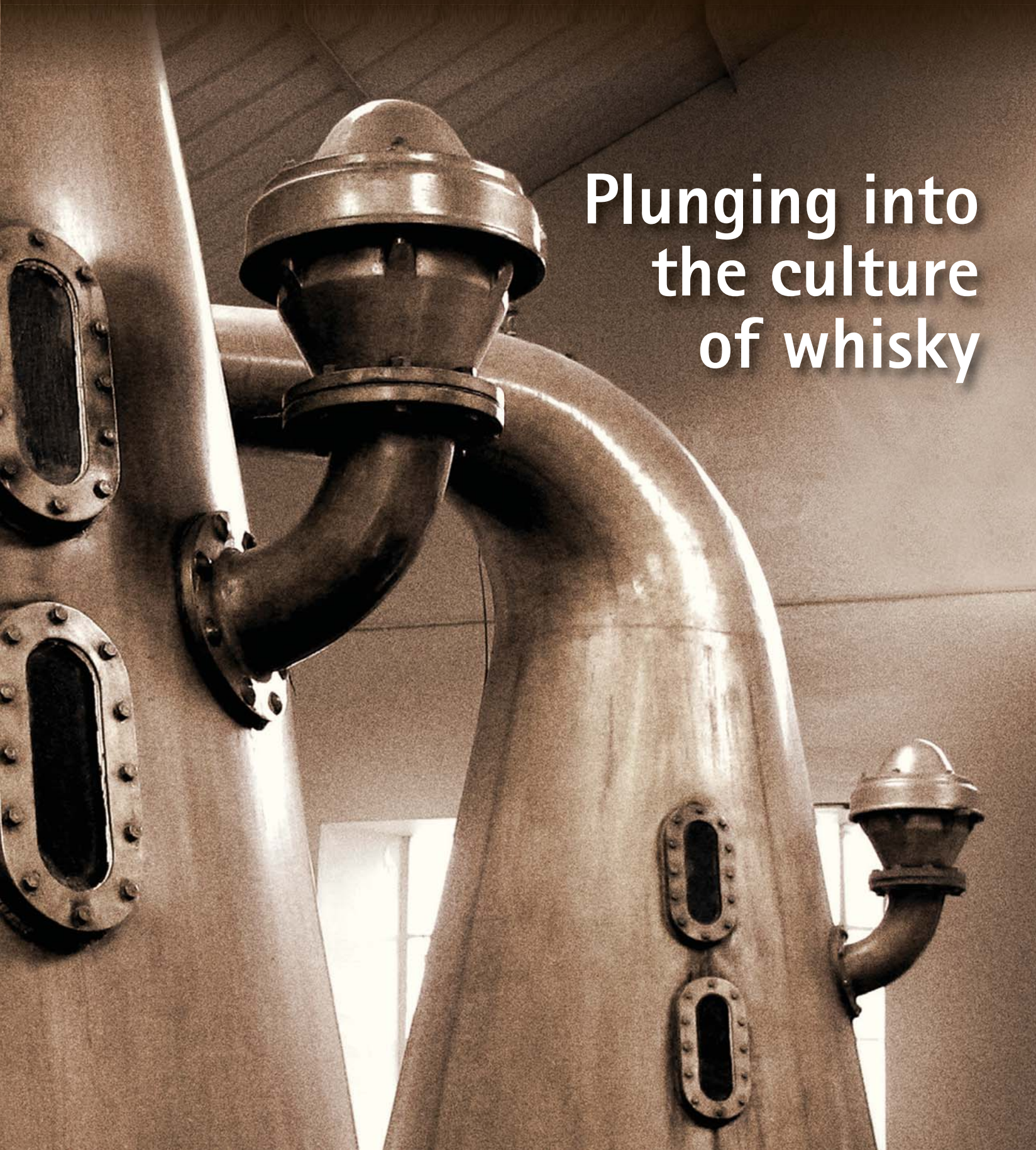


**MEDIA
PLANET**
10 NOVEMBER 2007

SCOTCH WHISKY

Plunging into
the culture
of whisky



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Ian Buxton, author, *Guide to Scotch Whisky*

About the author

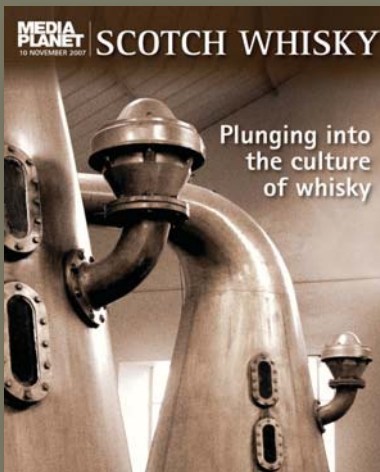
Ian Buxton is well-placed to write or talk about whisky and drinks. A former marketing director of Glenmorangie, Scotland's long-time favourite single malt, he lives in Perthshire on the site of a former distillery from where he conducts a love affair with Scotland's national drink!

Ian began work in the Scotch Whisky industry in 1987 and, since 1991, has run his own consultancy business.

He was elected a Keeper of the Quaich in 1991, the highest honour of the Scotch Whisky industry and is a member of the international tasting panel for Whisky Magazine's 'Best of the Best' annual awards and conference director of the World Whiskies Conference (www.whiskyconference.com)

As well as giving lectures, presentations and tastings on whisky, he writes regular columns for Whisky Magazine, the leading UK consumer title, and regularly contributes to titles such as The Malt Whisky Yearbook, The Keeper, Marketing, Scottish Field, Magnum Wine Intelligence and elsewhere.

In 2002 his book *Scotch Whisky: History, Hints and Tips* was published by Powerfresh and he was one of the principal co-authors of *The Whisky Companion* (2005). He recently completed a new edition of Aeneas MacDonald's 1930 classic *Whisky* (pub. October 2006, Canongate Books). Currently he is a co-author of the *Eyewitness Whisky* for Dorling Kindersley and working on a history of John Dewar & Sons.



SCOTCH WHISKY

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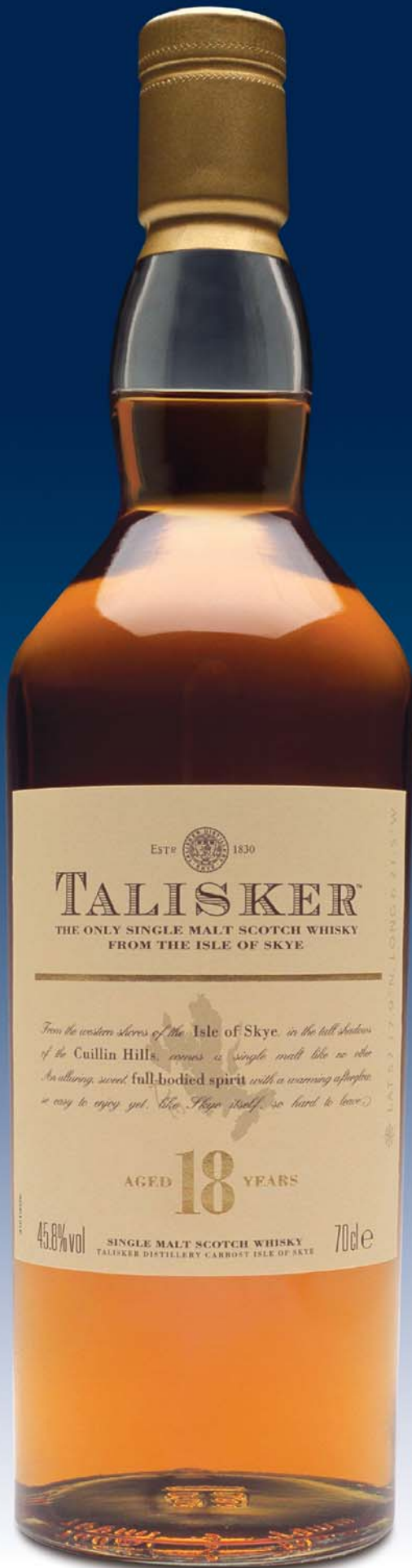
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Introducing the basics

Ian Buxton on the vocabulary of Scotch Whisky

With Scotch Whisky entering something of a golden age – 2006 was reputedly its best year ever – it's timely to look at the drink the Scots fondly know as "the cratur".

It would be easy to be confused by the plethora of labels and descriptors but in reality it's straight forward. There are just three types of Scotch whisky, though in all likelihood you'll only ever encounter two: blended Scotch whisky and single malt whisky.

Blended Scotch whisky is the mainstay of the business: over 90 per cent of all the Scotch whisky sold round the world is a blend. Familiar brands such as Johnnie Walker, Bell's, The Famous Grouse and more obscure names such as Asyla (the plural of 'asylum', don't you know) and Pig's Nose are all blends. That is to say, a mixture of grain whisky, the

lighter base spirit that's produced on an industrial scale, and the more strongly flavoured single malts with their romantic history and provenance.

Single malts, as their name suggests, are the product of just one named distillery (Glenmorangie, Highland Park etc) and are made solely from malted barley (grain whisky uses cheaper ingredients) in a pot still, on a batch basis. It's a more labour intensive, time-consuming and costly process – hence the higher price of the typical single malt whisky.

Grain whisky is the unknown third type of whisky. Essential to the taste of blended Scotch it's hardly

marketed on its own account, with Diageo's Cameron Brig one of the very few representatives of this style available for sale.

Other descriptors represent a refinement of these basic types. A 'Single Cask' whisky is just that – the content of one single cask, bottled in a limited run to showcase the contents of a barrel the distiller considers particularly fine.

'Non chill filtered', sought after by single malt enthusiasts, describes something which hasn't happened to the whisky. Chill filtration is used to 'polish' whisky prior to bottling so that it appears crystal clear and does not go cloudy with the addition of ice. Connoisseurs maintain that it strips flavour from the product and accept the possibility of a slight haze as a mark of quality. Not that they would drink it over ice anyway.

These three simple types of whisky have given birth to an industry which as Bryan Donaghey, managing director of Diageo Scotland, observes: "It is often forgotten just how big the Scotch whisky industry is up here. It employs more than 9,000 and contributes £800m to the Exchequer every year."

The legal definition of Scotch whisky

Scotch whisky has been defined in United Kingdom (UK) law since 1909 and recognised in EU legislation since 1989. The Scotch Whisky Act 1988 and the orders made under it, which came into effect in June 1990 state "Scotch Whisky" means whisky:

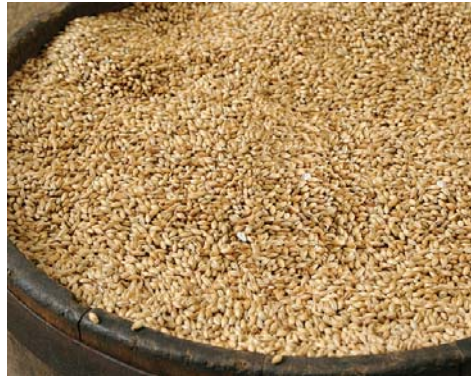
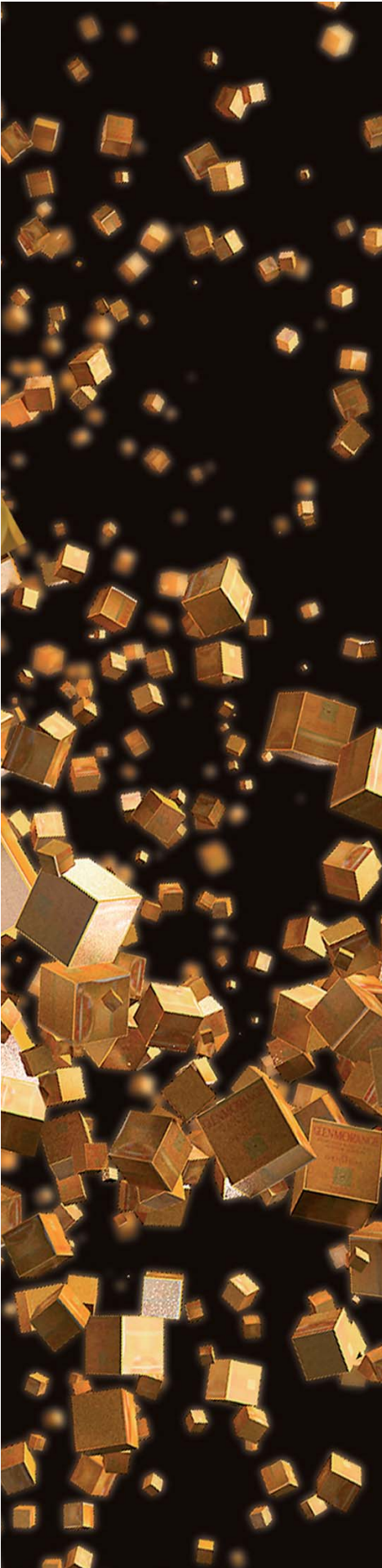
- which has been produced at a distillery in Scotland from water and malted barley (to which only whole grains of other cereals may be added) all of which have been: processed at that distillery into a mash; converted to a fermentable substrate only by endogenous enzyme systems; and fermented only by the addition of yeast.
 - which has been distilled at an alcoholic strength by volume of less than 94.8 per cent so that the distillate has an aroma and taste derived from the raw materials used in, and the method of, its production.
 - which has been matured in an excise warehouse in Scotland in oak casks of a capacity not exceeding 700 litres, the period of that maturation being not less than three years.
 - which retains the colour, aroma and taste derived from the raw materials used in, and the method of, its production and maturation.
 - to which no substance other than water and spirit caramel has been added.
- Both the Scotch Whisky Act and EU legislation specify a minimum bottling strength of 40 per cent by volume.



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Making whisky

Ian Buxton looks into the secrets of the water of life.

Whisky distillation goes back as far as 7000 BC in either China or North Africa. Eventually, within the last thousand years, the technique reached Ireland, and was brought over to Scotland by monks following St Patrick and St Columba. The earliest written mention of whisky in Scottish history dates to 1494 and Scots believe that the art of whisky-making has reached its zenith with the rich variety of Scotch whiskies.

Indeed, the very word comes from the Gaelic phrase 'uisge beatha', meaning water of life, anglicised as 'whisky'. Whisky is produced in a number of countries around the world using a variety of cereals, but only whisky made from a tightly-controlled list of ingredients and distilled and aged in Scotland for a minimum of three years can bear the description of 'Scotch whisky'.

There are two main types of Scotch whisky - malt whisky or grain whisky. Malt uses the distillate of barley alone, while grain whisky is made mainly with wheat or maize.

Whilst the distillation of all single malts is essentially the same, no two will taste the same. Each distillery reflects several individual characteristics. The natural ingredients, the shape of the stills, the distiller's

own processes and the wood used for maturation all add to the complexity of each single malt. When the skill of the blender is added to this rich diversity the permutations of flavour become almost limitless.

Single malt whisky is made from just three ingredients - barley, water and yeast.

Barley is steeped in water, to start the germination process. Over about five days, germination breaks down the protein, releases the starch and synthesises the enzymes. The barley is now called 'green malt' which is dried to halt the germination process. At this stage peat can be added to the kiln's fuel to give the whisky a more smoky flavour. Kilning turns the green malt into 'malted barley'.

This is then ground up to make 'grist', exposing more of the starch, and then mixed with hot water. As the starch is converted to sugar, the grist becomes 'worts'.

The sugary worts are transferred to 'washbacks' (the Scotch whisky name for fermentation vessels) where they are turned into alcohol by the addition of yeast. After two days the alcohol reaches a concentration of around 8 per cent and is called the 'wash'.

The wash is now boiled up twice in copper stills but, as alcohol boils at a lower temperature than water, it can be condensed to give the 'new made spirit'. The new make is transferred to the oak casks or barrels in which it will mature. These barrels have usually been used previously to mature sherry or bourbon, which mellows the wood and imparts additional flavour.

Once the casks are filled they are rolled into the warehouse to slowly mature over several years, growing in complexity and depth of flavour....

...and then we drink it!

Finishing Glenmorangie

As it runs from the still for a second time, the liquid which will become Scotch whisky is known as 'new make spirit'. This is then transferred to the barrels in which it will mature. These vessels have usually been used previously to mature sherry or bourbon, mellowing the wood and imparting additional flavour over and above the inherent characteristics of the oak itself.

Once the casks are filled they are rolled into the warehouse to slowly mature over several years, growing in complexity and depth of flavour. Following this, 'finishing' may add extra depth and sophistication to the flavour.

The Glenmorangie company, now part of the French luxury marketing group LVMH, pioneered finishing with the 1991 launch of their Port Wood Finish. As the name suggests, a Glenmorangie which spent the final months of its life in a cask formerly used for port.

Their lead was soon followed by others. The Balvenie released a well-regarded Port Wood Finish and the independent bottlers clambered aboard this bandwagon as the finishing concept captured the imagination of malt whisky enthusiasts.

The small Islay distillery at Bruichladdich was particularly active. This independently-owned (and independently minded) operation has management with close links to the French wine trade and a number of unusual bottlings followed the re-opening of the distillery, including a Chateau d'Yquem finish and a pink whisky, named Fleurtaitions.

Other releases include a remarkable Glenkinchie single malt matured for half its 20 years in former brandy casks. This started life as an experiment, but the company has been so delighted with the results that a limited edition of 5,124 bottles has just been released at £70.

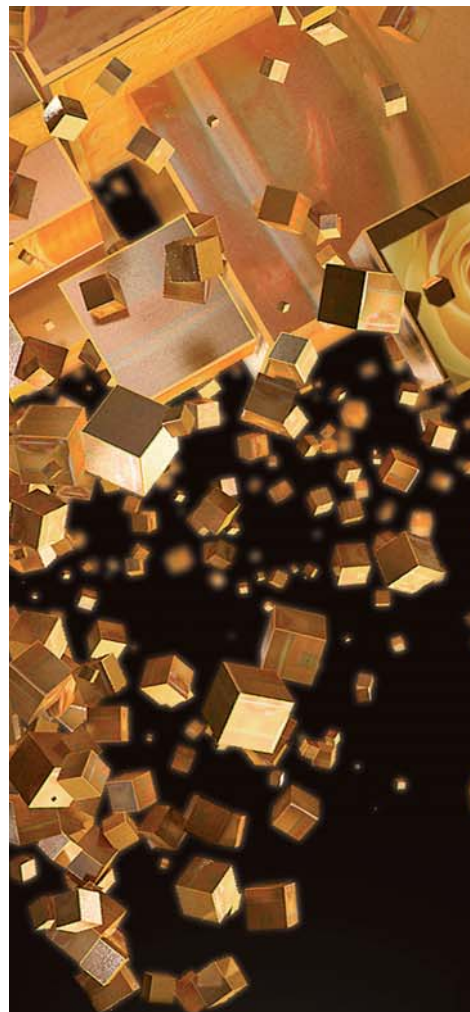
Elsewhere, even more radical finishes have been attempted, but The Scotch Malt Whisky Society must hold some sort of a record when they matured whisky in a Tabasco sauce barrel. Totally undrinkable, it made a wonderful cooking ingredient.

Now, with the Glenmorangie Extra Matured Range, the company have again innovated dramatically. Following an initial maturation of at least ten years in ex-bourbon casks, these three whiskies have been matured for an extra period in specially selected casks that previously held Port, Sherry or Sauternes wine.

Each is bottled at 46 per cent ABV and non chill-filtered to enhance taste, mouthfeel and/or texture. The new range consists of three products:

Glenmorangie Lasanta - extra matured in Spanish Oloroso Sherry casks; Glenmorangie Quinta Ruban - extra matured in Port pipes selected from the 'Quintas' or wine estates of Portugal and Glenmorangie Nectar D'Or - extra matured in the very best French Sauternes wine barriques, with key flavour notes of lemon and syrup

Dr Bill Lumsden, Glenmorangie's Head of Distilling & Whisky Creation says: "The Glenmorangie brand has a long-standing reputation as a leading pioneer in whisky maturation, and as a company, the quality of our whisky is at the very heart of everything we do. We continually endeavour to provide the most delicious single malt Scotch whisky and our core range delivers new expressions that offer an extraordinary variety of tastes, textures and aroma.



GLENMORANGIE
SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY



www.glenmorangie.com



Richard Paterson is Master Blender for the Glasgow firm of Whyte & Mackay. One of the best-known and most flamboyant of the industry's characters, he is renowned for his spectacular and theatrical tasting sessions. At a typical Paterson tasting you may be blown away by giant fans; soaked by a water pistol or shocked by indoor fireworks.

For over 35 years he has been responsible for his firm's blended whiskies and single malts from Whyte & Mackay Special and including Isle of Jura, Fettercairn and Tamnavulin single malts through to the 62 year old Dalmore. In a distinguished career he has won every major award in the industry. He is, naturally, a Keeper of the Quaich, a member of the Worshipful Company of Distillers and Past Deacon of the Incorporation of Coopers. Richard was voted 'Blender of the Year' in 2000 and again in 2002.

But what lies behind the public face? Ian Buxton interviewed Richard to find out more.

Ian Buxton (IB): Richard, tell me – how did you get started in whisky?

Richard Paterson (RP): At 8 years of age, my father took me into the cellars of the family company, a whisky brokerage, and taught me how to taste whisky. "Is it sweet like your Mother," he would ask "or dry like the dust?"

In 1966, at the age of 18, I left school and joined the Glen Scotia distillery in Campbeltown, where I learned the art of distilling and began to learn to be a blender. I'm still learning, today.

And how has your career developed subsequently?

I needed to prove myself, away from family connections, so in 1970 I joined Whyte & Mackay in Glasgow. I've been here ever since. In 1975 I was appointed the firm's Master Blender. Despite many changes in ownership and strategy I'm still here.

You're "Master Blender" for Whyte & Mackay. What does that involve, exactly?

That's very simple to explain, though not so easy to do! I have to produce the volumes of whisky

required by my sales colleagues, at an acceptable cost, whilst maintaining the overall quality and the consistency and style of our blends over long periods of time. Sound simple, doesn't it?

How has the Master Blender's job changed over the years?

The core of the job hasn't changed, but today we need to be more innovative and to react faster to changes in the market. Consumers are ever more knowledgeable and aware of what they are drinking and so we have to develop new finishes, ages and styles of whisky.

All this has to be done with a product that might take five, twenty or even fifty years to reach its peak.

And what part of the job provides the biggest satisfaction?

Industry awards, especially the independent IWSC awards, are hugely satisfying. For Whyte & Mackay to be have been voted 'Distiller of the Year' in 2001 and then again in 2004 was immensely rewarding, because I really respect the judging panel.

Then again, public endorsement of a whisky I like and have deliberately developed in a particular way can mean that 15 years of development and nurturing of a very special whisky has paid off!

Single malt whiskies and premium blends are really developing well. What future do you see for them? Can the growth continue?

There's undoubtedly plenty of room for growth. The rapid expansion is accounted for by an increasingly educated consumer, demanding the best.

Whisky fairs and festivals have been good for our business and great marketing, across all of the industry, has also helped. Packaging standards have improved and, if we keep innovating and stimulating the consumer we'll see further growth. Blended malts also have a great future.

Within the group you have four single malts. How do you see these brands developing?

RP: We've invested recently in new packaging for all four. There will be further marketing investment behind them, especially Isle of Jura and Dalmore, where we've opened visitor facilities. The single malts will become more important over time, but we won't forget our blending heritage.

Also, we've recently opened some luxury apartments at Jura to give a five star experience of this fabulous island. Together with the company's new bottling hall, this represents an investment of many millions of pounds.

What's the biggest change you've seen in whisky in your career – for good or bad?

From the point of view of good things, the investment and interest in single malts has been great. We're seeing more and more young people try whisky, giving the lie to the idea that it's an old man's drink.

I have to regret some of the consolidation in the industry. Looking back a few years, there was over-production and that meant consolidation if

a profitable industry was to emerge. The loss of some great old distilleries and respected brands was a high price, but one that had to be paid to make up for earlier mistakes. I don't believe we're as complacent now. The Scotch whisky industry may have failed to innovate and react to threats, such as premium vodkas, in the past – but we're leaner, faster and more flexible now.

Favourite dram?

Actually, there's no one favourite. It depends where, and when, and whom I'm with, as the mood takes me. Our Whyte & Mackay 13 year old blend is superb though and, if you were paying, I might have a glass of our 62 year old Dalmore single malt. A bottle sold in May 2005 for £32,000 in the Pennyhill Park Hotel in Surrey. An anonymous businessman and five friends drank it in one evening, after dinner, though they did give the lucky barman a dram!

Richard Paterson, thank you very much.

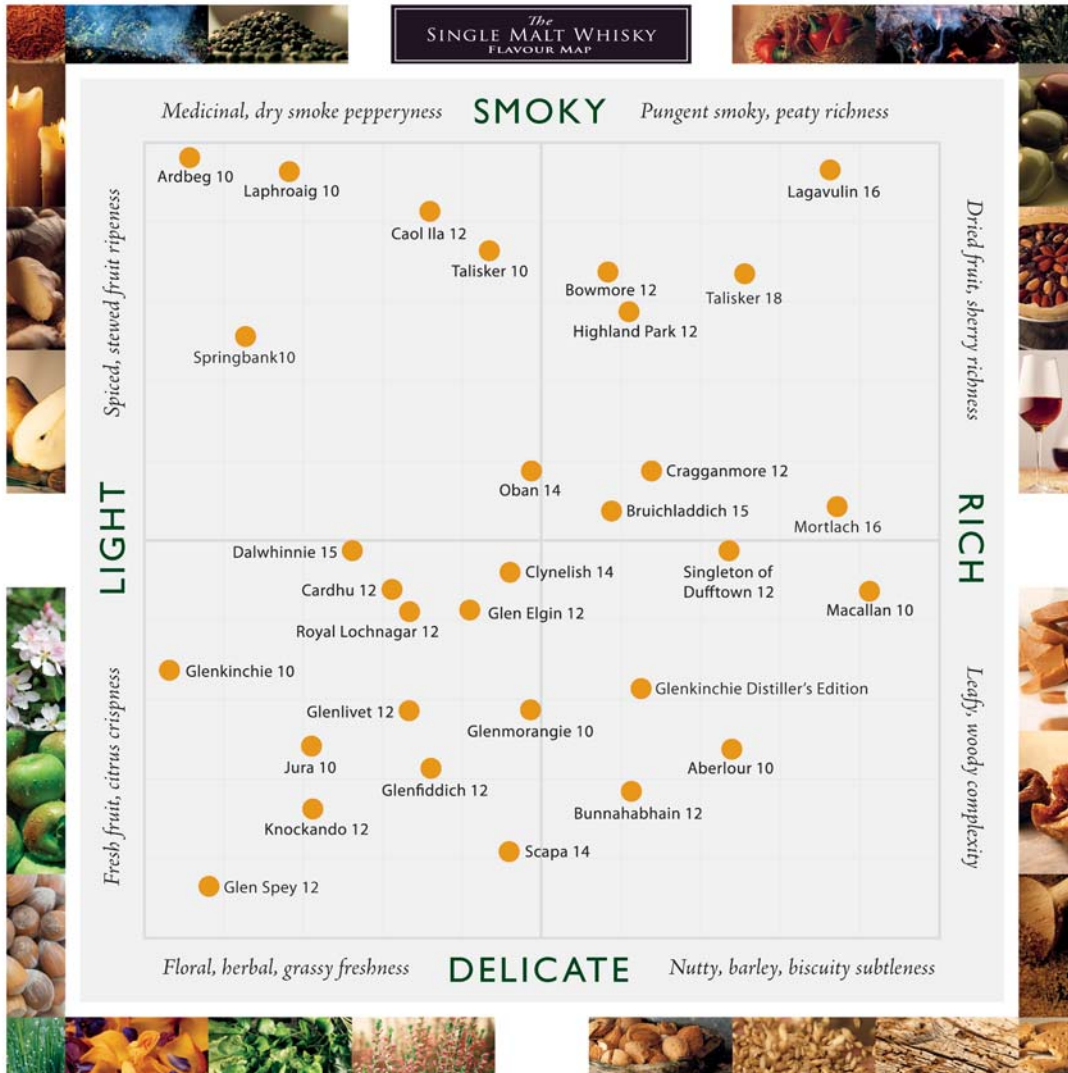


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If you like that, you'll like this...

Ian Buxton looks at a new guide to the taste of Scotch whisky

Neophytes may justifiably find working through the flavour maze that is Scotch whisky just a little intimidating. And also expensive, considering that a bottle of single malt or a luxury blend can cost £35 or more – a considerable sum if you don't like the contents.

It may well be one of the glories of Scotch Whisky that it has one of the widest and most varied of taste profiles, but it's also a challenge. After all, how can you be sure you'll like Glen Gloom when you've never tried it?

Specialist retailers, such as The Whisky Shop or many of the airport Duty Free operators, get round this problem with a generous free sampling programme but what's needed is a simple guide.

Up until now, you needed to carry a book with you. Long-time whisky expert Pip Hills, who in 1983 founded the Scotch Malt Whisky Society, offers a partial solution in his useful "Scotch Whisky Directory". A simple graph describes the taste of 267 different whiskies, both blend and single malt, on a 15-point scale that allows you to compare and contrast various drams to find one you might like.

FLAVOUR MAP

Now, with support from industry leaders Diageo, independent whisky authority Dave Broom has gone one better. With his Single Malt Whisky Flavour Map (a copy free with this issue of The Times) he has devised a simple matrix that allows the flavour of any whisky to be plotted on a four point scale – and thus compared to any other whisky.

The simple grid is labelled Smoky, Delicate, Light and Rich (refer to illustration) and the flavour of any whisky you select can be plotted on the 'map'. The initial version features mainly Diageo's whiskies, but then they do own more distilleries than anyone else, and it's clear that this is a category initiative that can be applied to any whisky. National retailers are said to be keen to embrace the concept.

"The idea is very much that it will be an industry standard," explains Broom. "It doesn't say one whisky



(or distiller) is better than another, just that they taste different."

The great joy is that it allows you to discover a previously unknown whisky by reference to an old favourite and be tolerably sure you'll enjoy the new one. Say your taste runs to Highland Park 12 year old (not a Diageo whisky as it happens) – well then, the map suggests you'll enjoy a 30 year old Brora. As that particular bottle will cost you nearly £200 it's not a decision to be taken lightly.

Now, the right glass helps. Traditional whisky tumblers allow the volatile aromas escape and are useless for a properly structured tasting. The best known whisky glass comes, fittingly, from Scotland.

Glencairn Crystal of East Kilbride has won the Queen's Award for Enterprise for its unique glass, the design of which has been patented. It's been enthusiastically adopted by the industry and is pretty much the standard for professional tasters.



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Roll out the barrel

Ian Buxton looks at buying your very own cask

Fifty years ago owning your own private cask of whisky was a common practice. You could go to the distillery of your choice, agree a quantity of whisky, select a cask (small casks of less than 50 litres were available then) and, after some simple paperwork, the whisky was yours.

This delightful practice has largely fallen out of use. The consolidation of the industry; the introduction of more and more paperwork; the time consumed in dealing with individual orders and the experience of some notorious 'investment' scams in the 1980s led the industry to abandon the practice.

Moreover, as single malt whisky became more fashionable, the distillers needed more and more stock for themselves and didn't want unauthorised 'third party' bottles of their brand appearing on the market. So it became harder and harder to purchase your own cask of whisky.

Until recently, only a few of the smaller, independent distillers hung onto this tradition. But, remarkably, two of Scotland's most famous distilleries have announced that they will sell single casks to the public. First to announce this new policy was Glengoyne, a delightful single Highland

malt, near to Glasgow. This is one of the prettiest little distilleries in Scotland and a pleasure to visit (you will surely want to go and see your cask of whisky as it matures).

A limited number of casks will be made available to purchase, with the buyer able to make key decisions such as wood type and length of maturation exerting a huge influence on the resulting malt.

EXTENSIVE

With a really extensive range of wood casks on offer, owners really will be able to choose a cask to suit their taste. From fresh bourbon barrels to the finest European oak and first fill Oloroso sherry butts, malt enthusiasts will have a range of 11 different casks to choose from.

Owners will then be encouraged to visit their cask as it matures. Prospective purchasers will also have

the opportunity to “try before they buy” with a nosing session in the distillery’s stylish Sample Room, which will help to give participants a greater insight into the maturation process.

Initial costs start at £1,200, covering the spirit, cask and ten years storage and, as you would expect, there are a number of member benefits including complimentary Single Cask bottlings that are exclusive to cask owners, and discounts at the distillery shop.

THE MACALLAN

But let’s say you want something more stylish; something famous; something that will really impress your friends and neighbours. Only one single malt will do: The Macallan.

Well until very recently, if you had suggested this to the distillery they would have politely declined. It was impossible to buy a private cask of The Macallan and the policy was quite definite.

Now, however, they have changed their mind and, in a lavishly produced brochure, have introduced what they are calling The Macallan “En Primeur” offer – they’ve taken the name from the French practice of selling new releases of each year’s Bordeaux vintage.

STAGGERING

And they seem to have copied claret’s pricing too. A cask of The Macallan, even a small one, will cost a staggering £5,000 when you order, with a further amount due in 12 years time, when the whisky matures.

Don’t imagine that you can recoup your investment by selling a few bottles. The scheme’s literature makes it completely clear that this whisky is for personal use and gifts only, and The Macallan will control your label design and packaging as well. They make you sign a legally binding contract to that effect.

EXCLUSIVE

It’s all about making the brand rare and exclusive and deterring speculators. The Macallan is trying to position itself in a refined group of luxury brands such as Patek Philippe; Rolls Royce; Laliq and Brioni where the price is immaterial to the purchase decision and the brand and its image is everything.

But, if you’re interested, you’ll be helped by David Cox, a director of The Macallan, to select your cask and (after signing your credit card) you’ll go for lunch at the distillery and be presented with a ‘log book’ recording all the details of your purchase.

Naturally, you can return as you wish to experience the maturation of the cask and draw small samples for tasting. After 12 years, or longer if you determine, the whisky will be bottled and you can



judge for yourself if the cost, and the wait, has been worth it. It seems like a lot of trouble and expense, but The Macallan will have no difficulty in selling all the casks they decide to release in this way. With the very substantial initial payment there’s no problem to the distillery if the buyer eventually defaults or decides he or she has lost interest when the whisky matures.

And remarkably this does happen. Every distillery in Scotland has a few casks mouldering at the back of a warehouse somewhere – the original purchaser has died or the paperwork has been lost, but the whisky can’t be sold or disposed of in case a legitimate owner turns up.

If only one could adopt one of these ‘orphans’ and take it home!





The World's fastest growing single malt

Ian Buxton explores a little-known Speysider that's making new friends

According to analysts A C Nielsen, malt whisky sales are booming in the UK. Volumes have significantly outperformed the total spirits category in both the off (6 per cent value; 8 per cent volume growth) and on-licence trade (14 per cent value; 5 per cent volume growth).

A major beneficiary of this positive trend is Berry Bros & Rudd's The Glenrothes, a relatively little-known Speyside single malt that, perhaps under the influence of its 300 year old wine merchant owners, releases dated vintages rather than the more normal aged expressions.

A 'Vintage' is a set of casks that have been hand-picked by Glenrothes' Malt Master from a particular year's distillation and judged to be at the peak of all possible perfection. These are rare. Vintage selections account for little more than 2 per cent of the dis-

tillery's production capacity. Unlike Malt Whiskies that are produced in line with the age concept, each Vintage must have its own unique personality.

You can find other vintage whiskies, but it's not a concept accepted by all distillers, who argue that the year to year variations in whisky are substantially less important in a distilled product than in wine, with the natural variation inherent in the grape harvest. However, should you have the opportunity to nose casks of the same whisky managed in the same way but from different years clear differences can be detected. Is that due to the difference in age or the specific effect of a certain year?

Perhaps no-one can offer a definitive answer and aficionados will argue that such a debate is part of whisky's continuing charm.

Whatever the truth, recent research from the International Wine & Spirit Record shows that The Glenrothes is growing faster internationally than any other single malt Scotch whisky in the top 30 sellers, with an annual compound growth rate of over 17 per cent from 2002 to 2006. As Brand Director, Luke Tegner says; "Obviously, statistics are

not the be all and end all. Having said that, we are clearly overjoyed at this research, the results of which are testimony to The Glenrothes Single Malt's outstanding quality."

More recently The Glenrothes Select Reserve has been added to the vintage expressions and quickly established itself as a favourite amongst consumers and critics alike, as demonstrated by the fact that it collected two Double Gold medals at the 2007 San Francisco World Spirits Competition, one for the whisky and the other for packaging.

Every expression of The Glenrothes is instantly recognisable from its distinctive bottle. The front label of each bottle carries the Malt Master's tasting notes. For example Select Reserve is a marriage of casks of mature Glenrothes from different years, whose character is described as "Ripe fruits, citrus, vanilla, hints of spice". This expression captures those complex flavours in perfect balance; the palate features vanilla with the typically creamy texture associated with The Glenrothes. The finish is slightly spicy.

Vintage or age? Only extensive experimentation can resolve this dilemma.

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SILVER AND GOLD

In 1826 when James Henderson founded the most northerly distillery on the British mainland, there were plenty more fish in the sea.

The Highland town of Wick was at the centre of a 'herring boom', becoming the largest and wealthiest fishing port in Europe. Barrels of silver and gold left the harbour of Wick (there were no roads).

The herrings were silver, the gold was Old Pulteney single malt scotch whisky.

Today, 'the silver darlings' have long gone but the Pulteney distillery still produces 'unashamedly excellent' single malt whisky - tangy, dry, and with a mineral-salted spiciness that evokes the rugged, windswept character of the far north.

It is the unique history of the town, its people and their distillery that makes Old Pulteney The Genuine Maritime Malt.



THE GENUINE MARITIME MALT

www.oldpulteney.com

Old Pulteney encourages you to savour this fine single malt responsibly

Did you know?

- Scotch whisky contributes £78 a second contributed to UK exports (£2.5bn in total).
- Scotch represents a quarter of all UK food and drink exports.
- Over one billion bottles are shipped worldwide each year.
- USA is Scotch whisky's largest market by value, at just over £400m annually.
- A 1926 Macallan sells for \$3,300 (£1,650) a dram, at the Old Homestead Steakhouse in the Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa in Atlantic City, N.J.
- An anonymous Russian bidder last month broke the world auction record for a whisky when he paid £29,400 for a 1850s bottle of W & J Mutter's Bowmore single malt.
- Jam maker F Duerr & Son marked its 125th anniversary by producing the world's most expensive marmalade, using whisky naturally. The Fine Cut Seville Orange Marmalade with Whisky, Champagne and Gold mixes the finest Seville fruit with vintage Dalmore 62 whisky from Whyte & Mackay (valued at £32,000 per bottle). To cover a single slice of toast would cost £75!
- In May 2005, an anonymous businessman paid £32,000 for a rare Dalmore 62 Single Highland Malt Scotch Whisky, at the Pennyhill Park Hotel, Bagshot. The Surrey hotel said the man bought the whisky and drank almost all of it in one night with some friends – but he did give the barman a taste!
- The price of Ardbeg 1965, with just 261 bottles released at £2,000 (in a glass museum case), increased 40 per cent in under a year.
- The oldest surviving bottle of Scotch whisky is claimed to be a bottle of The Glenavon *** Special Liqueur Whisky, which was sold by Bonhams for £14,850 in November 2006.
- The first written record of Scotch whisky dates from 1494.
- More than 2,500 brands of Scotch whisky are sold all over the world.
- The term 'whisky' comes from the Gaelic 'uisge beatha', or 'usquebaugh', meaning 'water of life'.

- During 1822, at a welcoming ceremony to his visit to Scotland, George IV requested a glass of the then illicitly distilled whisky. His choice was Glen-

livet. A year later the new excise act heralded the end of illicit distilling.

- The UK is the world's 3rd largest market for Scotch whisky.

MILROY'S

— OF SOHO —

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Milroy's of Soho and Dewar Rattray have worked closely together for several years to bring you unique whiskies of excellent quality.



Established in 1964 the portfolio focuses on hand selected whiskies from around the world. The independent retailer Milroy's of Soho has an unsurpassed reputation for quality and knowledge.



Dewar Rattray specialises in unusual and exclusive casks of Scotch Whisky, each one chosen to reflect the unique characteristics and individual styles of their distilleries.

Order your Dewar Rattray whiskies from Milroy's of Soho before 30th November 2007 and receive a 10% discount on your purchase, please call 020 7437 2385 or go to milroys.co.uk to place your order online.

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Japanese whisky: Best in the World?

Ian Buxton looks at the growth of the rising sun



Not all whisky comes from Scotland. Canada, the USA and Ireland all have long-standing and well-regarded distilling traditions of their own. However, one of the least understood whiskies of the world is that produced in Japan.

In 1951, S H Hastie could write "The Japs came to this country years ago, copied our plant, and even employed some of our Speyside personnel. They produced an imitation of Speyside Whisky which was not good though drinkable."

Fifty years on, such an attitude can be seen as offensive, patronising and plain wrong, for the simple fact is that Japanese whisky is amongst the finest in the world. Japanese whiskies have received a lot of attention recently in Europe after a Yoichi malt won Whisky Magazine's Best of the Best in 2001. Yoichi, Yamazaki and Hakushu have all been bottled by the Scotch Malt Whisky Society.

Hastie may have been referring to Masataka Taketsuru, the father of Japanese whisky and founder of Nikka. He undertook a lengthy study trip to Scotland in 1918, marrying a Scottish wife. His Yoichi Distillery in Hokkaido is closely modelled on Scotland's distilleries but the whisky produced there is world-beating.

Today, Nikka own the Ben Nevis distillery in Scotland but their own Japanese whiskies are gaining new friends here in the UK. One to look out for is the simply packaged and named "Nikka Whisky from the Barrel". A 50cl bottle, at a healthy 51.4 per cent, retails at around £22 which is competitive considering the duty take alone. Nikka also own the Sendai (also known as Miyagikyo) and Yoichi distilleries, whiskies from which can be found in specialists such as Royal Mile. They represent excellent value for money, considering the quality.

Take, for example, the Taketsuru 21 year old Pure Malt, winner of the title "World's Best Blended Malt Whisky" in the 2007 World Whiskies Award. The judges described it as "Head and shoulders above the rest in this category. A complex mix of oak, smoke and dense toffeed sweetness."

And, if that wasn't praise enough, Japan's other major distiller Suntory, claimed the title of "World's Best Blended Whisky" in the same awards. Competing in a crowded field against whiskies from Scotland's finest, Suntory's Hibiki 30 year old blend had experienced tasters such as Dave Broom in raptures. "Mature, deep, powerful, showing its age, with assertive wood influence but sufficient weight and power to balance," he recorded on his tasting notes.

As befits one of the most influential drinks companies in the world Suntory's whiskies are beginning to enjoy wider UK distribution and today can be found in major independent specialists.

CONNOISSEUR

For the connoisseur, Norwich's Number One Drinks Company (www.onedrinks.co.uk) imports a selection from the now silent Hanyu distillery, north-west of Tokyo and also the tiny Karuizawa distillery, established in 1955 in the foothills of Mount Asama, an active volcano. Number One Drinks are the sole European distributor for this truly artisanal malt whisky and the exclusive Ginkgo blended malt. Seek out these and other Japanese whiskies in leading specialists.

JAPANESE WHISKY CONTINUES TO BOOM. READ MORE ABOUT THE WORLDS LEADING JAPANESE WHISKY COMPANY

HISTORY OF JAPANESE WHISKIES



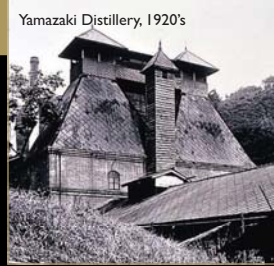
In 1923, Shinjiro Torii, the founder of Suntory and the father of Japanese whisky, built Japan's first malt whisky distillery in the vale of Yamazaki.

The distillery's location on the outskirts of Japan's ancient capital of Kyoto offers pure waters, diversity of climate and high humidity - the ideal environment for the maturation of good whisky.

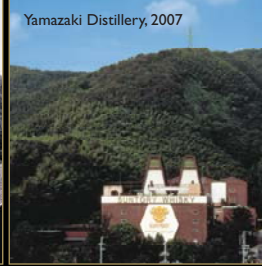
Today, Suntory's Yamazaki is the most popular single malt whisky in Japan and is enjoyed by whisky connoisseurs the world over.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Yamazaki distillery, Suntory built a second distillery in 1973: The Hakushu distillery. This is located in a dense green forest in the foothills of the majestic Mt. Kaikomagatake and is supplied by natural crystal-clear mountain streams.

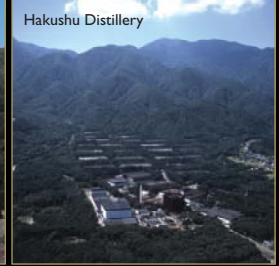
Hakushu is a single malt whisky which contains some peated barley, giving it a slightly smoky flavour which compliments



Yamazaki Distillery, 1920's



Yamazaki Distillery, 2007



Hakushu Distillery

the floral notes derived from the forest surroundings during maturation.

Hibiki is the third Suntory whisky brand and is a master blend of carefully selected malt and grain whiskies.

We hope you will try a Suntory whisky from our award winning range in the near future.



Pot stills at Yamazaki Distillery.



YAMAZAKI 10YO

Single Malt Whisky (40% abv)



YAMAZAKI 12YO

Single Malt Whisky (43% abv)



YAMAZAKI 18YO

Single Malt Whisky (43% abv)



HAKUSHU 12YO

Single Malt Whisky (43.5% abv)



HIBIKI 17YO

Blended Whisky (43% abv)

- Named after the town of Yamazaki, famed for its pure waters, tea ceremonies and samurai warriors
- Main cask - Puncheon 1st fill, 2nd fill (predominantly American oak)
- Colour - Brilliant gold
- Aroma - Dry fruits, malt, spicy, cinnamon, vanilla
- Body - Medium
- Taste - Nutmeg, cinnamon, fennel, bitter sweet
- Finish - Spicy, dry, hint of vanilla and honey
- Awards - IWSC 2006 Silver
- ISC 2006 Silver



- Japan's No1 Malt Whisky
- Main cask - Hogshead (3rd fill, 4th fill + Japanese oak)
- Colour - Gold
- Aroma - Dried fruit, prune, malt, woody, honey
- Body - Medium
- Taste - Cherry, buttercream, vanilla cream, prune, sweet & delicate, round & mellow
- Finish - Pleasant woodiness, warm long lingering dry finish
- Awards - ISC 2006 Silver, San Francisco WSC 2005 Silver, ISC 2003 Gold



- Trophy winner for 'Best Worldwide Whisky' at the International Wine & Spirit Competition 2006
- Main cask - Sherry Butts
- Colour - Copper-gold
- Aroma - Prune, toffee, marmalade, mandarin orange, honey, strawberry
- Body - Full
- Taste - Sherry, cherry, milky, honey, buttercream, spicy, chocolate
- Finish - Well balanced, creamy, pleasant dryness
- Awards - IWSC 2006 TROPHY, San Francisco WSC 2005 Double Gold



- Hakushu means 'white sand banks' named after the mineral deposits in the streams that feed the distillery
- Highest distillery in Japan
- Matured in American oak puncheon
- Colour - Golden
- Aroma - Fragrant forest leaves and citrus
- Body - Medium
- Taste - Creamy, fruity and rounded palate
- Finish - Long, dry and slightly smoky
- Awards - IWSC 2006 Silver, best in class
- ISC 2006 Silver



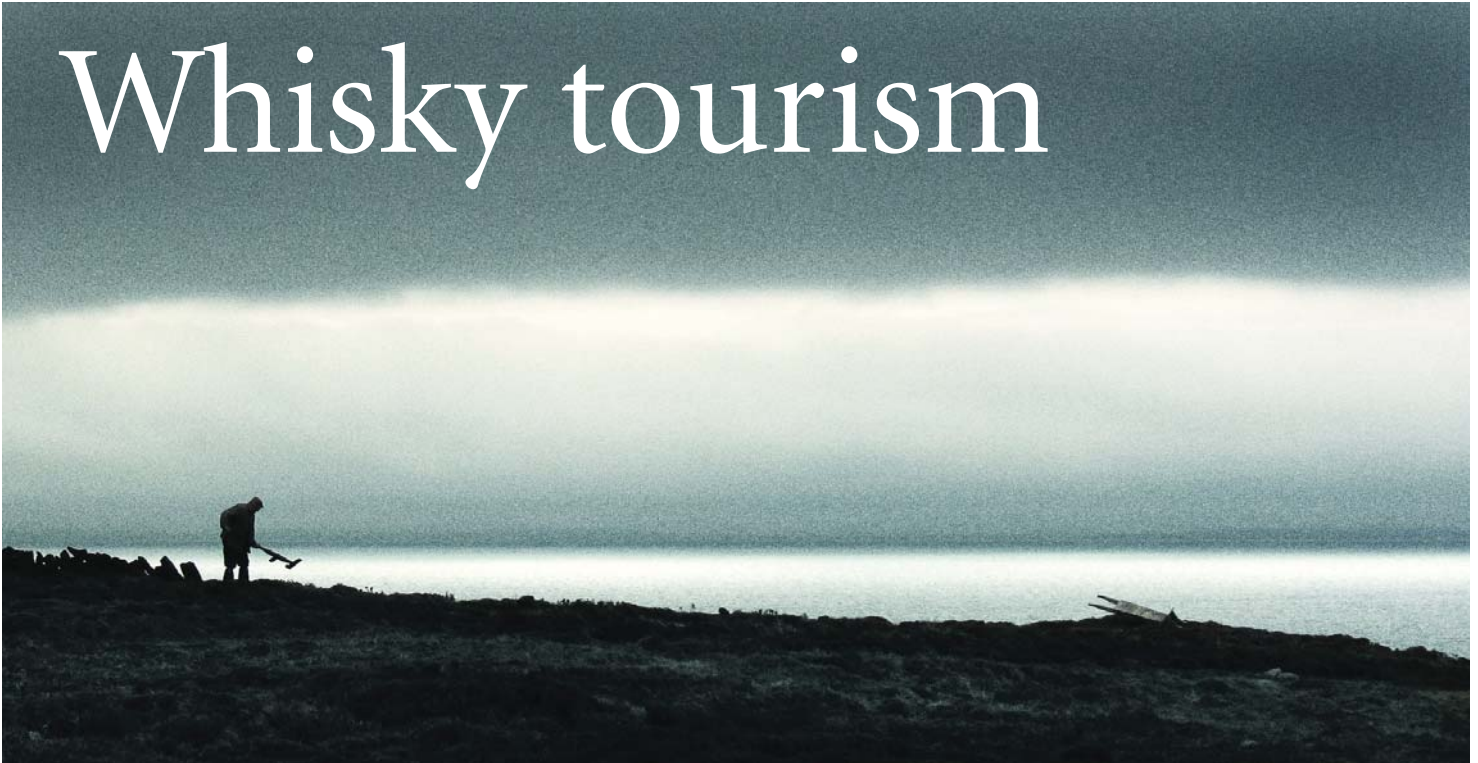
- Hibiki meaning 'Harmony', symbolises a unique harmony of over 30 malts, the youngest being 17 years old
- The 24 faces of the bottle symbolise the 24 seasons which are followed in the age-old tradition of 'Sekki', the ancient Japanese calendar
- The front label is made from hand-crafted Japanese paper: 'Washi'
- Colour - Amber
- Aroma - Light citrus and floral top note, vanilla, milky, very subtle
- Body - Medium light
- Taste - Extremely round and smooth, rich and developing
- Finish - Very long lingering subtle sweetness
- Awards - IWSC 2006 Silver, San Francisco WSC 2005 Gold
- ISC 2006 Silver



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SUNTORY
www.yamazaki.eu

Whisky tourism



Enjoying Scotland's national drink in its very own home is one of the joys of visiting Scotland, writes Ian Buxton. Fortunately, the distillers are happy to throw open their doors to almost all comers and show you how single malt whisky is made. A variety of experiences to suit all levels of knowledge awaits you, and when your day is over a bewildering range of hostelries offer a beguiling range of drams. Slainte!

Beginners should make their way to the granddaddy of distillery tours – William Grant & Sons at Glenfiddich, just outside Dufftown. First into the tourism business their competitors laughed – then copied them. Recently revamped, it's still hard to beat for its comprehensive coverage and an evocative opening film presentation.

Enthusiasts will appreciate Dewar's World of Whisky, Aberfeldy which concentrates on blending rather than single malt. The centre is packed full of historical archives, nostalgic advertising and some high tech features that will engage young and old. An excellent café, shop and nature trail add to the fun.



The expert can take a step further at Glengoyne, outside Glasgow, with one of their VIP tours. You can spend most of a day in their blending workshop learning about the various single malts and grains that go into the whiskies the world drinks and come home with your very own version.

Islay is a pilgrimage for the enthusiast. Neglected until 15 years ago its full-flavoured drams are now all the rage. It's possible to visit eight distilleries and a ninth on nearby Jura. Stay at the distillery cottages at Bownmore or Bunnhabhain; eat at the restaurant at Ardbeg and travel back in time at historic Bruichladdich.

GLENKINCHIE

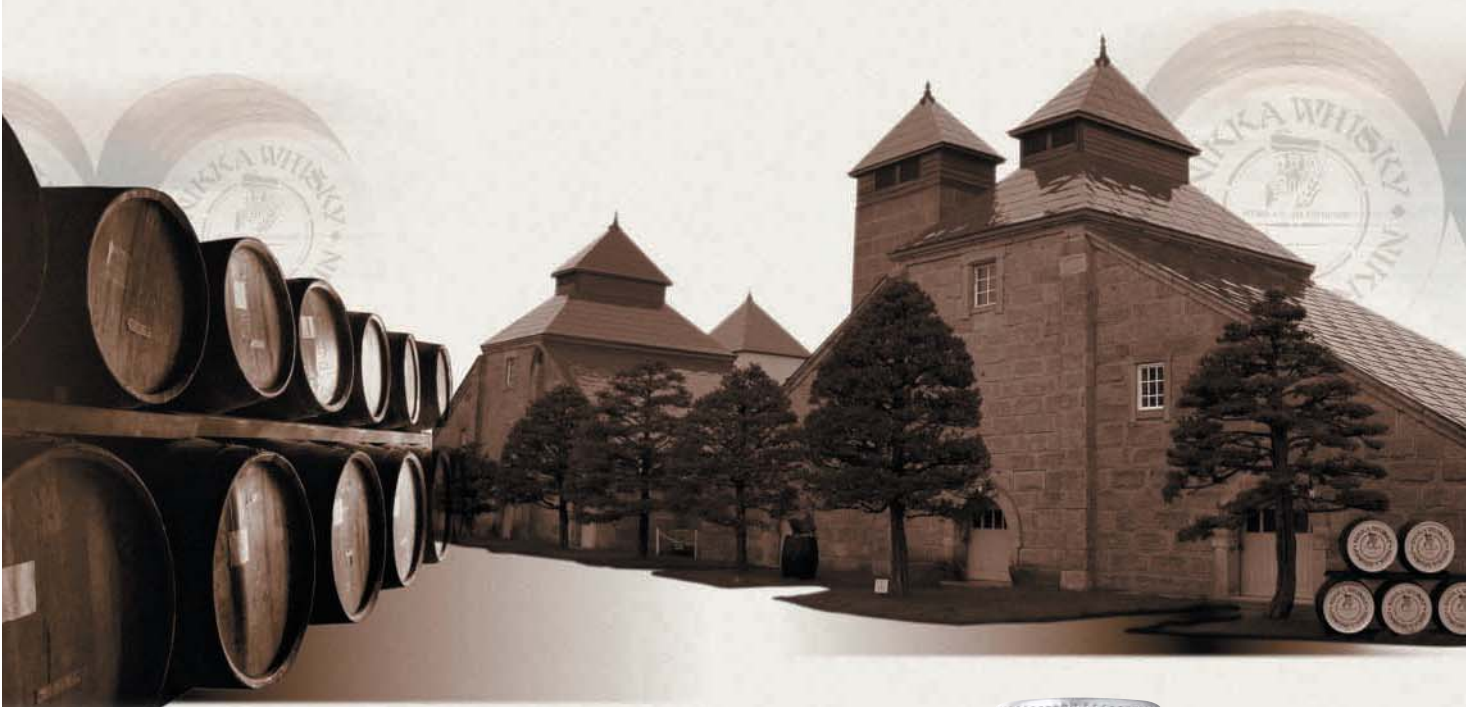
From Edinburgh, assuming you want a real distillery, head to Glenkinchie, one of the few Lowland distilleries still operating. In the attractive centre, the stunning model is worth the trip alone, and you might catch a glimpse of one of their three ghosts.

The whisky is pretty fair, too. Visitors to Glasgow can pick Glengoyne or make the short trip to Auchentoshan, by the Erskine Bridge. They fall either side of the 'Highland Line', with triple-distilled Auchentoshan a true Lowlander. An excellent accompanied tour in one of the most-attractive and clearly laid out distilleries you could hope to visit.

If you are in Perth you are spoiled for choice: Tullibardine, Aberfeldy, Blair Athol and Edradour are all within easy reach. Make it a double and visit Pitlochry to see Bells' Blair Athol and then on to tiny Edradour. Amongst the smallest distilleries in Scotland it's justifiably popular with bus tours.

A trip to Orkney, especially your first, is always memorable. The island has a fine distilling tradition, superbly expressed at the Highland Park distillery. All whisky seems to taste better in its home, but there is no finer place to enjoy this distinguished single malt than in its Kirkwall birthplace.

JAPANESE PURE SPIRIT



*Mr. Taketsuru, father of the Japanese whisky,
and his Scottish wife Rita, around 1920*



*NIKKA
Pure Malt*



*NIKKA
Miyagikyo*



*NIKKA
Yoichi*



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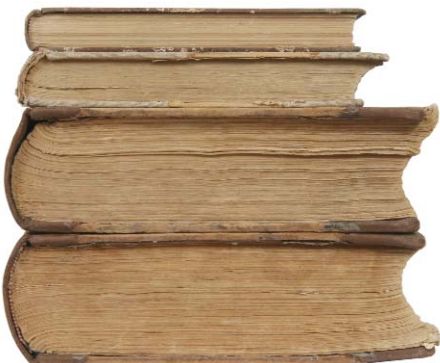
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NIKKA WHISKY ENCOURAGES RESPONSIBLE DRINKING



Saving whisky's history

With a history dating back to 1494, there's no shortage of books about whisky. But a small Perthshire company has exploited an unusual niche.



Classic Expressions, (www.classicexpressions.co.uk) reprints classic whisky books in exact facsimile editions to offer what they describe as "a time machine, a window into whisky's history."

Currently, they are offering limited edition facsimiles of two of the rarest whisky books you could hope to find, with plans for three more.

First is *Smuggling in the Highlands* (1914). The author, Ian MacDonald was a long-serving excise officer in the Scottish Highlands so he knew the people and their whisky-related 'ploys' very well.

The facsimile is an essential and long-overdue edition for anyone interested in the heritage of Scotch whisky and Victorian Scottish social life.

Its equally fascinating companion is *Reminiscences of a Gauger* by Joseph Pacy. Dating from 1873, this is as compelling as it is rare – a good copy is now worth over £300. It's one of the most important works of its period – an invaluable record of

forty years service during the nineteenth century, being one of the very few contemporary accounts of the life and work of the Gauger. It is particularly notable for his detailed explanation of foiling a duty evasion racket in Campbeltown at the height of its whisky producing fame and his turbulent relationship with Captain William Fraser of the Royal Brackla distillery.

LIMITED

Each title comes in a limited, numbered edition (300), in a slipcase, and packed with a CD containing a fully searchable PDF file. These are authentic, complete facsimiles of the originals at the highest possible quality.

The first 75 numbered copies of each book are reserved for the Founding Subscribers, whose names will appear in the new edition and also benefit from an attractive discount on the full published price.

Taking whisky round the world

Commercial feature



Whisky enthusiasts have long held a modest Elgin grocers shop in high regard. This is the public face of Gordon & MacPhail, arguably the world's leading malt whisky specialist, with over 110 years experience in maturing and bottling single malt whiskies.

Since they were founded in 1895, and through the vagaries of an industry often buffeted by fashion, Gordon and MacPhail have purchased 'new make' whisky, matured and then bottled it to provide one of the most extensive selection of single malts for sale the world over.

This small family owned company took over a hundred years to evolve into distillers in their own right, but now own Benromach Distillery in Forres, where a four star visitor centre is open to the public throughout the year. Having been closed by the previous owners, Gordon & MacPhail re-equipped the distillery and now offer a range of ages and finishes of whisky, culminating in the long-lived Benromach Classic 55 Years.

Such diversification has also led to an active sponsorship programme and Benromach is a race partner of the clipper *Glasgow: Scotland with style* in the Clipper 07-08 Round the World Yacht Race.

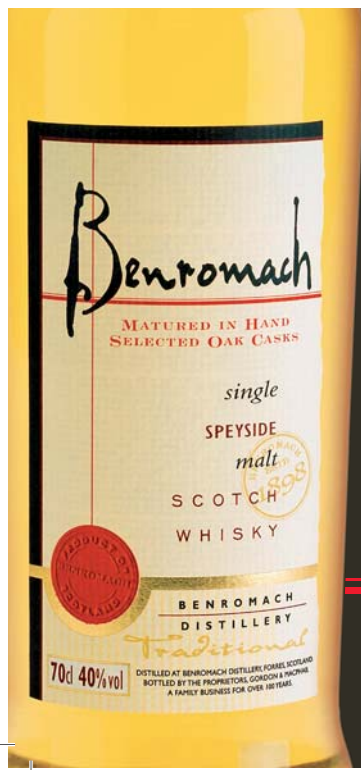
More than 350 international sailors set off from Liverpool on the 16th September 2007, in a ten

month race, which will see the fleet of identical yachts return to Liverpool in July 2008 as part of the city's European Capital of Culture celebrations.

La Rochelle was the first port of call for the fleet of yachts. Representatives from Benromach were naturally in attendance at the quayside to welcome the yachts into port after racing 610 nautical miles with *Glasgow: Scotland with style* clinching third place. With Hull & Humber commanding victory and Liverpool finishing in second place, the UK entries in the Clipper 07-08 swept the board for the three podium positions in the first three-day sprint of the ten-month series.

To mark the partnership with *Glasgow: Scotland with style*, a unique expression of Benromach Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky has been bottled.

For your chance to win, all you have to do is guess how long it will take *Glasgow: Scotland with style* to complete each leg of the Clipper 07-08 Round the World Yacht Race. Simply visit www.benromach.com to enter.



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