



Feints and Foreshots



WELCOME TO

Feints and Foreshots #36

CHEESE AND MALT MATCHING EVENT 2011

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FEINTS AND FORESHOTS

Festive Season Edition

As the festive season peeks around the corner and boxes of Old Spice begin to fill the shops, it is time to turn one's thoughts to a good single malt: the drinking of at christmas or on a relaxing holiday, the gifting of one to a lucky enthusiast, and of course, reading about it in Feints and Foreshots or one of the many books available and ready to giftwrap.

If you're considering the ultimate festive gift, look no further than your own Malt Whisky Society of Australia: membership makes a brilliant gift and gives you the chance to share your passion for malt with a friend or relative - and for them it is the beginning of a unique journey with good friends and expert guides through the bewildering yet beguiling world of Single Malt. Membership forms are available to download on the MWSOA website: www.mwsoa.org.au.

If you're inspired to add a story or a tasting note of your own to our journal - please write in! We'd love to hear your top malts of the moment, a great event or hear your thoughts about anything malt related. write to: fandfeditor@mwsoa.com

Nic Lowrey
Editor, Feints and Foreshots. .





Feints and Foreshots

Our First Whisky & Cheese Pairing Adventure – Report by Craig Daniels

I'll be the first to admit that I'm a bit of a whisky and food sceptic. I tend to like my malt whisky by itself and unadulterated. However, Franz Scheurer and the experience in Sydney in 2005 chipped away at my defences and the whisky and cheese pairing evening eroded the scepticism further.

I'm happy to admit that I'd never done this before; try whiskies and cheese together so it was as new to me as everyone else in the room.

However I should say that my responses were very personal and not all of my favourite pairings would even come close to the consensus on the night. Indeed doing the number crunching revealed that there wasn't a particularly strong consensus across the matrix and that my opinion was quite often contradictory to the consensus. Opinions are like noses; everyone has one!

I collected and collated everyone's scoring matrix and did some number crunching. My impressions are recorded later, but the consensus of all the scores democratically decided is below:

Whisky & Cheese Couplets	Average	Ranking	Total of 1st & 2nd Prefs
Glenlivet Nadurra 16yo + Edith (Woodside)	2.857		8
Glenlivet Nadurra 16yo + Aged Gruyere	2.667		5
Glenlivet Nadurra 16yo + Smoked Cheddar	3.333	1	10
Glenlivet Nadurra 16yo + Soumaintain	3.048		7
Glenlivet Nadurra 16yo + Bleu d'Auvergne	3.095	2	11
Sullivan's Cove HH0514 + Edith (Woodside)	2.524		4
Sullivan's Cove HH0514 + Aged Gruyere	3.381	1	12
Sullivan's Cove HH0514 + Smoked Cheddar	3.095		10
Sullivan's Cove HH0514 + Soumaintain	2.714		7
Sullivan's Cove HH0514 + Bleu d'Auvergne	3.286	2	9
Aberlour a'bunadh #33 + Edith (Woodside)	2.81		8
Aberlour a'bunadh #33 + Aged Gruyere	3.19	1	9
Aberlour a'bunadh #33 + Smoked Cheddar	2.857		9
Aberlour a'bunadh #33 + Soumaintain	3.19	1	8
Aberlour a'bunadh #33 + Bleu d'Auvergne	3.095		7
Ardbeg 10yo + Edith (Woodside)	2.381		4
Ardbeg 10yo + Aged Gruyere	3.524	1	13
Ardbeg 10yo + Smoked Cheddar	3.048		7
Ardbeg 10yo + Soumaintain	2.619		6
Ardbeg 10yo + Bleu d'Auvergne	3.476	2	12

The highest scores for each pairing are highlighted. Overall the best result was for Ardbeg 10 with the Aged Gruyere, Ardbeg 10 with the Bleu d'Auvergne and Sullivan's Cove with the Aged Gruyere.



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Cheese and Whisky pairing night continued...

My take on the exercise was a bit individual as for me, the most important factor wasn't how good the whiskies were by themselves (or for that matter how great the cheeses) but how they worked together to deliver what Franz Scheurer calls the "1 + 1 = 3" factor; that is where the combination of the two delivers a result greater than the sum of its parts. And I'll admit upfront that I was looking for what the cheese did for the whisky and not the other way around. I was looking for synergy from the combination, but starting with the whisky as the key determinant.

It wasn't pure luck that the first pairing was the Glenlivet Nadurra 16yo and the Edith wood ash coated goat's cheese as the cheese and the whisky were both picked as first off the block because of their relative blandness (and I mean that in the nicest possible way) that they didn't have extreme flavours and are both possessed of a certain delicacy, one might even suggest elegance. For me it was one of the best matches of the night. The Glenlivet has natural vanilla flavours with mixed fresh stone fruit and just a hint of citrus, but the acidity in the cheese really accentuated the lime, lemon and orange zest character and toned down the vanilla from the bourbon wood. The combination really delivered a zesty sparkle in the whisky that just isn't there when the whisky is alone. Reflecting I think this cheese would also work well with Glenmorangie Nectar D'Or and the An Cnoc 12.

The second whisky was the Sullivan's Cove and for me the best match was the washed rind Soumaintrain. This cheese also has a slightly alkaline crust with a mature acidic core, but singing in a much deeper register than the Edith, more like an aged balsamic rather than lemon rind. The Sullivan's Cove almost always has a slightly wine vinegar and burnt character in the palate, but the cheese didn't boost this but matched it so that this characteristic was flattened and evened out across the pairing and the fruit and nuttiness in the whisky was brought forward to advantage. I wasn't a fan of the cheese by itself, but it worked very well with the Sullivan's Cove.

The third Whisky was the Aberlour a'bunadh and for me the only cheese that worked well and did this very well indeed was the smoked cheddar. I know a few more knowledgeable around the table were a bit bored with this cheese but I liked it a lot; I guess I didn't suffer from the familiarity breeding contempt syndrome. The intense nutty flavour of the cheese really boosted the glac  

cherry and fruitcake character in the whisky and also revealed some subtle desiccated coconut, cherry ripe and Turkish delight character that must normally remain buried under the sherry.

The final whisky was the Ardbeg 10 and by now I was experiencing some palate fatigue, so my thoughts might be unreliable as once again I was out on the edge as I didn't really think that any of the cheeses worked all that well. I'm happy to admit that while they all struggled the Bleu d'Auvergne stayed in the ring and traded more blows than any of the others. For me the cheeses clashed rather than melded. The Ardbeg is a more extreme whisky than the others and the bleu was the most flavoursome of the cheeses, although not the most pungent; but I didn't get the same "1 + 1 = 3" experience with this pairing as with some of the others. If I were to do it again I'd probably substitute a whisky like Laphroaig 10 or Quarter cask for the Ardbeg, as I think the Ardbeg is just too spiky or stiletto like in its carbolic intensity. For me none of the cheeses had a peat receptor that fitted comfortably with the tarry white rubber in the Ardbeg.

I'd like to thank Valerie Henberg from Say Cheese and The Smelly Cheese Coy for selecting the cheeses. By themselves they were all of exceptional quality and nice by themselves and a couple of them worked really well with the whiskies.

The Bleu was my favourite cheese of the night, followed by the smoked cheddar and the aged gruyere. I'd find it hard to warm to the others by themselves, but I found some whiskies that worked for me.

As you can see from the democratic vote, the best all-rounder cheese – the cheese that seemed to work well with most whiskies was the aged gruyere. I suspect that the overall balance in the cheese between sweet and sour and nutty and salty allowed it to work with more of the whiskies, and to really shine with two of them.

The cheese that seemed to work less well with most of them was the Edith, I expect because of the youthful acidity. Feel free to disagree. As I said earlier this is a very personal journey of discovery.

Thanks to colleagues Aaron Baxter and John Dunbar for doing most of the organising and Mal O'Farrell for the venue and collecting the revenue.

I've included the tasting notes (below) that I provided to the participants on the night.



Feints and Foreshots

Cheese and Whisky pairing night continued...

Tasting Notes for the Whiskies on Thursday 1 September 2011

1 – Glenlivet 'Nadurra' 16yo 57.2% Batch # 0606A - Bottled June 2006

Colour: Light gold with honey highlights (2.5)

Nose: Green apples, nashi pear, tropical fruit salad syrup, vanilla slice, praline and nougat, whipped cream, honey.

Palate: vanilla icecream, fresh fruit salad (apples, pears, fresh pineapple, banana) a hint of ginger and aniseed

Finish: vanilla, soft tannins

Comment: Much more refined and sophisticated than most give it credit for. Classy and eminently drinkable despite the high proof.

2 – Sullivans Cove French Oak Matured Barrel # HH0514 10yo 47.9% - Bottled May 2011

Colour: medium dark amber with orange highlights (5.6)

Nose: Roasted nuts, soft fruits, smoked fruit (sultanas), hint of toffee, cocoa and fruchocs. Some dark chocolate and a hint of wine vinegar then marzipan, muscovado sugar, Scottish tablet. Porty character takes a while to develop.

Palate: Toffee, spirit, peanut brittle, roasted hazelnuts, toffee, bitter chocolate, bittering herbs and tannins.

Finish: warming and slightly burnt and slightly bitter; the vinous character lingers.

Comment: rare to find an Australian whisky of this age. Most get bottled younger. Both the French oak and the port are well integrated and shown to good advantage.



3 – Aberlour a'bunadh Batch # 33 60.9% - Bottled ~2010

Colour: dark amber brown with red highlights (6.7)

Nose: Brandy soaked figs, black cherry, raisins, liqueur cherry, honey, toffee apple, dark chocolate, polished oak, currants, prunes, pink lady apples, brandy soaked Christmas pudding and some bitter oak.

Palate: Raisins, toffee, prunes, dates, mixed spice (cloves and nutmeg), candied orange, redcurrant jam, marzipan & nougat, leather, fruit and nut mix.

Finish: Rich oloroso sherry, mixed berry jam, leather and a hint of nutty bitterness (almond and peanut skins).

Comment: Big oloroso sherry and good quality spirit underneath. Both rich and lively.

4 – Ardbeg 10 46% Bottled December 2010

Colour: Pale gold with lemon/lime highlights (2.2)

Nose: Lemon meringue, whipped cream, then tar, white rubber, lemon and lime zest, ashes, creosote, cold fireplaces, seaweed, beach sand.

Palate: whipped cream and lemon then the phenolic smoke kicks in, tarry with preserved lemons and green olives, a sprinkling of white pepper.

Finish: smoky sweet cream, lingering tar, lemon and lime oil.

Comment: Probably the cleanest of all the Islay whiskies and the most citrussy.





Feints and Foreshots

FESTIVE FLAVOURS:

As we near the holiday months, here are a couple of recipes to practice, all ready to add some spice to your seasonal festivities.

THE HAWKSMOOR, SEVEN DIALS, LONDON - Whisky Cocktail

The Artist's Special

Peat Monster, Manzanilla Sherry, Lemon Juice and home made redcurrant syrup

Created at the Artist's Bar in Paris in the 1920s, this drink proves wrong the theory that Scotch Whisky cannot be mixed. Taken one step further by using the Compass Box Peat Monster.

TRADITIONAL RECIPES WITH WHISKY

compiled by Margaret Ashby for Salmon Publications

VENISON BUNNAHABHAIN

Haunch of venison, well hung	Celery, diced
1/2 pint olive oil	Mixed herbs
1/2 pint of red wine	Bay leaf or two
Glass of bunnahabhain	Few juniper berries
Large onion, sliced	Few peppercorns, crushed
Carrot sliced	Butter for roasting
	1/4 pint of cream

Put all the ingredients except the venison, butter and cream into a large glass bowl. Wipe the venison, place in the bowl and baste well with the marinade. Cover and leave in a cool place (not fridge) for 24 hours or so, basting from time to time. When ready, pre-heat oven to 400f. Take meat from marinade, wipe carefully. Place in a roasting tin and rub well with butter, seasoning and add half of the marinade to the tin. Roast in oven allowing 25 minutes per pound, and another 25 minutes extra. Cover with foil if it appears to be cooking too quickly, and make sure to leave uncovered for the last 30 minutes. Place remaining marinade in a saucepan, including the vegetables, and simmer gently until the liquid is reduced. Place in a sauce boat. Rest to meat for 15 to 20 minutes after roasting and then serve.



Feints and Foreshots

FEINTS AND FORESHOTS

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Tasting Notes November 2011

Ardbeg Alligator

The newest in Ardbeg's offshoots from their standard collection, Alligator is basically a 10 year old, as is the standard Ardbeg, except that a large share of the malt has been matured in heavily charred first-fill oak barrels, and then married at the last with standard 10 year old, then allowed to settle for about a year before bottling.

The result? both on the nose and the palate a heavily smoke and peat dominated malt - as would be expected from the process. What differentiates it from a normal Ardbeg, also smoky and peaty? Along with an extra smoke comes other savoury flavours, olives, seaweed, even fennel hints, plus a salted caramel length on the palette, and spices like cinnamon and perhaps a hint of bitter clove. Others report a chocolate and vanilla hint, but perhaps it was hidden in the spectrum or overwhelmed for me by the char: it's a flavour characteristic I didn't spot. Can you? Highly recommended bombastic malt with hidden secrets beneath the smouldering front and finish.





Feints and Foreshots

MALT WHISKY & CHOCOLATE MATCHING

"A truly decadent experience"

We've done food and whisky matching before at our Conventions and with Franz Scheurer and Cheong Lieu at the Grange Restaurant. Earlier this year we run our first ever whisky and cheese matching with Valery Henbest of Say Cheese which was a great success. When we did the member survey a while ago, whisky and food matching was high on the list of member's desires. So now we bring you our first every Single Malt Whisky and Chocolate matching night.

We've engaged with Steven Ter Horst Adelaide's newest chocolatier (producer of the most fantastic Ardbeg truffle) to provide an assortment of different chocolates which will be matched to and tasted alongside 4 whiskies selected by Craig Daniels, Chairperson of the MWSOA.

Steven will talk to the chocolates and their fillings and explain how the flavours complement the whisky each has been paired with and Craig will talk to the whiskies and relate their flavour profiles to malting processes, regional characteristics and the impact of the maturation wood.



The four whiskies (in tasting order) are:

- Glenlivet 18yo 43% • Glenfarclas 1980 24yo MWSOA 48.7%
- Laphroaig Quarter Cask 48% • Ardbeg 10yo 46%

This will be a truly decadent experience for everyone in the room including the presenters, so please come along and let us know what you think on the night.

THE VENUE , DATE & TIME

The Pot Still Room at the **ROB ROY HOTEL**, 108 HALIFAX STREET, ADELAIDE
THURSDAY 17 NOVEMBER 2011, 6.15 FOR 6.30PM

COST \$55 FOR MEMBERS -\$65 FOR NON-MEMBERS (\$20 DEPOSIT AT TIME OF BOOKING)

There is a limit of 20 attendees so **BOOKINGS are ESSENTIAL**.

RSVP: Rob Roy Hotel on (08) 8223 5391 before 4.00pm on 15 November 2011

For information please contact Aaron Baxter on 0439 806 375 or Craig Daniels on 0412 239 046



MALT WHISKY SOCIETY OF AUSTRALIA
 INCORPORATED



Feints and Foreshots

MELBOURNE EVENT

MWSoA Malt Whisky Showcase

“A wee visit to Islay”

Fancy a trip around the Isle of Islay; the most important whisky island in Scotland?

The whiskies :

Ardbeg 10

Bowmore 12 year old

Caol Ila 29 year old

Big Smoke 40%

Bunnahabhain 40 year old

Ian Baxter from Single Malt Whisky P/L and Jenny Polack from Winebins will lead you through this shades of peat collection.

At Winebins, 58 Commercial Road, Prahran, Victoria, 3181

Thursday 17 November 2011 7:00 – 9:00pm

Cost \$35 for members \$45 for Non-Members

There is a limit of 22 attendees so BOOKINGS are ESSENTIAL.

RSVP: Jenny on (03) 9510 5424 **before 14 November 2011**

Further Information: Jenny Polack on (03) 9510 5424

Please arrange to travel by public transport. Winebins is well situated close to the 246 and 220 buses, 72 tram or 10 minutes walk from Prahran Railway Station.

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Feints and Foreshots

An Autumn day in Auchentoshan - by Nic Lowrey

Late afternoon on a Sunday, all is quiet in the suburbs of Glasgow: a light rain falls on the dilapidated houses of Glasgow's outer dwellings. And suddenly - suburbia stops, giving way to gentle hills on the edge of the city. Nestled into the hillside, at the city's edge, is Auchentoshan distillery, which boasts not only being the only malt distillery technically within the Glasgow city limits, but also a triple distilling method.

Auchentoshan is a small distillery, and when i reach the end of the impressive drive, including ornamental lake, and reach the distillery entrance and shop, there are only two staff around, and they both seem short of a Sunday afternoon job. So what better occupation for an idle distillery worker but to show someone around on a private tour. A winning smile and the promise of a profile in the MWSOA journal assured my place on this private peek into the distilling process at Auchentoshan.

But first, a word about their malt itself. Often called a breakfast malt, the basic Auchentoshan expression is clean, light and could perhaps be considered just shy of bland (if one was being mean, or certainly if one prefers a feistier malt). However, there are more interesting expressions inside the walls of their distillery, and after the tour I personally walked out with a bottle of the 11 year old 1999 Bordeaux Cask Matured: aged for 11 years in St Julian wine casks from top claret producer Chateau Lagrange, distilled in 1999 and bottled at natural cask strength.

Auchentoshan is one of very few Lowland distilleries, and was established in 1823, and its history includes being bombed by the Luftwaffe in world war two, meaning the loss of a warehouse and more litres of malt than you might want to consider. It is currently owned by Morrison Bowmore, who are in turn owned by Suntory. The distillery and associated buildings are small and very clean. Our first tour stop is the massive lauter tun: a single huge metal mash tun, it is impressive to behold and, even very clean, still retains a hint of wet barley in its general aroma. The lack of mash currently held within was actually an advantage, allowing us to see its depth and mechanism.

Next it is onto the picturesque washback room, containing a line of elevated wooden washbacks, which I'm told are Oregon Pine. Certainly they stretch at least 8 feet high and the whole room = whilst in essence a vital and practical thing - is so richly coloured that it's a photo opportunity and a half!

The final step in our personalised journey is the whisky stills, the three which of course are responsible for that triple distillation process. And just as with many if not all distilleries, Auchentoshan are superstitious about their stills and the part they play in the maturation process, and my guide goes to great pains to point out the angle at which the neck of the stills have been created to maximise the 'clean' flavour of an Auchentoshan malt. There is also a small cabinet containing a sample of feints and foreshots, which I consider to be a nice touch.

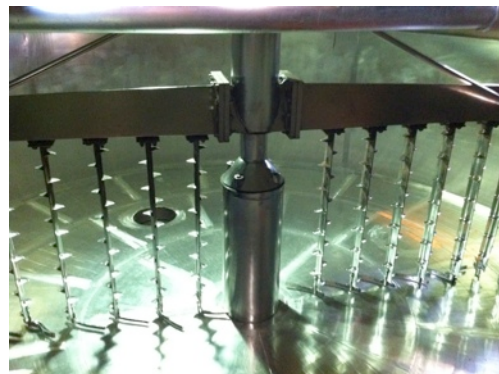
With this, our private tour concludes, and we wander past the warehouses full of drying malts back to the shop, where we are of course obligated in the name of research to try a flight of malts: the standard edition, the triple wood and the Bordeaux Matured. I was less than overwhelmed by the Breakfast Malt, intrigued by the Triple Wood and was so impressed by the Bordeaux matured that I



Feints and Foreshots

bought not the company, but at least a bottle.

Many thanks to the staff of Auchentoshan for their kind hospitality.



The mighty Auchentoshan mash tun, outside and in.



An extremely picturesque set of wooden washbacks

the site of the all important triple distillation



The ubiquitous feints and foreshots

A journey that ends in liquid research