

Whiskeria®

The first sip
of spring



Featuring — Luss Distillery — The Loch Fyne — Fuji at 50 — Dr. Rachel Barrie — The Big Spring Thaw

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The first sip

The days are growing longer, the air is softening, and spring is finally shrugging off winter's icy grip, ready to burst into bloom. It's a season of renewal and curiosity – of taking the plunge and trying something new.

As the seasons shift, so too does our experience of whisky. The first drams of spring should be all about freshness and nuance: brighter flavours, lighter moments and the pleasure of discovery. It's a time for exploration, for revisiting old favourites in a new light, and for finding unexpected delights.

Inside this issue, you'll find inspiration for the months ahead – bottlings to explore, expressions to seek out, and ideas to refresh the way you drink and share whisky. Spring invites us to look forward, so pour a dram and step into the new year.

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THE WHISKY SHOP UNLOCKING THE MYSTERY OF WHISKY

Founded in 1992, The Whisky Shop is the UK's largest specialist whisky retailer, offering 400+ whiskies, including exclusives and rarities, across 22 UK stores, Paris, Cannes and online.

As I see it PROGRESS & PRESERVATION

This issue, Chairman Ian P Bankier shares his perspective on Scotland's ever-evolving distilling landscape, from planning challenges in protected areas to the value of pragmatic partnerships.

When I visit stately homes in Scotland and take on board their sheer size and the impact they would have made on their otherwise untouched rural surroundings at the time, I contemplate the irony that there would have been no chance of them gaining planning permission if they were proposed today. This same thought occurs to me every time I visit a Highland distillery, particularly the large established ones where elements of their construction are frankly brutal in the context of their serene riverside settings. By contrast, the numerous small independent distilleries that have popped up across Scotland in recent years have clearly met the high standards of planning and

construction that apply today. This has much to do with their relative size and scale together with the fact that there is romanticism and popularity attached to small distilling ventures.

The most recent arrival is the newly opened Luss Distillery on the banks of Loch Lomond. Gaining permission to build Luss Distillery was a notable planning achievement for the Colquhoun family, as it sits within the Loch Lomond National Park where the policy towards commercial and industrial development is, to say the least, negative. The National Park concept, introduced just after the War, was founded on the attractive idea that preservation of areas of natural beauty would promote public access and therefore commercial tourism. This notion is compelling until one starts to consider the paradox of preserving the status quo whilst fostering commerce. It works in depopulated areas such as Dartmoor or the Yorkshire Dales, but it flounders where there are towns, communities, intensive farming, woodlands and industries. National Park authorities in varying degrees have had to find ways to balance these conflicting considerations and for the Loch Lomond Authority, this has been a stubbornly slow process. As an example of the sort of nonsense that the area has had to endure, I can testify that trees and bushes were

encouraged to grow naturally along the shores of Loch Lomond with the result that tourists taking the loch side road were unable to see any of the loch that they had come to visit!

The Colquhouns of Luss are to be congratulated for having had the vision and persistence to take their distillery project to the National Park and the Park Authority must equally be recognised for giving their consent. And there is another aspect of this initiative to be admired. The Colquhouns appear to have foreseen the challenges of going it alone as another micro distillery in a crowded sector and, very sensibly, have made a deal with The Loch Lomond Group to bring the distillery and visitor centre to commercial reality. The end product is a delightful distillery and visitor centre sympathetically designed to nestle in the historic village of Luss. It's a natural fit for both parties and a good example of how to give a small distillery an economically sustainable future. As I see it, partnering up with larger distillers can make sense for some of the new independent distilleries that have arrived on the scene. I appreciate that there is a profound and proud sense of achievement upon the establishment a new distillery, but when the money is all invested and production is under way, what then?

Slainte
Ian P Bankier, Chairman

“As I see it, partnering up with larger distillers can make sense for some of the new independent distilleries that have arrived on the scene.”

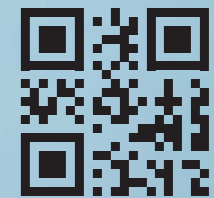


WIN

To celebrate our Mixing It Up feature, we're giving one lucky reader the chance to win The Loch Fyne core range: The Loch Fyne Blended Whisky, The Loch Fyne Botanical Gin, The Loch Fyne Chocolate & Orange Liqueur, and the sensational latest addition, The Loch Fyne Honey Liqueur.

See the full feature on page 52.

To find out more and enter, go to tws.cx/win



Competition closes Friday 8th May 2026. T&Cs apply. Winners will be contacted directly.

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CLONAKILTY

IRISH WHISKEY

The Atlantic
DISTILLERY

IT'S IN OUR NATURE



Double Gold
2025
San Francisco
World Spirits
Competition



Notes of vanilla, caramelised pear and apple
with a dark chocolate and orange finish

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FIELDS FULL OF LIFE. WHISKY FULL OF FLAVOUR

CONTRIBUTORS

Our team of contributors bring whisky to life from every angle. With perspectives spanning the cask to the counter, they offer expert insight, sharp storytelling and a dash of wit.



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*.

A time in history 26

Charlie MacLean

Whiskeria's resident whisky guru, Charlie, has been researching and writing books on the water of life since 1981. Charlie's bestsellers include the award-winning *World Whisky* and *Scotch Whisky: A Liquid History* and his extensive knowledge on the subject led him to 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 08



Katie Puckrik

Katie is a writer, broadcaster, and performer. Throughout her career, she has danced with Pet Shop Boys, presented *The Word* and *Pyjama Party*, and written for *The Evening Standard*, *Elle*, *The Guardian*, *The Sunday Times*, and *Interview Magazine*, among others. After tackling subjects ranging from perfume and yacht rock to entertainment and travel, her nose for the new triggers a phrasemaking frenzy in *Katie Puckrik's Neat Takes*, her punchy column savouring a fresh set of whiskies in every issue.

Neat takes 90

Luke Crowley-Holland

Luke joined The Whisky Shop in 2022, having previously worked as an Irish whiskey specialist and mixologist, and having gained a degree in History and Politics. Luke has a real *grá* for the whisky industry, its people, and its stories, all of which he incorporates into his role as W Club Manager. His wit and incisive insight in his columns are a real highlight of this magazine.



New releases 08
The W Club 22



Christoffer Hällström

Christoffer leads The Whisky Shop Auctions. Having been at the forefront of one of the earliest 'new-age' online whisky auction sites, Christoffer brings knowledge and experience of this relatively new industry. He is an enthusiastic collector and possesses and almost encyclopaedic knowledge of auction items and values.

Auctions 24

NEW RELEASES

Fresh expressions and exciting new releases – these arrivals are made for the season of discovery. Find something new – to share, to savour, or to return to again and again.

Reviewed by
Charlie MacLean
Luke Crowley-Holland



Glasgow 1770 8 Year Old Bourbon Cask

CRN 57° 18 & 25 Year Olds

The Macallan 12 Year Old 110 Proof

Bladnoch 16 Year Old

MacPhail's 12, 15 & 21 Year Olds

Torabhaig 2018 Single Cask

Laphroaig 2013 12 Year Old Madeira Cask



Glasgow 1770

8 Year Old

Bourbon Cask Matured 2025 Release

Reviewed by
Charlie MacLean

The Glasgow Distillery Company Limited was named after an earlier distillery in the city, founded in 1770 and accordingly one of the earliest licensed distilleries in Scotland. It operated under different names until 1902.

As did its forerunner, Glasgow makes three styles of whisky – double-distilled unpeated, triple-distilled unpeated, and double distilled peated; Bourbon Cask Matured combines equal amounts of double-distilled peated and unpeated spirit – three first-fill ex-bourbon barrels of each.

The founders, Liam Hughes and Mike Hayward, came up with the idea for a distillery in December 2012 and decided to locate it in a warehouse on the industrial estate of Hillington on the outskirts of the city. The first still was installed in August 2014 – a 500-litre copper pot still to produce white spirits – and in October that year Makar Original Dry Gin was launched. This was followed in January 2015 by the installation of two further pot stills, at 2,500 and 1,500 litre capacity, for the production of malt whisky, which commenced in March that year. So successful was the launch of Glasgow 1770, as the single malt was named, that distilling capacity was doubled in 2019 with the installation of two further stills, replicas of the original pair.

The first peated expression was released that year and a triple distilled whisky in May 2020 and a blended Scotch named Malt Riot followed in June, commemorating the riots in Glasgow against the hated Malt Tax in 1725, during which Daniel Campbell of Shawfield M.P. who had supported the tax had his mansion sacked by the mob. He was awarded £9,000 in compensation, with which he bought the island of Islay.

Later in 2020 Glasgow was named 'Scottish Whisky Distillery of the Year' at the annual Scottish Whisky Awards, a significant acknowledgement of the company's growth and innovation.



70cl

54% ABV

£57

8 Year Old Lowland single malt

“Elegant, unusual,
and impressive.”

◆ TASTING NOTE

Pale gold in colour, with surprisingly good beading for its age (indicating texture). A mellow nose with a faintly medicinal top-note (Elastoplast), backed by pears and citric fruits which lend a fresh taste, both sweet and acidic. The finish is medium length, with a thread of smouldering peat. Elegant, unusual and impressive

CRN 57° 18 & 25 Year Olds

Reviewed by
Charlie MacLean



18 Year Old

70cl

43% ABV

£79

Blended malt

◆ TASTING NOTE

Pale amber, the first impression on the nose is savoury, mossy and slightly bosky, but soon faint fruity notes emerge (Seville orange marmalade, even orange zest). The taste continues and expands the aroma, starting lightly sweet and finishing lightly sour.

“The taste continues and expands the aroma, starting lightly sweet and finishing lightly sour.”

25 Year Old

70cl

43% ABV

£149

Blended malt

◆ TASTING NOTE

Amber in colour. A deep and mellow nose-feel with top-notes of dry fruit cake, with candied fruits (orange peel, angelica root) and tablet toffee. A smooth texture and a sweetish taste drying in the long finish, with a suggestion of pistachio nuts.

“A smooth texture and a sweetish taste drying in the long finish, with a suggestion of pistachio nuts.”

This curious brand-name is an abbreviation of The Cairn Distillery, which lies 57° north of the equator.

The Cairn Distillery was built by the family-owned independent bottler and distiller, Gordon & MacPhail of Elgin; although planning permission was granted in November 2019, commissioning was delayed until July 2022 by the pandemic. The site chosen for the distillery is within the Cairngorm National Park, close to Grantown-on-Spey. The name reflects the location and was chosen from over 300 proposals submitted by G&M’s shareholders and staff, as being clearly Scottish and easy to pronounce and spell – especially important in overseas markets.

The distillery is strikingly modern, but it has also been designed to blend into and complement its environment. From its turf roof (which encourages insect life) to its locally sourced Caithness stone pathways and stained timbers echoing the look of local farmsteads, it considers the National Park to be its natural home.

G&M arguably has the largest stock of mature malt whiskies from all over Scotland in the business and also has over 130 years of experience in blending. The CRN57 range was originally designed to be sold only at the distillery while waiting for The Cairn’s own product to mature, and to reflect the planned flavour profile of The Cairn’s Single Malt, giving rise to the slogan “*Taste the Future Today.*”

As well as the 18- and 25-year-old expressions featured by The Whisky Shop, CRN57° is also available at 12, 30, 57 and 70 years old, and as an annual limited release named CRN 57° Step Two, only available at the distillery.

Stuart Urquhart, Director of Operations, said of the latter: “*Step Two is the next in the series of releases that will take us towards the Cairn’s first single malts. It will provide visitors with a taste of what’s to come and with only a handful of bottles available, we expect this to be a popular release.*”

The Macallan 12 Year Old 110 Proof European Exclusive

Reviewed by
Charlie MacLean

The Macallan 110 Proof is a new expression from the distillery's Sherry Oak Collection. Its presentation at 110 proof enhances the bold, rich and fruity character their signature style is known for.



“The aroma combines savoury and sweet notes – walnuts and Seville marmalade, dark chocolate, and dried fruits – a trace of camphor and Christmas cake at reduced strength.”

The strength of new make spirit straight from the still is between 68% and 71% ABV, termed 'receiver strength'. Long ago it was discovered that the ideal strength at which to mature the spirit was 63.5% and accordingly a measured amount of 'reduction water' is added. Of course, it is perfectly legal to fill the casks at receiver strength – this has the advantage of reducing the number of casks required per batch, but scientists say *“Higher strengths should be used judiciously, as they will increase the levels of wood lipids and ethanol-soluble lignins, both of which will adversely affect the final processing of the matured whisky”* (Professor Paul S. Hughes, The Science and Commerce of Whisky, 2021).

While we're on the subject of whisky strength, it should be noted that it is not expected that you should drink whisky at 63% ABV – unless you're a masochist! – since it will burn your nose and numb your taste-buds. But bottling at high strength – so-called 'natural strength' or 'cask strength' – is highly desirable since the alcohol inhibits the loss of certain volatile flavour-bearing compounds. If the strength is reduced on the bottling line, these volatiles will have evaporated. Indeed, the reason reduction below 40% is prohibited is that, as the chemists say, the fall off in flavour is *“catastrophic”*. Far better to reduce to your preferred drinking strength in the glass, then enjoy the benefit of enhanced aroma and taste.

◆ TASTING NOTE

The colour of a polished conker. Excellent beading. A mellow nose-feel with some prickle. The aroma combines savoury and sweet notes – walnuts and Seville marmalade, dark chocolate, and dried fruits – a trace of camphor and Christmas cake at reduced strength. An oily texture and a taste which starts sweet and becomes tart then spicy in the lengthy finish, leaving a lingering taste of chocolate.

70cl

55% ABV

£125

12 Year Old Speyside single malt

MacPhail's 12, 15 & 21 Year Olds

Reviewed by
Charlie MacLean

On 24th May 1895, the Elgin Courant reported the opening of what would become the leading specialist whisky merchant in the world. The founders of the firm were James Gordon and John Alexander MacPhail, and among their earliest employees was John Urquhart, aged fifteen years, who was to serve an apprenticeship under the partners.

He was an able learner and before long was helping James Gordon to select and buy casks of malt whisky from local distilleries and assisting with the creation of house blends for the firm's customers around the north of Scotland. When J.A. MacPhail retired in March 1915, Urquhart became a partner in the business, and when James Gordon died suddenly only two weeks later, he became senior partner, developing the whisky-broking side of the business and specializing in single malts.

As well as becoming the licensed bottler for a number of famous Speyside distilleries, including The Glenlivet, Glen Grant, The Macallan, Linkwood, and Mortlach, he began to select and fill his own casks – invariably ex-sherry transport casks – at these and other distilleries, and maturing the whiskies for much longer than was customary at the time.

John Urquhart was joined by his son, George, and daughter, Betty, in 1933, and by another son, Gordon, in 1950. By this time the family firm held the largest range of bottled malt whiskies in the world. Most makes were unavailable elsewhere, since very few distillery owners bottled their own malts as singles. As well as bottling under the names of individual distilleries, they also registered the MacPhail's brand which gave them the freedom of releasing their own malts without disclosing the distillery.

The Urquhart family's profound knowledge of whisky, wood and maturation has enabled them to release some legendary expressions under the MacPhail's label, including several malts distilled before World War II.

12 Year Old

70cl

40% ABV

£45

Speyside single malt

◆ TASTING NOTE

Bright amber. Top notes of raspberry jam with a suggestion of vanilla custard and a sprinkle of ginger powder. A smooth texture and a sweet taste becoming lightly spicy in the finish.

“A smooth texture and a sweet taste becoming lightly spicy in the finish.”



15 Year Old

70cl

40% ABV

£70

Speyside single malt

◆ TASTING NOTE

Bright amber. Similar to the 12-year-old but with greater depth and slightly sweeter (vanilla fudge, raw sugar crystals), developing notes of cappuccino coffee at reduced strength. A creamy texture and a sweet taste overall, with cappuccino froth in the aftertaste.

“A creamy texture and a sweet taste overall, with cappuccino froth in the aftertaste.”

21 Year Old

70cl

40% ABV

£100

Speyside single malt

◆ TASTING NOTE

Deep amber. Mellow and reserved. Nose-drying overall, with top-notes of coffee beans and almond praline. A drop of water raises chocolate powder. A soft and mouth-filling texture, with a sweet mid-palate taste and a lengthy, gingery, finish leaving an aftertaste of milk chocolate.

“Nose-drying overall, with top notes of coffee beans and almond praline.”

Bladnoch

16 Year Old

Reviewed by
Charlie MacLean

Scotland's most southerly distillery was founded in 1817 by Thomas and John McClelland, farmers in Wigtownshire, and remained in the ownership of their descendants until 1938. Thereafter it had a chequered history, with several owners and periods of closure until it was bought by Arthur Bell & Sons in 1983, which company was acquired by Guinness two years later, so becoming part of United Distillers, Guinness' spirits division, in 1987.



U.D. reduced capacity by disconnecting a pair of stills, then decommissioned the site in June 1993. The local authority continued to manage some of the buildings as a 'heritage centre'. This should have been the end of the road for Bladnoch but a year later the site was bought by a property developer from Northern Ireland, a family company directed by Raymond and Colin Armstrong and their wives.

Their original plan was to develop the attractive site on the River Bladnoch, close to the Solway Firth, as holiday cottages, however they soon realised what an important role the distillery had played in the local economy. Also, the visitor centre was doing well – but, as Raymond Armstrong told me - there was little point in having a distillery visitor centre with no distillery. A condition of the sale was that the distillery should not be brought back into production but following discussions with U.D.'s Director of Production, the company was persuaded to waive this and help the new owner bring Bladnoch back into limited operation.

Following a family dispute in 2009, the distillery went into voluntary liquidation and in 2015 it was acquired by an Australian entrepreneur, David Prior. After two years of substantial investment and refurbishment under the direction of Ian MacMillan, former Master Distiller and Blender at Burn Stewart Distillers, capacity was increased to 1.5 million litres per annum. He was succeeded by Nick Savage, formerly Master Distiller at The Macallan, who writes about this 16-year-old expression, part of the distillery's 'Galloway Collection': "A small batch, Lowland single malt matured exclusively in first fill oloroso sherry casks."

“Deep umber in colour, clearly Spanish oak, most unusual for Bladnoch.”

◆ TASTING NOTE

Deep umber in colour, clearly Spanish oak, most unusual for Bladnoch. The nose is rich, with top-notes of dark chocolate and nougat (Turkish Delight), with light prickle, dry (Oloroso) overall and alluring. A creamy texture and a taste which is lightly sweet, with chocolate in mid-palate and a rich, shortish finish.

70cl

46.7% ABV

£115

16 Year Old Lowland single malt



W The Whisky Shop
Exclusive

Laphroaig 2013 12 Year Old Madeira Single Cask #1328

Reviewed by
Luke Crowley-Holland

Laphroaig exclusive single casks must be something like a film adaptation that the fans of the original work all agree was terrific. I'm sure there is one, is there? I don't know. But when I heard The Whisky Shop was getting one, I knew it'd be a crime on the level of if Jessie Buckley doesn't win an Oscar for Hamnet if I didn't get to review it. Or at least try it.

Fully matured in a Madeira Hogshead, the classic Islay smoke from a whisky famous the world over – like the county from which Buckley and I hail – take a backseat to some magnificent cask flavours in this one. It is bottled at 51.6%, and while I've always been a fan of the oiliness and robustness of a cask strength Laphroaig, this doesn't deliver what you'd expect on that front. As if the dram was sent to a prestigious finishing school on the island of Madeira. It certainly hasn't forgotten where it came from, but it's delicate, polite and welcoming.

W Club members save 10% on this bottle; now far be it from me to give financial advice, but I know where my discretionary income will be going this month.

“There are some stewed fruits, but for the rest of the flavours we take a trip across the water from Madeira to Casablanca.”

◆ TASTING NOTE

The nose carries barbecued orange and pineapple alongside a sweet earthy note, like a freshly opened tobacco pouch. The palate is not overly oily – by Laphroaig standards anyway – or tannic, but the smoke catches the edges of your tongue, letting you know it's there. There are some stewed fruits, but for the rest of the flavours we take a trip across the water from Madeira to Casablanca, where we'll find some baked spices, argan oil nuttiness, some cloves, and a salty olive brine. A drop of water teases out some of that more classic Laphroaig smoke, along with some stewed apples and berries. An exceptional dram from an exceptional distillery.

70cl

51.6% ABV

£199

Single cask Islay single malt



W The Whisky Shop
Exclusive

Torabhaig 2018 Single Cask #5797

Reviewed by
Luke Crowley-Holland

Walter Benjamin once penned the claim that 'work on a good piece of writing proceeds on three levels: a musical one, where it is composed; an architectural one, where it is constructed; and finally, a textile one, where it is woven.' In this single cask bottling there is no greater expression of this level of craftsmanship and artistry in a dram than any I've sampled in recent time. It sings a siren song from the glass and embraces you with the warmth of island knitwear.

When writing about a dram of this nature from Torabhaig, the temptation to evoke clichés about the beauty of the Isle of Skye looms large. And while I tried to resist, this whisky can only have emerged from the same divine kitchen as the one that baked the stiff peaks and soufflé cliffs of that magical place. It belies its age and its ABV. The latter at 62.2% is almost an optical illusion; as it appears on paper far bigger than it does in the glass. The oloroso cask is equally deceptive; side stepping expectations before returning again in more familiar form.

W Club members save 10% on this bottling!

“A second and third visit to the glass brings out some fig, raisin, and dried orange notes, along with some salinity.”

◆ TASTING NOTE

At first the nose is subtly vegetal, with a distinct mossy note, followed by almonds and vanilla pods, all of which are warped in a delicate charred wood-esque smoke. It's relatively light in texture but carries some heavy tannins, with an explosion of chalky-charcoal smoke on the palate, the vegetal flavours and nuttiness is still there but is joined by a beautifully balanced minerality. The finish lasts longer than a blockbuster's directors cut. A second and third visit to the glass brings out some fig, raisin, and dried orange notes, along with some salinity.

70cl

62.2% ABV

£125

Single cask Island single malt whisky

THE **W** CLUB REWARDS

The W Club FOR THOSE IN THE KNOW




2026 has arrived and W Club Manager Luke Crowley-Holland is here to encourage you to get involved with the world's finest whisky club so you, dear reader, can have your best year yet!

The most impactful and rewarding whisky club in the world enters another year, ready to deliver more for everyone, from whisky-swirling sophisticates to brave imbibing beginners to savvy bequesters. What they all have in common is membership of the greatest whisky club known to mankind.

Einstein observed that time is relative, and in many ways so is how you might experience *The W Club Rewards*. Did your membership begin the same as others? Was it with an excited click of a mouse or did you sheepishly catch the eye of a sales assistant before nervously gripping the neck of the bottle you wanted to know more about? Did you come in for the 10% off or did you come in to pick up a bottle and left pleasantly surprised by the welcome offer? Perhaps you'd shopped with The Whisky Shop years ago and when *The W Club Rewards* launched found yourself with a £10 voucher. Maybe you came in to buy a gift and left with a ticket to an upcoming in-store tasting? Perhaps you joined Premium to enter a ballot one time and fell in love with Digital Drams?

Like the love locks on Paris' Pont des Arts, there are thousands of stories as to how they ended up there, but the one thing they all – without exception – share in common is that they did.

If you're not yet a member, or you've signed up and are still figuring out what we have to offer here is a very brief overview of The W Club Reward's three tiers:

 Points	 Delivered	 Premium
Free	£15 a Year	£30 a Year
2 Points per £ spent	3 Points per £ spent	4 points per £ spent
Access to brand-led in-store tastings	Access to brand-led in-store tastings	Access to brand-led in-store tastings
'Members Pay Less' Deals	'Members Pay Less' Deals	'Members Pay Less' Deals
Bonus birthday rewards	Bonus birthday rewards	Bonus birthday rewards
	Unlimited Free UK Shipping*	Unlimited Free UK Shipping*



Exclusive Deals such as Whisky Wednesday savings

Ballots and Priority Access on the most in-demand whiskies

Exclusive in-store members only tastings

Join our famed Digital Drams online tastings

Unique savings with TWS Auctions

Get Whiskeria magazine delivered free to your door

Take part in judging our annual W Club Awards

Access our exclusive partner offers

If that isn't enough, all new W Club members get 10% off when joining up. So just try it once and save!

Still want more?

Check out our W Club podcast: *The W Club Decanted*. You can find it on all major podcast providers and in full visual form on YouTube. We have regular episodes featuring the biggest names in whisky. Check out our latest mini-series on The Macallan or our one-to-one with Dr. Rachel Barrie.



<https://tws.cx/decanted>

Join The W Club Rewards



<https://tws.cx/join>



Auctions

PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

Words Christoffer Hällström

Whisky has always been about more than what's in the glass. It's about time, rarity, and the thrill of the chase. The Whisky Shop Auctions (TWSA) was built on that belief, created to serve not just as an auction platform, but as a trusted home for collectors at every stage of their journey. From landmark bottles and record results to an always-on auction model that reflects how whisky lovers actually buy and sell today, TWSA continues to evolve with its community at the centre.

◆ KNOWLEDGE BAR

- W Club Premium benefits with Auctions**
- Sellers Listing Fee £5^{VAT} per bottle
 - Free Registration to allow you to bid
 - Including all the Whisky Shop Benefits

The past

Where the spark was lit

Some bottles don't just sell – they define moments in whisky collecting. Over the years, TWSA has been proud to offer whiskies that have captured imaginations and set benchmarks across the secondary market.

Auction favourites through the years

The Macallan	£21,000
1952 49 Year Old Single Cask #1250 Fine & Rare	
Bowmore	£20,000
1967 12 Year Old Largiemeanoch	
The Macallan	£17,000
James Bond 60th Anniversary Release Decades I–VI Globe Trotter	
The Macallan	£12,500
Distil Your World – New York	
The Macallan	£12,500
Distil Your World – London	
The Macallan	£10,000
1988 30 Year Old Single Cask #3892/08 Exceptional Cask (2018 Release)	

Behind these headline results was a growing realisation.

The lightbulb moment

The decision to launch The Whisky Shop Auctions came from watching collectors' behaviour. Customers would leave The Whisky Shop having made a purchase, only to search elsewhere (often on unvetted platforms!) to find the rare bottles they truly wanted.

For a genuine whisky enthusiast, the journey doesn't end at the shop counter. The secondary market is where the hunt continues.

By launching TWSA, The Whisky Shop closed that gap, creating a trusted "circle of life" where collectors could buy, build, and eventually trade their bottles within one ecosystem. It marked the shift from being simply a retailer to becoming a partner in the full whisky-collecting experience.

Why daily auctions, not monthly events?

With an established nationwide shop network, TWSA recognised an opportunity to rethink the traditional auction format. Rather than forcing buyers and sellers into a single monthly deadline, the team introduced a faster, more flexible approach.

Daily auctions reflect the pace of modern collecting by allowing bottles to stand on their own, avoiding overcrowded catalogues, and giving customers the freedom to act when interest is highest.

Milestones & achievements

Over the years, TWSA has grown into a true hub for collectors. Since launch, we have:

Sold over 92,000 lots

Whisky and spirits above 35% ABV only

Over 20,000 buyers and sellers

Serviced by our team

Collected 8,500+ lots last year

Covering 20,000+ miles to support home collections

The largest month in auction history

In June 2023, with 2,200+ lots offered

A moment that mattered

One of the most meaningful chapters in TWSA's history came in November 2020 with Doddie's Charity Whisky Auction, a moment when the whisky industry united for a cause far bigger than collecting.

Auction highlights

The Dalmore	£4,100
35 Year Old – Signed	
Auchentoshan	£3,300
1966 44 Year Old	
Glenkinchie	£3,200
16 Year Old – My Name's 5 Doddie Bottle No.1	

Inspired by Doddie Weir's extraordinary determination, distilleries, collectors, and brands came together to donate over 50 rare and highly sought-after bottles in support of the *My Name's 5 Doddie Foundation* and its mission to find a cure for Motor Neuron Disease.

To maximise impact, registration was set at just £1, with every penny donated directly to the charity. The result was remarkable: £50,000 raised, funding vital medical research at a time when collective action mattered more than ever.

Every bid was progress toward Doddie's vision of a world free from MND. It remains one of TWSA's proudest achievements.

The present

Bridging digital and physical

What truly differentiates TWSA is its real-world reach. With 20+ UK drop-off locations, every Whisky Shop acts as a direct gateway to a global auction audience, removing friction for sellers and adding reassurance for buyers.

This is further strengthened by home collections, where expertise meets personal service. In an increasingly automated industry, TWSA's "On the Road" specialist David McFall brings a human face to the auction process, building trust from first conversation to final collection.

A smarter way to auction

Members of W Club Premium enjoy a more rewarding auction experience:

- Reduced listing fees of £5^{VAT} per bottle (non-Premium £7^{VAT})
 - Free registration for bidding and selling
 - Access to all Whisky Shop benefits, integrated with auctions
- It's a model designed to remove barriers and reward loyalty.

Designed for global collectors

- Shipping to 29 countries, including 40 US states
- No storage fees for 90 days, allowing buyers to consolidate shipments
- The only auction house offering a virtual wallet, enabling sellers to instantly use proceeds to purchase bottles they've won

All built to keep momentum high and collectors engaged.

The future

The return of theme days

By popular demand, themed auction days will return in 2026. Once a month, the platform will spotlight tightly curated selections, such as Islay-only or sherried whisky, giving specific styles and regions the attention they deserve. It's a refined revival of a much-loved early concept, reintroduced for today's scale.

Later finishes, same fair play

Daily auctions will now close at 21:00 (GMT), responding directly to customer feedback. TWSA's anti-sniper technology remains in place, resetting the countdown timer to 10 minutes when last-minute bids are placed to ensure fair outcomes.

Expanding personal service

Home collections continue to grow through recommendation and repeat use. To meet demand, collections will run monthly across Scotland and every three weeks throughout England – with David and the TWSA van covering more miles than ever.

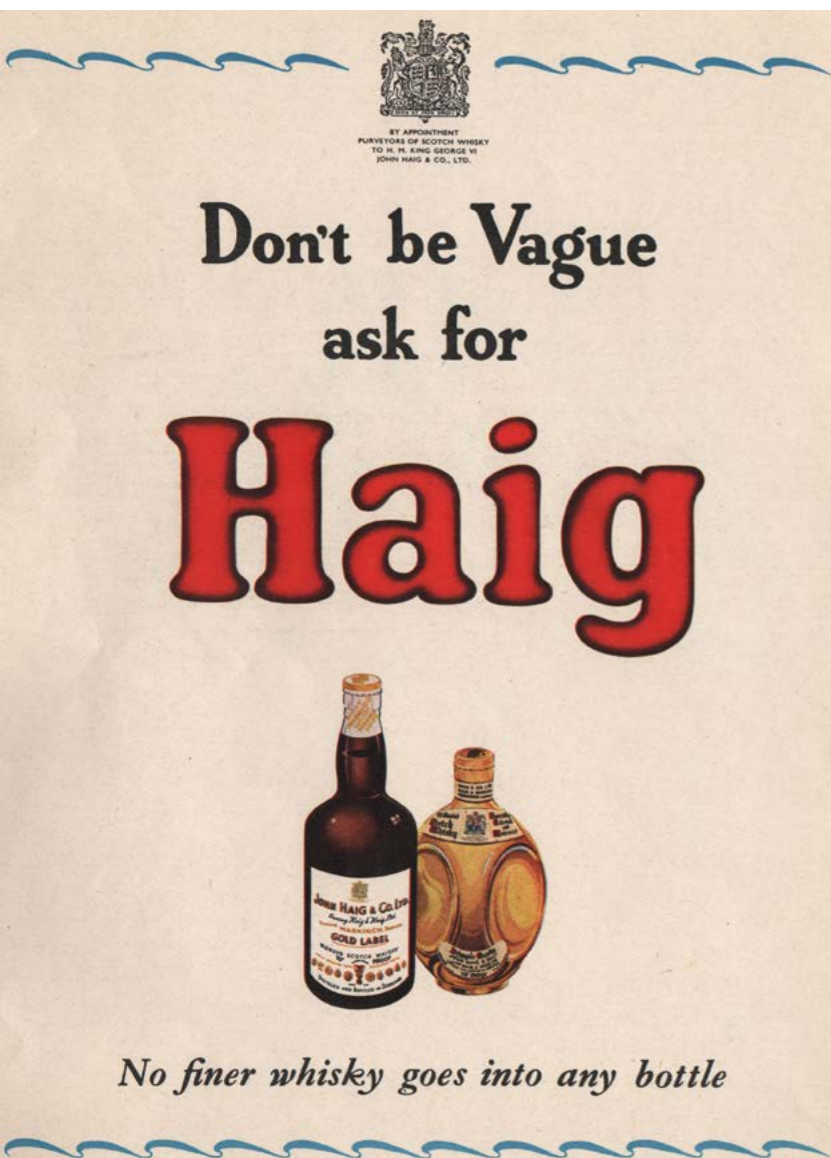
Staying connected

A stronger social media presence will bring collectors closer to the bottles, the stories, and the people behind the auctions. Follow along to make sure you never miss what's next.

A time in history

HOW TO STAND OUT IN TODAY'S CROWD

Words Brian Wilson



BY APPOINTMENT
PURVEYORS OF SCOTCH WHISKY
TO H. R. KING GEORGE VI
JOHN HAIG & CO., LTD.

Don't be Vague
ask for
Haig

No finer whisky goes into any bottle

Brian Wilson reflects on the golden age of whisky advertising and explores how the industry has moved from simple slogans to stories, packaging, and increasingly complex expressions.



A few years ago, the advertising magazine *Campaign* published a survey which produced the remarkable finding that three-quarters of us who were in our early teens in the 1960s could remember adverts on Radio Luxembourg, when it was the only commercial radio station available – “208, the Station of the Stars,” if I recall correctly.

The highest retention rate was for a guy called Horace Batchelor and his “famous *infra-draw method*” for winning the football pools! Horace spelt out his address as K-e-y-n-s-h-a-m, Bristol, and the whole teenage nation not only knew it but remembered it for the rest of their lives!

From an advertising point of view, the point was exceptionally well made. Get a catchline into a young mind and it will never leave –

“I can’t remember when I last saw any of them on a billboard, but the messages remain imprinted in my consciousness and that makes them classics of the advertising art.”

a principle which doubtless continues to be applied today. Historically, no industry was better at implanting unforgettable slogans than Scotch whisky.

We had “*Don’t be vague, ask for Haig*,” “*You can take a White Horse anywhere*,” “*Bell’s, afore ye go*,” and so on. I can’t remember when I last saw any of them on a billboard, but the messages remain imprinted in my consciousness and that makes them classics of the advertising art – slogans which were made to last, and whisky was particularly good at inspiring them.

In these unsophisticated times, people were drawn towards a particular brand by personal taste note that did not have to be written down. Bell’s was fiery; Stewart’s Cream of the Barley was mellow; and Johnnie

BELL'S

'Afore ye go'

This fine old whisky contains all the richness of many years maturing.



ARTHUR BELL & SONS LTD.
SCOTCH WHISKY DISTILLERS, PERTH
 • AN INDEPENDENT HOUSE •

Walker had a higher malt content. When Johnnie Walker withdrew from the UK market in the early 1970s, The Famous Grouse, a sleepy brand produced by Matthew Gloag since the 1890s, burst on the scene boasting a higher malt content, as had Johnnie. Word soon got round.

When Highland Distilleries took it over and started putting some serious promotion behind it, The Famous Grouse experienced a meteoric rise to become Scotland's biggest-selling brand by the 1990s – a position which, remarkably, it has held ever since with Bell's hot on its heels.

Within that period, the world had become more complicated. Even in 1980, single malts accounted for only one per cent of the market. To the vast majority of consumers, Scotch whisky equated to blends and while they were never exactly cheap, they had to be affordable in order to secure a place in that mass market.

Then, quite quickly, the scene changed and has continued to evolve upwards. While blends retained the volume, single malts created an upper end of the market, with the sky pretty much the limit.

“To find a niche, every bottle needs a story to tell.”

I came across a great little book called *Classic Blended Scotch* by Jim Murray which was published in 1999, and he was by then bemoaning the lack of serious attention paid to the whisky that most people consumed – i.e. blends.

“If I ask an editor today if they would like an article on a blend, usually the answer is no, but something on malts might be quite acceptable,” wrote Murray. *“Perhaps this goes to explain why, quite extraordinarily, this is the first ever book in the world dedicated exclusively to blended whisky giving not only histories but, vitally, full tasting notes.”*

He argued, even then, that there were *“just too many single malts on the market that are, well, boring. They have little to say for themselves and have to depend on evocative packaging to create an image. However, inside blended whiskies these same dull malts take on an extraordinary versatility ... It is no coincidence that the vast majority of Scotland's blenders – who are also responsible for the single malts on the shelves – usually prefer a blend when they choose their dram.”*

But don't underestimate the power of packaging, which is why the whisky companies invest so much creativity and money in making it ever more attractive. Many consumers who are in search of a gift to give but have minimal knowledge of whisky 'buy with their eyes' and, with a little reassurance that what's inside the bottle is also okay, may well opt for the packaging that stands out.

Apart from packaging, the single malts had to find other means of promoting themselves. In the secretive whisky world, blends were brands whose owners generally preferred not even to publicise which distilleries supplied the component whiskies. In contrast, malts were out on their own – dependent on the names, reputations and images of individual distilleries.

This did not fit the old marketing model. Some of the distilleries provided challenges with pronunciation, never mind building slogans around them. There were, of course, exceptions: *“The Glenlivet. One place. One whisky”* is a fair statement. And *“Ardbeg. The Islay malt that sweetly whacks you”* certainly carries a message. But they don't exactly trip off the tongue like the old ones did.

Today, 85 per cent of production still goes into blends but the number of single malts, and variations upon their themes, continues to proliferate. The most common differentiation is, naturally, by age but eventually, even the most creative marketers have long since run out of years which end in five or zero. So now the distinguishing ages are more random. I noticed, for example, Fettercairn is being offered in 22 and 28 year-old variations and there is certainly a market for that degree of individualism.

A browse along The Whisky Shop shelves reveals the diversity of USPs. The stag's head on The Dalmore label goes down well with tourists. Arran has produced a Robert Burns whisky. Glen Moray offers a *“peated Rioja cask finish.”* Isle of Raasay – one of the smartest of the new wave of distilleries – trades on the island's 'Jurassic' rocks. Nc'nean from the Morvern peninsula promotes itself as an *“organic whisky”* fired by renewal energy. And so on... to find a niche, every bottle needs a story to tell. But good old-fashioned advertising slogans? No, not really.

“Sustainability” is one of the buzzwords of the age and some brands with big budgets are keen to imply that they are deeply in tune with it. Glenfiddich, for example, have produced a series of videos to back up a *“Water for Life Initiative.”* One very classy video shows a chap from Soweto seeking *“water untouched by man”* in the Arctic Circle. I'm not sure the exact read-across to selling Glenfiddich, but it must be in there somewhere – just as subliminally as the old radio ads!

Winning awards is another good way of standing out from the crowd. When I dropped into The Whisky Shop in Glasgow, the GlenAllachie 12 Year Old had become a big seller by being able to proclaim itself the 'World's Best Single Malt' by courtesy of the World Whiskies Awards. *“A nose of rich sultanas, flapjacks and milk chocolate, alongside acetone notes,”* averred the judges. *“On the palate, dried apple, gourmet chutney, orange zest, nutmeg, and cinnamon emerge, complemented by vanilla custard.”*

And that, I suppose, is how times change. I'm not sure our forebears would have welcomed the assurance that their drams tasted of chocolate and custard. Maybe there was something to be said for simpler times.

“But don't underestimate the power of packaging, which is why the whisky companies invest so much creativity and money in making it ever more attractive.”

The Whisky Shop Cannes

WELCOME TO THE RIVIERA

The Whisky Shop Cannes
13 Rue Hoche
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Cannes

www.whiskyshop.fr

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book your event in Cannes



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“It is exactly the kind of environment where our belief in Unlocking the Mystery of Whisky can truly come to life.”

Private Lounge 13 Hoche: Extending the Experience

This year we have added a private lounge that we call ‘Le 13 Hoche.’ It’s an intimate, refined space designed for moments that go beyond everyday retail. Here, we host whisky masterclasses, private tastings and bespoke events that can be built around specific themes, regions or distilleries. The lounge is also used for private and corporate gatherings, client hospitality, team-building sessions, brand activations and product launches.

For Whiskeria readers, Cannes is very much an open invitation. If you find yourself visiting the Côte d’Azur, make a point of popping into the boutique and saying hello to Johan, our Store Manager - he will be delighted to welcome you and share what’s new and exciting.

And if you are attending a conference, festival or event in Cannes, our private space ‘Le 13 Hoche’ is open for reservations. Whether for clients, colleagues or partners, the team can help tailor something memorable.



Few regions outside of Paris combine international tourism, culture, business and luxury quite like the French Riviera, and Cannes attracts an extraordinary and diverse mix of newcomers, collectors and visitors.

It was exactly the environment where our philosophy of Unlocking the Mystery of Whisky could be further deployed.

When our shop in Cannes opened its doors in spring 2024, it marked an exciting new chapter for The Whisky Shop in Europe. More than simply becoming our second French boutique, we wanted Cannes, like our flagship in Paris, to be special – a unique experience that would bring our personality and values to one of the world’s most iconic lifestyle destinations.

Situated on the buzzing pedestrian Rue Hoche in the heart of Cannes, just moments from La Croisette and the Palais des Festivals Conference Centre, the boutique benefits from constant energy and footfall. Locals drop in, visitors wander through, collectors return, and first-timers happen upon us by chance. The mix of customer type has shaped the spirit of the store: part local whisky specialist, part international brand.

Like Paris, Cannes was designed to be ‘not just another caviste’ – (there are plenty of those in France...!) Its initial impact on every new visitor is ‘WOW!’ It looks very different, as the design takes its cues from the Belle Epoch era of French architecture combined with the colours of the Côte d’Azur. The stylish setting provides a remarkable showcase for whisky brands, and allows customers to browse comfortably, sample some whiskies and enjoy their experience with us.

Customers of The Whisky Shop will know that we pride ourselves on being able to offer something ‘Unique, Different and Interesting.’ We offer more than 350 whiskies and premium spirits from around the world with Scotch whisky at the heart, proudly representing our Scottish roots. Customers will also find French and Japanese whiskies, American whiskey, premium tequila and cognac. It goes without saying that we also provide a personal and express delivery service to local hotels, villas, concierges and yachts in the region.

Cannes was opened and is overseen by Imogen Choinet Bankier, who leads The Whisky Shop’s French operation. As the daughter of co-owner Ian Bankier, Imogen brings both a deep personal connection to the business and a clear, modern vision for its future.



Industry insider **THE LONG VIEW**

Interview Dr. Rachel Barrie



Few figures in Scotch whisky embody continuity quite like Dr Rachel Barrie. We spoke with her about her more than three decades in the industry; a career shaped by flavour, travel and patience.



Whiskeria

Could you maybe tell us a bit about your journey up to this point and how you got into whisky?

It's been a wonderful and very interesting journey. I started off with the Scotch Whisky Research Institute and was employed by the late, great Dr. Jim Swan, who was my mentor and guru. I studied chemistry so it was great to bring science together with my hobby and appreciation for whisky. That really set the scene for the next 31 years!

I was at the Scotch Whisky Research Institute for three years and then I got a job as Quality Lab Manager at Glenmorangie. I was there for three years then had my first son and when I came back, I went straight into product development. I was made Master Blender in 2003 which was a wonderful accolade and really opened the doors for me to advance.

I was at Glenmorangie until the beginning of 2011 and then I got a tap on the shoulder from Suntory and I worked as Master Blender there for six and a half years with Bowmore, Glen Garioch, Auchentoshan, and latterly Laphroaig and Ardmore.

Then I got another tap on the shoulder from Brown-Forman and felt like going home to Aberdeenshire – their three malts (The Glendronach, Benriach, and Glenglassaugh) are all in the northeast of Scotland where I was brought up. It's a very fitting final chapter in my career to work with three Brown-Forman distilleries close to home.

It's a really broad portfolio. How do you find managing three brands that all have similarities but also all have their own distinct elements?

It's fantastic because we've got distilleries in the ben with Benriach, our very elevated Speyside malt, the glen, deep in the Valley of Fergie with The Glendronach to the coast with Glenglassaugh. They're all very unique and in a very small area with only 30 to 40 miles between each distillery in a triangle in the northeast, and their characters could not be more different!

For me, variety is the spice of life. Working for three distilleries is a sweet spot because there's enough variety and you can bring out the best in each one, but it's not so many that you dilute your ability to nurture them to be the best they can be.

It's a wonderful opportunity because they're all different from sherry cask mastery with The Glendronach to the delicacy of Speyside with Benriach to the influence of the coast with Glenglassaugh.

In terms of your role and day to day managing, how is your time divided between the three? What would a typical week in the life of Rachel look like?

Oh, gosh, there's no typical day! Around 12 weeks of the year, I'm travelling the world, so for about 25% of my role, I'll be out and about.

The other 75% is a little bit more structured. Normally, I'll do sensory assessments and team meetings in the morning to set the scene for the day. I try and do as much nosing as possible early on. Then it's onto lots of meetings to do with strategy, wood, and supply chain.

The job of a Master Blender means you're almost at the centre of a spider's web. You're interacting with distillery and warehouse managers, ensuring the wood supply comes in, handling bottling strategy, and making sure that you can deliver on everything. I have conversations with people across many teams almost every day – even more so when there's a challenge with the supply chain!

Again, I'll speak to somebody from marketing every day to write copy or discuss innovation and brand positioning.

Then, I'll have meetings with the markets. There might be a private client in Singapore wanting to bottle a specific cask type and style that they're really into so then I might have to go and dive into that for a bit and find something that fits the bill.

On any one day I'm going to be interacting with people from the start to the end of the process, nosing, and deciding how best to use our whisky stocks and to create the expressions of the future.



Do you find that the 25% of your time spent travelling influences the other side of your role?

Oh, hugely. It adds richness to the multitudes that you pick up that inform flavour or inspire you. It could be a specific culture or particular aroma. The rich layers of travel are very inspirational for anyone and very enriching in your life so of course I bring that back to the distillery and what I make.

There's always something. I could be at a whisky show in Shanghai, meeting people who want to show you something interesting they're doing with a specific cask. You get the chance to meet competitors too which is always interesting. It's all part of the richness.

It's great. I find as I'm getting older, it's more and more fun because you do what you love. You want to help where you can in markets and share the love of whisky.

Moving back to the other 75%, when you're assessing a sample or thinking about a release, in terms of the first nose or the first sip, what does that process involve? How much of an impression can you get from meeting samples when they're young and how they're going to mature?

When it's during the maturation process, I've got a very simple scale of red / amber / green when I'm nosing casks and you can tell at each sniff if something's great or not quite ready and needing another six months. These decisions are mostly made during maturation based on aroma.

In terms of developing whiskies, obviously the first sip is critical for the consumer, so you have to put yourself in the consumer's mind. When they taste this, you want it to be harmonious and balanced.

Integration of flavour for me is the most important thing. If it's punching you about in your palate, I can tell at the first sip that it's no good. If a whisky has got viscosity, body, is harmonious, plays a symphony on your palate, and has a lovely finish, then you can tell that it's really good. In my opinion, you can tell at first sip because of the balance that you immediately perceive.

In the time you've spent working in the whisky industry, have you noticed any trends or changes that you find interesting?

When I started out, it was the 1990s so some malts had started to grow but there was very much a focus on blends. Over the past 30 years, there's definitely been a move to single malts, a real shift in consumer preference. There's more focus on quality. Drinking less but drinking better has been a more recent trend, too.

This means that you have to produce and strive for the best because consumers are becoming more discerning and are looking for quality, exclusivity, and storytelling.



It's not just about the nose and what you put in the glass.

Distilleries have been expanded, including The Glendronach (we're having new stills put in in May!), and innovation has increased.

There are also new consumers and new markets. Korea is doing extremely well. Every time I visit, it blows my mind how many millennials are buying 21- and 30-year-old single malt whisky. It's a really great example of a market that's really growing for single malt.

Finally, there's a focus on sustainability. When you really get into the distilleries, they're all looking to reduce carbon footprint and use renewable energy.

You touched on the renovations at The Glendronach. Can you tell us any more about that?

It's a really exciting time for The Glendronach. Being founded in 1826, 2026 is the 200th anniversary of The Glendronach. So not only have we got the distillery expansion, but we've also got Boynsmill House that goes back to 1771 which is being refurbished to be part of our visitor centre experience.

We'll have celebrations around the world, of course, as well as

people coming to visit the distillery once Boynsmill House is ready in the summertime. In addition to that, we're bottling two new expressions to celebrate our 200th anniversary so that's really exciting.

You're in conversation with the past, but you're laying down something that will probably outlast all of us, too. What's that interplay like for you?

It's really interesting because if you're a Master Blender or a Whisky Maker, you are working with the past, present, and future. We're very lucky at The Glendronach, for example, to have whisky in our warehouses that date right back to 1968. Depending on what the portfolio is, I have to constantly nurture the past. I need to check in on the casks and make sure they're fine and decide what they're going to become.

In terms of being a guardian of quality in the present, there are two main strands to that – ensuring that what's being distilled today is consistent and the character is there as well as making sure that each of the expressions in our portfolio ranges can deliver what the demand is.

For the future, I'm looking at the wood strategy that we're filling today for new make and what I'm going to rereack to create the new whiskies of tomorrow, as well as looking what space each distillery can move into to drive desire for people to try new expressions.

It'll be another blender that follows me who's going to be the guardian of the future so I'm doing my best for now for the people that will follow.

Could tell us more about Benriach and Glenglassaugh?

I'm very lucky because they're all very, very unique. Benriach is unique in that it's a 'ben' – for anyone who knows their whiskies, there are lots of 'glens' but very few 'bens'! Everything about Benriach is elevated – it's a north Speyside, it sits on some raised land, and it's renowned for being sweet and fruit forward. I always describe it as the delicacy of Speyside. It's been around since 1898, and it creates a spirit that's like Speyside in a glass. It's a creamy malt and it's got clarity and rhythm to it. It dances on the tongue.

For me, Speyside is all about being outdoors and being on the move whether it be cycling, running, or climbing. Benriach as a whisky

is like that – there's lots of different cask types, experimentation, different styles, but still in essence, the essence of Speyside.

Glenglassaugh, on the other hand, is right on the beach at Sandend Bay on the Banffshire coast. It's a beautiful location. I've not seen or heard of any other distillery that is quite as close to the surf of the sea than Glenglassaugh which kind of explains its character because it's so influenced by the sea and the minerality of the area. It's got the most mineral water on the mainland to make the whisky and it takes in that North Sea air.

We relaunched Glenglassaugh in 2023, and Glenglassaugh Sandend has been voted best whisky in the world by a number of places. It's doing really well and it really represents a coastal elixir if ever there was one. It's tropical, luscious, and with a salinity, that's quite unlike any other whisky, if not any other spirit that I've tried.

Would you say that Glenglassaugh has the most unique distillate out of your portfolio?

Glenglassaugh really stands out from the other 150 distilleries in Scotland because it is so distinctive. In the past, previous owners tried to change it because it wasn't very good for blending, because it was so distinctively different from others.

With the peat, which goes into our expression called Portsoy, it really takes the whisky into this umami zone

like no other. We've not really made a big thing about this, but I don't think I've ever experienced as much umami in a whisky as is in Portsoy. It really has that incredibly unctuous, chewy, savoury, almost like fermented soy character as well as the fruit and the smoke. It really is very special.

What do you think gives it its salinity?

Tropical fruit, when you taste it, has almost this perception of salinity on the palate. You get the acidity, but it also gives you that slight saltiness as well. I think there's a combination of the flavours that are created in the biochemistry of fermentation and the wooden washbacks being very close to the sea.

Again, the maturation, is more humid, too. Whether the sea salt is in there is debatable, but it undoubtedly increases the level of the breakdown products from the oak casks and malt that give you more of that fruit and salinity on the palate.

Across the portfolio, is there a favourite cask type that you're enjoying playing with at the moment?

With The Glendronach, the focus has been mostly on PX because it's the king of sherry and works so well with The Glendronach's robust character. I've introduced experiments with Amontillado and I think that's the one for The Glendronach that I've been wowed by. The combination of Oloroso, PX, and Amontillado is so sumptuous. I've loved being able to move The Glendronach into a wider sherry-sphere.

I also love Manzanilla for Glenglassaugh in particular, so that's one I've been filling more of. I think that's why Sandend is so good – the coastal sherry really brings out the essence of the North Sea.

I'm focusing on different oaks from around the world from mountain ranges for Benriach to see what we can do to elevate it.

They're probably my favourite at the moment but there are lots of experiments on the go!

◆ KNOWLEDGE BAR

Listen to our full interview with Dr. Rachel Barrie on the *W Club Decanted* podcast.



Distillery visit: Luss Distillery **THE STORIES BEHIND THE SPIRITS**

Words
Rachel Loughran

Photography
Clair Irwin



The day is frostbitten and bright, with clouds drifting over the peaks of the mountains. Arriving in the village of Luss, especially in winter, feels a little like going back in time.



Low, stone cottages, curls of smoke spiralling from chimneys, swans slowly slicing through the surface of the loch with their feathers fluffed against the cold. It could be a scene from a hundred years ago, except for the occasional car, parked close to a building, parked right where you'd expect a pavement, only there aren't any. Half an hour from Glasgow, but feeling like a world away, it's a beautiful, frozen little hamlet, privately owned by Clan Colquhoun, without the usual blight of second homes or holiday lets. It's here, on the iced-over banks of Loch Lomond, that Luss Distillery has opened its doors; a purpose built visitor centre for the entire extended family of the Loch Lomond Group.



“Half an hour from Glasgow, but feeling like a world away, Luss is a beautiful, frozen little hamlet.”



The first thing you need to know about Luss Distillery is that if you're looking for whisky, you'll find it here in spades. The second thing is that if you're looking for gin, you'll find it here in spades. Same goes, actually, for rum, vodka, rye and champagne. This isn't your usual distillery tour; with mash tun facts and barley anecdotes; instead it's an opportunity for adventure, stepping out of your comfort zone, and taking the chance to have a dozen first sips instead of just one or two.

We arrive at the compact but beautifully designed complex, masterminded by architect Alastair Fitchet in collaboration with interior design firm Hot Pickle. The building is clad in materials sympathetic to its surroundings; so sympathetic in fact it seems to have always belonged. Many of our number have visited this famous village before and the new distillery poses no jarring intrusion on the landscape. It's largely clad in reclaimed Douglas fir timber and Sho Sugi Ban charred nearby in Alexandria, which feels deliciously tactile under your fingers. The undulating grain of the timber, elevated by the charring, echoes the hills surrounding us, while the occasional strip of traditional brickwork is cohesive with the village itself. The whole place is suffused with a smoky, botanical scent.

The complex itself comprises four separate buildings set around a courtyard; a quirk of existing planning permission for the site, we're told. The first holds an exhibition space where anyone passing through can enjoy a self-guided tour, and a tasting room, which we will return to in due course. There's no ticket barrier to the exhibition space; it is intentionally free – an invitation rather than a threshold. It's a long, dark space filled with natural materials and lift-to-sniff vases of gin botanicals. The experience guides you through Ben Lomond Gin's eleven botanicals, from the essential juniper to the hand-foraged local rowan berries, by way of Scottish blackcurrants, Persian rose petals and Sichuan pepper. A few well-chosen facts do the work of a tour guide without ever becoming a lecture and a large video screen tells the story of the Beacon Mountain – Ben Lomond, for the uninitiated. It appears not as an abstract brand but as a place you can point to – the mountain sitting there at the end of the village like a backdrop they didn't have to build. There are nods to how the gin is made and why it tastes the way it does, but the emphasis is on flavour rather than process.



At the far end is the story of Loch Lomond Whisky, presented in the same spirit – respectful of tradition but not hemmed in by it. You get a sense of the scale and range behind the name, the breadth of styles under one group, the idea that Loch Lomond Whisky isn't a single note so much as a whole chord. And all of it is calibrated for the visitor who hasn't learned the language yet: you don't have to be an expert to understand what you're looking at, or to feel tempted by what comes next. There's even a glimpse of their in-house cooperage, a rarity in the whisky business these days. You leave this building, blinking in the sunlight, with the image of a fiery beacon atop Ben Lomond burned into your mind.

The captivating screen tells a story of wild nature and mountains on fire.





Six first sips
you can find in-store

◆ LOCH LOMOND WHISKY

Loch Lomond is a distiller that thrives on variety: multiple still types, a famously broad range of spirit styles and a house character that can move from fruit and honeyed sweetness to soft smoke. It's whisky made with respect for tradition but never trapped by it. A tasting flight here feels like travelling without leaving the room.

“Their approach works in a place like Luss because some visitors come knowing exactly what they want. Others are simply doing what you do on holiday: try the local, see what the place tastes like.”

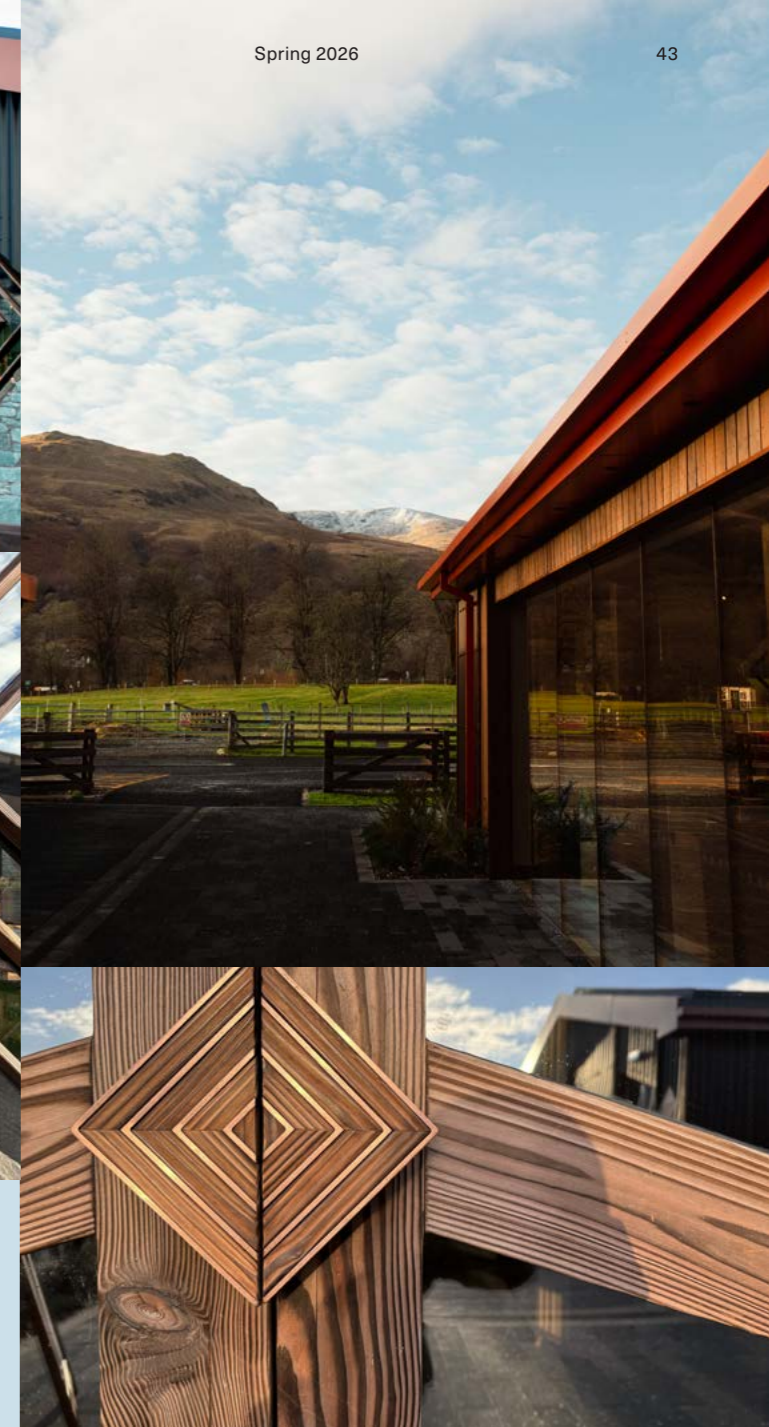
The second building, set at a right angle to the first, houses their Ben Lomond Gin distillery and bar. This is a beautiful space, the only one adapted from the existing structures on site (up until last year the site was home to a shuttered smokehouse, an old shed and a muddy field). The bar area has a magnificent glass atrium supported by beams salvaged from the Fergusons Chocolate Factory in Cathcart – a nice get for Luss Distillery, whose multi-spirit offering and ‘say-yes’ attitude gives the place a touch of Willy Wonka fizz, not least when you find out about the breadth of the experiences they’ve been dreaming up for guests to enjoy. Behind the bar, a large glass window frames their brand new gin distillery, a permanent home for the distillation of their Ben Lomond Gin.



Directly opposite the exhibition space is their cafe by Scoff & Patter, which serves breakfast, lunch, whisky, gin and champagne, as all the best eateries should. Concertina doors run the length of the café. In summer, this modest space will dissolve into the courtyard, tables multiplying, visitors frothing at the edges.

In the middle of the courtyard is a glass-lined gift box of a building containing the shop, where you can not only buy anything from Loch Lomond Group’s extensive family of products, but also a genuinely impressive range of merchandise – from tote bags to fleeces to key rings, coasters, pin badges and hip flasks, they truly have every member of the family covered, and it was clear from the other guests there that day that children are more than welcome on site.

For the whisky purists, there are bottles you can only buy here – a small rolling run of visitor-centre exclusives, the kind of thing that rewards the detour. From the gift shop’s three glass walls you can see undulating hillsides; towering trees, naked and stark; and highland cows, just in case you thought it couldn’t get any more picturesque.



It’s clear that Loch Lomond Group, with this Visitor Centre, aims to please. There’s a sincere desire to cater to all tastes and whims, which, if you look at their portfolio of products, has been the case for a long time. Their range includes thirteen brands, from single malts to champagne, and it’s hard to imagine a customer who couldn’t find something to savour. But it’s not just that which sets Luss Distillery apart – it’s the chance to have that first sip of a new favourite. It’s the underlying sense of adventure that suffuses the whole place. Their approach works so well in a place like Luss because some visitors come knowing exactly what they want. Others are simply doing what you do on holiday: try the local, see what the place tastes like.

Aly knows all the facts and spins a good yarn, too.



Here at Luss Distillery, they are moving quickly, learning in real time what works and what could work better. We're told about their ceaseless determination to fit into their surroundings, both aesthetically and just in terms of being a good neighbour. It's hard to believe that eighteen months ago this was, as Aly puts it, "a muddy paddock". The ground wasn't broken until January 2025. By mid-October, it was open: café, retail, distillery, tasting rooms – the lot. They invited local residents over for the first look at the site, and they run workshops like wreath making and mixology classes for locals as well as for the bigger tour groups that pass through. They even hosted a champagne tasting event with their Piaff brand to help locals pick their favourite festive fizz. Soon, they plan to launch their own spin on a Gin School – rather than teaching people to make gin in the technical sense, the plan is a blending session – exploring flavour in four directions, then building your own balance from their library of distillates. It's gin as composition, not chemistry.

Their say-yes philosophy seems to know no bounds; just last month they hosted a group of over 90 people as one leg of a multi-stop Luss extravaganza. They're also keen to talk about their commitment to being as ethical and environmentally friendly a spirits company (a notoriously energy-thirsty industry) as they can be. Aside from peak distilling periods, they say, this site is largely self-sufficient, with every square inch possible covered in solar panels, and they are keenly conscious of their place in the landscape – they even had to delay opening by a couple of days when the river burst its banks. You're never short of reminders, here, that nature sets the timetable.

We sat down with Tony and Aly, Luss Distillery's Brand Manager and Head of Marketing respectively, and had a chat about origins, philosophy, the locals and the beacon at the centre of it all; Ben Lomond. Loch Lomond Group have never had a Visitor Centre before – in all their varying brands and centuries of history, they've not had a good central location to showcase everything they can offer. Luss Distillery is the true distillation of all of their various distillations, then; the first time the Loch Lomond Group has been able to think about how people meet their spirits, not just how they're made. A smallish spirits company, with less than 200 employees across the group, they are an agile and entrepreneurial bunch. Aly tells us about the buzz of handing someone their first dram – something they usually only get to do at events like The Open. Luss, for them, is that feeling made permanent: 52 weeks a year instead of one. There's a lot of love for Luss in this place, and for the mountain and loch their flagship gin and whisky are named after, and Aly says something that stays with me: people come here for stories, not drinks. Or not just drinks, anyway.



The best of old and new: sitting comfortably beside aging stone and ageless nature.

◆ LITTLEMILL

A closed Lowland distillery with a cult following and a scarcity that makes every bottle feel like a recovered artefact. Often described as elegant and citrus-led, it's a reminder that Scottish whisky isn't only peat and stormy drama. Luss Distillery has some beautiful expressions from Littlemill available in their shop.



We were waiting all day for the weather to turn, but as we sat down to lunch at Scoff & Patter, it only became more beautiful. The food is deceptively simple, soup and sandwiches elevated to their highest form. After the pervading chilliness every time we stepped outside, it was welcomed wholeheartedly by our group, many of whom boldly requested takeout boxes so we didn't have to miss out on the remaining sandwiches. It was a really good lunch, is what I'm saying.

◆ BEN LOMOND GIN

Now distilled on site at Luss, Ben Lomond Gin takes its cue from the landscape around it. A classically structured London Dry, it's lifted by local rowan berries, blackcurrant and a hint of spice. A perfect sipper and makes a lovely cocktail.



After lunch we were taken on a tour around Luss itself. Our guide, Neil, walks us along what he affectionately and somewhat facetiously refers to as the 'main drag' of Luss, which has the unusual feature of having a mountain at the end of it. There's a loch in between, of course, but Ben Lomond looms, its flat top covered in a blanket of snow with teasing clouds that tickle its peaks. He tells us about how Ben Lomond got its name: Ben of course being Gaelic for mountain; and Lomond from the Celtic Lumon, meaning blaze, or beacon. Beacon Mountain. Centuries ago, he says, a huge fire was lit on the flat top of the mountain as a beacon and a meeting point for travellers. This is ancient traveller tech, of course, and true of many mountains, but there's something in the way they tell the story that makes it work here, something in the East meets West and land meets sky of it all. People come for the stories, not just the drinks, after all.

Neil tells us about the feudalistic history of the place and clashes of Clan Colquhoun and the MacGregors, which culminated in the eradication of the MacGregors from the area. Neil taps his Luss Distillery ID, which hangs from his neck, and we all notice his surname for the first time. It's a good punchline, as is when he tells us the laws banning MacGregors was never officially repealed so when he and his brothers get together in the area it's technically a criminal act.

We pass a gentleman in his garden who calls out a greeting; apparently a rite of passage for anyone who walks this street, including the near million tourists over the summer. This guy is as famous as Luss itself for his insatiable appetite for a chat, and indeed one of our

number is lost to us for a good ten minutes as we amble down to the banks (bonny, bonny).

Those million tourists a year are Luss's blessing and its curse. The Distillery opened less than six months ago at the time of writing, right at the village's fallow time of year. It was a sensible move, allowing them plenty of time for snagging, for preparation, finessing, and strengthening their ties with other local businesses before the summer onslaught arrives. Keen to ensure that Luss is not simply a midway point between destinations – a place to park your car and stretch your legs and have a coffee before you get back on the road – the distillery is working with other businesses to ensure dwell time in the village is extended. They want you to come here to come here. To park your car (in one of the car parks and emphatically not on the streets, which are for resident parking only) and properly spend some time. Luss Distillery works with these establishments on their bespoke experience packages, being one of many component parts like overnight stays at one of several local hotels, boat trips, and the Hot Tottie sauna.

We amble along the shore and through the trees that surround the sauna. Loch Lomond is one of those lochs with a lot of islands and frilly edges, and the sauna is on one of the frills, jutting out a little, bordered by one of the streams that feeds the loch. This is a particularly magical place, with tall, stark trees twisting above our heads and the gently lapping water forming constantly breaking sheets of ice at our feet. We climb a mossy staircase into Luss Old Parish churchyard, take note of the viking grave, and head back to the distillery. It's a beautiful walk, as lovely cloaked in frost as in the height of summer; perhaps more so.

We are led to their gin distillery building and settled beneath the wooden ribcage of the glass ceiling. It's time for a drink. Our guide Jonny takes us through the Ben Lomond gins they make here at Luss Distillery – right behind him, in fact, as the backdrop of the bar is a huge glass window that not only reflects the skylight above us, making it seem twice as big, but allows a full view of the brand new copper gin still; beautiful, shiny, reminding us as we sip of the craft that goes into these liquids. First we have their London Dry, which is crisp and lovely, with a smooth, fresh flavour that culminates in berry sweetness. As the notes of orange peel fade on our tongues, the London Dry is followed up by their three infusions, Raspberry & Elderflower, Blackberry & Gooseberry, and Blood Orange & Pink Grapefruit. These are no measly liqueurs: at 38% ABV they're only a hair less strong than the London Dry at 43% and each pack a punch that invokes spring, summer and autumn in turn. When they can, Jonny says, they find their botanicals close to home – foraging when possible, like the rowan berries and blackberry leaves they handpick from hedgerows in Luss.



◆ GLEN SCOTIA
Glen Scotia of Campbeltown is one of the oldest surviving distilleries in what was once the whisky capital of the world. Expect maritime character – coastal salinity, gentle smoke and a waxy, oily texture – with a history that runs deep in a town that still punches far above its size in whisky lore.

“There’s something in the way they tell it, something in the East meets West and land meets sky of it all. People come for the stories, not just the drinks, after all..”



Whiskeria

They're remarkably open with their globally sourced botanicals actually, with none of the pretence that sometimes haunts a Scottish distillery that everything is foraged, yes even the Sichuan pepper. No, Luss Distillery says, not everything can be found on their doorstep, but that's where their sense of adventure comes into play – for the other nine of their eleven botanicals, they must go further afield – though it must be confessed, it's much nicer to hear about their days of clambering up the local rowan trees to collect the bright red berries. Rowan trees are noted in Scottish mythology for their protective qualities, and their berries are tart and pungent in the dried form we are allowed to inhale in the bar – but toxic when fresh. We're finishing up their seasonal spring cocktail, a delicious, syrupy concoction that plays with their London Dry's aromatic and sweet character: grassy, tannic chamomile meets the soft grape sweetness of white port, balanced with rhubarb for subtle tartness. It's the perfect lead in to what happens next: as we sip the last of the cocktail, we're told that they've just bottled the first batch of gin to be made in situ at Luss. Would we like to try it?



A first sip we never expected: the debut on-site bottling of Ben Lomond Gin was poured just for us.

Their distiller Chloe tells us as she pours about the tweaks you need to make to a recipe when you're changing where it's made. The temperature of the water as it comes out of the tap. The way botanicals are stored. The moisture levels of the room. The microscopic detail that goes into it is clear, but so is the passion at the heart of this project. They all really love what they're making here at Luss, and it shows. Gin is not simple to make well, but it is a much faster expression than whisky, with a much smaller production and it makes sense why gin is the creative medium at play here in this conservation village.

After the magnificent first sip of this new era of Ben Lomond Gin, we are given a variety of whisky drams and shown to their whisky tasting room, where we sit in handcrafted wooden chairs, each one slightly different, as if the maker's fingerprints were meant to remain, and enjoy this final flourish of the day.

We begin with their *12 Year Old single malt*. With the words 'Perfectly Balanced' on the bottle, it's a confident way to start. This is said to be a perfect representation of their signature style, with peach, pear and vanilla layered beautifully, and a hint of smoke on the finish.

Our main course, as it were, is the *Loch Lomond 18 Year Old single malt*: powerful and surprisingly savoury, all leather, oak and cigars, with a toffee note. The finish is long and surprisingly soft: tea leaves and medicinal peatiness.

Dessert is *The Waypoint Series 'Falls of Falloch' 16 Year Old*; finished in Cognac casks and with all the dried fruit and caramel notes that Cognac brings to the party, without being overly sweet. Stewed apple, vanilla and honeysuckle fade into a lingering, oaky spice. It's delicious.

It's not hard to imagine this place in a few months time – teeming with life, as will be the whole of Luss. It is hard



to imagine that any of their guests – whether people booked in for bespoke experiences or people wandering through as part of a day trip to this beautiful piece of Scotland – will struggle to find something to love here. Luss is usually one of the first or one of the last stops for someone doing a tour, whisky based or otherwise, of Scotland. In offering the chance for many, many first sips, Luss Distillery have done that rare thing: they've made you want to go back for more.

◆ NOBLE REBEL

Possibly the world's greatest blended whisky? Noble Rebel is designed to be enjoyed without ceremony; a gateway dram for the curious, and a reminder that whisky doesn't have to be intimidating to be taken seriously.

◆ NEW YORK DISTILLING COMPANY'S RYE WHISKEY

This Rye brings Big Apple energy to a classic American style: bold spice, warmth and a dry, grain-driven snap that lends itself especially well to cocktails.

“We're told that they've just bottled the first batch of gin to be made in situ at Luss. Would we like to try it?”

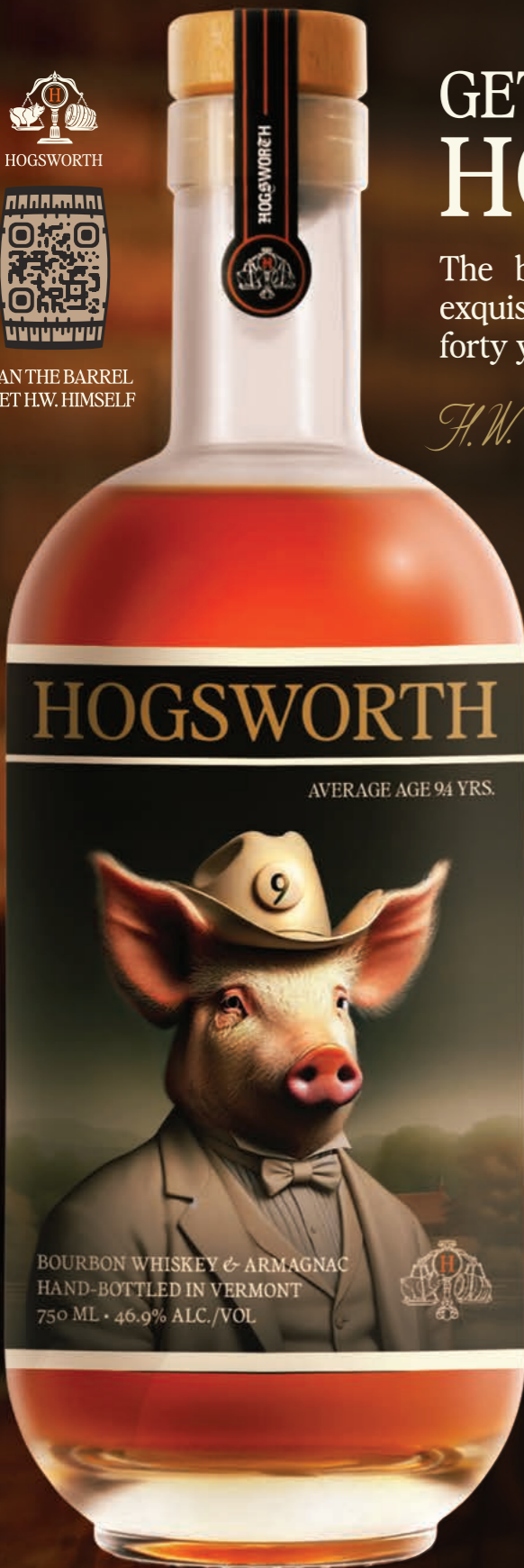




HOGSWORTH



SCAN THE BARREL
MEET HW. HIMSELF



GET YOUR HOGSWORTH

The best American bourbons blended with exquisite Armagnacs from France; some over forty years old. Older, richer, and more complex.

F.W.

BLEND 09 BATCH 01 94 YEAR AVERAGE AGE

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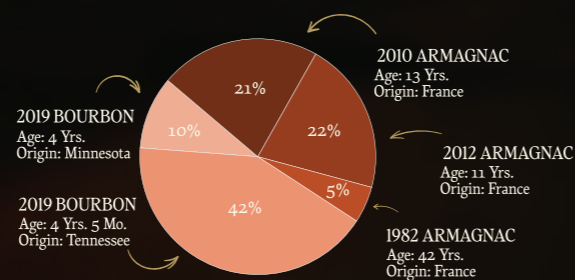
Honey, crème brûlée, baking spices, gingersnap.

PALATE

Chai, green apple, black pepper, orange zest.

FINISH

A firm business handshake, with oak spice, marmalade and vanilla bean.



52% Bourbon Whiskey, 48% Armagnac
Average age of 9.4 yRS.
93.8 proof • 46.9% alc./vol

—AVAILABLE NOW—
Get it at The Whisky Shop online or in store

PENDERYN
DISTILLERY

ICONS OF WALES
PENDERYN BAD WOLF



PENDERYN BAD WOLF Icons of Wales 13

10-year-old whisky fully matured in Tawny Port pipes

PENDERYN
DISTILLERY

Mixing it up **THE LOCH FYNE**

Photography
Susan Castillo

Mixology
Luke Crowley-Holland

Great spirits don't need overcomplicating. These four classic cocktails let the character speak for itself. Slip into spring with The Loch Fyne – there's a perfect first sip for every palate using their unbeatable range.



Honey Sour

Loch Fyne Highball

Loch Fyne Martini

Great Scot!





Honey Sour



Sweeten up your sour with this honeyed serve. The Loch Fyne Honey Liqueur is the star of the show here, bringing you a taste of sunshine right in time for Spring.

Glass

Rocks

Garnish

Lemon wheel

Ingredients

30ml *The Loch Fyne Blend*

30ml *The Loch Fyne Honey Liqueur*

25ml lemon juice

5ml sugar syrup

15ml egg white

Method

- 1 Shake all ingredients with ice
- 2 Strain back into shaker
- 3 Dry shake
- 4 Fine strain into ice-filled glass

Loch Fyne Highball



Who says Easter chocolate has to come in the form of an egg? Treat yourself The Loch Fyne Chocolate and Orange Liqueur this Easter instead - and try it in this exceptional highball!

Glass
Highball

Garnish
Orange slice

Ingredients

45ml *The Loch Fyne Whisky Blend*
25ml *The Loch Fyne Chocolate and Orange liqueur*
Soda water

Method

- 1 Pour *The Loch Fyne Whisky Blend* and *The Loch Fyne Chocolate and Orange Liqueur* into glass filled with ice
- 2 Top with soda water





Loch Fyne Martini



Even if whisky is normally the only language you speak, there's something undeniable about a gin martini. The Loch Fyne Gin lends itself perfectly to making the dreamiest springtime version.

Glass
Nick & Nora

Garnish
Lemon twist

Ingredients
50ml *The Loch Fyne Botanical Gin*
1 tsp dry vermouth

Method
1 Stir ingredients with ice
2 Fine strain into coupe

Great Scot!



A perfectly balanced cocktail which allows The Loch Fyne Blend to sing, complemented by soft notes of acacia honey. Best paired with a view of the setting sun.

Glass

Coupe

Garnish

Lemon twist

Ingredients

45ml *The Loch Fyne Blend*

12.5ml *The Loch Fyne Honey Liqueur*

20ml dry vermouth

7.5ml chilled water

Method

1 Stir all ingredients with ice

2 Fine strain into coupe

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THE DRAAM
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NEWS

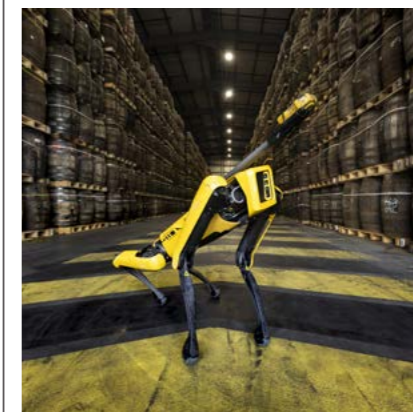


Jim Beam production ceased in 2026

Suntory Global Spirits has paused distillation at the main James B Beam distillery in Clermont, Kentucky, for 2026, following a review of production levels and consumer demand. Distillation continues at its Freddie Booker Noe and Booker Noe distilleries, while bottling, warehousing, and the James B Beam visitor centre remain fully operational. No layoffs have been announced, with discussions ongoing with unions. The move comes amid softer US whiskey demand, record levels of ageing bourbon stocks in Kentucky, rising barrel taxes, and continued pressure on American whiskey exports and sales.

Robotic dog for ethanol leaks

Bacardi is trialling advanced robotics to detect small but costly ethanol leaks in whisky warehouses. In a first for the Scotch whisky industry, a robot dog equipped with an ethanol-sensing kit developed by The National Manufacturing Institute Scotland, with support from the Scotch Whisky Research Institute, is being tested at the John Dewar & Sons maturation site near Glasgow. The trial explores how autonomous inspections could improve efficiency across whisky and other industries. Bacardi hopes the technology could eventually be deployed across its sites.



Aluminium bottle research

Stirling Distillery has partnered with Heriot-Watt University to explore whether whisky can be safely stored in aluminium bottles as a more sustainable alternative to glass. Working with the university's brewing, distilling and chemical sciences experts, the project examines chemical, sensory and safety impacts of aluminium storage. Early tests found some chemical interaction with matured whisky, though no detectable flavour differences in tastings. Researchers are now exploring protective liners to prevent reactions. Stirling Distillery hopes the work will support lower-carbon packaging options ahead of its first whisky release in 2027.



A SIP FOR EVERY MOOD



Six Nations

Non Age Statement

Springtime Sippers

Six Nations

Bushmills 2000 Ruby Port Cask The Causeway Collection

70cl 54.1% ABV £260
Plum / Toffee / Raspberry

This dram has enjoyed a hefty 20-year-long slumber in Portuguese first fill ruby port wine casks.

After undergoing a classic triple distillation in November 2000, it was bottled in 2021 at a cask strength of 54.1% ABV.

Part of The Causeway Collection, a celebration of Bushmills' rarest and most special casks.



Penderyn Sherrywood

70cl 46% ABV £58
Toffee / Dried fruits / Hazelnut

Part of Penderyn's Gold Collection.

Matured in ex-bourbon barrels before a finish in sherry casks.

A multi-award winning expression!



Deanston 18 Year Old

70cl 46.3% ABV £89
Honey / Oak / Tobacco

Matured in hogshead casks and finished in first fill Kentucky bourbon casks.

Hailing from Deanston distillery on the banks of the River Teith.

Boasting the distillery's signature waxy character with notes of oak and honey.



Take your Six Nations watching that step further this year by filling up your drinks cabinet with these national treasures!

Malfy Con Limone Gin

70cl 41% ABV £31
Amalfi lemon / Orange / Grapefruit peel

A zingy citrus taste of the good life in Italy!

Distilled with some of the finest fruits and botanicals including juniper, Amalfi lemons, coriander, and more!

Works perfectly in a refreshing G&T or a spritz!



Alfred Giraud Heritage

70cl 45.9% ABV £162
Brioche / Vanilla / Baking spices

This luxurious expression blends together three unpeated French malt whiskies.

These malts have been matured in different casks: old cognac, new French oak casks, and new American oak casks.

The blend is aged exclusively in barrels that previously contained very old cognacs.



The Lakes Single Malt Signature

70cl 47% ABV £74
Pecans / Raisins / Polished oak

A whisky that encapsulates over a decade of flavour exploration and craftsmanship!

The first permanent style of sherry-led single malt from The Lakes.

Matured in a selection of European and American oak Oloroso and Pedro Ximénez sherry casks.



Non Age Statement

The Hearach Isle of Harris

70cl 46% ABV £73
Peat smoke, toasted malt, vanilla

A historic whisky inspired by the distillery's home on the small Outer-Hebridean island.

Every drop has been made by local people to revive the distilling culture that was lost in the 1840s.

The first legal dram from Harris!

◆



W The Whisky Shop
Exclusive

Fettercairn The Journey

70cl 47.9% ABV £99
Toasted pineapple, café au lait, burnt sugar

An incredible bottling exclusive to The Whisky Shop!

A rare and thoughtful single malt crafted in partnership with our own W Club members.

Finished in dark stout barrels for around a year.

◆



Lochlea Our Barley

75cl 46% ABV £49
Boiled sweets, pear, macadamia nuts

Lochlea's first core single malt expression!

Matured in a combination of bourbon, Oloroso sherry, and STR casks.

A complex and classy dram.

◆



Age is but a number –
and sometimes, a secret!

anCnoc Peated Sherry Cask

70cl 40% ABV £50
Vanilla, cinder toffee smoke, toasted wood

A delicious dram from Knockdhu Distillery.

An incredible marriage of peated whisky with ex-sherry cask maturation.

The perfect balance of sweet and smoky!

◆



Fuji Single Malt

70cl 46% ABV £84
Darjeeling tea, pears, apple

Distilled and matured at the foot of Mount Fuji.

Made with aquifer water containing 50 years of snowmelt.

Aged in a combination of American white oak, bourbon, and beer casks.

◆



SPEY Chairman's Choice PX Sherry Cask

70cl 40% ABV £58
Sultanas, treacle toffee, oak

Matured in a combination of bourbon barrels and Pedro Ximénez sherry casks.

Traditionally selected by the distillery's chairman.

A luxuriously rich and elegantly fruity dram, perfect for any time of year.

◆



Springtime Sippers

The Macallan 12 Year Old 110 Proof

70cl 55% ABV £125
Plum jam, cocoa, oak spice

One of The Whisky Shop's most prestigious exclusives.

Matured predominantly in European sherry oak casks with just a hint of influence from American sherry-seasoned oak.

The higher abv showcases The Macallan's bolder edge, offering a richer and more intense experience than their classic 12 Year Old Sherry Oak.

◆



CRN57 18 Year Old

70cl 43% ABV £79
Raisins, banana, mint

An exciting first look at the outputs from Gordon & MacPhail's new Highland distillery.

A beautifully blended malt that truly captures the spirit of the Cairngorms.

Sweet and refreshing - the ideal springtime spirit!

◆



Loch Fyne Fynest Ledaig 27 Year Old

70cl 64.1% ABV £225
Dried fruit, smoked tea, liquorice

A limited release from the Loch Fyne brand with only 848 bottles available.

Bottled at a powerful 64.1% abv, this expression packs a mighty punch.

Matured solely in a refill sherry cask.

◆



Celebrate the first glimpse of warm sunshine with one of these fantastic bottles, specially selected as our stars of the season.

Highland Park 15 Year Old

70cl 44% ABV £80
Citrus, vanilla, heather smoke

A fine-tuned symphony of contrasting flavours.

Matured in a combination of first fill sherry-seasoned American oak and European oak casks.

In our opinion, this is liquid gold!

◆



Glenrothes 15 Year Old

70cl 43% ABV £100
Candied orange peel, dark brown sugar, baking spices

Part of The Glenrothes' exceptional core range.

Boasting a many-layered flavour profile, creating a dram that can be savoured all year round.

A whisky that showcases the very best of Speyside.

◆



The Loch Fyne Honey Liqueur

50cl 40% ABV £39
Acacia honey, clovers, honeysuckle

The latest edition to Loch Fyne Whiskies core range.

Treat your tastebuds to the smooth sweetness of this honied spirit merged with the Loch Fyne Blend.

At 40% abv, this expression makes the perfect base for springtime cocktails.

◆



Love Whisky

The Glendronach Ode to the Dark

70cl 50.8% ABV £85
Maraschino cherries, chocolate, mocha

A deep amber liquid glowing with hidden depths, like candlelight through a window on a dark evening.

Part of the distillery's The Master's Anthology series.

Matured in Pedro Ximenez sherry casks.



Loch Lomond 16 Year Old Waypoint Series Falls of Falloch

70cl 46.2% ABV £90
Honey blossom, oak, lemon

The first release in Loch Lomond's Waypoint series, which pays tribute to beauty spots nearby to the distillery.

Matured in three kinds of bourbon casks for 15 years before a 12-month finish in Cognac barrels.

This whisky captures exploration and depth in every drop.



W The Whisky Shop Exclusive

Laphroaig 2013 12 Year Old Madeira Single Cask #1328

70cl 51.6% ABV £199
Pipe tobacco, bonfire smoke, baked apple

A dedicated Laphroaig bottling created exclusively for The Whisky Shop!

Crafted with our customers firmly in mind.

Fully matured in a Madeira hogshead cask with just 318 bottles filled at a robust 51.6% ABV.



Whiskies The Whisky Shop team having been falling in love with this springtime.

Glen Scotia 12 Year Old

70cl 46% ABV £45
Vanilla, caramelised sugar, oak

A distinguished single malt that embodies the maritime character of Campbeltown.

Matured in first-fill bourbon casks.

This expression stands as a proud tribute to Glen Scotia's heritage and the enduring spirit of one of Scotland's most historic whisky regions.



Blue Spot

70cl 58.4% ABV £91
Banana, toasted oak, pineapple

The single pot still Irish whiskey is crafted at Midleton distillery.

Made using a combination of bourbon, sherry, and Madeira casks.

Matured for at least seven years and bottled at a natural cask strength of 59.1% ABV.



Isle of Raasay Dun Cana Sherry Cask

70cl 52% ABV £85
Sultanas, pepper, wood smoke

Made with peated and unpeated spirit.

Initially matured in American rye casks, before a second maturation in Pedro Ximenez and Oloroso sherry quarter casks.

An exceptional Hebridean dram!



THE WHISKY SHOP

CUSTOMER FAVOURITES

Our customers have great taste! Let them guide you to your next favourite dram.



Light & Floral

Rich & Sweet

Smoky

International



① **Loch Lomond 16 Year Old**

70cl 46.2% VOL £90
Honey blossom, citrus, stewed apple

This release is the first in Loch Lomond's Waypoint Series, which pays tribute to beauty spots near the distillery. Matured in three kinds of bourbon casks for 15 years before being finished for 12 months in Cognac barrels, this whisky captures exploration and depth in every drop.



Lee



Trentham

"The Loch Lomond I know and love is full of fruity flavours, especially that unique peachy note of theirs. This being finished in Cognac casks adds much more fruit to their usual taste along with a subtle smokiness in the background, one of my favourite whiskies of the last 12 months for sure."



② **Balblair 15 Year Old**

70cl 46% VOL £80
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.



③ **Glengoyne 12 Year Old**

70cl 43% VOL £49
Honey, ginger, lemon zest

A real smooth sipper from Glengoyne distillery. Matured in hand-selected sherry casks crafted from European and American oak, this multi-award-winning expression is sure to keep you coming back for more.

④ **Balblair 12 Year Old**

70cl 46% VOL £56
Sultanas, honey, apple

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



⑤ **Bunnahabhain 12 Year Old**

70cl 46.3% VOL £49.50
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.



⑥ **Fettercairn 16 Year Old**

70cl 46.4% VOL £87
Honey, giner cake, Turkish delight

Previously a limited annual release, Fettercairn 16 Year Old now shines as a new addition to the distillery's core range. Finished in ex-bourbon casks, this is a gorgeous showcase of the classic Fettercairn house style.



CUSTOMER FAVOURITES
Light & Floral

⑦ **Glenglassaugh 12 Year Old**

70cl 45% VOL £57
Morello cherry, toasted vanilla, whipped cream

Glenglassaugh is a whisky shaped by land and sea - the still house doors of Glenglassaugh distillery are purposefully left open to invite nature in. This expression introduces ripe fruit flavour to their coastal spirit, bringing elemental balance.

⑧ **Fettercairn 12 Year Old**

70cl 46.4% VOL £53
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.





① **Benromach 10 Year Old**

70cl 43% VOL £49.50
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.



Ashley



Manchester

"A wonderfully complex dram. Red fruits and oranges surround the gentle smoulder of a campfire the morning after. Sweet, smoky, oily, and slightly bitter. An unusual and unique Speyside whisky, definitely one to try if you would like to see Speyside step outside of its comfort zone!"

anCnoc 12 Year Old

70cl 40% VOL £43.50
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 spirit shelf.



Arran 10 Year Old

70cl 46% VOL £49.50
Apple, banana, 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 of Arran.



The Dalmore 15 Year Old

70cl 40% VOL £111
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.



CUSTOMER FAVOURITES
Rich & Sweet



Benriach The Twelve

70cl 46% VOL £49.50
Honey, maraschino cherries, cocoa

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

Tomatin 14 Year Old

70cl 46% VOL £69.50
Toffee, red berries, oak

A sweet and sumptuous 14-year-old expression which has spent its maturation period in bourbon barrels before being transferred into tawny port casks to finish. The result is a delectable and surprisingly gentle dram.



The Dalmore 12 Year Old

70cl 40% VOL £72
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.



① The Glendronach 15 Year Old

70cl 46% VOL £88
Maraschino cherry, angelica, walnut liqueur

This decadent expression is aged in exceptional Pedro Ximénez and Oloroso sherry casks from Andalucía. This much-loved classic develops its character in the quiet of Glendronach's dunnage warehouses.



Cathie



Oban

"An outstanding, intricate combination of Pedro Ximénez and Oloroso sherry casks that compliment one another: fruitiness and depth opposite drier, nuttier flavours. Yin and yang that merge with each other perfectly. The colour of burnished copper, expect the aroma of orange and nuts that lead into a heavenly palate of honeyed berries glossing over your tongue with a long-lasting brown sugar and nutty dark chocolate finish. Indulge yourself!"

Glenfiddich 18 Year Old

70cl 40% VOL £99
Sultanas, oak, vanilla

This expression of the world's best-selling single malt has been matured in a mix of ex-sherry casks and former bourbon barrels, which gives it a greater complexity than its younger siblings.



Jura 16 Year Old

70cl 46.5% VOL £70
Dried citrus, toasted walnuts, stone fruits

The first in a new series from Jura, Perspectives No.1 has been aged for 16 years in a combination of bourbon and Oloroso sherry casks.



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.

CUSTOMER FAVOURITES
Rich & Sweet



Old Pulteney 15 Year Old

70cl 46% VOL £83
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.



Glen Scotia Double Cask Rum Finish

70cl 46% VOL £53
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.





Ardnahoe Bholsa

70cl 50% VOL £62
Walnuts, raisins, plums

Ardnahoe is named for Loch Ardnaheo - the loch from which the distillery draws the water for its whisky making process from. The water is exceptionally soft, having been filtered through peat and rock for thousands of years. This gorgeous whisky is predominantly matured in Oloroso sherry casks and delivers a full-bodied, memorable flavour profile.

1 Torabhaig Allt Gleann Legacy

70cl 46% VOL £64
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.



Kris  Leeds

"Instant intensity of citrus laced brine and lingering vanilla and smoky notes open this fabulous dram from Torabhaig, quickly establishing themselves as one to watch over the next few years. The palate showcases beautifully balanced flavours of sweet white chocolate, dulce de leche sauce, and lingering ashy smoke. This whisky transports you to a beach bonfire on a summer's evening on the rugged Isle of Skye. Intense, balanced, ruggedly beautiful."



3 Glenturret 10 Year Old Peat Smoked

70cl 50% VOL £69
Citrus, smoke, sea salt

This exceptional single malt has been crafted in the same stills that the distillery's unpeated spirit runs through. Sweet and smoky, this is a simply delightful expression from an exemplary Highland distillery.

Laphroaig 10 Year Old Sherry

70cl 48% VOL £62
Smoky bacon, wood polish, fresh pine

Wonderful peaty fare with a sherried twist. Sweet and smoky drams don't get much better than this. Laphroaig's exceptionally well-balanced fare is an expression that is bound to keep you coming back for more.

CUSTOMER FAVOURITES
Smoky



① **Filey Bay Single Malt**

70cl 46% VOL £62
citrus, vanilla, honey

Made by the Spirit of Yorkshire distillery, this single malt is the culmination of their bourbon-matured style. An approachable whisky crafted using 100% homegrown barley.



Tyler



Waverley Market

"This tastes just like sitting under a thatched roof in Yorkshire with a Solero in hand. Lashings of juicy oranges and tropical fruits; clean, dry hay, and soft, creamy malt."

Hatozaki 12 Year Old Umeshu Cask Finish

70cl 46% VOL £84
Apricot, pear, plum

A striking twelve-year-old pure malt whisky from Kaikyo Distillery. Created by combining various small batch single malts, the expression was matured in American oak casks before enjoying a six-month finish in Umeshu casks.



②

Bushmills 16 Year Old

70cl 40% VOL £93
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.



The Irishman Single Malt

70cl 43% VOL £56
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

CUSTOMER FAVOURITES
International

Widow Jane 10 Year Old Bourbon

70cl 45.5% VOL £89
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 five barrel batch, meaning that no two bottles of this fabulous expression will be exactly the same.



④

Hakushu Distiller's Reserve

70cl 43% VOL £70
Vanilla, Christmas pudding, fudge

From Suntory's mountain distillery, nestled deep in the forests of Mt. Kaikomagatake, Hakushu is a famously green and fresh whisky, renowned globally for its crisp and refreshing flavour profile.



⑥

A RICH WORLD OF FLAVOUR

PRAKAAN Distillery Manager Yuthapong Pakam introduces Thailand's first single malt whisky with their inaugural release, The Tribura Series.

What inspired the creation of PRAKAAN, Thailand's original single malt whisky?

Until now, Thailand has typically been renowned for its beaches and culinary scene but with the launch of PRAKAAN, we are looking to reshape Thailand's global identity. Our mission is to showcase Thai craftsmanship and make a significant mark on the global whisky stage, proving that Thailand is serious about setting new standards of quality in the Asian and New World Whisky categories.

By leveraging our deep understanding of PRAKAAN's home in Kamphaeng Phet, we have crafted a single malt that captures the vibrant, eclectic spirit of Thailand in every golden drop. More than just a whisky, PRAKAAN is an invitation to discover a story where Thai heritage, tradition and adventure unite.

How does the climate and natural environment of Thailand influence the flavour profile of PRAKAAN?

PRAKAAN's home is set deep within the heart of a UNESCO World Heritage site, against the majestic backdrop of the Kamphaeng Phet region. Historic national parks, preserved conservation lands and lush rainforests breathe life into PRAKAAN, gifting an abundance of natural resources – including pristine clear water from a local spring – to create an inviting whisky that mirrors the warmth of Thai culture.

Each meticulously selected cask is matured within the hot, humid embrace of Thailand's tropical climate. The result is a whisky of unique depth and character, with a flavour profile that features tropical sweetness, gentle spice and aromatic notes – a true tribute to Thailand's vibrant terroir.

Can you walk us through the production process at Prakaan Distillery and highlight what makes it unique compared to traditional Scotch or Japanese methods?

As Thailand's original single malt whisky, PRAKAAN is born through a unique production process. Every detail carefully crafted, our dedicated team marry traditional whisky-making techniques with Thai ingenuity.

PRAKAAN's production process begins deep beneath the earth where local, crystal-clear water is drawn before carefully selected malted barley is milled and transformed, its essence coaxed out through fermentation in gleaming stainless steel. The spirit is twice distilled in copper pot stills imported from Scotland before embarking on a patient journey in innovative underground warehouses, maturing within both American ex-bourbon and Spanish ex-sherry casks under the watchful eye of PRAKAAN's makers. The result is a single malt whisky that embodies a rare equilibrium – vibrant, complex and unmistakably Thai.

What has been the biggest challenge in creating the world's first single malt whisky from Thailand?

When we set out to create PRAKAAN, mastering maturation within Thailand's tropical, humid climate whilst preserving the whisky's depth and complexity was the biggest challenge we faced.

Traditionally, single malt whisky relies on a balance of three key cask interactions: extraction (driven by heat), oxidation (during cooler periods) and absorption (from charring or toasting). In Thailand, fluctuating temperatures and humidity swings disrupt this balance. Instead of the slow, steady process seen in other whisky making countries, maturation accelerates dramatically, resulting in excessive angel's share.

We overcome this by maturing PRAKAAN in innovative subterranean warehouses which ensure more stable temperatures and a manageable average angel's share per year whilst creating a completely unique flavour profile.

The Tribura Series consists of Select Cask, Peated Malt, and Double Cask. Which expression best defines PRAKAAN's house style?

Select Cask is the truest representation of PRAKAAN's signature style. Crowned Category Winner at the World Whiskies Awards in both 2025 and 2026, this single malt perfectly showcases the soft, sweet, tropical notes that make PRAKAAN so unique.

Matured in American oak ex-bourbon casks, this perfectly balanced, smooth whisky is bursting with notes of tropical fruit and zesty citrus, layered with honeyed sweetness and creamy vanilla. The palate reveals caramelised pineapple, chewy toffee, warm spice and candied lemon peel, culminating in a long, lingering finish that embodies Thai character and craftsmanship.



Expert tasting FUJI 50TH ANNIVERSARY EDITIONS

Words Charlie MacLean

Distilled and matured at the foot of Mount Fuji (which is depicted on the labels), these single Japanese whiskies from Fuji Gotemba distillery have been made with aquifer water containing fifty years of snowmelt. The distillery is the third largest in Japan and is owned by the Kirin Brewery Company, which itself was founded in 1888 by two Scots, Thomas Blake Glover and William Copeland.

The distillery was founded in 1975 by Kirin in partnership with the Seagram Corporation of Canada and this is reflected in its lay-out which integrates Kirin's brewing technology was much influenced by other Seagram sites, such as Gimli grain distillery in Canada and Strathisla Distillery in Scotland. It is capable of producing four distinct types of whisky – three styles of grain, referred to as Bourbon-style, Canadian-style and Scotch-style, and a Scotch-style malt. Accordingly, it is capable of producing its own 'single blend'.

The company describes its house style as *"Pure & Mellow,"* referring to their whiskies purity of flavour, depth of character and smoothness. Although these commemorative single whiskies do not carry age statements, I have it on good authority that they contain judiciously selected malt and grain whiskies dating from the 1970s and running up to the 2010s, matured in a diverse range of casks, including American white oak ex-bourbon, ex-beer casks, Mizunara, Spanish oak Oloroso, and French oak wine casks. The whiskies have been bottled without chill-filtration and at natural strength. My overall comment is *"very well made."*

Master Blender Jota Tanaka remarked to my colleague, Dave Broom: *"After 50 years the past decade has seen the most evolution in whisky-making... Over the past five years we have invested over \$60 million in distillery operations, including new equipment to diversify the malt flavour profile, and a state-of-the-art aging warehouse to increase our capacity."*



Blended Whisky

70cl

51% ABV

£500

NAS Japanese blended whisky

◆ TASTING NOTE

Deep amber with moderate beading. A mild nose, lightly peppery. Savoury top-notes (desiccated coconut, Virginia tobacco) backed by toasted marshmallow. Medium bodied; the sweetest of the three, but with chilli in the finish/aftertaste until calmed by a drop of water. Easy drinking.

"Medium bodied; the sweetest of the three, but with chilli in the finish/aftertaste calmed by a drop of water."



Single Malt

70cl

52.5% ABV

£500

NAS Japanese single malt whisky

"Mouth-filling and creamy texture; a sweet taste well balanced by light acidity and a spicy finish."

◆ TASTING NOTE

Deep amber with excellent beading; considerable prickle at full strength. The top notes are fruity (pineapple, citrus), backed by Darjeeling tea. A drop of water adds a floral note. Mouth-filling and creamy texture; a sweet taste well balanced by light acidity and a spicy finish. Complex.



Single Grain

70cl

52.5% ABV

£500

NAS Japanese single grain whisky

◆ TASTING NOTE

Deep amber with moderate beading. A mild nose, initially closed. Faintly floral (honeysuckle, lily of the valley?) and faintly fruity (apricot, melon?). A light texture and a sweet taste, with abundant coconut and a short finish. Elegant.

"A light texture and a sweet taste, with abundant coconut and a short finish."

Neat takes YOUNG BLOOD

Words Katie Puckrik

Katie Puckrik takes us on a speed run through some of the best expressions from new age distilleries. Who says whiskies have to be old to be great?

Torabhaig Sound of Sleat Legacy Series Chapter 4

Fill your lungs with this blast of fresh air: fresh seaweed, fresh kicks, fresh tar. Then sip it neat. It's the Industrial Revolution in your mouth, a smoky inferno that shifts the landscape from mere tongue and teeth to full-blown phenolic freak-out. The next sip with a drop of water reveals the cinnamon sweetness of candied red hots. The slope-off of this single malt is salty and woody, so mild that you wonder if all that earlier smoke was real. Sip again. Oh, it's real, alright.

70c1	46% ABV
NAS	Single malt
£67	Island



Nc'nean Organic Quiet Rebels: Simon

I *actually* LOL'd when I poured a slug of this golden amber organic single malt Scotch and smelled the virtual *pain au chocolat* singing out from the snifter. How did this "small team of eco-conscious drinks fanatics" fit that choccy bun into my nose? The velvety taste hovers on the intersection of jammy cherry, dark chocolate, and the roastiness imparted by stout finishing casks. The stout route continues with the malt loaf sign-off.

70c1	48.5% ABV
NAS	Single malt
£80	Highland



Inchdairnie Ryelaw Vintage 2018

This one's a devil-may-care mashup of rye, bourbon, and single malt Scotch. There's buttery suede on the nose, which leads to a mule-kick surprise when suede turns to sandpaper on the tongue. This is due to rye's lively pepper ping-pong effect, accompanied here by murmur of vanilla. Vintage 2018 is a veritable Wicker Man of oak from top to bottom, softened by a slender spine of toffee.

70c1	46.3% ABV
6 Year Old	Single malt
£85	Lowland



Ardnahoe Bholsa

Stern birch tar is the whiff on the wind at first pour. Further enquiring sniffs tease out a phantom walnut, its buttery bitterness keeping defences up. A few drops of water unlock the expansiveness behind the ashiness, revealing a marine dankness sloshing beneath a reduction of caramelised raisin. Peat and pepper reassert themselves on the fade-out.

70c1	50% ABV
NAS	Single malt
£62	Islay



Glasgow 1770 Peated

An exploratory sniff draws forth a perfume of fresh tobacco and almost-flowers. Its rich treacly sweetness is already a tip-off that this NAS number has been finished in PX sherry casks. Once the tongue gets in on the act, there's more: a playful pepperiness wafting through caramel and gentle cigar smoke peat. The earthy sherry finish is light, but persistent.

70c1	46% ABV
NAS	Single malt
£52	Lowland



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TOMATIN

HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT

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Please drink responsibly.

1897



ESTD