

FEINTS & FORESHOTS 9

Warning For Aussies Travelling To The UK Duty Free Whisky Being Confiscated At Major Euro Airports

Scotland's Senior MEP has warned that new EU-wide airport security measures could cause "chaos and misery" for international travellers arriving in the EU this Christmas.

Labour MEP David Martins aid people flying into an EU airport from outside the EU with a connecting EU flight would lose any liquid duty free products they were carrying.

Martin said this could have an impact on the sale of Scottish whisky, with Schipol Airport in Amsterdam reporting to the MEP that they are confiscating around 1200 bottles of spirits a day.

In reply to a parliamentary question posed by Martin, the European Commission confirmed that if a person was flying to the UK from Australia or Canada and landed at Amsterdam or a London airport to catch a connecting flight, alcohol or perfume they bought in duty free would be confiscated during transit.

Martin said: "If you are travelling from Glasgow to London to Australia any liquids you buy are put in a tamper-proof bag and can be taken through security - but what's happening is that people coming back from Australia, for example, are buying duty free, and other countries don't use tamper-proof bags, so passengers are likely to have liquids confiscated when they come into the UK.

"I can see many Christmases spoiled as relatives buy presents at airports to take home to loved ones in Europe and discover they can't get them through

airport security."

In the meantime, Martin said airlines, airports and retailers had an obligation to warn passengers that if they plan to transit within the EU not to buy duty free.

From the Sunday Herald

The World Whisky of the Year

The annual Jim Murray Whisky Bible award has been won by 18-year-old blend Old Parr Superior.

The whisky, which sells for less than £20 a bottle online, is sold almost exclusively for export to the Far East.

Another Diageo blend, White Horse 12 Years Old, also picked up the Scotch Blended Whisky of the Year (8-12yrs) in the awards by Jim Murray's Whisky Bible - the world's best-selling whisky guide.

Old Parr Superior, which is blended and bottled by MacDonald Greenlees Distillers, Edinburgh, beat more than 3600 drams.

Best single malt in the latest Bible was a Brora 30yo 4th Release.



Vote Of Confidence In Current MWSOA Committee

The Annual General Meeting of the MWSOA was held in late October with the major result being the re-election of the Committee for another term.

Chairman Daniels in his annual report stated, "The Society has had an excellent year, memberships are up, we have held a number of exciting and highly interesting public tastings and we have been constantly liaising with our trade supporters and sponsors."

He went onto state, "We can also look forward to 2007, we have the Convention but we are also looking at holding a number of public events that will keep the Society firmly in the malt drinking public's eye."

The meeting also approved Chairman Daniels' recommendation that the Convention be held at Rydges Melbourne. Committee member, Amanda Gordon said, "The venue is fantastic and delegates are going to be delightfully surprised when they see the venue and realise that it is in the very heart of Melbourne's famous golden mile."

The MWSOA's Annual General Meeting also agreed to a raft of constitutional changes including the introduction of annual membership fees.

The new MWSOA Constitution can viewed at www.mwsoa.org.au



From our regular contributors & all at F&F, we wish you a safe & most excellent 2007!



MALT WHISKY SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
INCORPORATED

**Australia's 3rd Malt Whisky Convention
Melbourne 2007**

How to Taste Single Malt Scotch

Tasting single malt whisky is becoming increasingly popular all over the world. To be a "single malt" a whisky must be aged no fewer than three years and must contain no grain (e.g. maize) spirit, and cannot blend different malts. To be called "Scotch," the whisky must be from Scotland, the country that produces most of the world's single malt whiskies. A good bottle of single malt costs about three times as much as a good bottle of wine, but it is a much stronger drink (starting at 40% ABV). You may also find that Scotch whisky tastes more intense, with flavours that can be more easily identified than the subtler ones found in wine.

Steps

Buy a bottle of single malt whisky. The chief rule is to drink what you like. Starting at \$40 a bottle, you'd better like the taste, not the name. Famous names like Glenlivet, Glenfiddich and Macallan are famous for a reason, but tend not to offer a diversity of expressions (i.e. different kinds). To begin, try some of your friends' whiskies, or what's at the bar, and try to find tastings in your area. If these options fail, some good bottles under \$40 include Laphroaig 10 Year Old, Balvenie 12 Year Old Double Wood, Glenmorangie 10 Year Old, and Bowmore Legend.

Buy a good glass. The snifter (right) is best, allowing the rising alcohol to be directed toward the nose. Tumblers do not focus the alcohol, so many of the aromas are lost. A "dram" of whisky is about an ounce, but depending on your experience and how much you want to drink, this amount can be anywhere from half an ounce to two

ounces.

Swirl the whisky around in the glass, which causes the molecules to collide and release their whisky goodness, and smell. Remember that whisky (40%+) is stronger than wine (11%+). You do not need to be very close to the glass. The collection of aromas is referred to as the "nose."

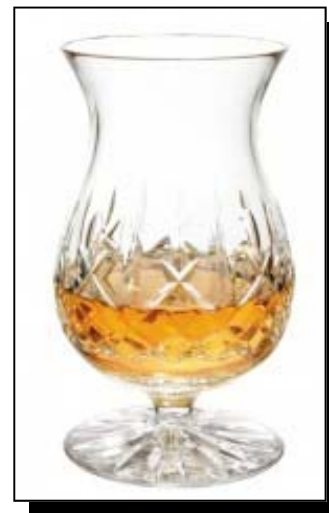
Add water. Adding water depends on the whisky and the taster, but also on the strength of the whisky being consumed. "Cask strength" whiskies have had no water added before bottling, and therefore usually require some water to be added. Regular bottles have water already added, and usually don't require water. However, a little water will always result in slightly different smells and tastes. Purists recommend adding distilled water.

Swirl the whisky around in the glass and smell it again. Continue this for a few minutes while the water "marries" with the whisky and releases additional aromas you may not have noticed at first.

Take a sip. Take just enough to coat your mouth and begin to slowly swirl it around your tongue. Feel the consistency of the whisky. Some feel thicker, more oily, or grittier than others. This is referred to as the "palate." Try and coat your tongue so that the whisky touches all of your taste buds.

Taste the whisky. Try to hold still in this position as long as possible to notice all of the different flavour components.

Swallow but do not open your mouth or close your throat. Let in a tiny amount of air through your mouth and breathe through your nose slowly so that the fumes rise up into your sinuses. As the whisky evaporates from your tongue it will release a sequence of different flavours. This is called the "finish." Once the flavours



subside, breathe normally.

Repeat steps 5 through 8 until all of the whisky is gone. Be sure to notice how the flavours and aromas change throughout your session.

Tips

Many tasters disagree about whether one should add ice to the whisky. Some believe that ice hinders the taster's ability to smell and taste the complex flavours. Others believe that ice changes the entire dynamic of whisky, bringing new smells and tastes out of the same glass. You should feel free to make your own judgement.

If the predominating taste is "ALCOHOL!," add more water. If it tastes weak or watery, add more whisky. Experiment- whisky tasting is a matter of practical wisdom, not theory. There are no rules for adding water, but most people find that cask strength whiskies require at least some water; that Islay malts (e.g. Laphroaig, Lagavulin, Ardbeg) will yield very more floral aromas and tastes before and after adding water; and that sherried whiskies (e.g. The Macallan, The Balvenie) yield fruity aromas more easily after water is added.

More expensive is not necessarily better. You can build a top-rate Scotch collection with bottles that cost less than \$70 each.

How to taste... cont'd

Older is not necessarily better. The older the whisky, the more time it has spent in a barrel, which means that it will take on more characteristics of the barrel. This means that the alcohol, which continues to evaporate in the barrel, is progressively more mellowed over time. If you like a fighting spirit, older whiskies might not be your favourite.

Notice the relationship between the style of whisky and the taste and complexity. What region is it from (e.g. Islay, Speyside, Northern Highlands)? How old is it? Was it aged in a used Sherry or Bourbon cask? Was the malt peat-dried? Was it chill-filtered? Was spring water added or was it bottled at cask strength?

Whisky drinking is more enjoyable and more rewarding when you are relaxed and free of distractions.

When nosing, change the angle and distance of the glass to discover additional aromas and subtleties.

Experiment with bigger and smaller sips to discover additional nuances to the taste.

Some whisky needs time to breathe. After opening a new bottle, have a glass and then let it sit for a week or two. Notice the increased complexity. This is especially true for cask-strength bottles and certain brands like The Balvenie and Glenfarclas.

Write your own tasting notes. It will motivate you to find more nuances. It is not necessary to attach concrete names to the flavours (e.g. smoke, peat, sherry, fruit, coconut, toffee). Everyone experiences something different. It may remind you of a forest after rain or of a campfire on the beach. You may also describe it as dignified, evil, luxurious, or, if you can't find any words, complex.

Enjoy it with a friend and compare experiences.

Also experiment with Irish Single Malt Whiskeys. Irish whiskey is a very close cousin of Scotch, the main difference is that Irish malt is dried over a coal/coke fire rather than a peat fire.

Consequently Irish Whiskey has a less smoky flavour. An enjoyable tasting would be to start with an Irish Whiskey, then move to a Highland Scotch, a Speyside, and finally an Islay. Each is progressively smokier.

As said previously, whisky drinking is a very preference laden affair so don't be afraid to drink it the way you want it. Much has been said about the addition of water which some purists scorn but there is a very good reason for its addition: 40% alcohol is concentrated enough to knock out your oral sense organs temporarily. In fact 20% is considered the upper limit before those senses are numbed. I drink scotch or bourbon or rye (they're all whisky!) half and half mixed with water, distilled if I have it.

This text comes from Rob Gardiner but is unedited and does not reflect the views of the MWSOA, Ed

Another night, another whisky

By Franz Scheurer

The Islay Whisky Club's last meeting for the year took place at Alchemy 731 (a terrific one-hatted restaurant in Mosman on Sydney's North Shore) last night and patrons had just over an hour to sample a line up of 19 whiskies. Every person received a glass, which they had to hang onto for the rest of the night, and the line up included nine different expressions of Ardbeg. Here is the full list:

Connoisseurs Choice Ardbeg 1994
Connoisseurs Choice Ardbeg 1978
Ardbeg Lord of the Isles
The Scotch Malt Whisky Society
33.62 (Ardbeg)
Ardbeg Airigh Nam Beist
Ardbeg 10 y/o
Ardbeg Still Young
Ardbeg Uigeadail
Ardbeg 17 y/o

Lagavulin 16 y/o
Bruichladdich 15 y/o
Bruichladdich Mòine Mhòr
Bowmore Darkest
Bowmore Mariner
Jura Superstition

FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 9

**Water in
whisky.
Sin or saviour?**
Have your say!
Contact the F&F Ed
at
wright.graham@gmail.com

Jura 16 y/o
Port Ellen 5th Release 25 y/o
Laphroaig Cask Strength 10 y/o

And for everyone who never had a chance to try a whisky straight off a still there was as a bottle of Highland Park new make spirit to try, at an intimidating 69.8% a/vol.

After the tasting everyone sat down and the following dinner, cooked by Keith and Derek creating magic in Alchemy 731's kitchen, matched by Franz Scheurer's selection of whiskies:

Marinated Kingfish with Tabouleh Salad
Glendronach Sherry Cask 15 y/o, 40% a/v
Twice Cooked Duck, Honey Glaze with Aromatic Cabbage
Roast Potatoes
Invergordon Single Grain, 38 y/o, 49.6% a/v
Chocolate and Pear Tart with Vanilla Ice Cream
The Macallan Cask Strength, Sherry Casks, 57.7% a/v

The blind was particularly cunningly selected and no one managed to get close: John Glaser's Compass Box - Peat Monster. The night ended on a high with the last match easily being the best of the night. Luckily no one drove home...

FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 9

Whisky Round Australia:

The Brisbane Malt Scene

Part 1 - The Queensland Malt Whisky Society

By Peter Johnston, Gauger Brisbane Sept

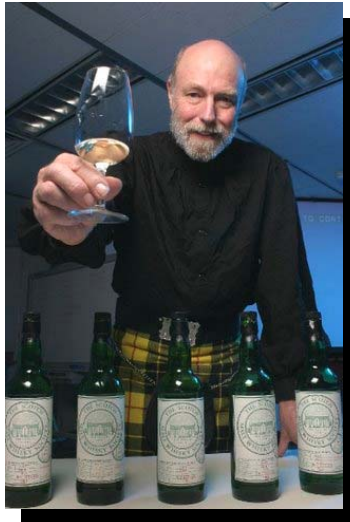
Queensland is different, as people who live in every other state of Australia frequently tell us! However, when it comes to whisky consumption, we are much the same. We somehow manage to drink it all year round, without too many ill effects. The Queensland Malt Whisky Society was founded in August 1996, when two fellows, who had met at a Johnny Walker Journey of Taste event, set up the club. There are currently over 70 members. Both are still members today.

Now that club (now the Brisbane City Sept#) is the largest with 30 members, with other clubs thriving at Brisbane North, Breakfast Creek and Narangbah, all part of the QMWS Federation. John Gagen, the State Laird was one of the original six who kicked it all off. There are plans to start a second city club, based on a Spring Hill Hotel, and the inaugural meeting is planned for next month.

Each Sept typically meets once a month, with an annual joint Christmas Dinner, where members of all Septs join together. The Brisbane Sept also has a Chieftain's Dinner in June. These two events allow the Partners/Spouses to socialize. Our Club has a number of office bearers, including Chieftain, Gauger, Exciseman, Scribe, Bard, Jester, Piper and Twelfth Man. We also have a Druid. The club, despite appearances, is not Scottish, but Celtic and we enjoy whisky/whiskey from around the world. The club has a logo and many members wear shirts with the logo at tastings, and an official tartan (the Queensland Tartan).

Each monthly meeting follows a theme* and comprises five malts, chosen by the Gauger. The first is a blind and must have been tasted at the club in the last 3 years to qualify.

Just like in any other club, the Chieftain opens the meeting, records apologies etc and the Exciseman provides the financial report. (He usually just declares us "liquid"). The scribe takes



Peter Johnston: MWSOA & QMWS member

notes. Gauger presents the Malts, but sometimes a club member will present the malt, having been tipped off about it earlier.

The Bard recites his piece before the blind tasting, and Harry (the Jester) tells his joke sometime during the proceedings. The piper only plays at the dinners and at Robbie Burns statue on the 25th January when we gather to celebrate his life. The 12th man steps in when needed.

A Group of Septs form a Clan, hence the branches are referred to as "Septs"

* Typical themes are geographically based (eg Islay, Round the world), source based (eg Supermarket Malts, Gordon & McPhail Independent bottlings), and Taste Clusters (eg wood finishes, peated offerings) and some tastings are totally blind.

Following a few words from the gauger about the distillery and the malt, the members taste the offerings and as a group discuss their experience. Each is "scored" by the group and consensus is really only obtained by the scribe who has the final decision on what he puts into the minutes.

Twice a year Brisbane have guest nights and invite Companies to present their products to us. MWSOA has also participated in joint events. A group of members (along with MWSOA Chair Craig Daniels) had spent a week together touring

Tasmania in October, visiting all three operating distilleries, as well as a number of other locations. Maybe Islay next time?

It's all a lot of fun and we get great support, as measured by attendance figures. As we hold our meetings at the Irish Club, Many of us gather upstairs afterwards for some typical Irish Fare and a Kilkenny.

So, if you are in Brisbane you should be able to get to a tasting somewhere most weeks. Just email me inhighspirits@gmail.com, or phone me on 0407 372243 and I will point you in the right direction.

Good Moanings from Melbourne Malts

by Stephen Harbour

In October last year David Baker lured me to the distillery, plied me with some peated cask strength Bakery Hill & bemoaned the slow death of the art of Windsor knot tying in Melbourne. Late in the afternoon, suitably plied, I had the vague recollection of a discussion around the lack of local whisky appreciation group.

The following Wednesday I received emailed minutes of the meeting (???) from David in which I was elected Chairman unopposed by two votes.

I got the feeling that I had just won the garage door and now was in dire need of a garage.....

In the cold light of day, that didn't seem a large problem. I printed a load of flyers and had them couriered to David whom I placed in charge of distribution to stop him writing any more minutes.

I then had the bright idea of ringing Craig Daniels for advice. Craig was full of helpful priorities – get a place to meet, get some people to come along, get some glasses, some whisky and he'd fly over to Melbourne on the night to participate in the consumption (What did I have in mind to taste???), budgeting, forward planning and consumption. Did I mention that already?

A special report by MWSAO members

And so it was that on Thursday December 1st that 9 people found their way upstairs on a hot evening at the Rex Hotel in Port Melbourne. We began in the manner in which we were to continue, with a rigorous inspection of tie knots. As the air conditioning abandoned us, we abandoned ties altogether when the sandwiches showed signs of wilting.

Before getting too far into the tastings, (sensible discussion was the first order of the night) we decided to meet on the first Thursday of each month from February to November. The annual membership fee would be \$200 and a contribution of \$35 per meeting and that Melbourne Malts would affiliate with the Malt Whisky Society of Australia.

The whisky that provoked the most discussion that night was the blind, and it wasn't even a malt whisky. During the year I wanted to throw as many curve balls into the 5th tasting slot as I could. The 18 yo Sazerac Rye was definitely the hit of the menu. Steve Horton and George Collier were the first to work there way to it as a rye whisky.

Of the people attending that night, Steve and George, together with Robert Gardner, Adam Milgrom, Jim Kelly and David Baker remain the leading instructors of Windsor knot tying at Melbourne Malts.

We have two or three visitors that add to our solid core of about 10 people that attend each meeting.

Our last task for the year is to blind taste the 5 top rated whiskies from the 44 we tasted this year and decide on Melbourne Malts Inaugural Whisky of the year award. The choice will be made from:

- 18yo Sazerac
- Connemara cask strength
- Bakery Hill Peated Cask strength
- 22yo Benromach Port Finish
- 25yo Cutty Sark Blend

A fine task to complete a year's exploration!

If you are in Melbourne or passing through on the first Thursday of any month from February 2007 onwards and wish to come S.E.E. (Share, Educate and Enjoy), drop me a line at stephen.harbour@internode.on.net or ring me on 0412 560 778.

What's happening in the world of whisky for NSW?

By Andrew Derbidge

As we start the run home to Christmas, the number of whisky events and attractions around town always starts to pick up. So what's been happening and what's on the horizon?

One thing that's been evident this year (and the trend is certainly continuing) is the increased marketing & promotional events being put on by the big players in retail and distribution. The Edrington Group, through Maxxium, have been particularly busy hosting free in-store masterclasses at many of the liquor stores around town, and they recently put on a very flash Macallan event at the Sydney Boat Show. (Just quietly, keep an eye out for the new Macallan liqueur to be launched next year!) Gerry Tosh, global brand ambassador for Highland Park, also paid Sydney a quick visit and conducted some masterclasses. Dewars, Johnnie Walker, and 'The International Whiskey Experience' (Chivas Regal, Jameson, and Wild Turkey) have also been running tasting nights galore at various venues in Sydney's CBD.

Vintage Cellars have been proactive in promoting Bruichladdich in their malt portfolio, and they recently brought out head distiller Jim McEwan to conduct some masterclasses around the country, including Sydney. In 10 years of going to tastings and whisky events, I thought I'd heard it all, but Jim delivered the most informative and charismatic tasting I've ever been to. This was a much anticipated event, and I noticed many members of the Highland Branch of the Gillies Club (based in Orange, NSW) tackled the four hour drive just to be there.

Following on from the success and theme of his earlier Springbank tasting, Shane Kalloglian, in

FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 9



conjunction with the MWSOA, again pulled out all stops when he presented a ridiculously generous and impressive line up of rare Macallans. This was a truly spectacular afternoon of malt & merriment, and I know his brain is already ticking over thinking about the next event. Ardbeg or sherry monsters? Either is fine by us, Shane!

It's difficult to outline some of the things that are going on without specifically mentioning several of the MWSOA's sister clubs and societies that facilitate these events, particularly since we're all an incestuous bunch that spread ourselves across most of the organisations: The Islay Whisky Club, the Gillies Club, and the Scotch Malt Whisky Society have all held hugely successful & well-attended tasting & dinner events recently, and credit is due to Franz Scheurer and his passion for matching food to whisky, as his philosophy is being increasingly incorporated into these events. Congratulations are also due to the Macquarie Branch of the Gillies Club who celebrated their 15th anniversary in style on September 30th.

So what's on the horizon? Moët Hennessy (Glenmorangie, Ardbeg, etc) are planning a tasting showcase shortly (watch this space for details); the Scotch Malt Whisky Society has its end-of-year bash in Sydney on Nov 17th, and another restaurant dinner evening is scheduled for January; the Islay Whisky Club is having a monster tasting in November; and it is also intended to hold a tasting/dinner event under the MWSOA's banner shortly before Christmas. Details to follow soon.



FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 9

Whisky Round Australia: A special MWSOA report

Variation is the Spice of Life

By Tim Duckett

Malt whisky production is steeped in tradition, tried, tested and proven. However, the range of malt whisky is immense. This makes the industry all the more exciting. There are numerous variables that influence the quality of whisky produced. Many of those variables can be controlled and they include water source, storage time and location, alcohol content, previous barrel usage, peat source and percentage use. The list goes on. Climatic, geological and altitudinal conditions provide Tasmania with numerous distinct characteristics that can be utilised in the production of high quality and unique whiskies. This is the path that we hope to pursue.

In the 90's there were a small number of distilleries that established within the State that were not successful due to lack of knowledge, or funds or commitment or a combination of all three. However, they must be congratulated on realising the potential for whisky production within Tasmania.

Take a punt, take a risk, and commit! The remaining commercial distilleries that have established in SE Australia particularly in Tasmania have taken that punt and have taken that risk and have committed to the long-term development of industry. Larks Distillery, Tasmania Distillery and Hellyers Road Distillery have committed through infrastructure investment and expertise development and are now producing Tasmanian malt whisky of great potential. What was considered a novelty in the early 90's has now taken on a more serious element with production on the increase.

The truly exiting result of this commitment to whisky production has already been the production of a diverse range of whiskies with unique characters and why not, we have everything we need to make great whisky and more.

Climatic, altitudinal and geographic variation over a relatively small area within Tasmania has been utilised to

produce uniquely Tasmanian malt whisky. Experimentation has already commenced with the utilisation of tannin laden waters from the high mountain buttongrass plains of the west coast in combination with drying of malted barley with sphagnum peat from the central highlands. The permutations are huge. Lets not be afraid of doing something that is different with our water sources such as high altitude tannin water, low altitude tannin waters from rainforest, water from the north east granites, with our peats, such as high altitude sphagnum peat bogs, low altitude peats from the west coast coastal strip near Trial Harbour or Strahan, with maturation at high altitude or at low altitude coastal environments and with new barley strains development through co-operation with the University Farm. Opportunities are unlimited given the range of conditions within Tasmania and any combination of which can influence the final whisky outcome. Some of the whiskies will be below par, however, there is also the possibility to discover a real gem.

Reportedly we have the cleanest air in the world at Cape Grim, our population in Tasmania (and in close geographical proximity), is relatively low giving us an advantage over other regions within the world. Therefore the standard components that go into the production of whisky should be some of the purest and best anywhere. Expertise, history and time are the one thing we lack.

In order to generate cash flow, the operating distilleries need to sell whisky, which is obvious. By definition the whisky must remain within the barrel for at least three years prior to bottling before being called a "whisky". The whiskies currently being bottled and sold range from 3 to 6 years in age and they exhibit characters that are typical of a lack of maturation. If you look beyond their youth and allow in some cases, the volatile medicinal characters to dissipate you can taste the true potential of the whiskies produced by the main Tasmanian distilleries. Each has its own distinctive character.



Tim Duckett: MWSOA member from Tasmania

Already we are producing an exciting range of products varying from a simplistic smooth mono-dimensional whisky for less mature palates through to complexed multi-layered whisky incorporating the use of varying levels of peat. The greater range of whisky produced will only enhance the industry particularly as markets develop in Asia and India.

Some critics may be quite harsh in their commentary on the whiskies produced in Tasmania as they (the critics) have developed a palate that has been exposed to aged high quality complex Scottish malts. This is an unfair comparison due to where we are in terms of timescale comparisons within the industry. Also the Scottish whisky market must be changing with the development of more commercial whiskies such as Compass Box, Monkey Shoulder and Smokehead. The Scottish producers have identified the need for variation and the associated changing markets, both within their own country and outside in established and potential markets. Tasmania will produce its own style of malt adding to and enhancing the range of malts available on the world stage.

We will never produce a Scottish malt whisky but, one day, we can challenge for the best malt whisky in the world and this exciting challenge isn't too far away. I would also like to think the Scottish being Scottish would say "bring it on" and encourage the competition. All we need is time (preferably in Oak), experience and it goes without saying, a sense of adventure.

Menu

**Gillies Club Meeting
24th October 2006**

Morels and Salsify
Mortlach 1984 (bottled 1995)
Centenary Reserve Gordon &
MacPhail 40% a/v

**Monkfish Liver and
Pig Snout**
Glen Grant 1949 Gordon &
MacPhail, 40% a/v

**Oxtail and Broad Beans
Green Salad**
Michel Couvreur 15 y/o
Sherry 47% a/v

**Pork Belly
Roasted Baby Bintje
Potatoes**
Benriach 1980 Cask Strength
59.3% a/v

Heidi Tilsit
Glenfiddich Caoran Reserve

**Figs on Clementines with
Blood Orange Relish,
Marrons Glacés and Traou
Mad De Pont-Aven**
Ardbeg 1977, 46% a/v

Collector's Corner: Raise a glass to the power of Scotch whisky

If you've got the bottle, collecting whisky could result in some spirited returns, says Gwyn Jones of the Independent

Scotch whisky collecting is definitely not on the rocks. This niche market is booming and, whether you like the tippie or not, you might fancy a wee dram of an investment.

"The market is extremely strong at the moment," says Martin Green, a specialist with the UK's leading whisky auctioneer, McTears in Glasgow. At the auction house's last sale in September many lots exceeded their estimates.

"It's becoming really popular - it's such an alternative investment and the collecting bug seems to be spreading worldwide," adds Green. "We're seeing a larger proportion of people buying to invest. If they're prepared to wait 10 years or more, then profits can be several hundred pounds and in some cases they amount to thousands."

Sukhinder Singh, of The Whisky Exchange, thinks much of the growth is down to drinkers. "I don't see any point in investing if you don't like whisky because you need to know your product and there's no fun in it if you don't enjoy it," he says.

"Whisky is a product meant for drinking so in theory it doesn't matter how pretty the bottle is - the best criterion of investment is how good the whisky is."

However, the consumable nature of whisky does make the investment market a little different from that for other collectables. A limited edition of 100 average whiskies, say, will probably not rise in value as much as a limited edition of 500 fabulous whiskies because the latter are likely to be drunk at a much faster rate.

The market started to take off in the early 1990s with the launch of limited-edition single malts, almost by accident. Several companies found the odd cask of whisky that had been overlooked and not used in one of their popular blends. These casks are all individual, with the wood creating a unique flavour, so they bottled them and presented them smartly. Now these are some of the most collectable bottles around.

"I think the market is still expanding," says Green. "I sold the first whisky at auction with Christie's in 1986 and at that time a 50-year-old Macallan sold for £1,100 - we had a bottle recently that went for £6,000."

This is a market that can fit any pocket, but at the top end The Whisky Exchange last year sold two bottles of 62-year-old Dalmore for £31,000 each, the priciest whisky sold by a retailer.

"Macallan also released a 50-year old whisky in the early 1980s for about £60 a bottle," says Singh. "Today you are looking at £7,000 to £8,000 or more for a bottle, which must be one of the best investments there has been in terms of whisky."

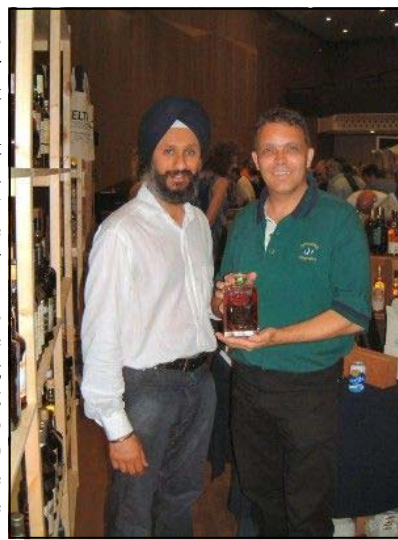
"One that fuelled the limited-edition collectors market was Black Bowmore. Bowmores found some whisky distilled in 1964 that had gone black in the cask and was a great whisky. When it was released in 1993 it was £80 - it now sells at £1,500 to £2,000 or more."

Islay whiskies have a cult status and are very hot at the moment, with Port Ellen distillery, closed in 1984, a particular favourite.

One advantage compared with wine is that whisky does not go off in the bottle and needs only to be kept at standard, constant room temperatures.

That makes checking granddad's cupboards worthwhile. McTears recently had a lady come in with a bottle of 25-year-old Macallan that was bottled in 1989 and given to her husband as a gift. Never opened, it would have been bought for £50 in 1989 but will now sell for a price in excess of £200.

FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 9



The remarkable Mr Singh (left) with a very happy single malt collector.

FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 9

Dear Ed,

Just received an invite from John Glaser to catch up for a dram in London. Anyone heading in that direction who could take him up on the offer?

I will be but not until 2008.

Cheers
Craig

From: John Glaser
To: Daniels Craig
Subject: RE: EOZ Newsletter

You're good, man!

Hope to catch up over some whiskies sometime soon! Do you ever come to the UK? If so, come visit us in London. (You can pass this invitation along to your whisky friends, too.)

John Glaser
Compass Box Delicious Whisky Ltd
Chiswick Studios, 9 Power Road
London W4 5PY
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fax: +44 (0)20 8742 1948
mob: +44 (0)7887 577 447;
Visit the web site!
www.compassboxwhisky.com

Hi Graham

I have not received any newsletters at all since joining; nor, my membership certificate.

Do you have this email address?

Here's looking up ye kilt
Dale

*Dear Dale,
No excuses...just pure slackness & a
desperately busy business to run.
They will be arriving soon...Ed*

Members Have Their Say!

Hi Graham,
I would love to come (Dr Bill's visit) to this but it is a little too far for me to come. I am now ensconced in middle England, in a small village near Nottingham.

We moved in a few weeks ago (a nice little 1920's farmhouse) and have a bit of work to do on the house, although I expect we will wait until spring before we start work. I am setting up a malt society in the Vale of Belvoir (pronounced beaver!) probably starting up in January.

I have approached a local pub and they seem quite keen. Will let you know how it goes, and of course any visitors will be most welcome!

Give my regards to Bill. Hope you are having fun in the hot weather.

Regards
Sandi McOrist
(MWSOA Founding Member)

Hi Graham,
I asked the guy who was looking for 4 Seasons whisky if he had any more info, and here's what he responded....

Good morning Amanda, all I can tell you about the 4 Seasons whisky is that I am a avid collector of old ceramic whisky pourers and during a search for these items I came across one for auction on a Australian website. Am not sure if it is a malt whisky, but had a rough idea that it was manufactured in Tasmania. .

Thanks for your interest and hope to hear from you again shortly,
regards,
Alan.

OVERALL WINNER FOR 2006

Non-Plus-Ultra Award
Yamazaki 1984/2005 (56%, OB, Suntory, Japan, 70cl)
(Overall top scoring whisky out of all 2006 MM Awards entries)

WHISKY STYLES' AWARDS FOR 2006

Supreme Sherry Cask Award: Glen Grant 1956/2005 (46%, G&M for La Maison du Whisky, France)
Supreme Bourbon Cask Award: Clynelish 32yo 1974/2006 (58.6%, The Whisky Fair Germany, Bourbon Casks)
Supreme Warped Cask Award: Speyside 1991/2006 'Sauternes Finish' (50%, Celtique Connexion / Celtic Whisky Compagnie, France)
Supreme Peated Malt Award: Benriach 37yo 1968/2006 (52%, OB, Hogshead #2712, 157 Bottles)
Gentle Giant Award: Glenlivet 1975/2006 (54%, Berry Brothers, C#10846)
Aeneas Coffey Award: Lochside 42yo 1963 (45.2%, DL, The Clan Deny, Grain whisky, C#HH243)

WHISKY REGIONS' AWARDS FOR 2006

Speyside Award of Excellence: Macallan 30yo 1976/2006 (45.3%, Adelphi, Cask #2749, 206 Bottles)
Highlands Award of Excellence: Brora 30yo (56.3%, OB, Bottled 2005, 3000 Bottles)
Islands Award of Excellence: Talisker 25yo (57.2%, OB, Refill casks, Bottled 2005, 15600 Bottles)
Islay Award of Excellence: Caol Ila 21yo 1984/2006 (58.5%, Dewar Rattray for 'The Nectar Belgium')
Lowlands Award of Excellence: Saint Magdalene 23yo 1982/2006 (50%, Douglas Laing Old Malt Cask, 329 Bottles)
Campbeltown Award of Excellence: Springbank 36yo 1970/2006 (53.1%, Signatory Vintage, Sherry C#1629, 461 Bottles)

DAILY DRAM' AWARDS FOR 2006

Bang-For-Your-Buck Award: Aberlour 10yo (40%, OB, Bottled +/- 2006)
Pressure Cooker Award: Laphroaig 10yo Cask Strength (55.7%, OB, Bottled +/- 2006)
Internal Combustion Award: Talisker 18yo (45.8%, OB, Bottled +/- 2006)
Prime Pure Dram Award: Bunnahabhain 12yo Second Edition (40%, OB, Second Edition, Bottled +/- 2006)
Prime Sherried Dram Award: Aberlour A'bunadh Batch #15 (59.6%, OB, Bottled +/- 2006)
Prime Peaty Dram Award: Laphroaig 15yo (43%, OB, Ref L00994, Bottled +/- 2006)

MOST REMARKABLE' AWARDS FOR 2006

Single Starlet Award: Glenfarclas 15yo (46%, OB, New labeling, Bottled 2006)
Global Village Award: Yamazaki 25yo (43%, Suntory OB, Bottled +/- 2006, Japan, 75cl)
Multiple Personality Award: Probably Speyside's Finest! 40yo 1965/2006 (50%, Douglas Laing, Old Malt Cask)
Dark Horse Award: Glengoyne 1986/2006 'Peter's Choice' (51%, OB, Ximenez Butt #433)
Blast from the Past Award: Ayrshire (Ladyburn) 30yo 1975/2005 (48.9%, Wilson & Morgan, Ladyburn distillery, Cask #3376)
Love-It-Or-Hate-It Award: Blackadder 'Smoking Islay' NAS (55%, Blackadder, Cask ref BA2005/213, Bottled 2005)

For a full explanation of the Malt Maniac's 2006 awards goto <http://www.maltmaniacs.org/>



The Back Page

The Scotsman's Song

Well a Scotsman clad in kilt left the bar one evening fair
And one could tell by how he walked that he'd drunk more than his
share

He fumbled round until he could no longer keep his feet
And he stumbled off into the grass to sleep beside the street.

Ring-ding diddle diddle aye-dee-oh
Ring di-diddle-aye-oh

He stumbled off into the grass to sleep beside the street.

About that time two young and lovely girls just happened by
One says to the other, with a twinkle in her eye
"See yon sleeping Scotsman, so strong and handsome built?
I wonder if it's true what they don't wear beneath the kilt."

Ring-ding diddle diddle aye-dee-oh
Ring di-diddle-aye-oh

"I wonder if it's true what they don't wear beneath the kilt."

They crept up on that sleeping Scotsman, quiet as could be
Lifted up his kilt about an inch so they could see
And there behold for them to view, beneath his Scottish skirt,
Was nothing more than God had graced him with upon his birth.

Ring-ding diddle diddle aye-dee-oh
Ring di-diddle-aye-oh

Was nothing more than God had graced him with upon his birth.

They marveled for a moment then one said, "We must be gone.
Let's leave a present for our friend before we move along."
As a gift, they left a blue silk ribbon tied into a bow
Around the bonnie star the Scot's kilt did lift and show.

Ring-ding diddle diddle aye-dee-oh
Ring di-diddle-aye-oh

Around the bonnie star the Scot's kilt did lift and show.

Now the Scotsman woke to nature's call And stumbled towards a tree
Behind the bush he lifts his kilt and gawks at what he sees
And in a startled voice, he said to what's before his eyes
"Lad, I don't know where ye been, but I see ye won first prize!"

Ring-ding diddle diddle aye-dee-oh
Ring di-diddle-aye-oh

"Lad, I don't know where ye been, but I see ye won first prize!"



FEINTS & FORE- SHOTS 9

Muslim whiskey distillery defies prohibition

The dusty, traffic-choked streets of the sprawling Pakistani metropolis Rawalpindi are a world away from the crisp mountain streams and heather-covered glens normally associated with single-malt whiskys.

But it's here in dusty Rawalpindi that the only malt whisky distillery in the Muslim world is preparing to launch its newest product – a 21-year single malt that it claims will rival in quality the best Scotch whisky.

"Very few distilleries anywhere in the world, even the high-end ones in Scotland, produce ... 21-year old malts," said MP. Bhandara, chief executive of the Murree Brewing Company, announcing the launch the new product which goes on sale in January.

Bizarrely, the new spirit, named Murree's Millennium Reserve, will only be available to a small clientele of ex-pats and non-Muslims in a land where prohibition has been enforced for 30 years. Existing variants – including 8- and 12-year-old single malts – cannot be sampled abroad because Islamabad bans exports of alcoholic beverages.

Pakistan is officially an Islamic country, one of only a half dozen in the world. Legally, only the non-Muslim minority, which accounts for a mere 5% of the 150 million population, can get a permit that allows them to buy alcohol for home consumption.

But in secret black market sales around the city, much of this is then sold to Muslims at a significant mark-ups. This can be risky business, because under Pakistan's draconian laws drinking alcohol is punishable by caning and three years in jail.

The whisky distillery is part of Murree Brewery, which itself is a legacy of British colonial rule, set up in 1860 in the hill station of Murree to provide beer for the British troops.

In the 1960s, Bhandara decided to investigate the possibility of producing a high-grade whisky.

"We went to Scotland to enlist their help in distilling our own whiskey, but they said it was impossible because we needed special water quality," said the soft-spoken Bhandara, a member of Pakistan's parliament.

The distilling process still employs the traditional way of spreading malt on the floor of a huge warehouse for processing, rather than using modern mechanical malting systems. Two giant cellars beneath the brewery contain hundreds of old oak casks where whiskey is awaiting bottling.

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More information: www.mwsoa.org.au