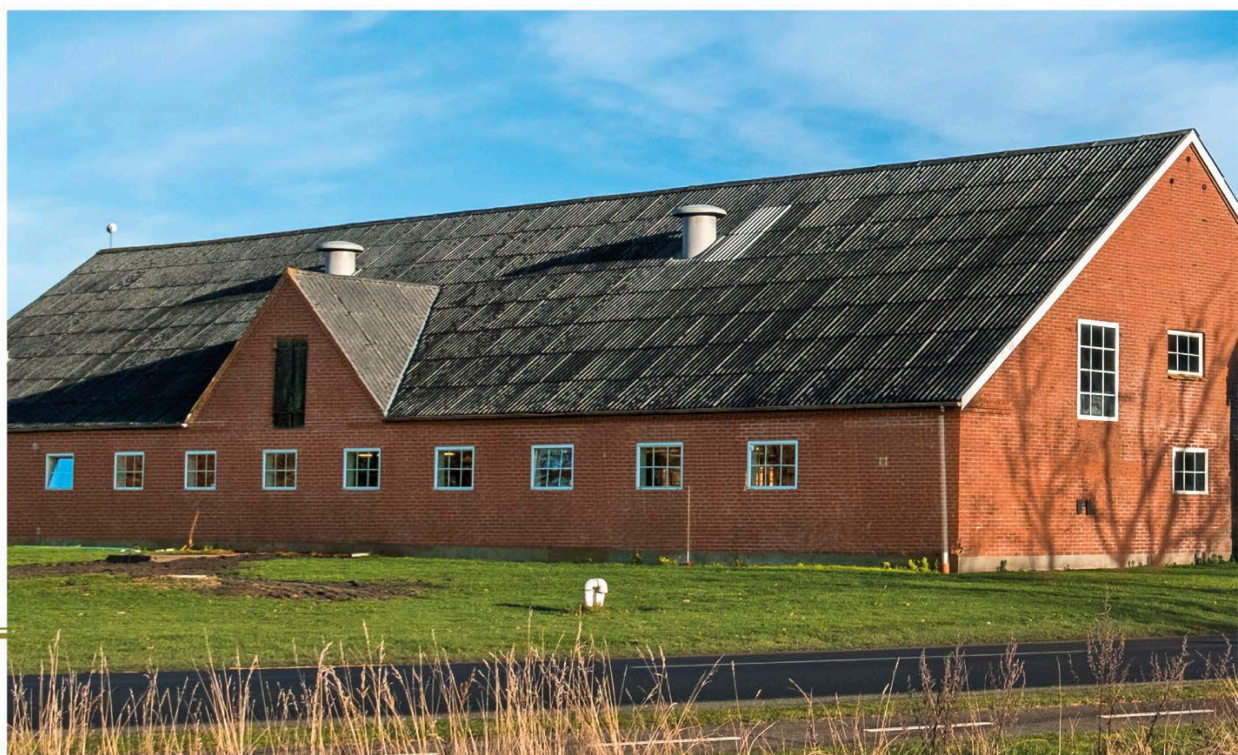
distinct personality of their own. Some of the Swedish producers have even sought out redundant barley varieties to ensure the highest possible quality.

Whisky production in Scandinavia is still relatively new, but expanding rapidly. There are producers bottling whisky now, while others are still maturing their first whiskies or are still at the planning stage. The whiskies vary from relatively conventional Scotch-like single malts, to unusual whiskies designed to appeal to the Scandinavian palate. Many of them are “works in progress”—but there is ample evidence that Northern Europe has started to produce some outstanding whiskies.

DENMARK

Braenderiet Limfjorden

This is a micro-distillery located in a fisherman's warehouse in the small Sillerslev harbor on the island of Mors. The owner, Ole Mark, is an architect by profession but has been distilling since 1979, having studied distilling



techniques in Germany, Scotland, and the Caribbean. Production of each of the distillery's whiskies is very small—1,000 to 3,000 bottles. The first, bottled in July 2016, is a whisky produced with local malt and stored in 10-gallon (50-liter) sherry casks for three years. Other whiskies include one made with local unpeated malt and English peated malt, and one made with peated malt from the island of Fyn.

Braunstein

Braunstein is a micro-distillery located in the dock area of Copenhagen and owned by the Poulsen brothers—Michael and Claus—who have been distilling since 2004. The whiskies are distinctive, fruity, and peaty, and are beautifully packaged. Both ex-sherry and ex-bourbon casks are used for maturation. Pure, glacial water is added to dilute the spirit to the normal 46% ABV, and the whiskies are matured in warehouses across Denmark.

Fary Lochan

Owner Jens-Erik Jørgensen started distilling in 2010 and is determined to make his whisky different. He dries his barley over nettles (a traditional way of smoking cheese in the region) and has adapted his still to produce a particularly oily spirit. Some of the distillery's new-make spirit is bottled without being matured. Bourbon-cask wood is then added to the bottle to flavor the spirit in a unique way. It cannot be called whisky following this process (European whisky has to be matured

in an oak barrel for at least three years to hold this title), but the idea does show a willingness to innovate.

Stauning

Stauning is a distillery built within an old farmhouse and it uses Danish peat, barley, and, unusually, rye to produce its whiskies. The distillery follows traditional whisky methods, such as floor maltings and directly fired stills, to produce both a smoky and a non-smoky whisky, as well as a full-bodied and rich malted rye whiskey.

FINLAND

Teerenpeli

Teerenpeli grew up on the back of a successful restaurant and brewery business and is the biggest whisky distillery in Finland, producing about 35,000 gallons (160,000 liters) of spirit a year. The business is family-owned and has been distilling since the start of the new millennium. Its whiskies include a malt matured in sherry casks, a 10-year-old single malt, a whisky matured for six to eight years in a bourbon cask and finished in muscatel casks, and a whisky matured up to seven years in bourbon casks and finished in ex-Madeira casks.

The Helsinki Distillery Company

This distillery started producing spirit in 2014 and, at the time of writing, is maturing whisky spirit and selling premium gin, aquavit, applejack, and a gin-based grapefruit drink.

ICELAND

Eimverk

Eimverk makes Flóki whisky, a distinctive and original single malt that is the result of years of experimentation and practice. The distillery is made up of home-produced equipment; uses organic barley; heats its stills with geothermal energy; and dries the barley over a sheep dung fire, a traditional way of smoking in Iceland.

VARYING STYLES

Traditional production methods are used at Stauning, in Denmark, to make peaty and non-peaty whiskies as well as a rich malted rye whisky.



DIVERSE DISTILLATION

While waiting for its first whisky, the Helsinki Distillery Company made applejack and a gin-based grapefruit drink.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

PORAN (THORAN)

FOUNDED 2009

OWNER Birgir Már
Sigurðsson, Bergþóra
Aradóttir, and
Jóhannes Valberg

CAPACITY Not given

ARCUS

FOUNDED 1996

OWNER Arcus
CAPACITY Not given

AURORA SPIRIT

FOUNDED 2016

OWNER AuroraSpirit
CAPACITY Not given

BOX

FOUNDED 2005

OWNER Mats and
Per de Vahl
CAPACITY 25,000 gal
(115,000 liters)

MACKMYRA

FOUNDED 1999

OWNER Mackmyra
Svensk Whisky
CAPACITY 132,000 gal
(600,000 liters)

SMÖGEN

FOUNDED 2009

OWNER Pär Caldenby
CAPACITY 7,700 gal
(35,000 liters)

SPIRIT OF HVEN

FOUNDED 2007

OWNER Henric Molin
CAPACITY 3,300 gal
(15,000 liters)

Poran (Thoran)

Poran (Thorán) distillery is a new distillery currently developing a single malt whisky made from naturally filtered glacial water, organic barley, and distilled using geothermal energy.

NORWAY

Arcus

Arcus was state-owned until 2009 and specialized in traditional Norwegian aquavit. It now makes different styles of whisky using imported German barley, including one smoked over beechwood fire. It uses a range of different casks including the ones used to make aquavit, with the aim of producing a distinctly Nordic whisky.

Aurora Spirit

Situated in the Arctic at the foot of the Lyngen Alps, this distillery has a visitor center and claims to make the purest spirit in the world, given the quality of the water. The distillery currently sells a 10-year-old Highland Scotch whisky provided by Gordon & MacPhail.

SWEDEN

Box

In the far north of Sweden in an old sawmill that once turned the surrounding forest wood into boxes for Victorian England, you will find one of the most exciting distilleries in the world. A team of dedicated whisky enthusiasts are painstakingly experimenting with different woods and peat types to make big, rich, and fruity malt whisky. The distillery uses only Swedish products and wants to play a pivotal role in establishing Sweden as a premium malt-whisky-producing nation.

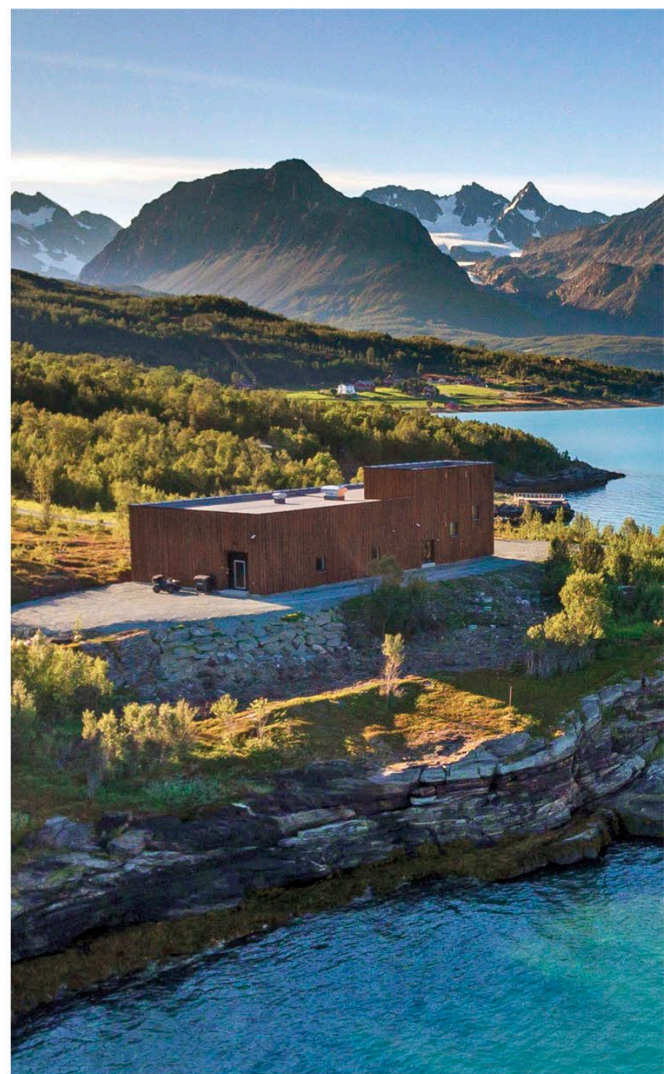
Mackmyra

The first Swedish whisky producer, now well established across the world, Mackmyra has built from a modest base a sizable distillery with a number of maturation sites, including

an old armory on an island off Stockholm, and a disused underground mine. The distillery has a number of core expressions, from relatively easy-drinking and light whisky to more challenging peated styles. But the distillery really hits the spot on its varied and exciting seasonal and limited-edition whiskies.

Smögen

Founded by whisky enthusiast and malt purist Pär Caldenby in 2010, Smögen released its first whisky in 2014: a limited edition bottled at cask strength. The distillery is a small one, and Caldenby says he has taken inspiration from Scotland, Japan, and France. He is responsible for every drop of the spirit and has adopted an almost scientific approach to making the finest malt whisky he can.



WATER IN PARADISE

The stunning location of Aurora Spirit distillery gives it access to some of the purest water anywhere in the world. Its owner hopes that this will be reflected in the quality of its whisky.

Spirit of Hven

Situated on the island of Hven, a tourist hotspot between Denmark and Sweden, this small distillery is part of a hotel and restaurant and is the brainchild of Henric Molina, a trained chemist with a deep love for whisky. The distillery's rounded and flavorful whiskies are released in several forms. In addition to the core range, some impressive single cask offerings have been released.

Other distilleries

Denmark, Finland, Iceland, and Norway—all have other distilleries that are either set to produce or currently producing on a very small scale. But Sweden has more than most, including Gammelstilla Whiskey AB, Gotland Nordmarkens, Nortellje, Tevsjö, and Wannborga.



TASTING NOTES

Although we have only tasted European whiskies that are relatively easy to find, many distilleries release in small batches or from single casks, and each batch will differ slightly. The tasting notes below are an attempt to capture the house style of each distillery.

DENMARK

BRAUNSTEIN SINGLE MALT LIBRARY COLLECTION

46% ABV

Nose Smoked meat, kitchen pantry, overripe fruit, youthful, with sharp barley.

Body Robust, assertive, and to the novice, challenging.

Palate Varying levels of oil, fruit, peat smoke, and drying tannins. Chewy barley.

Finish Big, with stewed fruit, peat, tannin, and spice.

FARY LOCHAN DANISH SINGLE MALT

48% ABV

Nose Fresh barley, ginger, green meadow, and some spice.

Body Rich, full, and mouth coating.

Palate This is a bit of a battle in the mouth. There is oiliness, fresh salad, some green fruits, and light smoke. Very much in its infancy, but with huge potential.

Finish Quite short, pleasant, and fresh.

STAUNING KAOS

46.5% ABV

Nose Earthy, rootsy notes, some spice, a whiff of smoke, honeycomb.

Body Medium, mouth coating, and pleasant.

Palate A traffic jam of a whisky, with all sorts of ordered chaos. Molasses, rye spice, honey, and peat all swirl around in oily splendor, with no obvious victor.

Finish Long and intriguing.



STAUNING KAOS

FINLAND

TEERENPELI 8-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Fresh with floral notes, citrus, and coconut.

Body Light and sweet.

Palate Honey, oaky notes, yellow fruits, and vanilla.

Finish Medium long, with caramel and oaky notes.

SWEDEN

BOX ARCHIPELAGO 2017

55.4% ABV

Nose A wonderful balancing act between peat, dusty wood, and sherbet-like fruits.

Body Very assertive, rich, and full.

Palate Honeycomb in chocolate, licorice, menthol, crystallized fruits, all wrapped in smoke. Flavors drift in and out, but it is never less than fascinating. Some oak and spice in there, too.

Finish Lots going on as this wanders into the sunset. Tannins, spices, smoke ... fabulous.

MACKMYRA VINTERDRÖM SWEDISH SINGLE MALT

46.1% ABV

Nose Poached pear and cream, toffee apple, mango, sweet toffee.

Body Medium and sweet.

Palate Tangerine, pineapple, mango, clean, and sweet. Canned fruit in syrup.

Finish Medium, sweet, with canned fruits.



MACKMYRA
VINTERDRÖM
SWEDISH SINGLE MALT

MACKMYRA MOMENT JAKT

48.1% ABV

Nose Fermenting apples, damp leaves, autumn orchard, grape, and chicory.

Body Medium and sweet.

Palate Plum, black cherry, aniseed, menthol, sharp chili spice, and earthy rustic peat.

Finish Long, spicy, and peaty.



MACKMYRA
MOMENT JAKT

SMÖGEN PRIMÖR SVENSK SINGLE MALT WHISKY

63.7% ABV

Nose Typically Swedish, smoke, grape, raisins, oily, balanced, and inviting.

Body Big, aggressive, and very full, and a nuttiness that gives the whisky body.

Palate Lots of smoke but also stewed orange and red fruits.

Finish Long, peaty, honeyed, and spicy.

SPIRIT OF HVEN SEVEN STARS NUMBER FIVE

45% ABV

Nose Peppery, salty, malty, and big. All very enticing.

Body Medium full, sweet, and balanced.

Palate Fantastic balance of a melange of flavors. This is malty, fresh, sweet, with baked apple, mince pies, an earthy undertow, and enough peat to give it real depth.

Finish Medium-long, balanced, and full.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

BELGIAN OWL

FOUNDED 1997

OWNER Etienne Bouillon

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 11,000 gal
(50,000 liters)

FILLIERS

FOUNDED 2007

OWNER Filliers family

METHOD Column and
pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

HET ANKER

FOUNDED 2003

OWNER Charles Lecief

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 22,000 gal
(100,000 liters)

RADERMACHER

FOUNDED 1836

OWNER Radermacher

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

COPPER HOUSE

FOUNDED 2010

OWNER Adnams

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY 98,000 gal
(450,000 liters)

COTSWOLDS

FOUNDED 2014

OWNER Daniel Szor

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 66,000 gal
(300,000 liters)

HICKS & HEALEY

FOUNDED 2003

OWNER Cornish Cyder
Company

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

LONDON DISTILLERY COMPANY

FOUNDED 2012

OWNER Darren Rook and
Nick Taylor

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

Western Europe

THERE IS NO PARTICULAR STYLE BINDING THE DISTILLERIES OF WESTERN EUROPE. THEY VARY SIGNIFICANTLY IN SIZE AND PRODUCE A BROAD RANGE OF SINGLE MALT WHISKIES.

BELGIUM

Belgian Owl

Belgian Owl was founded by Belgian whisky enthusiast Etienne Bouillon, and has grown gradually over several years. It started life in a suburban garage but can now be found on the grounds of a farm where the distillery's barley is grown. The whisky spirit, originally distilled on a portable still which had once traveled through France and Belgium distilling grapes into brandy, is now distilled on two stills brought over from the closed Scottish Caperdonich distillery in Speyside. Bouillon has distilled since the early part of the new millennium, and since then he has stayed close to a solid blueprint of making 3-year-old whisky matured in ex-bourbon casks and bottled at 46% ABV.

Filliers

Alongside whisky, Filliers produces a range of drinks and spirits, including genever and gin. Its whisky is produced under the name Goldlys.

Het Anker

With a history stretching back to the 1700s, Het Anker started out making genever. The distillery closed in 1914, but whisky production started in 2010 alongside a successful brewery operation. The distillery, under the watchful eye of fifth-generation owner Charles Lecief, now produces a range of whiskies, each based on the highly respected Gouden Carolus Tripel beer. They are distilled in traditional pot stills.

Radermacher

Best known for its beer and a highly respected gin, Radermacher also makes a 10-year-old, sweet, grain whisky.

ENGLAND

Copper House

Sited within the Adnams Brewery in the pretty, east England seaside resort of Southwold, Copper House distillery has successfully made award-winning vodka, gins, and absinthes. It is now making whisky. Initially, two whiskies were launched: a 100 percent malted-barley whisky, and a triple-grain whisky.

Cotswolds

Cotswolds is a sizable traditional distillery in a beautiful touristy part of the world. It makes a whisky spirit founded on the Scottish model.

Hicks & Healey

A partnership between Healey Cyder Farm and St. Austell Brewery, Hicks & Healey released England's oldest whisky in the early part of the new millennium. The distillery now has maturing stock that is considerably older than that.



London Distillery Company

Situated near the River Thames in London, Darren Rook and his team are taking an almost Swedish approach to whisky making. The idea is to look at how whisky was made in London from the start of the last century, experimenting with historical barley and yeast strains before settling on a new version of London whisky.

Lakes

Another purpose-built distillery in a picturesque part of England, Lakes promises to experiment with its malt whiskies. In 2013, Lakes launched a blended whisky called One.

St. George's

The first new malt whisky distillery in England for more than 100 years is sited in Norfolk on England's east coast, and was built from scratch by farmers James and Andrew Nelstrop. It follows the Scottish model closely on the face of it, and its core whiskies are a peated and an unpeated whisky at a standard 46% ABV, and at a stronger 58% ABV. But the distillery has made some stunning special releases using malt matured in sherry, rum, and Madeira casks.

FRANCE

Brenne

The whisky is made on a small estate in Cognac and is matured in Cognac barrels. It tastes like a sweet, fruity, light, and



WHISKY OF BELGIUM

Het Anker makes a specific Belgian-style whisky based on the highly respected national beer, Gouden Carolus.

fragrant malt that has the potential to attract drinkers normally averse to the charms of single malt whisky.

Distillerie Warenghem

France's oldest whisky distillery has been on quite a journey, since it was first launched in Brittany in 1987. The distillery's first whisky was a blend called Whisky Breton, and it was followed by an unexciting single malt—Armorik. But some serious investment by distillery founder David Roussier in recent years, has seen the whisky elevated to award-winning status. The whisky is distilled in conventional pot stills and matured in a range of cask types.

Distillerie Des Menhirs

Another Brittany distillery, but a very different one. Although the distillery has started making a small proportion of its whisky with malted barley, its chosen grain is *blé noir*, which means “black wheat” but is actually buckwheat. Whatever the technicalities, Eddu and Eddu Gold are tasty, sophisticated, and enjoyable whiskies.

Domaine Des Hautes Glaces

Situated at altitude in the heart of the French Alps, Domaine Des Hautes Glaces places great emphasis on the use of locally sourced raw materials for its malt whisky. The distillery dries its barley in the traditional regional manner of using chestnut wood. As well as malt, the distillery also produces a flavorful and unique rye whisky.

FARMYARD DISTILLERY

Over a number of years, the owner, Etienne Bouillon, has brought his Belgian Owl distillery operation on to one site on a pretty farm near Liège.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

LAKES

FOUNDED 2011
OWNER The Lakes Distillery Co.
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 55,000 gal (250,000 liters)

ST. GEORGE'S

FOUNDED 2006
OWNER The English Whisky Company
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 13,000 gal (60,000 liters)

BRENNE

FOUNDED 2012
OWNER Allison Parc
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

DISTILLERIE WARENGHEM

FOUNDED 1987
OWNER Gilles Leizour
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 22,000 gal (100,000 liters)

DISTILLERIE DES MENHIRS

FOUNDED 1998
OWNER The Le Lay family
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

DOMAINE DES HAUTES GLACES

FOUNDED 2009
OWNER Jérémy Bricka and Frédéric Revol
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given



DISTILLERY DETAILS

DISTILLERIE LEHMANN

FOUNDED 1850
OWNER Yves Lehmann
METHOD Alembic stills
CAPACITY Not given

GLANN AR MOR

FOUNDED 1999
OWNER Jean Donnay
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 8,800 gal (40,000 liters)

US HEIT

FOUNDED 2002
OWNER Frysk Hlynder
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 1,600 gal (7,000 liters)

ZUIDAM

FOUNDED 1998
OWNER The Zuidam family
METHOD Pot and column stills
CAPACITY 66,000 gal (300,000 liters)

DESTILERÍAS Y CRIANZA

FOUNDED 1958
OWNER Beam Suntory, Inc.
METHOD Pot and column stills
CAPACITY 4.4m gal (20m liters)

DESTILERÍAS LIBER

FOUNDED 2001
OWNER Destilerías Liber
METHOD Single pot still
CAPACITY Not given

PENDERYN

FOUNDED 2000
OWNER Welsh Whisky Co.
METHOD Pot and Faraday stills
CAPACITY 66,000 gal (300,000 liters)

DA MHILE

FOUNDED 2010
OWNER The Savage-Onstwedder family
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

Distillerie Lehmann

Founded in 1850, Distillerie Lehmann, in Alsace, is now in its fifth generation, and has not only expanded from its fruit liquor and *eaux de vie* production into whisky, but has started picking up awards for its single malt. Whisky here is matured in ex-white-wine casks.

Glann ar Mor

Glann ar Mor is another distillery in Brittany. It produces two rugged, rich, and flavorful whiskies: Glann ar Mor, a fruity, full-flavored, non-peated whisky; and Kornog, a big, peaty, saline-rich monster.

THE NETHERLANDS

Us Heit distillery

Situated in Bolsward in the northwest of the Netherlands, Us Heit makes double-distilled, single malt whisky in a Scottish style. It is matured in a range of casks, including those previously used for wine, Cognac, port, and sherry.

Zuidam

Zuidam distillery, in the village of Baarle-Nassau, is not much to look at from the outside, but it is a very special distillery indeed. It has been hugely successful, having been expanded twice, and at the time of writing it was undergoing further growth plans. It was set up by Fred van Zuidam and is now under the control of his son Patrick. It produces up to 600 different products, using the finest, freshest ingredients.

Patrick has a particular love for making whisky, which Zuidam markets under the name of Millstone. He has experimented with a range of styles, including a five-grain whisky, some stunning bourbon and sherry-cask whiskies, and a delightful creamy and coconut-flavored rye.

SPAIN

Destilerías Y Crianza (DYC)

When Franco-era drinkers were deprived of Scotch by shortages and high prices, Nicomedes Garcia Gómez founded Destilerías Y Crianza (DYC) to satisfy the thirst.

DYC makes grain and malt whiskies, and has small and experimental stills as well as larger, commercial ones, plus floor maltings, a bottling operation, packaging facilities, and even a major electric power station.



DISTILLERY ON THE UP

The whiskies have improved massively in recent years and are now winning awards and admirers across the world.

DYC was launched as a blend, becoming the third best-selling blended whisky in Spain, and, for a few years, the distillery was supplied by Lochside Distillery, which the company had bought. Now part of Beam Suntory, Inc., it has continued to make a blended whisky with Spanish whisky and Scottish malts.

DYC first launched a blended malt (Pure Malt) at the start of the new millennium, followed by a single malt in 2009 to mark the 50th anniversary of its founding. It now produces a single malt whisky regularly.

Destilerías Liber

Destilerías Liber initially focused on vodka, gin, rum, and liqueurs before turning its attention to whisky. It now produces Embrujo de Granada using water from the melted snow of the nearby Sierra Nevada mountains, and the whole mashing, fermenting, and distilling process is done on-site. Freezing winters and very hot summers have an influence on maturation, which is, naturally enough, carried out in ex-sherry casks.



WALES

Penderyn

After Frongoch Distillery in Bala closed in the early 1900s, distilling became a lost art in Wales. However, in 2000, just around 100 years later, Penderyn Distillery was established by a group of friends, and produced its first bottling on St. David's Day (March 1) 2004. Since then, there has been further investment and expansion.

Penderyn has two special "hybrid" stills and two more traditional lantern stills. The distillery was expanded in 2013 and 2014, with new stills and a mash tun. In 2016, Penderyn announced it would open a second distillery.

Dà Mhile

Dà Mhile whisky is produced by the Savage-Onstwedder family on their organic farm in west Wales. The farm is also known for its renowned Teifi cheese.

In 2010, John Savage-Onstwedder applied for and obtained a distiller's license to run a 77-gallon (350-liter) copper pot still. After three more years of building and license applications, distilling finally started in 2013.

The distillery is run by John's eldest son, John-James, who was trained at Kilchoman distillery in Scotland.

TASTING NOTES

Although most countries in Western Europe now make malt whisky, local ingredients and traditional regional distilling methods have ensured a diverse range of flavors.

BELGIUM

BELGIAN OWL SINGLE MALT 46% ABV

Nose Sweet citrus fruits, tropical fruit, and vanilla.

Body Medium, full, and quite delicate.

Palate Fragrant and fruity, with more citrus, some banana. It is all very sweet, fresh, and clean. Some honey and vanilla, and some milk chocolate. Spices arrive late.

Finish Full and fruity.



BELGIAN OWL
SINGLE MALT

EDDU GOLD 43% ABV

Nose A fruit bowl of a nose, with strawberry, plum, and cherry in the mix.

Body Rich, sweet, and a little flabby.

Palate Cherry and berry fruits dominate, some spice works into the mix, and over-ripe melon.

Finish Short and sweet.



EDDU GOLD

ENGLAND

THE ENGLISH—SMOKEY 43% ABV

Nose Chapter 9 in new livery, so a big, phenolic, peaty nose. But also lemon drizzle and young barley.

Body Full, assertive, and mouth coating.

Palate Oily growly peat dominates, with young and aggressive phenols, but there are some salty maritime notes, citrus, and some grape.

Finish Long and peaty.

FRANCE

BRENNE 40% ABV

Nose Sweet and floral, almost perfumed, vanilla, and sherbet.

Body Dances in the mouth like popping sherbet. A light ballerina of a whisky.

Palate Like no other malt whisky you ever tasted. Lots of sweet grape and raisin fruits, sherbet, and spice. Feminine.

Finish Soft, with more than a nod to the Cognac region it comes from.

ARMORIK DERVENN 46% ABV

Nose Fresh green fruits, chili, strawberry, and orange sherbet.

Body Light and pleasant.

Palate Fruit bitters, blackcurrant, pear juice, clean and fresh with razor-sharp spices. Almost like an aperitif.

Finish Medium-long and spicy.



ARMORIK DERVENN

THE NETHERLANDS

MILLSTONE 12-YEAR-OLD SHERRY CASK 46% ABV

Nose Dried berry fruits, orange, oak, toffee, honey, and polish.

Body Rich and full.

Palate Berry fruits, Christmas cake, sherry trifle, honey, spices, and vanilla.

Finish Long, fruity, and warming.



MILLSTONE 12-YEAR-OLD
SHERRY CASK

SPAIN

DYC SINGLE MALT WHISKY 10-YEAR-OLD 40% ABV

Nose Orange, lemon, grass, and macaroon.

Body Light, sweet, fresh, and pleasant.

Palate Summer fruits, with strong vanilla and malt notes. Toasted oak and some late spice.

Finish Short, sweet, and pleasant.

WALES

PENDERYN MADEIRA FINISH 46% ABV

Nose Floral, sweet perfume, apple and pear sponge, with dessert wine notes.

Body Flighty, light, sweet, and pleasant.

Palate Sweet and spicy, apple and pear, cream, honey, cinnamon, and melon.

Finish Medium, sweet, and more-ish.



PENDERYN
MADEIRA FINISH

DISTILLERY DETAILS

BROGER

FOUNDED 2008

OWNER Bruno and
Eugan Broger

METHOD Christian Carl still

CAPACITY 550 gal
(2,500 liters)

PFANNER

FOUNDED 2005

OWNER Pfanner

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

REISETBAUER

FOUNDED 1995

OWNER Hans and
Julia Reisetbauer

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 4,400 gal
(20,000 liters)

WALDVIERTLER GRANIT

FOUNDED 2006 (whisky)

OWNER Gunther Meyer

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY Not given

WEIDENAUER

FOUNDED 2005

OWNER Oswald
Weidenauer

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY Not given

WHISKY DISTELLERIE J. HAIDER

FOUNDED 1995

OWNER Johann and
Monika Haider

METHOD Christian Carl stills

CAPACITY 22,000 gal
(100,000 liters)

TECKER

FOUNDED 1989

OWNER Gruel family

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY 330 gal
(1,500 liters)

Alpine Europe

THE ALPINE COUNTRIES HAVE A LONG AND PROUD TRADITION
OF DISTILLING, BUT THEY HAVE STARTED MAKING QUALITY
WHISKY ONLY RECENTLY.

The five countries that we have put together as “Alpine Europe”—Austria, Germany, Italy, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland—can be linked because they have a great deal in common.

All five have a distilling history and have distilleries built around both breweries and vineyards. They have access to the same range of grains, enjoy very similar climates, and boast long histories of distilling a variety of spirits, including fruit liqueurs, brandies, and genevers.

Their efforts with whisky production have, until very recently, been patchy, but all five countries have distillers who have successfully adapted to the special demands of whisky making and have developed a willingness to work with unusual grains and smoking materials.

It is estimated that these countries have in excess of 200 distilleries, many of which are little more than a trashcan-size still in a garden shed, making a small amount of whisky each year for the local community. But without doubt,

some of the world’s most exciting new whiskies are being produced here. With the support of sizable investment in some cases, it is surely just a matter of time before they are competing on the world stage.

Here, then, are a small selection of the most promising and established distilleries.

AUSTRIA

Broger

When one of Broger’s heavily peated creations was named “World Whisky of the Year” for 2014 by international whiskey magazine *Whisky Advocate*, the distillery was truly brought to the world’s attention.

It is situated at Klaus, in the west of Austria close to the German and Swiss borders. All five whiskies produced here, including a corn- (maize) based whisky called Riebelmais, are outstanding. Broger traditionally produced fruit liqueurs, but has also been distilling malt spirit since 2008.



Pfanner

Pfanner is an acclaimed international producer of fruit drinks and fruit spirits. However, the company has built its own micro-distillery at its plant in western Austria and is now producing beautifully packaged and highly enjoyable clean, sweet, and fruity whiskies.

Reisetbauer

Hans Reisetbauer started distilling in 1995, using brewing barley he had grown on his land. The spirit is distilled in two copper pot stills, but the whisky made here is distinctive, in part due to maturation in casks that have previously been used for Austrian wine. The distillery makes three single malts: a 7-year-old malt bottled at 43% ABV, a 12-year-old with a strength of 48% ABV, and a 15-year-old malt also bottled at 48% ABV.

Waldviertler Granit

Owner Gunther Mayer first added whisky to his spirits offering in 2006 and he is now producing a range of whiskies. He experiments with different types of unusual grains, including rye, and two of his whiskies are smoked.

Weidenauer

Originally a brandy producer, Weidenauer is a family company that started producing whisky in the 1990s under the guidance of Oswald Weidenauer. The distillery's repertoire includes

Weidenauer Hafermalz Whisky, an earthy, sweet whisky made from toasted oats and matured in American and Austrian oak.

Whisky Distellerie J. Haider

This is Austria's oldest whisky-making distillery, having started distilling malt whisky in 1995. But the company has a history going back some 200 years.

Experimentation and originality are key to the success of the distillery, and it was always thus, with the first release being a rye whisky. Over the years, the distillery has released a range of whiskies, normally at 41% ABV. At present, the distillery makes its original rye, with about 40 percent malted barley and 60 percent rye, as well as a range of whiskies, with malt toasted to different levels to produce whiskies characterized by honey, nougat, and caramel notes. It also uses local peat to smoke dark-roasted rye and barley malt.

GERMANY

Many different spirits have traditionally been distilled in Germany, such as schnapps, brandy, and *Korn*, but in the last 30 years, inspired by the Scottish and Irish, German distillers have turned to whisky. It started small, with distillers buying grain spirit and maturing it themselves. However, the success of these enterprises has led to a wider demand and the appearance of large distilleries that solely produce whisky. Experimentation with grain and finishes are now standard, including the use of local German wine casks. Some are even exploring the effect of Germany's varying climates on maturation, maturing whisky on both the North Sea Islands and in the German Alps. With its rise in sophistication and professionalism, the German whisky industry is fast becoming one of the world's best.

Tecker

Christian Gruel was taught the art of distillation by his family, who had been producing fruit brandy for generations. He started distilling grain whisky in 1989, inspired by a visit to Scotland.

IN THE SHADOW OF THE ALPS

There are thought to be more than 200 distilleries in the five countries in this region.



BROGER BARRELS

Broger uses a still made by Christian Carl, a company known for producing innovative distilling equipment.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

FINCH

FOUNDED Not given
OWNER Hans-Gerhard Fink
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

COILLMÓR

FOUNDED 2006
OWNER Gerhard Liebel
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

PUNI

FOUNDED 2012
OWNER Ebensperger family
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 18,000 gal
 (80,000 liters)

TELSE

FOUNDED 2006 (whisky)
OWNER Telser family
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 1,500 gal
 (7,000 liters)

KÄSER'S WHISKY CASTLE

FOUNDED 2002
OWNER Ruedi Käser
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 2,200 gal
 (8,400 liters)

LANGATUN

FOUNDED 2007
OWNER Langatun
METHOD Pot and
 column stills
CAPACITY 160,000 gal
 (750,000 liters)

LOCHER

FOUNDED 1999 (whisky)
OWNER Locher family
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

PUNI DISTILLERY

It is not just the building that is unusual—its whiskies are made with three malted grains: wheat, rye, and barley.

The distillery, now run by Gruel's grandson Immanuel, is state-of-the-art. Production uses malt barley and locally sourced wheat, and there is a great deal of emphasis on the *terroir* of the Swabian Alb, a plateau in the region of Baden-Württemberg. Maturation takes place in ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casks.

Finch

Hans-Gerhard Fink is synonymous with Finch whisky. He uses heritage grains grown in the Swabian Alb to make his whiskies. The pristine landscape, ultra-pure water, and the "Al-bluff" ("plateau air") are his other key ingredients. The result is a unique style of whisky.

Coillmór

Gerhard Liebel, owner and master distiller of Coillmór, produced the Bavarian Forest's first single malt whisky. He stresses the importance of barrel management when it comes to producing whiskies.

The name Coillmór is Gaelic, meaning "great forest," and combines the Scottish origins of single malt and the Bavarian origin of the whisky produced.

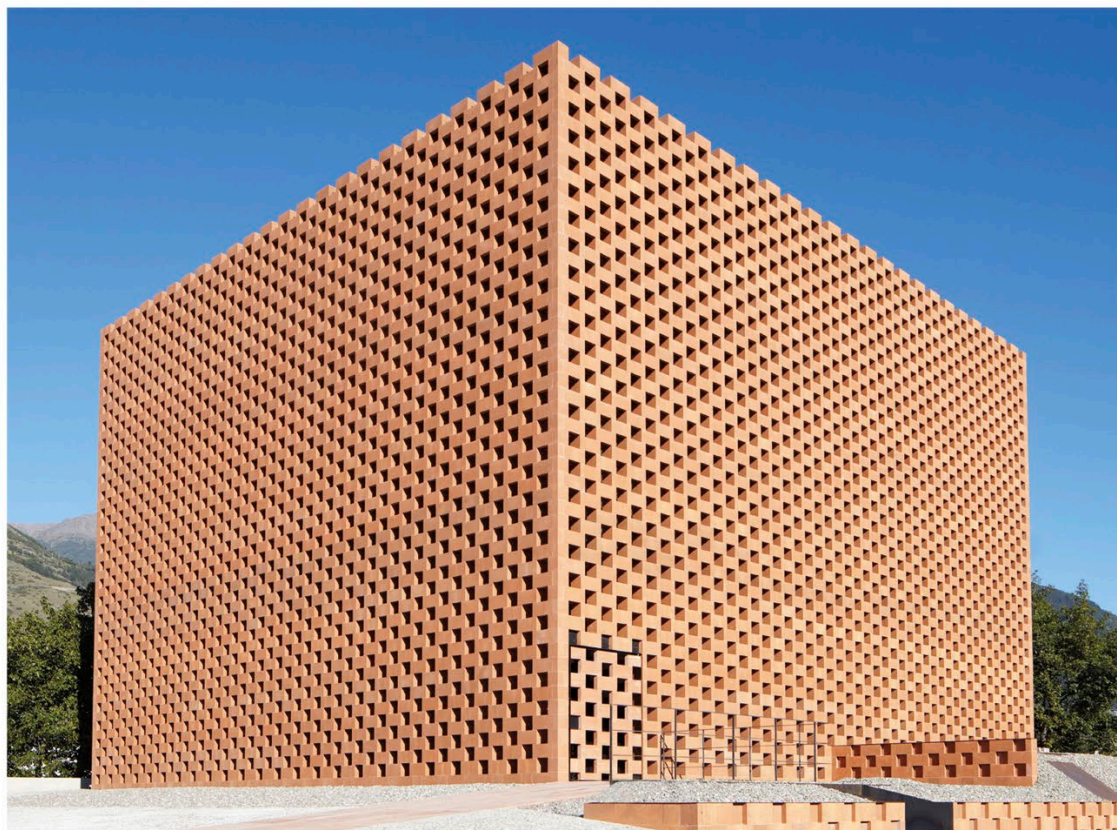
ITALY Puni

It might seem odd to put an Italian distillery in an Alpine category, but Puni is in the very north of the country at the foot of the Alps. The distillery, uniquely housed in a massive cube structure, was founded by the Ebensperger family, uses copper stills made in Scotland, and produces a light and delicate whisky suited to Italian palates. Some spirit is even matured in ex-bourbon casks that have contained Marsala wine. The spirit also spends some time in casks used to mature Islay malt whisky.

LIECHTENSTEIN Telser

Marcel Telser, the man behind Liechtenstein's only distillery, is a very likeable, very determined (and just a little eccentric) whiskey enthusiast with a passion for Scotch whisky and a burning desire to create a world-class malt.

He has come a long way from his less successful, early attempts at malt whisky, complete with a uniquely packaged bottle built into a wooden box. But at least it got him noticed. The production methods of the malt



whisky known as Telsington are traditional, but maturation takes place in ex-Pinot Noir casks, ensuring a distinctive style of whisky.

By 2016, Telser's whiskies were enjoying international recognition and picking up awards. Such is his growing reputation, distillers in nearby Switzerland and Austria have started turning to him for advice.

SWITZERLAND

Käser's Whisky Castle

Ruedi Käser founded a purpose-built distillery in 1995. He set out to make a distinctive Swiss whisky, but he installed a copper still to ensure a quality spirit comparable to that of Scotland. From that point, though, the whiskies take their own path. Swiss brewing techniques and smoking methods, as well as maturation in a range of woods and unusual oak types, have ensured that the distillery's whiskies are challenging and are an acquired taste.

Langatun

The Baumberger family has been brewing and distilling in the Swiss village of Langenthal since 1860, and the original distiller, Jakob, had the foresight to purchase a clear spring in the hills above the village, to guarantee a steady water supply. Today, that same spring water is used to make two outstanding whiskies, both using stout yeast from England. Old Bear is lightly smoked and is matured in Châteauneuf-du-Pape casks, while Old Deer is unsmoked and is matured in ex-sherry and ex-Chardonnay casks.

Locher

Established during the 1880s amid the Alpstein Mountains, Locher is best known as a brewery in the local area of Appenzell. Grain distillation was illegal in Switzerland until 1999, but the brewery had distilled spirits before the war, so when the laws were relaxed, Karl Locher, who had just turned 40, set out on a distilling quest to produce his own high-quality whisky to drink when he turned 60.

He did not have to wait that long. Most of the spirit is matured in beer casks for obvious reasons but small casks are also used, and the whiskies tend to be fruity and spicy. The distillery also makes a quite stunning malt, which combines floral incense notes with a barbecued-meat flavor.

TASTING NOTES

Alpine whiskies tend to be big and bold, and can often challenge the conventional view of what malt whisky should taste like—that is a good thing.

AUSTRIA

BROGER MEDIUM SMOKED SINGLE MALT WHISKY

42% ABV

Nose Smoked fish, orange compote, and sharp citrus fruits.

Body Medium, quirky, and acerbic.

Palate Lemon, smoke, hops, and malt, with some sweet honey notes.

Finish Long, malty, and smoky.

REISETBAUER SINGLE MALT 7-YEAR-OLD

43% ABV

Nose Light, wine, prosecco, some light melon, and grapefruit notes.

Body Light, quite thin, and refreshing.

Palate Yellow and green fruits, sponge, fruit compote, and pantry spices.

Finish Short and sweet.



REISETBAUER
SINGLE MALT
7-YEAR-OLD

HAIDER ORIGINAL RYE WHISKY

46% ABV

Nose Sweet molasses, honey, rum, and vanilla.

Body Rich, full, and quite gloopy.

Palate Zippy and zesty, with rye, spice, sharp fruits battling each other over a honeyed carpet, some nutty nougat, and caramel.

Finish Rich and spicy, with caramel and chocolate.



HAIDER ORIGINAL
RYE WHISKY

GERMANY

TECKER SWABIAN SINGLE GRAIN WHISKY 5-YEAR-OLD

40% ABV

Nose Fruity, vanilla, and some toffee.

Body Full, sweet, and chewy.

Palate Some apple, vanilla, toffee, and caramel.

Finish Dark chocolate, caramel, and some wood.

FINCH SWABIAN HIGHLAND WHISKY SINGLE MALT—PORT/BLACK LABEL

40% ABV

Nose Slightly sweet, reminiscent of bitter chocolate.

Body Smooth.

Palate Malty, subtly sweet, honey, and some port wine flavor.

Finish Long-lasting maltiness, honey, and port wine notes.

COILLMÓR SINGLE MALT WHISKY PORT SINGLE CASK

46% ABV

Nose Grapes, tropical fruits, peppery, and elegant port wine flavor.

Body Light, refreshing, and rounded.

Palate Light tropical fruit, persistent ruby port character, full, and warm.

Finish Full-bodied, persistent port wine notes.

ITALY

PUNI THE ITALIAN MALT WHISKY

43% ABV

Nose Cookie dough, green salad notes, fir trees, fresh mint, fruit jelly, and custard.

Body Light, fresh, sharp, and oily.

Palate Lemon, light clementine, grapefruit, cereal, toast, barley, and fresh straw.

Finish Short, light, clean, sweet, and cereal.



PUNI THE ITALIAN
MALT WHISKY

SWITZERLAND

LANGATUN OLD DEER

40% ABV

Nose Citrus fruits, red berries, chili spice, and raspberry jam.

Body Full, fruity, and chewy.

Palate Toast, malt, and liqueur fruits, then cocoa, dark chocolate, and drying tannins. Still lots of berry fruits, though.

Finish Long and fruity, with tannins and spice.

SÄNTIS SWISS HIGHLANDER (LOCHER)

40% ABV

Nose Spring meadow, fresh straw, and melon.

Body Light, sweet, gentle, and fresh.

Palate Honey, vanilla ice cream, mixed canned fruits, sophisticated, and evolving, with pepper and cinnamon, and cumin notes arriving late.

Finish Medium, fruit, honey, and vanilla.



SÄNTIS SWISS
HIGHLANDER

DISTILLERY DETAILS

AMRUT

FOUNDED 1948

OWNER Amrut
Distilleries Ltd

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

Asia

THERE IS A HUGE THIRST FOR WHISKEY ACROSS ASIA, AND SCOTCH, IN PARTICULAR, IS IN HIGH DEMAND. HOWEVER, INDIA AND TAIWAN ARE PROVING THAT THEY CAN ALSO MAKE FINE MALT.

Historically, there has been a large dollop of snobbery when it comes to the whiskies from India and the Far East.

Japan has well and truly overcome this prejudice after a lengthy period of producing world-class whiskies and spotlighting them in the west through critical acclaim and countless awards.

But it has been tougher for the whiskies from India and Taiwan, despite the fact that both have produced a large number of exciting and innovative malts. It can still be a big task to get dyed-in-the-wool connoisseurs to accept that both have the ability to produce game-changing whiskies.

India, in particular, faces an uphill credibility battle because it is at loggerheads with the rest of the whiskey world, and particularly with Scotland, over what can and cannot be called whiskey. The potential for whiskey to be sold in the country is immense: about a quarter of the population, around 300 million people—roughly the same number of people as there are in the US—is growing in wealth. They are demanding premium and luxury goods, such as quality whiskey.

India could eventually be the world's biggest whiskey market, and whiskey producers are acutely aware of this. While some of the world's biggest "whisky" brands are sold here, the vast majority of Indian whiskey drinkers drink a spirit that goes by the name of whiskey but is in fact a colored, neutral grain spirit, or in some cases, is even made with molasses as opposed to grain.

Those that do produce single malt whisky—there are three or four established Indian distilleries on the world stage, with mutterings about the emergence of a few others—have won acclaim for some excellent whiskies.

Elsewhere, Taiwan is home to the commendable Kavalan distillery, which in turn is part of the large food and drink producer King Car Group. It has invested heavily to overcome huge issues with the climate, in particular intense heat and humidity.

SUNRISE IN YILAN

Taiwan's tropical climate has allowed distillers at Kavalan to explore the effect of high temperatures and humidity on whiskey maturation.





AMRUT DISTILLERY

Home to a range of different stills, Amrut is prepared to experiment with its whisky production.

INDIA

Amrut

Bangalore-based Amrut has worked hard and demonstrated remarkable ingenuity to create an excellent portfolio of world-class and award-winning whiskies.

The company was founded in 1948 by J.N. Radhakrishna Rao Jagdale. The distillery is best known for distilling brandy made from tannin-rich grapes, and for molasses-based blends that were initially made as a cheap alcohol for the military.

The journey to being an exporter of malt whisky started with Amrut's decision to produce its own malt for its domestic whiskies. There had been no intention to export it until Riki Rao Jagdale, the grandson of the distillery's founder, attended Newcastle University in the north of England. As part of his degree course, he thought it would be an interesting experiment to try selling Indian whisky first in Scotland, and then across the UK.

It turned out to be as interesting as hoped; though the first attempt had its own set of problems. However, in partnership with fellow student Ashok Chokalingam, Amrut whisky was born, available initially in two basic styles—peated and unpeated.

Running a distillery in Bangalore presents its own set of challenges—the heat and humidity mean that spirit evaporates quickly, though the

positive side of this is that maturation is accelerated. The whisky is normally matured for four years; when one cask was aged for eight years, three quarters of the cask's contents evaporated. The resulting whisky (less than 150 bottles in total) was named Greedy Angels and was stunning—rich in tropical fruits, with the sort of aniseed, rancio-like flavor often found in quality single malt Scotch whisky that has been aged for 25 years or more.

What makes Amrut special is its willingness to think outside of the conventional box. Whiskies have been matured on a remote island off the coast of Germany, where the climate was considered to have been particularly favorable. One malt release was matured in both India and Europe, while for other whiskies the spirit was switched from sherry cask to bourbon cask and back again. The distillery itself houses an array of stills of different sizes, and the whisky makers there are experimenting with various types of casks.

Some distilleries cause a frisson of excitement every time they announce a new release. Amrut is such a distillery.

“WHAT MAKES AMRUT SPECIAL IS ITS WILLINGNESS TO THINK OUTSIDE OF THE CONVENTIONAL BOX”

DISTILLERY DETAILS

JOHN DISTILLERIES

FOUNDED 1992

OWNER John
Distilleries Ltd

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

KAVALAN

FOUNDED 2005

OWNER King Car Group

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 330,000 gal
(1.5m liters)

MURREE

FOUNDED 1860

OWNER Isphanyar
M. Bhandara

METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

John Distilleries

John Distilleries is another large company producing a range of products that has turned its attention to single malt whisky in recent years.

Due to its vast size, the low income of most potential drinkers, and a reluctance for domestic drinkers to choose home-produced, premium whisky over Scottish single malts, India is a tough market for the likes of John Distilleries.

So the company followed Amrut and launched into export markets first. It produces whiskies the Scottish way, with domestic barley and imported peat. Initially, the distillery launched a heavily peated, unpeated, and lightly peated whisky, but where it scores particularly highly is with its single-cask and cask-strength releases.

John Distilleries was set up originally in Goa in 1992, and includes wines and a top-selling brandy in its portfolio as well as a whisky that sells more than 10 million cases a year. Since its launch in the UK in 2012, it has started exporting across Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and North America.

TAIWAN

Kavalan

Few distilleries have made such rapid progress as Kavalan has. In just a few years, the distillery has become a world whisky power, and has challenged the likes of Amrut and Japanese companies Suntory and Nikka for world awards.

Not everyone is convinced (yet) and some have a dismissive attitude toward Taiwanese whisky because it is bottled so young. Only time will tell, but the obvious riposte to such a view is, “So what?”—if the whisky tastes great and can be made quicker than Scotch whisky, then all the better. There is a view that though the whisky is still relatively young, it has already become as good as it will ever be. If this is the case, older expressions are unlikely in the future.

Furthermore, anyone who has tasted the whisky from Kavalan, and particularly those in its Solist range, cannot help but be impressed. If you spend any time with distiller Ian Chang, it is clear that whisky production is in the hands of a very dedicated, knowledgeable, and serious whisky maker.

KAVALAN

Despite only entering the whisky scene in 2008, it has rapidly become a world power within the industry.



Kavalan introduced itself to the world in 2008 with two samples of spirit aged for two years, labelled “China.” One was a deep yellow color and matured in bourbon casks, and the other a deep-mahogany brown and matured in an ex-sherry cask. Both were astounding. Since then, the company has produced outstanding whiskies matured in ex-bourbon, Fino, and Pedro Ximénez sherry casks.

The distillery is part of the large King Car Group food and drink business, which produces, among other things, a highly respected and popular bottled water sourced from a natural reservoir under the distillery. This water, the specially cultivated yeasts, and the clear mountain air are cited as key reasons for the distinctive and fruity taste of the new-make spirit.

It is not easy to produce whisky in Taiwan. The owner called in international whisky troubleshooter Dr. Jim Swan to overcome the twin problems of humidity and heat. To ensure that the spirit recondenses properly, a special cooling system has been introduced.

However, the high rate of evaporation of spirit during maturation is unavoidable.

But the results from this impressive and sizable distillery—it produces nearly 330,000 gallons (1.5 million liters) of whisky each year and is growing—have established it as a leading player in the world whiskey market.

PAKISTAN

Murree

This could be the whiskey world’s best kept secret. Murree makes a range of fruit juices, fruit malts, squashes, beers, and spirits. It has also made malt whisky since the 1960s. It has an extensive website, with the somewhat cryptic message “Say ‘no’ to corruption” on its home page. Murree says

that historically it made drinks to satisfy the thirst of, predominantly, the British military.

A BRIGHT FUTURE

Both Kavalan and the distilleries of India have entered a crucial period in their long-term development. Both countries are now capable of producing older whiskies, and, with so many Scottish producers now bottling no-age-statement whiskies containing malt whisky well under 10 years old, direct comparisons between the old and new guards is inevitable. Thus far, whiskies from the New World, with their accelerated maturation times, have more than held their own. “*The times they are a-changin’!*”

TASTING NOTES

This is a snapshot of what Asia has to offer. The whiskies are consistently good and come recommended.

AMRUT

AMRUT FUSION 50% ABV

Nose Intense fruit bowl, with vanilla and honey notes.

Body Big, demanding, and mouth coating.

Palate Lots of citrus and yellow fruits, wave after wave of oak, smoke, and dark chocolate. An earthy undertow.

Finish Long, full, and fruity.



AMRUT
FUSION

RAMPUR SELECT 43% ABV

Nose Rich, fruity top note, toffee in the background, floral, honey, dried fruits, and hint of spice.

Body Medium, sweet, and fruity.

Palate All around balanced taste, with malt and creamy vanilla. Hint of fruits, such as apricot and apple, with a sweet and winey taste.

Finish Rich and long.

AMRUT PEATED 46% ABV

Nose Smoky bacon, malt, youthful barley, grilled kipper.

Body Medium full, tangy, and unusual.

Palate Ginger barley, orange fruits, wispy smoke drifting in and out, and flavored tea.

Finish Medium and fruity, with peat only making a passing appearance.



AMRUT
PEATED

OMAR BOURBON CASK 46% ABV

Nose Citrusy, especially orange and lemon, toffee, and some spice.

Body Medium-full, pleasant and fruity.

Palate Overripe melon, pineapple, sweet orange, banana split, toffee, sprinkled nuts, and vanilla.

Finish Rich, medium, long, and fruity.

JOHN DISTILLERIES

PAUL JOHN BRILLIANCE 46% ABV

Nose Orange blossom, vanilla, hickory, and clementines.

Body Full, rich, and mouth coating.

Palate Juicy oranges, stem ginger, barley, intense, milk chocolate, caramel—Mars Bar and pepper.

Finish Big, full with a mix of fruit and pepper.

KAVALAN

KAVALAN SOLIST EX-BOURBON CASK 57.3% ABV

Nose Classic bourbon notes: vanilla, honey, peach, and sandalwood.

Body Rich and mouth coating.

Palate A stunning mix of sweet tropical fruits, vanilla, honey, trace of licorice, sweet spices, and some sherbet in the mix, too.

Finish Long, very fruity, and delightful.



DISTILLERY DETAILS

BAKERY HILL

FOUNDED 1999

OWNER David Baker

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

BELGROVE

FOUNDED 2007

OWNER Peter Bignell

METHOD Bio-fueled,
homemade stills

CAPACITY Not given

Australia

NO “NEW WORLD OF WHISKEY” NATION HAS EMBRACED MALT WHISKY PRODUCTION WITH SUCH PANACHE AND SWAGGER. IT HAS RAPIDLY EMERGED AS ONE OF THE WORLD’S GREAT WHISKY PRODUCERS.

There is no one dominant characteristic of Australian whisky, and even the relatively small island of Tasmania boasts an array of different whisky styles. However, it is fair to say that, with a few exceptions, Australian whisky is not shy or retiring. If you have never tasted whisky from this part of the world, then consider that this is the nation that gave us Dennis Lillee and Jeff Thomson, David Campese, AC/DC, and Rose Tattoo.

As whisky production has grown from the start of the new millennium, a great deal of attention has been given to Tasmania. This is understandable, but the role of the likes of Cameron Syme at the Great Southern Distilling Company in Albany, Western Australia, and David Baker at Bakery Hill in Victoria should also be recognized. These whisky makers have been pioneers, making their own way into the world of whiskey.

Australia has a long history of whisky production, but at the outset the new malt whisky distillers made a symbolic statement of intent by rejecting government plans to allow distillers to bottle spirit younger than 3 years old. They wanted to show the world that they were serious about whisky and that they were seeking quality products.

At the same time, however, they have not been slow to stride out in their own direction. Often deprived of the world’s finest ex-sherry casks, for instance, they have turned to export pipes from the country’s long-established

port industry. Some have made these into small quarter casks, and the combination of port wood, domestic barley, and local peat has meant that the whiskies are proudly not Scotch.

Bakery Hill, Melbourne

David Baker is one of the very few Australian distillers who can lay claim to making whisky spirit before the turn of the new millennium, and he is the first to admit that he needed all his pioneering strength to keep his spirits up—if you will excuse the pun!

“SINCE WHISKY PRODUCTION GREW FROM THE START OF THE NEW MILLENNIUM, A LOT OF ATTENTION HAS BEEN GIVEN TO TASMANIA”



Bakery Hill is in Victoria, a state which has established itself as the natural Australian home for fine food and drink, but it was not always so. Baker had to learn as he went, using trial and error as he attempted to perfect his whiskies, learning the intricacies of mashing, fermenting, and distilling. There was no guidebook to help him out, and nobody with technical expertise to guide him through. And then there were the practical problems: if something broke down, Baker had to learn to fix it himself.

The distillery makes a peated and an unpeated whisky, bottling them at both 46% ABV and cask strength. There is a Doublewood edition and, in recent years, there have been a series of special releases, such as the Lost Cask edition—this being bottled from a cask that was incorrectly numbered and is a lot older than the distilling team had originally thought.

In some ways, Bakery Hill is in an odd position, partly because it is not in Tasmania, and partly because it cannot be considered part of the latest wave of craft distilling. Baker has

been content to go his own way and do his own thing, though he is enjoying the way Australian whisky is being accepted much more readily.

“I remember trying to get people interested and it was very difficult,” he says. “Now people are very interested, and we are seeing a greater range of people prepared to taste it, particularly younger drinkers and a growing number of women. We are looking forward to taking our whisky to new markets in the future.”

Belgrove, Kempton, Tasmania

Belgrove is going from strength to strength. Founded by farmer and sand-and-ice sculptor Peter Bignell, the distillery’s whisky proved to be an instant success, so much so that expansion is necessary. Bignell has accepted that his current, do-it-yourself distillery made up of milking equipment needs to be replaced and, at the time of writing, he was in the process of expanding to potentially three times the current output. Most of the whisky he makes is 100 percent rye made



LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

David Baker, owner of Bakery Hill distillery, had to master the process of whisky making by trial and error.



THE ALBANY COAST

Home to Cameron Syme’s Great Southern Distilling Company, Albany is in Western Australia.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

BLACK GATE

FOUNDED 2012
OWNER Brian and
Genise Hollingworth
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

CASTLE GLEN

FOUNDED 2009
OWNER Cedric Miller
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

HELLYERS ROAD

FOUNDED 1999
OWNER Betta
Milk Cooperative
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 8,800 gal
(40,000 liters)

HOOCHERY

FOUNDED 1995
OWNER Spike Dessert III
METHOD Column stills
CAPACITY Not given

LARK

FOUNDED 1992
OWNER Lark
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY Not given

with excess grain from the farm, but since 2014, he has been experimenting a bit, too. He has made peated whisky using two different types of peat, as well as smoking rye malt with a fire fueled by dung from sheep on the farm (a method used in Iceland).

Bignell's rye is matured in casks that had previously been used for maturing Tasmanian whisky, though he successfully experimented with ex-Pinot Noir casks, which gave him more complex flavors. He also makes whisky with spelt and oats from the farm, and has made a heavily peated whisky.

It is not just conventional whisky, either. "I have been acquiring hopped beers from craft breweries when they make a slightly off-spec batch, and distilling a *Fleur de Biere* and barrel aging it to become a hopped 'whisky,' " he says. "I have distilled slightly off-spec ciders, and fruit wines made from misshapen fruit."

Belgrove's whiskies are deliberately as flavorful as possible. Bignell aims for cloudy wort, hot and dirty ferments, scorched wash in the still, and very big foreshots. He digs well into the traditional feints, because he says that is where he finds the rye and smoky flavors. "A big foreshot cut means the barrel has less work to do," he says.

Black Gate, Mendooran, New South Wales

Single malt whisky and rum is made in Mendooran, New South Wales, in a distillery built by Brian and Genise Hollingworth who traveled to Scotland, Ireland, New South Wales, and Tasmania before fulfilling a dream of distilling themselves.



FIRST IN ITS CATEGORY

Belgrove was Australia's first distillery to produce rye whisky.



Castle Glen, The Summit, Queensland

Owned by the Australian Whiskey Company, Castle Glen is Queensland's first distillery and makes a 2-year-old single malt.

Hellyers Road, Burnie, Tasmania

Although Hellyers Road is located in Tasmania, it stands apart from the island's other distillers not just in terms of its location, but in the way it came to be established and the type of whisky it makes. While nearly all the island's other distilleries regrouped around Hobart in the south of the island, Hellyers Road is situated close to the town of Burnie in the northwest. It is a commercial distillery providing whisky locally, to the mainland, and increasingly to other parts of the world. It now exports to more than 20 countries—not bad for a group which started out as milkmen.

Yes, you read that right. Hellyers Road is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tasmania's largest milk producer Betta Milk Cooperative and was set up as an insurance policy against being swallowed up by an aggressive competitor. It



POT STILLS AT HELLYERS ROAD

The distillery was set up by a milk company (the Betta Milk Co-op) as an insurance policy against an aggressive competitor.

Lark, Hobart, Tasmania

Tasmania is to Australian whisky what Islay is to Scottish single malt: home to a number of whisky distilleries and a magnet for would-be whisky makers and enthusiastic whisky lovers alike. The reason that whisky is thriving the way it is in Australia is, to a large extent, due to Bill Lark.

Supported by wife Lyn and daughter Kristy, Lark first questioned why the island had no whisky, given that it had all the basic ingredients in abundance. Tasmania had not produced spirit since production was banned in an attempt to end the island's lawlessness in the 1830s. Lark then set about changing federal legislation before starting to distill on a small and ancient still.

The first batch of single malt was released in 1998 and soon sold out. Subsequent production has also struggled to match demand. Lark uses some malted barley smoked over peat, and the resulting whisky is complex, full-flavored, and with a distinctive smoky pepperiness. It has some rich apple notes and a menthol aftertaste.

The company has grown as the reputation of the whisky spread around the world, but it is not just the distillery's fabulous whisky that has made an impression across the globe. Bill Lark has been generous with his time and support for other distilleries and has advised several new distillers, helping to create a thriving and impressive Australian whisky industry.

The distillery itself is situated in the countryside outside Hobart and is surrounded by farmland close to the island's wine-growing regions. But the distillery also has a "cellar door" site on the town's pretty waterfront. Here are the company offices, but it also has a bar and retail outlet, with an outstanding collection of Australian whiskies. The bar offers Tasmanian whisky and beer as well as platters of local cheese. The distillery runs tours, including an immersive one-day tour, and hosts tastings and events. Whiskies include Lark Classic (43% ABV), a Distiller's Selection bottled at 46% ABV, and a 58% ABV, cask-strength bottling. Lark also offers some special releases, including a single malt matured in ex-apple-brandy casks.

takes its name from an old trail close to Burnie, named after the pioneer Henry Hellyer, who forged it out of rough bushland using the most basic equipment.

Hellyers Road stands apart from the island's other whiskies in other ways, too. While many Tasmanian distilleries offer rampant, big-flavored malts with the volume turned up to 11, some of Hellyers Road's whiskies have more in common with Scottish Lowland malts. That said, the distillery's range does include a peated whisky and malts finished in port pipes and ex-Pinot Noir casks.

Hoochery, Kununurra, Western Australia

Situated in the delightfully named Kununurra in Western Australia, Hoochery is proud of making 100 percent Australian products in a totally upfront and transparent way. It is best known for its award-winning rums, but it also makes a 100 percent corn (maize) mash whisky called Raymond B. Whiskey, which is a charcoal-filtered, smooth whisky bottled at 40% ABV.



HOBART'S WATER FRONT

The Lark distillery's offices, store, and bar are located here. They sell a wide range of Australian whiskies, beers, and Tasmanian cheeses.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

LIMEBURNERS

FOUNDED 2004

OWNER Great Southern
Distilling Company

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 5,500 gal
(25,000 liters)

MACKEY'S

FOUNDED 2014

OWNER Damian Mackey

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

NANT

FOUNDED 2007

OWNER Keith Batt

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 31,000 gal
(140,000 liters)

NEW WORLD DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 2008

OWNER New World
Distilling Company

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 20,000 gal
(90,000 liters)

OVEREEM

FOUNDED 2007

OWNER Lark

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 2,200 gal
(10,000 liters)

Limeburners, Margaret River, Western Australia

The opening of a second distillery by the company that makes iconic Australian malt brand Limeburners is a symbol of Australian whisky's huge growth in the second decade of the new millennium.

The Margaret River Distilling Company opened in late 2015, joining the Great Southern Distilling Company as a whisky producer in western Australia. Sited in a picturesque, forested part of the state, the new distillery offers casual, tavern-style dining, with local food on offer, as well as the company's Limeburners whiskies, its special Tiger Snake Sour Mash, and white spirits from the new distillery.

The distillery has come a long way since founder and former lawyer Cameron Syme fulfilled a lifelong ambition and completed a 16-year period of research to start commercial distilling in 2005. He had learned his distilling skills by traveling to Scotland and spending time with distillers there, and traveling to Tasmania to speak to Bill Lark.

The first whiskies appeared in 2008, and since then the quality of malt production has gone from strength to strength.

Limeburners is available in a large range of expressions, including sherry- and port-cask whiskies at 43% ABV and cask strength; a big, bold, heavily peated malt; and some special releases.

Mackey's, Shene Estate, Pontville, Tasmania

Damian and Madeleine Mackey started researching whisky in 2007 and moved to the Shene distillery on the Shene Estate in 2015. They sell their whisky cask by cask, and are maturing a triple-distilled, Irish-style whisky. Damian worked for Bill Lark, who has given his support throughout the project.

Nant, Bothwell, Tasmania

The Nant distillery is one of the country's prettiest, hidden as it is in picturesque countryside about an hour from Hobart. It is a fairytale distillery, with a brook flowing in front of it and a working waterwheel on the edge of the estate. Purpose-built, it has pristine Australian-made stills, and boasts pine and stainless steel washbacks. It was built at the start of the new millennium and is the model for the Kingsbarns distillery in Fife, Scotland. The site also boasts a bar area, a "cellar door," and a restaurant.



MACQUARIE HARBOR, TASMANIA

The island of Tasmania has ideal distilling conditions and has become home to a thriving whisky distillery fraternity that makes a range of whisky styles.

“TASMANIA IS TO AUSTRALIAN WHISKY WHAT ISLAY IS TO SCOTTISH SINGLE MALT”

Production began in 2008 and the first whisky was bottled in 2012. It did not disappoint, and since that time the distillery's whiskies have been picking up awards and accolades from critics.

The distillery's core range is made up of four malts: whiskies matured in American oak ex-sherry casks, French oak ex-port casks, American oak ex-bourbon casks, and French oak ex-Pinot Noir casks.

New World Distillery, Melbourne

Few distilleries have grown faster than the New World Distillery, which has hardly put a foot wrong since it was founded by former Lark employee, David Vitale. Located in Melbourne, the distillery makes Starward, Australia's fastest-growing whisky brand.

The distillery's first product was a whisky matured in Australian sherry barrels. Its second release, Starward Wine Cask, won the “Best Craft Whisky in the World” at the San Francisco Spirits Awards and “Best Australian Single Malt” at the World Whiskies Awards in 2016.



“Our core products are our greatest innovation,” says Vitale. “Melbourne's climate—‘four seasons in a day’—forces our barrels to expand and contract daily, and the whisky to age at a rapid rate in comparison to stagnant climates. Our whisky goes into Australian wine barrels from neighboring regions, resulting in a complex and uniquely Australian whisky produced in a relatively short period of time.”

In keeping with the Australian sense of adventure and ability to think outside the box, the distillery runs an unusual program developing multiple whiskies referred to as “Projects.” The production team spends about 10 percent of its time addressing open-ended questions, such as: “What would an aged whisky with the color stripped out do to the tasting process?” “How would people's eyes affect their palate?” “What if we brewed an alcoholic ginger beer and seasoned a cask of whisky with it?”

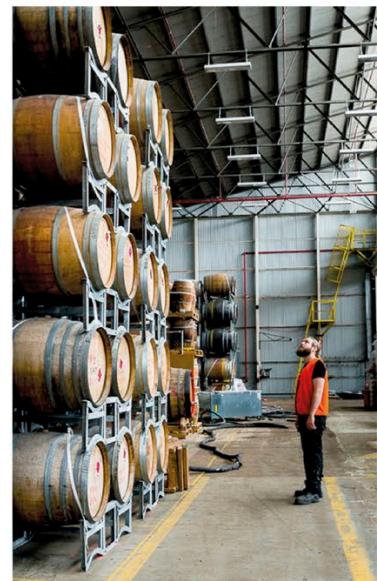
“The answer to the latter is delicious!” says Vitale. “These are always small batch runs and single-barrel expressions that aim to push the boundaries and challenge preconceptions around what whisky can be.”

Progress has been rapid for the distillery. It underwent a major expansion in 2016 and won the backing of Diageo in the form of its start-up venture capital arm, Distill Ventures. This will allow it to expand and export across the world.

“Starward was born from the desire to create a modern Australian whisky and then share it with the world,” says Vitale. “Our ambition is to do to whisky what Australian wine has done to that category around the world. A modern interpretation on a classic that speaks of the place it is made. This story resonates just as well in the laneway bars in Melbourne as it does in New York or London, and we have our sights on being the on-the-back bars of great drinking places around the world.”

Overeem, Blackman's Bay, Tasmania

The Overeem distillery began as a family-owned and operated business, founded by Casey Overeem. Overeem's interest in the



APERAS CASKS

Starward's core malt whisky is matured in apera (Australian fortified wine) casks.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

REDLANDS

FOUNDED 2013
OWNER Redlands Estate
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 2,200 gal
(10,000 liters)

SULLIVAN'S COVE

FOUNDED 1996
OWNER Patrick Maguire
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 22,000 gal
(100,000 liters)

TIMBOON RAILWAY SHED

FOUNDED 2007
OWNER Tim Marwood
METHOD Pot stills
CAPACITY 880 gal
(4,000 liters)

WILD SWAN

FOUNDED 2002
OWNER Wild Swan
Distilling Co.
METHOD Hybrid stills
CAPACITY Not given

industry started back in the early 1980s when he had his first experience of distilling at a relative's house in Norway.

"Many people had micro-distilleries in their cellars and I really admired them, so I started experimenting when I got home," says Overeem. Following years of research, experimentation, and the realization that Tasmania was the perfect place to make single malt whisky, Overeem secured his distiller's license in 2005. A trip to Scotland—the spiritual home of all whiskies—shortly followed, with visits to around 15 distilleries to gain a better understanding of the entire distillation process. Being a real family affair, Overeem's youngest daughter Jane Overeem is also hands-on and fully involved. Jane is the Overeem brand ambassador and manages the sales and marketing areas of the whisky business.

The Overeem distillery is nestled among the trees of the Overeem family home, and has a copper pot still made in Hobart. Production commenced in 2007 and has since ramped up to full production.

Overeem produces six whiskies in 22-gallon (100-liter) American and French oak casks: ex-port-cask, ex-sherry-cask, and ex-bourbon-cask single malts, each bottled at both 43% and 60% ABV. They are all matured for a minimum of five years before being released as single-cask bottlings. They are impressive, rich, and bold-tasting whiskies.

Casey Overeem has retired now and the distillery was sold to a group of investors who also bought into Lark, so Lark and Overeem are part of the same company.

Jane Overeem is still at the distillery and as it struggles to keep up with current demand the hope, going forward, is that production will be increased so that more Overeem whisky can be exported. More of the same or more so, then? Jane hopes so. "Our strength is in our simplicity," she says. "We focus on what we know. We aim for consistency and high quality in every single-cask barrel we make. Overeem whisky is highly recognized for this consistent quality. I believe the plan is to continue to increase Overeem production, ensure that the brand remains the same, and spread our distribution to more corners of the world. Export is definitely a focus for years to come." Overeem is already available throughout Australia and in the Netherlands and the UK.

Redlands, Kemptons, Tasmania

Redlands is one of Tasmania's best-known rural estates and nestles by the banks of the River Derwent. It was once a thriving hop and grain farm, but it fell badly into disrepair.

Peter and Elizabeth Hope bought the distillery and have invested a huge amount of time and money to restore the estate as a residential property, working farm, and whisky distillery.

HISTORICAL LOCATION

The Redlands Estate, where the distillery is found, is a tourist heritage site and is being lovingly renovated.





Whisky is being made with barley grown on the estate, and the distillery has a visitor center, holds tastings, and has a whisky shop as well as a retail unit selling other Tasmanian produce.

Sullivan's Cove, Cambridge, Tasmania

Few distilleries have risen from “zero to hero” more dramatically than Sullivan's Cove (once known as the Tasmania distillery).

If you have tasted any of the very early bottlings, the chances are you were a little underwhelmed. All released at less than three years, they were produced by the original distillery owner who had covered the stills in lights that flashed during distillation.

The distillery struggled on under a couple more owners before eventually closing down at the start of the new millennium. The equipment was purchased by Patrick Maguire, who had learned whisky making while working for Bill Lark, beginning a new era for the distillery.

It took a while, but over time the bottlings, bottled as individual casks, started to not just improve, but to become special. And then, after a couple of years of winning top awards, Sullivan's Cove picked up the title of “The World's Best Whisky” at the World Whiskies Awards in 2014.

Sullivan's Cove is named after the place where Captain David Collins founded the British settlement that would become Hobart in 1804.

The whiskies produced vary from cask to cask and batch to batch, but they are matured in French or American oak and tend to be clean, fruity, and fresh. The distillery also produces a Double Cask, made up of 40 percent French oak matured whisky and 60 percent American oak matured malt.

SULLIVAN'S COVE

The distillery has moved to a larger site and is leading the Tasmanian charge across the world.

The Timboon Railway Shed Distillery, Timboon, Victoria

Inspired by the story of a rebel distiller who made a single malt called Mountain Dew in the 1880s, this quirky restaurant and function room in Timboon, Victoria, now distills malt whisky for sale on site. It takes Scottish Highland whisky as its inspiration. It is possible to buy your own cask.

Wild Swan, Henley Brook, Western Australia

Wild Swan is at Henley Brook in Western Australia and was established in 2006. Since then it has won awards for its gins and vodka and has been maturing whisky.

TASTING NOTES

Australia produces a wide range of whisky styles, but most of them are assertive and confidently produced.

BELGROVE

BELGROVE RYE

42% ABV

Nose Dill pickle, chamomile tea, hints of boiled sweets, cedary oak, and peppermint.

Body Medium, quite delicate, and distinctive.

Palate Dry flavors of chamomile tea, sourdough, and unusual notes of dill and caraway. Finishes with a dry, mildly tannic note.

Finish Medium long, subtle, and complex. Aftertaste is subtle but shows good length.



BELGROVE RYE

LARK

LARK SINGLE MALT WHISKY CASK STRENGTH

58% ABV

Nose Rich and spicy, with nutmeg, cinnamon, toffee apple, and honey.

Body Very big, rich, and mouth-coating.

Palate Baked apples filled with mincemeat, nutmeg, lots of licorice, rancio, ginger, toffee, baked pears, and cream.

Finish Very long, spicy, with licorice and cloves.

NEW WORLD DISTILLERY

STARWARD SOLERA

47% ABV

Nose Ripe orchard fruits: pears, bananas, and apples, with vinous raisins and dried figs. Caramel, vanilla, and marzipan balance the fruit.

Body Full, juicy, and sweet.

Palate Rich, toasty caramel, crème brûlée, more fruit, pepper, sandalwood, nutmeg, and marzipan.

Finish Balanced, with fruit and spice.

SULLIVAN'S COVE

SULLIVAN'S COVE AMERICAN OAK CASK

47.5% ABV

Nose Oats, honey, almonds, and butterscotch.

Body Medium, fruity, and sweet.

Palate Fresh and clean, with dark chocolate, lemon, vanilla, butterscotch, hazelnuts, and ginger barley.

Finish Medium, nutty, sweet, and fruity.



SULLIVAN'S COVE
AMERICAN OAK CASK

DISTILLERY DETAILS

NEW ZEALAND WHISKY COMPANY

FOUNDED 2010

OWNER New Zealand
Distillery Co.

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY Not given

THOMSON WHISKY

FOUNDED 2014

OWNER Matthew and
Rachel Thomson

METHOD Pot still

CAPACITY Not given

New Zealand

DESPITE A STRONG SCOTTISH HERITAGE, NEW ZEALAND'S WHISKY-MAKING HISTORY HAS BEEN PATCHY. BUT SLOWLY AND SURELY IT IS COMING TO PROMINENCE IN THE WHISKY WORLD.

If one general theme emerges from this book, it is that the world of whisky is a healthy and vibrant one. Across the planet, established distilleries are expanding in size and range to meet demand, and a plethora of new whisky players are entering the market to fill in the gaps and to carve out their own niche.

It is a pretty universal picture. However, take a look at what is happening in New Zealand and you will get a slightly different perspective on the world of whisky: with a relatively small population, its ability to produce its own whisky has been inconsistent.

Whisky drinking would seem to be a no-brainer in the land of the long white cloud. A large Scottish immigrant population and ideal whisky-making conditions, very similar to those enjoyed in Scotland, would have suggested a thriving market for whisky, and, in the past, New Zealand has produced its own whisky.

Its main distilleries included Willowbank, which produced Lammerlaw and Wilsons, and Southern distillery, which made a moonshine and two whiskies called The Coaster and The Mackenzie. More recently, Thomson has bottled some whisky from Willowbank and has started distilling on a small scale in Auckland. Here, Thomson is making New Zealand's most exciting whisky spirit: a smoky delight, with the barley dried over a fire made with dried manuka twigs.

But New Zealand's story is a stuttering stop-start one, and is frustrating as a result. For many years, the light seemed to have gone out for whisky in New Zealand, and whichever bottlings were there tended to be decidedly average. There was no competition for the single malts from Scotland, which New Zealand whisky drinkers revere.

However, interest was piqued around 2011, when a couple of commemorative bottlings were released, one to mark the fact that New Zealand

WATER FOR WHISKY

The purity of the water collected by New Zealand's mountains (here near Porter's Pass, South Island) makes it perfect for use in whisky distillation.



was hosting the Rugby Union World Cup, and another marking the eventual success of the All Blacks in that tournament (the New Zealand national rugby team). They were vintages—one 16-year-old to mark the 16 years since the All Blacks last reached the World Cup final in 1995, and a 24-year-old to mark the time that had passed between the 2011 victory and New Zealand's only previous rugby World Cup win in 1987.

The man behind the releases was managing director of New Zealand Whisky Company Greg Ramsay, a Tasmanian who had been involved in both the launch of the Nant distillery in Tasmania and, due to his golf links with Scotland, in the early conversations required for the Kingsbarns distillery in Fife (see p.60). It seems he had bought up the remaining Willowbank stock and was re-casking some of it as the commemorative bottlings.

Auckland hosted a version of the international show Whisky Live, at which many of the Tasmanian distillers made an appearance. But it happened just once, and, although Ramsay's New Zealand Whisky Company won distribution with Gordon & MacPhail in the UK, the slow progress of the country's whisky, in stark contrast to that made by the Australians, is worrying.

New Zealand Whisky Company

The last distillery in New Zealand shut down in 1997, and most of the stock was sold off. However, 443 barrels and 17,600 gallons (80,000 liters) had been left forgotten in an old airplane hangar. The stock was eventually bought by a small group based in Tasmania, and it is this stock that makes up the New Zealand Whisky Collection sold by the New Zealand Whisky Company.

The Tasmanians openly admit that some of the stock was not in the best of conditions, but they have gone to a lot of trouble to re-cask it in quality wood, filling it into New Zealand red wine or port casks to give it a distinctive and unique flavor profile. The whiskies are now being bottled, put into stylish packaging, and are being sold round the world.

Though marketing of the whiskies has been inspired, success—hindered by the remoteness of New Zealand and the costs of shipping the whisky to Europe and the US—has been patchy. In one marketing campaign, the company pitched its whiskies against Scottish, Welsh, and English expressions in tasting competitions staged during

an All Blacks tour to the British Isles. In another, Managing Director Greg Ramsay took former distiller Cyril Yates on a world tour of whisky shows after hearing Yates had not received a trip to New York promised for 20-years' service.

Ramsay says he is still committed to properly reviving New Zealand whisky, and claims that distillation has begun. He has also said that New Zealand has other distillery projects in the pipeline.

Thomson Whisky

Thomson is a husband-and-wife team with strong links to the New Zealand music scene, and that is how Matthew and Rachel approached making whisky.

"We started Thomson Whisky the same way you would start a band," they say. "We got together and just started tinkering. It was never about taking over the world, or playing Wembley, but about giving it a go." The Thomsons started learning to make whisky on a home still, but eventually they bought some stock from the closed Willowbank distillery and launched it as their independent bottling. The whiskies have been a huge success, and now the Thomsons are distilling their own spirit on an old pot still they have renovated. Their range includes spirit made with barley dried over manuka twigs.

"A few years down the road and things have changed a lot," they say. "With a new distillery in operation, we now blend whiskies and distill single malt. Aged in a range of casks including ex-bourbon barrels, New Zealand red-wine casks, and some miniatures, our whiskies are growing handsome with age."



BARRELS AT THE NEW ZEALAND WHISKY COMPANY

Some of the whisky has been moved into top-quality casks to improve the quality. These casks include ex-New Zealand red wine casks.

TASTING NOTES

Most New Zealand whiskies are old, but can be surprisingly fresh and fruity. They are not as oaky as you might expect.

THE OAMARUVIAN 16-YEAR-OLD 57% ABV

Nose Tingling sweet red wine, port, clementines, and spice.

Body Cordial-like—quite thin but pleasant.

Palate Red berry fruits, sweet, blackcurrant cordial, some menthol, licorice, and pepper spice.

Finish Medium long, sweet, and fruity.



THE OAMARUVIAN
16-YEAR-OLD

THE NEW ZEALAND WHISKY COLLECTION 1992 21-YEAR-OLD 50.7% ABV

Nose Gooseberry, dried mango, and crystallized pineapple. All light.

Body Cordial-like, refreshing, and surprisingly sprightly.

Palate More pineapple, coconut, mango, sweet cream, sweets, and pleasant. Wood and tannins later on show the whisky's age, but they do not dominate.

Finish Medium, with spice and oak.

DISTILLERY DETAILS

JAMES SEDGWICK

FOUNDED 1886

OWNER Distell Group

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY Not given

DRAYMAN'S

FOUNDED 2006

OWNER Moritz Kellmeyer

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

GOLDEN COCK

FOUNDED 1997

OWNER Rudolf Jelinek

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY Not given

MILK & HONEY

FOUNDED 2013

OWNER Milk and
Honey Distillers

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

GOLAN HEIGHTS

FOUNDED 2014

OWNER David Zibell

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY Not given

LA ALAZANA

FOUNDED 2011

OWNER Nestor Serenelli

METHOD Pot stills

CAPACITY 1,800 gal
(8,000 liters)

UNION DISTILLERY

FOUNDED 1972

OWNER Union Distillery

METHOD Pot and
column stills

CAPACITY Not given

Whisky Around the World

IT WOULD SEEM THAT NOWHERE IS OFF LIMITS WHEN IT
COMES TO WHISKY PRODUCTION, AND MALT IS BEING MADE
IN SOME SURPRISING PLACES.

AFRICA

South Africa is one of Africa's few whisky-producing nations. Its whisky has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years, and its main producer, Distell, has moved from being a tentative exporter to an international drinks giant. It now owns a group of Scottish distilleries.

James Sedgwick

Distell Group is a drinks company that is on the move, and its South African whisky distillery is on the up. The James Sedgwick distillery was expanded significantly in 2009. Its whiskies have picked up a range of awards. In 2016, after 25 years, head distiller Andy Watts gave up his post to take on responsibility for Distell's entire whisky portfolio, which includes a tranche of Scottish distilleries and blended Scotch whiskies.

The distillery produces a gorgeous bourbon cask-finish blend. It also makes a 10-year-old single malt and one of the world's greatest grain whiskies. Bain's Cape Mountain Whisky combines honey, toffee, vanilla, and citrus fruits in a sweet, dessert-like whisky delight.

Drayman's

Moritz Kellmeyer makes award-winning craft beer on the Highveld, not far from Pretoria. Kellmeyer has a science background and has set out to create rich, full-flavored, fruity whiskies in the style of Scottish Highland whisky. His ability to produce whisky is limited by the time he has to dedicate to his beers, but a four-year malt was highly encouraging, with berry fruits, orange, and grape in the mix.

Kellmeyer also makes a blend and has operated a solera system. In this process, new spirit is regularly added to casks of maturing whisky, and whisky is regularly removed to be bottled.

EASTERN EUROPE

Golden Cock, Czech Republic

Golden Cock has roots stretching back to the 19th century. The company produces a popular plum brandy, and the distillery's whisky can be found in a young blend, as well as a 12-year-old single malt and a limited edition 22-year-old single malt.

MIDDLE EAST

Milk & Honey, Israel

Israel has an enthusiastic whisky following, and in recent years, the country's knowledge has grown. In 2016, a whisky museum



and retail outlet opened in Tel Aviv, and Milk & Honey Distillery, also in Tel Aviv, launched its first whisky spirit.

The distillery is a sizable one, purpose-built with crowdfunding money in a city center location. The distillery has a guest-reception area, offers tours and workshops, and has plans for a retail site.

The whisky, surprisingly advanced for its tender years, is easy drinking, sweet, balanced, and fruity.

Golan Heights, Israel

You would expect making whisky in a location such as the Golan Heights to be challenging, but distillery founder David Zibell had already successfully made absinthe before he turned to whisky production. His young spirit is highly encouraging, with rustic, earthy notes. It should come as no surprise that maturation is accelerated—David says that the temperature can vary by 86°F (30°C) in a single day, with very hot summer days followed by freezing nights.

SOUTH AMERICA

La Alazana, Argentina

The Patagonia region of Argentina is surprisingly well-suited to whisky production, and La Alazana is the first of a couple of distillery projects planned here. La Alazana is a particularly pretty distillery, its rural location

TASTING NOTES

James Sedgwick makes a range of whiskies, and its aged single malt, Three Ships 10-Year-Old can hold its own against the best of Scotland.

JAMES SEDGWICK

THREE SHIPS 10-YEAR-OLD
44.6% ABV

Nose Vanilla, light honey, citrus, almonds, cinnamon, banoffee pie. Traces of pear and tropical fruit.

Body Dry, warming medium-bodied, silky.

Palate Grapefruit, honey, some oak tannin and spice, ginger, lemon, and vanilla. A battle between the vanilla and honey on the one hand, and tannin, spice, and rustic earthiness on the other.

Finish Medium long, with citrus, ashy peaty notes, and nutmeg.



THREE SHIPS
10-YEAR-OLD

backdropped by mountains and the distillery set on a horse-riding center. Spirit is matured in sherry and bourbon casks, as well as local former wine casks. The first releases were light, clean, sweet, and fruity, with a distinct orange note.

Union Distillery, Brazil

Union launched its first single malt in 2008, and has made heavily peated and unpeated whiskies, serving mainly the local market.

“THE JAMES SEDGWICK WHISKIES HAVE PICKED UP A RANGE OF AWARDS”



A WHISKY CLIMATE

Patagonia, the southernmost region of Argentina, is not only beautiful, but has an ideal climate for whisky production.



DRINKS & COCKTAILS





SPIRITS ON SHOW

A new breed of drinks makers are showing off the flavor of whiskey.

COCKTAILS

It is widely believed and accepted that the cocktail is a US invention and, indeed, the word may well be. However, it may also be the case that the US has as much claim to the idea of mixing spirits with herbs, spices, fruits, and botanicals as it does to the concept of the pizza. And if you think about it, many of the classic cocktails are based around gin, an English drink style, or vermouths from Italy, France, and Germany.

Scotland and England are thought to have both discovered how to make strong spirits centuries ago. The difference between the two (supposedly) is that Scotland was prepared to wait years for an oak barrel to remove the unpleasant flavors and to add attractive new ones, while the English could not wait, so they threw in juniper and other berries, inventing gin.

It is not quite that simple, but nevertheless, gin in its primitive form is a cocktail, and it has its roots stretching back to the 17th century. At that time, water was a killer, and drinking alcohol was the best way of avoiding typhoid, cholera, dysentery, and any number of other waterborne diseases. The very fashionable London bar Purl is named

after a special beer served warm for breakfast on the banks of the Thames. The drink is even mentioned in Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (written in the late 16th century).

Plentiful grain harvests in the late 17th century and a subsequent lowering of grain tax led to a huge increase in grain spirit production. The era of gin production and the apparent medicinal use of alcohol (look at the link between alcohol toasts and health) led to the consumption of millions of liters of alcohol flavored with any number of ingredients.

The modern concept of cocktails as a social drink has been with us since the early 20th century. They were simple and direct, showing off the base spirit rather than hiding it, and they were associated with sophisticated clubs and bars. The cocktail culture was particularly embraced in the US where, in the 1950s, the Rat Pack and some world famous bars made the cocktail king.

Inevitably with trends, though, the big drink companies wanted to get in on the act, and before long pre-mixed cocktail liqueurs

CLASSICS

Cocktails went through a patchy spell during the late 20th century where they were associated with bad night clubs, tacky holidays, paper umbrellas, and sparklers. However, the sophisticated classic cocktail is back in vogue, often served with the barman's own twist. These are some of the better-known cocktails.

SAZERAC

Invented in New Orleans, the Sazerac is named after the Cognac it was traditionally made with.

YOU WILL NEED

¼ tsp superfine sugar
2 dashes Peychaud's bitters
1½ fl oz (50ml) rye whiskey
ice cubes
splash of Ricard or Herbsaint
lemon peel

tumbler (unchilled)

muddler

mixing spoon

cocktail strainer

lowball glass (chilled)

1 In the unchilled tumbler, muddle the sugar and bitters, until the sugar is dissolved. Then add the rye whiskey, several ice cubes, and stir to chill.

2 Pour a splash of Ricard or Herbsaint into the chilled lowball glass. Swirl to coat the inside of the glass, and then pour out any remaining liqueur.

3 Strain the sugar, bitters, and whiskey mixture into the chilled lowball glass, and garnish with a lemon peel.



WHISKEY SOUR

This cocktail is traditionally made with bourbon, and the lemon juice gives it a zestiness. A dash of egg white is an optional extra.

YOU WILL NEED

1½ fl oz (50ml) whiskey
1 fl oz (25ml) simple syrup
¾ fl oz (20ml) fresh lemon juice
ice cubes

1 Maraschino cherry

1 slice of orange

cocktail shaker

cocktail strainer

tumbler

1 In the cocktail shaker, shake the whiskey, simple syrup, and lemon juice with ice, and strain into the tumbler.

2 Garnish with the cherry and the slice of orange.

MARK TWAIN

This was the legendary writer and satirist's favorite tippie.

YOU WILL NEED

1½ fl oz (50ml) Scotch whisky
¾ fl oz (20ml) fresh lemon juice
1 fl oz (30ml) simple syrup
2 dashes Angostura bitters
ice cubes

cocktail shaker

cocktail strainer

cocktail glass

1 Shake all the ingredients with ice in the cocktail shaker.

2 Strain into a cocktail glass.

OLD FASHIONED

This started life as a soft drink, but has developed into a truly classic cocktail.

YOU WILL NEED

1 tsp superfine sugar
6 dashes Angostura bitters
2 Maraschino cherries
2 wedges of orange
splash of soda or water
2 fl oz (60ml) bourbon
ice cubes

muddler

highball glass

1 Muddle the sugar, Angostura, a cherry, an orange wedge, and a splash of soda at the bottom of the glass, so that the fruit flesh is crushed. Then discard the orange wedge and cherry skin.

2 Add the bourbon, ice, and top up with soda or water. Garnish with a fresh orange wedge and a cherry.



SIDECAR

Another cocktail often made with Cognac, the whiskey version makes for a great summer drink.

YOU WILL NEED

1½ fl oz (50ml) bourbon
1 fl oz (25ml) Cointreau or orange liqueur
1 fl oz (25ml) fresh lemon juice
ice cubes

1 slice of lemon

cocktail shaker

cocktail strainer

martini glass (chilled)

1 Shake the liquid ingredients with ice in the cocktail shaker, and strain into the chilled martini glass.

2 Garnish with a lemon slice.



TIP A classic addition to the Sidecar, which was mentioned in recipes from the early 1930s, was to add sugar to the rim of the glass. This is a nice contrast to the sour flavor of the drink.

BLOOD AND SAND

Inspired by Rudolph Valentino's 1922 bull fighting film of the same name, this is best made with quality blended Scotch.

YOU WILL NEED

¾ fl oz (20ml) blended or single malt whisky
¾ fl oz (20ml) cherry Heering (or cherry brandy)
¾ fl oz (20ml) sweet vermouth
¾ fl oz (20ml) fresh orange juice
ice cubes
orange peel

cocktail shaker

cocktail strainer

cocktail glass

matches

1 Shake the liquid ingredients in the cocktail shaker with ice, and strain into a cocktail glass.

2 Light a small piece of orange peel with a match to garnish.

MANHATTAN

One of the oldest cocktails out there, the Manhattan was thought to have been invented in the late 19th century. Use bourbon or rye.

YOU WILL NEED

2¼ fl oz (65ml) bourbon (though you could make this with Scotch, such as Rob Roy)
¾ fl oz (20ml) Italian sweet vermouth
2 dashes Angostura bitters
ice cubes

1 Maraschino cherry

twist of lemon peel

cocktail shaker

cocktail strainer

martini glass (chilled)

1 Pour the bourbon, vermouth, and bitters into the shaker, and stir with ice to chill.

2 Strain into the chilled martini glass and garnish with the cherry and the twist of lemon peel.



and spirits were hitting the market. However, dumbed down and mass-produced cocktails with the ubiquitous umbrella or sparkler in them took the cocktail elsewhere. It all went a bit schmaltzy, gimmicky, and cheap. There were great bartenders such as Dale DeGroff keeping the flame alive in the US, and in London the likes of Jonathan Downey and his Match Bar Group helped ensure the stylish staff-created drink remained in vogue. But ready-mixed

drinks, cheap holiday cocktails, and sweet concoctions where the spirit, mainly vodka, was hidden, made the idea of cocktails unfashionable and cheap. Certainly until the turn of the new millennium, very few bartenders, if any, were making cocktails with single malt whiskey.

That has changed dramatically in the last decade, though. A new breed of drink makers, adopting the title of “mixologist,” have set about

MODERN CLASSICS

Dale DeGroff is one of the world's leading mixologists. He developed his extraordinary techniques and talent tending bar at great establishments, most notably New York's famous Rainbow Room where, in the 1980s, he pioneered a gourmet approach to recreating the great classic cocktails. DeGroff has since been credited with reinventing the bartending profession, setting off a cocktail revival that continues to flourish.

BELMONT BREEZE

This was created to be the official drink of The Belmont Stakes horse race.

YOU WILL NEED

- 1½ fl oz (50ml) Seagram's Seven (blended American whiskey)
- ¾ fl oz (20ml) Harveys Bristol Cream sherry
- ¾ fl oz (20ml) fresh lemon juice
- ¾ fl oz (20ml) simple syrup
- 1½ fl oz (50ml) fresh orange juice
- 1½ fl oz (50ml) cranberry juice
- 1 fl oz (30ml) lemonade
- 1 fl oz (30ml) soda
- ice cubes
- 1 fresh strawberry
- 1 sprig of mint
- 1 slice of lemon

Cocktail shaker

Tumbler

- 1 Shake the ingredients, except the strawberry, mint, and lemon, with ice in the cocktail shaker and pour into a tumbler.
- 2 Top up with the lemonade and soda, and garnish with the strawberry, mint, and lemon.

DUBLINER

Of all the places, this cocktail was created for Molly Malone's restaurant in the Czech Republic.

YOU WILL NEED

- 1 fl oz (30ml) Irish whiskey
- 1 fl oz (30ml) Irish Mist Liqueur
- ice cubes
- lightly whipped unsweetened cream

mixing glass

mixing spoon

cocktail strainer

small wine glass

- 1 Pour the spirits into the mixing glass with ice and stir to chill.
- 2 Strain into the small wine glass and top with 1 in (2.5cm) of cream.

PORT WHISKEY PUNCH

Based on a 19th-century tradition of punch-style whiskey drinks. It is topped up with port.

YOU WILL NEED

- 1½ fl oz (50ml) Jack Daniel's
- ¾ fl oz (20ml) fresh lemon juice
- 1 fl oz (25ml) simple syrup
- 1½ fl oz (50ml) fresh orange juice
- 1½ fl oz (50ml) cranberry juice
- ice cubes
- 1 fl oz (30ml) ruby port
- 1 slice of orange

cocktail shaker

highball glass

- 1 Shake all the liquid ingredients, except the ruby port, with ice in the shaker and pour into an ice-filled highball glass.
- 2 Top with ruby port, and garnish with the slice of orange.

WHISKEY PEACH SMASH

Dale DeGroff suggests you save this drink for the height of the summer fruit season.

YOU WILL NEED

- 4 small peach quarters
- 1 sprig of mint, with 3 extra leaves
- 2 lemon wedges
- 1 fl oz (30ml) simple syrup
- 2 fl oz (60ml) bourbon
- ice cubes
- 1 slice of peach

bar glass

muddler

cocktail shaker

cocktail strainer

tumbler

- 1 In a bar glass, muddle all the ingredients, except the bourbon and ice. Transfer to the shaker.
- 2 Add the bourbon and shake with ice.
- 3 Strain into tumbler and garnish with mint leaves and the slice of peach.



reinventing the cocktail, heading back to the history books in search of exciting bitters, old recipes to recreate, and building up a fan base of drinkers who would follow them from bar to bar.

There has been a huge surge in interest in classic and historical cocktails, but the most exciting aspect of the trend has been the interest in British Victoriana and a massive growth for properly made craft gin.

Whiskey has also been a major benefactor, as bartenders seek to show off the full flavor of the spirit. Indeed, many see successfully working with single malt whiskey as a particular challenge. The whiskey industry, never slow to take up a commercial opportunity, embraced the cocktail trend, recruiting the best bar consultants and mixologists to create specific cocktails with their whiskey, and to serve as brand ambassadors to educate and encourage others.

MODERN

In recent years, a new generation of young cocktail makers have invented their own recipes, scouring old recipe books to unearth gems and give them a contemporary twist. There is no limit to the ingenuity and creativity being used, with smoke machines, glass domes, and froth-making machines among cocktail-making paraphernalia now available. Here are some simple recipes.

TALLULAH

This cocktail was invented by Ollie Irene of Birmingham, Alabama. Make the Peanut Orgeat well in advance as it needs to be left for six hours. The recipe makes more than is required for one serving of Tallulah, but orgeat will keep in the refrigerator for two weeks.

YOU WILL NEED

(For the Peanut Orgeat)
9oz (250g) peanuts
10oz (300g) superfine sugar
10fl oz (300ml) water
1fl oz (30ml) orange flower water
1fl oz (30ml) brandy or vodka

food processor

saucepan

cheesecloth

(For the Tallulah)

1fl oz (30ml) peanut orgeat
1.8fl oz (55ml) bourbon or Jack Daniel's
ice cubes
Coca-Cola (as required)
3 or 4 roasted peanuts

tumbler

Peanut Orgeat

- 1 Blend the peanuts in a food processor.
- 2 Combine the sugar and water in a saucepan over medium heat, stirring constantly until the sugar dissolves. Allow the mixture to boil for three minutes, then add the blended peanuts.
- 3 Lower the heat, allowing the mixture to simmer for several more minutes, then gradually increase the temperature. When the mixture is about to boil, remove from the heat and cover.
- 4 Let the mixture sit for at least six hours. Then strain it through a cheesecloth, discarding the peanuts. Add the orange flower water and brandy or vodka.

Tallulah

- 1 Pour the peanut orgeat and bourbon into a tumbler over ice.
- 2 Stir, top with Coca-Cola, and garnish with the roasted peanuts.

LYNCHBURG LEMONADE

A long drink named after the Tennessee town that is home to the Jack Daniel's distillery.

YOU WILL NEED

1fl oz (30ml) Jack Daniel's
1fl oz (30ml) triple sec
1fl oz (30ml) sweet and sour mix
1½ cups ice cubes
2fl oz (60ml) lemon-lime soda
1 lemon wheel

cocktail shaker

cocktail strainer

hurricane glass

- 1 Combine the Jack Daniel's, triple sec, and sweet and sour mix in a hurricane glass.
- 2 Add the ice and top with lemon-lime soda.
- 3 Garnish with the lemon wheel.



HOT BLOODED

This spicy cocktail can also be made with fresh ginger instead of jalapeño.

YOU WILL NEED

8fl oz (235ml) freshly squeezed blood orange juice
2 tbsp agave syrup
4fl oz (120ml) Speyside whisky
1 medium-size jalapeño, finely chopped with stem removed (about 2 tbsp)
ice cubes

cocktail shaker

cocktail strainer

highball glass

- 1 Add the blood orange juice, agave syrup, and whisky to the cocktail shaker, and stir until combined.
- 2 Add the jalapeño and, replacing the cap, shake three times.
- 3 Strain to remove the jalapeño, pouring the liquid into a highball glass filled with ice.

THE IRISH ROYALE

Simply replace the brandy in a traditional Royale with Irish whiskey. It works well with Scotch, too.

YOU WILL NEED

1 sugar cube
2 dashes Angostura bitters
1½fl oz (45ml) Jameson's Irish whiskey
chilled Champagne (as required)

Champagne flute

- 1 Place the sugar cube in the bottom of the Champagne flute and douse it with the Angostura bitters.
- 2 Add the Jameson's Irish whiskey and top up with Champagne.

BOURBON SWEET TEA

This is a barbecue favorite, and is enjoyed by sports fans across the US. Make jugs of it.

YOU WILL NEED

24fl oz (720ml) water
4 oz (113g) superfine sugar
2 or 3 black tea bags
1 lemon, sliced into wedges, plus extra to garnish
1 lime, sliced into wedges
1 orange, sliced into wedges
8fl oz (240ml) bourbon

saucepan

wooden spoon

large heatproof jar

collins glass

- 1 Combine the water and sugar in the small saucepan and bring to the boil, stirring to dissolve the sugar.
- 2 Pour the mixture into the jar, add the tea bags, and let it steep for 5–10 minutes depending on how strong you want your tea.
- 3 Remove the tea bags and add lemon, lime, and orange wedges.
- 4 Pour in the bourbon, cover the jar, and chill.
- 5 Serve in collins glass garnished with thin lemon wheels.



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