

Whiskeria®



Julie Lin pairs food with fame

Cross-cultural cuisine pioneer, restaurateur, and rising TV star Julie is one to watch.



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THE MAGAZINE OF

**THE
WHISKY
SHOP**

UNLOCKING
THE MYSTERY
OF WHISKY



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Only invest with the best

Ian P. Bankier, Executive Chairman of The Whisky Shop, on choosing investments wisely and how best to avoid fraudsters.



➤ I start this year's first edition of Whiskeria with 'wealth warning' for our customers and readers.

As we have covered in these pages on many occasions, rare and collectable whiskies are booming at present with demand across the world as strong as ever. At the top end they exude luxury, being beautifully crafted and genuinely rare. The care and attention that goes into the design and production of these items is stunning—they are works of art. And at whatever level you choose to participate, these whiskies are fun to collect, you get to take them home, you can drink any one of them at any time, and their values have generally risen. What's not to like? Nothing.

But there is a dark side that I wish to shine a light on, and it concerns the growing community of agencies that offer the public the opportunity to invest in casks of maturing whisky. These protagonists convey robust and reassuring messages on glossy websites, they quote random economic and financial statistics, and they promise you that this is a solid investment with appealing returns. If you engage with any one of these agencies, you find yourself on the end of very hard sell tactics.

And if you succumb, you will end up with something or nothing. I mean that quite literally. You will have paid a price for something that you can't see in the shops that might be in a dark warehouse somewhere. Essentially, it's a raw material that in years to come might be bottled and it might be good, and it might be worth

more or less than you have paid. Amidst all of these "mights", what you actually get is a piece of paper that is headed "Certificate of Ownership". And here's the rub. In many cases these certificates are written by the sales agency, not the distiller or warehouse keeper. Crudely, that means that there is no certainty that you have anything at all!

This is very dodgy, and I have consistently advised friends and customers who enquire about these opportunities to steer well clear. Ask the question, how have all these agencies, who have mushroomed up from nowhere, managed to acquire so many casks? The whisky industry has experienced trends like this in the past and they have ended the same way with sales agencies going bust, allegations of fraud, and scores of private individuals ending up with inappropriate casks at high prices. I'm not saying that this is the case across all situations, and I grant that there are legitimate established brokerages and indeed new distilleries who will sell casks to the public.

As I see it, casks belong to the production end of the industry and whisky in bottle is where the customer belongs. I recognise that there are those who do not have a deep liking for whisky, but, nevertheless, want to invest. What I would say to them is go ahead, but the foundation of any investment is to buy well. Buying a cask from a middleman, whose sole motivation is to make as much money from the deal, is not where you should be, especially if you are not an industry insider.



Casks belong to the production end of the industry, whisky in bottle is where the customer belongs."

Now you know what I am going to say next, but it is true. If investing or collecting or both, buy the best bottle of whisky you can afford from a retailer—most preferably The Whisky Shop. The very best opportunities are in limited editions released by the top distillers. These can be only available in very few outlets across the world because of their scarcity. The Whisky Shop specialises in obtaining these – it's what we do. We also scour the market for older releases from the top brands and we offer these to our customers. And lastly, in all cases, buy for love, not greed.

Caw canny, but caw awa!

Ian P. Bankier,
Executive Chairman

THE WHISKY SHOP

Win! The Singleton of Dufftown 21 Year Old

To celebrate our exciting Mixing It Up feature with The Singleton, we are delighted to offer you the chance to win a bottle of The Singleton of Dufftown 21 Year Old. Only one of every 20,000 casks from The Singleton is deemed special enough to be selected for this outstanding whisky.

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T&Cs apply. Winners will be contacted directly.



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PO Box 7415
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G51 9BR

CONTACT
enquiries@whiskyshop.com

COMMISSIONING EDITOR
Glenkeir Whiskies
Limited

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Frances Wilson
frances@whiskyshop.com
0141 427 2919

EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN
Ian P Bankier
ipb@whiskyshop.com

FEATURE WRITERS
Brian Wilson
Charles MacLean
Gavin D Smith
Luke Crowley-Holland

CREATIVE DIRECTION
A Visual Agency
emlym@avisualagency.com

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY
Brian Sweeney
Armando Ferrari
Christina Kernohan

FEATURE ILLUSTRATION
Hrafnhildur Halldorsdottir
Katie Smith
Francesca Waddell

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ILLUSTRATION: FRANCESCA WADDELL

Charles MacLean

Whiskeria's resident whisky guru, Charlie has been researching and writing books on the water of life since 1981. Charlie's bestsellers include award-winning *World Whisky and Scotch Whisky: A Liquid History* and his extensive knowledge on the subject led to him becoming the script advisor for Ken Loach's 2012 film

The Angels' Share. In fact, Charlie's whisky expertise was so hot that he landed himself a part in the film – a feat he claims to be his biggest career highlight to date! Each edition we ask Charlie to try what's new on the shelves of *The Whisky Shop*, and we're sure you'll agree that his sensational tasting notes never disappoint.



New Releases ➔ 9

A Time in History ➔ 28

Brian Wilson

Formerly an MP, Brian held several posts during his political career, including Minister of Trade. Brian now lives on the Isle of Lewis where he pursues various business interests, notably in the energy sector. As chairman of Harris Tweed Hebrides, Brian is credited with leading the regeneration of the Harris Tweed industry. Brian's first love is writing, and in his spare time he continues to write books and opinion pieces for national newspapers – as well as delving into the fascinating history of whisky for each edition of *Whiskeria*.

Gavin D Smith

One of the world's most prolific and respected whisky writers, Gavin is regularly published in the top magazines within the whisky scene. He's written and co-authored more than 20 books on the subject, including *A-Z of Whisky*, *The Secret Still*, and *Goodness Nose*. Gavin has the envy-inducing task of scoping out the whisky industry's new and best-loved distilleries for *Whiskeria* readers, visiting a new distillery each edition. With his exquisite palate and whisky credentials, Gavin is undeniably the whisky lover for the job!

Distillery Visit ➔ 36

New Releases / Spring 2023



Reviewed by
Charles MacLean

Benromach / Glen Elgin /
Loch Lomond / Maker's Mark
W.L.Weller / Laphroaig /
Johnnie Walker / Balblair /
Penderyn / Old Pulteney
Eagle Rare / Caol Ila

New Releases

Benromach 2012 W Club Exclusive Single Cask #333

70cl 60.1% VOL

10 Year Old £88

Single cask Speyside single malt

A fine amber hue—Amontillado sherry. A surprisingly mild nose-feel, even at this strength, slightly cooling. A mellow aroma of pears macerated in armagnac, with a fleeting hint of treacle toffee, on a base of autumnal beech woods. A smooth texture and a sweet taste, with an intriguing note of polished leather in the aftertaste.

“A mellow aroma of pears macerated in armagnac, with a fleeting hint of treacle toffee, on a base of autumnal beech woods.”



Benromach Distillery was founded in 1898 on Alexander Edward's Sanquhar Estate near Forres but did not go into production until 1909. The reason for the delay is interesting.

The founders were Duncan Macallum (owner of Glen Nevis Distillery, Campbeltown) and F.W. Brickmann (a spirits broker in Leith), supported by Alexander Edward, entrepreneur, philanthropist, owner of the first motor car in Morayshire and one of the unsung heroes of the Scotch whisky industry in the 1890s.

He was born near Craigellachie and in 1888, aged 23, founded the Craigellachie Distillery Company in partnership with Peter Mackie, who launched his White

Horse blend the same year. In 1893, he inherited Benrinnes Distillery from his father and rebuilt it; in 1894, he bought the brick and tile works in Craigellachie, and in 1895, established Aultmore Distillery. By 1896, he had also built the Craigellachie Hotel and much of the village.

He went on to buy Oban Distillery in 1898, the same year as he supported the Benromach Distillery venture. Alas, two of his principal customers were the blenders, Pattison of Leith and the aforementioned F.W. Brickmann. In December 1898, rumours began to circulate about Pattison's liquidity and the Clydesdale Bank refused to honour the company's cheques. Its conspicuous success, and its owners,

Walter and Robert Pattison's, lavish lifestyle, was based on borrowed money, credit within the whisky industry, and worse: in 1901, the brothers were found guilty of "fraudulent flotation, other frauds and embezzlement" and sent to prison.

The collapse not only destroyed confidence in the Scotch whisky industry, but it also ruined at least nine other companies, including that of F.W. Brickmann. The construction of Benromach was put on hold and even after completion it had a chequered career until it was bought by Gordon & Macphail, the long-established family-owned wine & spirits merchants in Elgin in 1993.

The Loch Fyne Glen Elgin 14 Year Old

50cl 58.6% VOL

14 Year Old £79

Speyside single malt

The colour of tarnished silver, with pale green lights. A mild nose-feel, the aroma is of dried fruits (sultanas, dates, figs), combined with hazelnuts to create a malt loaf. I suspect the cask to be much refilled European oak. At full strength, the taste is very sweet, with some spice in the finish, both reduced by a drop of water.

“A mild nose-feel, the aroma is of dried fruits (sultanas, dates, figs), combined with hazelnuts to create a malt loaf.”



Glen Elgin has long been highly esteemed as a blending malt and is usually ranked Top Class on blenders' lists – indeed, more than one Master Blender of my acquaintance considers it to be their "favourite malt." However, on account of its usefulness as a blending constituent – not least for *White Horse* – it is relatively uncommon as a single malt, although listed as one of Diageo's Classic Malts since 2004.

The site, two miles south of Elgin, was acquired by William Simpson, former manager of Glenfarclas Distillery, in 1898 – the year before the catastrophic collapse of the leading blending house, Pattison of Leith, destroyed confidence in the Scotch whisky market and led to a substantial

reduction in the demand for malt whisky from blenders. Mr. Simpson's former employer, Glenfarclas, narrowly avoided bankruptcy. [also, see Benromach, p.10]

Production at Glen Elgin began on 1st May 1900. The distillery's designer, Charles Doig (the leading distillery architect of the day) prophesied that it would be the last distillery to open on Speyside for fifty years – he was right: the next to be built was Tormore, in 1958. It was rumoured locally that none of the contractors had been paid in full except the steeplejacks, who were paid by instalments and threatened to demolish the chimneystack unless they got their money! In November 1900, the Glen Elgin was put on the market: it sold for

£4,000 at auction; the cost of construction was in excess of £13,000.

The distillery was frequently silent between 1906 and 1945, and went into voluntary liquidation in 1929, and was sold to Scottish Malt Distillers, the production division of The Distillers Company Limited (now Diageo), in 1936.

This single cask expression has been bottled by The Whisky Shop under its Loch Fyne label. In spite of coming from a much-refilled cask (witness the colour) it displays the spirit character well.

New Releases

Loch Lomond 2013

#20/429-8
W Club Exclusive

70cl 55.9% VOL
9 Year Old £60
Single cask Highland single malt

Old gold with khaki lights, implying American oak maturation. A mellow nosefeel, with fruity top-notes, led by ripe pear and apple, backed by fruit salad with cherry and banana, developing notes of caramel and almond. The taste is sweet and toffee-like, finishing spicy and warming, with a light mouth-cooling effect.



Loch Lomond Distillery has long been an invisible giant. Although it is one of the largest distilleries in Scotland, producing both malt and grain spirits on the same site – currently ten million litres of the latter and 2.5 million litres of malt, in eight different styles – and thus is able to be self-sufficient as a blender, its products have until now been mainly available in export markets.

It has been described as “Scotland’s most versatile distillery” in regard to the different styles of spirit it produces from a baffling range of still-types – two traditional pot stills, four “Lomond” stills, one traditional Coffey still, and one uniquely modified Coffey still capable of producing malt spirit. The distillery also produces some peated spirit.

Lomond stills – the name is coincidental; they were invented at nearby Inverleven Distillery – replace the “swan necks” of traditional pot stills with short, straight-necked rectifying columns. The distillery writes on its website:

“One of the factors that has a great influence on the character of the spirit produced is the physical length of the neck of the stills. The longer the neck - the lighter (or cleaner) the spirit, the shorter the neck - the more full-bodied (or fatter) the spirit. By using the rectifying heads in a number of different ways, we can replicate the effect of different lengths of ‘neck’ without physically altering them.”

I do not know what style of still this cask comes from; the spirit is clearly unpeated and I would have thought this well-balanced mature whisky was older than nine years. The cask has done a first-rate job, without masking the original spirit character, and is a further indication of how good young whiskies can be.

“The taste is sweet and toffee-like, finishing spicy and warming, with a light mouth-cooling effect”

Maker’s Mark Private Selection Batch 5

The Whisky Shop Exclusive

70cl 55.3% VOL
NAS £115
Kentucky straight bourbon

Rich amber in colour, from a first fill American oak barrel. The top notes are nose-cooling and minty, backed by oak shavings and charcoal; there is a suggestion of linseed oil and vanilla toffee at base. A smooth texture and a sweetish oaky taste, finishing long with some spice and mentholic spearmint, and an oaky aftertaste.

“The top notes are nose-cooling and minty, backed by oak shavings and charcoal; there is a suggestion of linseed oil and vanilla toffee at base.”



Maker’s Mark Private Selection programme is all about selecting individual oak staves and suspending them deep within the new oak cask prior to it being filled with whiskey at full strength. The interaction the liquid has with these additional staves is what influences the final flavour of the whisky, and what makes each batch different is the fact that there can be many combinations of the staves selected.

The distillery offer five “additional stave types”, each of which add different flavours to the maturing whiskey – some fresh apple and pear, others caramel and vanilla and others spice and dark fruits. Each stave type had a different name—“Baked American Pure,” “Seared French Cuvee,” “Maker’s 46,” “Toasted French Spice,” etc. “Private selectors” choose the combination of staves they want and more than one of each may be selected.

Stave combinations for the earlier batches of The Whisky Shop exclusives were selected by Darren Leitch, The Whisky Shop’s General Manager, and Phil Dwyer, Manager of the Manchester store, at Maker’s Mark Distillery in Loretto, Kentucky. Darren writes: “Once we decided our stave combination, we went to the filling hall, attached the staves to a metal ring and simply dropped them into a new American Oak barrel. The end was resealed and it was filled with Maker’s Mark Cask Strength, at around four years old, then left to marry alongside the thousands of other Maker’s Mark barrels for a few more months, enough time for those additional staves to work their magic.

“We believe Batch 5 is different enough from previous batches and for me it is a bourbon I can really enjoy, plenty of flavour and even at its high strength very, very drinkable”.

Readers of Whiskeria will know that the addition of extra staves is prohibited by the Scotch Whisky Regulations, although this was loudly protested against by Compass Box, who attempted to use it for their Oak Cross expression!

New Releases

W.L.Weller Antique 107

The Whisky Shop
Exclusive

70cl 53.5% VOL

9 Year Old £135

Single barrel Kentucky straight bourbon

Very deep amber with copper lights. The nose is mellow and understated; while it has classic bourbon identity (oak, vanilla), this is modified by tropical floral notes and citrus peel, on a lightly ashy base. Sophisticated. Mouth-filling and soft; a sweetish, then refreshingly sour taste, with a medium length finish and a vanilla cream aftertaste.



"107" in the brand name highlights the fact that this whiskey has been bottled at 107 degrees U.S. Proof, which is 53.5%ABV (or 90 degrees Imperial Proof). I am sure that readers of Whiskeria will know that higher strength alcohol holds flavour-bearing molecules (congeners) better than low strength, so this is a justified selling point.

The label also proclaims it to be "The Original Wheated Bourbon." Weller was the inventor of "wheated bourbon", which means that the mash-bill replaces rye in the usual bourbon mix of corn (maize) and rye—although to be a "straight bourbon" the mix must be at least 51% corn. The high percentage of wheat makes for a lighter, softer character.

Born around 1825—the son and grandson of distillers—William founded a whiskey company named William Laroue Weller & Brother in 1849, with the slogan "Honest Whiskey at an Honest Price." It would seem that by this time the family distillery had closed, and the company was buying in and blending whiskey from other distilleries. The "Brother", Charles, was murdered in Tennessee in 1862 by two gunmen who then stole his cash.

By 1876, the company's name had been changed to W.L.Weller and Son, and by 1880 its whiskeys were doing so well that William marked each bottle with his thumb print in green ink to guarantee authenticity.

The W.L. Weller whiskeys are made at Sazerac's massive Buffalo Trace Distillery in Frankfort, Kentucky [see Eagle Rare, p.21], and this release is part of the company's celebrated Antique Collection. In common with their baffling number of other famous bourbon and rye brands, they are distributed "on allocation", with a specific number of bottles being allocated to each State. Now a limited number of bottles are made available to select overseas retailers, of which The Whisky Shop is one.

"Mouth-filling and soft; a sweetish, then refreshingly sour taste, with a medium length finish and a vanilla cream aftertaste."

Platinum Old & Rare Laphroaig 22 Year Old

70cl 59.1% VOL

22 Year Old £708

Islay single malt

Deep gold in colour, from a refill American oak hogshead. A mild and "polite" nose-feel and aroma, the phenols more maritime than obviously smoky or medicinal (dry seaweed, sea breeze, an extinguished beach bonfire). A creamy texture and a sweetish taste with a pinch of salt and a lightly smoky finish with a lingering smoky, turnip lantern aftertaste. A sophisticated example of the make.

"A mild and "polite" nose-feel and aroma, the phenols more maritime than obviously smoky or medicinal (dry seaweed, sea breeze, an extinguished beach bonfire)"



As readers of *Whiskeria* will be aware, *Laphroaig* is a highly phenolic malt – smoky and medicinal – much enjoyed by its many devotees around the world. As with other malt distilleries, the vast majority of the make went for blending, but through its Glasgow agents, Mackie & Company, some was being offered as Rare Islay Malt. Mackie & Co. owned the neighbouring Lagavulin Distillery and as early as 1881 were offering The Staghound Blend through their Australian distributor, described on its label as "*The Islay Blend Whisky, Mackie & Co, Lagavulin and Laphroaig Distilleries, Island of Islay, 6 Years Old.*"

In 1908, Mackie's contract was not renewed. The principal partner in the firm, the peppery Peter Mackie - described in his obituary many years later as "*one third genius, one third megalomaniac, one third eccentric*" - was furious and immediately sought legal redress, and when this failed, unsuccessfully attempted to dam Laphroaig's water supply.

Soon after this, Ian Hunter became manager (and later whole owner) of the distillery. He was a scion of the founding family; hard-working, meticulous, and somewhat secretive. During the 1920s, he set about selling his whisky in the United States, one of the earliest single malts to be promoted there. Prohibition was still in place, but a loophole in the law allowed whisky to be sold "for medicinal purposes", and *Laphroaig's* medicinal character made it perfect for such. While he was abroad, the distillery was managed by his secretary, Bessie Williamson, and when he died in 1954, he bequeathed Laphroaig to her.

By this time Laphroaig was badly in need of repair. In order to raise the funds to do this, Bessie sold a third of her shares to an American distiller, the Schenley Corporation, and by 1970 Schenley had complete ownership. Like many other distilleries, Laphroaig became an item on a multi-national corporation's balance-sheet: since 2005 that of Fortune Brands, owners of Jim Beam Bourbon, which merged with Suntory in 2014 to become Beam Suntory.

New Releases

Johnnie Walker Blue Label Year of the Rabbit

70cl 40% VOL
9 Year Old £210
Blended Scotch whisky

A mellow nose, with light spice (black pepper). A comparatively closed nose, when they emerge the top-notes are faintly floral (wallflowers?), on an earthy/mossy base. All tightly integrated. A very smooth texture and a sweetish taste with light spice and fragrant smoke in the finish.

“A very smooth texture and a sweetish taste with light spice and fragrant smoke in the finish.”



2023 is The Year of the Rabbit in the Chinese Zodiac, and this limited bottling of Johnnie Walker's iconic Blue Label expression has been released to mark it.

In China, each year is related to an animal sign, in a 12-year cycle: "Rabbit" is the fourth in the cycle so was celebrated in 2011, 1999, 1987, 1975 and so on. According to the lunar calendar, the Chinese New Year 2023 starts on 22nd January and ends on 9th February 2024.

The rabbit is considered to be the luckiest of all the twelve animals, "symbolizing mercy, elegance, and beauty. People who are born in the year of the rabbit are vigilant, witty, patient and responsible; gentle and amicable, they avoid fighting and arguing at all times, but are artistic and have good taste." On the downside, Rabbits are "sometimes reluctant to reveal their minds

to others and having a tendency to escape reality."

Johnnie Walker Blue Label was introduced in the early 1990s, to replace Johnnie Walker Oldest, which was described as "containing whiskies from 15 to 60 years old" – although one of the team responsible for it told me that the quantity of 60-year-old whisky in the blend was "homeopathic"! The Scotch Whisky Regulations 1990 prohibited such labelling, requiring that if a whisky bore an age statement it must be only than of the youngest constituent.

Accordingly, Blue Label does not carry an age statement, although we are assured that it contains some "very old and rare" whiskies. It is an outstandingly smooth blend, worthy of being savoured. I must say it goes very well with a wide range of Cantonese and Sichuan dishes.

Old Pulteney 2010 #1802 W Club Exclusive

70cl 64.2% VOL
12 Year Old £130
Single cask Highland single malt

An unusual example of the make. Very deep amber, with ruby lights; a polished conker. Some nose prickle, as expected at this strength. The top notes suggest European oak maturation—malt loaf, mixed dried fruits, kitchen spices (allspice, mace, nutmeg). A smooth texture and a sweetish, spicy taste; medium length finish with dried fruits in the aftertaste.

The top notes suggest European oak maturation—malt loaf, mixed dried fruits, kitchen spices (allspice, mace, nutmeg)"

Ten years ago, I was asked by Inver House Distillers, owners of Pulteney Distillery, to research its origins. It's a curious story.

The name was bestowed on the urging of no less a person than Thomas Telford, the "Father of Civil Engineering", who designed "Pulteneytown", a model village, and the port of Wick.

The project was sponsored by The British Fisheries Society and was executed between 1800 and 1820—with considerable difficulty, since the fierce winter gales in the north-east twice washed away the harbour walls. The Governor of the B.F.S., and the moving force behind the scheme was Sir William Pulteney.



Sir William's birth name was William Johnstone. He had met the young, impoverished Telford, son of a shepherd in Langholm, when he was working as a stonemason on the Johnstone family home in Dumfriesshire and later when he was engaged in Edinburgh's New Town. Having qualified as an advocate, William joined the Customs Service and moved to London, where he married Frances Pulteney, the daughter of an M.P. and cousin of the Earl of Bath, one of the richest men in England. Following the latter's death, his fortune passed to Frances and her husband, who took the name Pulteney.

Now a man of independent means, Sir William (he had inherited the baronetcy on

the death of his father) became Telford's principal patron, including appointing him Surveyor General to the B.F.S. in 1790, but he died in 1805, before the Wick project was completed.

Wick soon became the largest herring station in Europe, used by over a 1,000 fishing boats and attracting 7,000 migrant workers during the season. It was logical to build a distillery there to quench the thirst of such a hoard of workers, and this was done in 1826 by a local man, James Henderson.

Balblair 2006

#73 The Whisky Shop Exclusive

70cl 55% VOL
16 Year Old £179
Single cask Highland single malt

Old amber in hue—Amontillado sherry—with good beading. A mild nosefeel at natural strength, with top notes of clotted cream, on a faint base of strawberry jam (with a suggestion of scone? i.e. cream tea!); beneath all this is warm brown paper. The taste is a nice balance of light sweetness and faint saltiness, with a medium-length, warming, finish.

“Old amber in hue—Amontillado sherry—with good beading.”



The pretty Balblair Distillery stands in “the parish of peats”, Edderton, high above the Dornoch Firth in Ross-shire. The current distillery was built around 1872 to replace an earlier distillery, licensed in 1790 (some claim 1749 as the foundation date), located nearby. The founder of the earlier distillery was John Ross, and members of his family managed Balblair for over a hundred years. I believe that of the nine staff working at the distillery today, four bear the name Ross.

In his *The Whisky Distilleries of the United Kingdom*, (1887) Alfred Barnard remarks “In former days the whole neighbourhood abounded in smuggling bothies, and was the scene of many a

struggle between the revenue officers and smugglers.” This is not surprising: the rich soils of Rosshire provided quantities of barley, an equable climate (Edderton is reputed to have the cleanest air in Scotland), an abundance of peat and a copious water supply made it an ideal place for distilling whisky.

The usually taciturn Charles Craig describes Balblair as “one of the most attractive small distilleries still standing” in his *Scotch Whisky Industry Record* (1994), a factor which encouraged the great English film director, Ken Loach, to choose it as the location for the auction of a cask of Malt Mill whisky in his award-

winning film *The Angels’ Share* (2012). The tiny Malt Mill Distillery operated within Lagavulin Distillery between 1908 and 1962; it produced a heavily peated malt for blending, but no casks of the make are known to exist. The present writer, who appears in the film, was responsible for suggesting Malt Mill as a super-rare whisky.

Balblair was first released as a single malt in 2000, having been acquired by its present owner, Inver House Distillers, four years earlier. It is an attractive whisky – full-bodied and savoury (nuts, leather, wax in the new make spirit), developing fruity and faintly maritime notes during maturation.

Penderyn 2014

The Whisky Shop Exclusive

This expression is only available to purchase at The Whisky Shop Cardiff

70cl 59.8% VOL
5 Year Old £90
Welsh single malt

Old gold with khaki lights; moderate beading. A surprisingly mellow nose for its strength, with only light prickle. The aroma is understated but led by European oak notes of dried fruits (sultanas), nuts (almonds, dry marzipan) and Virginia tobacco. A smooth, mouth-filling texture and a sweet taste, with spice in the finish and milk chocolate in the aftertaste.

“A smooth, mouth-filling texture and a sweet taste, with spice in the finish and milk chocolate in the aftertaste.”



Like all good whisky tales, the story of the revival of distilling in Wales begins in a pub.

In 1997, the landlord, Alun Evans, was chatting with a friend, Brian Morgan, about the Welsh influence upon distilling in the U.S.A., and wondering whether it might be possible to revive the art of whisky distilling in the Principality. Two weeks later, Alun phoned Brian to alert him to the sale, in liquidation, of the plant and effects of Welsh Distillers – including a complete bottling line and an unused still. They would go for a song, he said—they did: £75,000—and within a year The Welsh Whisky Company Ltd. had been incorporated.

The ‘unused still’ in question was of

a completely novel design, combining a pot still with elements of a column still, so that complete distillation could be done in a single unit - at unusually high strength (92% abv) and with considerable energy saving (38% of the energy required to fire a traditional pot still). It was the invention of Dr David Faraday, Professor of Distilling in the University of Surrey, and a descendent of Michael Faraday, the 19th century ‘Father’ of electricity and magnetism.

None of the founders had any experience of distilling, so they sought the advice of the leading independent authority on the subject, Dr Jim Swan. His first task was to test the still, which he reported was

capable of producing ‘world class spirit.’ He then recommended that the distillery do away with mashing and fermenting on site—this is not possible in the manufacture of Scotch whisky, but there is no reason why a pioneering non-Scotch distillery should not have its wash made elsewhere. Conversations were opened with S.A. Brain & Company’s Brewery in Cardiff, nearby. Dr. Swan also recommended finishing in Madeira, port and sherry casks.

Penderyn’s spirit is light and fruity. This cask has been matured in European oak ex-Oloroso sherry casks. It is remarkably mature for its age and mellow for its strength.

New Releases

The Loch Fyne Caol Ila 9 Year Old

50cl 58.9% VOL
9 Year Old £85

Islay single malt

Chardonnay in colour, with pale green lights. A mild nose-feel with light prickle. The first, brief, impression is of vanilla fudge, soon overcome by medicinal phenols (carbolic, iodine), supported by traces of smoky bacon crisps. A smooth texture and a sweet taste, slightly salty and very smoky in the shortish finish. A classic example of the make.

“A smooth texture and a sweet taste, slightly salty and very smoky in the shortish finish.”



This youthful expression of Caol Ila from Loch Fyne is a reminder of just how good young whiskies can be. This is especially true of Islay malts – with some reservations: I have never been a fan of young Lagavulin and some NAS Ardbegs can be coarse—which deliver their phenolic characteristics (smoky, medicinal) at full volume when they are young.

Caol Ila is the largest distillery on Islay and its make is a key component of the Johnnie Walker blends; as a result it has been little known as a single malt, compared with the other Islay malts, until recently.

Although United Distillers (now Diageo) released small amounts in the late 1980s under its Flora & Fauna and Rare Malts ranges and began to promote the make as part of the expanded Classic Malts range in 2002, it was only following nearly doubling of capacity (to 6.5 million litres of pure alcohol per annum) in 2011–2012 that the company was able to make more spirit available for single malt bottling.

The distillery's connection with Johnnie Walker was celebrated (and made public) in 2022 when Caol Ila was chosen to be the fourth of the “Johnnie Walker Four Corners” scheme to promote Johnnie Walker following the opening of the very

grand Johnnie Walker Experience on Princes Street, Edinburgh. The other chosen distilleries were Glenkinchie (Lowland), Clynelish (North Highland) and Talisker (Isle of Skye). All have been upgraded with stunning visitor centres – at a cost of £180 million, which is a significant vote of confidence, not only in the future of the world's best-selling blended Scotch, but also a realisation of the importance of Scotch whisky tourism to our economy.

Eagle Rare Single Barrel #173 The Whisky Shop Exclusive

70cl 45% VOL
NAS £99

Straight Kentucky bourbon

Very deep amber with copper lights. A mellow nose-feel. The top notes are fresh oak shavings, backed by vanilla cream, with a trace of almond oil, on a base of pencil shavings. Reserved and subtle. A smooth texture and a sweet taste, but not cloying, with white pepper in the finish and oak in the aftertaste.

“The top notes are fresh oak shavings, backed by vanilla cream, with a trace of almond oil, on a base of pencil shavings.”



Eagle Rare is a “single barrel bourbon”—each release is drawn from a single cask, rather than a mix of casks and bourbon styles, based on different mash-bills (i.e., the proportions of corn (maize), malted barley, rye, and wheat). To be labelled as “straight bourbon”, the mash-bill must have at least 51% of corn—Eagle Rare probably has around 80%, but we are not told how much.

It is described as a “classic bourbon” and has won a hoard of awards—indeed its website opens with: “*The only bourbon to ever win the double gold medal four times.*” The leading American whiskey writer, Paul Pacult, writes: “*Easily one of the most tactile yet assertive and expressive bourbons I’ve*

tasted in the last two years; fasten your seat belts.”

It is part of Sazerac's Antique Collection of super-premium American whiskies made at Buffalo Trace Distillery [see W.L. Weller, p.14]. The 17-year-old was introduced as part of the original Collection in 2000, although the brand was first created by Seagram in 1975, at the same high strength, and acquired by Sazerac in 1989.

Buffalo Trace Distillery is huge and rambling. The site in Franklin County, Kentucky, stretches over 130 acres and apparently is “home to four centuries of architecture—all still fully operational.” It has been around since 1775—“the oldest continuously operating distillery

in America”—under a confusing number of names: Leestown (post 1775), George T. Stagg, (1840), Ancient Age (1865, then 1969), OFC (Old Fire Copper, 1869), Albert B. Blanton (1912) and finally Buffalo Trace (post 1995, when the brand was launched).

The brand and distillery name comes from the fact that this place on the Kentucky River was a ford, used since time immemorial by herds of buffalo on their annual migration. Then came the Lee brothers in 1775, who established a trading post named “Leestown”, and presumably a whiskey distillery as well.

Whisky business

1 The Macallan Estate extends opening days

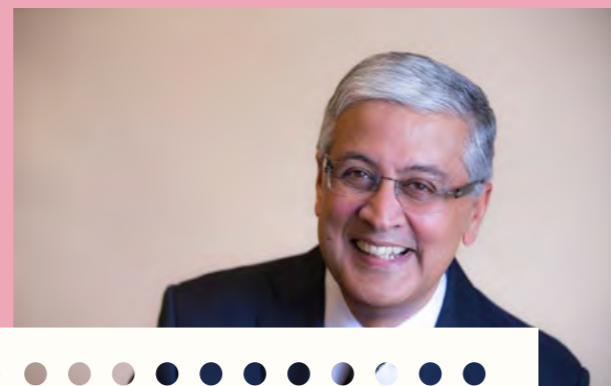
At the end of January, **The Macallan** made the move to extend its opening days in order to give as many people as possible the chance to visit the historic Speyside location. Visiting has been extended to Thursday through until Sunday, a move away from what was previously weekend only availability. Stuart Cassells, General Manager at The Macallan Estate, said, *"It is important to us to curate the most magical experience for everyone who visits, and by welcoming guests throughout the week we can create far more opportunities for people to enjoy this unique place and immerse themselves in the history of The Macallan."*

To arrange your visit, go to www.themacallan.com



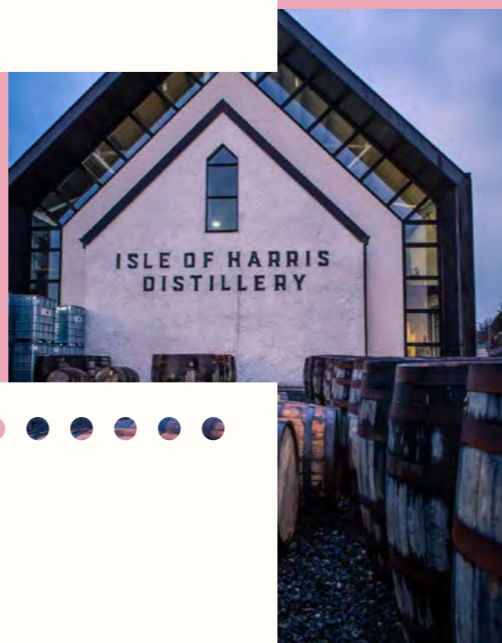
2 Diageo CEO receives knighthood

After almost a decade in the role, **Diageo CEO, Ivan Menezes** has been given a knighthood for services to business and equality. Menezes said of the knighthood, *"I am incredibly honoured to receive this award on behalf of my 28,000 colleagues at Diageo. Their creativity, passion, and drive has enabled Diageo, a British company, to become a truly global leader, making a positive contribution to the communities we serve."* Congratulations to Ivan and the whole team at Diageo!



3 £10 million in funding for Isle of Harris

Isle of Harris has received £10 million worth of funding that will help grow their business across the globe. **The distillery is planning to launch a malt whisky alongside their signature gin.** The funding has also helped the distillery build two warehouses on the island. Founded in 2015, Isle of Harris has been named Distillery of the Year twice at the Scottish Gin Awards.



4 Whisky ingredients found to be beneficial to skin health

According to a recent study from Robert Gordon University's School of Pharmacy and Life Sciences, pot ale provides antioxidants that can benefit the skin by reducing redness and puffiness. The study was inspired by research by a Japanese company in the 1970s into the effects of sake ingredients on the skin. Inverness-based skincare company, Zaza & Cruz, are now using the ingredients in their range of products.



5 Whisky legend Jim McEwan awarded MBE

Bruichladdich's former Master Distiller, **Jim McEwan**, has been awarded an **MBE for services to the Scotch whisky** industry and the community in Islay. 2023 marks the sixtieth year that Jim McEwan has worked in the industry, starting his career at Bowmore as an apprentice cooper in 1963. Congratulations, Jim!

6 Proceeds of The Macallan The Reach auction split between four businesses

The proceeds of the recently auctioned **The Macallan The Reach** has been split between four recipient businesses—**Alexander Manufacturing, Glasstorm, Powderhall Bronze, and Shepherds Bookbinders**—as part of the distillery's Artisan Apprenticeship fund. Each business will receive a portion of £260,000 which will help them train and recruit new apprentices. Elizabeth McMillan, Head of Insight & Sustainability at The Macallan said, *"Preserving and safeguarding legacy crafts, trades, skills, and values is an essential part of this, to help support employment for generations to come. We're proud to play a part in training and guiding the next generation of artisans throughout Scotland and beyond."*



Join the club



Last year we announced our newly revitalised W Club. Since then, our membership has grown by over 135 per cent! We are always working hard to improve and enhance to make sure your £30 goes further than ever. If you're not yet a member, it's never a bad time to sign up!

PHOTOGRAPHY: DECLAN CORCORAN



Delivering In-Demand Whisky to Members

Over the last year, fifty different in-demand releases were offered to W Club members via 24-hour Priority access, and more than 500 of the world's most sought-after whiskies went out exclusively to W Clubbers across over twenty exciting ballots.

For the year ahead we are looking to increase the number, frequency and transparency of these releases, which are all designed to ensure W Club members get as fair as possible a chance of acquiring some of the finest whiskies released throughout the year.

In-Person Tastings

After the lifting of restrictions in early 2022, we ran nearly one hundred in-person tasting events—from members-only tastings to brand-led nights and roadshows—across fourteen stores up and down the United Kingdom. All of these events are either discounted for members or are hosted exclusively for the W Club. We'll be running even more throughout 2023, and we will have tastings return to TWS venues who didn't host them in 2022 – including our new Cardiff store. Once the tastings are confirmed,

the information can be viewed on our events page on the W Club Members Hub (accessible via the QR Code) and each one is communicated via email. To ensure you're not missing out, make sure you've selected your nearest store on the "My Account" section of www.whiskeryshop.com.

Digital Drams

We hosted over twenty Digital Drams virtual tastings in 2022, developing and improving our packaging and how we deliver these events. Throughout the year, demand for these events grew and remained strong. There are multiple benefits to tasting virtually, and Digital Drams is an unrivalled way to expand your knowledge and improve your palate.

The goal for 2023 is to deliver more varied events and to include more unique prizes and benefits. On the night of the events, members can pose questions to the experts and share their opinion on the whiskies. In addition, the tastings are recorded, so you can watch back whenever you like. Check out all the old and upcoming events on our members hub, where on each product page you can watch back some of our older tasting; and it might even still be possible to purchase some of our past packs.



Exclusive Bottles and Cask Committee

In 2022, we ran two Cask Committees, with our release of our W Club Exclusive Loch Lomond 2013 9 Year Old in February being the first W Club Exclusive release chosen by our members. Later this year we will see the release of another W Club members selected single cask from Kilchoman—the second release chose by the Committee — and we hope to run more as the year progresses.

Outside of the Cask Committee, we will still have other W Club Exclusive Single Casks. Indeed, W Club members have enjoyed a 10% discount on dozens of recent TWS Single Casks. Make sure you're in the Club as there are some very exciting releases planned for the rest of 2023; watch this space!



Partner Offers

In 2022, we introduced fifteen different Partner Offers for members. This entitles W Clubbers to discounts on various visitor experiences and subscriptions. Over the course of 2023 some partnerships will be leaving us but will be replaced with new exciting ones coming online throughout the year. Keep an eye on your W Club emails and our "Partner Offers" page on our members hub for current and new W Club Partner Offers.

Members Only Deals and More to Come

W Clubbers get monthly deals in-store as well as exclusive access to our bi-weekly Whisky Wednesday deals. This is in addition to the aforementioned discounts on the majority of TWS exclusive bottles.

We are updating the Members Hub to improve our members interaction and overall online experience; and for the rest of 2023, we have a couple of other projects in the works that we think will excite W Clubbers everywhere. Be there, don't be square!



Knowledge Bar W Club



By joining the W Club, you will receive a subscription to this very magazine! Have every of Whiskeria delivered directly to your doorstep!

Sign Up:



Go to our Members Hub:



How we've grown

From humble beginnings in 2019, our cracking Auctions team has gone from strength to strength over the years. After their biggest year yet, we sat down with Whisky Specialist Graeme Maxwell to review how far Auctions has come these past four years.



PHOTOGRAPHY: DECLAN CORCORAN

How many people were there in the Auctions team in 2019? How many are there now?

Back in 2019 when TWSA started up, we had a staff of two. As the number of bottles coming through the doors has increased, the team has grown along with it. We now have five members of staff in the auction house, and also our van driver who travels the length and breadth of the country picking up hundreds of bottles from sellers on each trip.

How many bottles have been sold through Auctions?

Since the launch of TWSA, there has been in excess of 40,000 bottles sold, with over 18,000 of those being sold in 2022 alone.

What has been the highest selling bottle?

We have seen many fantastic results since Auctions launched, the highest of which was the Bowmore 1965, which spent over 52 years maturing in a sherry cask. The bottle sold for a hammer price of £23,500.

What are the most popular brands at Auctions?

Those that achieve strong showings in auctions tend to be some of the usual big-name distilleries such as The Macallan, Springbank, and Ardbeg, to name but a few. Closed distilleries, due to the finite supplies, are always targets for collectors, particularly spirits from Brora, Rosebank, and Port Ellen. Although, the desires of bidders are not restricted to whiskies produced in Scotland, with some of the higher prices achieved by distillates from the Japanese distilleries Chichibu, Yamazaki, and the lost Karuizawa distillery.

What have been the most memorable sales over the years?

Some of the more memorable bottles that have come through the doors haven't always been the most expensive and aren't always single malts. One that comes to mind is the Johnnie Walker Old Highland Whisky. This is the precursor to the short-lived Johnnie Walker White Label and was produced around 1910. Bottles of this age rarely appear at auction, so it is somewhat of an event when they do! This antique bottle had been handed down from one generation to the next and was found at the back of a cupboard covered in dust. In the end, it sold for a hammer price of £5,000 which for a blended whisky is a fantastic result.

To find out more about all the wonderful work done at Auctions, visit our handy website. Selling and buying whiskies at auction has never been easier! So, what are you waiting for? There's a world of rare and exciting bottles out there to explore!



Knowledge Bar i

Free home collection

If you have an interesting bottle at home that you'd like to auction, we'll pick it up from your doorstep, free of charge!

Email auctions@whiskyshop.com to find out when your dram can be collected.

THE WHISKY SHOP
AUCTIONS

Now showing...



Brian Wilson turns his eye to The Macallan's new short film, *The Spirit of 1926*, and gives us the low-down on this exceptional Scottish production.

Knowledge Bar The Robertson Sisters



Ethel, Elspeth, and Agnes Robertson were the granddaughters of William Robertson, co-founder of Robertson & Baxter.

Growing up, the girls were said to be extremely active, ambitious, and worldly-wise.

Following the death of their father, James Robertson, in 1944, all of his possessions were passed on to the three girls. Ethel, who had the keenest mind for business of the three, took on Robertson & Baxter, which eventually went on to be renamed The Edrington Group. Without Ethel's wisdom and direction, it is unlikely that Edrington would be the company that it is today.



➔ A film worth making is worth making classily. That principle clearly underpinned the decision to make a short biopic called *Nettie*, prompted by the sale of a bottle of 1926 Macallan whisky for the world record price of £1.5 million.

The film is about the woman who ran The Macallan show at Craigellachie when a crucial cask was filled with that precious liquid almost a century ago. It is also tacit acknowledgement that Scotch whisky collectors with lots of money around the world are buying into history and narrative as well as a drinkable, tradeable commodity. And they will love *'The Macallan—the Movie'*.

An American collector was vendor of the £1.5 million bottle. According to Sotheby's spirits specialist, Jonny Fowle: *"The electricity in the auction room was palpable. There were cheers when the hammer fell on The Macallan Fine and Rare 1926, in what has to be one of the most exciting moments in the history of whisky sales."*

The Macallan has a great, authentic story to tell and chose this moment to tell it. Who better to write the script than Allan Scott, though at this point the name-check, for those who do not know, gets a bit confusing. Allan Scott is the screenwriter and producer (think *The Queen's Gambit* etc.).

Allan Shiach, on the other hand, was formerly chairman and chief executive of The Macallan, prior to it becoming part of Edrington in 1999. It was Shiach who made the decision to bottle The Macallan Fine & Rare 1926 after 60 years of maturation back in 1986, during his

time as chairman of the company.

The twist to the name tale is that Scott and Shiach are one and the same person—an enviable double life which has ensured that Allan S., as we will call him, knows not only a great deal about whisky and movies, but everyone who's anyone in both businesses.

So, recruitment for the film was not a problem, starting with the director Mike Newell, whose previous credits include such modest titles as *Four Weddings and a Funeral* and *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*. That's surely the most promising starting point ever for an eight-minute promotional film!

But what's the plot? Shortly before the end of the First World War, Alexander Harbison, an Irish doctor who had been running the distillery, died suddenly. He had married into the business, his wife Janet—or Nettie—being the daughter of the distillery's owner, Roderick Kemp, an innovator with strong local loyalties who built The Macallan brand. Nettie knew the operation inside out but the idea of a woman running a distillery was still pretty alien to the age she lived in. However, she resisted pressure to sell, became managing director, and saw the business through 20 exceptionally tough years of prohibition, depression, and war. Along the way, she made great whisky—including that 1926 cask that was to become famous.

Jaume Ferras, Global Creative Director for The Macallan, said: *"We uncovered Janet Harbison's story when researching the background to The Macallan Fine & Rare*



We uncovered Janet Harbison's story when researching the background to The Macallan Fine & Rare 1926, and we knew we had to share it as soon as we learned of her role in its distillation and maturation, as well as the deep influence she had on the future development of the brand.

1926 and we knew we had to share it as soon as we learned of her role in its distillation and maturation, as well as the deep influence she had on the future development of the brand.

"At its heart, this is a love story; it celebrates the love that Nettie had for her husband, her love for the local community, her love for nature, and her love for the family business. She cared deeply about others and was determined to use her position at The Macallan to enrich the lives of those around her."

Jaume says that *"as a brand with a long Scottish heritage it was important for us to bring together the best of the country's creative talent"* and they largely stuck to that principle. The exception was the fine London-born actress, Emily Mortimer, who flew in from her Brooklyn home to play the part of Nettie – and the accent is perfect!

What celebration of Scottish talent would be complete without the actor, Bill Paterson? He has been a friend of mine since the halcyon days of The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil and I have seen him in a hundred roles. But he was never better cast than as the wing-collared family solicitor telling Nettie that a woman couldn't possibly run the company and then recoiling in horror as she tore up the offending documents in front of him. I laughed out loud!

When I mention that the Glasgow-born designer, Christopher Kane, was responsible for Nettie's period costumes while Simple Minds provide the soundtrack, you will get the idea that this is not so much a promotional film as a work of art, worthy

of its subject. It has been shown in selected cinemas around the world or you can find it on The Macallan website.

As owners of The Macallan, Edrington have elevated it to the highest peaks of the Scotch whisky industry to become the world's biggest selling single malt by value. It is entirely appropriate to their history that a strong female narrative features so strongly in its history since their own existence is also a tribute to the under-reported role of women in the Scotch whisky industry.

The Edrington Group grew out of Robertson & Baxter, a bottling and blending company founded in Glasgow in 1855. Their interests in the whisky industry expanded and eventually ended up in the hands of William Robertson's three spinster granddaughters who, in order to maintain the business's independence in perpetuity, created in 1961 the Robertson Trust.

Robertson & Baxter was re-named The Edrington Group, after the estate in Berwickshire which the sisters owned since 1945 and the Trust has remained the dominant shareholder in the business. The dividends which it pays to The Robertson Trust allow it to operate as one of Scotland's most significant philanthropic funders with a focus on supporting organisations *"working to alleviate trauma and poverty in Scotland."*

The Robertson Trust has dispensed hundreds of millions of pounds throughout its existence while also seeking to inform public opinion on the issues it deals with.

For example, it recently published *"new research showing that many low-income families are being pushed into debt and arrears by the public bodies meant to be helping them through the cost-of-living emergency."* To say the least, it's unusual work to be funded from the profits of a whisky company! William Robertson also founded Highland Distillers in 1887. It grew into one of the most significant players in the whisky industry and when the Edrington Group brought it within the fold, it came with the Famous Grouse and Highland Park brands as well The Macallan with all its potential for global promotion which was quickly identified and acted upon.

As the brand's status grew, so too did the potential for attracting visitors to the place it is made. In 2018, Edrington opened a stunning £140 million distillery and visitor centre on the original site at Easter Elchies Estate, near Craigellachie. At present, to help them on their journey to net zero by 2045 (and presumably cut their energy bills), they are planning on developing a solar farm close to the distillery.

It's a great success story and all the better for having, in the background, a social purpose. The film is worthy of the story and if they are ever making a sequel, I would nominate the remarkable Robertson sisters as suitable subjects!

Flying high

Desiree Reid dreamt of making her mark on the drinks industry. After twelve years of hard work and unwavering belief, Desiree now leads the 50-strong team at Cardrona Distillery, which is taking the whisky world by storm.

Knowledge Bar

Cardrona Distillery



The Cardrona Distillery

Cardrona Valley Road, Wanaka

New Zealand

Nestled in the Cardrona valley (hence the name!), the distillery prides itself on the exceptional quality of their spirits.

The whisky is created using pure alpine water from Mount Cardrona, rich malted barley from New Zealand's Canterbury region, and hand-selected oak casks.

These ingredients, combined with the distillery team's immaculate attention to detail in production, results in some truly delectable whisky flowing from the stills.

➔ Tell our readers about your role at Cardrona Distillery.

I'm the founder of Cardrona Distillery. This was my dream. It was a five-year journey from the seed of an idea to the day the first spirit ran from the stills. It's been twelve years to this point.

What gave you the idea to found the distillery?

It was a really long journey. It certainly wasn't a straight line. The seed was sown when I was aged 20. I had taken a break from my degree and bought a one-way ticket to the UK. I ended up pulling pints. One place that I worked at was the Ladbroke Arms in Notting Hill. The owner at the time had a wonderful collection of malts. The different shapes of bottles and colours really caught my eye.

Then, my mum came over for my 21st birthday and we went up to Scotland where her family come from, and we went on a bus tour. One of the stops was Edradour. I can't honestly say that I sat there thinking that one day I'd go on to build a whisky distillery but probably those are the experiences that sowed the seed.

Then fast-forward, I went home, finished my degree, and went farming. I had a very lucky run through to farm ownership with

my first husband. But the worst happened, and we separated. I started doing a whole lot of soul-searching and started making lists of business ideas, researching them, then scrapping the lot.

On my list came an idea of making properly made perfume all from scratch so I had to learn how to make alcohol. I started travelling to the States to learn how to make vodka because vodka undiluted is perfumery alcohol.

At a conference in the States, I stumbled across a man called Dave Pickerell who was former Head of Maker's Mark. He was just incredible, so I scoured the programme and went to all of his workshops. He took me under his wing, and he mentored me from the United States. Perfume sort of fell away to whisky—and here we are!

What were the first couple of years like when you were creating the distillery?

I formed the company in 2011 and it was two and a half years of research. It took six months to find the appropriate site. It took another whole twelve months after this to get all the consents. Then another whole year to build. It was five years from the beginning of the research to the spirit flowing from the stills—which happened on my 37th birthday!





I think the beautiful thing about whisky is that it's such an everyman's drink [...] It's a drink that everybody loves to enjoy and share.

What was this process like for you?

The research phase is very much like scuba diving. It's very quiet and solitary, and you look at things yourself. The start-up phase is like white-water rafting. It's turbulent and you've got to listen to the captain. I'm the captain so I'm making those calls to keep the business afloat and keep everybody on the raft. Then once the business matures, it becomes a rowing eight where everybody is in unison.

Do you remember your first experiences of dipping your toe into the world of whisky?

There was a dram at Edradour which I tried on the bus tour. We were given our drams and they were delicious. However, my mum was tee-total. By the end of the tour, my mum hadn't touched hers and that was not acceptable. So, she took the glass from my hand and thrust hers into mine and so I got to enjoy my second dram of Edradour very quickly. That was the first real taste of whisky.

In terms of the industry, the taste of the people and the culture was something I found incredibly embracing and very open. Dave Pickerell and Richard Forsyth [of Forsyths] were incredibly giving of their time. I really appreciated that.

What does a typical working day look like for you?

It's incredibly varied. I have fifty people working for me now in a range of different teams. My job is to direct those teams and make sure we're focused on the right activities. That can go from sales team meetings to different trade events to being in the distillery itself. I also have two children, so it's been a very big seven years with them coming along on that journey as well.

Could you tell our readers about the wonderful team that you have working with you at Cardrona Distillery.

At the distillery, we're led by a lady called Sarah Elsom. She's our Master Distiller. She has a degree in winemaking and is very capable in fermentation. And, of course, if you don't create the flavours in fermentation then you'll never be able to distil them. She brings a wonderful expertise in that area.

We have an all-female team at the distillery at the moment. It's not by design, it's just how it happens to be. Then, there's our front of house team who are excellent at what they do. Finally, we have two sales teams—one in New Zealand and one in the UK. They're out there waving the flag for us.

What has been the highlight of your career so far?

The day the spirit flowed was pretty special. The spirit flowed for my birthday, and we laid our first cask two weeks later on my mother's 60th birthday on 5th November. We have a party at the distillery every year on that night. This year, it was black tie or Scottish formal and we had 700 people—Cardrona's nearest and dearest—who came to the party all dressed to the nines.

Cardrona Distillery utilises a number of different cask finishes. Tell us more about this.

The casks are very traditional. We make whisky to the highest of standards, traditionally and properly. We bring our casks in whole from Kentucky [for bourbon casks] and from Jose Miguel in the south of Spain [for sherry casks].

We use red wine casks, too. This is special as we live in the heart of New Zealand's best Pinot noir making area. Felton Road provides us with our red wine casks. There is one extremely busy time in a winery's year, which is when they make the wine and they're bottling it at the same time. Normally, you cannot go near a winery during that time. However, Felton Road really love the fact they've got Cardrona on their doorstep. The day that they dump the casks, they ring us, and my dad goes over with this very large trailer, picks up all of the casks that they've retired that year, and brings them back to Cardrona. We fill them that day to preserve the beautiful, fresh, ripe, red fruit notes.





The distillery is in New Zealand. What kind of impact does the climate have on the whisky?

We make this very well-made whisky in an extreme environment. We're sitting at 600 metres above sea level which changes the boiling point of alcohol, so it changes the way it behaves in the still. It also changes the way it behaves inside the cask when it's maturing and the way the angels interact with the casks.

Added to that, unless it's raining, it's 0 per cent humidity. It's a very dry environment, again, changing the way the angels interact with the casks during the maturation. We have an enormous

swing in temperature. In winter, it can be -10°C and then in summer 40°C.

Do you think that whisky is beginning to appeal to a wider demographic?

It is very fashionable to drink single malt now and it's wonderful for the industry. It's great for those who are broadening their experiences and drinking less but better, which I think is a really important trend at the moment. I think the beautiful thing about whisky is that it's such an everyman's drink. It's approachable and it has no snobbery. It's a drink that everybody loves to enjoy and share.



We make whisky to the highest of standards, traditionally and properly.

Can you give us any hints about upcoming releases the distillery might have?

We've followed what Ardbeg did when they started producing again and came into the market with Very Young, Still Young, and Almost There. When we turned three years and a day, we released Just Hatched. At five years, we released Growing Wings. We've just turned seven and the cask that we've selected for the single cask release of our final progress report was bottled in mid-January, and that will be Full Flight.

What is your personal favourite expression that you've created at the distillery so far?

I love sherry. The Full Flight that's coming out, the single cask, is delicious.

Could you tell our readers something about the distillery something they might not already know about?

The well was dug by my father, so the well's name is Alvin's Well. Alvin's Well is the water source of The Cardrona distillery.

What is it that makes Cardrona Distillery stand out from the crowd?

The experiment of the extreme environment and what that's doing to the maturation and the development of the whisky. That's what makes Cardrona stand out.

What goals do you have for the future of the distillery?

The same goal from the beginning: to make great whisky.

The Making of a Masterpiece



THE
DALMORE[™]
HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

New kid on the block



Gavin D Smith explores
the Isle of Skye's newest
distillery, Torabhaig.



Distillery Visit

Knowledge Bar
The Legacy Series

TORABHAIG

TEANGUE

ISLE OF SKYE

IV44 8RE

In 2021, Torabhaig launched their inaugural expression, Torabhaig 2017. This release marked the beginning of the distillery's Legacy Series, as well as being the first whisky produced on Skye from a distillery that wasn't Talisker. Just 100 casks of the expression were filled and the bottles of this highly limited release were swiftly snapped up.

The second edition in the legacy series is Torabhaig Allt Gleann, also released in 2021. This expression is built around complex peat flavours and has become an instant hit, just like the distillery's first release. With two more expressions still to be released as part of the Legacy Series, we cannot wait to see what this exciting young distillery has in store for us next.

**Torabhaig Allt Gleann**

70cl | 46% VOL | £61

A delicious small batch expression which wonderfully balances notes of sea salt, fresh orchard fruits, and thick peat smoke.



➔ Of all Scotland's many islands, few can boast such a heady blend of history, romance, mystique, and dramatic scenic beauty as the Hebridean gem of Skye. It offers a spectacular coastline of lochs and peninsulas, and towering above everything, the mighty Cuillin Hills. Unsurprisingly, Eilean a Cheo —*‘the misty isle’* as it is known in Gaelic— is regularly voted one of Scotland's top visitor destinations.

For whisky lovers, Skye has long been synonymous with Talisker, but for the past five years, the Diageo-owned classic has had competition from a young upstart called Torabhaig (pronounced *‘Tora-vaig’*), which is already making a major impression in the minds and on the palates of peated whisky aficionados the world over.

Torabhaig is located by Knock Bay and the hamlet of Teangue, on the Sleat (pronounced *‘Slate’*) peninsula in the south-west of the island. The name is Gaelic for *‘the hill overlooking the bay.’* Close by are the ruins of Knock Castle (also known as Castle Camus), comprising part of a 15th century keep. The castle was built by members of Clan MacLeod, and was later captured by their arch-rivals the MacDonalds, subsequently becoming their power base.

While Gaelic is very much a minority language in Scotland these days, it still holds sway in the area of Skye, where Torabhaig distillery is located. Road signs are bilingual, and just two miles from the distillery is Sabhal Mòr Ostaig (The Great Barn of Ostaig), the National Centre for Gaelic Language and Culture, which has done so much to make Gaelic relevant and attractive to young people in the Hebrides and beyond.

The college was founded by former Edinburgh merchant banker Sir Iain Noble, who was keen to promote the Gaelic language as a tool for economic revival, purchasing

some 20,000 acres of former MacDonald land on the Sleat peninsula, plus a hotel at Isle Ornsay, in 1972 for the princely sum of £120,000. Noble established not only Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, but various commercial ventures, including Pràban na Linne—purveyor of blended Scotch and blended malts under the Gaelic Whiskies banner.

Ultimately, Noble's mind turned to the notion of establishing a *‘Gaelic language whisky distillery’*, and he identified a derelict farm steading on Sleat as the ideal location. Sadly, however, Noble died before the venture got beyond the planning stage, but the genesis of Torabhaig distillery was in place.

CREATING TORABHAIG

The development of the distillery came about due to the efforts of Mossburn Distillers Limited, a Scottish subsidiary of the Marussia Beverages Group, a family-owned drinks company with headquarters in Switzerland and nine international production sites, embracing brandy, vodka, whisky, sake, liqueurs, and wine.

Among their assets is a small grain distillery named The Reivers, located at Tweedbank in the Scottish Borders. There, Mossburn's range of third-party single malts, blended malts, and blended Scotch are assembled and bottled, along with whisky from Torabhaig.

Keen to build on the success of the Mossburn enterprise, Marussia's owners decided that they wanted to extend their Scotch malt whisky interests by creating their own malt distillery. As Global Brand Manager Bruce Perry explains, *‘Our CEO Neil Matheson knew Sir Iain Noble and knew about the Torabhaig site. It had three things going for it. It was on the Isle of Skye; it had two water sources and it had planning permission to become a distillery.’*



Distillery Visit



Perry adds that *“The building we inherited was a Grade 1-listed cattle steading dating from around 1820, and some of the stones to build it came from the derelict Castle Camus. It had to be restored as it was, and the stills had to be fitted into the existing space. They are comparatively short and rounded, so the constraints of the building actually play a part in the style of whisky we make.”*

Work to renovate the near-derelict steading began in 2013, and involved the addition of new buildings, including a visitor centre, in the original style, with the Torabhaig team reckoning that Skye’s sometimes inclement weather added a year to the overall project.

With the structures intact, distilling equipment was installed, including a 1.5-tonnes semi-lauter mashtun, eight Douglas Fir washbacks and a Forsyth-fabricated wash still and spirit still—appropriately named “Sir Iain” and “Lady Noble”, with capacities of 8,000 litres and 5,000 respectively.

According to Bruce Perry, *“We always wanted our whisky to be peated. Our aim was to have high peating in the grain and then tame it at the distillery. We make clear wort and have long fermentations – 60–100 hours, with an average of 72.”*

“We run the stills very slowly, with 15 minutes of foreshots and we cut at 64 degrees, which is very high for a peated whisky. We’re not trying to make a medicinal whisky, we’re looking for nuanced peatiness.” Heavily peated, yet delicate and gentle. *“Well-tempered peat”* is our strapline. Malt is sourced from Crisp Malt, peated to 77ppm, which gives 17 residual ppm in the bottle, and we state that on the back label.”



Its single malt surely has all the makings of a classic.

NICE PEOPLE

When it came to recruiting staff to operate the new distillery, the Mossburn supremos took the highly unusual route of advertising for people without brewing or distilling experience. As Bruce Perry says, *“We had good consultants who trained them, and we started with an eclectic group of nine people. A real spectrum of age and experience. We had Iona, at twenty-one (the youngest), we had someone who’d worked for the Ministry of Defence, a Glasgow roofer, a hotelier, and a fiddler.”*

“They began working, and after a while understood why they were doing what they were doing, and ultimately began to ask if any of it could be done differently, which we thought was terrific. We brought new blood into the whisky industry, which it really needs.”

“We started distilling during the second week of January in 2017, and by December 2019, the staff were suggesting lots of things. So, we decided to dedicate two weeks of production time to each person, during which they could make anything they wanted. Iona MacPhie and Niall Culbertson

were the first two to do this, and Iona commented that she was twenty-three years old, and most people working in the industry don’t get to do this after twenty-three years of working!”

MacPhie and Culbertson each made 10,000 bulk litres of spirit—around eighty barrels—some of which is due to be released next year as The Journeyman’s Dram. Both are being offered as five-year-olds, with further quantities due to be bottled at eight and at twelve, with other Journeyman’s Drams created by different staff members following along behind.

Journeyman variations on the theme of whisky-making have so far included altering cut points, using chocolate malt, heritage barley, such as the Chevallier variety, malt peated up to 138ppm, and even totally unpeated spirit.

Bruce Perry makes the point that *“Our production staff came in knowing nothing, so there are no egos. They will get the mower out and cut the grass after firing up a still, that sort of thing. They have a real pride in the place. They have lots of different practical skills between them. They can fix pumps, for example, if they break. I was once told many years ago – employ nice people. You can teach them everything else, but you can’t teach them to be nice. Happily, most of the original nine are still working with us.”*

TORABHAIG RELEASES

Those “nice people” are responsible for making an average of 550,000lp per annum, with three shifts operating in winter and two in summer. This is because in summer, the water in Torabhaig’s cooling pond at the distillery can become too warm, and sometimes needs to be cooled with water direct from the source.

To date, there have been two public Torabhaig releases, with the first expression in the Legacy series being launched in February 2021 and selling out almost immediately. Peated to 55–60ppm, it was matured in first-fill bourbon barrels. The second—and current—bottling was named Allt Gleann (Gaelic for Glen of the Burn) after one of the distillery’s water sources. This was peated to 70ppm and matured in a combination of first-fill bourbon and refill casks.

Bruce Perry explains that *“We were very happy with what we were making at the start but felt that after 10 years in cask it might not be quite what we wanted. So, we spent nine months getting it exactly where we wanted it, and by this time, we had four ‘foundations’, as it were.”*

“At the close of 2023, Allt Gleann will end forever, and early next year, we will launch Cnoc na Moine (Hill of Peat), which will include some sherry cask-matured whisky. Then, the fourth and final bottling in our Legacy series



Distillery Visit



will be Allt Breacach (the Speckled Burn), named for our second water source, and the plan is to include some Madeira cask-matured spirit in that. Madeira wood should be ideally suited to our house style. We will sell that for two years and then we will have our first ten-year-old permanent expression. People can follow the journey, the evolution, up to ten years and beyond."

In terms of cask choices, Perry says that "We fill some sherry casks, but a little goes a long way. Cnoc na Moine will contain sherry from oloroso casks, but we also fill some Pedro Ximenez, along with very small quantities of Madeira, virgin European oak, Cognac and rum casks. We now have an ageing cellar by the shore of Knock Bay, which can hold 1,200 casks out of the 4,000 we fill each year. We will probably offer distillery specials bottled on site from some of these casks."

Another way of acquiring exclusive bottlings of Torabhaig is to join The Peat Elite. An annual fee of £200 allows members to sample new make, undertake special distillery tours and receive a cask strength single cask bottling each year, with hosted tastings being available for each release.

When it comes to visiting Torabhaig, a warm welcome is assured by both the visitor and production staff, and as well as a comprehensive distillery tour and tasting,

there is a well-stocked shop and café on site. Future tour options will include access to the ageing cellar and its maturing treasures. Potential visitors should note that pre-booking via the website (www.torabhaig.com) is advisable, and essential during the busy summer months. Torabhaig distillery is proving to be an extremely popular attraction with the many people eager to experience Skye in all its glory, while its single malt surely has all the makings of a classic.



LADY GAGA

Julie Lin
pairs
food with fame

PHOTOGRAPHY: BRIAN SWEENEY
ART DIRECTION: A VISUAL AGENCY
ASSISTANT: MARK CAMERON
STYLING: AMANDA BLACKWOOD
HAIR & MAKE-UP: STEPHANIE FERRY
LOCATION: GAGA, GLASGOW



With a new role on BBC's Food Fest, as well as her recent appearance on *The Hairy Bikers Go Local*, restaurateur Julie Lin is set to take our screens by storm in 2023.

Julie is on a personal mission to take us on a journey of flavour exploration, serving up cross-cultural cuisine matched with a wide variety of Scotch whiskies.

Julie has also created a nine course food and whisky pairing menu, exclusively for The Whisky Shop.

Knowledge Bar



Julie Lin

Julie's cooking journey started back in 2013 after a friend entered her onto **BBC's Masterchef**. A quarter-finalist on her season, which aired in 2014, Julie has been cooking up a storm in the Glasgow food scene ever since, opening first **Julie's Kopitiam**, then **Gaga**.

2023 marks Julie's return to TV, kicking off the year with an appearance on the Glasgow episode of **The Hairy Bikers Go Local**.

More recently, Julie has taken up her first presenting job on **BBC's Food Fest Scotland** alongside **Edith Bowman** and **Colin Murray**.

Both *The Hairy Bikers Go Local* and *Food Fest Scotland* are both available to watch on the **BBC iPlayer** now.

➔ Where did your love of cooking begin?

Quite simply, eating. I just feel like whenever you love to eat, you get quite an interest for the food. I think there's quite a lot connected to who you are as a person and what you eat to make you happy. To nourish yourself is to look after yourself.

It also came from my mum's background in Malaysia. Food is the centrepiece of culture in Malaysia and it's a bit of a melting pot for food. You get so many different types of food —you get Indian-Malay food, Portuguese-Malay, Chinese-Malay—it's just amazing. [I was] completely spoiled in that way. If bumped into you and we were in a Malaysian street, I wouldn't say "Hey, how's it going?", I'd say "Hey, have you eaten yet?" Food's a bit of a conversation starter. The culture there passed down to me through my mum and I want to continue her journey with it. The way I got into cooking was through her.

What are your first memories of food growing up?

I've always loved salty foods. From an early age, I used to eat quite a lot of my mum's food which was an amalgamation of ingredients that she could get here and her cooking from Malaysia. She would do these amazing fried veg dishes or wok fried dishes with fish sauce. My first memories of food are all savoury.

That's interesting what you say about your mum using an amalgamation of ingredients to create her dishes because that's very similar to what you do now. You use locally sourced Scottish ingredients to create amazing Malaysian cuisine. Could you tell our readers more about that?

We hunt for authenticity in food and quite often we think of that as being synonymous with good food. I've witnessed the access to ingredients become a bit more difficult and expensive. It's good to challenge yourself as a cook and think *I don't have access to this ingredient because it's a million miles away. Where can I make changes? Can I use Scottish greens in a wok fry? Yes, I can. Actually, that works really well.*

I think we're coming out of looking for authentic foods when they're not necessarily easy to access here. I think the conversation is growing bigger, especially with the fact that we are becoming more aware of our carbon footprint. That's accelerating that conversation.

Growing up, my mum would always use samphire through her wok fries because it was local and it turns out that it's one of the most glorious things you can put in a wok fry because it's salty, it gives such a punch, and it has good texture, too. There's a lot of different ingredient swaps that can be found. I've tried to continue that within the cooking I do now at the restaurant.

I want to make people proud of their cross-cultural cuisine. I think that's a really nice way of putting it. It means that you can



Interview



Julie prepares our tasting menu in Gaga's kitchen.



If you believe in the dish you're doing, it makes it so much easier for people to understand."



celebrate your own culture whilst using what you have around you.

When did you realise that cooking was the career that you wanted to pursue?

I had a very confused journey. I left school and I didn't really know what I wanted to do. It wasn't until I started cooking for friends that something clicked. I used to find so much joy in inviting friends round and cooking for them and expressing love in that way.

A friend actually entered me onto Masterchef. I used to watch that programme endlessly and then ended up getting the call where I was asked to go onto it, and I had a blast. I absolutely loved it. If I look back on it, that was the turning point for me. To be honest, I never left my job thinking I'm going to open a restaurant. It was more like *Okay, actually, this is going really well and you're enjoying this—keep on going.* Sometimes having no plan is quite a good plan. My rule for this career is to keep on doing it as long as it gives me satisfaction.

After your experience on Masterchef, what was your journey into the industry like?

It was really interesting. I just wanted to find a mentor. Kitchens are quite hard places to work, and I wasn't daft to that. I thought this could be a hard thing but as long as I find someone that I want to work with, I think that this could be good.

I met someone called Laurie, and she owns Café Strange Brew in Glasgow—she's become quite a success story as well. She was running a kitchen called The Scullery at the time. I met her and said, *"Listen, cards on the table—you can probably find someone with more experience than me, but I promise to give it my all. If my all is not enough, you can tell me at that point, and I'll let myself out."*

She was so patient with me and gave me the confidence to be able to go and do what I'm doing now. In a nice turn of events, she had the restaurant that I moved Julie's Kopitiam into. That was her first unit for Café Strange Brew and then she gave it to me. It's a nod to how this all happened. It wasn't a planned progression, but it's worked out in a very lovely, seamless way.

What was your first gig like?

My first ever kitchen job was working alongside Laurie. There were lots of bumps along the road which I think there should

be—if you don't make mistakes, you don't learn from it! It was long hours and hard work, but I was really willing to do it. I learned loads and stayed there for a while. I left to go and work at a street kitchen called Babu which was great. It was a bit more along the lines of the style of cuisine that I wanted to cook eventually. By this point, I was starting to get the idea that I wanted to do something on my own. After Babu, I had my own little stall down a lane in Glasgow. That worked really well, and it was busy all the time. That was my first proper go of doing it on my own. I scraped together any money I could to pull it off and it worked. I had a friend who stayed in my house who would help me prep all the stuff to bring to the stall the next day. I've had so much support from friends over the years that's made it so much easier. I was very fortunate and still am to this day with all the people around me.

You opened your first restaurant in 2017. What's changed in the past since years since opening Julie's Kopitiam?

I think many things have changed. Number one is myself, actually. I started the Kopitiam having just turned twenty-six. I don't think I actually realised how young I was at the time. Being twenty-six and starting a business means that you make so many mistakes. You need to learn to be your own accountant, your own marketing person, to be a good manager, as well as cooking the food. It's a big, big task. I was so young, and I loved it and I was so ready for that challenge. I think over the years, I've matured and I'm sure I'll change in the next six years as well.

Number two: the area that I opened [the Kopitiam] in has changed. That's not a bad thing—it's become more diverse and we're seeing a good number of small businesses opening up from young entrepreneurs. Seeing how they're doing is really interesting.

The pandemic is another thing that changed us all. I think we've all come out of that with a bit of heaviness but also a bit of awareness of each other. Customers have become easier to talk to and kinder with their words. I think it's a nicer climate than it was six years ago.

We've been shooting today in your restaurant, Gaga. What was the original premise around opening Gaga?

I've got a couple of business partners there and one of them I've known for years. His name is Marc Ferrier and he's just wonderful. He owns The Thornwood as well.

In 2016, I was doing a street food stall when Sister Sledge was playing at the Bandstand. I remember it being one of the greatest days of my life because Sister Sledge came up and ate my food and then tweeted me. That same day Marc came up to me and introduced himself.

We kept in touch. I'd known him for years and then he called me during lockdown. He said, *"Listen, I want to open a restaurant with you."* And I was like, *"Oh, okay. That's scary because we're in a pandemic!"* I was a bit reluctant at the beginning, but he talked me into it. So, we got to work! We've done it alongside Fraser Hamilton. Fraser had just come back from Miami having done the best cocktails (he uses quite a lot of whisky in his!) and was huge in the mixology world in America. Gaga for me is really all about collaboration. That's such a strong thing in business. If you get collaboration right, you can go on for miles. You've got somebody to lean on and somebody that you trust right by your side. It all really started through Marc, and he doesn't get enough credit.

What inspires you when you're cooking?

Quite a lot of things! Mostly other people. I think learning from other people constantly is the best way to go which is why I love travel so much. I tend to travel just to watch people's food and be completely engrossed in their culture. A trip will change my cooking style.

The sense of food and nourishment is also really inspiring to me. For example, if I'm feeling a bit fluey one week, in Gaga you might find wonton mee (a big brothy style soup with wontons in it) on the specials list because it makes me feel amazing. I always think there must be people out there who also have the cold and would want to eat that, too. Or in summer, I might put on a chilled sesame noodle salad. I tend to put things on the menu that I love eating because hopefully other people will love it, too. If you believe in the dish you're doing, it makes it so much easier for people to understand.

Interview

Who inspires you in your day-to-day life?

I'm going to go for the classic answer, but it's true. It's my mum. I see quite a lot of bravery in her move to Scotland. She moved over here when she was eighteen, she didn't know the language, and she had no support network here. She came from Malaysia where she had thirteen brothers and sisters. My mum used food as a means to connect to who she was. That's often part of it for me, as well. It's a very expressive thing. My mum is definitely my inspiration. She is absolutely amazing.

What have been your favourite memories as a chef?

Oh there are so many. I remember getting our first review from Joanna Blythman. She's a big food reviewer in Scotland and she gave us a really nice review. Moments like that are like building blocks which is amazing.

Cooking for Malaysians in Glasgow has also been a really big part of it. Having people coming up to you and saying, "I've not been able to try this food since I was in Malaysia." The notion that you can make somebody feel less homesick is one of the nicest feelings in the world.

It's been great meeting some heroes and having them be as amazing as I thought they were. We got nominated for some awards at The Golden Chopsticks Awards and we ended up meeting Ken Hom. It was crazy that a small place in Shawlands had led us to this point.

What is your favourite food and drink combination?

There's this drink in Malaysia called hot limau. You get it at street food stalls and it's so great. It's just hot water with brown sugar, calamansi limes, and ice. It's the simplest thing. There's something so nice about it just being a couple of ingredients because it goes with most things that I'd eat. I feel like you could add whisky to that, and it would be delicious.

My favourite dish to go with that would be nasi lemak. It's a very colourful dish—you get your coconut rice in the middle, then you get red sambal on the side, a boiled egg, sometimes a bit of fried chicken or curry, a pickle on the side, and some peanuts. It's the rice that is the most amazing thing—it's cooked in coconut milk, a bit of ginger, and pandan leaf which is super fragrant. You get all these really

complex things around it, but the rice is the centrepiece. It's Malaysia's national dish. I'll have it every single day when I'm there. I really like these dishes where the simplest thing is the most amazing thing on the plate.

You've done some work with Benriach. Could you tell our readers a little bit about that?

I worked on their *World of Flavour* campaign. I think for a long time, we've been pairing whisky with Scottish food solely. The *World of Flavour* was all about opening up different cuisines and pairing it with whisky. I think whisky is absolutely amazing with Southeast Asian food. There are so many punchy flavours there and they kind of work symbiotically. It tends to work perfectly. For Benriach, I created a dish that was to go with their new sixteen-year-old malt. The whisky was full of dried apricot flavours as well as being quite smoky, oaky, and nutty. It was really fun to match up these flavours. I paired it up with a punchy Szechuan aubergine dish. It was a match made in heaven. It's nice to see that distilleries are delving a bit more into different cuisines to pair up with whiskies.

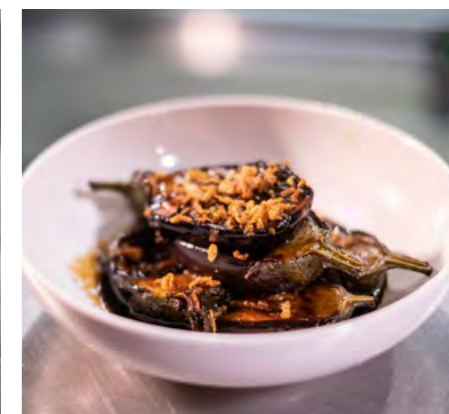
Is this kind of cross-cultural eating and drinking something you'd like to see more of? Scotch whisky paired with different cuisines?

For sure. Maybe younger generations aren't drinking as much whisky but it's such a good drink. Sometimes it takes the conversation of food to open up people's minds to alcohol. You see that quite a lot with wine. I think if we can get to that level of people understanding whisky and knowing dishes to pair with whisky, it opens up the conversation to understanding the flavours a lot more. That's how I learned more about whisky.

There's a dish called rou jia mo which is the Chinese answer to a hamburger—it's a flatbread with pork that has been seasoned really nicely with some five spice, soy sauce, and coriander. I think that'd be really lovely beside a dram. I think there's scope to play with things here. It doesn't always necessarily have to be fancy food. I think that's where we're not opening up our minds enough to pairing whisky.



I think whisky is absolutely amazing with Southeast Asian food. There are so many punchy flavours there and they kind of work symbiotically."



Top row: Ingredients in the kitchen; Julie preparing her work; Bahwan Jagung frying

Second row: Julie plating up; Finishing touches; Julie's Whole Hoisin Aubergine

Third row: Julie's Nyonya Kari Ayam; Julie's Fried Tong Fun; Julie smashing chicken for Ayam Penyet

Fourth row: Adding sambal to Ayam Penyet; Ayam Penyet prep

Left: Julie in her favourite spot for menu prepping



Nyonya Supper Spread

Julie worked with Gaga co-founder, Fraser Hamilton, and head bartender, Scott Stevenson, to put together these perfect pairs.

Scott was recently named as a World Class Top 100 bartender so you can trust that every combination is a real match made in heaven!

1

Ayam Penyet

Smashed fried chicken with a fragrant green chilli sambal.

Goes well with:

Glenfarclas 15 Year Old

Its high ABV boldness will stand out against the spice of the green sambal. It's got a little bit of smoke to it so it cuts through the fragrant sambal and salty chicken.

3

Whole Hoisin Aubergine

Whole aubergine, scored and marinated in garlic, hoisin, and soy, then slowly braised until tender.

Goes well with:

Dewar's 8 Year Old Japanese Mizunara Cask Finish

I find it hard not to enjoy this whisky with any of the above, the plum flavour goes really well with the jamminess of hoisin and soy.

4

Bahwan Jagung

Sweetcorn fritters served with sambal oelek.

Goes well with:

Bushmills 1991 Madeira Cask Finish

The baked vanilla complements the sweetness of the corn perfectly.

2

Sayur Lodeh

Vegetables stewed in a spiced coconut sauce.

Goes well with:

The Glenlivet 12

This curry is often made with pineapple in Malaysia, and I find the tartness of the pineapple flavours in the malt compliment this perfectly.

5

Green beans with garlic and soy

Simple wok fried green beans with plenty of fresh garlic and premium light soy sauce.

Goes well with:

Bruichladdich Islay Barley

The soft flavours of pear, barley, citrus, and gentle oak complement the dish perfectly!

6

Nyona Kari Ayam

Traditional and quintessential Nyona chicken curry. Stewed with potatoes and green beans and rich coconut milk.

Goes well with:

Loch Lomond 14 Year Old

I adore the aniseedy flavours in here, it goes amazingly well with the cardamom and star anise throughout the Nyonya curry.

7

Fried Tong Fun

Glass noodles with garlic, green beans, and soy sauce.

Goes well with:

Glenrothes 18 Year Old

The sweetness and gentle spice of the whisky perfectly compliments this noodle dish.

8

Sambal Udang

A rich sambal with dried shrimp paste, Scottish prawns, and fresh green beans.

Goes well with:

Highland Park 18 Year Old

This pairing pleasantly surprised me, the cherry notes go so incredibly well with the sambal which is rich with dried chillies, fermented shrimp paste, and balanced with salt and sugar.

9

Cucumber and Crystallised Ginger Salad:

Soy sauce, sugar, and black vinegar marinated cucumbers speckled with crystallised stem ginger.

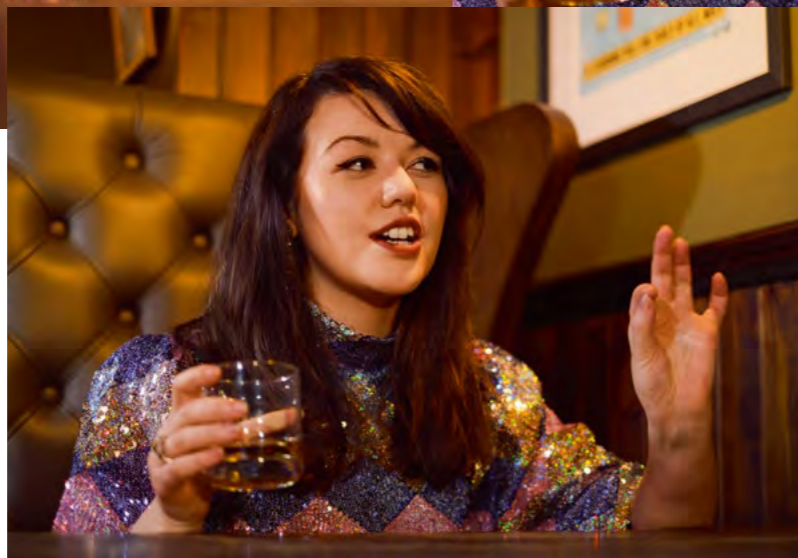
Goes well with:

BenRiach The Sixteen

The stone fruit aromas go so well with the crystallised ginger, and the fragrance of the black vinegar. It really elevates the dish!



Julie enjoys a dram at The Thornwood bar.



I tend to travel just to watch people's food and be completely engrossed in their culture. A trip will change my cooking style."



My rule for this career is to keep on doing it as long as it gives me satisfaction."

What are your long-term goals?

I'd really like to get to a stage in my career where I start giving back. My mum came from that—she used to run cooking classes that were for single mothers in the East End of Glasgow when she came here. I'd quite like to follow in her footsteps and do a lot more in terms of community work. I absolutely love running restaurants but it's quite clear to me that there are a lot of people out there who need help. My goal is to do a bit more of that, as well as developing people into the next restaurant owners in Scotland.

What kind of things do you have coming up in 2023?

I've just closed the Kopitiam. It feels like the beginning of a new chapter. Now that I've got past the six years of having that restaurant and having formulated my opinions a lot more, I'd like to start writing and hearing about people's stories a bit more.

I've started doing some presenting work because on top of building my own food story, I'm really interested in everyone else's as well. I'll be on *Food Fest* on the BBC which is coming out this year. I'll be going around Scotland and interviewing people about their food stories.

I'm also working quite a lot more with kids and schools. I'm going to be helping kids get into the hospitality sector if they want to and I'll be going around schools in Glasgow and teaching them about Malaysian cuisine.

There are many things on the | horizon. I think this year is a year of change. Quite a lot of it is a mystery to me which I'm so excited for!

Mixing it up

Indulge yourself

—
Shake things up with our exclusive Singleton
serves created by Brand Ambassadors
Ervin Trykowski and Jo Last

PHOTOGRAPHY: ARMANDO FERRARI
ART DIRECTION: A VISUAL AGENCY
STYLIST: ISABEL FORBES
ASSISTANT: PAUL REICH



Mixing it up



Hazelnut & Coffee Martini

A Singleton twist on the classic espresso martini. Fresh coffee and hazelnut syrup compliment the rich nuttiness in The Singleton of Dufftown 12 Year Old. Perfect for Easter!

Ingredients:

- 40ml The Singleton of Dufftown 12 Year Old
- 30ml Fresh espresso
- 15ml Coffee liqueur
- 10ml Hazelnut syrup

Glass: Coupe

Garnish: Grated orange flavoured chocolate

Method:

Build ingredients in cocktail shaker / Add ice and shake / Strain into coupe / Grate orange flavoured chocolate to garnish

Best paired with:

Caramel macaroon.

A beautifully made macaroon is always a treat alongside The Singleton of Dufftown 12 Year Old, but even more so when coffee and hazelnut come into play.

Mixing it up

White Chocolate & Raspberry Sour

A twist on a classic whisky sour. Fresh raspberry and indulgent white chocolate compliment the fruitiness in The Singleton of Dufftown 12 Year Old. A Cranachan in a glass!

Ingredients:

50ml The Singleton of Dufftown
12 Year Old
20ml Raspberry syrup
15ml Lemon juice
15ml White chocolate liqueur
15ml Egg white

Glass: Coupe

Garnish: Raspberry

Method:

Build in cocktail shaker / Shake without ice /
Add ice and shake again / Strain into coupe

Best paired with:

Crème brulee.

Raspberries and custard are meant to be together. Add in the nutty creamy notes of The Singleton of Dufftown 12 Year Old and you have a beautifully rich pairing. The sharpness and sweetness of the raspberry balances everything with the bitterness of the caramel topping it all off.



Mixing it up

The Singleton Affogato

The Singleton, hazelnut ice cream, and coffee combine to make our own affogato.

Ingredients:

25ml The Singleton of Dufftown
12 Year Old
5ml Hazelnut syrup
2 scoops Vanilla ice cream
50ml Fresh espresso

Glass: Rocks

Garnish: Grated chocolate

Method:

Scoop the ice cream into glass / Top with hazelnut syrup, The Singleton, and fresh espresso / Garnish with grated chocolate



Mixing it up



Singleton & Cucumber Tonic

A fresh highball with cucumber highlighting the fruity notes of the whisky. A perfect spring serve!

Ingredients:
50ml The Singleton of Dufftown 12 Year Old
150ml Fevertree Cucumber Tonic

Glass: Highball
Garnish: Cucumber ribbon

Method:
Pour The Singleton into glass / Full glass to the brim with ice / Top with tonic / Add cucumber ribbon to garnish

Best paired with:
Vanilla pannacotta

The light palate cleanse of a perfectly made pannacotta works beautifully alongside this simple highball. Vanilla ties together the fresh cucumber flavours with the depth of The Singleton of Dufftown 12 Year Old. Only four flavours between the glass and the plate—simplicity is key!



Fig Leaf Old Fashioned

A tropical twist on a classic Old Fashioned

Ingredients:
40ml The Singleton of Dufftown 18 Year Old
20ml Parafante liqueur
5ml Sugar syrup
1 dash Orange bitters
10ml Supasawa

Glass: Rocks
Garnish: Gold leaf and orange coin

Method:
Stir all ingredients in mixing glass / Strain over ice / Garnish with gold leaf and orange coin

Best paired with:
Bakewell tart

A warm Bakewell tart works nicely alongside this Fig Leaf Old Fashioned. Buttery pastry giving way to warm almond cake filling laced with vanilla and a dash of whisky, cut through with some stewed fruit. Fig and almond are a match made in heaven, the quality of The Singleton of Dufftown 18 Year Old bringing this pairing to a whole new level.

The Singleton of Dufftown 21 Year Old

Our hero. The Singleton of Dufftown 21 Year Old served neat

Ingredients:

50ml The Singleton of Dufftown
21 Year Old

Glass: Rocks

Best paired with:

Dark orange chocolate. The bitter orange dark chocolate compliments the rich, fruity depth of The Singleton of Dufftown 21 Year Old which has been aged in ex-bourbon, European, and Pedro Ximenez seasoned casks.

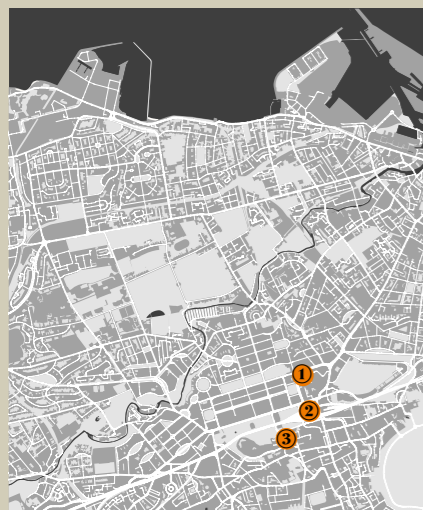


Welcome to... Maltrees Walk

What better way to cure the January blues than a luxury whisky tasting led by than Charles MacLean? We invited some industry experts—along with some of The Whisky Shop's customers—for a tasting experience unlike any other at our new store on Maltrees Walk.

PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRISTINA KERNOHAN

Knowledge Bar Edinburgh



With all of our shops in Edinburgh within less than fifteen minutes of one another, why not take a tour of them the next time you're in the city!

- 1 — Unit 18 Maltrees Walk
- 2 — Princes Mall, 3 Princes Street
- 3 — 28 Victoria Street

➔ Edinburgh has always been a beloved destination for its rich history, beautiful landmarks, and awe-inspiring architecture—no wonder that it is so adored by residents and tourists alike. Now it has a new hot spot that is sure to impress whisky fans from across the globe—The Whisky Shop on Maltrees Walk. To begin the new year with a bang, the team hosted their first tasting event in the new location, led by none other than Charles MacLean.

If you're planning to visit Edinburgh by train, you're in luck. The journey from Waverley station to Maltrees Walk is short—the stroll past St. Andrew's Square and Harvey Nichols will get you there in just five minutes. Alternatively, you can cut through the brand new St. James' Quarter, and do a bit of shopping en route.

Upon arrival prepare to be met by impressive, bespoke window displays. At the time of our visit the iconic stag of The Dalmore loomed large—less of a marketing display, and more of a work of art. The store certainly makes its presence felt at street level.

The inside of the shop is just as impressive. From the illuminated central tasting table, to the metallic ceiling, to the spectacular in-store displays, the new Maltrees Walk shop is chic and elegant,

following in the footsteps of The Whisky Shop's flagship Piccadilly and Paris locations.

Speaking about the design of the new store, manager Lynsey Edmunds said, *"The circular layout of the store is inspired by a cask, with the copper ceilings inspired by stills and the central unit resembling a mashtun. It's an intimate space, which is reflected in the selection of whiskies and the bespoke service we provide our customers."*

It was clear that the tasting event guests were very impressed by their luxurious surroundings. In attendance were Cameron Ewen and Ross Barr, Manager and Assistant Manager at The Balmoral's SCOTCH, Justine Hazlehurst of Fife Whisky Festival, John Boyle from *Scottish Field Magazine*, whisky blogger Luyu Qi, as well as a couple of The Whisky Shop's regular customers. United by their love of whisky, the attendees swapped stories about their favourite drams and fondest industry memories.

The drams to be tasted were displayed on the table in the middle of the room: Lochlea Our Barley, Benriach The Sixteen, the new The Dalmore 2007 Vintage, The Macallan A Night on Earth in Scotland (of The Whisky Shop ballot fame), Lochlea Ploughing Edition, and Benriach The Twenty One—an enticing spread!





Top: John noses a dram; Luyu examines the beautiful presentation box of The Macallan A Night on Earth in Scotland, designed by the celebrated Japanese-French illustrator, Erica Dorn; Charlie shares his thoughts on The Macallan A Night on Earth in Scotland; Sean noses a dram.

Bottom: Silversmith Annabel enjoys a whisky with Justine; Ross tastes the Benriach 21 Year Old; Cameron shares his expertise with his fellow guests

Soon, Mr Charles MacLean took the floor, and the tasting began.

A tasting led by Charlie is always a real treat. His whisky industry insight opened up exciting conversation—from discussing The Macallan's history, to forensic tasting notes on Benriach's expressions, everyone came away from the event having learned something new.

Patrick Dupuy, Lochlea's Business Development Executive, provided an in-depth tasting of Ploughing Edition—the final instalment to the distillery's first annual limited-edition series. This was a really exciting opportunity for the attendees, as the whisky had just been released the same week as the tasting event.

Patrick and Charlie compared notes on Lochlea's choice of peated quarter casks to mature the whisky. This kind of detail and expertise made it a cut above your average whisky tasting.

Whilst these events might not take place every day in the new store, we can guarantee that any trip you take there will be of the highest calibre. Multrees

Walk is home to many of Edinburgh's most premium brands. The Whisky Shop sits beside Mulberry, Louis Vuitton, and Strathberry—you can even finish the day off with a spot of afternoon tea around the corner at Harvey Nichols. So, if retail therapy is your thing, Multrees Walk is an ideal day out. As Justine Hazlehurst described it, the new location is, in a word, "perfect".

Ross Barr of SCOTCH was excited about the store's stock: "At the hotel, we're able to offer some of the best whiskies by the dram, so it's really interesting to come somewhere that offers the best whiskies available in retail. We never see whiskies like Highland Park 50, or Balvenie 40, or The Macallan 30 anywhere else so readily available in retail. It's really impressive." We can't disagree—some of the stock on the shelves really has to be seen to be believed.

So, what is the strategy behind this ultra-premium stock? Manager Lynsey explained, "We have created a very special space for whisky lovers, and we will ensure that our range reflects this. We have curated

what we believe to be the most exclusive selection of whiskies in Edinburgh and are uniquely positioned to be welcoming to all whisky fans, whether they be drinkers, collectors, gift buyers, or investors.

"Since we are proudly located in the heart of the capital of Scotland, we really want to show off the very best of our national product. We want to focus in on what makes Scottish whisky so special and celebrate its quality and variety. We are able to offer our customers bottles from new start-up distilleries, right up to a whisky which has been aged for 80 years, which is a unique feature to whisky made in Scotland because of the traditions and history of the industry here. We have such a diverse range available to us here in Scotland and this store is an amazing opportunity to showcase that."

Ross's colleague, Cameron Ewen, summed up his feelings: "The offering is second to none, and it's in a really stunning part of town." High praise indeed.

Whisky People



Opposite page, clockwise from top left: Charlie adds water to his whisky; John listens to Patrick's words on Lochlea; Brora Triptych on display; One of last year's iconic releases, Bowmore ARC-52; Pouring Lochlea's new expression, Ploughing Edition; The stunning paper display from Balvenie, designed by artist Yulia Brodskaya; Whisky galore!; The Johnnie Walker Blue Label display, inspired by the four corners of Scotland; Luyu and Sean having a ball;

Whether you are a whisky aficionado, or are still trying to find your perfect dram, the new store on Multrees Walk is a must-visit experience. With engaging displays and expertly trained staff always ready to lend a helping hand, you'll find the answer to all your whisky related questions here. If you are looking for a whisky shopping experience in Scotland that is a cut above anything you've ever experienced before, look no further than The Whisky Shop on Multrees Walk. Unique, different, and interesting—it's The Whisky Shop at its best.

THE W CLUB



Join our exciting Whisky Club in store or online!

- Just £30 per year gives you access to:
- regular & unique tasting experiences
 - exclusive bottles & priority notice on limited edition whiskies
 - members-only deals & partner offers
 - a print subscription to Whiskeria magazine



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THE WHISKY SHOP

ISSUE

Spring 23

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THE WHISKY SHOP

UNIQUE
DIFFERENT
INTERESTING



Spring Fling

These delectable drams are sure to put a spring into your step!

St. Patrick's Day Gems

Spirit of Speyside

Mother's Day

Gins Galore

THE WHISKY SHOP

St. Patrick's Day Gems

No St. Patrick's Day celebration is complete without a cracking Irish whiskey!

① Bushmills 21 Year Old

70cl | 40% VOL | £190 **Spiced fruits / Dates / Toffee**

- Distilled at Bushmills, which claims to be the oldest licensed distillery in the world!
- This expression matured in oloroso sherry and bourbon seasoned casks
- Finished in a Madeira wine cask for two years

② Dingle Single Malt

70cl | 46.3% VOL | £53 **Milk chocolate / Candied orange peel / Peach**

- Impressive fare from an up-and-coming distillery
- Matured in a combination of ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casks
- Free from both chill filtration and artificial colouring

③ Dunville's Three Crown Sherry

70cl | 43.5% VOL | £50 **Malt loaf / Spiced toffee / Brown sugar**

- Spectacular stuff from Belfast's Echlinville distillery
- This blend pulls together a four-year-old single grain, a ten-year-old single malt, and an Oloroso finished fifteen-year-old single malt
- Bursting with delectable sherried flavours

④ Grace O'Malley Rum Cask Blend

70cl | 42% VOL | £50 **Coconut fudge / Pineapple / Stewed fruits**

- A very unique Irish blend
- Finished in Caribbean rum casks
- A stand-out whiskey!

⑤ The Irishman Founders Reserve

70cl | 40% VOL | £35 **Cracked black pepper / Thick butterscotch / Custard**

- An exceptional small batch expression
- This tittle combines single malt whiskey and single pot still whiskey
- Triple distilled to create a wonderfully smooth sipper

⑥ Teeling Ginger Beer Cask Finish Whiskey

70cl | 46% VOL | £50 **Ginger / Vanilla / Cinnamon sugar**

- A particularly memorable tittle
- Finished in ginger beer casks to create vibrant, spicy flavours
- A whiskey to share with friends!



THE WHISKY SHOP

Spirit of Speyside

Explore Speyside from the comfort of your own home with some of the region's finest drams.

① The Octave Glenrothes 2013 8 Year Old

70cl | 55.9% VOL | £79 **Maple syrup / Fresh ginger / Sticky toffee pudding**

- A fabulous addition to Duncan Taylor's The Octave series
- Eight years spent maturing in oak casks, eight months finishing in an octave
- Bottled exclusively for The Whisky Shop

② The Loch Fyne Glen Elgin 14 Year Old

50cl | 58.6% VOL | £79 **Espresso / Fruit cake / Cereal**

- A limited edition single cask dram
- Just 537 bottles produced
- Hailing from the exceptional Glen Elgin distillery

③ The Loch Fyne Inchgower 14 Year Old

50cl | 60.4% VOL | £95 **Toasted nuts / Vanilla / Honey**

- A stunning coastal single malt
- 355 bottles have been filled at a mighty 60.4% abv
- A spectacularly well-balanced single malt

④ Mossburn Miltonduff 2008 13 Year Old

70cl | 56.6% VOL | £102 **Treacle / Toffee apple / Ginger**

- Another fabulous The Whisky Shop exclusive bottling
- A sweet and spicy single cask expression
- Matured for 13 years in an oloroso hogshead at Miltonduff

⑤ Darkness Mortlach 20 Year Old Oloroso Cask

50cl | 49% VOL | £179.95 **Dark chocolate / Red berries / Espresso**

- Finished in oloroso octave casks for three months
- An impressively well-aged dram
- A total sherry bomb!

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THE WHISKY SHOP

Mother's Day

Impress your mum with one of these top-drawer tipples this Mother's Day!

① Kraken Spiced Rum 2022 Copper Scar LE

70cl | 40% VOL | £37.99 Winter spices / Sticky toffee pudding / Vanilla bean

- Part of Kraken's limited edition collection - you'll need to be fast if you want this!
- Presented in a creative gift tin, inspired by the diving equipment of years gone by
- £1 of every bottle sold is donated to PADI AWARE Foundation, an ocean protection charity

② Blanton's Original Single Barrel

70cl | 46.5% VOL | £125 Vanilla / Caramel / Honey

- A single barrel bourbon from Blanton's Warehouse H
- Created from a sour mash of corn, rye, and malted barley
- An iconic Kentucky bourbon!

③ Tobermory 21 Year Old

70cl | 46.3% VOL | £175 Caramel / Beeswax / Pine

- A well-aged dram from a fabulous Island distillery
- This expression is inspired by the vibrant scenery of the Isle of Mull
- Matured in refill casks and finished in oloroso casks

④ Bombay Bramble Blackberry & Raspberry Infused Gin

70cl | 37.5% VOL | £28 Juniper / Citrus / Raspberry

- A must-have for the cocktail lover
- Perfect for making a Bramble
- Bursting with bold and bright flavours that are bound to impress

⑤ Mermaid Pink Gin

70cl | 38% VOL | £43 Sea salt / Rock samphire / Peppery spice

- A small batch gin created with 100% natural ingredients
- This expression is presented in totally plastic-free packaging - delicious and sustainable!
- Hailing from the Isle of Wight distillery

⑥ Cazcabel Honey Tequila Liqueur

70cl | 34% VOL | £30 Smoke / Honey / Caramel

- A tequila-based liqueur - perfect in cocktails or sipped neat
- The honey used in this expression is entirely locally sourced
- Presented in a beautifully crafted glass bottle

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THE WHISKY SHOP

Gins Galore

What better time to enjoy a perfect gin than Spring?

① **Bimber Da Hong Pao Tea Gin**

50cl | 51.8% VOL | £62 | Smoke / Oak / Orange peel

- Delicious stuff from London's up-and-coming Bimber distillery
- Created by infusing one of the world's rarest teas with Bimber's signature gin
- Perfect for tea and gin lovers alike!

② **Manly Spirits Australian Dry Gin**

70cl | 43% VOL | £39.50 | White pepper / Lemon peel / Orange zest

- Named Best Gin in Australia 2020
- Created using locally sourced Australian botanicals
- Best enjoyed with tonic water, ice, and a slice of orange to garnish

③ **Isle of Harris Gin**

70cl | 45% | £52 | Garden herbs / Lime / Fresh pine

- Crafted with nine botanicals, included hand-harvested sugar kelp
- Full to the brim with breath-taking maritime flavours
- A must-have Scottish gin

④ **Bluecoat American Gin**

70cl | 47% VOL | £41 | Juniper / Grapefruit / Pine

- A cracking American gin presented in a stylish bright blue bottle
- Distilled in a copper pot still
- Won Gold at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition 2019

⑤ **Glaswegin Cask Collection Bourbon Cask**

70cl | 41.1% VOL | £45 | Liquorice / Marmalade / Cinnamon

- A wonderfully warming Scottish gin
- Released as part of Glaswegin's Cask Collection series
- This particular expression was matured in bourbon casks to create rich and creamy flavours

⑥ **Roku Gin with Gift Carton**

70cl | 43% VOL | £36 | Sansho pepper / Yuzu / Green tea

- Inspired by six Japanese botanicals
- These botanicals, are combined with more traditional botanicals to make this truly special gin
- Presented in an elegant gift carton for an extra special touch

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THE WHISKY SHOP

Customer Favourites

Light / Floral

① Loch Lomond 14 Year Old

70cl | 46% VOL | £62 Green apple / Grapefruit / Vanilla

A 14-year-old single malt from the Loch Lomond Distillery, made using unpeated spirit. This liquid matured in refill American oak casks and lightly toasted French oak from the Limousin region for up to twelve months.



“An aromatic bowl of citrus fruits bursts onto the nose—pears, green apples, and lemon—followed by warm toffee sauce and vanilla fudge on the palate. The finish is as long as it is warming, with plenty of oak spice. Playful, fruity, and sweet—this is a future classic!”

— Tom, Bath

①



② Auchroisk 10 Year Old

70cl | 43% VOL | £57 Orange zest / Cut grass / Roasted nuts

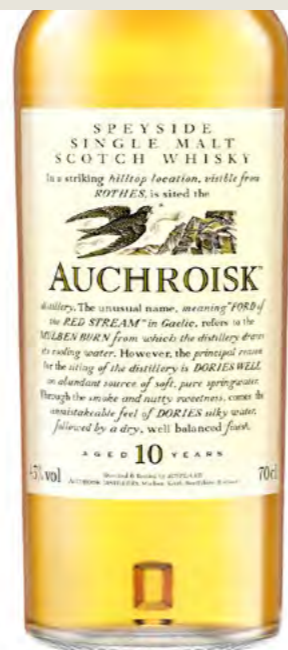
Hailing from the village of the same name, this whisky is a masterclass in fruity Highland flavour – perfectly embodying Fettercairn’s exotic fruit-driven character. It has been matured in American oak ex-bourbon for its full 12 years in cask. Simply delicious.

③ Balblair 15 Year Old

70cl | 46% VOL | £85 Apple / Dates / Caramel

An older sibling to Balblair 12 Year Old, this whisky perfectly balances unique distillery character with smoothness of age, thanks to a flavour profile of tropical fruits and a texture of melted chocolate. Gorgeous.

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④ Bunnahabhain 12 Year Old

70cl | 46.3% VOL | £52 Dried fruit / Honey / Chestnut

Bunnahabhain’s whiskies are quite distinct from other single malts of the Islay region, in that the majority are produced with unpeated malted barley. Toast the versatility of Islay with this superb 12-year-old expression that showcases Bunnahabhain’s ‘fruit and nut’ signature style.

⑤ Balblair 12 Year Old

70cl | 46% VOL | £55 Sultanas / Honey / Apple

Matured in American oak, ex-bourbon and double-fired American oak casks, this 12-year-old whisky has an elegant complexity and warmth – the defining expression of Balblair Distillery.

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⑥ Fettercairn 12 Year Old

70cl | 40% VOL | £57 Nectarine / Ginger / Pear

Hailing from the village of the same name, this whisky is a masterclass in fruity Highland flavour – perfectly embodying Fettercairn’s exotic fruit-driven character. It has been matured in American oak ex-bourbon for its full 12 years in cask. Simply delicious.

⑥



THE WHISKY SHOP

Customer Favourites

Rich / Sweet

1 The Dalmore 15 Year Old

70cl | 46% VOL | £113 Terry's Chocolate Orange / Fruitcake / Sherry

An older sibling to The Dalmore 12 Year Old, this expression has been matured for 15 years in a trio of ex-sherry casks, as well as ex-bourbon barrels. It offers all of the sweetness and spice expected of The Dalmore.



"Elegance in a glass! Matured in bourbon and sherry casks, this whisky is rich, sweet, and so delicious. A comforting evening dram."
— Jeremy, Paris

2 Glenrothes 18 Year Old

70cl | 43% VOL | £110 Sweet vanilla / Wood oil / Ginger biscuits

An exceptional 18-year-old Speyside single malt. Released as part of The Glenrothes' Soleo Collection, this expression has been exclusively matured in sherry seasoned oak casks.

3 Blair Athol 12 Year Old

70cl | 43% VOL | £56 Walnut / Cinnamon / Fruitcake

Established in 1798, Blair Athol is one of Scotland's oldest working distilleries and is famed for producing the signature malt for Bell's blend. A delicious dram, this is one of only a few official bottlings ever released from the distillery.

4 Arran 10 Year Old

70cl | 46% VOL | £46 Apple / Cinnamon / Digestive biscuits

An award-winning whisky that captures the fresh and unique style of this island distillery. A worthy addition to your whisky cabinet, this expression offers a fantastic introduction to the flavours from Arran.

5 Benrinnes 15 Year Old

70cl | 43% VOL | £60 Toffee apple / Sherry / Malted biscuit

This 15-year-old Speyside single malt is partially triple distilled at Benrinnes Distillery, resulting in a sultry expression that packs in plenty of body and character. It is another bottling from Diageo's Flora & Fauna series, highlighting the versatility of distilleries producing liquid for blends.

6 Old Pulteney 15 Year Old

70cl | 40% VOL | £80 Honey / Salted caramel / Fruitcake

An incredibly balanced single malt that has spent time in American oak ex-bourbon casks and finished in Spanish oak. Spice and sweetness combine with the refreshing coastal notes expected from this seaside distillery to create a delicious dram.

7 anCnoc 12 Year Old

70cl | 40% VOL | £40 Banana / Butterscotch / Custard

Produced at Knockdhu Distillery in the Highlands and matured in a combination of second-fill American oak, ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casks, this is an award-winning expression that should sit proudly on your spirits shelf.

8 The Dalmore 12 Year Old

70cl | 40% VOL | £71 Cocoa / Marmalade / Milk chocolate

This single malt is a Highland triumph: full-bodied, thick and sweet. A popular dram, known for its long and spicy finish, and a beautifully rich expression for its 12 years of age.

9 Benriach The Twelve

70cl | 46% VOL | £51 Honey / Maraschino cherries / Cocoa

Part of the refreshed core line-up from Benriach, this new recipe brings intensified notes of baked fruits and a rich smoothness, thanks to time spent in a combination of sherry casks, bourbon barrels and Port pipes under the expert care of Master Blender Rachel Barrie.

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THE WHISKY SHOP

Customer Favourites

Rich / Sweet

1 Glen Scotia Victoriana

70cl | 54.2% VOL | £80 **Crème brûlée / Cocoa / Caramel**

Inspired by the whiskies produced at Glen Scotia Distillery in the Victorian times, this expression has been relaunched at a slightly higher strength and bottled straight from cask to better reflect how historic expressions of this era would have tasted. Delicious!



“A whisky that has it all! Bottled at cask strength, this dram is packed with notes of fruit, oak, and spice, with a subtle smoky finish. Delicious.”

— Lee, Trentham

2 Glen Scotia Double Cask Rum Finish

70cl | 46% VOL | £56 **Toasted coconut / Baking spices / Molasses**

A beautiful dram that pays homage to the rum casks that were on sale in Campbeltown in 1815. Matured in ex-bourbon casks before an eight-month finish in ex-Demerara rum barrels, the result is something simply spellbinding.

3 Mortlach 12 Year Old The Wee Witchie

70cl | 43.4% VOL | £62 **Toffee / Marmalade / Raisins**

Known as 'the Beast of Dufftown', Mortlach's spirit is distilled 2.81 times in a complicated process referred to simply as 'The Way'. Named after a tiny still that distils a portion of Mortlach's whisky, this 12-year-old is a perfect example of the distillery's intense character.

4 Oban Distillers Edition

70cl | 43% VOL | £86 **Milk chocolate / Sea salt / Christmas cake**

A distillery renowned for its innovation, each expression of Oban Distillers Edition undergoes double maturation in casks that have previously held a fortified wine. This edition has been finished in a Montilla Fino cask - a rare type of finish and a complete treat!

5 Mortlach 16 Year Old Distiller's Dram

70cl | 43.4% VOL | £112 **Gingerbread / Orange peel / Sultanas**

An older sibling to Mortlach 12 Year Old, this dram offers plenty of sweet and sticky Christmas spice thanks to maturation in sherry casks. A combination of first-fill and refill sherry casks gives this 16-year-old a wider range of sherry flavour, from dried fruits to juicy berries.

6 The GlenDronach 12 Year Old

70cl | 43% VOL | £56 **Marmalade / Sherry / Raisins**

An award-winning expression from the distillery famous for its richly sherried offering - this 12-year-old is a firm favourite amongst our customers. Matured in both Pedro Ximénez and Oloroso sherry casks, this expression offers an indulgent portfolio of flavours.

7 Benromach 10 Year Old

70cl | 43% VOL | £44 **Green apple / Toffee / Black cherry**

Produced at the family-owned distillery in Forres and aged for a decade in first-fill bourbon and sherry casks, Benromach's 10-year-old is a dram that is unmistakably Speyside in flavour. It is the proud winner of multiple gold awards.

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THE WHISKY SHOP

Customer Favourites Smoky

① Talisker Port Ruighe

70cl | 45.8% VOL | £59 **Cocoa / Plum / Spicy pepper**

Rich and fruity, Talisker have taken their Isle of Skye malt and finished it in ruby port casks to achieve this delicious dram. 'Port Ruighe' (pronounced 'Portree') is the Gaelic spelling of the once bustling trading port on Skye.



"This is hands-down my favourite Talisker. Classic Talisker smoke and pepper combine with a rich, bold sweetness from the port cask finish. The result is a sublime combination of sweet, savoury, and smoke. This whisky in a Bloody Mary is by far the best I've ever tasted!"

— Andrew, Loch Fyne Whiskies



② Bunnahabhain Toiteach A Dha

70cl | 46% VOL | £54 **Dried fruit / Peat / Black pepper**

Made with Bunnahabhain Moine, this expression is the follow-up to the original Toiteach single malt. "Toiteach" translates to "smoky two" in Gaelic, so it is no surprise that this dram is bursting with sumptuous, peaty flavours."

③ Torabhaig Allt Gleann Legacy

70cl | 46% VOL | £61 **Sea salt / Peat smoke / Lemon peel**

The second release in Torabhaig's Legacy series is an impressively peaty malt. The series consists of small batch bottlings, all drawn from 30 casks or less.



④ Jura 18 Year Old

70cl | 44% VOL | £81 **Dark chocolate / Coffee / Blackcurrant jam**

Matured for 18 years in American white oak ex-bourbon barrels and enriched by Premier Grand Cru Classé red wine barriques, this expertly crafted single malt is a unique island whisky that has truly come of age.

⑤ Ledaig 10 Year Old

70cl | 46.3% VOL | £50 **Gingerbread / Sea salt / Stewed fruit**

This beautifully smoky dram is one third of the Ledaig core range. Hailing from the Isle of Mull's only distillery, this is an impressively balanced maritime whisky that is sure to keep you coming back for more.



⑥ Ailsa Bay 1.2

70cl | 48.9% VOL | £63 **Vanilla / Shortbread / Campfire ember**

Ailsa Bay 1.2 has undergone the distillery's signature micro-maturation process - rapid maturation in ex-bourbon casks before ageing in virgin American oak casks for several years - achieving a single malt that's even sweeter and smokier than its predecessor. Beautiful.

⑦ Caol Ila Distillers Edition

70cl | 43% VOL | £80 **Malted biscuit / Peat smoke / Cinnamon**

A sweeter expression from the Islay distillery due to time spent in Moscatel casks at the end of its maturation process. The result is a delicious layer of sweetness and dried fruits on top of classic Caol Ila peat smoke.



THE WHISKY SHOP

Customer Favourites International

① Maker's 46

70cl | 47% VOL | £47 **Nutmeg / Mulled wine / Caramel**

Filled into a barrel partly made of seared French oak staves, this stunning Kentucky bourbon packs plenty of spice and is named after the final recipe chosen by its creators - recipe number 46.



"My go-to bourbon for making cocktails at home. Corn, cereal, and caramel lead on the nose, and on the palate -everything that can be expected from a good bourbon! Strong and punchy, with woody notes, vanilla, and old spice. Perfect mixed in an Old Fashioned."

— Imogen, Paris

①



② Bushmills 16 Year Old

70cl | 40% VOL | £94 **Almond / Currant jam / Dark chocolate**

Triple distilled at Northern Ireland's Bushmills Distillery, this 16-year-old Irish single malt has been matured in oloroso sherry casks and bourbon-seasoned casks for just over 15 years, before being finished in Port pipes for nine months to impart sweet, jammy flavours.

③ Widow Jane 10 Year Old Bourbon

70cl | 45.5% VOL | £80.95 **Sandalwood / Tobacco / Madagascan vanilla**

A fabulous bourbon from Widow Jane Distillery in Brooklyn. Each bottle of this ten-year-old tippie has been drawn from a single barrel, meaning that no two bottles of this fabulous expression will be exactly the same.

②



③



④



④ Writers' Tears Copper Pot

70cl | 40% VOL | £43 **Apple / Ginger / Dark chocolate**

A delectable recreation of a fabled whiskey favoured in 19th century Ireland by literary greats such as Joyce, Beckett, and Bernard Shaw. A marriage of one cask, two grains, and three distillations, the original soon became known as the "Champagne of Irish Whiskey."

⑤ Waterford The Cuvée

70cl | 47% VOL | £72 **Orange zest / Barley sugar / Lemon peel**

An outstanding release from Ireland's Waterford Distillery. This impressive expression draws together spirits from the distillery's Single Farm Origins series to create this striking single malt.

⑥ The Irishman Single Malt

70cl | 43% VOL | £48 **Crystallised pineapple / Ripe stone fruits / Honey**

A bourbon and oloroso matured dream! This whiskey wonderfully balances sweet, fruity, and woody flavours to create this gorgeous Irish tippie. This small batch expression won Gold at the International Spirits Challenge 2022—get your hands on one now!

⑤



⑥



⑦



⑧



⑦ New York Distillers Ragtime Straight Rye

70cl | 45.2% VOL | £47 **Liquorice / Cinnamon / Marmalade**

An impressive rye from New York Distilling Company. Specially created to be used in cocktails, this expression will be right at home in a delicious Manhattan! A must-have addition to your drinks cabinet.

⑧ Stauning Smoke Single Malt

70cl | 47% VOL | £82 **Digestive biscuits / Apple / Campfire smoke**

A real triumph from Denmark's Stauning distillery. This Danish expression is full to the brim with seductively smoky notes that give way to soft, sweet, fruity hints.

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LONDON Unit 7, Queens Head Passage Paternoster EC4M 7DZ 0207 329 5117	MANCHESTER 3 Exchange Street M2 7EE 0161 832 6110	EDINBURGH Unit U23 Waverley Mall Waverley Bridge EH1 1BQ 0131 558 7563
BRIGHTON 64 East Street BN1 1HQ 01273 327 962	YORK 11 Coppergate Walk YO1 9NT 0190 4640 300	EDINBURGH 28 Victoria St EH1 2JW 0131 225 4666
GUILDFORD 25 Chapel Street GU1 3UL 01483 450 900	STOKE-ON-TRENT Unit 210 Trentham Gardens ST4 8AX 01782 644 483	NEWLY OPENED EDINBURGH Multrees Walk 28 St. Andrew Square EH2 1AF
BATH 9-10 High Street BA1 5AQ 01225 423 535	NOTTINGHAM 3 Cheapside NG1 2HU 0115 958 7080	INVERNESS 17 Bridge Street IV1 1HG 0146 3710 525
OXFORD 7 Turf St OX1 3DQ 01865 202 279	BIRMINGHAM Unit 9 Great Western Arcade B2 5HU 0121 233 4416	FORT WILLIAM 93 High Street PH33 6DG 0139 7706 164
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THE 42



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Expert Tasting / House of Hazelwood A Singular Blend 1963



Charles MacLean takes us back to the whisky production of 1963 in the Scottish Highlands with House of Hazelwood's A Singular Blend.

➔ 'A Singular Blend' well describes this remarkable whisky, since both malt and grain components were produced at the same Highland distillery in the same year, 1963. While there have been a handful of such 'singular' whiskies, never before has a whisky with such provenance been offered for sale at such an advanced age, and such rarity. It is bottled history, and the cask has yielded a mere 74 bottles.

It forms part of House of Hazelwood's 'Autumn Collection' of eight stupendous whiskies, and, as with the company's 'Inaugural Collection'—released this summer and reviewed by me in the Autumn 2022 edition of this magazine—it is divided into two ranges, *The Charles Gordon Collection* and *The Legacy Collection*.

Hazelwood House near Dufftown is owned by the Gordon family and has played a significant role in the lives of several generations of this whisky-making dynasty, not least that of Charles Gordon (1927-2013), the leading whisky distiller of his day, who spent much of his youth at Hazelwood

House and laid down some of the earliest casks in the collection which bears his name, all of them over fifty years old. Now the Gordon family has unlocked their archive of unusual and historic casks from all over Scotland, under the House of Hazelwood name.

The family claims, with some justification, their collection to be *"the greatest inventory of aged Scotch whisky held anywhere in the world. Spanning seven decades and every corner of Scotland, the diverse whiskies held in cask tell stories of remarkable places, lost ways of working, first casks, last casks, the ambitions and achievements of several lifetimes—none of which will be repeated."*

The inventory is held in several carefully selected warehouses across Scotland, with fresh stocks being laid down each year. Prior to bottling, a small proportion of the stocks are moved to traditional dunnage warehousing near Dufftown, from where they are monitored and sampled ahead of release.

I have written elsewhere that they are tremendous whiskies—greatly aged,

complex, outstanding on the palate. However, what really sets them apart are the stories behind them. Every bottle is an invitation into the Gordon family's ways of working—a very personal connection to a different era, a different mindset.

We should be in no doubt that these whiskies are heirlooms and none more so than 'A Singular Blend'. To see a whisky of such provenance available to purchase is a remarkable thing – and for those lucky enough to try it, the liquid character is breath-taking. I feel privileged to have been able to taste it and sad that the sample was so small! It is one of the finest whiskies I have ever encountered.

1) *Whisky Magazine's* Editor-at-Large, Christopher Coates, charmingly refers to such "distilleries within distilleries" as "Russian Dolls." The Highland distillery which created A Singular Blend has not been revealed—readers might like to guess—I can think of only two such "Russian Doll" distilleries operating in the Highlands in 1963.

House Of Hazelwood A Singular Blend 1963

70cl 45.6% VOL

58 Year Old

Blended Scotch Whisky

Deep amber in hue, the nose is supremely mellow and deeply complex. The top notes are of tropical fruits, backed by almond oil and a trace of desiccated coconut on a base of sandalwood, with a hint of charcoal. The texture is slightly waxy, the taste sweet, the finish fresh and mouth-cooling. Astonishing!



The Last Word / The Irish Whisky Renaissance



Irish whiskey is making a comeback in a big way. Our W Club Manager and resident Irish whiskey expert, Luke Crowley-Holland, gives us the low-down on the spectacular resurgence in the industry.

➔ Over the past two decades, the growth in Irish whiskey has been nothing short of remarkable. From sales of less than five million cases in 2010, to over fourteen million cases sold globally in 2022—breaking €1 billion in export value for the first time—it's a story that's much celebrated but is now about to get really interesting.

Although there are some predictions sales of Irish could overtake Scotch in the US between now and 2030, the value and volume of Irish whiskey still looks relatively abject compared to that of Scotch. However, the truth is we are only now entering the truly exciting period for Irish whiskey. Of the fourteen million cases sold in 2022, ten million of them were of Jameson; the popularity of this iconic blend has been integral to the growth in Irish whiskey since the turn of the century. But what makes 2022 and beyond most interesting for Irish whiskey isn't really the above statistics. But rather that December 2022 marked the tenth year of distillation at Kerry's Dingle Distillery.

Prior to the opening of the Dingle Distillery by Irish drinks industry pioneer, Oliver Hughes, in December 2012, there were only three operational distilleries on the island. The following ten years have seen the number of operational Irish distilleries surpass forty. As this new generation of distilleries—such as Echlinville, Glendalough,

Tullamore, and Teeling—all start hitting the ten-year milestone, we will start seeing not only new areas of growth outside of the traditional brands, but also more innovation in mash bills and cask types.

While there are a considerable number of Irish distilleries who currently are, and historically have, produced both triple and double distilled single malt whiskey, one of Irish whiskey's unique strengths and historical points of difference has been the production of pot still whiskey; distilled from a mixed mash of malted and unmalted barley. A review of the Irish Whiskey Technical File—submitted in 2021—has sought to liberalise the definition of pot still, reflecting historical mash bills from the golden age of Irish whiskey.

Over the past ten years, massive international drinks companies such as Illva Saronno, William Grant & Sons, Diageo, Casa Cuervo, Quintessential Brands, Sazerac, Beam Suntory, and Brown-Forman have all followed Pernod Ricard in investing considerable funds in backing the future of Irish whiskey. At the same time, we've seen real innovation in all aspects of the journey from grain to glass from distilleries both with backing from the aforementioned companies, but crucially from small, independent producers.

From 2016 onwards, we started to see

an influx of mature whiskey from smaller craft and/or independent distilleries. Irish whiskey drinkers have been, or will be, treated to larger than presently available commercial releases from both genuine innovators and/or market trailblazers such as Dingle, Echlinville, Glendalough, Pearse Lyons, Shed Distillery, Teeling, and Waterford. In addition, there has been a slew of very exciting new projects undertaken from the likes of Killarney Distillery, Wayward Irish Spirits, Lough Ree, Micil Distillery, and Killowen to name but a few.

The majority of these distilleries—along with dozens of other fantastic producers not mentioned—are joining Middleton Distillery in putting Pot Still back on the map. To go full circle to our original comparison to sales of Scotch in the original golden age of Irish whiskey production—in the 1800s when Irish whiskey outsold Scotch 5-1—the most consumed style of in the world was pot still whiskey. In this period, less than 10% of Irish whiskey producers distilled a whisky akin to a single malt, the rest distilled a variation of what we'd call pot still. Therefore, for our last word this Spring let's raise a glass to the innovators and believers in Irish whiskey, and the new brands and producers we're going to be falling in love with over the next ten years.



JOHNNIE WALKER

×

ANGEL CHEN



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