

# Whiskeria®

## Master of his craft

Outlander star  
Graham McTavish  
on the arts, whisky  
and Scotland

#### EDITION

Summer  
2022

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#### THE MAGAZINE OF

**THE  
WHISKY  
SHOP**

UNLOCKING  
THE MYSTERY  
OF WHISKY



The MACALLAN

MACALLAN

*The*  
**MACALLAN**  
HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT  
SCOTCH WHISKY

T H E R E A C H

AGED **81** YEARS

— 1940 —

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Distilled in 1940, The Reach is the oldest whisky released to date by The Macallan, from a single, sherry seasoned oak cask. The 81-year-old was created during the Second World War in a period of increasing hardship and was laid to rest just before The Macallan was compelled to close its doors for the first time in its history. Its very existence is testament to the care and commitment to uncompromised excellence that has driven The Macallan since it was founded in 1824.

The extraordinary packaging of The Reach has been brought together by a collective of Scottish artisans. The Reach's deep auburn liquid is encased in an exquisite decanter created from mouth-blown, hot glass. A unique bronze sculpture of three hands by Scottish sculptor Saskia Robinson cradles the decanter, and these three hands are an implicit nod to the decades that passed during the maturation of the whisky. One hand commemorates the distillery workers of 1940

who crafted the spirit in challenging times. Another is the hand of once chairman of The Macallan, Allan Shiach, whose grandfather headed the company when this spirit was first consigned to its cask. The third is that of Master Whisky Maker, Kirsteen Campbell, who carefully selected the special cask used to create The Reach, and who decided that now was the time to release this exquisite whisky.

The Reach has notes of dark chocolate, sweet cinnamon, plum, leather, pink grapefruit, and resinous on the nose. It has a gentle smoothness, in keeping with The Macallan's signature taste, yet the complexity of its profile offers an array of flavours. There is a rich, sweet smokiness, attributable to the peat used when malting the barley and firing the stills during this period in time. The smoky note is subtle but unmistakable, complemented with antique oak.

Find out more at [www.themacallan.com](http://www.themacallan.com)

# Built to last

The Whisky Shop's Ian Bankier compares the feeling of belonging to the pursuit of the new.

➔ I don't know about you, but I am not a nomad. Nomads are constantly on the move, grazing here and grazing there and building no relationship or connection to any one place or thing. I admire nomads, because they seem to pack more into their lives and sometimes I think I would like to be one, but my heart is not in it. Like a homing pigeon, I gravitate back to what I have liked and done before.

If it's a holiday, I am confident that the holiday starts the instant I arrive. If it's a restaurant, I will have a preferred table and know what I am getting. And if it's a shop, I will have a relationship with the staff, enjoy the recognition and welcome back and, most important of all, will be comfortable, even if I am there to browse not buy. My instinct is that nomads are in the minority, but that could possibly be blind prejudice on my part.

As I see it, nomads run the risk of a less fulfilled existence. To hop from one new thing to another is a high-octane existence, akin to ticking off the 'bucket list' (not my favourite expression and definitely not for me!) I prefer to dig deeper. I think of the poet William Henry Davies, who wrote;

*A poor life this, if full of care  
We have no time to stand and stare*

Now that leads me conveniently to The W Club, which we feature in this edition. The core principle of The W Club is to build a friendship with our customers and to reward them for coming back. Our W Club membership has been increasing lately, especially through lockdown, and this has encouraged us to do another revamp. Our members tell us that they really appreciate the benefits, not least the feeling of

belonging they have to our stores.

In-store tasting experiences have always been popular, but when our stores had to close, virtual tastings took off. We now see how popular these have become and have greatly increased the numbers who can attend. Another pleasure of W Club membership is being first in the know. With rare edition bottles disappearing as soon as they are launched, our members have really appreciated the chance to get in first.

I like all of this. If I were a customer and not an owner, I would be delighted with the added reason to enjoy The Whisky Shop. So, I guess my question to all of our readers is, what's stopping you?

*Sláinte!*

Ian P Bankier

**THE WHISKY SHOP**  
Executive Chairman



THE MAGAZINE OF

**THE  
WHISKY  
SHOP**

**Whiskeria**<sup>®</sup>

UNLOCKING  
THE MYSTERY  
OF WHISKY

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## Competition



# Win an exclusive, all-inclusive luxury three day Johnnie Walker experience in Edinburgh.

*Go on your own whisky pilgrimage, and experience unrivalled comfort and elegance in this once-in-a-lifetime competition. This luxury trip to Edinburgh is an unforgettable experience for two. With travel, fine dining, private tastings, and two nights in a luxury hotel all to be won, all that is needed is to enter the competition and decide who is lucky enough to enjoy this with you! Be sure to enter this competition as soon as you can, as this will run only until 30th June. The details of the prize are as follows...*

Bottle purchase required for entry

**TO FIND OUT HOW TO ENTER, SIMPLY VISIT:**  
[whiskyshop.com/whiskeria-competition](http://whiskyshop.com/whiskeria-competition)

Competition closes 30th June 2022.  
 T&Cs apply. Winners will be contacted directly.

Travel for winner and one guest from a GB location to Edinburgh, followed by electric car airport transfer.

### **Day One**

Check in to Hotel – suite overlooking Johnnie Walker Princes Street  
 Lunch  
 Archive Tour at Johnnie Walker Princes Street & fill your own bottle  
 Private Tasting in the Whisky Makers Cellar  
 Dinner in one of the city's Michelin Star Restaurants

### **Day Two**

Leisurely breakfast  
 Journey of Flavour Experience at Johnnie Walker Princes Street  
 Lunch in 1820 Rooftop Bar at Johnnie Walker Princes Street (including Whisky/Cocktail Pairings)  
 Free time to explore the sights of Historic Edinburgh  
 Fine Dining Experience at Dean Banks at The Pompadour

### **Day Three**

Breakfast and check out  
 Free time  
 Lunch  
 Private Transfer to airport

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# Contributors

ILLUSTRATION: FRANCESCA WADDELL

## Charles MacLean

Whiskeria's resident whisky guru, Charlie has been researching and writing books on the water of life since 1981. Charlie's bestsellers include award-winning *World Whisky and Scotch Whisky: A Liquid History* and his extensive knowledge on the subject led to him becoming the script advisor for Ken Loach's 2012 film *The Angels' Share*. In fact, Charlie's whisky expertise was so hot that he landed himself a part in the film – a feat he claims to be his biggest career highlight to date! Each edition we ask Charlie to try what's new on the shelves of The Whisky Shop, and we're sure you'll agree that his sensational tasting notes never disappoint.

New Releases

11

## 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

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## Gavin D Smith

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

Distillery Visit

44





THE  
**DALMORE**  
HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

AGED **21** YEARS

2022 EDITION

The *pinnacle* of the Principal Collection and the very *epitome* of whisky making artistry. Over 21 years our talented teams have hand nurtured every drop. Matured in the rarest 30 Year Old Matusalem oloroso sherry casks *exclusive* to The Dalmore.



*Aroma*

Seville oranges, bitter chocolate,  
Columbian coffee and vanilla.

*Palate*

Sweet liquorice stick, Black Forest  
fruits, roasted walnuts and  
thick marzipan.

*Finish*

Peaches, ginseng, pear tarte tatin  
and Sanguinello blood oranges.

The Making of a Masterpiece

# MORE THAN A WHISKY



Welcome to Jura. A few miles off the west coast of Scotland you'll find our island; remote, sometimes wild, yet always beautiful. Home to roughly 212 islanders, one road, one pub, one distillery.

Since 1810 this unique island malt has been our greatest endeavour and our greatest reward, its creation the heart of an unbreakable bond between our island, our people and our whisky.

## THE TALL STILLS

Our exceptionally tall stills are some of the tallest in Scotland. We use them to distil a new make spirit that is light, citrus and pine in character.

## THE JURA RECIPE

For less than 4 weeks each year we distil peated malted barley, which we use sparingly to provide body and seasoning to all our whiskies.

## THE OAK CASKS

Sweet and smoky from 21 long years of maturation first in American white oak ex-bourbon barrels and further finessed with a spicy character from hand-selected virgin American white oak casks.



[jurawhisky.com](http://jurawhisky.com)

[drinkaware.co.uk](http://drinkaware.co.uk) for the facts

# New Releases: Summer 2022



Reviewed by  
Charles MacLean

Tamdhu / The Dalmore /  
North Star / The Glenlivet /  
The Lakes / The Balvenie /  
Glen Scotia / Glengarioch /  
Bunnahabhain / Iconic Speyside /  
Tobermory / Duncan Taylor /  
The Loch Fyne / Tobermory /  
Quarterdeck

## New Releases

## Tamdhu 2006 #2165

The Whisky Shop  
Exclusive

70cl                      56.7% VOL  
15 Year Old              £250 (W Club £225)  
Speyside Single Malt

Rich umber (oloroso sherry) with good beading. The nose is prickly to start, hiding scents of polished oak, kitchen spices (allspice, cloves, nutmeg) and a clutch of dried fruits (figs and sultanas) and nuts (walnuts, almonds). Water opens it somewhat; the nosefeel is now cooling, the mouthfeel dry and the taste sweet and spicy, with a trace of cordite in the aftertaste.



"The nose is prickly to start, hiding scents of polished oak, kitchen spices (allspice, cloves, nutmeg) and a clutch of dried fruits "

Ian Macleod Distillers bought Tamdhu from the Edrington Group in 2011. The latter had owned the distillery from its foundation in 1897 – the founder, William Grant, was a director of Highland Distilleries, which is now a subsidiary of Edrington. The make, a medium-bodied Speyside, has always been well regarded – looking back through many dozens of personal and panel tasting notes, the words 'well made' recur frequently – but Edrington's policy was to focus on its core brands, The Macallan and Highland Park, and had mothballed Tamdhu in 2010.

A key reason for choosing the site was its proximity to the Strathspey Railway line, from which a spur was built right into the distillery, with a passenger station

named Dalbeallie close by. The line itself was owned by the Great North of Scotland Railway Company – described as "a little railway with an inspiring title".

When Tamdhu was first released as a single malt in 1976, the old station was refurbished as a visitor centre – the line itself having been closed by Dr. Beeching in the 1960s. Tamdhu can therefore claim to be one of the first distilleries to welcome visitors, although the visitor centre is currently closed. It was also one of the first malt distilleries to install a 'Saladin box' maltings, in 1949. This was a mechanical method invented by Colonel Charles Saladin (a Frenchman) during the 1890s and widely adopted by brewers but only

by half a dozen whisky distilleries. The maltings were closed in 2010 and now very lightly peated malt is supplied by independent maltsters.

Ian Macleod favours sherry-seasoned casks for maturing its spirit – both at Tamdhu and their other distillery, Glengoyne – and this 15-year-old expression is a classic example of the whisky's style.

## The Dalmore Connoisseur's Choice 2008 #19601905

The Whisky Shop  
Exclusive

70cl 57.7% VOL

14 Year Old ETBC

Highland Single Malt

9CT gold, drawn from a refill American oak barrel. A mellow nosefeel, with light prickle. The initial impression is fruity - fresh apple, pear in syrup, fruit salad, a suggestion of raspberry jam - beneath this is a whisper of shortcrust pastry. A soft texture and a sweet taste overall, with a surprisingly spicy savoury finish. Little change with a splash of water, the finish now slightly tart.



"The nose is prickly The initial impression is fruity - fresh apple, pear in syrup, fruit salad, a suggestion of raspberry jam - beneath this is a whisper of shortcrust pastry."

This expression of Dalmore, exclusive to The Whisky Shop, is from Gordon & MacPhail under their legendary Connoisseur's Choice label which was introduced as early as 1968 by George Urquhart, father and grandfather of the current directors, who I have described as 'The Father of Scotch Malt Whisky'.

I say this because at that time only three of four malts were bottled by their owners, and in fact several of these (Glen Grant, Macallan) were bottled for them by G&M. The family firm had been filling their own casks a wide range of distilleries since 1900, mainly for blending, but George took the unprecedented step of releasing them as single malts.

Dalmore is the only Highland distillery on the banks of the Cromarty Firth. It was established in 1839 by Alexander Matheson, a partner in the dynastic Hong Kong trading firm Jardine Matheson & Co - merchants in everything from tea to opium. From 1867 it was worked by tenants - the Mackenzie family, who had famously been gifted the iconic 'royal' stag's head symbol as their clan badge, in recognition for saving the life of King Alexander III (1241 - 1286) from a charging stag. This now appears on all the proprietary bottles. In 1886 they purchased the distillery and associated buildings before merging the business in 1960 with Whyte & Mackay.

The distillery has several unique features which contribute to the flavour of the spirit. The four wash stills have flat tops rather than swan necks, which makes for a heavy, musky style, while the four spirit stills are fitted with water jackets around their necks, so the copper is continually cooled, increasing reflux and making for a lighter spirit. Furthermore, one of the spirit stills is twice as large as the other three and produces a very different style of spirit - citric fruits and aromatic spices. The two styles are mixed prior to being filled into cask. It is claimed that the stills are the oldest in the Highlands; part of one of them dates from 1874.

## New Releases

## Caol Ila North Star 8 Year Old

The Whisky Shop  
Exclusive

70cl 51% VOL

8 Year Old £75

Islay Single Malt

Lemon gold, pale sunlight. No beading at this strength. The first impression - loud and clear - is smoked cheese and smoky bacon crisps. Beneath this is a carbolic note (swimming pool footbath), and whiff of salty sea breeze. The taste is surprisingly sweet then very smoky. A fine example of the make.

## Mannochmore North Star 10 Year Old

The Whisky Shop  
Exclusive

70cl 51.2% VOL

10 Year Old £72

Speyside Single Malt

Lemon gold, pale sunlight with good beading. A delicate nose - surprisingly mellow at this strength - with sweet, fruity top notes (white grapes, melon, pear, boiled sweets); fresh and simple. The taste is sweet and mid-palate, finishing lightly spicy with a sherbet fizz and leaving a fruity aftertaste.

## Blended Malt North Star 8 Year Old

The Whisky Shop  
Exclusive

70cl 51% VOL

8 Year Old £58

Blended Malt

Amber in hue, with moderately good beading. The nose is rich and mellow, led by malt loaf with sultanas, suggesting a fair proportion of European oak matured whiskies, probably sherry-seasoned. The texture is creamy and the taste both sweet and savoury, with curry spice in the finish and a hint of struck match in the aftertaste.

North Star Spirits is the brainchild of Iain Croucher, who I have not met, but who generously supported my three sons when they rowed the Atlantic last year for the charity Feedback Madagascar. He founded the company in 2016, having previously worked for another independent bottler, A.D. Rattray.

In an interview with the Scots Magazine [see North Star's website for the complete interview] he says:

*"Independent whisky bottling is a beyond exciting industry that mostly flies beneath the radar of mainstream consumers... Mainstream brands are mostly about consistency. Nose, taste, ABV and sometimes colour have to be*

*the same [from batch to batch]... North Star focuses its energies on the curiosities, peculiar oddities and obscurities - whisky as it comes, straight from cask into bottle - nae funny business".*

While the company's main focus is on single cask single malt bottling, selecting six to nine casks per quarter, Iain has also a range of blended malts and blended Scotch. He says of his blended malts:

*"The range is named 'Vega' [after the 5th brightest star in the universe] ... We have bottled a 23 Year Old, 40 Year Old, and 41 Year Old, and I'm delighted to say that these have all been very well received, although I keep it to only 400 bottles, so it's pretty hard to get hold of... I can't take any credit*

*for making any of the liquid, which makes it easier for me to say they're all bloody good!"* The company also has another range of blended malts named 'Supersonic', and this.

Indeed, North Star won 'Independent Bottler of the Year' in both 2020 and 2021.



“The first impression - loud and clear - is smoked cheese and smoky bacon crisps. Beneath this is a carbolic note (swimming pool footbath), and whiff of salty sea breeze.”

“The texture is creamy and the taste both sweet and savoury, with curry spice in the finish and a hint of struck match in the aftertaste.”

“A delicate nose - surprisingly mellow at this strength - with sweet, fruity top notes (white grapes, melon, pear, boiled sweets); fresh and simple.”

## New Releases

## The Glenlivet Connoisseur's Choice 2003 #800360

The Whisky Shop  
Exclusive

70cl 60.2% VOL

19 Year Old ETBC

Speyside Single Malt

The lemony hue of spring sunlight from a refill American oak barrel, with moderate beading. A mellow nosefeel, with some initial prickle. The top notes are sweet (fresh pineapple, with a trace of spun honey). A creamy, mouth-filling texture; the taste starts sweet and becomes savoury and spicy. Fresh and straightforward.

"The lemony hue of Spring sunlight from a refill American oak barrel, with moderate beading. A mellow nose-feel, with some initial prickle."



Glenlivet was allegedly the very first distillery on what we now call 'Speyside' to take out a license. Rapidly, its whisky became so famous that many other distilleries adopted the name - Macallan-Glenlivet, Glendullan-Glenlivet, Aberlour-Glenlivet, etc. - twenty-seven in all, some of them over twenty miles from the glen itself, giving rise to Glenlivet being referred to as 'the longest glen in Scotland'. In 1885, the son of the founder took the matter to the High Court, Chancery Division in London and it was agreed that only one was 'The Glenlivet', while the others could use the word as a suffix.

The founder was George Smith. He had formerly been a smuggler - the

remote Glenlivet was said to have over 200 illicit stills in 1815 - and was urged by his landlord, the Duke of Gordon, who had earlier recommended to the House of Lords that excise duty be reduced to encourage illicit distillers to 'go legal'. His pleading led to the setting up of a Royal Commission, whose recommendations were enshrined in the Excise Act 1823, which laid the foundations of the modern whisky industry.

Soon after Prohibition was repealed in the United States, Captain Bill Smith Grant, George Smith's great-great-grandson and now the owner of the distillery, began to promote his whisky in the eastern states - one of the first single malts to be promoted anywhere, albeit the volumes were small.

Time Magazine reported in 1952: *"For the delight of a few well-heeled connoisseurs, Glenlivet bottles about 3,000 cases of pure malt liquor a year, ships 90% of it to the U.S., where it sells for \$10.39 a bottle, including taxes and duties"*. When he was asked by the same magazine *"What makes Glenlivet special?"*, 'The Captain' replied: *"There's nothing secret about it. It just comes out like that... I think it's 99% the water, and a certain fiddle-faddle in the manufacture!"*



# An Iconic Speyside The Octave

The Whisky Shop  
Exclusive

70cl 54.4% VOL

11 Year Old £99

Speyside Single Malt

Pale amber with very good beading. A mellow nose, dry overall. The top notes are of dried fruits, led by dates and dried figs, supported by a suggestion of hard toffee and dark chocolate. A creamy texture and a sweet taste finishing spicy, with lingering toffee/chocolate notes in the aftertaste. A drop of water increases the sweetness and reduces the spice.



“The top notes are of dried fruits, led by dates and dried figs, supported by a suggestion of hard toffee and dark chocolate.”

This single octave has been bottled exclusively for The Whisky Shop by Duncan Taylor Ltd. Octaves are the smallest casks used by the whisky industry (only occasionally!), with a capacity one-eighth of a butt (about 50 litres). Because the surface ratio of wood to spirit is greater in smaller casks, they mature their contents more rapidly.

Why is the make anonymous? Well, some distillers are nervous about independent bottlings, since they do not have control of the quality of the whisky which bears their name, sometimes with good reason: I remember with a shudder tasting a 25-year-old Macallan which had been bottled by an independent and sold to the Bank of Scotland (or maybe the Royal Bank). In spite of its age, was as pale as

tarnished silver and still had traces of immaturity on the palate. The cask was clearly completely exhausted, and the person who sold it to the bank should be shot!

Readers will be aware that the Scotch Malt Whisky Society has, from its foundation in 1982/83, numbered distilleries rather than naming them, partly to preserve good relations with brand-owners, partly to entertain members with cryptic clues about the origins of the whisky. Nowadays, you can cheat by looking online, where the names and numbers of the distilleries may be found, but this is cheating!

Independent bottlers have been naming their malts for so long – think of William Cadenhead & Co., founded 1846, or Gordon

& MacPhail, founded 1895 – that brand-owners usually have to grin and bear it if their whiskies are named. But I know of one who absolutely forbids it, and has litigated on any occasion that this has happened. When the highly respected indie bottler, Adelphi, acquired an old cask of this whisky it was labelled The Whisky That Cannot be Named.

To avoid any possibility of the whisky being named, some distillers ‘tea-spoon’ by adding small amounts of another whisky to the principal one and giving the product – which is now technically a blended malt a different name. Thus Glenfiddich, when ‘tea-spooned’ with Balvenie becomes Wardhead, Balvenie with Glenfiddich becomes Burnside, and Kininvie with a teaspoon of either becomes Aldunie.

## New Releases

# Glengarioch The Octave 2012

The Whisky Shop  
Exclusive

70cl 55.4% VOL

10 Year Old £99

Highland Single Malt

The colour of humbugs, with excellent beading. A mellow nose, lightly mentholic, savoury overall (a well-worn leather saddle), but with faint caramel top notes and a hint of malt barn, on a mossy, warm wood-shaving base. The nosefeel dries out with a drop of water. The taste is sweet and spicy, with a pinch of salt in the aftertaste.



“A mellow nose, lightly mentholic, savoury overall (a well-worn leather saddle), but with faint caramel top notes and a hint of malt barn, on a mossy, warm wood-shaving base.”

The Garioch – pronounced ‘Geery’ – is a tract of fertile arable country, some 150 square miles in extent, bounded on every side by rolling hills. It is known as ‘The Granary of Aberdeenshire’. The quaint market town of Oldmeldrum, on the edge of which stands Glengarioch Distillery, is on its eastern border, some 18 miles north-west of Aberdeen. For unknown reasons, the distillery is named ‘Glengarioch’, but its single malt whisky has long been known as ‘Glen Garioch’. At the same time, ‘Oldmeldrum’ was formerly ‘Old Meldrum’.

The distillery is one of the oldest in Scotland. It was first licensed in 1798 and the site – which still has some charmingly antiquated buildings – might well have been expanded from a brewery, established in 1784.

The founder, John Manson, came from local farming stock local; he was joined four years later by his old brother, Alexander, and in 1837, the year before John died, they were joined by his son, also named John (1804-1877).

The Manson family relinquished ownership in the 1880s and the distillery passed through several hands, until in 1970 it was bought by the Glasgow whisky broker, Stanley P. Morrison, who also owned Bowmore Distillery on Islay.

At the time Glengarioch was mothballed, on account of “chronic water shortages and limited production potential”. Morrison resumed production at the same level as previously, but in 1972 appointed Joe Hughes as manager, with a brief to find another water source.

Hughes employed a well-known water diviner to investigate neighbouring fields and together they found what came to be called ‘the silent spring of Coutens Farm’: it could neither be seen nor heard, but it flowed in sufficient abundance to increase production ten-fold.

Morrison extended the plant from two to three stills in 1972, and to four in 1973, when the distillery was largely rebuilt, Glen Garioch was released as a single malt for the first time in 1972. This bottling comes from Duncan Taylor.

# Bunnahabhain The Octave 2014

The Whisky Shop  
Exclusive

70cl 55.6% VOL

7 Year Old £89

Islay Single Malt

Pale amber in colour, with good beading. The first impression is of Rich Tea biscuits, but peat is immediately apparent in a gentle, smoky way, and further application reveals faint maritime notes of iodine, dry seaweed, and warm sand. The taste at full strength is powerfully sweet, salty, and smoky; water modifies this and adds a dash of spice.



“The first impression is of Rich Tea biscuits, but peat is immediately apparent in a gentle, smoky way, and further application reveals faint maritime notes of iodine, dry seaweed, and warm sand.”

Bunnahabhain was first bottled as a single malt in 1979, although the distillery had been built on the north coast of Islay in 1881/82. Its founder was William Robertson of the Glasgow firm of brokers and blenders, Robertson & Baxter, in partnership with the Greenlees Brothers from Campbeltown.

When the first navvies' huts appeared on the shore in May 1881 the surroundings were bleak indeed: a stony beach stretched the length of Bunnahabhain Bay; desolate moorland began immediately behind and rose steadily to the horizon; and there was not a tree in sight, let alone a human habitation.

The site had to be levelled; stone quarried for the sizeable distillery buildings,

the extensive warehouses and the village which would accommodate the workforce and excisemen. A strong pier had to be built out into the fast-flowing Sound of Islay, and a mile-long road (some of it up the steep slope, almost a cliff, behind the distillery) was also required to connect the site to the outside world via Islay's single-track roads.

In 1887 William Robertson went on to buy Glenrothes Distillery on Speyside and merged the two as Highland Distilleries, now The Edrington Group, although Bunnahabhain Distillery was unexpectedly sold to Burn Stewart Distillers in 2003 and is now owned by the Distell Group of South Africa, who completed a major refurbishment (including a visitor centre)

completed last summer, having been delayed by Covid.

The original spirit was to be used for blending and was to be only lightly peated – one of the reasons for choosing the remote and inaccessible site was the availability of a fresh-water spring to minimise any peat influence in the process water. Trials of a peated spirit were conducted in 1997 and the first peated expression, named Moine (the Gaelic for peat) was released for the Islay Festival in 2004 at six years old. This seven-year-old cask from Duncan Taylor is of the peated variety and delivers in spades!

# The Loch Fyne Living Cask Batch 12

The Whisky Shop  
Exclusive

50cl 43.6% VOL

NAS £46

Blended Malt

Deep gold with amber lights and good legs. A very mild, well-integrated aroma, faintly maritime (plastic water-wings!), on an ashy base. The mouthfeel is soft, the palate an interesting balance of primary tastes: light sweetness, a pinch of salt, light acidity, a shake of pepper in the warming finish. Drinks well straight - and easy to drink!

"Deep gold with amber lights and good legs. A very mild, well-integrated aroma, faintly maritime (plastic water-wings!)"



The Loch Fyne Living Cask first appeared in 1999 - a continually changing blended malt, inspired by the renowned oenophile Professor George Saintsbury, who wrote in his *Notes on a Cellar Book* (1920):

*"The more excellent way - formerly practised by all persons of some sense and some means north of the Tweed - is to establish a cask... fill it up with good and drinkable whisk... stand it up on end, tap it half way down or even a little higher, and, when you get to or near the tap, fill it up again with whisky fit to drink, but not too old.*

*"You thus establish what is called in the case of sherry a 'solera', in which the constantly changing character of the old*

*constituents doctors the new accessions, and in which these in turn freshen and strengthen the old."*

It is an ingenious idea. Not only will the whisky continue to mature and change in the cask, but it provides the lucky owner with the opportunity to create their own, unique, blended malt, tailored to their own taste, and to vary the flavour so as never to become bored with one flavour profile. A common drawback reported by owners of casks on single malt is that, frankly, they become weary of drinking the same whisky all the time - not matter how good that whisky might be.

In 2015, a second 'Living Cask' was installed in the shop at Inveraray. The two

are continually being 'refreshed' with mature malts, left to marry for a period of time then, when the Master Blender is happy with the blend, bottled by hand in the shop and labelled by batch.

It strikes me that the flavour profile of this Batch 9 has been much influenced by sherry-matured malts, with dried fruits to the fore.

# Glen Scotia Festival Release 2022

Limited Release

70cl 56.5% VOL

8 Year Old £55

Campbeltown Single Malt

Old gold in colour, with remarkably good beading for its age, a non-aggressive nose feel and a phenolic aroma (carbolic soap and antiseptic, rather than smoke, at full strength; smouldering peat when reduced), backed by baked apple. An oily, mouth filling texture and a sweet (treacle toffee?) then salty taste, with smoke, and white pepper in the finish.



“...a non-aggressive nose feel and a phenolic aroma (carbolic soap and antiseptic, rather than smoke, at full strength; smouldering peat when reduced), backed by baked apple.”

After two years of Covid cancellations, the splendid Campbeltown Malts Festival will take place again between 24th and 27th May. In contrast to last years unpeated Bordeaux Finish, this year's Festival Release from Glen Scotia is a heavily peated expression, matured in first fill ex-bourbon barrels then finished for 12 months in casks seasoned with Pedro Ximenez (a fortified dessert wine). In my view it is an outstanding example of the make, vigorous and assertive with a classic Glen Scotia flavour profile.

My good friend Iain McAlister, distillery manager and Master Distiller at Glen Scotia, said: “Our Festival Release 2022 is very special as it heralds the return of the much-loved Malts Festival and the opportunity for us to showcase our work in person once

more to whisky fans from around the world. The limited-edition release is an intriguing mix of characteristics, picking up our signature maritime style and the rich sticky sweetness from the Pedro Ximenez hogsheads. It is a liquid that has been crafted by our talented team and is a fantastic dram to enjoy while soaking up Campbeltown and all it has to offer”.

As readers will know, Campbeltown was once the ‘Whisky Capital’ of The World: between 1823 - when the Excise Act made it desirable for illicit distillers to take out licenses - and 1835, 28 distilleries were commissioned. By 1930 only three distilleries remained - Glen Scotia (then named simply ‘Scotia’), Springbank and Riechlachan, and the last closed in 1934. On its website, Glen Scotia describes itself

as “whisky from the whiskiest place in the world”!

Having passed through several ownerships, Glen Scotia was mothballed in 1994, then operated for only a couple of months a year, until it was bought by Loch Lomond Distillers Ltd. in 1999 before passing to the current owners, the Loch Lomond Group in 2014. They have invested heavily in restoring and upgrading. Iain and his team have brought about a renaissance at Glen Scotia, both physical and - dare I say - spiritual, regarding recent single malt releases, of which this is such an outstanding example.

## New Releases

## The Lakes Whiskymaker's Reserve No. 5

70cl 52% VOL

NAS £77

English Single Malt

Polished rosewood in colour with excellent beading, the nose is a rich and exotic balance of maraschino cherries, dark chocolate, Turkish Delight and scented hair oil, lightly tannic. A smooth texture and a taste which starts sweet, becomes savoury (macadamia nuts) and finishes long, dry, and lightly spicy. More perfumed with a drop of water, with a trace of vanilla fudge and tobacco.



“the nose is a rich and exotic balance of maraschino cherries, dark chocolate, Turkish Delight and scented hair oil, lightly tannic.”

The Lakes Distillery's whisky maker is Dhavall Gandhi – a remarkable man and a good friend is an intensely creative artist. His motto, adopted by the distillery itself, is “*The nature of our art is whisky. The inspiration for our art is nature*”. More than this, he is a philosopher, a mystic, and a poet. I urge you to visit The Lakes Distillery's website which, as well as being beautifully filmed, is the most intelligent, honest and informative of any whisky distillery website I have come across.

The carton notes state: “*The Whiskymaker's Reserve is an artistic exploration of our sherry-led style. The whiskymaker defines the architecture of each release as he unlocks infinite variables*

*and never-ending flavour possibilities*”.

Each of Dhaval's releases is an expression of his creative freedom – a freedom rarely encouraged by larger, better-known, distilleries. He describes it as “*the product of a playground where instinct, experience and inspiration roam free*”.

Previous expressions in this sought-after series have proved to be extremely popular, with No.4 even winning World's Best Single Malt this year. Matured in a mix of Spanish and American oak casks seasoned with Oloroso sherry, Pedro Ximénez, and red wine, No.5 is bottled at 52% ABV. Dhaval describes it as: “*Perfumed and fruity on the nose,*

*with polished oak, red apples, chocolate and hints of Devonshire cream. On the palate, pecan and walnut baklava, baking spices, candied papaya and hints of coffee. Elegant and restrained with a Moorish influence*”.

The Lakes Distillery was founded in 2011 in the World Heritage English Lakes district of Cumbria – beloved of romantic poets like Wordsworth and Coleridge and a fit cradle for a talent like that of Dhavall Gandhi.

## The Balvenie French Oak 16 Year Old

70cl 47.6% VOL

16 Year Old £130

Speyside Single Malt

Bright gold in hue, the nosefeel is gentle and the aroma fresh and subtle, with meadowsweet, green apple peel, lemon zest and grapefruit, on a faintly earthy base. At natural strength, the texture is smooth, the taste sweet and acidic (grapefruit) with a gingery finish; less acidic with a drop of water, but still spicy.

"...the aroma fresh and subtle, with meadowsweet, green apple peel, lemon zest and grapefruit, on a faintly earthy base."



A new addition The Balvenie's popular wine-finished range, this expression finished in French oak Pineau de Charantes casks, following primary maturation in refill American oak casks.

Pineau is a fortified wine made from unfermented white grape juice or a blend of lightly fermented grape must to which Cognac eau-de-vie is added, then matured for at least eighteen months, eight of them in French oak, and is typically bottled at two-years-old between 16% and 22% ABV.

It makes a delicious aperitif, sweet, balanced by both fresh acidity and the increased alcohol level. I have a fond memory of drinking it after a breakfast

of scrambled eggs and smoked salmon on a Pullman train, en route from Marylebone station to Liverpool, to watch the Grand National. Both the train and the event were hosted by Martell Cognac, at that time the sponsor of the legendary steeplechase. The bottle of Pineau was produced by the late Wallace Milroy and was a perfect way to start a day of serious drinking.

The process of 'wood finishing', by which a whisky is matured in the usual way (usually in refill American oak casks) then re-racked into active ex-wine or spirit casks, for a period of time (typically around nine months) to add an extra layer of flavour to the finished product. David Stewart M.B.E., Balvenie's Malt Master, is generally

acknowledged to have pioneered the process in 1982, for The Balvenie Classic, re-racked into ex-oloroso casks, although it did not state so much on the label. He followed this with many other 'finished' expressions - port, French oak, rum, etc. - beginning in 1993 with Doublewood.

The Balvenie Pineau Finish takes this rich Speyside malt in a whole new direction.

## New Releases

## Tobermory 24 Year Old

70cl 52.5% VOL

24 Year Old £320

Island Single Malt

A fine, warm amber colour, with very good beading. A mild nosefeel and a first impression of maturation warehouse (dusty casks, hessian bung-cloths), faintly vinous (dry sherry). A suggestion of tablet toffee and warm sand-dunes emerges after a while. A smooth texture and a sweet taste, with a pinch of salt, drying elegantly to a lengthy finish.

“A mild nosefeel and a first impression of maturation warehouse (dusty casks, hessian bung-cloths), faintly vinous (dry sherry).”



Like Pultneytown, Wick, with its Old Pulteney Distillery, Tobermory was the creation of the British Fisheries Society – a model fishing village, designed by Thomas Telford, ‘The Father of Civil Engineering’ and ‘Architect to the B.F.S.’ in the late 1780s.

The principal contractors on the job were Hugh and John Stevenson, who also built Oban Distillery. Another Stevenson, Robert – Robert Lewis Stevenson’s grandfather and Chief Engineer to the Northern Lighthouse Board – was critical of the choice of the site. Although the bay was a perfect harbour, the village was too far from the fishing grounds.

He was proved correct, and

Tobermory never took off as a fishing port. It did become an important trading port, however, especially after the Crinan Canal opened in 1801, and later the Caledonian Canal, and the ‘enormous increase in the kelp trade from the Inner and Outer Hebrides’.

Among those whose fortunes were founded on kelp was one John Sinclair from Loch Etive, who set up first as a ‘merchant’ then, in April 1797, applied to the BFS to lease of 57 acres at Ledaig, to the south of the harbour front, on which he wished to build houses and a distillery.

He built his distillery the following year, as well as a pier known as ‘Sinclair’s Quay’ and a substantial four-storey rubble

warehouse which was used to mature whisky until the 1980s, when it was sold and converted into flats.

The subsequent history of Tobermory Distillery is patchy, with several owners and even more years of closure. It did not really stabilise until Burn Stewart bought it in 1993, three years after which, Ian MacMillan, the company’s Director of Production, rationalised production to produce two styles of malt – Tobermory (unpeated) and Ledaig (peated). This 24 Year Old is an outstanding example of the former.



## Quarterdeck Single Cask Rum Guyana at Diamond Distillery 2010

70cl 50.9% VOL

11 Year Old £106

Guyanese rum

Pale gold in hue, with moderate beading and good legs. A mellow nosefeel and a delicate aroma of banana rolled in Demerara sugar and fried in butter; perhaps a hint of honeysuckle. A creamy texture and a lightly sweet then tart taste and a lengthy, warming finish. A drop of water reduces the tartness.

“A mellow nosefeel and a delicate aroma of banana rolled in Demerara sugar and fried in butter; perhaps a hint of honeysuckle.”



Although it is on the northern coast of South America, the Republic of Guyana thinks of itself as Caribbean. It was colonised by the Dutch in 1650; some decades later English sugar planters began to arrive, and by the eighteenth century every plantation was making and exporting rum. By the nineteenth century there were around 200 distilleries in the country and the Demerara style of rum had become the main constituent of Royal Navy rum and has been embraced by British blenders. Today, only Diamond Distillery, run by Demerara Distillers Limited (D.D.L.), continues to make rum, including Quarterdeck.

In his seminal book, *Rum* (2003), Dave Broom writes: “Diamond is unlike any other distillery in the Caribbean... Here are single and double wooden pots, Savalle columns, Coffey stills, a high ester still, a tiny pair of copper pots and, on the back wall, looking like a giant filing cabinet, the Enmore still: the last wooden Coffey still in the world, which has been producing Demerara rum since 1880”.

Each of these still types creates a different style of spirit, recollecting how each plantation made its own variant, whether by design of chance. Dave continues: “True, Demerara rums have long been obliterated by caramel, their subtle, soft, medium-bodied style not allowed to

shine. At least that was the case until 1992, when D.D.L. began to break free of the chains of bulk exporting”.

The company’s chairman, Yesu Persaud, determined to move his products upmarket and launched a long aged expression El Dorado 15 Years Old, followed by a number of other iterations under the same label. He told Dave Broom: “Our decision to go premium was to show what real rum was. We knew rum was a commodity and that it was only a matter of time when we would have to change. I wanted to be ahead of the game.”

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THE BEAST  
OF DUFFTOWN  
1823  
SPEYSIDE SCOTLAND

ESTD  1823

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ESTD



1823

# Whisky business

## 1 Better late than never

In April, a 'forgotten' cask of whisky became the most expensive cask ever sold at auction. The cask has been held in bond at The Macallan Distillery for nearly 34 years. The liquid was distilled on the 5th of May 1988 and the cask was originally bought for £5000. Incredibly, the owner had forgotten about the cask, which they were said to have bought on a whim, and was only made aware of its existence after the distillery got in touch. Once they had been reminded that it was still maturing in the warehouse, it went under the hammer for over one million pounds - smashing records in the process. The cask is said to be of extraordinary condition in quality and size and could yet yield up to 534 bottles.



## 2 UK suspends tariffs on US whiskey

The UK Department for Trade rolled back Trump-era tariffs on American whiskey in what is said to be a welcome relief to industries on both side of the Atlantic. The UK was previously subjecting American whiskeys to 25% tariffs, which led to American whiskey exports to Britain declining by 42% since 2018. These tariffs were retaliatory in nature after the US set tariffs on imports of Scotch whisky. These trade barriers were some of the last remaining vestiges of the trans-Atlantic trade clashes between the US and the UK over the last few years. Mark Kent, CEO of the Scotch Whisky Association, said, "Lessons must be learned, and we hope that governments will not use whiskies as collateral to resolve trade disputes in the future".

## 3 Taking centre stage

The Macallan Estate has announced the return of its immersive theatre experience this summer. This follows the success of a similar experience it hosted last year, when it became the first single malt Scotch whisky distillery to tell the story of its history through live performance. Using the backdrop of the Easter Elchies Estate as its setting, these summer performances will explore the rich tapestry of the distillery's history. Stuart Cassells, General Manager at The Macallan Estate, said "Last summer's run was a huge success, with plenty of fun along the way, and we're sure this year will be no exception." Included in the event is the opportunity for audience members to explore areas of the distillery not usually open to the public, experience fine dining, and, of course, savour some one-of-a-kind drams.





## 4 Still Game stars Jack and Victor meet fans in Glasgow

Ford Kiernan and Greg Hemphill, known for their roles as Glaswegian pensioners Jack and Victor in the series *Still Game*, appeared at our Buchanan Galleries store on Saturday 30th April. The duo met fans, signed bottles of their Jack and Victor branded whisky, and had a few cheeky drams in the process. Donald Darroch, Store Manager at The Whisky Shop Glasgow, mentioned the appropriateness of the hosting the event in a store that is "just a short bus ride from Craighlang!" Bottles of the Jack and Victor Blended Scotch Whisky, and the Still Gin, are available in-store and online.

Photo: David Monaghan



## 5 World's first Michelin-starred distillery

The Glenturret Lalique Distillery became the first distillery in the world to receive a Michelin Star back in February. Part of only a handful of restaurants in Scotland which hold this honour, we are excited to see if this pushes other distilleries to elevate their own culinary offerings even further.



## 6 Ardbeg jumps into NFTs

Ardbeg has released an industry first, a NFT (non-fungible token) single malt whisky. The expression, which used casks that were buried in a peat bog for nearly three years, was seen by many as a late April Fool's Joke. The whisky was only available to be purchased on blockbar.com, with successful buyers receiving a digital certificate that verifies their ownership and authenticity of the bottle. With many Ardbeg lovers expressing their discontent at being forced to purchase cryptocurrency in order to get their hands on what seems to be a first-rate whisky, it seems like NFTs and whisky may not be as well suited a pair as some may have thought.

## 7 Whisky festivals make spirited return

Whisky festivals are making a big return this summer. The Campbeltown Malts Festival takes place from Tuesday 24 May to Thursday 26 May, with a wide range of tastings, tours, and sensory experiences (just make sure to buy your tickets before your trip to Campbeltown!) The Fèis Ile runs from Friday 27 May until Saturday 4 June, promising a mesmerising line-up of tastings, ceilidhs, tours, and miles and miles of golden beaches. Following this is The National Whisky Festival, which hosts events across the North of Scotland throughout the summer. At the end of June, The Arran Whisky Festival also makes its long-awaited return – though tickets for this festival have, unfortunately, already sold out. Don't wait until it's too late for the others!



# 6 Reasons why...

## The W Club is the place to be for whisky lovers



Behind the scenes, the team at The Whisky Shop have been working hard to revamp The W Club in a big way. Long story short - we are ramping up activity across the board. Some features like the virtual tastings have had some tweaks, others are brand new. And we are convinced that for £30 a year (that's £2.50 a month!) The W Club offers you more bang for your buck than any other whisky club around. Here are six new-look features, welcome to W Club 2.0.

### Knowledge Bar

#### Tasting Events



**The only way to keep up to date with all of our latest offerings is by being a member, so sign up at: [whiskyshop.com/my-club/join](https://whiskyshop.com/my-club/join)**

1. Talisker
2. A special Glen Scotia Campbeltown Festival Virtual Event
3. An Ailsa Bay Deconstruction Tasting
4. Highland Park and Laphroaig
5. Johnnie Walker (& Friends)

Keep up to date with all upcoming virtual tasting events on the Members Hub.



## 1. In-store Tasting Experiences

In store tastings have returned! We missed you and we hope you missed them. At the time of publication in-person W Club tastings and brand-led events have returned to the following shops:

York / Birmingham / Norwich / Oxford /  
Trentham / Nottingham / Piccadilly /  
Manchester

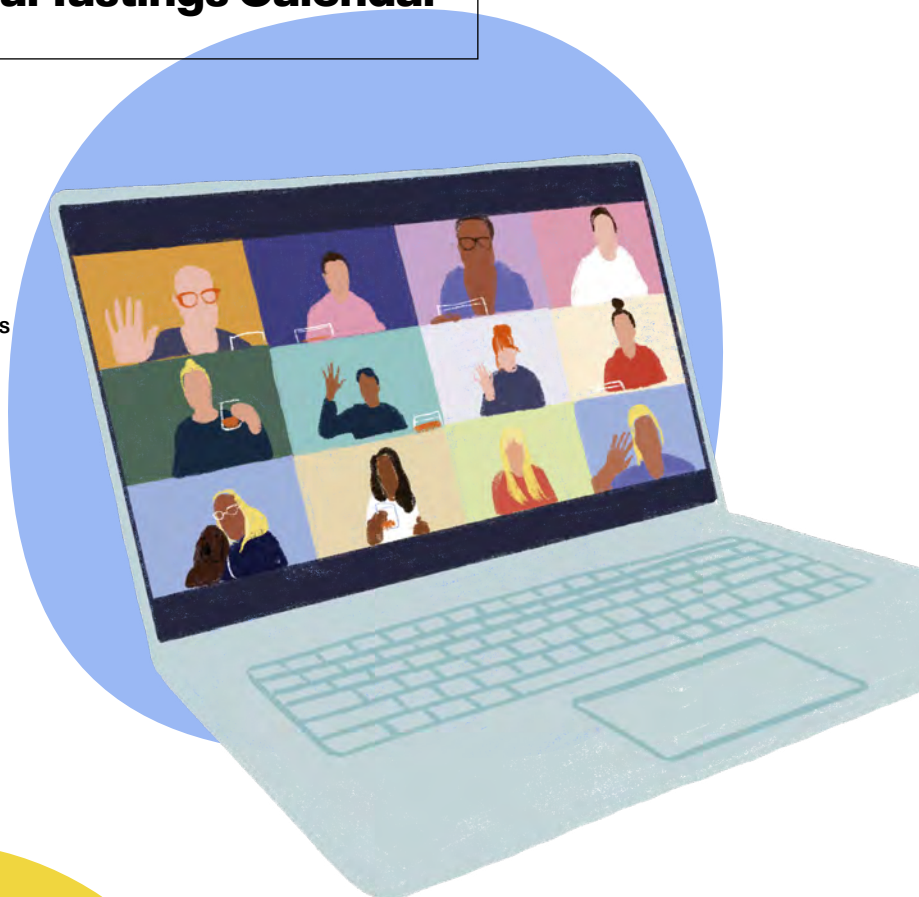


## 2. Digital Drams Virtual Tastings Calendar

After a short break, our Digital Drams online tastings have returned. This year to date we've had fantastic events with Bunnahabhain, Fettercairn, Singleton, Tobermory & Ledaig.

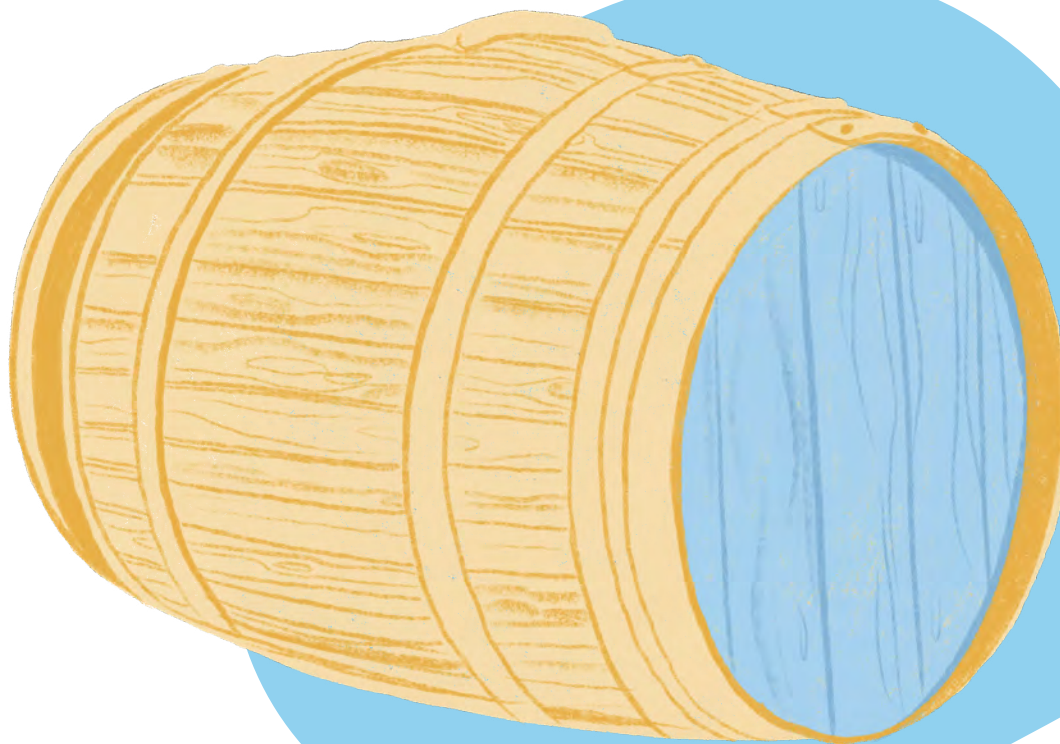
It's no secret why so many whisky tastings moved to an online format over the past two years; but we at The W Club believe that this format for tastings is here to stay. Digital Drams – and other virtual tastings – allow people all over the world to come together, and not have to worry about other considerations when attending in-person tastings. We love in-person tasting events and will continue to provide them to W Club members in stores across the UK. But as long as there is a demand, we'll also continue to provide Digital Dram events.

We've drastically increased the number of spaces available on these tasting events, so we can avoid disappointment. All our Digital Drams events — unless stated otherwise — will be recorded and made available to customers after the event; so you can follow along in your own time.



## 3. Priority Notice

Our Priority Notice is one of our most popular features - and for good reason. W Club members are aware of rare and limited edition bottles, and have the opportunity to buy them before they are made generally available to the public. Priority Notice and Access doesn't guarantee you a bottle of a specific release, but it ensures you can be first in line to get one. This means that W Clubbers not only are aware of the availability of sought-after releases before anyone, but releases chosen for Priority Access are only purchasable for those with a W Club account. Recently W Club Members have gotten first dibs on releases from The Lakes, Lochlea, White Peaks, Caol Ila, Balvenie, Fettercairn, GlenDronach, Glen Scotia, and Midleton. We all know that the pursuit of excellent whisky rewards patience, but we think it also helps to be punctual.



## **4. W Club Single Cask Releases and Cask Committee**

Over the last few months, it has been plain to see the interest from W Club members in our W Club Exclusive Single Cask Releases - our recent Glen Scotia Single Cask received rave reviews. On top of expanding this offering, we are also re-launching the much-requested Cask Committee programme. This gives a lucky group of W Club members the chance to receive a selection of cask samples, which they will then review; with the most popular samples going on to be a W Club Exclusive Single Cask Release.

Democratising the process of single cask selection has been on our mind for a long time, and we cannot wait to involve our members in the cask selection process. Members of the committee will be selected from the pool of W Clubbers who opt into this programme. Make sure your membership is up to date if you haven't already and put yourself into the mix.



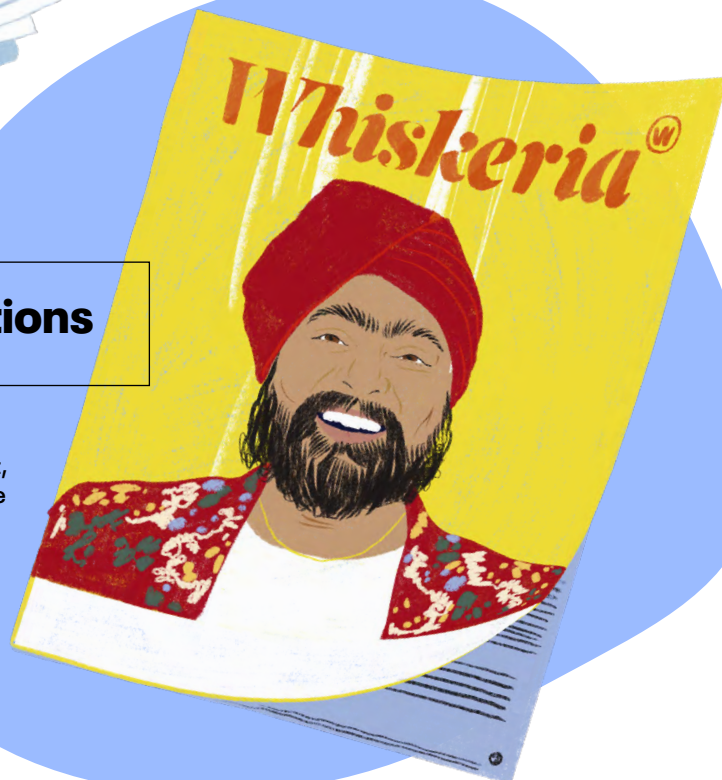
## 5. Whisky Wednesday & In-Store Deals



Those of you who are members will already be aware that the W Club's Whisky Wednesday has returned on a bi-weekly basis. This feature gives W Clubbers exclusive discounts on a selection of twelve whiskies, gins, vodka, and other spirits from around the world every second week. We're also going to be giving W Club special discounts on all upcoming TWS Exclusive releases. In-store, W Club members will get 10% off a selection of eight different bottles, in each branch of the Whisky Shop, every month! The whiskies are selected by the Shop's respective manager; so, the selection of bottles on offer for W Club members is unique to each store. Get down to your local Whisky Shop to make sure you're not missing out.

## 6. Whiskeria and TWS Auctions

The subscription to Whiskeria will be continuing, and W Club Member's will get it first too. Our next edition arrives 8th August, and we are offering an interactive prize the like of which we have never been done before. W Club members also get exclusive discounts on lot registration with The Whisky Shop Auctions. So, if you're a W Club member looking to sell some of your collection get on over to the TWS Auctions, or if you are an Auctions customer missing out on great savings (in addition to all the other W Club benefits), get online. We think the next few months are going to be ones to remember.



# Back of Beyond and Back Again



We are always looking for ways to go the extra mile for our customers, so we have decided to increase the range of our Home Collection service to include some of the most remote parts of the Scottish Highlands. We ask Brett Gleed, our Inverness Store Manager, and Drew Hillier, our resident whisky specialist, how often they will be making the run, if they know any scenic resting points along the way, and what the best bottle they've seen being brought through the doors was?

## Can you tell us how the home collection service is expanding?

Drew: On the last Sunday of each month, we will visit a different area of the north of Scotland. Be it the Highlands, the vast expanse of Caithness and Sutherland, or the even more widely spread Speyside region, (boasting as it does some two-dozen distilleries) which we have divided into two sub-regions: Aberdeenshire and the Elgin/Huntley catchment – AKA 'whisky central'.

## How far roughly might you be driving on this new home collection service?

Drew: Potentially hundreds of miles! The Highland Council area alone covers nearly ten thousand square miles – or in other words, 11.4% of the land mass of Great Britain (an area 20% larger than Wales). Alternatively, travelling eastward from Inverness to Aberdeen, taking in Grantown-on-Spey along the way, involves a round trip of well over two hundred miles.

## How do people get in touch if they have a high value bottle they would like to auction?

Drew: Firstly, it's best to get in touch with us. From there, we'll take you through the process and make an initial assessment of your items. You can do this online at [whiskyshop.com/auctions](http://whiskyshop.com/auctions), or, you can contact us on [auctions@whiskyshop.com](mailto:auctions@whiskyshop.com) with your estimation

queries along with photographs of the bottle. This could mean that we drive to pick up your bottle from your doorstep, or that you drop it off with us and we'll safely transport it to our auction house.

## Could I also just walk into a store with a bottle to have it evaluated?

Brett: Of course, we offer both an in-store drop off and pick up service for customers. Though we always advise those who have larger collections to contact the auction team before coming to the store – it can get quite busy on Saturdays!

## Do many people bring whisky into the shop, and what have been the best bottles you've seen arrive in store?

Brett: We have seen no small number of unique bottles come through these doors too numerous to mention. Some of the more unusual ones include bottles signed by senior politicians, and an extensive collection of old and very rare Macallans.

## Are there any good spots along the road where you are planning on taking a break on the home collection run?

Drew: Heading north-west from Inverness, a good stopping off point – before hitting the wild, sparsely habited expanse of peatland known as the Flow Country – would be the coastal town of Wick, home to Old Pulteney, whose legendary manager Malcolm Waring is a good friend of the Inverness branch and a perfect

lunch companion. Another distillery stop would be the picturesque and historic Balblair, nestling in the rolling pastures alongside the beautiful Dornoch Firth. On the other hand, heading into Speyside, the quaint village of Nethy Bridge on the edge of the mighty Cairngorms National Park and the Abernethy RSPB reserve, close to tranquil Loch Garten, offers a wonderful rest-stop for a haggis sarnie and a bit of osprey-spotting.

## Is this a brilliant ploy in order to drive the entire route of the North Coast 500 whilst still technically at work?

Drew: Yes!

## Will in-store tastings return to Inverness?

Brett: Yes, most definitely, tastings are a great way for our club members and customers to try before they buy, and for those new to whisky it provides a great learning experience.

## Are you planning any whisky festivals?

Brett: I am hoping to attend the Edinburgh whisky festival in July, it should be a corker! We also have a new local festival here in Inverness which will be running for its first year.



## Knowledge Bar



### 5 simple steps to selling a bottle with Auctions

#### 1. Contact us

Get in touch with us online or in one of our shops to get the ball rolling! We'll take you through the process and make an initial assessment of your items.

#### 2. Create an Account

If you have not already, registration for an account costs £5. Members of The W Club can register free of charge.

#### 3. Send Your Items

Drop off at any one of our stores with free insurance up to £250. You can also send items direct to our Auction House, or we can also arrange a home collection.

#### 4. Go To Auction

Time to go under the hammer! You'll follow its progress every step of the way in your account.

#### 5. Get Paid

Once your item is sold, the buyer has seven days to pay. We'll deduct our Seller's Fees, and add your funds to your Virtual Wallet, of which you can withdraw, spend on future purchases, or just save for a rainy day!

Scan here and see how easy it is to sell and buy from our Auction house.



# Worth its salt



Brian Wilson takes the long road down to Campbeltown, to a region with a rich history of catastrophes, cult distilleries, and a vibrant community.

## Knowledge Bar Campbeltown



Campbeltown was officially recognised as the **whiskiest place in the world** by Parliament.

Distilling on the Kintyre peninsula dates back to 1609 with the granting of the first licence to produce 'aqua vitae'. The place itself was only established in 1597 by act of parliament, and began to be settled in 1607.

Glen Scotia 25 Year Old was chosen the **Best Whisky in the World** at the 2021 San Francisco World Spirits Competition. The distillery was also named **Scottish Whisky Distillery of the Year** at the Scottish Whisky Awards.

➔ The name-check for Campbeltown Loch in the old music hall song was not just because it fitted the tune of the Glendaruel Highlanders. When the immortal lines '*Campbeltown Loch, I wish you were whisky*' were penned by a guy called Alan Cameron, the "*wee toon*" at the far end of the Kintyre peninsula was indeed the world capital of whisky.

As far as we can tell, the song parodied a local complaint that while Campbeltown produced huge volumes of the hard stuff, the price in the pubs was unaffected. Hence: "*Now Campbeltown Loch is a beautiful place but the price of the whisky is grim; how nice it would be if the whisky was free and the loch was filled up to the brim!*"

Campbeltown is the only one of Scotch Whisky's five '*appellations*' that bears the name of a single town. Islay is an island. Speyside, Highland and Lowland are regions. This gives a clue to just how important Campbeltown was to the early history of the industry. It was unique in having a cluster of small distilleries cheek-by-jowl within the confines of a community occupied by just a few thousand souls.

At one point, when only the revered Springbank and Glen Scotia were operating, the Scotch Whisky Association dropped Campbeltown as a distinct classification. Happily, these days are long gone and the prospects are again something to sing about with three functioning distilleries and at least two more on the way. Kintyre's 21st century whisky renaissance is well underway.

The peninsula's whisky history had its origins in proximity to the north of Ireland where distilling was an ancient art, easily

transportable across the narrow strip of water that separates Kintyre from the Glens of Antrim. Then there was rich agricultural land to which, since the 17th century, the landowners had implanted an entrepreneurial breed of Ayrshire farmers, who became the driving force behind the proliferation of distilleries.

Campbeltown's other major creator of wealth was as a herring port and when the whisky chronicler, Alfred Barnard, got there in 1886, he found "*a most attractive place ... its waters were teeming with life and hundreds of sail were riding at anchor on its ample bosom*". He also found 21 distilleries still in operation though decline set in over the next few decades as ownership within the industry consolidated and competition from Islay and Speyside grew.

By 1930, there were three distilleries left - Springbank, Scotia, and Rieclachan though none was operational. Rieclachan finally closed its doors in 1934. Springbank resumed production in 1935. As for Scotia, Angus Martin wrote in his history of the distillery: "*The most intriguing question is how it managed to survive the catastrophic collapse of the Campbeltown whisky industry in the 1920s ... I am as certain as can be that had Bloch Brothers not brought their commitment and money to Campbeltown in 1933 and bought the distillery, Glen Scotia would have gone the way of the vast majority*".

The brothers were from a Jewish immigrant family and built a whisky brokering business in Glasgow before buying Scotia and adding the word "Glen" to its name. (They also saved Scapa distillery in Orkney from the 1930s depression in the industry).



2015 SPRINGBANK SINGLE MALT

764

2015 SPRINGBANK SINGLE MALT

CAMPBELL TOWN

## A Time in History



Campbeltown, mid-1800s



Distillery workers at Glen Scotia, late 19th C.



Campbeltown, 2022

# There is still something reassuringly small scale and crafted about Campbeltown's whisky production.

Glen Scotia resumed production in 1935 and the Blochs retained control for two decades. Thereafter, it stuttered along through a series of ownerships and temporary closures which continued to make its survival a minor miracle. In 1994, it was bought by the Loch Lomond Distillery Company and production resumed three years later. The man behind that business was Sandy Bulloch, a major entrepreneurial figure in the Scottish drinks trade, and he is credited with bringing a long-term future to Glen Scotia.

Initially, this was at a very modest level and there was little early sign of the necessary investment. Iain McAlister, a native of Kintyre, has been manager since 2008 and recalls that, when he took over, there were three people working in the distillery – the mashman, the distiller and the manager, Hector Gatt, who was only too pleased to retire. Iain says: *“They were doing two or three mashes a week. Everything was falling*

*to bits, the spirit condenser had a hole in it and the reputation was shot”.*

If the previous history of the distillery had not been so chequered, that might have been considered its nadir. The only way was up and since then, Glen Scotia has been transformed under Iain's leadership to produce once again a robust and highly-regarded Campbeltown whisky. The parent company, which has had its own changes of ownership through these years, has provided the investment required. As Iain says: *“For a successful distillery, you need to invest a lot of money but the returns can be huge”.*

Glen Scotia is a great place to visit. Its location in the heart of Campbeltown limits the potential for a fashionable visitor centre but this is more than compensated for by the interior of the distillery itself which combines evidence of recent investment with the original stone walls and reliance on equipment which has stood the test of time. Notably, the rack and pinion mash tun is well over 100 years old while the plate on the malt mill boby, “made in Bury St Edmunds”, reminds us of things the UK used to make ... and make to last.

The much sought-after Springbank represents continuity in the Campbeltown industry though even it was mothballed from 1979 to 1987. Thereafter, its long-established owners – it has been in the Mitchell family since 1837 - decided to concentrate solely on single malt production. They too describe the Springbank equipment as *“resolutely old-style”* while it is the only distillery in Scotland to carry out the whole process from malting to bottling.

Springbank's self-description is as *“one of Scotland's cult malt whiskies and a template for many new distillers”*. The Mitchell company themselves own Glengyle, another

19th century distillery that has been revived over the past 20 years and produces a single malt under the name Kilkerran. There is still something reassuringly small scale and crafted about Campbeltown's whisky production.

Sure enough, new ventures are beginning to appear in the area and two are currently awaiting planning consent. The Dal Riata distillery, within Campbeltown itself, will share the same water source – Crosshill Loch – as the long-established ones. Also in line for planning approval is the venture based in Dhurrie Farm, adjacent to Campbeltown's airport at Macrihanish. It has the same ownership team behind it as the Isle of Raasay Distillery, Alasdair Day – who is also master distiller – and Bill Dobbie who has strong family links with Kintyre. Indeed, his uncle was for many years greenkeeper at the magnificent Macrihanish golf course. By buying the farm, they have created the means of producing their own barley and the word “sustainability” is written into every aspect of the project. Alasdair says it has always been in their plans to build a second distillery and now Raasay has its own single malt on the market, the time is right for a new venture – and Bill's Kintyre connections pointed in that direction.

There are other projects thought to be in the pipeline and the days when the Campbeltown classification was under threat are long gone. It is good news not only for those who retain a great loyalty to the distinctive, ‘salty’ features of whisky from that part of the world, but a great boost to the economy of a town which may to some be at the *“end of the road”* but, for whisky afficianados, will always be recognised as a place that was once centre of the universe.



# FETTERCAIRN

RARE. PURE. ENLIGHTENED.

## WAREHOUSE 2

BATCH: N°003

The third release in The Collection, Warehouse 2 Batch No.003 has been crafted using a handpicked selection of ex-Bourbon barrels, rum barrels and French red wine Barriques, filled with spirit that flowed from the Fettercairn stills in 2015, which has been maturing in Fettercairn Warehouse 2, before bottling in 2022.

It is a rare and remarkable single malt shaped by its maturation in its own unique dunnage environment and then crafted through the expert combination of three different cask types to reveal a whisky of distinctive character - one displaying the wonderful Fettercairn house-style that is abundant with tropical flavours and soft spice.

### CASK TYPE BATCH: N°003

	2015	EX-BOURBON BARRELS	67%
	2015	RUM BARRELS	18%
	2015	FRENCH RED WINE BARRIQUES	27%

### THE FETTERCAIRN WAREHOUSE COLLECTION

The Fettercairn Warehouse Collection is a new series of rare and limited small batch whiskies drawn from one of our 14 traditional dunnage-style warehouses. Within the hallowed walls of each of these warehouses, high humidity and relatively cool temperatures come together in distinct and different ways to uniquely shape the character of the spirit as it slowly matures in peaceful darkness.



# Yamazaki, Green Tea, and Tsukuriwake



We welcome back a Whiskeria favourite, House of Suntory Brand Ambassador James Bowker. This time we find out all there is to know about Yamazaki, the fun aspects of being a brand ambassador, and which season is the best to visit Japan in.

## ➔ What's your favourite whisky from the Yamazaki portfolio and why?

Probably the 12 Year Old. That's the one that first got me into Japanese whisky so it's associated with so many warm memories, which is such an important part of whisky drinking, I think. With the twelve-year-old I tend to find this lovely harmony between the natural fruit profiles, the aromatics of the whisky itself, and the aromatics of the cask. You still get that vibrancy; that tropical fruit note that we tend to find in Yamazaki, like pineapple or peach, that's really well harmonised with the subtle spices, the incense notes from the Mizunara, so that's why.

It's a perfect example of what in Japan is called Kaizen, which means continual refinement. In the West we often confuse refinement with change; change can be either good or bad, there are plenty of changes in the world recently that prove change is not an inherently good thing. We play around with more of the variables during the whisky making process, but not for the sake of difference. We work with different malts, different peating levels, fermentation types, distillation styles, which means we make a huge range of different flavours of whisky at Yamazaki, and each age is basically a blend of these different variables in combination to create whatever the best profile is at that age. The Distiller's Reserve is focussed on wooden fermentation tanks which gives you lovely creamy notes, but also utilising Bordeaux red wine casks for a red berry profile.

The 18 Year Old shifts dramatically and it moves much towards the very early styles of whisky making where we use a lot more of the Spanish oak sherry, obtaining much more tannic, dark fruit profiles and things that remind us of Christmas cakes. The 25 Year Old is this perfect harmony between mizunara but also some sherry cask as well. That's a brand new recipe for the 25 Year Old this year, so it will be super exciting to see how everyone reacts.

## Last year you mentioned how nature presented itself in the Toki blended whisky highball. How does Yamazaki go about reflecting nature?

I think one of the fascinating things is that many of the cultural underpinnings of the distillery have a massive impact on the way in which we approach what we're making. Japan has this incredible diversity of seasons, with a heavy distinction between each of those four seasons. Our first goal was to see what would happen to a whisky fully produced, fermented, distilled, and aged in this unique terroir. The climate impacts the aromatics you get through ageing and the way in which the oak interacts with that whisky, but also affects the fermentation of the whisky itself because there are unique bacteria in there depending on where you are. It became a case of saying 'let's just do this really, really well' - let's make sure we are making the highest quality possible whisky and allow that nature to almost naturally sing through, rather than trying

to consciously choose what aspects within nature we want to reflect. We thought, let's use this blank canvas and see what nature says to us, rather than imposing our version of what we think nature is on the whisky.

## In what other ways are the Yamazaki values put into practice?

The name Suntory sheds some light on this: the 'Sun' refers to the rising sun, the 'tory' refers to the original family (Torii) that still run the business. Putting the 'sun' before the 'tory' is saying that our Japanese culture is our first priority - it comes above and beyond anything for us. We're the only producer of Japanese whisky where 100% of our whiskies are fermented, distilled, and aged in Japan, but we're touching on the honour culture in Japan where we are striving to give something back to our people. There are three pillars to this. *Wa* is an old name for Japan, and it means a specific sort of harmony that we observe within nature. You might look at a tree and, straightforwardly enough, see a tree. But there's an awesome symbiosis of organisms in that tree, which is what we're interested in. The second is *omotenashi* - authentic Japanese hospitality. This is a deep-rooted idea of having authentic relationships. You need to understand every element of what your guest needs, and the process of giving it to them yourself. Our version of that is asking how each particular person consumes our spirit; how can we make sure it goes above and beyond what they're wanting?





## Industry Insider

We know people drink whiskies neat, but also potentially on the rocks. You can experience omotenashi whether you choose to enjoy a more condensed profile neat, but also as you dilute a Yamazaki on ice. We want to be hospitable to our drinkers around the world, that they will have flavours opened up to them based on how they like to drink. We don't have a signature serve for any of our malt whiskies, on the grounds that we genuinely believe that so many people have different ways of enjoying whisky, we want to make a whisky that works to all of their needs rather than saying to have it neat. Finally, there's *monozukuri* which is the idea of Japanese craftsmanship. When we were first mastering whisky, we learned from the Scottish masters. We then spent years achieving our own mastery, after which we then started asking ourselves - what are the authentically and uniquely Japanese touches we can make? Consequently we get different flavours coming through our whiskies that you can't find in Scotland.

### Knowledge Bar

#### Phrase book



**Kaizen** "This idea is about mastering the traditional way, and only then are you able to understand if the changes you make will be positive."

**Izakaya** "An izakaya forms a very similar function to a pub, it's a much more casual drinking environment where you actually can reasonably go on your own and expect to make friends quickly. Though whilst the British pub has historically been a relaxed, quiet environment, in Japan it is a much more vibrant and upbeat. British culture is perhaps unique insofar as we don't necessarily always pair food and drinks together, and the reverse is certainly true in a Japanese izakaya!"

**Monozukuri** "This is the deep-rooted value of Japanese craftsmanship."  
Tsukuriwake - "Tsukuriwake is all about having diversity of spirit, which ties into everything we make"

**Pineapple** "It's the core tasting note that I think many people find in Yamazaki across the portfolio, outside of casks, peating, or age statement. It's that fresh tropical fruit which I perceive as pineapple, some perceive as peach."

### There are numerous distilleries that emphasise their surroundings and achieving flavour harmony. What makes Yamazaki unique, both in Japan and to the world?

Ultimately, there are many fantastic things that can be said about the uniqueness of Yamazaki's flavour, and I think that's really important. However, most of us whisky lovers also enjoy the story - the provenance of what we're enjoying. You're drinking the birthplace place of Japanese whisky as an overall concept, an entire industry. They felt that responsibility of being the very first. There was pressure to replicate the Scots when they were building it. But the whole point was to make something unique to Japanese culture that was more appropriate to the Japanese palate. The region they chose was where, historically, the best green teas and the very best saké was produced. Like us, they enjoyed a story, so they went to the history books. The Emperor of Japan asked Sen no Rikyū, creator of the tea ceremony that Japan is so famous for, to build an imperial tearoom. The place he chose was because of the quality of its water, the diversity of its flora and fauna, and the distinction of its seasons. The tearoom had been left to decay, though that the water source was still perfectly functioning. This felt like a perfect place for the soul of Japanese whisky.

### Why did so few foreign countries attempt to create whisky in their own countries?

That's a big question. The Torii's family company employed the first master distiller on the basis of him spending a few weeks as an apprentice distiller in Scotland. To answer on behalf of other countries is complex. Nowadays, you see distilleries in all sorts of places. But Japan was not early to the party, they were late! Many of the technologies required for making modern spirit categories, things like whisky, rum, cognac, or gin, were significantly refined - if not invented - during the industrial revolution. During this time, Japan was in a period of isolation called the Edo period where they didn't allow import into the country. Consequently, this technology spread around the world and people formed their own spirits categories. When you arrive in Mexico you find agave, rather than malt, being distilled. Japan had the sudden influx of the finished spirit products at the same time at the same time they had influx of the technological information. So, rather prudently, we thought, 'whisky is a category we really, really enjoy, let's make that'.

### How has the basic process of whisky making changed from the years where Yamazaki was forging its taste identity?

We were a much smaller enterprise at the start; we only had a couple of pot stills. The first few products certainly didn't meet the vision of what we were trying to do. Consider the difference between sushi and haggis, or for comparisons sake a green tea and espresso, and you had to start to see why the whisky must be lighter to work in Japan. We created as many different variations on the profile as possible, and still do this. Imagine photographing a Sakura flower, for example. You could take a photograph from one angle, and it looks great - that's the Scottish style of whisky making. We take photographs from countless different angles and the role of our blenders is to then harmonise those different angles into a 3D recreation. In doing so, they get a more accurate and complex perspective on the core malt profile itself, rather than just one set of variables would give you.

### What are the differences in using Japanese oak rather than the more typical used in Scottish whisky?

Suntory uses six different types of casks, four of which are traditional. We use ex-bourbon and hogshead casks, primarily from the Maker's Mark Distillery, but we also see reformulated American oak casks like first fill such American oak puncheons. The fourth and final traditional cask type are sherry butts which we refer to as Spanish oak, as we like to emphasise as it is all real Spanish oak seasoned with actual sherry in Jerez. This then takes us to the remaining casks: Bordeaux red wine casks and our own mizunara barrels, which is a unique and challenging oak. It's highly porous and has a different internal structure compared to American or European oaks which means it has a greater tendency to flex during the ageing process. Not only is it hard to source an actual useable tree - because unlike the others, these trees grow in every possible direction - but even when we find that tree and convert it into a cask, oftentimes you'll get a lot of spillages because of its tendency to change shape during the aging process. And if that wasn't enough, the first 10 to 15 years of aging in mizunara tends to produce particularly unpleasant aromas. It takes a significantly longer amount of time to age with a positive effect than it does in American, Spanish, or French oak.



We play around with more of the variables during the whisky making process, but not for the sake of difference...



James Bowker sampling the House of Suntory range



Yamazaki Distillery is nestled amid lush forest, underneath Mount Tennozan



The Yamazaki 25 Year Old, brand new to 2022

### How did WW2 influence the taste of Yamazaki today?

Japan's history is, sadly, occasionally marred and this is part of our history. During the Second World War, Yamazaki wasn't able to import oak from Europe or indeed from the Americas and consequently it had to find an alternative way of aging its whisky. Yamazaki was forced to use mizunara and discovered consumers didn't really care for it. It was oily, unpleasant, and it went quickly out of use. It wasn't until the 1960s that we rediscovered some of these old mizunara casks that, for whatever reason, had not been sold. Suddenly, they were complex, with unique incense-like aromas like sandalwood or cedarwood that you just can't find in other types of casks. It's a hard wood to work with and it's expensive, but we discovered its value for these unique flavours. But it's still very important for anyone trying mizunara casks to double check the age statement.

### Could you tell us about your typical day as a brand ambassador?

There isn't really a 'typical day', though there are three sides to my role. The fun side is going out and hosting events, working with consumers, and creating fantastic experiences of Japanese whisky so people personally understand the category in a heartfelt and authentic way. I also love the educational element in my role. I host the Suntory Dojo, an immersive and intensive training and education programme for professional bartenders and retail staff to help them understand Japanese culture in a much broader sense than just the spirits. The final part is the grindstone, the behind-the-scenes strategy.

### The theme of whisky pilgrimages comes up a lot in this issue. When the distillery is open to visitors again, is there an ideal season to visit Japan?

Japan really does have very intense seasons. Personally, I would avoid the hurricane season, somewhat unsurprisingly. I'd recommend Spring, but Autumn is often

overlooked - especially by the tourists, in my opinion. Autumn is an incredibly sacred time of year in Japanese culture; you get to see the beautiful shades of red, orange, and gold tones around the country, a time that is really valued by the Japanese.

### Yamazaki describes the pursuit of harmony from a wide array of influences. What is your favourite way to find harmony?

On the personal level, for me, it's meditation. That, and being in nature, those two things really help me to find a sense of harmony and myself.

### Are there any good Japanese toasts you can share?

We just say *KanPai* to be honest!

## Distillery Visit



### Knowledge Bar Bunnahabhain



Bunnahabhain only exists because of the distillery. The original proprietors had chosen the area to capitalise on the abundant water supply.

The name Bunnahabhain is an anglicisation of 'Bun na h-Abhainn' means, meaning 'mouth of the river' in Scottish Gaelic.

Since 1902, Bunnahabhain has only had seven Distillery Managers.

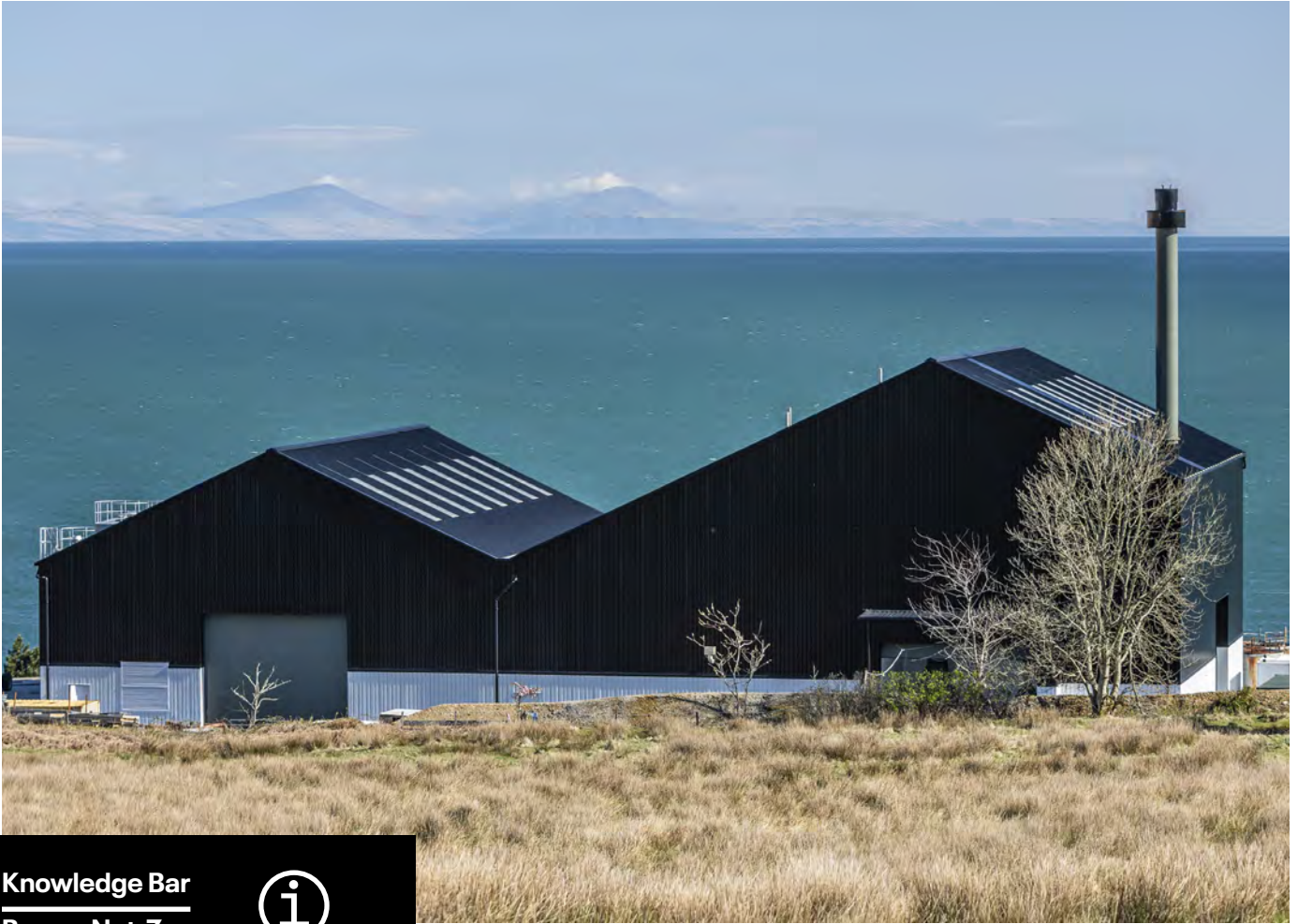


# BUNNABHAIN



This summer, we sent our distillery expert Gavin D Smith to Port Askaig, the home of Bunnahabhain, where the winds of change are blowing through the coastal air.

## Distillery Visit



### Knowledge Bar Bunna-Net-Zero



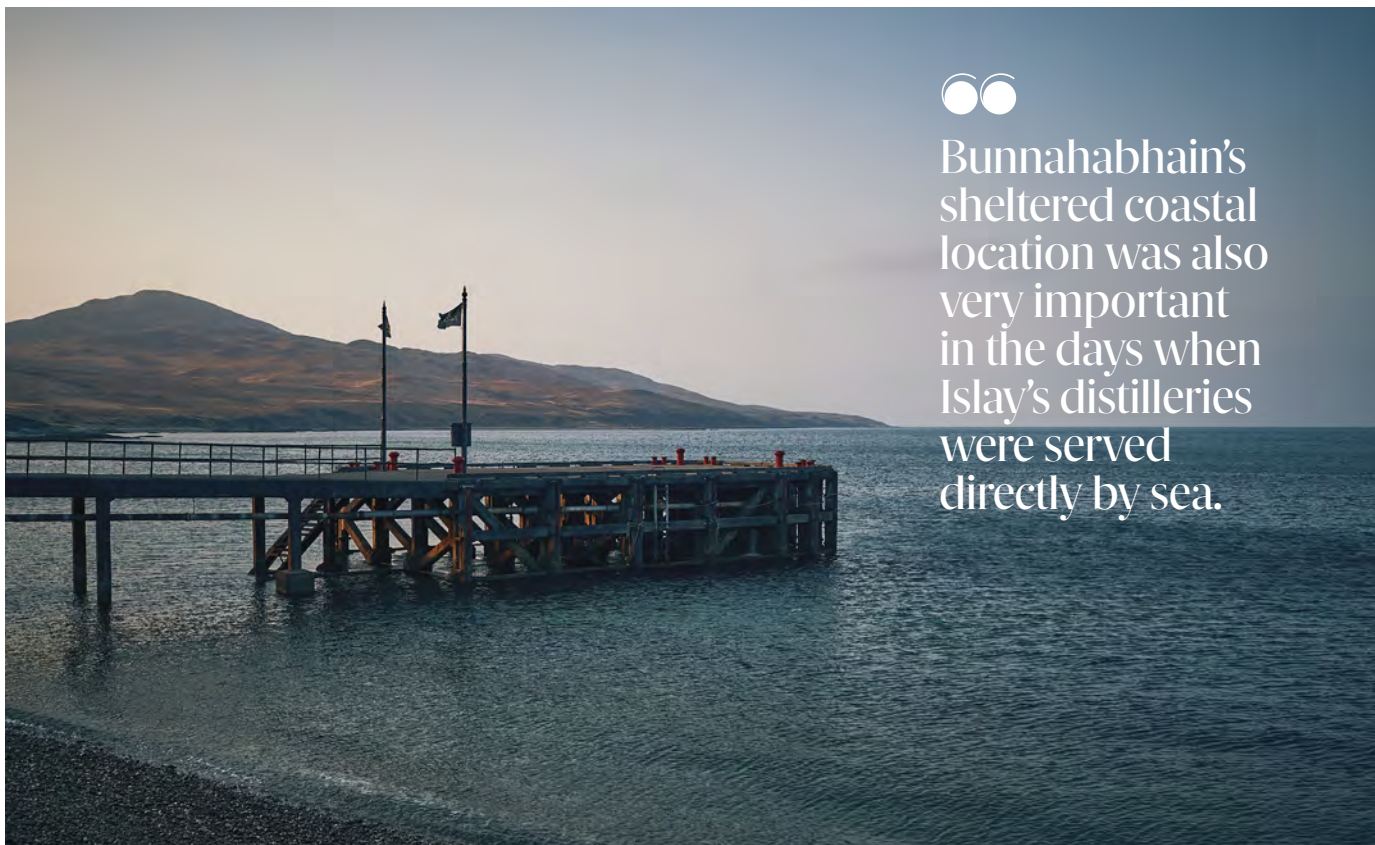
Bunnahabhain has set the target of being Islay's first distillery with a Net Zero distillation process. This has led to the installation of a biomass energy centre powered entirely by forest biomass and spent malt (also known as draff, a by-product of distillation).

The new £6.5m Biomass Energy Centre will save 3,500 tonnes of carbon per year. This will save the CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent of the emissions of 1,800 diesel cars, which is more than the total number of vehicles based on Islay.

Julian Patton, Supply Chain Director at Distell International, said: "This is an exciting new chapter for Bunnahabhain distillery and whisky production on Islay. The Scotch Whisky Association has set a net zero target of 2040 and a lot of work is underway by our team in pursuit of achieving this goal long before this."

Bunnahabhain's newly constructed Biomass Energy Centre





Port Askaig



Bunnahabhain's sheltered coastal location was also very important in the days when Islay's distilleries were served directly by sea.

➔ *“Everything about Bunnahabhain is big,”* declares Master Distiller Brendan McCarron by way of introduction. *“Starting with the view.”* And he's absolutely right, with the distillery stunningly located on the north-eastern shores of the Hebridean island of Islay, with views across the Sound of Islay to neighbouring Jura and its famous trio of breast-shaped mountains, named The Paps.

Although most of Islay's nine working distilleries are relatively isolated in location, Bunnahabhain takes remoteness to a whole new level, being situated at the end of a four-mile-long, unclassified road, just outside the island's northern ferry terminal of Port Askaig. Bunnahabhain is on the way to nowhere.

The distillery's spectacular site was chosen by founders and whisky blenders William and James Greenlees and William Robertson for the local availability of pure water and high quality peat. Its sheltered coastal location was also very important in the days when Islay's distilleries were served directly by sea.

Bunnahabhain was established in 1881, and constructed along the same lines as a Bordeaux châteaux, with the first spirit flowing during October 1882. The distillery and its infrastructure cost some £30,000, equivalent to more than £2.6 million today.

Part of that 'infrastructure' involved the creation of a road, pier, and houses for staff, plus a post office and school. At the time, distilleries required a great deal more manual labour than they do today, and on-site facilities were essential in such a remote spot.

The company that owned Bunnahabhain, Islay Distillers Company Ltd, merged with the proprietors of Glenrothes distillery on Speyside in 1887, creating Highland Distilleries Company Ltd. Highland remained in control until 1999, when The Edrington Group took over, reducing Bunnahabhain to just a few weeks of whisky-making per year.

Edrington soon decided to concentrate its energies on a small number of strategic, high profile single malt brands such as The Macallan and Highland Park, and accordingly sold off Glengoyne and Bunnahabhain

distilleries during 2003.

Bunnahabhain was purchased by Burn Stewart Distillers plc, and through a series of sales, Burn Stewart itself was ultimately acquired by South African-headquartered drinks giant Distell International in 2013, along with Deanston and Tobermory distilleries, in a deal worth £160 million.

#### **BIG BUNNAHABHAIN**

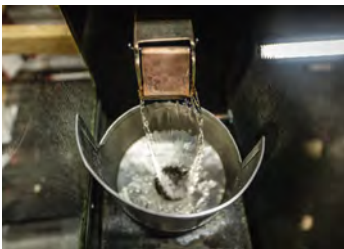
All of which brings us to the present day and the 'bigness' of Bunnahabhain. Brendan McCarron expands on his initial comment about the scale of the distillery, saying that *“Bunnahabhain' is a big word, a real mouthful, meaning 'mouth of the river' in Gaelic. And it's a big site, with a large courtyard. And a big whisky. Matured almost exclusively in sherry wood, the big character of the spirit can take sherry wood maturation all its life, and is great at the chosen bottling strength of 46.3% abv.*

*“We have one of the largest mashtuns in Scotland, which can accommodate 15-tonne mashes. We're doing 14.2-tonne mashes and 13 of them a week. We do big batches, but not many of them. That's how we work. The mashtun isn't*

## Distillery Visit



Bunnahabhain is a cult distillery and it's time to lay down quantity to the highest quality.





always on the go.

*"We put the wash – 60,000 litres at a time – into six huge 18-foot-tall wooden washbacks, and allow 55 hours for fermentation. We have just four stills, two wash and two spirit, but they are vast. To make the amount of spirit that we do, most people would think you'd need six stills. We could make 3.3 to 3.4mla at capacity."*

McCarron declares that *"Bunnahabhain is a cult distillery and it's time to lay down quantity to the highest quality. I know people all over the world want to drink it, and we need to be more selfish with the stock and not use too much for blending or selling it to other companies. Around 50 percent of output goes for single malt and I'd love that to be 70 percent."*

*"It's a cool stillhouse where you feel the sea breezes coming in, which helps reflux. Bunnahabhain is all about reflux, with lots of copper in the large stills stripping out the sulphur, leaving lots of big flavours. The spirit stills are teardrop-shaped and the wash stills are like wizards' hats."*

Distillation is relatively slow, partly due to the large size of batches being distilled, with the middle cut lasting from two to two and a half hours. Production is largely manually controlled.

When it comes to spirit character, McCarron says that *"You get green apple and Conference pear notes. Floral and malty, with a bold, burnt cereal note, and it's oily. There's a salinity about Bunnahabhain because it's distilled by the sea. You can smell the sea at the distillery. There's a sprinkling of crystalline sea salt. It's a very complex whisky, with real depth."*

#### INVESTING IN BUNNAHABHAIN

Distell has already proved itself to be a worthy custodian of its Scottish distilling estate, providing funds for much-needed investment. £10.5m was allocated to Bunnahabhain, with a three-year programme of work starting in 2019.

Central to improving the appeal of the distillery was the creation of a dedicated visitor centre, which replaced two shoreside warehouses that were in a poor state of repair. According to Global Marketing Lead Chiara Giovanacci, *"We were ready to open it just before the Covid lockdown. The shop has been open, but we've had very restricted public access, so it's been a sort of 'soft' opening as visitors have started to come through. We're really excited about it. It brings the distillery to life and the staff at the distillery get so much out of it."*

*"Welcoming people into the distillery is of paramount importance. Getting people to explore Islay and to taste the drams is like nothing else. You can sit in the new visitor centre and enjoy your dram and take your time. You can just enjoy the centre and the views if you wish. You can go as light or as deep as you want with the tours. It's all small-scale and hands-on with the distillery team."*

*"We were getting around 10,000 visitors per year pre-pandemic, but we're not expecting that level again for a few years. It's all about the quality of our offering, and by the nature of where we are, we get real malt aficionados."*

A large chunk of Distell's investment at Bunnahabhain has been dedicated to a biomass energy centre, which came on stream in March of this year, putting the distillery on-track to become Islay's first to have a net zero emission distillation process. The plant is powered entirely by forest biomass, sourced 15 miles away, and draff, and is expected to save 3,500 tonnes of carbon per year. As Chiara Giovanacci notes, *"We are lowering our carbon footprint ongoing as part of the Scotch Whisky Association's target of achieving industry-wide net zero emissions by 2040."*

Additional expenditure has been devoted to refurbishment of the mash tun, replacement of a still condenser and lyne arm, while two replacement washbacks and two stills are to be installed this summer. Brendan McCarron adds that *"We've also spent a small fortune painting the distillery white again!"*

The distillery previously operated with eight production staff, but since McCarron was appointed Master Distiller early last year, that number has increased to 10. *"It allows greater flexibility and we've been working a seven-day week instead of a five-day week for a year now,"* he explains.

#### SINGLE MALTS

The core range of Bunnahabhain single malts comprises 12 and 18-year-olds, along with Stiuriadair and Toiteach A Dha, while 25, 30, and 40-year-olds are also available.

The NAS Stiùireadair - pronounced 'stew-rahdur' - means 'helmsman' in Scots Gaelic, while Toiteach A Dhà is a peated NAS expression, with a higher sherry cask influence, and the name – pronounced 'toch-ach ah-ghaa' - means Smoky Two.

Until the early 1960s, Bunnahabhain was a peated single malt, in common with its fellow Islay whiskies, but the distillery's owners required unpeated whisky for their light-bodied Cutty Sark blend, and Bunnahabhain duly began to produce the style for which it is famous today. Around the same time, the original 1881 open-topped mashtun was replaced and a second pair of stills was added.

Burn Stewart's ownership saw a return to the production of quantities of heavily peated spirit once again – named Moine, the Gaelic for peat – and a number of peated single malt expressions followed. Peated production now accounts for around 50 per cent of the distillery's annual output, with some destined for bottling under the Bunnahabhain label, while the remainder either goes into Distell's Black Bottle blend or is used for reciprocal stock trading with third-party companies.

The latest addition to Bunnahabhain's permanent range is a cask strength expression of the 12-year-old, and as Chiara Giovanacci explains, *"12-year-old Cask Strength came out of an 'ask' from our consumers. People visiting the distillery get great pleasure sampling the whisky at cask strength, so we wanted to bring that experience to our consumers. Bunnahabhain now make stands up to sherry wood and cask strength very well."*

*"We launched the first batch of cask strength 12-year-old last November and it exceeded all our expectations. It sold out online in 40 minutes and into retailers in 48 hours. There will always be variations in ABV and flavour profile from batch to batch and the chocolate and berry fruits are intensified at cask strength."*

Meanwhile, two new limited editions were released to celebrate this year's Feis Ile festival in May, namely Abhainn Araig, which translates from the Gaelic as Araig River, and a 1998 Calvados Cask Finish.

The former contains a proportion of spirit matured in ex-Pedro Ximenez sherry octave casks, with the small vessels helping to concentrate aromas and flavours, while the latter spent its final two years in casks which previously held the famed French apple brandy.

There is no doubt that you need to make an effort to visit Bunnahabhain distillery, but that effort certainly pays-off in an experience that is 'big' in every way. And if you aren't able to take the trip, there's always a tempting range of Bunnahabhain single malts available from The Whisky Shop. As Chiara Giovanacci says, *"Bunnahabhain has a small but mighty group of fans who are very loyal. We are predominantly known for unpeated, sherried Islay single malt. That's our signature style and what sets us apart."*



Interview

# Master of his craft

An interview with *Outlander* and  
*Men In Kilts* star Graham McTavish

PHOTOGRAPHY: BRIAN SWEENEY

ASSISTANT: JONNI

LOCATION: NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON



## Interview

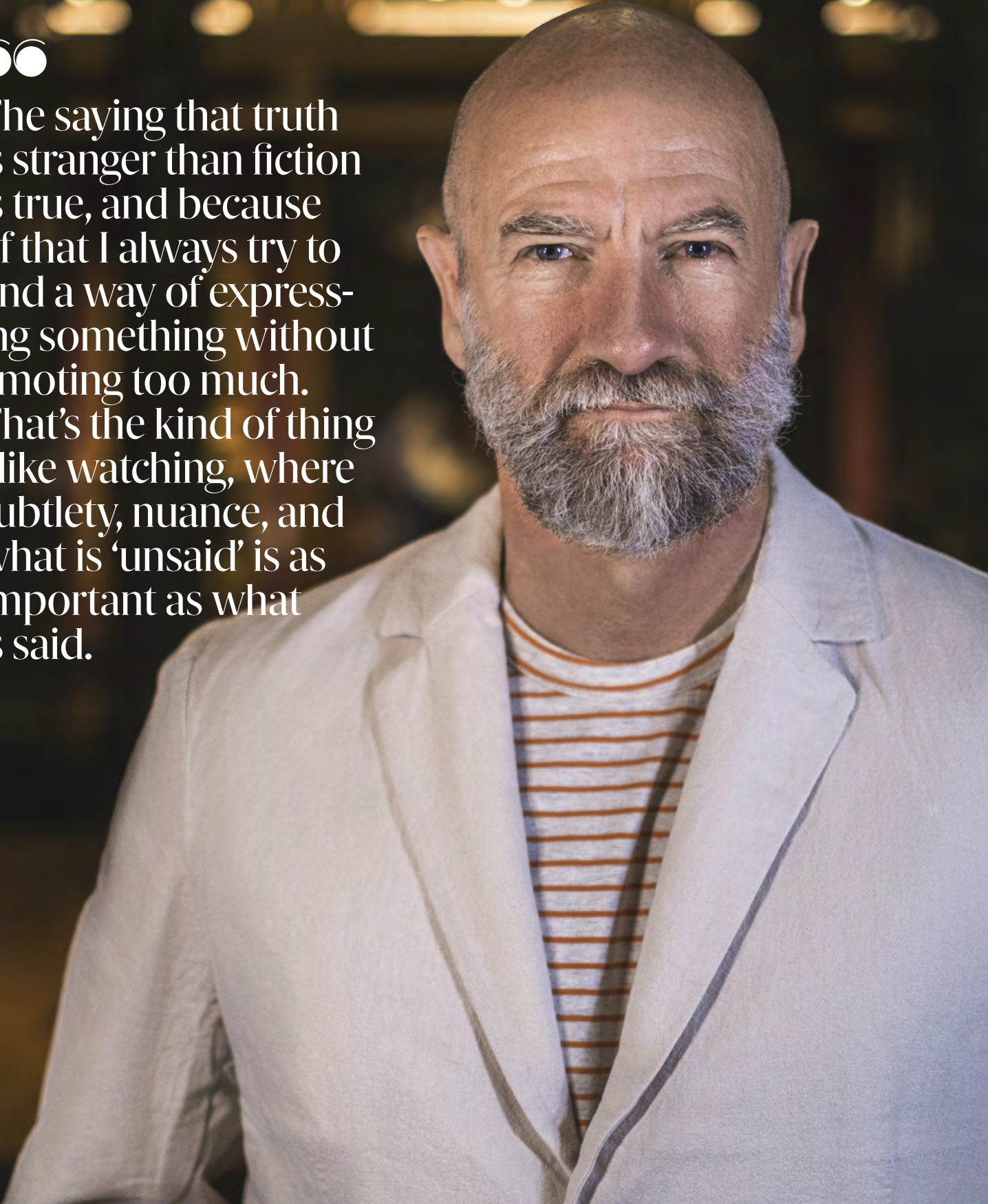
Whether he is starring as a hardy dwarf in *The Hobbit* trilogy, a fierce warrior chieftain in *Outlander*, or writing a *New York Times* best-selling book, one cannot fault Graham McTavish's versatility, talent, and on-screen presence. His hilarious travel series *Men in Kilts* with fellow *Outlander* star Sam Heughan, which has just wrapped up filming its second season, showcases his deep love for his Scottish roots, as well as his wry sense of humour.

*Whiskeria* caught up with Graham at The National Gallery in London – the place where he first caught the acting bug – to discuss what his favourite whiskies are at the moment, what 'The Outlander Effect' is, and how Scotland, and the UK, is seen around the world.





The saying that truth is stranger than fiction is true, and because of that I always try to find a way of expressing something without emoting too much. That's the kind of thing I like watching, where subtlety, nuance, and what is 'unsaid' is as important as what is said.



➔ **The second season of *Men in Kilts* has just wrapped up filming in New Zealand. What made you shoot a show about Scotland there? Did you find many overlapping cultural connections?**

I did! I believe 20% of New Zealanders have Scottish descent, when you go into the South Island you find that there's more McTavish's in Otago than anywhere else. They all just got on boats and went as far away from Scotland as they could, and then essentially landed up in another Scotland. You go to the South Island, and you could be in the Highlands. They brought the culture with them too, which is why we have a shared fascination with each other.

**What's the secret to making great television?**

Good writing helps - that's pretty important. The saying that truth is stranger than fiction is true, and because of that I always try to find a way of expressing something without emoting too much. That's the kind of thing I like watching, where subtlety, nuance, what is 'unsaid' is as important as what is said. I think it's important not to over-emphasise everything and let people draw their own connections.

**You play a lot of Scottish characters in movies and television; do you approach it differently nowadays compared to when you started your career?**

Well, there was a very strong Scottish identity in theatre back in the 80s, and I don't know if there is as much of it as there used to be. That's a real shame, as I think the culture's been slightly homogenised. There's a great interest in independence but at the same time there's this sort of disconnect with the ways Scotland projects itself culturally, to a great degree. The ability to have a Scottish voice was much greater than now, ironically. *Outlander* is an interesting example. It's obviously raised awareness of Scotland internationally, in the United States particularly. And the tourism numbers - I mean, there was some ridiculous increase in tourism in Scotland since *Outlander* - but because there is a romanticisation of Scotland, especially from people outside of it, I think Scotland has struggled a little bit with its identity. On the outside they view it as this kind of wonderful Rob Roy, shortbread world. The reality of Scotland is very different, it has always been much more complicated. Even the idea that Scotland was this backwater that nobody knew about, the connections with

mainland Europe were huge! And continue to be so. That is still often overlooked. For example, in the Highlands I don't think there was a strong sense of a 'Scottish' identity - there was a sense of being a MacLeod, there was a sense of being a McTavish, and they were they were constantly fighting each other and hated each other. It wasn't a sense of 'Well, let's all get together and help each other out already!'

**Do you consider yourself Scottish?**

Definitely. It's a strange thing. I think it comes from many, many things and not just where you were physically born. Identity is very interesting, and where we draw our identity from. Whether it be the cultural influences on us, our ancestry, the individuals who have really affected us or influenced interests in our lives, it just so happens that all of those were really Scottish for me. My Grandfather was born in Edinburgh and walked to Glasgow looking for work, hoping there was work at the end of it. 'I'll just walk to Glasgow', what, 40 miles? Just a totally different breed of people! I don't know if that's 'Scottish', but I think that attitude has deeply influenced me.

**Your profile has risen dramatically over the last ten years. What are the best things and worst things about fame, and how has that affected your attitude?**

Well, I get to do more of the things I have wanted to do, I've been able to write two books with Sam and I've always wanted to be a writer, so that was a dream come true. I just get to be active. When I started, this was not a profession you went into to become well known or anything. I would say I enjoyed doing ten years of theatre in Scotland as much as I've enjoyed the last ten years of doing film and television. I don't get it in the same way that a lot of other people would, I think that there is a level of that kind of recognition where you end up a prisoner in your own life. I don't think that's very healthy at all. I remember performing a Samuel Beckett play to one person in an Irish pub in north London, it's just about doing that which I enjoy. I only have the memories of those experiences to sustain me in terms of a narrative in my career, so I'm more interested in that.

**Many of the characters that you play are neither good nor bad, but somewhere in between. Do you think morally ambiguous characters are becoming harder to love?**

That's a good question. Someone like Dougal Mackenzie in *Outlander*, people are always telling me 'He's so villainous!' He's a complicated character: he's manipulative; he's cheating on his wife; he has things that you could criticise him for, but he's human. The problem with the more popular genres now is that everything is becoming very black and white, you have superheroes, and you have supervillains. There's nothing seriously bad about the heroes, and there's nothing great about the villains. But the whole point of tragedy is that they must be great for the fall to be profound and interesting. We're in a period of history where nuance isn't very important to people. You either agree with what I say, or you're going to be ignored, or potentially vilified. It's very binary, the way people look at the world, and that's not the way I think the world is. I spent my 20s and 30s in a pub arguing with my friends about everything, and now I feel like it's a dangerous thing to do.

## Interview

### What's a hill you would die on?

I think something that I've learnt about myself is how much I value freedom. That's an old-fashioned concept, I suppose. With the obvious exception of my children, that is something I'd die to protect. Freedom is something I think that is always in danger of being eroded in our lives, and once it's gone it's difficult to get back.

### Do you think 22-year-old Graham McTavish would recognise the Graham McTavish today?

Totally! I mean I have learnt some things; I've changed in certain ways. But fundamentally I'm exactly the same, in some ways I'm trapped as a 12-year-old. I think anybody that goes into something like the arts has to be in touch with the very childish side to themselves. You look at a child playing – they can instantly become whatever it is they want to become because their minds are so fluid, they can move between fiction and reality very, very easily and I think as an actor you have to try and hold onto that, and resist the cynicism that comes with age, the resistance to play. You do a scene with Sylvester Stallone, this hugely well-known figure, and find out he loves improvisation. Loves it! We improvised most of our dialogue in *Rambo*. He loved to play around and come up with new things. I thought that was amazing, it's an interesting approach to life. He said to me that he never wanted to be in action movies. He was a serious actor, he wanted to do serious work, then he became these iconic characters. At the same time, he's a very good businessman.

### How comfortable are you with the 'business' side when it comes to selling yourself?

I think I approach all of it the same really. I like telling stories, just like the ones I've been telling you! I like talking about things to do with me and stories that have nothing to do with me. It's all part and parcel of the same thing, I love communicating with people about potentially interesting things. I wrote a treatment for *Men in Kilts* in 1990, I only resurrected the idea after *Outlander*. I suppose it is selling myself to some degree. Sam Heughan is a great example, he's taken his passions: whisky, outdoor pursuits, Scotland, and has made those interests into a business. It's rarely been a thing where I'm looking to 'cash in'.



I think something that I've learnt about myself is how much I value freedom. That's an old-fashioned concept, I suppose.





## Interview



**How did you become the first person to ever put on a play in The National Gallery, and what was the story about what you did to promote it?**

Yes! It was called *‘Letters from the Yellow Chair’*, we had done a two-man show in Edinburgh to begin with. A lady showed us a book based on the letters between Vincent Van Gogh and his brother Theo. Normally, we would have just gone to the pub. But had we not gone to the book shop immediately that day, I wouldn’t have written that play. We presented it to the National Gallery and in a moment of complete madness on their part they agreed to do it, and so we did it in the summer of 1986. Then we did this thing where we wrote letters on National Gallery-headed notepaper, giving the impression that we were writing on behalf of the National Gallery, recommending ourselves to all these amazing art institutions in America. I joke that my friend was like my first wife because we ended up going places that you would only really go with somebody you were in love with. I’m just glad I went to the bookshop first, before celebrating!



I spent my 20s and 30s in a pub arguing with my friends about everything, and now I feel like it’s a dangerous thing to do.



*The Ambassadors*  
Hans Holbein the Younger  
1533

*An Allegory with Venus and Time*  
Giovanni Battista Tiepolo,  
1758



## Interview

**Knowledge Bar**  
**Tasting Notes**


We selected four whiskies for Graham to sample - here's his thoughts:

—  
**Starward Single Barrel**  
**Red Wine Barrique TWS Exclusive**  
 55.4% VOL | Australian Single Malt | £93

—  
**Wow! Quite sweet. I'm always a bit nervous using notes, I just feel like I'm not skilled enough. I get something syrupy; I would definitely say caramel. There's a little bit of spice in there, isn't it? Incredible that this is from Australia, though we found New Zealand has a couple good distilleries too.**

—  
**Dalmonach 2016**  
**5 Year Old W Club Exclusive**  
 55.6% VOL | Highland Single Malt | £67

—  
**Oh, you definitely get some fruitiness. You can smell that; it's got a real fruit presence. A sort of real smell of the outdoors, maybe grass in there as well, some earthy things going on there. Mmm!**

—  
**Benromach 2012**  
**First Fill Sherry #350 TWS Exclusive**  
 59.4% VOL | Speyside Single Malt | £88

—  
**Oh, I get a wee bit of cappuccino. Is this where the expression 'wake up and smell the coffee' comes from? A real morning whisky! A leathery smell follows, a bit like smelly old boots. This is lovely. Wow, now the party's really starting, that's a really long finish. Some sort of tobacco-ey presence, quite muscular.**

—  
**Rare Find Tranquillity 1985**  
**Highland Single Malt TWS Exclusive**  
 42.2% VOL | Highland Single Malt | £395

—  
**Fudge, is that pancakes? Is that right? They're such wonderful things, tasting notes. You're trying to define something that you just can't put your finger on.**

"Incredible that this is from Australia, though we found New Zealand has a couple good distilleries too."

Starward Single Barrel  
 Red Wine Barrique TWS Exclusive

**What occasion justifies spending a lot of money of a single bottle for you?**

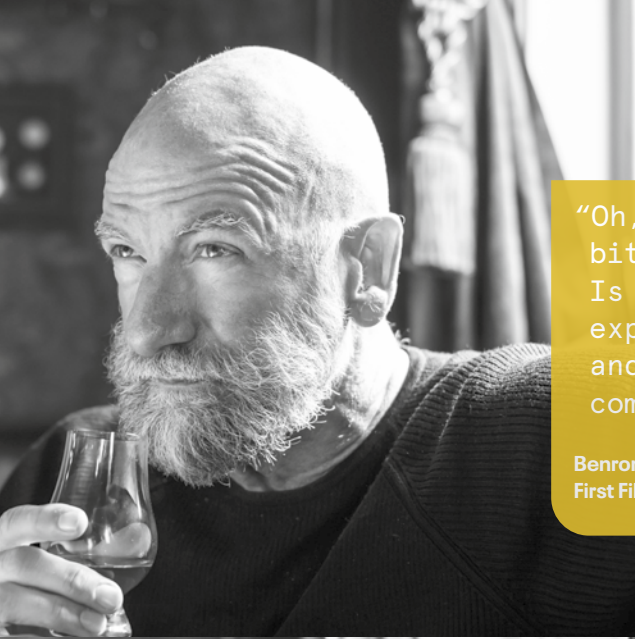
Celebrations, marking something, passing something on to people. But also, because it's a great pleasure to enjoy something that's really, really, good. And that doesn't mean it has to be expensive, but unfortunately that tends to be the case.

**What is your preference when it comes to whisky?**

I've sort of slowly developed a little bit of an understanding in it. Like a lot of people, I started out with *'let's get peaty!'* For a lot of Americans I know, it can't be peaty enough, they want that peat floating around in the glass! The first whisky I would have been introduced to would have had a Speyside style, that would have been by my father's influence. Since then, what I've found out is that I've come to really like a region that, I'm ashamed to say, I didn't really know existed, which is the Campbeltown region. Springbank is a big one... I'm pretty sure that Sam Heughan had me try some Glen Scotia? Blending those Highland and island flavours, it somehow takes the edge off of both. That is just a really unique flavour, I'm always really into that. I have very Catholic tastes when it comes to whisky, there's not many that I would go *'Oh, no, no, no!'* That's one of the great things you do, you bring attention to styles, regions you would not know otherwise. I've kind of given up on beer altogether.

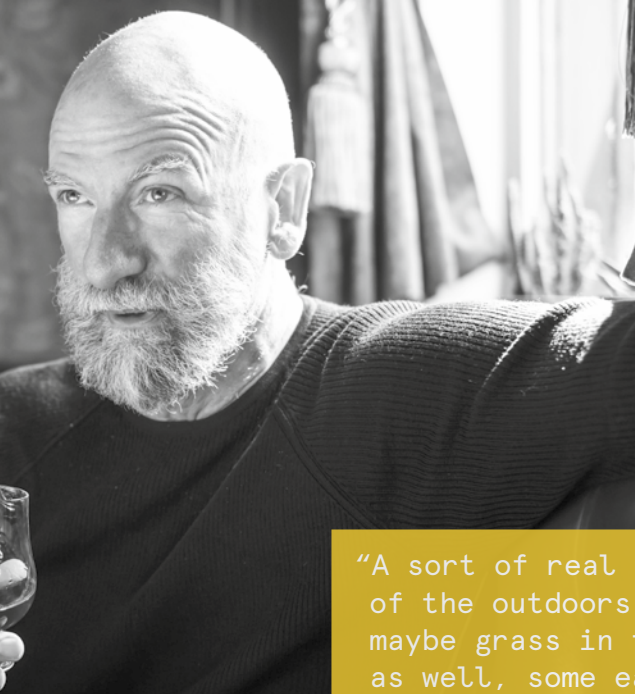
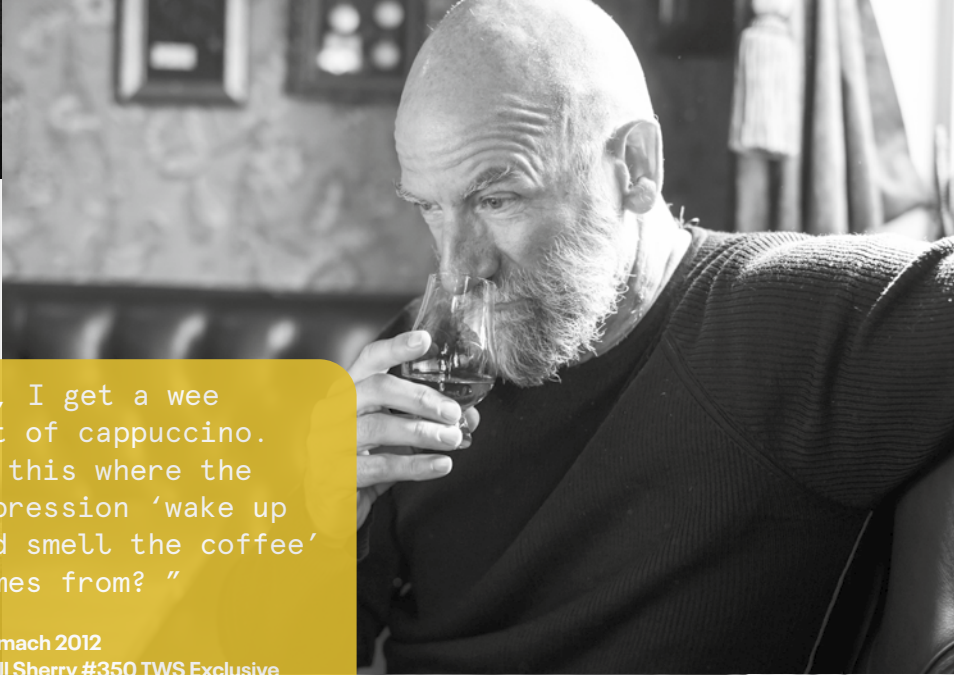
**Do you have a good toast to share with our readers?**

Oh absolutely - *"Here's tae us. Wha's like us? Damn few, and they're a' deid."* The one that my father used to do, with pretty much every dinner we ever had. I remember quoting it in America and they were like *'they're all dead? Isn't that creepy?'* You're missing the point, they're not glad that they're all dead! Well, what can you do?



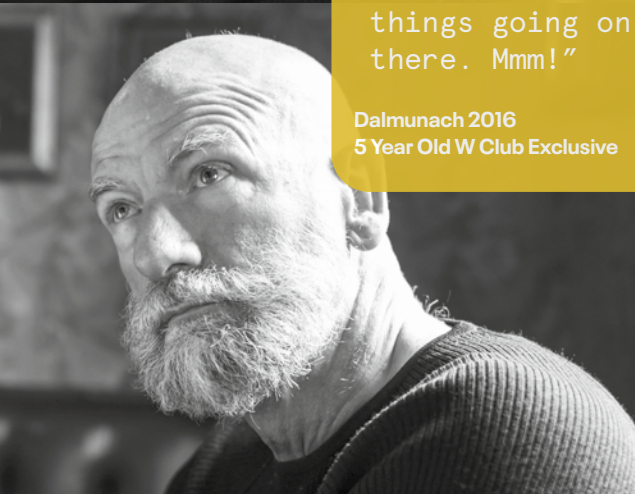
"Oh, I get a wee bit of cappuccino. Is this where the expression 'wake up and smell the coffee' comes from? "

Benromach 2012  
First Fill Sherry #350 TWS Exclusive



"A sort of real smell of the outdoors, maybe grass in there as well, some earthy things going on there. Mmm!"

Dalmunach 2016  
5 Year Old W Club Exclusive



### Knowledge Bar Graham McTavish



#### 1961

**Graham James McTavish** was born 4 January 1961 to Alec and Ellen McTavish, in **Glasgow**. Graham also spends time growing up in Canada and England.

#### 1979

Graham first gets on stage in a school performance of *The Rivals*. He goes onto study English Literature at Queen Mary University of London.

#### 1982

After graduating, Graham plied his trade with the repertory theatres of London's West End and the **Dundee Repertory Theatre**.

#### 1986

Graham co-writes, performs, and produces a play on the life of **Vincent Van Gogh**, eventually touring it around the world. He wins his first professional role in Walt Disney's mini-series **Return to Treasure Island**.

#### 1988

Graham stars in his first professional film role **For Queen and Country**, alongside a then-unknown Denzel Washington. A year later begins a long association with Monty Python's Terry Jones, starring in **Erik The Viking**, and **The Wind in the Willows**.

#### 1998

Graham is cast in popular TV shows such as **Taggart**, **Casualty**, **Red Dwarf**, **Heartbeat**, **Doctors**, **Rome**, **Empire**, **Prison Break**, **24**, and more.

#### 2008

McTavish stars opposite Sylvester Stallone in **Rambo**, the fourth film in the franchise.

#### 2012

Graham is cast as the dwarf Dwalin in Peter Jackson's blockbuster **The Hobbit** trilogy, based on the J.R.R. Tolkien novel.

#### 2013

It is announced that Graham has been cast as **Dougal MacKenzie** in STARZ time-travel drama series **Outlander**. Graham would reprise the role for two seasons, winning plaudits from critics and audiences alike.

#### 2016

McTavish lands the role of the Saint of Killers in AMC's drama **Preacher**.

#### 2020

He and *Outlander* co-star Sam Heughan announce that STARZ will be the platform for their travel series **Men In Kilts: A Roadtrip with Sam and Graham**. The two go on to publish **Cianlands: Whisky, Warfare, and a Scottish Adventure Like No Other**. The book reaches the #1 spot on **New York Times'** Best Seller Lists.

#### 2021

The pair release their second book, **The Cianlands Almanac: Seasonal Stories from Scotland**.

#### 2022

Graham has starring roles in the upcoming **Game of Thrones** prequel series **House of the Dragon**, and a raft of other film and TV roles. The second season of **Men in Kilts** is due to arrive over the next year. At present, Graham lives with his family in New Zealand.

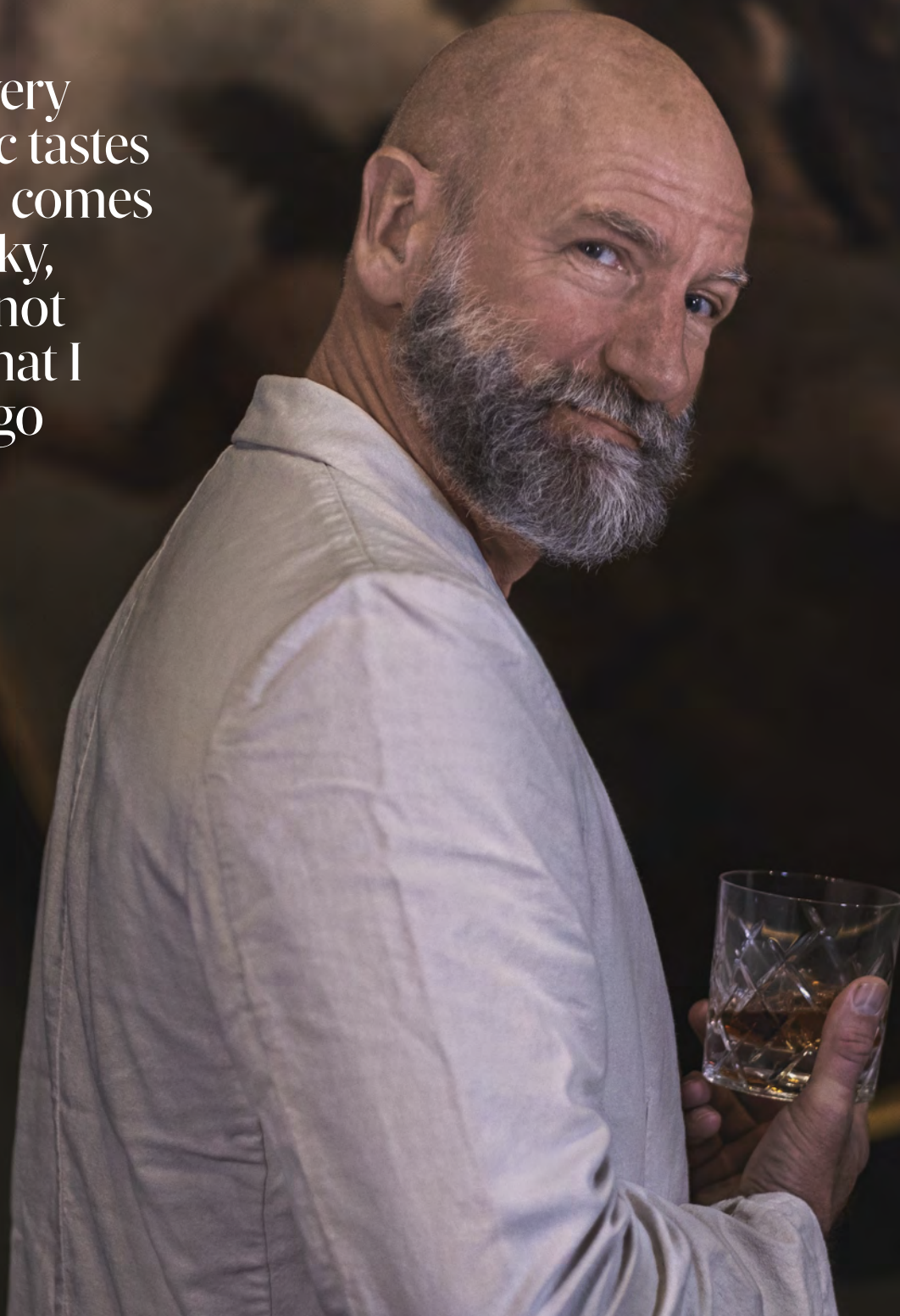


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FOLKCLOTHING.COM

-  
SUNGLASSES, AND JUMPER ON P61, GRAHAM'S OWN.



I have very  
Catholic tastes  
when it comes  
to whisky,  
there's not  
many that I  
would go  
*'Oh, no,  
no, no!'*



Mixing It Up

# Fyne Art







Loch Fyne Whiskies is broadening its horizons. As the shop prepares to celebrate a 30 year anniversary, W Club Manager Luke Crowley-Holland uses each expression from the core range to create four modern masterpieces. The Botanical Gin, the Chocolate Orange Liqueur, and the Blended Whisky are inspired works of art in their own right, though the right spirit can be a light sketch or a bold brushstroke depending on how you use it.

PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRISTINA KERNOHAN  
ASSISTANT: JESSICA SCHURTE  
SET DESIGN: ISABEL FORBES







## The Inveraray

<b>INGREDIENTS</b>	Loch Fyne Blended Whisky	50ml
	Loch Fyne Chocolate & Orange Liqueur	30ml
	Dry Vermouth	75ml
	Lemon juice	10ml

<b>GLASS</b>	Coupe
--------------	-------

<b>GARNISH</b>	Lemon slice
----------------	-------------

<b>METHOD</b>	Mix in a shaker with plenty of ice.
	Served straight up.

## Mixing It Up

### Loch Fyne Margarita

INGREDIENTS	Tequila	50ml
	Loch Fyne Chocolate & Orange Liqueur	25ml
	Lime juice	20ml
	Agave syrup	15ml

GLASS	Crystal tumbler
-------	-----------------

GARNISH	Orange peel
---------	-------------

METHOD	Shake well and double strain into a pre-chilled glass. Serve on the rocks.
--------	--





## Mixing It Up

### Aviation Cocktail

<b>INGREDIENTS</b>	Loch Fyne Gin	50ml
	Maraschino Liqueur	25ml
	Cherry Liqueur	15ml
	Lemon juice	25ml

<b>GLASS</b>	Coupe
--------------	-------

<b>GARNISH</b>	Cherries
----------------	----------

<b>METHOD</b>	Shake well and double strain into pre-chilled glass. Serve straight up.
---------------	---





## Mixing It Up

**Affinity  
Cocktail**

<b>INGREDIENTS</b>	Loch Fyne Blended Whisky	50mL
	Sweet Vermouth	25mL
	Dry Vermouth	25mL
	Dash of Angostura Bitters	

<b>GLASS</b>	Coupe
--------------	-------

<b>GARNISH</b>	Lemon peel
----------------	------------

<b>METHOD</b>	Mix in a shaker with plenty of ice.
	Served straight up.







# INSPIRED ON THE SHORES OF LOCH FYNE



CREATED WITH  
SCOTTISH COASTAL BOTANICALS

ISSUE

Summer 2022

BUY ONLINE AT  
whiskyshop.com

# THE WHISKY SHOP

UNIQUE  
DIFFERENT  
INTERESTING



## Summer of Fun

Warm weather and delicious drinks? It's time to get excited.  
Treat your senses this summer with these pitch perfect spirits.

IN THIS ISSUE

Independence  
Day

Father's  
Day

Summer  
Spirits

Customer  
Favourites

## THE WHISKY SHOP

# Father's Day Bottles

Secure 'favourite child' status this year with these fabulous drams

## ① GlenDronach 15 Year Old

70cl | 46% VOL | £74

Treacle / Toffee / Chocolate orange

- Matured in the finest oloroso sherry and Pedro Ximénez casks
- A full bodied and dynamic dram
- Crammed with sherried spice and rich fruitcake flavours

## ② The Dalmore 12 Year Old Sherry Cask Select

70cl | 43% VOL | £71

Mango / Cinnamon / Panna cotta

- A truly decadent dram aged in ex-bourbon casks and finished in sherry barrels from Andalusia
- Exclusive to The Whisky Shop in the UK - treat your dad to something unique!
- Sip it neat, drink it in an Old Fashioned or add it to a chocolate truffle mix

①



②



③



**③ BenRiach  
12 Year Old  
#4830**

70cl | 59.9% VOL | £102

Dried fruit / Cocoa powder / Rich dark chocolate

- An exclusive to The Whisky Shop, with a rich history
- Distilled in 2009, spending a 12-year-long maturation in a port pipe cask
- Each Cask Edition Dram is a full house of flavour, using hand-selected casks from Benriach

**④ Kilchoman  
Machir Bay Glass Set**

70cl | 46% VOL | £59

Lemon zest / Honey sweetness / Dried sultanas

- Kilchoman Distillery's signature peated whisky, named after the spectacular beach nearby
- Matured in oloroso sherry butts and ex-bourbon barrels, bottled at a natural colour
- Floral intensity, long-lasting peat smoke, and a one-of-a-kind gift set

**⑤ Yamazaki  
12 Year Old**

70cl | 43% VOL | £160

Ginger / Cinnamon / Coconut

- Suntory's flagship single malt whisky known and loved the world over
- Great appeal to newcomers and experienced Japanese whisky fans
- Elegant and smooth, with soft fruit and the mizunara oak shining through

**⑥ Bushmills  
16 Year Old**

70cl | 40% VOL | £95

Almond / Currant jam / Dark chocolate

- Matured in oloroso sherry casks and bourbon-seasoned casks
- Before being finished in port pipes for nine months
- Sweet, jammy flavours abound, a delectable treat

④



⑤



⑥



THE WHISKY SHOP

# Father's Day Gifts

Spoil your dad the way he deserves with any one of these nifty gift sets

## 1 Scotland in a Box

12x3cl | Various VOL | £71

- Big flavours, for the fan of Diageo classic malts!
- A broad canvas of tastes, from smokey notes, to the sharp tang of the sea
- Talisker 10, Lagavulin 16, and Cragganmore 12 Year Old, and more feature

## 2 Dalmore Port Wood Reserve Gift Set

70cl | 46.5% VOL | £83

Seville oranges / Cherry / Sticky toffee pudding

- An award-winning bottle of Dalmore Port Wood Reserve
- A harmony of different flavours
- Presented with two rock glasses emblazoned with the iconic Dalmore stag

1



2



3



4



### ③ Jack Daniel's Single Barrel Nosing Glass Set

70cl | 40% VOL | £55

Charred oak | Vanilla | Caramel

- Signature offering in JD's single barrel collection
- Limited edition, this single barrel has a robust taste profile
- Glass Set includes a Jeff Arnett Master Distiller tasting glass

### ⑥ Johnnie Walker Blue Label Glass Gift Set

70cl | 40% VOL | £187

Vanilla / Hazelnuts / Warming smokiness

- Featuring a big expression in the Johnnie Walker range
- A big award-winner in recent years
- Honey, nutty floral notes, and smoky flavours

### ④ Not Socks Again Gift Pack

6x3cl | 40% VOL | £30

- Make this summer extra special with some sensational whiskies
- Drams with a truly head-turning quality
- Upgrade your usual Father's Day gift of socks with six first-rate malt whiskies

### ⑦ Ailsa Bay 1.2 Gift Set

70cl | 48.9% VOL | £67

Earthy smoke / Sugary shortbread / Soft apricot

- Gift pack includes a wonderfully geometric glass
- Distilled at Girvan, with a totally unique micro-maturation
- Wood smoke, heather, sweet vanilla, and oak abound

### ⑤ Singleton of Dufftown 12 Year Old Tumbler Gift Set

70cl | 40% VOL | £42

Malty / Orange zest / Nutty spiciness

- The rich start of the Singleton range
- Matured in European oak casks for a minimum of 12 years
- Loads of fruit and nut flavours, with two nifty tumblers

### ⑧ Glencairn Travel Set and Two Glasses

£36

- Compare and contrast with a pair of fine tasting glasses
- Complete with a beautiful leatherette case to keep the glasses safe when on the move
- Crafted by award-winning glass makers Glencairn

⑤



⑦



⑧



⑥



## THE WHISKY SHOP

# Summer Spirits

Cool down in the heat with these beautiful tipples

## ① Nouaison Gin Negroni Gift Box

70cl | 45% VOL | £65

Fruity / Woody notes / Marmalade

- An unforgettable gift for a Negroni fan
- A spectacular celebration of premium gin and luscious vermouth
- The cherries on the cake are two Negroni glasses, designed to last

## ② The Loch Fyne Botanical Gin

50cl | 42% VOL | £27

Sea salt / Heather pearls / Herbaceous notes

- A unique and handcrafted product from the West Coast
- A clever infusion of Scottish maritime botanicals
- Lingering, sweet herbal finish

①



②



③





### ③ The Lakes Pink Grapefruit Gin

70cl | 46% VOL | £34

Pink grapefruit / Juniper dryness / Smooth finish

- A critics favourite gin from the Lake District
- Distilled in a traditional copper pot still, one smooth expression!
- Won Gold in International Wine & Spirits Competition 2022

### ④ House of Suntory Japanese Craft Spirits Gift Set

3x20cl | varied % VOL | £45

- A premium spirits pack from House of Suntory
- A first-rate introduction to the luxury brand
- Roku Gin, Haku Vodka, and Toki Blended Whisky are included

④



### ⑤ Madre Mezcal

20cl | 45% VOL | £27

Mint / Herbs / Aromatic smoke

- Produced by the Morales family in Oaxaca
- Uses a combination of Espadin and Cuishe agave
- The perfect little bottle for a beach barbecue

### ⑥ Silent Pool Rare Citrus Gin

70cl | 43% VOL | £41

Lemon sherbet / Seville orange / Marmalade

- A gin that uses some of the world's rarest and most intriguing citrus
- Counts Buddha's hand, natsudaikai and green Seville oranges among its unique botanicals
- Best served with tonic over plenty of ice, garnished with a juicy wedge of grapefruit

### ⑦ Seignette Vs Cognac

70cl | 40% VOL | £33

Citrus / Vanilla / Earthy

- A contemporary homage to the original Seignette Cognac
- Versatile, drinkable, and a depth of flavour
- The finish is sweet and lingering with an earthy quality

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⑤



THE WHISKY SHOP

# Independence Day

The ultimate excuse to get into the American spirit!

## ① Four Roses Single Barrel

70cl | 50% VOL | £46

Toasted oak / Chilli spice / Fruity juiciness

- A rich, potent single barrel bourbon
- Aged for a minimum of seven years, this is a high-in-rye bourbon
- Expect a kick of spice and lush fruit on the palate and finish

## ② Sazerac Rye

70cl | 45% VOL | £51

Liquorice / Cloves / Candied spice

- The New Orleans original
- Named after the Sazerac Coffee House in New Orleans, birthplace of the Sazerac cocktail
- Warming spices, with a zesty palate and an oily, spicy finish

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### ③ Eagle Rare 10 Year Old

70cl | 45% VOL | £44 Candied almonds / Toffee / Cocoa

- A top quality Kentucky straight bourbon, produced at the famous Buffalo Trace Distillery
- Aged for no less than ten years
- Celebrated around the world with a raft of gold medals

### ⑤ Woodford Reserve

70cl | 43.2% VOL | £41 Vanilla / Coconut / Butterscotch

- Toast Independence Day with a perfectly rich US dram
- The only bourbon triple-distilled in copper pots
- Makes the perfect Old Fashioned, but also gives a crisp, distinct taste neat

### ④ Smooth Ambler The Whisky Shop Exclusive

70cl | 59% VOL | £88 Pipe tobacco / Maple syrup / Black peppercorn

- High-rye straight bourbon whiskey
- Aged for five years in heavily charred barrels, creating an intense spirit
- Bottled at natural strength at a hearty 59% ABV, this is a fiery expression

### ⑥ Legent Bourbon

70cl | 47% VOL | £49 Caramel / Toasted nuts / Cinnamon spice

- Classic bourbon character, a combination between Jim Bean and House of Suntory
- Aged for at least four years in charred white oak, then split into red wine and sherry casks
- A harmonious and complex whisky, with oaky spices lingering

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## THE WHISKY SHOP

# Customer Favourites

## Light / Floral

### ① Auchroisk 10 Year Old

70cl | 43% VOL | £57

Orange zest / Cut grass / Roasted nuts

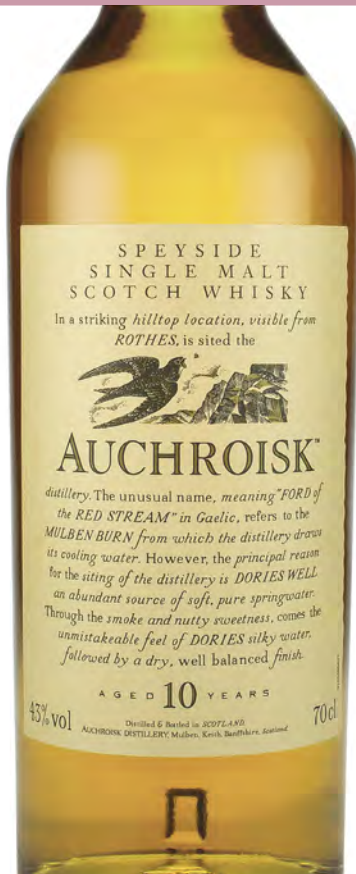
A special whisky due to being the only official bottling of Auchroisk Distillery. This 10-year-old expression is part of Diageo's Flora & Fauna series – an ode to superb single malts from lesser-known distilleries which normally provide liquid for blends.



“A staple bottle to have in your collection for those warm summer evenings. Sweet vanilla leads on the nose, with hints of a fresh meadow. The palate is sweet and nutty, with hints of citrus – think lime sugar dusted biscotti. Delicious.”

Carl, Nottingham

①



### ② Balblair 12 Year Old

70cl | 46% VOL | £52

Sultanas / Honey / Apple

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

### ③ Balblair 15 Year Old

70cl | 46% VOL | £82

Apple / Dates / Caramel

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

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**④ Loch Lomond  
14 Year Old**

70cl | 46% VOL | £64      Green apple / Grapefruit / Vanilla

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

**⑥ Fettercairn  
12 Year Old**

70cl | 40% 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.

**⑤ Bunnahabhain  
12 Year Old**

70cl | 46.3% VOL | £53      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.

**⑦ Glen Moray  
18 Year Old**

70cl | 47.2% VOL | £81      Heather / Honey / Fudge

A Speyside single malt from the Cairngorms, this expression is aged in the finest American oak barrels, specially selected to emphasise the whisky's smooth character. It is a whisky that is celebrated for its long and mellow finish.



THE WHISKY SHOP

# Customer Favourites

## Rich / Sweet

### ① The BenRiach The Twelve

70cl | 46% VOL | £49 Honey / Maraschino cherries / Cocoa

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



“A lovely balance of sweet and spice makes this a new Speyside classic. Perfect for a wee pre-dinner dram!”

→ Lynsey, Edinburgh

①



### ② The Dalmore 15 Year Old

70cl | 40% VOL | £96

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.

### ③ Blair Athol 12 Year Old

70cl | 43% VOL | £56

Walnut / Cinnamon / Fruitcake

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

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**④ Old Pulteney  
15 Year Old**

70cl | 46% VOL | £77

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.

**⑤ The Dalmore  
12 Year Old**

70cl | 40% VOL | £62

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.

**⑥ Benrinnes  
15 Year Old**

70cl | 43% VOL | £59

Toffee apple / Sherry / Malted biscuit

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

**⑦ anCnoc  
12 Year Old**

70cl | 40% VOL | £39

Banana / Butterscotch / Custard

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

**⑧ Loch Lomond  
18 Year Old**

70cl | 46% VOL | £92

Apple / Honey / Tobacco

Matured in the finest oak barrels chosen by former Master Cooper Tommy Wallace, time has allowed this 18-year-old Highland malt to take on the sweeter character of the wood, while a subtle hint of peat and smoke ensures a balanced finish.

**⑨ Arran  
10 Year Old**

70cl | 46% VOL | £46

Apple / Cinnamon / Digestive biscuits

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



## THE WHISKY SHOP

# Customer Favourites

## Rich / Sweet

### ① Mortlach 16 Year Old Distiller's Dram

70cl | 43.4% VOL | £90

Gingerbread / Orange peel / Sultanas

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



"If you haven't tasted a sherry bomb yet, make Mortlach 16 Year Old your first one! Expect an intense whisky packed full of rich fruit flavours, dark chocolate and exotic spices. A top-notch, well-balanced whisky best served neat."

Neil Jamieson, Whisky Specialist

①



### ② Mortlach 12 Year Old The Wee Witchie

70cl | 43.4% VOL | £52

Toffee / Marmalade / Raisins

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

### ③ Oban Distillers Edition

70cl | 43% VOL | £82

Milk chocolate / Sea salt / Christmas cake

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

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#### ④ Glenfiddich Project XX

70cl | 47% VOL | £56

Cinnamon / Almond / Pear drops

The result of one of the most ambitious malt experiments undertaken by Glenfiddich, bringing together 20 whisky experts from around the world and combining each of their selected Glenfiddich casks. The result is something spectacular.

#### ⑤ Glen Scotia Victoriana

70cl | 54.2% VOL | £80

Crème brûlée / Cocoa / Caramel

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

#### ⑥ Benromach 10 Year Old

70cl | 43% VOL | £44

Green apple / Toffee / Black cherry

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

#### ⑦ The GlenDronach 12 Year Old

70cl | 43% VOL | £52

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.

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THE WHISKY SHOP

# Customer Favourites

## Smoky

① **Ailsa Bay 1.2**

70cl | 48.9% VOL | £63

Vanilla / Shortbread / Campfire ember

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



"Coastal peat aromas with plenty of citrus fruit - this is what noses were made for! Both peatier and sweeter than the 1.1, sweet peat and spicy peppercorn follow on the palate, alongside lemon, vanilla and some lovely cereal notes. Delicious."

→ Chris, Norwich



②



## ② Balvenie The Week of Peat 14 Year Old

70cl | 48.9% VOL | £78

Vanilla / Shortbread / Campfire ember

The second release in The Balvenie Stories series, this expression was created by Distillery Manager Ian Millar who was inspired by a trip to Islay. For one week each year, Balvenie distil peated malt, introducing fragrant notes of smoke to the distillery's classic Speyside character.

## ④ Talisker Port Ruighe

70cl | 45.8% VOL | £57

Cocoa / Plum / Spicy pepper

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

## ③ Jura 18 Year Old

70cl | 44% VOL | £77

Dark chocolate / Coffee / Blackcurrant jam

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

## ⑤ Caol Ila Distillers Edition

70cl | 43% VOL | £77

Malted biscuit / Peat smoke / Cinnamon

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

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## THE WHISKY SHOP

# Customer Favourites

## International

### ① Maker's 46

70cl | 47% VOL | £47

Nutmeg / Mulled wine / Caramel

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



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

→ Imogen, Paris

①



### ② Bushmills 16 Year Old

70cl | 40% VOL | £95

Almond / Currant jam / Dark chocolate

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

### ③ Redbreast 12 Year Old

70cl | 40% VOL | £62

Ginger / Marzipan / Dried fruit

This 12-year-old expression is an Irish single pot still whiskey full of aroma and flavour, praised by critics worldwide. Matured in ex-bourbon barrels and oloroso sherry casks, you can thank the latter for giving this whiskey its signature Christmas cake flavour.

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**④ Writers' Tears  
Copper Pot**

70cl | 40% VOL | £42 **Apple / Ginger / Dark chocolate**

A delectable recreation of a fabled whiskey favoured in 19th century Ireland by literary greats such as Joyce, Beckett and Bernard Shaw. A marriage of one cask, two grains and three distillations, the original soon became known as the 'Champagne of Irish Whiskey'. Today's recreation follows the same production process before being aged in American oak bourbon casks.

**⑤ Bulleit Bourbon  
10 Year Old**

70cl | 45.6% VOL | £47 **Apricot / Vanilla / Cinnamon**

A top-notch Kentucky bourbon that has spent a decade in oak. With a mash bill of 68% corn, 28% rye and 4% malted barley, this is the go-to bourbon for a rich balance of creaminess and spice.

**⑥ Green Spot**

70cl | 40% VOL | £50 **Vanilla / Papaya / Chocolate**

Produced at Midleton Distillery in Ireland and comprised of pot still whiskeys aged between seven and ten years old, this whiskey was once only available to buy at one grocery store in Dublin. It is now a whiskey held to high acclaim across the world - and rightly so!

**⑦ Roe & Co**

70cl | 45% VOL | £38 **Pear drops / Allspice / Vanilla**

Developed by Diageo Master Blender Caroline Martin, this is a whiskey that can be enjoyed neat or hold its own in a cocktail. A tasty blend of malt and grain from various distilleries across Ireland, this expression has been matured predominantly in first-fill bourbon casks.

**⑧ Hibiki  
Japanese Harmony**

70cl | 43% VOL | £82 **Vanilla / Sandalwood / Black pepper**

A blended whisky from House of Suntory that brings to life the harmony of Japanese nature and craftsmanship. Grain whisky from Chita combines with malt whisky from Yamazaki and Hakushu to create a delicate and well-balanced expression that is both subtle and complex.



# THE WHISKY SHOP

# Directory

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01483 450 900

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BA1 5AQ  
01225 423 535

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M2 7EE  
0161 832 6110

YORK  
11 Coppergate Walk  
YO1 9NT  
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# Expert Tasting: Glen Scotia 46 Year Old



Whiskeria's Charlie MacLean gives us his thoughts on the oldest Glen Scotia to grace his – or indeed, anybody's – tasting glass.

➤ The Glen Scotia 46 Year Old is the oldest expression ever released by the distillery and is limited to only 150 bottles. Michael Henry, Loch Lomond's Master Blender, tells me it was distilled on a particularly rainy Saturday in 1974, “in the final year of production before Glen Scotia would close its doors to complete a long and costly program of renovations that would ‘radically modernise’ the distillery for the next chapter of its history”.

At that time Glen Scotia was owned by a London-based blending company named Amalgamated Distilled Products PLC, who mothballed it in 1984; ADP was bought by Gibson International two years later, who resumed production in 1989. In 1994, under yet another owner, Glen Scotia was again mothballed, then operated for only a couple of months a year, until it was bought by Loch Lomond Distillers Ltd. in 1999 before passing to the current owners, the Loch Lomond Group, in 2014. They have invested heavily in restoring and upgrading and Glen Scotia won a clutch of prizes in the 2022 World Whisky Awards.

This 46YO expression was first matured in a refill ex-bourbon hogshead, re-racked into a first fill ex-bourbon barrel in 2011, then finished for three years in a first fill oloroso hogshead in 2017. Michael Henry writes:

*“It is quite an honour to have inherited these old casks and to release this one now as a window through time”.* It is bottled at natural strength, without tinting or chill-filtration.

As readers will know, Campbeltown was once the ‘Whisky Capital of the World’: between 1823 - when the Excise Act made it desirable for illicit distillers to take out licenses - and 1835, 28 distilleries were commissioned. But by 1930 only three distilleries remained – Glen Scotia (then named simply ‘Scotia’), Springbank and Riechlachan, and the last closed in 1934.

In his excellent *Campbeltown Whisky: An Encyclopaedia* (2020) Angus Martin writes:

*“The most intriguing question in the history of Glen Scotia is how it managed to survive... [The distillery] changed hands many times and was more often out of production. It should have failed several times and is now arguably in its healthiest state since its foundation”.*

Scotia's most intriguing owner was Duncan MacCallum, who headed a consortium to acquire it in 1891. He was clearly a remarkable man, travelled widely – his obituary mentions “Canada, the U.S., the West Indies, South America, Australia, New Zealand, India, and the east generally”. His passion was sailing; he owned a cruising yacht (on which he took Alfred Barnard, the renowned distillery visitor, for an exhilarating

sail up Campbeltown Loch).

He was also a hugely successful businessman: according to a visiting journalist, in 1905 he “held the controlling interest in Benromach, Glen Albyn and Glendronach Distilleries” and went on to incorporate Highland Malt Distilleries Ltd. in 1919 to operate Scotia, Glen Nevis, Glengyle, Kinloch, Dalintober and Ardlussa Distilleries.

On his last cruise, to Norway and the U.S.S.R. in 1930, a journalist reported that “... he was the life of the ship, and...it was the surprise of all on board to learn that he was 83 years of age. To convince them that he was not a man of sixty or thereabouts, he had, indeed, to exhibit his passport”.

It is therefore shocking to report that, on 23rd December that year he drowned himself in the Crosshill Loch. To this day, it is not known why; he was public-spirited, universally popular and immensely wealthy.





## Glen Scotia 46 Year Old

70cl	41.7% VOL
46 Year Old	£6750
Campbeltown Single Malt	

A deep gold hue, with a mellow, slightly mentholic nose-feel, like a sea breeze. The top notes are of dried fruits and orange peel, backed by Highland toffee, at once simple and complex. A smooth texture and a taste which starts sweet (melted caramel?) and becomes refreshingly tart in mid palate (green apples?), finishing long and salty, with lingering white pepper.



# Dram infinitum

We asked some of our whisky experts their thoughts on infinity bottles – the process of adding your leftover whisky to an empty bottle, and decanting future leftovers into this same bottle, creating your own ‘blend’.

➤ The infinity bottle has passed from the realm of ‘lockdown projects’ and into the real world, with some whisky bars now offering their own infinity bottles (also called Solera bottles, fractional bottles, and a raft of other nicknames). As this form of ‘amateur blending’ has quickly developed from a novelty into an art form, we ask the experts if they have had much experience with the concept, and whether they had ever experimented with one themselves?

**Brett Gleed,**  
Store Manager, Inverness.

I have, indeed. As you can imagine I have acquired a fair few samples over the years, and so getting round to trying them all is not always possible. So instead of having loads of different samples lying around, I simply add them to my infinity decanter (in a considered manner of course). It’s always a pleasant surprise when I revisit it, and a great way to train the pallet!

**Luke Crowley Holland,**  
W Club Manager

Working in the industry you tend to acquire lots of samples, but usually - if I wasn’t drinking them - they’d find their way into cocktails, Irish Coffees, etc. After tastings went virtual, I was suddenly hosting tasting after tasting at home and was left with literally hundreds of little sample bottles with five to ten millilitres of whisky at the bottom. The obvious move: infinity bottle. Dreadful decision altogether. The bottle was undrinkable muck. Which is a shame, as it’s made up of some stunning and very rare whiskies. My conclusion? I wouldn’t recommend it to a friend.

**James Bowker,**  
House of Suntory Brand Ambassador.

I actually maintain two infinity bottles. I don’t tend to put American whiskies in – I’m not really an American whiskey drinker. I’ve got one that’s an unpeated infinity bottle and I’ve got one that’s a peated infinity bottle. The peated one does use unpeated whisky, so my rule is that peated isn’t allowed in the unpeated one and that’s the only rule.

Share your thoughts by tweeting  
@whiskeriamagazine!



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