WHISKY STORIES

AND A LITTLE BIT MORE

2019
A TALE OF WHISKY
FIRST EDITION

'Experiences for people who collect memories, not stuff.'

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CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS WHISKY

WHAT IS WHISKEY

Whisky or whiskey is a type of distilled alcoholic beverage made from fermented grain mash. Various grains which may be malted are used for different varieties, including barley, corn maize, rye, and wheat. Whisky is typically aged in wooden casks, generally made of charred white oak.

Whisky is a strictly regulated spirit worldwide with many classes and types. The typical unifying characteristics of the different classes and types are the fermentation of grains, distillation, and aging in wooden barrels.

In history, it is possible that distillation was practised by the Babylonians in Mesopotamia in the 2nd millennium BC, with perfumes and aromatics being distilled, but this is subject to uncertain and disputed interpretations of evidence. The earliest certain chemical distillations were by Greeks in Alexandria in the 1st century AD but these were not distillations of alcohol. The medieval Arabs adopted the distillation technique of the Alexandrian Greeks, and written records in Arabic begin in the 9th century, but again these were not distillations of alcohol. Distilling technology passed from the medieval Arabs to the medieval Latins, with the earliest records in Latin in the early 12th century. The earliest records of the distillation of alcohol are in Italy in the 13th century, where alcohol was distilled from wine. An early description of the technique was given by Ramon Llull (1232 – 1315). Its use spread through medieval monasteries, largely for medicinal purposes, such as the treatment of colic and smallpox.

The art of distillation spread to Ireland and Scotland no later than the 15th century, as did the common European practice of distilling "aqua vitae" or spirit alcohol primarily for medicinal purposes. The practice of medicinal distillation eventually passed from a monastic setting to the secular via professional medical practitioners of the time, The Guild of Barber Surgeons. The earliest Irish mention of whisky comes from the seventeenth-century Annals of Clonmacnoise, which attributes the death of a chieftain in 1405 to "taking a surfeit of aqua vitae" at Christmas. In Scotland, the first evidence of whisky production comes from an entry in the Exchequer Rolls for 1494 where malt is

sent "To Friar John Cor, by order of the king, to make aquavitae", enough to make about 500 bottles.

James IV of Scotland (r. 1488–1513) reportedly had a great liking for Scotch whisky, and in 1506 the town of Dundee purchased a large amount of whisky from the Guild of Barber Surgeons, which held the monopoly on production at the time. Between 1536 and 1541, King Henry VIII of England dissolved the monasteries, sending their monks out into the general public.

Whisky production moved out of a monastic setting and into personal homes and farms as newly independent monks needed to find a way to earn money for themselves.
The distillation process was still in its infancy; whisky itself was not allowed to age, and as a result tasted very raw and brutal compared to today's versions. Renaissance-era whisky was also very potent and not diluted. Over time whisky evolved into a much smoother drink. With a license to distil Irish whiskey from 1608, the Old Bushmills Distillery in Northern Ireland is the oldest licensed whiskey distillery in the world.

In 1707, the Acts of Union merged England and Scotland, and thereafter taxes on it rose dramatically. A man pours some whisky into a flask in this 1869 oil painting by Scottish artist Erskine Nicol.

After the English Malt Tax of 1725, most of Scotland's distillation was either shut down or forced underground. Scotch whisky was hidden under altars, in coffins, and in any available space to avoid the governmental excisemen or revenuers. Scottish distillers, operating out of homemade stills, took to distilling whisky at night when the darkness hid the smoke from the stills. For this reason, the drink became known as moonshine. At one point, it was estimated that over half of Scotland's whisky output was illegal.

CHAPTER 2

SPEYSIDE

SPEYSIDE

Speysides are famous for their elegance and complexity. They have little peaty character (although some have a whiff of smoke) and can be highly perfumed: scents of carnations, roses and violets.

GLENLIVET 11 YEARS OLD 2007 SIGNATORY 46% £14.50
The unchill filtered collection reveals few hidden gems, cask N 900273 (part of a long series of sister casks, all first fill, European oak, Oloroso sherry). Insanely heavy dry sherry, incense and dried fruit, very close to "Rancio" even at its young age. Definitely not the usual Glenlivet!

STRATHISLA 12 YEARS OLD 40% £10.50
The Main malt that goes into Chivas, bought by the Chivas brothers back in 1949, since then also the "House of Chivas", fruity and peppery.

TOMINTOUL 10 YEARS OLD 40% £9.50
Stated as "The Gentle Dram", light, fruity, barley sugar, toffee and a lingering spicy in the back. Recommended to everyone as introduction to Scotch Whisky.

TOMINTOUL 12 YEARS OLD 40% £12
Similar to the above, but spending a final part of the maturation in Oloroso Sherry cask.
Very similar to Balvenie 12 years old, more mild due to the lack of peat.

GLENTAUCHERS 8 YEARS OLD, CARN MOR 2010 46% £13.50
Single cask, picked by Càrn Mòr for the "Strictly Limited Edition", 890 bottles for a single Sherry Puncheon. A mild and gentle introduction to solely aged sherry Speyside whiskies.

GLEN SPEY 2007 G&M CONNOISSEURS CHOICE (Btl. 2017) 46% £12.50
Rumour has it that the distillery has been fully converted to gin production, we are not too sure about it but let's drink it till it's still out there. 1st Fill Bourbon casks, G&M CC, what else?

SPEYSIDE

INCHGOWER 2005 G&M CONNOISSEURS CHOICE (Btl 2016) 46% £13

Refill Sherry Butts and Refill Sherry Hogsheads for this batch, bottled by Gordon and Macphail, the Sherry influence is not too intrusive, it is well merged with the Distillery profile. Dried fruits, sultana, some stewed green apple in the back, incredibly balanced despite the age.

BENROMACH 10 YEARS OLD 43% £11

The flagship of the distillery reintroduced after a silent period, aged in ex-bourbon and sherry casks, slightly peated, the barley is fermented by brewer yeast.

BENROMACH 15 YEARS OLD 43% £14.50

In 1998 Gordon & MacPhail decided to resurrect what is now a days the smallest producing distillery in Speyside, peating their malt around 8 to 12 ppm. This expression is an very elegant but robust whisky aged in selected bourbon and sherry casks, enclosed in a hint of smoke. Classy and at the same time unusual speysider.

GLEN ELGIN 12 YEARS OLD 43% £12

Official bottling of the homonymous distillery, marvellous every day whisky, nothing to envy to the other 12 years old out there in the market.

CRAIGELLACHIE 13 YEARS OLD, 2008 DOUGLAS LAING PROVENANCE £10.50

With the nickname of the "bad boy" of speyside, due to the muscular and sulphuric taste, Craigellachie is the only distillery that use barley from Glenesk malting facility oil-fired Kiln. Often robust this expression comes quite light and floral, packed with spices.

GLENFARCLAS 10 YEARS OLD 40% £10.50

The youngest of the single malt released by Glenfarclas, needs time to open and appreciate, notes of baked pastries, ovaltine (malty) and some chocolaty notes on the back, such a complex whisky compared to many others of the same "age".

GLENFARCLAS 105 60% £13.75

The very first NAS (no age statement) whisky ever released, 105 refers to the British proof, in this case 60% alcohol. For sherry bomb lovers.

SPEYSIDE

DAILUAINE 10 YEARS OLD, HEPBURN'S CHOICE 2007 46% £13

Pronounced da-liu-een, not much seen on the shelves due to the large use in blends, it shines on sherry casks aging. This is from a Sherry Butt, very light, fresh, buttery. One of 789 bottles.

CRABBIE 30 YEARS OLD 48.6% £78

By an undisclosed speyside distillery, really uncommon to experience such a dram, kept secretly for over 30 years in a sherry butt this is set to be one off, You don't come across every day on peated Mac.....probably I said to much, astonishing dram and really rare. 330 bottles produced.

SINGLETON OF DUFFTOWN 12 YEAR OLD 40% £11

A straightforward, nutty and malty single malt from Speyside, the Singleton of Dufftown was released to replace the Singleton of Auchroisk. It's aged in a high proportion of European oak casks.

ABERLOUR 10 YEARS OLD 40% £10

This is a great entry-level malt, ideal for beginners, with a fine sherried spiciness. Pound for pound, this is one of the best that Speyside has to offer.

THE MACALLAN COLLECTION

Macallan was founded in 1824 by Alexander Reid and is one of the largest and most famous distilleries in Scotland. The distillery has 21 stills and while this is a large amount, each one is small, fat and stands at less than 4 metres tall. Macallan also use two types of yeast during fermentation, compared to just one type at most other distilleries. This is done in order to maximise the amount of sugar that gets turned into alcohol and can give a slight extra creaminess to the final spirit. The final difference is in the maturation. The whisky goes into European oak casks that have previously been made to exact specifications and filled with Sherry by the Gonzalez Byass Bodega in Jerez, Spain. Our collection is trying to represent the old style and tradition of Macallan and the specific flavour of the Sherry finish.

MACALLAN 12 YEARS OLD SHERRY OAK 43% £14.25

Along many release the exclusively matured sherry oak expression has been discontinued and alternated with few NAS. Back again this is the 2018 release.

MACALLAN 18 YEARS OLD, SHERRY CASK, 2016 RELEASE 43% £53

Now discontinued due to the small amount produced, the sherry finish here is more evident, still a very balanced whisky.

MACALLAN RARE CASK 43% £28

A non age state Macallan, born from a blend of 16 different Sherry casks, most of them are first fill. The Macallan style is well represented, the mouth feel is oily, with strong sherry influences but does not overpower the distillery character, it will not be available for long...

MACALLAN SIENNA 43% £21.00

The second-darkest whisky in Macallan's 1824 Series, comprising of naturally coloured whiskies selected by hue and flavour. This has been matured in sherry casks and balances rich dried-fruit sweetness with some lighter, spicier notes.

SPEYSIDE

THE GRANT'S FAMILY COLLECTION

Balvenie opened in 1892 by William Grant, who wanted to build a new distillery in order to help his other distillery at Glenfiddich. The distillery's success was almost instantaneous, following on from Glenfiddich's impressive start. Most of the whisky produced at Balvenie was put towards Grant & Sons range of blended whiskies, especially Grant's which has been one of the UK's and the world's top selling blends for many years. Regular single malt releases only really became common in the early 1970s and the reputation of its sweet, creamy, rich whisky grew rapidly. This popularity led Grant & Sons to build another distillery next door and Kininvie started production in 1990. Kininvie was built solely to take the weight off Balvenie and Glenfiddich and everything produced there goes towards the Grant's blended range. Balvenie and Glenfiddich now concentrate on meeting demand for their single malts, with only a small percentage now going to Grant's new blend called Monkey Shoulder. Balvenie remains under the ownership of the Grant family, making William Grant & Sons one of the longest single family ownerships in the world.

BALVENIE 12 YEARS OLD DOUBLE WOOD 40% £12
First aged in refill bourbon cask then finished in a first filled sherry, lots of toffee and vanilla notes from the youngest dram of the distillery.

BALVENIE 14 YEARS OLD DOUBLE WOOD 40% £12.50
First aged in refill bourbon cask then finished in a first filled sherry, lots of toffee and vanilla notes from the youngest dram of the distillery.

BALVENIE 17 YEARS OLD DOUBLE WOOD 43% £20
Older expression of the double wood, amazing balance between bourbon and sherry.

BALVENIE 21 YEARS OLD PORTWOOD 40% £26
The extra maturation in old Port pipes gives to this whisky an extra fruity and smoky notes, perfect as after dinner, un-chill filtered.

BALVENIE 30 YEARS OLD 47.3% £95
A perfect combination of American and European oak, this is a smooth but also very complex dram from Balvenie, honey in a bottle.

GLENFIDDICH 12 YEARS OLD 40% £9.50
Aged in Bourbon and sherry cask, one of the World's bestselling Malts.

GLENFIDDICH 15 YEARS OLD 40% £11.75
3 different types of casks are then filled into a large vatting cask to merge the last year of the 15 required for this age statement whisky, to achieve consistency and quality through all the batches, hence the name Solera.

SPEYSIDE

GLENFIDDICH PROJECT XX 47% £12.25
More than a decade ago Glenfiddich called over 20 bartenders and hospitality workers to select 3 barrels in the warehouse, ending with 3 samples each person, they had to select just one and leave it to the master blender, so in total a choice of 20 barrels, the master blender created a blend out of it but left the project as a draft, years later he managed to recreate that blend to produce a whisky and hold enough stock for consistency.

GLENFIDDICH IPA CASK 40% £12
The malt master Brian Kinsman collaborated with Seb Jones, a famous beer crafter in Speyside to find the best beer and best casks to finish a parcel of Glenfiddich. Are you a beer and whisky lover? Then this is for you. Very suitable for a paring with an IPA and cheese.

GLENFIDDICH 18 YEARS OLD 40% £17.50
Mature for at least 18 years in a combination of ex Bourbon and Oloroso Sherry casks, expect a well balance, never boring malty and gentle whisky. We consider it a fine introduction to Glenfiddich, therefore is our entry level.

GLENFIDDICH 21 YEARS OLD 40% £25
As previously stated Glenfiddich tends to be a gentle single malt with a lot of character to it. That's why suits long aging (2 decades) but it can be "lost" and overwhelmed by the time and the cask flavour impact, after almost 20 years of aging the whiskies are vatted in Rum barrels to rest and refine, complementing the already smooth and tropical elegance of this dram.

GLENFIDDICH 26 YEARS OLD 40% £62
26 Years in refill casks.

CHAPTER 3

LOWLAND

LOWLAND

Lowland typically have a dry finish, which makes them excellent aperitifs. The dryness comes from the malt itself, not from peat (Lowlands tend to use unpeated malt). Their aromatic intensity is low, and tends to be grassy or herbal, with grainy and floral notes.

GLENKINCHIE 12 YEAR OLD 43% £11
One of the classic malts released by Diageo back in the days, a classic, green apple and barley sugar.

CAMERONBRIDGE 24 YEARS OLD TBWC 49.6% £16
Diageo decided to close and demolish this grain distillery to focus on others, it will be sadly missed, still some stock dwelling here and there, quite old but fresh in taste, due to the light nature of grain whisky. Tropical coconut and pineapple coulis.

AILSA BAY 48.9% £15
The nose has wood smoke and heather with sweet vanilla oak and candied orange peel. The palate is a perfect balance of peat and vanilla sweetness, with fruit and toffee emerging. The finish has sweet oak balanced with drying peat.

AUCHENTOSHAN 12 YEAR OLD 40% £11
This Auchentoshan 12-year-old expression replaced the old 10 year-old when the range was totally revamped. Elegant and refined, with theose classic Auchentoshan notes of vanilla and almonds.

CHAPTER 4

HIGHLAND

HIGHLAND

Highlands malts tend to be light bodied, delicate whiskies with complex aromas and a dry(ish) finish that is sometimes spicy, and sometimes has a trace of salt.

THE DALMORE COLLECTION

It was founded, in 1839, by Alexander Matheson, knowing for certain what determines the character of malt whisky. It used to be thought that the water was the key. Certainly, the site of Dalmore Distillery was chosen to take advantage of the cold, clear waters of Loch Kildermorie, which local illicit distillers believed had mystical properties long before the legal distillery opened in the 1830s. The quality of the barley is essential, and that grown in the rich coastal soils of Ross-shire and the Black Isle, adjacent to the distillery, is second to none for making whisky. The very name 'Dalmore' means 'big meadow'. The only other ingredient is yeast, and here again, Dalmore is exceptional in having developed a single strain of yeast which produces an unusually rich and fruity 'beer' from which the spirit is distilled. As for a lot of fine whiskies almost all the dalmore are aged in selected, premium Sherry casks, giving a final touch to an elegant whisky.

DALMORE 15 YEARS OLD 40% £13

Here our entry level Dalmore, a combination of Matusalem, Apostoles and Amoroso sherry casks for a rounded and well balanced whisky.

DALMORE 18 YEARS OLD 43% £20

Transferred from Bourbon cask into a 30 Years Old Matusalem Sherry for a finishing period of 4 years. Prunes, chocolate and orange, intense sherry mouthfeel.

DALMORE CIGAR MALT 44% £19.75

American oak, 30 years old Oloroso and Premier Cru Cabernet Sauvignon cask join forces and provide a whisky that is best followed up by a cigar, Partagas Serie D No. 4 to be exact.

DALMORE KING ALEXANDER III 43% £28

Initially aged in bourbon cask, the whisky is then split into: Madeira, Marsala, Port pipes, Matusalem Sherry and Cabernet Sauvignon wine. Juicy, heavy and tick, doesn't burn, doesn't arm, a must to try.

DALMORE QUINTESSENCE 45% £120

Matured in bourbon casks and finished in five different types of Californian red wine cask: Zinfandel, Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah and Pinot Noir. Dark forest berries and red wine tannins.

DALMORE 25 YEARS OLD 42% £109

American white oak followed up by a combination of Palomino Fino sherry butt and first fill bourbon casks. These are then married together in bourbon barrels before a finishing period in Tawny Port pipes. Outstanding complexity of exotic fruit and deep aromas.

HIGHLAND

DALMORE PORT WOOD 46.5% £17
Beginning its life in American white oak ex-bourbon casks, this Highland single malt is then split between American white oak and aged Tawny port pipes from W & J Graham's vineyard in Portugal. These are then married back together to harmonise the flavours before bottling at a strength of 46.5% abv.

DALMORE 35 YEARS OLD 40% £395
Another mind blowing combination of casks from Dalmore: Matusalem sherry, Bourbon barrel and a Colheita-port pipe. Notes of coffee, banana and treacle predominates this 35 years old whisky.

GLENDRONACH 12 YEARS OLD 43% £12.50
The introduction to the core range of GlenDronach, a perfectly aged sherry whisky, the character is fuller and beefier than others, shows its best in sherry and on long term maturation.

FETTERCAIRN 12 YEARS OLD 40% £14
Freshly released this year, packed with tropical fruits, oily and full of esters, this 12 years old has nothing to lose compared to older whiskies.

FETTERCAIRN 28 YEARS OLD 42% £83
The unique still at Fettercairn distillery (a water jacket system flowing around the neck) allows just the lighter compounds and esters to climb and reach the end of the still, therefore the distillate is very fruity, anyway, within longer again the "Rancio" feels comes through mixing old musky oaky notes with tropical fruits. Not all distillates can be proud of such evolution during maturation.

GLENMORANGIE NECTAR D'OR 12 YEARS OLD 46% £14
Part of the cask finishes range of Glenmorange (La Quinta Ruban, Bacalta, La Santa to quote one of the few) this single malt spent couple of years in Sauternes casks, hence the colour, and the taste. Nectarines and soft riped apricots in syrup.

GLENMORANGIE SIGNET 46% £28
Chocolate barley (heavily roasted barley) is included in the final mash and then distilled, this particular spirit is then barrelled in Virgin American oak. Notes of coffee, vanilla and chocolate surround this delicate dram.

ANCNOC 12YEARS OLD 40% £10
Knockdhu distillery, 12 years aged in ex-bourbon cask, robust highland style, simple and efficient as palate warmer.

OBAN 14 YEARS OLD 43% £13
A coastal whisky rich of iodium, dried figs, spices and peppery notes, touch of smoke. The smallest working distillery in all Diageo portfolio, not a single drop goes in blends.

HIGHLAND

BEN NEVIS 10 YEARS OLD 46% £12
This is a superb introduction to the distillery's style. Full-bodied with a whiff of peat, lots of tropical fruit, and hints of coffee and dark chocolate, this is a great example of western Highland whisky. Masataka Taketsuru (Nikka) bought the distillery back in 1990.

WOLFBURN 46% £12.50
From Thurso, the Northernmost distillery in Scotland (Islands excluded) Wolfburn opened its doors in 2012, small stills and young whiskies plenty of flavour. This is their flagship, not much influenced by the oak and the wood notes, very spirit driven.

ABERFELDY 12 YEARS OLD 40% £12
Bacardi owned distillery, Aberfeldy, produces and aromatic style of single malt, unpeated, most of it ends up in Deward's blended whisky.

CLYNELISH 14 YEARS OLD 46% £12.50
By far, and we are serious, one of the most interesting distilleries out there. Called previously Brora, then expanded and splitted in Clynelish and Brora (2 different sites) could not survive the big whisky crack in the 80' and the new Brora got mothballed (plan to reopen by Diageo in 2020) and now really sought after, Clynelish nowadays has a spot in our hearts as whisky lovers. Fruity, chalky(in a good way), mineral, never boring!!

DEANSTON 12 YEARS OLD 46.3% £12
A cotton mill turned into a distillery in 1966, such a great idea! Part of Distell group the distillery released very interesting stuff and the style is very versatile. Check this 12 years old, barley sugar, green apple and orange marmalade.

ARDMORE 8 YEARS OLD 2009 DOUGLAS LAING'S PROVENANCE 46% £10.50
Very unusual highland malt, the style has moved into heavily peated since early 2000, Beautiful whisky, lots of freshness and soft peat, very suitable for blends out there but few barrels are really hidden gems. 325 bottles out of a refill barrel.

BALBLAIR 2005 (2018) 1st release 46% £12
Quietly distilling since 1790, the owners don't believe that an age statement should represent the whisky, the whisky is good when it's ready, therefore all the releases follow up a vintage scheme (once the stock is finished they pass into the next year available).

HIGHLAND

LOCH LOMOND ORIGINAL 40% *£9*
Loch Lomond distillery is able to provide 7 different style of distillates. Loch Lomond, Inchmurrin, Inchmoan, Glen Douglass, Craiglodge, Croftengea, Inchfad (listed from unpeated to heavily peated). 13 stills in total, specially designed, probably one of the most versatile distillery out there. Have you heard about Lomond stills?

GLENGOYNE 12 YEAR OLD 43% *£10*
Completely unpeated (unusual in the highlands), this Glengoyne is soft, fruity and very quaffable. A fine single malt!

JOHN CRABBIE 8 YEAR OLD 46% *£9*
Sweet and delicate floral notes, with subtle hints of ripe apricots. Delightfully balanced with honey, malty notes at first, followed by warming layers of vanilla and ripened summer fruits. Long and light, malty finish.

CHAPTER 5

CAMPBELTOWN

CAMPBELTOWN

Campbeltown traditionally full-flavoured and full-bodied whiskies, famous for their depth of flavour and for their slightly salty tang in the finish. They are referred to as ''The Hector of the West', the deepest voice in the choir''. The overall impression is often compared to 'sea mist.'

SPRINGBANK 10 YEARS OLD 46% £11.50
With a blend of sherry and bourbon cask this whisky truly represent the Campbell Town region, spices and red tannins enclosed in a light smoke.

KILKERRAN 12 YEARS OLD 46% £10.50
Glengyle distillery, one of the best and oldest distilleries in Campbeltown closed for good: until 2004, when we have seen the new make flowing again, reissued by Hedley G. Wright (Springbank). Aged in 70% bourbon casks and 30% Sherry, un-chill filtered and uncoloured, peated, but it is almost imperceptible. Old style and retro, a splendid 12 years old.

KILKERRAN 8 YEARS OLD 55.7% £13
Kilkerran, younger, cask strength…..Do I need to explain more?

GLEN SCOTIA 15 YEARS OLD 46% £15
Established in 1832, now owned by Loch Lomond Group, the core range has been re vamped into life and the distillery character shines through, old style of malt, similar to Ben Nevis, more costal, traces of bone fire, fresh fruit and wet wool. One of the 3 gems of Campbeltown.

CHAPTER 6

ISLAY

ISLAY

Islay generally opposite to the characteristics of Speyside, tending to be dry and peaty; behind the smoke however, they can have gentle mossy scents and some spice. The southern Islay distilleries produce powerfully phenolic whiskies, with aromas redolent of tar, smoke, iodine and carbolic.

LAPHROAIG 10 YEARS OLD 40% £13
Citrusy and salty peated whisky from Islay, a classic.

ARDBERG 10YEARS OLD 46% £12
Back in the day the distillery was very close faced by a squat of bulldozer (almost demolished) but the same group that owns Glenmorangie decided to invest and revive it in 1997 and here we are, experiencing the core of the range.

ARDBERG UIGEADAIL 54.2% £15.50
The smokiness of the Ardberg refined in Sherry cask, at cask strength, a mighty meaty whisky.

CAOL ILA 7 YEARS OLD, THE ART OF WHISKY MALTING 45.8% £13.50
A young Caol Ila, un-chill filtered and uncoloured, 1 of 600 bottles bottles by Elixir Distillers. Plenty of smoke, as expected, fresh fruit and a spicy kick at the back.

CAOL ILA 12 YEARS OLD 43% £12.50
Another classic from the biggest producer of whisky in the entire island, oily, briny, a bit of tar and vanilla to complete a medium body peated whisky.

LAGAVULIN 16 YEARS OLD 43% £15
Seaweed, iodine and peat and gathered together in one bottle, a very punchy and medicinal whisky, some influence of sherry lingering in the back.

KILCHOMAN MACHIR BAY 46% £13
From the latest established distillery on the island, Kilchoman express its best at young age, the style is new, definitely not austere. Quite similar to Caol Ila, more robust and peppery.

BRUICHLADDICH THE CLASSIC LADDIE 50% £12
Un-chill filtered, colouring-free, unpeated and with an ABV of 50%, this whisky it's set to represent the expression of the terroir of Islay and the barley from the Hebrides. The classic style of the distillery is unpeated, tendentially a dry speysidey. Regarding peated malt…..

PORT CHARLOTTE 50% £13
…..few years ago Bruichladdich decided to homage a closed distillery (Port Charlotte) and to replicate the style. 45 ppm, very Ardbergy, more fruity, malty, you can still feel that on the bone is a Bruichladdich but with plenty of firey smoke.

ISLAY

OCTOMORE 9.1 5 YEARS OLD 59.1% £23

Produced by Bruichladdich distillery, this is the world most heavily peated whisky by ppm, in this case 156. The project refers to the Octomore Farm, where the barley is grown and peated. No consistency here, just sperimental cask usage, re-aging, and finishing (From Port to Virgin Oak), every release as a different ppm content. Awarded most heavily peated whisky in the World!!

THE CASK OF ISLAY 46% £10

Independent bottling of A. D. Rattray, the provenience of the whisky is undisclosed but it is certainly bourbon and Hogshead sherry casks. A good introduction to Islay whiskies.

CHAPTER 7

ISLAND

ISLAND

In Island whiskies balance is a recurring theme. It is hard to categorise them, indeed the fact they are a category of their own is most probably for geographic ease rather than for discerning between styles. There is often, however, a marked salinity, particularly in whiskies from the Isle of Jura, with their oily nature.

CRABBIE 12 YEARS OLD 43% £9.50
Waiting for the distillery to be ultimate John Crabbie in the meanwhile is back on what is the best at, finding good whiskies around Scotland. In this case a "slightly peated Island whisky". I might put my finger on it but sounds like an Highland Park to me, excellent stuff in any sort, bit briny and salty, sweet, oak spice and a hint of sherry.

TALISKER 10 YEARS OLD 45.8% £12.25
An elegant and complex Talisker, resemble of what the island of Skye is made of, this is a dram made and perhaps aged by the sea. Salty, with a more accentuated peppery and orangey flavour enclosed in smoke.

ARRAN MARSALA CASK FINISH 50% £12.50
Such a pleasure to see how wine casks are reused by the industry to aged and impart new flavours to Scotch whisky, in this case Arran has decided to reuse cask that previously held Marsala, a sweet wine produced in Sicily, expect notes of orange peels toasted oak and baked apples, the higher ABV packs everything in a thigh, vibrant whisky.

ARRAN SAUTERNES CASK FINISH 50% £12.50
Part of the same range of the Marsala, this Arran has been finished in casks that previously held Sauternes. The fortified wine influence here is more evident. Very enjoyable, more soft than the Marsala, more on the fresh apricots and ripe peaches.

LEDAIG 10 YEARS OLD 46.3% £12
One of our favourite distillery out there in Scotland. Part of the same group as Bunnahabhain and Deanston (Distell), established back in 1798, currently producing 2 type of malts, Tobermory (unpeated) and Ledaig (heavily peated). Here the heavily peated version, peat lovers, you really need to try this.

JURA 10 YEARS OLD "ORIGIN" 40% £11
The Island of Jura faces Islay, enough said the character is quite similar but the distillate comes out more oily and perhaps, with the help of peat, greasy.

JURA 12 YEARS OLD 40% £12.50
Recently released from a new core range, this time the distillery is focusing in a softer sherry and slightly peated style.

ISLAND

JURA 18 YEARS OLD 42% £17.50

"Exclusive to Travel retail" well, I don't see any planes around but we are glad to bring to you one of the finest release from Jura, part of the liquid has been finished in Premier Gran Cru barriques from Bordeaux, Dalmore gets some of the finest and as far as I know Whyte & Mackay owns both….

JURA 21 YEARS OLD 44% £26

First released for the 200th anniversary of the distillery in 2009 it is first fully matured in ex-Bourbon casks then finished in vintage 1963 Gonzales Byass bodega Sherry. Spicy, smoky with some sweet wine finish and coastal aromas.

JURA SEVEN WOOD 42% £16

This new addition to Jura's signature range is crafted with a combination of seven cask types: American white oak ex-bourbon, Vosges, Jupilles, Les Bertranges, Allier, Tronçais, and Limousin barrels

CHAPTER 8

HOW IS WHISKEY MADE

HOW IS WHISKY MADE

The principals for the distillation of whisky have changed little over the last 200 years. Just three basic ingredients are needed - water, barley and yeast. Technology now aids production, but traditionally there are five stages to the process - malting, mashing, fermentation, distillation and maturation. Here we go through and explain each of these important stages.

Step 1 - Malting
Barley contains starch and it is this starch which needs to be converted into soluble sugars to make alcohol. For this to occur, the barley must undergo germination and this first part of the process is called 'malting'. Each distiller has their own preference about the type of barley they buy, but they need a type that produce high yields of soluble sugar. The barley is soaked for 2-3 days in warm water and then traditionally spread on the floor of a building called a malting house. It is turned regularly to maintain a constant temperature. This is also carried out on a commercial scale in large drums which rotate. When the barley has started to shoot, the germination has to be stopped by drying it in a kiln. Traditionally peat is used to power the kiln and it is at this point where the type of peat used and length of drying in the peat smoke can influence the flavour of the final spirit. The barley is now called 'malt' and this is ground down in a mill, with any husks and other debris being removed.

Step 2 - Mashing
The ground down malt, which is called 'grist', is now added to warm water to begin the extraction of the soluble sugars. The water is normally from a pure, reliable, local source - this is why most distilleries around the world are next to a river or lake. The character of this water can influence the final spirit as it can contain minerals from passing over or though granite, peat or other rock. The liquid combination of malt and water is called the 'mash'. It is put into a large vessel called a mash tun and stirred for several hours. During this process, the sugars in the malt dissolve and these are drawn off through the bottom of the mash tun. The resulting liquid is called 'wort'. This process is normally carried out three times with the water temperature being increased each time to extract the maximum amount of sugar. Only wort from the first two times is used. The third lot is put back into the next batch of new grist. Any residue, such as husks, is called 'draff'. This is collected and used in the production of farm feed.

Step 3 - Fermentation
The wort is cooled and passed into large tanks called washbacks. These are traditionally made of wood, but now a number of distilleries use stainless steel. Here the yeast is added and the fermentation begins. The yeast turns the sugars that are present into alcohol. As with the barley and water, the distiller will

carefully select the strain of yeast that they use and it can also have a small effect on the final flavour of the spirit. The fermentation normally takes around 48 hours to run its natural course, although some distilleries will let it go for longer so as to create further characteristics that they require. The liquid at this stage is called 'wash' and is low in alcohol strength (between 5-10% ABV), like beer or ale. You could make beer from the liquid at this point, but the difference with whisky is that the liquid is now distilled rather than brewed.

Step 4 - Distillation
In Scotland, the wash is traditionally distilled twice. In Ireland, it is distilled three times although there are exceptions in both countries. Here is a brief explanation of the double distillation process. The stills are made from copper, which has been found to be the best material for extracting impurities from the spirit as it is being distilled, and consist of a bowl shape at the bottom that rises up to the neck at the top. All are the same in principal, but a different shape will give a different flavour and character to the final spirit. Taller stills with longer necks will give finer, lighter spirits while shorter, fatter stills will produce a fuller, richer spirit. The stills tend to work in pairs. Firstly, the wash enters the larger wash still and is heated (this was traditionally by coal, but is now largely by gas or steam). The liquid vaporises and rises up the still until it reaches the neck, where it condenses. This liquid is called 'low wines' and is unusable as it is. The low wines are passed to the second smaller still, called the spirit still. Any residue from the wash still is collected and used to manufacture farm feed. In the spirit still, the alcohol produced is split into three. Alcohols from the beginning of the distillation (called 'foreshots') are very high in alcohol level and very pungent. Alcohols from the end (called 'feints') are weak but also pungent. It is only the alcohol from the middle or 'heart' of the distillation that is used and this is skillfully removed by a stillman and collected through the spirit safe. The foreshots and feints are then mixed with the next batch of low wines and re-distilled. The heart is the spirit that is then taken to be matured and that will become whisky. This 'heart' has an alcoholic strength of 65-70% ABV.

Step 5 - Maturation
The spirit is put into oak casks and stored. The most common types of oak casks are those that have previously been used in the American bourbon and Spanish sherry industries. The spirit must mature in casks for a minimum of three years before it is legally allowed to be called Scotch whisky. During maturation,

the flavours of the spirit combine with natural compounds in the wood cask and this gives the whisky its own characteristic flavour and aroma. Wood is porous, so over time it will breathe in air from the surrounding environment in which it is stored. This will also give the whisky some unique characteristics. If the distillery storage facilities are next to the sea, on an island or in the middle of the Highlands then the air quality, temperature and humidity will be different and influence the end product. During each year of maturation about 2% of the spirit is lost through natural evaporation. This is called the 'angel's share' and explains why older whiskies are less readily available and more expensive to buy. There is simply less whisky in the cask to bottle.

CHAPTER 9

TASTING WHISKEY

TASTING WHISKEY

The art of tasting whisky is much simpler than you think. You can read so many reviews and tasting notes that refer to a whisky as having the flavour of 'sherbert, dark chocolate or burnt rubber', that it can leave you wondering "am I tasting the same whisky?". But how do you learn to pick up such extreme, different and expressive characteristics?

The answer is to build up experiences of tasting different things that are unrelated to whisky and taking a 'taste snapshot' of the characteristics of that flavour. The more that you do this, the better and more precise your whisky tasting will become. Another key is that whisky is unlike most other spirits in that the true character comes through after some time, so it is important not to drink it too quickly. It is important to remember that taste is a personal thing and that there are no right or wrong answers.

The glass
The type of glass that you use will help your cause massively. It is best to use one that has a narrow opening as this will channel and concentrate the aromas of the whisky towards your nostrils. This type of glass is called a snifter, but a similar shaped wine or brandy glass would work just as well. Some come with an additional glass plate that is placed over the top of the glass and this plate helps to trap the aromas. Glasses such as tumblers or those with a wide rim should be avoided for tasting purposes, as the aromas dissipate too quickly. These should be used for drinking the whisky on its own, with ice or when less analysis is needed.
The nose

This is the sensation and aromas that you pick up from the whisky before tasting it. Important characteristics can be found and should give an indication as to what the whisky will taste like. Pour a reasonable amount of whisky into the glass and swirl it around for a short time, so as to allow oxygen to get to the liquid and evaporation to begin. This is important as the whisky has been trapped in a cask or a bottle for all of its life until this point and needs a little time to express itself and start to show its true characteristics.

Once you have swirled allow the spirit to settle so that your first sensations will not be full of alcohol. Take a note of the colour while you are waiting during this short time - holding it against a white background is a good tip. Now put your nose to the glass and breathe in, letting the aromas circulate around your nostrils.

Repeat this three or four times and think about what the aromas remind you of – are they light, fresh, heavy, rich, fruity, floral, spicy, smoky etc. You will often find that your first sniff will be full of alcohol and that you may not pick up much. However, the second, third and fourth sniffs should reveal more each time as your nostrils get used to the high strength of the spirit. From this, try to predict what the taste of the whisky will be like.

The palate

The flavour of the whisky on your palate should be the most rewarding and enjoyable part of the whole process. The most important thing is not to drink the whisky too fast (like a shot of cheap Tequila), rather to savour it in your mouth to get the maximum flavour and benefit. Different parts of your tongue and mouth respond to different flavours and stimuli, so pass the whisky over all areas of your mouth to gain maximum effect.

Upon swallowing, there will be an alcoholic burn, which is one of the main things that puts a lot of people off drinking whisky. It is important to let this pass as it is now that any whisky will reveal its true characteristics. Try to identify obvious flavours that are present and repeat, trying to identify something new each time. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers and everyone's taste buds are different so don't worry if you get a flavour that someone else doesn't or vice versa.

The finish

The finish is the after taste that comes once you have swallowed the whisky. Some people say that the complexity of the finish in whisky is what differentiates it from all other spirits. Once you get passed the alcoholic burn, then numerous flavours can reveal themselves, some of which can be extremely subtle. The list can be extensive but again try an relate the flavours and sensations to things that you have tasted in the past. Also, ask yourself whether the flavours remain for a short, medium or long time. This is called the length of finish.

TASTING WHISKEY

Should I add water or ice?
A common question and one that only you can answer. It is all down to personal taste. Always try whisky in its natural state first and then add water as this can release further flavours and complexity, especially in higher alcohol level or cask strength whiskies. Try to think of it as the same as if you tried to drink orange squash or cordial without diluting it. It is far more pleasant with water in some cases and how much water you add is up to you, dependent on your taste. Ice is different as it drops the temperature sof the whisky and inhibits some of the characteristics from emerging.

CHAPTER 10

BLENDED

BLENDED

Some of the most famous whiskies and whisky brands in the world are blends. These include such heavyweights as the Johnnie Walker and Chivas Regal ranges from Scotland and the Jameson range from Ireland. Blends are traditionally used in bars and pubs for cocktails or mixing with soft drinks. This is partly because they are cheaper than single malts and partly because the subtle flavours of a single malt can be masked by a mixer.

Blended whisky
Blended whiskies are produced by mixing different types of whisky together. These whiskies can be single malts (made from 100% malted barley) and other whiskies that are made using alternative grains (most commonly wheat). These often come from more than one distillery and are of differing ages. The whiskies are blended together to create a smoother, more complex drink with each part bringing its own characteristics to the blend. Each brand has its own distinct and traditional recipe that is adherred to. Some blended whisky can contain over 50 different single malt and grain whiskies combined together.

Grain whisky are much cheaper to produce than single malts, as the raw materials are more readily available and less expensive than barley. The costs are also reduced as they are produced continuously, rather than in small batches like single malts. These grain whiskies have always been used in blends as a foundation, with the single malts being used as 'accents'. As a rule, the more grain whisky, young whisky in the final product, the cheaper the price to the consumer.
Aged blends

Blended and vatted whiskies have traditionally rarely had any age stated on the label. This is now changing with many brands adopting age statements. This can be a little confusing, especially now that you know that whiskies of differing ages will be included in the blend. When an age is shown this refers to the age of the youngest whisky present in the blend. Other whiskies included will therefore be of the same age and older.

There are roughly nine out of 10 bottles of Scotch sold around the world are blends – that is, a mix of grain and single malt whiskies.

COMPASS BOX - GREAT KING STREET 43% £11
A gentle and floral blend from Compass Box, non-chill filtered and no colourants added. 33% Grain whisky and 67% malt.

COMPASS BOX - GREAT KING STREET GLASGOW BLEND 43% £11
Same style of the whisky above but slightly more peated and robust. Great with soda or in cocktails.

BLENDED

COMPASS BOX – SPICE TREE 46% £13
After the blending process the whisky is rested in barrels where the heads have been replaced with toasted French oak. 60% Clynelish, 20% Teaninich 20% Daluine (if I am not wrong) wonderful stuff.

MONKEY SHOULDER 40% £9
Glenfiddich, Balvenie and Kininvie in one bottle; smooth with a touch of spice.

CHAPTER 11

WHISKY OR WHISKEY

WHSKY OR WHISKEY

Whether it is whisky or whiskey has been the basis of many arguments over many years. The Scots spell it whisky and the Irish spell it whiskey, with an extra 'e'. This difference in the spelling comes from the translations of the word from the Scottish and Irish Gaelic forms. Whiskey with the extra 'e' is also used when referring to American whiskies. This 'e' was taken to the United States by the Irish immigrants in the 1700s and has been used ever since. Scotland, Ireland and America all have a rich heritage in the whisky industry. So what are the differences between the whiskies from these three nations?

The distillation process
It is here that one of the main differences occurs. generally, Scottish and American whiskies are distilled twice and Irish whiskey is distilled three times (there are exceptions to the rule, in all cases). Distilling three times produces a lighter and smoother spirit.

The stills
The size and shape of the stills used in the distillation process are different. In Ireland and much of America, pot stills are frequently used. These are short, fat, large stills with a round base that produce softer and more rounded spirits. In Scotland, distilleries use a wide variety of shapes and size of still and this gives wider diversity of characters and flavours.

The use of peat
In Scotland it is common to use peat to dry the malted barley so that it is ready for milling and mashing. The type of peat used and the length of time the barley is drying in the peat smoke will influence the flavour in the final spirit. This gives Scottish whisky its fullness and traditional smokiness. In Ireland and America, they use wood or other fuels in this process and this makes the spirit less smoky and lighter. Again, there are exceptions. For example, in Ireland Connemara use peat and produce a very smoky range of whiskies.

WHSKY OR WHISKEY

The use of grains

The Scots use malted barley in most whisky that is produced, however this is not the case in Ireland. They also use malted barley, but may mix other grains in with it. Traditionally Ireland has had a poorer economy than Scotland and barley is expensive to buy. Therefore, it is cheaper to use other grain to produce whiskey. This grain whiskey lends itself to blending and historically it has been used to make cheap blends. In America, the new settlers were forced to use different raw materials to produce their whiskey due to the different climate and soil conditions. This included mixing different grains together during the mashing process depending on what was available. Over time, these different recipes of grain mixtures have evolved so that now, American whiskey bears very little similarity to Scottish or Irish whiskies.

CHAPTER 12

USA AND CANADA

USA AND CANADA

American whiskey is distilled from a fermented mash of cereal grain. It must have the taste, aroma, and other characteristics commonly attributed to whiskey. Some types of whiskey listed in the United States federal regulations are:

Bourbon whiskey—made from mash that consists of at least 51% corn (maize) and aged in new charred oak barrels.

Corn whiskey—made from mash that consists of at least 80% corn and is not aged, or, if aged, is aged in uncharred or used barrels.

Malt whiskey—made from mash that consists of at least 51% malted barley

Rye whiskey—made from mash that consists of at least 51% rye

Rye malt whiskey—made from mash that consists of at least 51% malted rye

Wheat whiskey—made from mash that consists of at least 51% wheat

These types of American whiskey must be distilled to no more than 80% alcohol by volume, and barrelled at no more than 125 proof. Only water may be added to the final product; the addition of colouring or flavouring is prohibited. These whiskeys must be aged in new charred-oak containers, except for corn whiskey which does not have to be aged. If it is aged, it must be in uncharred oak barrels or in used barrels. Corn whiskey is usually unaged and sold as a legal version of moonshine.

If one of these whiskey types reaches two years aging or beyond, it is additionally designated as straight, e.g., straight rye whiskey. A whiskey that fulfils all above requirements but derives from less than 51% of any one specific grain can be called simply a straight whiskey without naming a grain.

US regulations recognize other whiskey categories, including:
Blended whiskey—a mixture that contains a blend of straight whiskeys and neutral grain spirits (NGS), and may also contain flavourings and colourings. The percentage of NGS must be disclosed on the label and may be as much at 80% on a proof gallon basis.

Light whiskey—produced in the US at more than 80% alcohol by volume and stored in used or uncharred new oak containers

Spirit whiskey—a mixture of neutral spirits and at least 5% of certain stricter categories of whiskey

USA AND CANADA

Another important labelling in the marketplace is Tennessee whiskey, of which Jack Daniel's, George Dickel, Collier and McKeel, and Benjamin Prichard's are the only brands currently bottled. The main difference defining a Tennessee whiskey is its use of the Lincoln County Process, which involves filtration of the whiskey through charcoal. The rest of the distillation process is identical to bourbon whiskey. Whiskey sold as "Tennessee whiskey" is defined as bourbon under NAFTA and at least one other international trade agreement, and is similarly required to meet the legal definition of bourbon under Canadian law.

FOUR ROSES SMALL BATCH BOURBON 45% £7.50
Small production of a really simple and juicy bourbon, from sipping till cocktails is an all-day drinking and mixing whiskey. The highest one in the market for Rye content.

REBEL YELL STRAIGHT RYE WHISKEY 45% £9.25
Aged 24 months. Sweater and slightly more rounded than Bulleit Rye, this is our choice between the two.

KNOB CREEK BOURBON 50% £9.50
The barrels are charred at mark 4, one of the highest used in the industry, then the spirit is aged for around 9 years to give to this Kentucky Straight Bourbon a bold and intense character.

EAGLE RARE 46% £12
Aged between 8 to 10 years, part of the Buffalo Trace products, quite high in rye.

BLANTON'S GOLD 51.5% £16
Another solid release from buffalo trace, single barrel n 173 dumped on the 6th of November 2017 from the Rickhouse H, rick number 31. More of a tropical fruit bourbon, cantaloupe and melon wrapped in corn sweetness.

BAKER'S 7 YEARS OLD 53.5% £12
Jim Beam distillery is still using a 60 years old yeast to ferment the wort of this Bourbon.

SAZERAC RYE 45% £11.50
An all-time favourite tribute to the Sazerac cocktail, even if it was originally made with Cognac, it is nowadays known and made with Rye whiskey. Well done to Buffalo trace distillery again.

USA AND CANADA

MICHTER'S RYE 42.4% £16
Demand forced MGP distillery to set a "Michter's week" to run just in that period all the whisky for Michter's company.

WHISTLE PIG RYE 15 YEARS OLD 46% £41
Sourced from MGP in Indiana, Whistlepig distillery is waiting for the stock to mature, in the meantime they are releasing super stuff. This is finished in Vermont Oak. Probably the best sipper in our collection.

YELLOWSTONE SELECT 46.5% £12.50
In the 1960s Yellowstone was the largest selling bourbon in the States, finally reissued by Limestone Branch in 2015, this is an homage to a very delicate and complex bourbon.

WILLET RYE 3 YEARS OLD 53.7% £19.50
One of the best rye whiskies out there, Willet family has been distilling for a while already (1936) stocking whiskies that are 28 years old. Everything comes in a small batch, pure boutique whiskeys.

WESTLAND AMERICAN OAK SINGLE MALT 46% £17.50
Located in Seattle, Westland distillery has been constantly working since 2010, pushing out outstanding single malts. Tosted coffee beans and a deep, charred oak note dominates on the palate.

WESTLAND SHERRY OAK SINGLE MALT 46% £17.50
Definitely a style that we usually see on Scotch whisky, Westland has done their best to merge the distillery character with the sometimes intrusive sherry aging. Sweet and rounded, raisins and stewed fruits well balanced with oak.

HEAVEN HILL 9 YEARS OLD 2009 NORTH STAR 66.1% £16.50
Finished in Islay hogshead, outturn of 253 bottles. Pretty sure North Star Spirits released an Ardberg not long ago….probably they had the funny idea to chuck in some American whiskey, probably we will never see (taste) anything like this in a while.

RITTENHOUSE RYE 100 PROOF 50% £10
A really popular rye whisky, the extra proof brings big notes of spices and extra flavour to a really well bottled rye

USA AND CANADA

HUDSON BABY BOURBON 46% £16

Deep amber in colour, with magenta lights – the new oak casks are small, to encourage this richness. As promised, the first impression on the nose is corn-on-the cob, liberally buttered, with traces of hard toffee, allspice and oak. An oily texture, and a clean, fresh (pine sap), sweet (but not cloying) taste, with lingering oak in the aftertaste.

CHAPTER 13

JAPANESE

JAPANESE

The model for Japanese whiskies is the single malt Scotch, although there are also examples of Japanese blended whiskies. The base is a mash of malted barley, dried in kilns fired with a little peat (although considerably less than in Scotland), and distilled using the pot still method. Before 2000, Japanese whisky was primarily for the domestic market and exports were limited. Japanese whiskies such as Suntory and Nikka won many prestigious international awards between 2007 and 2014. Japanese whisky has earned a reputation for quality.

NIKKA "RED" Pure Malt 43% £13.50
Part of the malt here comes from Ben Nevis in Scotland. Japanese Malt Whisky can contain whisky from other countries….We are not judging anyway, if it's good, it's good.

HIBIKI HARMONY 43% £15.50
Demand chocked Suntory, forcing to hold the stock and withdraw the Hibiki 12 Years Old from the market until more stock will come at age, blended whisky composed by Yamazaki, Chita and Hakushu it lacks the plum humeshu sake finish that was the key feature of the 12 Years Old. The Hibiki will be forever the ambassador of Japanese whisky around the world.

HIBIKI 17 YEARS OLD 43% £32
Dried fruits that evolve in a more deep but still fresh flavour, a bit of eucalyptus, the Mizunara is a bit more evident, finished in plum humeshu sake barrels, Suntory announced that it will be discontinued.

HAKUSHU DISTILLER'S RESERVE 43% £14
A NAS whisky from Hakushu, the oak here is predominant, bringing a green taste to it such as granny smith and elderflower, but it is smoky.

YAMAZAKI 12 YEARS OLD 43% £19
Darker expression of Suntory, compared to Hakushu it is more an evening, sipping whisky, with a deeper character; spicy and elegant.

YAMAZAKI BOURBON BARREL 2013, THE CASK COLLECTION 48% £69
Matured in first fill bourbon casks this unpeated whisky from suntory is a fresh, oily and mouth coating experience. Un-chill filtered.

YAMAZAKI PUNCHEON 2011, THE CASK COLLECTION 48% £72
Un-chill filtered aged in Puncheon barrels (480 Liters). Due to the size of the barrel the whisky maturate more slowly, giving it time to round and refine flavours. Gentle and elegant.

JAPANESE

YAMAZAKI PUNCHEON 2013, THE CASK COLLECTION 48% £60
Un-chill filtered aged in Puncheon barrels (480 Liters). Due to the size of the barrel the whisky maturate more slowly, giving it time to round and refine flavours. Gentle and elegant.

YAMAZAKI MIZUNARA 2013, THE CASK COLLECTION 48% £172
Un-chill filtered, unusual release since the Mizunara oak it is quite flavourful and accentuate and the barrel tends to leak a lot. Leather, sandalwood, soft spices and eucalyptus.

YAMAZAKI 25 YEARS OLD 43% £290
Aged entirely in Oloroso sherry cask, this is a masterpiece from Suntory.

ELIJAH CRAIG 12 YEAR OLD 47% £11.25
Elijah Craig was named for a reverend who lived in Virginia. He kept a warehouse where he stored barrels and one day experienced a devastating fire. He used the charred casks regardless and found they imparted a lovely character. This is a great 12 year old small batch bourbon, named in his honour.

CHAPTER 14

INDIAN

INDIAN

India consumes almost as much whisky as the rest of the world put together. Distilled alcoholic beverages that are labelled as "whisky" in India are commonly blends based on neutral spirits that are distilled from fermented molasses with only a small portion consisting of traditional malt whisky, usually about 10 to 12 percent. Outside India, such a drink would more likely be labelled a rum. According to the Scotch Whisky Association's 2013 annual report, "there is no compulsory definition of whisky in India, and the Indian voluntary standard does not require whisky to be distilled from cereals or to be matured. Ninety percent of the whisky consumed in India is molasses-based, although whisky wholly distilled from malt and other grains, is also manufactured and sold. Amrut, the first single malt whisky produced in India.

AMRUT FUSION 50% £15
2 barleys, scottish and Indian, the latter being peated for a true smoky character. This dram represents two traditions married in one bottle.

AMRUT SINGLE MALT 46% £12
100% Indian malted barley aged in oak barrels. Unpeated, earthy, with a deep but fragrant character.

AMRUT DOUBLE CASK 46% £30
Scottish peated barley coming from 2 casks, Bourbon and Port Pipe, aged for no longer than 4 years and vatted to produce an incredible complex whisky, best so far from Amrut. 1050 bottles available worldwide.

AMRUT GREEDY ANGELS 50% £41
The name may sound odd but it is justified, the angel's share in India is about 10 to 12% and 250 liters evaporated during the 8 years of maturation, leaving 1350 bottles for this batch. Peated Scottish barley and unpeated indian barley join forces in a super complex dram. Expect unbeatable smoothness.

CHAPTER 15

REST OF THE WORLD

REST OF THE WORLD

Whisky production of any significance was until recently confined to just a handful of countries, but has now spread to just about every continent on Earth. From Tasmania to Scandinavia and from Brittany to Taiwan come whiskies of every hue and flavour, giving their own often idiosyncratic interpretation of what whisky is.

GLENDALOUGH 13 YEARS OLD MIZUNARA FINISH 46% £19
Mizunara, or Mongolian Oak, is the most expensive oak in the market, a cask at Chichibu distillery will cost you 1000£ (against 50£ for an used barrel). But the flavour achieve is remarkable, tannis, incense, sandalwood, musk and sichuan pepper. This is probably one of the funkiest Irish whiskey you will every try.

TEELING CASK FINISH 46%, IRELAND £11
A selection of small batch Whiskey from Teeling is then further aged in selected casks to give some spicy flavour and extra smoothness. Yummy. (Ask for the current batch).

COTSWOLDS SINGLE MALT 46%, ENGLAND £13
Here the first whisky release by this small boutique distillery in Cotswolds, aged in 30% bourbon and 70% STR wine casks.

METHOD AND MADNESS SINGLE GRAIN 46% £11.50
Here is a brand new line of whiskeys from Midleton distillery (the producers of Jameson), uplifting creativity and estro of the master and apprentice distillers, this whiskey is first aged in bourbon barrel and then finished in virgin Spanish oak, a treat for the palate, full of spices and tropical notes, gentle, firm and refined.

GREEN SPOT CHATEAU MONTELENA FINISH 46% £15
One of the most classic Irish whisky out there, produced by Midleton Distillery, aged in bourbon and sherry casks, triple distilled in pot stills.

METHOD AND MADNESS SINGLE POT STILL 46% £19
Single pot distilled, finished in Hungarian Oak, we would expect to see this type of wood in wine. Marvellous choice as the oak is prominent in a good way, spices and rye bread collides with sweet notes of the new make.

STARWARD 43%, *AUSTRALIA* £13.50
Bourbon cask are generally the most used out there, because American produces an huge amount and they use it just once, but if you are in Australia, vivid land of wine production you could actually source casks from different wineries.
Here it comes a single malts aged ,almost exclusively, in Apera (a sweet wine similar to sherry) re-coopered and re-tosted barrels.

REST OF THE WORLD

TULLAMORE DEW 40% £9

Tullamore Dew is the original blended Irish whiskey, known the world over for its smooth and gentle complexity. For one, it is triple distilled and patiently aged in a combination of ex-bourbon and sherry casks, developing its distinctive smoothness. Secondly, being a blend of all three types of Irish whiskey, it has a gentle complexity.

PENDERYN MADEIRA FINISH 46% £12

The core expression at the heart of the Penderyn range, this was finished in Madeira casks.

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A

Angel's share

This is the name given to the alcohol that evaporates from a cask as the whisky is maturing in a warehouse. In Scotland and Ireland, this is approximately 2% of the contents of each cask each year, although this amount is higher in other countries with warmer climates.

ABV

The abbreviation for Alcohol By Volume – the term used to describe the percentage alcohol level in spirits.

B

Blended whisky

A whisky made by blending together any number of single malt whiskies and grain whiskies to create the required flavour and characteristics. These whiskies can be from different distilleries and be of different ages.

C

Campbeltown

The once bustling Scottish whisky producing region that is now home to just a couple of distilleries. It lies on a spit of land called the Campbeltown Peninsula on the western coast of Scotland .

Cask

The wooden barrel used to mature the whisky. These are traditionally made from oak. The most used types of oak are American, European or Japanese.

Cask strength

The strength of whisky as it comes from the cask. It is not diluted further before bottling and the strength can be anything between 40% and 65% ABV, depending on age. The younger a whisky is, the higher its ABV will generally be.

Charring

The process of burning the inside of a cask. This blackens the inside of the cask, accelerating the natural compounds in the wood to come out once the cask is filled with spirit. The level of charring can be controlled so as to control the amount of flavour compounds that pass from the wood to the whisky during maturation.

Chill filtration
The process by which natural substances that make whisky go cloudy when cold or diluted with water are removed before bottling. The whisky is chilled, the natural substances coagulate and are then removed by being passed through a series of metal meshes.

Column still
A large industrial still that allows for continuous, mechanised distillation. Column stills are mostly used in the production of grain whisky and are modern and cost effective. May also be called a Coffey still, continuous still or a patent still.

Condensation
The process where the alcohol vapours turn into the liquid spirit, with the help of cooling apparatus that form part of the still.

Cooper
A highly skilled person who makes the casks for whisky maturation by perfectly locking staves of wood together to make a watertight container. This art is called coopering and it takes place in a building called a cooperage.

D

Distillation
The process of turning the mildly alcoholic wash into highly alcoholic spirit. The wash is heated in a still and the alcohol vapours evaporate and rise up the neck of the still and travel along the lyne arm, where they are condensed to form a liquid again.

Draff
The residue from the mashing process. It consists of barley husks and other bits of the grain that are then collected, dried and compressed in to pellets and sold as animal feed.

Dram
The traditional Scottish name for a glass of whisky.

Drum malting
This modern method is used to produce malted barley in most malting facilities. The barley is put in to a large drum and soaked with water. It is then turned consistently for a number of days until the barley starts to germinate and becomes 'malt'.

INDEX

F

Fermentation
The process of turning sugar in to alcohol. In whisky production, a sugary liquid called wort is put into a container called a washback and yeast is added. This triggers the start of fermentation and after a couple of days, all the sugar has turned to alcohol and is called wash. The liquid has a strength of between 5-8% ABV.

Floor malting
A traditional method of producing malted barley that is only still practiced in very few distilleries. The barley is soaked in water and then laid out on a wooden floor for about a week until germination starts to take place. This is very labour intensive as the barley has to be regularly turned by hand so as to ensure even germination.

G

Grist
Malted barley that has been ground up into a powder, so that it can be added to water to become mash and the natural sugars present will dissolve.

H

Highlands
The Scottish whisky producing region, which covers the large geographical area roughly from just north of Glasgow and Edinburgh up to the far north coast. This region includes the sub-region of Speyside, which lies roughly between the cities of Inverness and Aberdeen.

I

Islands
The Scottish whisky region that covers all whisky produced on an island. Most of these lie off the west coast of Scotland, plus the Orkneys which lie to the north of the far northern coast. Most are well known for their peaty, smoky characters as peat was traditionally the only fuel available.

Islay
The most famous of the Scottish island for whisky production. The whiskies from Islay are famous for their peaty, smoky qualities and the island is home to eight whisky distilleries - more than any other island.

K

Kiln
The large room where malted barley is heated to stop the germination process and to remove moisture so that the barley is ready for milling. Traditionally, these were fired by peat but now most are powered by coal or oil. A number of the island distilleries still use peat to give their tradional smoky flavour characteristics.

L

Lowlands
The Scottish whisky producing region that covers the Central Belt between the major cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh and everywhere south of that. Once a traditional powerhouse region, now just a few distilleries remain.
Lyne arm
The part of the still where the spirit vapours are transported to be condensed back in to a liquid. This arm is normally horizontal or close to horizontal, although some distilleries have odd shapes or steeper angles for the arm and this allows some liquid spirit to travel back down into the still to be redistilled.

M

Malt
Barley grains that have been through the malting process (see Malting below).

Malting
The process where the starch in barley is converted to sugar, which in turn can then be turned in to alcohol during fermentation. Malting is achieved by soaking the barley grains in warm water and then allowing them to germinate, which turns the starch present in to natural sugars. This takes place in a drum or on a malting floor. The malted barley is then dried and ground up, with the resulting substance being called grist.

Mashing
The procedure where grist is added to warm water and the natural sugars are dissolved to form a sugary solution. This takes place in a large tank called a mash tun. The solution is then called wort and is passed to a washback tank for fermentation to take place. Any grain husks and other residue are known as graff and are collected, dried and formed into animal feed.

Mash tun
A large tank or vessel that is made from cast iron, stainless steel or wood, where the mashing process takes place. The mash tun is filled with a mixture of grist and warm water and the soluble sugars in the grist dissolve to form a sugary solution. This is then passed through the perforated floor of the mash tun to go to the washback tank to under go fermentation.

Master blender
The person working for a company or distillery that scientifically selects and then mixes whiskies of different ages or origins together to form the required final flavour profile of the whisky.

Maturation
The time taken for the whisky to gain the optimum amount of character from the wooden cask in which it is being stored. The whisky spirit draws natural oils and substances from the wood over time and the cask also pulls in air from the surrounding environment, as wood is a porous material.

Milling
The process where the dried malted barley grains are ground down in to grist.

N

Neck
The section of a still between the pot at the bottom and the lyne arm at the top. The width and height of the neck control the amount and type of alcohol vapours that are allowed to reach the top in order to be condensed back in to a liquid spirit.

P Q

Pagoda
The pyramid shaped roof that provides ventilation from the kiln where the malted barley is dried. Invented by architect Charles Doig, who drew inspiration from the similarly shaped designs used in Japanese architecture for centuries.

Peat
A layer of earth that lays below the topsoil and consists of grasses, plants, tree roots and mosses that have been compressed over thousands of years. It is a very dense substance that when dried is used as a fuel. The peat burns with a very consistent, high temperature with a thick acrid blue smoke. Used in the whisky industry to dry malted barley, with the thick smoke being absorbed in to the grains and the flavour getting carried through the rest of the whisky making process.

Pot still
A style of still that is the most common to be used in the production of single malt whisky. They are made of copper due to its excellent conductive qualities and is formed of the pot at the base (where the alcoholic wash is heated), the neck (where the alcohol vapours rise up) and the lyne arm/ condenser (where the vapours begin returning to the liquid form).

PPM
The abbreviation of Parts Per Million – the scientific measurement for showing the amount of phenols present in a whisky, that have been absorbed from the burning of peat.

Purifier
A device connected to the lyne arm that condenses heavier alcohol vapours that are not useful in the whisky making process. It leads the liquids back down to the base, where they undergo further distillation.

Quaich
A traditional Scottish whisky drinking cup that consists of a bowl with a short vertical handle on either side. They are associated with friendship and ancient Celtic stories say that if you share a drink from a quaich with someone, then you will be friends for ever.

R

Reflux
The name given to the re-condensing of alcohol that then runs back in to the still and gets re-distilled. The amount of reflux is determined by the shape and size of the still and the angle to which the lyne arm is set.

S

Saladin box
An old method of malting barley, named after its inventor Charles Saladin. The box is a large automated trough that has a perforated floor through which air is blown. The germination process of the barley is controlled in the Saladin box by regulating the airflow and temperature between the grains.

Shell and tube condenser
A copper tubing that surrounds the lyne arm on a still. Cold water is fed through the tubing and this process cools the alcohol vapours and condenses them in to liquid spirit. It is the most common type of condenser used in distilleries today.

Single malt
Whisky that is made of 100% malted barley and is from just one single distillery location. They generally contain slightly different ages of whisky from numerous different casks within the distillery's warehouse. These are then married together in a larger container to establish the required consistent flavour profile. The age stated on the bottle is the youngest age of any whisky included.

Speyside
The largest Scottish whisky producing region in terms of amount of distilleries. There are approximately 40 of the 90+ Scottish distilleries operating in this area. The area stretches roughly between the cities of Inverness and Aberdeen, and is named after the famous River Spey that runs through it.

Spirit safe
A brass framed box with glass walls that is attached to the spirit still. It is used to analyse the spirit when it leaves the still. By law, the operator cannot come in to contact with the spirit and as a result the spirit safe is padlocked with a Customs & Excise officer keeping the key.

Spirit still
The second and usually smallest in a pair of stills. The 'low wines' from the wash still are re-distilled in the spirit still – this raises the alcohol level to between 64-69% ABV and clears the alcohol of unwanted impurities. Only the middle section of this distillate is collected for maturation. This section is called the cut.

U V

Vatted malt
A whisky that consists two or more single malts that are blended together. Unlike a blended whisky, vatted malts contain no grain whisky and only single malts. These can be from the same or different distilleries and be of differing ages.
W X Y Z

Warehouse
The area where whisky is stored during its maturation. There are two main types. The first is the dunnage or traditional warehouse which have earth floors and stone walls where casks are stacked no more than three high. The other is the racked warehouse which is a modern facility with temperature and humidity control and where casks are stacked on racks up to 12 high.

Washback
A large deep tub or vat in which the fermentation process takes place in a distillery. Traditionally made of wood, they are now commonly made of stainless steel.

Wash still
Stills normally operate in pairs and the wash still is the first and usually largest of the two. The fermented wash is heated and the alcohol vapours evaporate and are then cooled and reformed in to a liquid by a condenser. The resulting liquid has an alcohol level of 20-22% ABV and are called the low wines. These then move to the spirit still.

Worm tub
An older form of apparatus used for cooling alcohol vapours back to a liquid spirit. The worm tub is connected to the lyne arm of a still and is formed of a long downward spiralling copper pipe that is submerged in a wooden tub full of cold water. The tub is usually positioned outside and was traditionally filled with rain water. Under 10 distilleries in Scotland still have this system in operation. Most others use shell and tube condensers.

Wort
A warm and sugary solution that contains the soluble sugars from the malted barley dissolved in warm water. Wort is the liquid that goes forward to the fermentation process, where the sugars are changed to alcohol.

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO CERISE BAR:
IF LOST, FOUND OR STOLEN,
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