
Jack Daniel's Raffle Results

Congratulations to Dale Rickards

**During the course of the raffle
a total of \$250 was raised.
Thank you everyone!**

BUNNAHABHAIN

CHAPTER 1

Our beloved Bunnahabhain – which means ‘mouth of the river’ in Gaelic, as it stands at the mouth of the Margadale Spring on the shores of the Sound of Islay – first came into existence in 1883. However its origins can be traced back four years earlier when, in 1879, William Robertson of Robertson and Baxter Blending House, joined with the Greenlees Brothers to create the Islay Distillery Company. And so, with the distillery built on a site close to the Margadale River, in 1883 Bunnahabhain was borne.

In the early years, our distillery relied upon the sea trade. Armed only with a small village, a pier and lots of whisky making know-how, our forefathers received supplies by boat and sent adventuring seafarers back to the mainland along the Sound of Islay with casks of the ‘good stuff’. It’s this daring spirit and coastal living which has made Bunnahabhain what it is today, and which continues to play an important role in the production of the ever increasing range of Bunnahabhain Single Malts

CHAPTER 2

In 1930, with the whole of Europe still reeling from the economic downturn, in the aftermath of the Great War, Bunnahabhain distillery closed its doors. However, thanks to the Bunnahabhain spirit, and our forebears’ determination to endure, we opened once again, a mere 7 years later.

While much of Islay hasn’t changed, in 1960 one of the biggest changes we ever experienced occurred; a new road was built! The puffer boats travelling along the Sound of Islay had been our lifeline for so long, but with the introduction of the road, supplies could now reach us by land– albeit, a hilly and challenging drive.

CHAPTER 3

The creation of the road, and the increase in supplies we could receive, was incredibly timely. As word of Bunnahabhain spread and demand soared, a second pair of stills were installed in 1963 to increase the production capacity.

In 1979, our classic 12 year old Single Malt Scotch Whisky was introduced to the world, received to great acclaim. You can still buy it today, just visit our shop to taste the first of our modern day core range.

CHAPTER 4

1993 marked a historic moment in Bunnahabhain’s history as the last boat docked. After receiving supplies via puffer boat travelling along the Sound of Islay for over a century, the road was deemed the most suitable route for receiving ever increasing ingredients and supplies. In 2006, 3 years after being purchased by Burn Stewart Distillers, a major rebrand was launched, with a redesign of the 12 year old packaging, and the launch of 18 year old and 25 year old variants. They quickly took their place, alongside the 12 year old, as part of the core range – a range still as popular today as it was then

CHAPTER 5

2010 marked yet another historic moment in the evolution of Bunnahabhain. Our whiskies returned to being produced non-chillfiltered, with a natural colour at 46.3% – just as they had been by our knowledgeable forefathers.

In 2014 Burn Stewart merged with Distell, which heralded more investment into both the brand and the distillery. In 2017, our packaging was further modernised and the portfolio of products was extended with two further variants; Stiùreadair & Toiteach A Dhà. Accompanying this, a substantial investment in the Distillery Visitor Centre was announced, giving our pilgrims yet another reason to brave the road and return to Bunnahabhain.

THE BUNNAHABHAIN KNOW-HOW

We could spin you a tale of how our whisky is made from superior ingredients compared to other Islay malts, but as you know, the truth is all good whisky starts the same way; with water, barley, yeast & time (lots of it!). What sets Bunnahabhain apart is our signature unpeated style, and the rich, complex layers of each cask matured in our Bay on the shores of the Sound of Islay. Whilst we’re known for being the unpeated Islay malt, this was not always the case, and our Distillery Manager loves to pay homage to his 19th century predecessors, who would have used peated barley like many of the other whisky distilleries on the Island. Today, we call our peated expressions Mòine, pronounced moy-nya and meaning ‘Peated’ in Scots Gaelic. Whatever the phenol content (level of peated’ness), all of our whiskies are non-chillfiltered and natural colour, meaning nothing is added and nothing is taken away. This allows us to showcase the true natural character of our Islay Single Malts. Read on to learn more about what makes Bunnahabhain unique.

WATER

Bunnahabhain is the only distillery on the island to use pure, spring water. Drawn from our namesake, the Margadale River - via pipes that lead directly to the distillery - our water remains un-influenced by the abundance of peat found throughout the Islay landscape. This pure, non-peated water contributes towards the light signature character of Bunnahabhain, and when you visit us, you can trek up the hill and see the source for yourself.

BARLEY

We use two types of barley, depending on which whisky we are making. For our non-peated whiskies, we use non-peated concerto malted barley and for our Mòine, we use peated concerto malted barley. Both barley types are passed through our Porteus Mill, which grinds it into ‘grist’, before being transferred into our mash tun for mixing with heated spring water.

MASH

Our mash tun at Bunnahabhain is one of the biggest in Scotland. It holds 12.5 tonnes and is made of stainless steel with a copper top. The grist from the Porteus Mill and the heated spring water is mixed in a mash cycle that lasts 12 hours, during which time the ‘wort’ (a sweet liquid) is produced.

FERMENTATION

Our Wort, or sweet liquid, is then drained through the perforated floor of the Mash Tun and transferred to our Wash Backs. We have 6 Oregon pine Wash Backs at Bunnahabhain, each with a capacity of 66,500 litres. It is here that the magic begins, as the yeast is added and the fermentation, which can last as long as 100 hours, is set in motion. As the cooled wort and yeast react to produce a weak alcohol solution called ‘wash’, and a bit like a strong beer, the natural bacteria within the wood interacts with the yeast and sugars to create additional layers of flavour not achieved by more modern methods and technology. Now we can start the next stage of the process; distillation.

DISTILLATION

Once fermentation is complete, we move our ‘Wash’ from the Wash Backs to our Wash Stills where it is heated to the point of evaporation. This

evaporation rises to the top of the still, flows down the curved lye pipe to the condenser where it is cooled, and runs on to the low wines receiver. At this stage, the solution is still too weak and impure to be casked, so it is redistilled in a second still called a Spirit Still. With the tallest stills on Islay, which have unusually long swan necks, we are able to produce a lighter, more delicate flavour profile.

The second distillation flows through the Spirit Safe, where our stillmen watch for the anticipated middle cut, rejecting the first and final parts of the run. The middle cut, or heart of the run, is stored in the spirit receiver for casking, while the rest is returned to be re-distilled. The 'heart' is now our New Make Spirit and has the perfect percentage of alcohol for taking to the next stage of the process. Our stills have a total annual production capacity of 2,500,000 litres.

MATURATION

From the Spirit Receiver, the 'New Make' is transferred to the Spirit Vat where water from our natural spring is added. The New Make is then decanted into the highest quality Bourbon, Sherry and Red Wine casks and laid to rest in our coastal warehouses which sit alongside the Sound of Islay. Some of our warehousing dates back to 1881 and together have a capacity for 20,700 butts, hogsheads and barrels. And so the wait begins...

BUNNAHABHAIN TIE-IN DRIVES FLAVOUR FOCUS

11th December, 2013 by Gabriel Stone

Islay whisky Bunnahabhain has teamed up with a Scottish Michelin-starred chef to create food matches that will help "bring to life" its whisky portfolio to customers worldwide.



Geoffrey Smeddle's dish of toffee apple cheese cake, bramble compote and salted caramel ice cream to pair with the Bunnahabhain 25-year-old

Geoffrey Smeddle, chef-owner of The Peat Inn near St Andrews, has put together a series of "tasting props", from canapé options to a full menu, which have been designed to accompany the Scotch whisky brand's core expressions: 12, 18 and 25-year-old.

"It's not a new thing to do," admitted Michelle Lansdowne, senior global brand manager for Burn Stewart Distillers. However, she told *the drinks business*: "I think it's a powerful message to give out to our customers that whisky is not just a standalone drink and to show its versatility and flavours."

This message was echoed by Dr Kirstie McCallum, brand ambassador for Burn Stewart. "There's always been a lot of preciousness about Scotch whisky, that you can only drink it with water, but it's very important that whatever you do you enjoy it," she insisted.

Explaining that the new programme would initially focus on Bunnahabhain's key markets of the US, Canada, Russia and the Nordics, Lansdowne told *db*: "It will help bring to life the tasting events that Kirstie and the brand managers carry out."

As for the decision to partner with Smeddle, she remarked: "We wanted someone with an international reputation – the Michelin star assured that – so that our international customers would understand. The purpose of this is really to show our markets how to get the most out of Bunnahabhain and bring out the flavours."

Although noting that "consumers still feel strongly about age statements", Lansdowne highlighted this food-focused initiative as a means of encouraging whisky drinkers to adopt a broader perspective. "It's about trying to show that it's not just about age, but the flavours in the whisky," she summed up, adding: "It will also help us to tap into different channels and consumers who are looking for more reassurance when tasting whisky."

While the recipes offer a degree of flexibility for incorporating seasonal or regional alternatives, Smeddle picked out in particular the "faintly salty tang" of Bunnahabhain, which also bucks

Chef Geoffrey Smeddle explains the food and whisky matches the traditional Islay style by using unpeated malt and water. In keeping with his own approach at The Peat Inn, he added: "I wanted to highlight Scottish ingredients."

Customers tasting the range at events will be able to try the whiskies with nibbles such as pork cheek braised on onion stock served on malt bread or slow cooked duck pastilla with spiced fruit and cinnamon stewed in a mix of 18-year old Bunnahabhain and Pedro Ximenez Sherry.

Those attending VIP dinners will be taken through a menu of cured salmon and oyster panna cotta with the 12-year-old; maple-glazed smoked partridge, red cabbage, salsify and malt jus with the 18-year-old; and toffee apple cheese cake, bramble compote and salted caramel ice cream with the 25-year-old.

This latest initiative follows a period of significant growth for Bunnahabhain, which Lansdowne confirmed has seen 107% growth since 2008. "Demand exceeds supply," she reported of the brand, [whose parent company Burn Stewart Distillers was bought by South African group Distell](#) earlier this year. "Albeit we're a niche brand, we're a serious competitor in the single malt market," concluded Lansdowne.

New campaign celebrates the isolation of Bunnahabhain

7th August, 2018 by Owen Bellwood - <http://www.thespiritsbusiness.com>

Islay Scotch whisky Bunnahabhain has launched its latest marketing drive, which celebrates the rugged isolation of the distillery.



Bunnahabhain has launched its Sound of Islay campaign

The Distell-owned distillery has launched its Sound of Islay campaign, which aims to bring consumers closer to the sound of Bunnahabhain's location, production and pronunciation in a playful manner.

Derek Scott, brand director for malt whisky at Distell, said: "The Sound of Islay campaign aims to take people on a journey to discover the unique pace of life at Bunnahabhain, showcasing all of the aspects that make our whisky so special – from the challenging trip to get there, the summer rain that will one day will become our precious spirit, to a warm welcome in the most remote corner of Islay."

A play on both the distillery's location on the narrow strait of sea between Islay and Jura, as well as the brand's Gaelic naming convention, the campaign uses phonetic spellings to portray 'The Sound of Islay'.

Scott added: "The new positioning highlights the brand's personality with humour in embracing the fact that many people find our whisky names difficult to pronounce. We hope this will aid us in driving a closer connection between our whisky, which is enjoyed worldwide, and our locational heritage through our Gaelic roots."

Last year, brand owner **Distell unveiled plans for an £11 million renovation of the Islay distillery**, which will include an updated visitor experience.

Bunnahabhain unveils Fèis Ìle special editions

20th April, 2018 by Amy Hopkins - www.thespiritsbusiness.com

Bunnahabhain Distillery will launch two special edition single malts at Fèis Ìle 2018, the Islay Festival of Music and Malt.



The two special editions will be available from the distillery during Fèis Ìle Taking place from 25 May to 2 June, the festival is a celebration of Islay whisky and Gaelic culture.

Islay distillery Bunnahabhain will showcase two new expressions at the event: Bunnahabhain Moine Oloroso Finish, bottled in 2007, and Bunnahabhain Spanish Oak Finish, which is 15 years old.

The Moine bottling (£95/US\$134) has been made with peated malted barley, while the Spanish oak whisky (£250/US\$351) was first filled into refill casks before being transferred to Spanish Oak Gran Reserva barrels in 2013.

The special editions are described as “very different spirits” despite being produced from the same still.

Bunnahabhain will be open for tours throughout Fèis Ìle and will host a programme of special events on 1 June. For the first time, visitors will be able to take a boat trip to view the distillery from the sea.

“We’ll also have plenty of our festive bottlings on hand, so people can experience the connection between our whiskies and the sea at first hand,” said Derek Scott, brand director for malt whisky at Distell, owner of Bunnahabhain.

Last summer, [Bunnahabhain announced plans for an extensive renovation](#), which will be phased over three years.

whisky distilleries – [Bunnahabhain](#), Deanston and *Bunnahabhain 2008 Mòine Bordeaux Red Wine Cask Matured*

Tobermory, the latter of which also produces Ledaig. They include:

- Tobermory 2005 (12 years old) Fino Cask Finish, RRP £110 (US\$140)
- Ledaig 1998 (19 years old) Oloroso Sherry Cask Finish, RRP £130 (US\$165)
- Ledaig 1998 (19 years old) PX Cask Finish, RRP £150 (US\$191)
- Deanston 2008 Brandy Cask Finish, RRP £60 (US\$76)
- Bunnahabhain 2008 Mòine Bordeaux Red Wine Cask Matured, RRP £75 (US\$95)
- Bunnahabhain Palo Cortado Cask Finish, RRP £275 (US\$350)

Derek Scott, brand director for malt whisky at Distell, said: “This has been a revolutionary year for our malt portfolio. We’re lucky to have three very different distilleries and this showcase will allow us to share the stories of each and highlight how these are reflected in the bold new releases.

“Kirstie [McCallum], our lead blender, has been working with each distillery to create these unique whiskies.

“Using the flavour profile each brand is known for as the guide to select the finishing casks, we’ve been able to create six limited release whiskies that are not just of interest for their points of difference but are also fantastic drams that remain true to the whisky’s style.”

Bunnahabhain, Islay’s Hidden Gem Part I: A Short History

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeemicallef/2018/01/16/bunnahabhain-islays-hidden-gem-part-i-a-short-history/#4657d15c2a58>



The Bunnahabhain distillery viewed from the pier.PHOTO,

A Short History of Bunnahabhain

The Bunnahabhain distillery is unusual among its Islay distilling brethren. Notably, for the last fifty-odd years, it has specialized in producing unpeated whiskies rather than the “peat monsters” that Islay’s other distilleries have become world famous for crafting. Moreover, unlike its better-known distillery cousins, its history is not shrouded in tales of bootleg whisky and surreptitious smuggling.

Bunnahabhain was built in 1881, during the late 19th century whisky boom, and at the height of the Victorian period. By then, whisky distillation was already a well-established business. Its construction, even now, reflects the optimism, the scale and the grandeur that exemplified Great Britain’s Victorian Age.

Locals have long insisted that the architect who designed the Bunnahabhain distillery also designed numerous prisons throughout Scotland and that consequently the distillery has a prison like appearance. Bunnahabhain does have an imposing gate, a feature that does give it a fortress like character. Given the increasing value of its maturing whisky stocks, a fortress might not be a bad idea.

In reality, it was designed to mimic the layout of a Bordeaux chateau and its buildings are arranged around a central square. The Bruichladdich distillery, which was built in the same year, has a similar layout. Bunnahabhain’s historical records are deposited in the archives of the University of Glasgow, but no one has been able to find any reference to the name of the original architects.

Distell to launch six limited edition single malts

13th August, 2018 by Melita Kiely - www.thespiritsbusiness.com



South African spirits producer Distell will release six limited edition single malt whiskies next month – two from Bunnahabhain and Ledaig, and one from Deanston and Tobermory.

Distell’s limited edition range includes a 2008 Bunnahabhain aged in Mòine Bordeaux red wine casks

The line-up will be launched at the group’s first annual showcase event in London, called The Malt Gallery, which will take place at TT Liquor in Shoreditch on 12 September.

The six single malts were bottled from Distell’s three Scotch

The Islay Distillery Company was organized in 1879, to construct a new distillery overlooking the Sound of Islay—the narrow channel that separates Islay from its neighbor Jura. The founders of the company were James Ford, of William Ford & Sons, tea, wine and spirit merchants of Leith, Edinburgh; James Watson Greenlees, a partner in McMurphy & Ralston of Campbeltown and William A. Robertson of Robertson & Baxter, wholesale whisky merchants, Glasgow.

Land was purchased in 1880. Construction of the Bunnahabhain distillery began the following year. Production volume was set at 200,000 imperial gallons a year or about 900,000 liters, making it one of the largest operating distilleries in Scotland at the time.

This northeast corner of Islay was relatively desolate and uninhabited. Even today, it is considered off the beaten path, and is connected to the rest of the island by only a single narrow road. Its closest neighbor was the Caol Ila distillery about four miles away. Port Askaig, one of the port links with the mainland, was another mile further. Most port traffic moves through Port Ellen in the center of the island.

The distillery was built at the mouth of the Margdale River, where it enters Bunnahabhain Bay. The original land grant covered 20 acres and was a *feu*; a land grant whose rental obligation could be paid in cash and that did not require providing military service to the local lord.

The site was so remote that a one-mile long road had to be built to connect the distillery with the island's road network. The distillery company even had to build the village of Bunnahabhain alongside the distillery to house its workers, complete with a school house for their children.

Despite its remoteness, the site offered plenty of water, from Loch Staoinsha and local springs, an excellent natural harbor, which made transportation by sea easier, as well as protection from the gales and high winds that blew in from the Atlantic and battered Islay's western shore.

Ironically, its remoteness then and now, notwithstanding, this desolate northeast corner of Islay was once the heart of the Kingdom of the Isles. The kingdom dated back to 875, and emerged from a series of Viking and Gaelic rulers of the islands and west coast of Scotland. It would last until 1493, when the then rulers, the MacDonald Lords, relinquished their island estates to King James IV of Scotland.

At its height, the Lords of the Isles were among the most powerful nobleman in the British Isles, second only to the kings of Scotland and England. Their empire included the Hebrides, Skye and Ross, as well as the Knoydart, Ardnamurchan and the Kintyre peninsulas on the west coast of Scotland.

In 1462, the then Lord of the Isles, John MacDonald, made a secret treaty with King Edward IV of England and with the Earl of Douglas to conquer Scotland and depose James III.

The discovery of that secret agreement in 1493, is what prompted James IV, the son of James III, to seize the lands of the MacDonald clan and strip John MacDonald of his title.

Since then, the title of Lord of the Isles was granted to the eldest son of the reigning Scottish monarch and, following the Act of Union between England and Scotland in 1707, to the eldest son of the reigning English monarch. The current Lord of the Isles is Prince Charles.

At the time it was built, the distillery was considered state of the art. Its stills were, and still are, among the largest in Great Britain, as are its mash tuns. The entire facility was designed to utilize gravity flow to move its liquids.

When he visited the distillery in 1885, Alfred Barnard, the late 19th century chronicler of the whisky industry, noted that barley was lifted to the malting lofts "by steam driven elevators" and then distributed using an Archimedes screw to spread the barley across the floor. A similar arrangement was used to transfer the malted barley to the kilns. Barnard observed that this was the only distillery he visited where this process was so automated.

Bunnahabhain ran its first spirit in October 1882. Full production started in January 1883. The company was initially successful, reporting a handsome profit of £10,000 its first year. The directors decided to sell their whisky wholesale to other distillers and blenders rather than bottle their own whisky.

At the time, there was no requirement to age whisky. The legislation mandating a minimum aging of three years was not enacted till 1916.

Robertson and Baxter, one of the original founders of the distillery, was appointed the company's sales agent. In 1886 to 1887, however, the British economy experienced a severe recession. The Islay Distillery Company saw its production slashed and its profits fall by half.

Faced with mounting competition, around four dozen new whisky distilleries were created between 1870 and 1900, two dozen of which have survived to this day, the company decided to amalgamate its business with William Grant and Company, the owners of the Glenrothes distillery. The resulting company, called Highland Distillers, would be an important player in the Scotch whisky industry for the next century.

Highland Distillers would go on to acquire additional distilleries, including the Glenglassaugh Distillery (1892), Tamdhu (1898) and Highland Park (1937). At its peak in the late 1920s, Highland Distillers was supplying malt to 180 different blenders.



The Entrance to the Bunnahabhain Distillery

The whisky produced at Bunnahabhain was heavily peated. It would remain so until the 1960s. Alfred Barnard, during his visit to the company, observed, "nothing but peat is used in the kilns, which is dug in the district, and is of exceptionally fine quality." Barnard went on to note that the peat was well seasoned so that it was "free from the sulphurous matter which it contains when newly dug."

At the time, the water used for both mashing and cooling the condensers came from Loch Staoinsha. Like many other of the water sources on Islay, this water flowed over peat and had a light brown color as a result, although the impact of this peaty water on the aroma and taste of the resulting whisky was negligible.

Since the 1950s, the water for mashing has been piped from the Margdale Springs, which lie to the northwest of the distillery, and is crystal clear. The owners of the spring are paid a yearly rent in whisky.

Unlike many other Scotch whisky distilleries that frequently changed owners over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, Bunnahabhain has had relatively few owners.

Highland Distillers owned the distillery from 1887 until 1999. That year the Edrington Group, now just Edrington, which had long held a share interest in Highland Distillers, teamed up with George Grant & Company, to take Highland Distillers private.

Edrington is an international spirits company whose shares are owned by the Robertson Trust. The trust was created by the descendants of William Robertson, one of the original founders of the Islay Whisky Company.

Although, Bunnahabhain has had relatively few owners, that doesn't mean that it has not suffered from the boom and bust cycles that have characterized the Scotch whisky industry. The distillery was closed from 1930 to 1937, because of the Great Depression. It had seen its sales decline in the 1920s, as a result of the imposition of prohibition in the United States.

It was again closed from 1942 through 1944, during the Second World War, and had to operate at a reduced capacity because of grain rationing, until 1953. It was again closed from 1982 to 1984, and operated on a part time basis from 1999 to 2002. During the latter period, it only operated for a few weeks a year and produced around 300,000 liters of alcohol, around 12% of its capacity.

Until the 1960s, Bunnahabhain produced heavily peated whiskies for the blenders. These whiskies were typically peated to about 35 to 40 ppm, comparable to the peated whiskies produced by Ardbeg, Laphroaig and Lagavulin.

Bunnahabhain's peated whiskies tended to be oily and smoky, very different from its peated expressions today, with the pronounced phenolic aromas typical of the other Islay distilleries.

Starting in the 1960s, however, Bunnahabhain moved away from heavily peated whiskies in favor of unpeated whiskies destined for the Famous Grouse and Cutty Sark blends. Peating levels in the malt dropped to around two ppm. After distillation, phenol levels were around .5 ppm, a level imperceptible to most humans.

Bunnahabhain's unpeated malt was also used in Black Bottle, Highland Distiller's bestselling blended whisky. Highland had acquired that brand in 1995.

Black Bottle incorporated whisky from seven of Islay's distillers, along with contributions from other grain and malt distillers on the mainland.

The brand dates to the late 19th century. It was developed by Gordon Graham, an Aberdeen tea merchant who switched to blending whiskies. He bottled the blend in opaque black bottles, hence its name, and it quickly became an Aberdeen favorite.



The Bunnahabhain Distillery

Bunnahabhain's malt also went into Scottish Leader, another distillery blend that dated from the 19th century. Scottish Leader also incorporated peated whiskies, but was less peated than Black Bottle.

In 1963, in response to burgeoning demand for blended whiskies, the Bunnahabhain distillery underwent a major expansion. The number of stills was doubled from two to four, and their capacity was expanded to 35,400 liters for the wash still and 15,500 for the spirit still; an increase of 30% and 15% respectively. The floor maltings were eliminated, and six new, larger washbacks were introduced, each with a capacity of 100,000 liters.

Overall, the distillery was modernized, and its capacity was doubled to 2.5 million liters. This was not the first time that the distillery had undergone expansion, although it was by far the most extensive. Renovations had occurred throughout the course of the 20th century.

In 1900, for example, Bunnahabhain's mash tun, a cast iron behemoth with a seven-ton capacity, was replaced with an even bigger mash tun, capable of holding up to 15 tons of mash. That tun was in turn replaced with a stainless steel, copper top mashed tun of equal capacity in 1999. The original mash tun ended up at Bruichladdich, where it is still in use.

Starting in the 1970s, the distillery began to bottle small quantities of its single malt. Independent bottlers had issued select bottlings of Bunnahabhain in the past but during this period, the pace of independent bottlings increased dramatically. By the late 1980s, the distillery began producing a core line built around a 12-year-old expression.

In the meantime, Bunnahabhain began to experiment with a return to its peated roots. In 1991, Bunnahabhain produced its first batch of peated whisky. It measured 28 ppm phenol. A second batch followed in 1997, which registered 38 ppm. Most of this production was sold to independent bottlers.

In 2003, Edrington sold the Bunnahabhain distillery and the Black Bottle and Scottish Leader brands to Burn Stewart, a subsidiary of CL Financial, a Trinidad based spirits company. Edrington retained most of the stock of maturing whisky and continued to rely on Bunnahabhain, under a five-year contract, to supply whisky for the Famous Grouse and Cutty Sark blends.

Burn Stewart in turn owned the Tobermory distillery on Mull and the Deanston distillery near Sterling, while CL Financial owned a range of other spirit-related companies, including Angostura Bitters, Belvedere vodka and Thomas Hine Cognac.

Burn Stewart cranked up Bunnahabhain's production and began to emphasize the brand as a single malt. It also began to produce peated whiskies for inclusion into the distillery's core range. The first official offering, a no age statement (NAS) peated expression branded Toiteach, was released in 2008. Currently, about 20% of Bunnahabhain's production is peated.

The tenure of CL Financial proved to be short lived, however. In 2013, the company was declared insolvent and Burn Stewart was sold to Distell, its longtime South African distributor. Distell was also a spirits

conglomerate. It owned a broad portfolio of South African wine, beer and spirits brands, as well as French Cognac producer Bisquit.

Since acquiring the Bunnahabhain distillery, Distell has continued to emphasize the development of its single malt brands, as well as the continued expansion of its production.

In 2017, Distell announced a three-year, \$14 million program to modernize the facility to better cater to visitors and add a larger visitor center and gift shop, as well as improve road access to the distillery. In addition, it will build new maturation warehouses and replace the current company housing with new facilities.

Producing Whisky at Bunnahabhain

There are several interesting features about Bunnahabhain's production process. The company stopped malting its own barley in 1963. The malting floors still exist. If the distillery ever wants to return to making its own malted barley it could probably manage about 40 tons a week.

The distillery brings in unpeated malted barley from Simpsons Berwick Maltings (about 80%) and the balance in malt peated at 35 to 40 ppm from Port Ellen Maltings on Islay. In 2016, the company did about 10 weeks of peated whisky distillation.

The mash tun has a capacity of 15 tons of malted barley, although it is usually filled to about 12.5 to 13 tons, roughly 50,000 liters.

The usual procedure in Scotch whisky production is to spray the grist in the mash tun three times with progressively hotter water. The water dissolves the sugars in the grist. The process is called the three waters. The first two waters, now called wort, go to the washbacks where they are fermented into wash, while the third water is reused as the first water of the next mashing.

At Bunnahabhain, the grist receives four waters, since the mash tun is so large. The first two waters are at temperatures of 147° F (64° C) and 176° F (80° C). The last two waters are at 194° F (90° C). The first two waters go to the washback, while the last two are recycled into the first water of the next mash cycle.

The distillery has two fermentation cycles designed to optimize the efficiency of the wash stills. Monday's and Tuesday's ferments last for 48 hours so that the wash can be distilled that same week. Ferments on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday last for 110 hours so that they are ready for distillation the following week. The spirit made from the two different fermentations is blended together before casking.

Another feature of Bunnahabhain's fermentation is that the wash passes through an underback, where suspended particles are allowed to drop out, before being moved to the washbacks. This results in a very clear wort. The wort itself is not filtered, suspended particles simply settle out.

Clear worts, sometimes referred to as Japanese style worts, produce a light, cleaner style of whisky, while cloudy or opaque worts that have a lot of suspended matter tend to produce whiskies that have more nutty and spicy flavors.

Bunnahabhain has among the largest stills in the Scotch whisky industry. The stills are also the tallest on Islay and, at 20 feet 10 inches, among the tallest in the industry.

The most significant feature of distillation at Bunnahabhain, however, is the relatively low fill charge used by the distillery. The wash stills are charged at 16,625 liters, only 47% of capacity, while the spirit stills are charged at around 60% of capacity.

Low charge rates create more reflux and increase copper contact resulting in a lighter malt. That's the primary reason why Bunnahabhain's peated whiskies are so different than their historic antecedents.

Rather than being oily and pungent, Bunnahabhain's current peated offerings are drier and lighter with a more pronounced peppery influence. The tall stills and low charge rates also explain the lightness of the distillery's non-peated offerings.

The heart cut is from 72% to 64% with an average alcohol by volume (ABV) of 68.5%. The cut lasts for about two to three hours and is preceded by a foreshots run of about 10 minutes. The heart cut for peated whiskies is from 72% to 61.5%. Both peated and unpeated whiskies are casked at an average ABV of 63.5%.

The water used to dilute the newmake spirit is from the Margdale Springs, the same as is used for mashing. Casking is in a combination of ex-bourbon barrels and sherry butts. The percentage of whisky matured in sherry butts has been steadily growing. In addition, the distillery has been experimenting with a range of cask finishes featuring sweet wines. These include, Port, Marsala and PX Sherry. A brandy cask finish has also been released.

All the whisky intended for bottling as single malt is matured at the distillery. One of the interesting features about Bunnahabhain is a noticeable salinity in many of its expressions. There are seven dunnage warehouses currently in use, numbered from 2 to 8. Traditionally, warehouse number 7, which sits on the bayside of the distillery, has exhibited the most pronounced saline influences.

As part of its current distillery renovation, Bunnahabhain plans to build new warehouse for maturing its whisky stocks, all of which will face the Sound of Islay. It will be interesting to see whether this new warehouse placement will have a noticeable impact on the perceived salinity of the whisky.

Since 2010, Burn Stewart has opted not to chill filter its whiskies before bottling. Chill filtering is a practice that began in the 1970s, largely in response to the needs of the American market for whiskies that would not turn cloudy or hazy when chilled.

By chilling the whisky to just above freezing before bottling, colloidal particles (suspended microscopic particles) and oilier, fatty alcohols are forced to drop out of solution or congeal into a semisolid form where they can be removed by filters.

The result is a whisky that won't become hazy when chilled. The drawback is that those fatty alcohols, what are typically called congeners, add flavor and texture to the whisky. Removing them strips the whisky of some of its aroma, flavor and mouthfeel.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WHISKY COLLECTING

23 August 2018 by [Tom Bruce-Gardyne](https://scotchwhisky.com/) - <https://scotchwhisky.com/>

Stamps, coins, stickers, and now whisky... what is it about memorabilia that makes us want to collect it? Tom Bruce-Gardyne explores the psychology behind whisky collecting, and that slippery slope from part-time hobby to serious investment.



Treasure trove: Collectors tend to amass their whiskies around one distillery or independent bottler

Evolutionary theorists suggest a collection was a way for a man to attract potential mates by signalling his ability to accumulate resources. Well, it may have worked for our Stone Age ancestors, but somehow a stash of old stamps, vintage comics or bottles of Macallan Fine & Rare wouldn't have much pulling power these days, you'd imagine. In the words of theartofmanliness.com in its [2016 Ultimate List of Hobbies for Men](#), 'Collecting is something a lot of men love and most women just don't get'.

'The reaction I get when people find out I'm a coin collector isn't great. It's definitely not much of a conversation starter,' Mackenzie Crook, the actor and creator of BBC Four's much-loved sitcom *The Detectorists*, told *The Observer*. But as he went on to explain: 'It's a personal, private thing. It's something for myself, unless I meet a fellow numismatist, like my dad. Then we will talk passionately about it for hours.'

The advice of author and inveterate collector Hunter Davies to 'never collect for investment,' is routinely ignored by whisky collectors. Many will have made a similar journey to Andy Simpson, co-founder of *Rare Whisky 101*, who progressed from whisky drinker to collector by 'buying one to drink and one to keep, and inadvertently becoming an investor'. He warns investment clients with rare bottles about 'the double D' – as in, don't drink it or drop it.

Yet the whole secondary market sits on the three-legged stool of drinkers, collectors and investors, with the latter reliant on the other two. If rare whisky becomes too expensive to drink or collect, the whole stool will collapse. There is not a whisky collector who doesn't bemoan the

soaring prices at auction and from the producers themselves. The [Ardbeg](#) aficionado, [Geert Bero](#), suggests that distillers should sell some rare bottles opened and unsealed just for drinking. It's a nice idea but I doubt it's a top priority at [Macallan](#) HQ.



Quiet reflection: Diego Sandrin takes the time to sit and admire his own whisky collection

Because so many bottles are bought for re-selling, Bero has learned to relax at auctions. 'In the old days I felt I had to get it on the day itself,' he says. 'Now I say: "why panic, it'll come along again". Some bottles I missed I went a long way to find, but then I just stopped and said: "it's only a bottle of whisky. It's only distilled barley."'" That sounds a very healthy attitude. By contrast, any speculator betting on the rising price of rare whisky will have heard the glib advice that 'you can always drink your investment if the value falls'. For your average bottle flipper, the taste of that financial loss would really stick in the throat.

'When you drink a whisky, that's when it comes alive and that's when it dies,' says Italian collector [Diego Sandrin](#), who admits that some of his bottles may have become too precious to ever open. 'I would never sell my collection, but my kids can do what they want when I'm gone. I'm sure it will be a lot of help to them.' The desire to leave a legacy and something solid that will outlive you is thought to be a common psychological motive for collecting things, as is the simple pleasure of possession. 'I could not even imagine not looking at my bottles,' says Sandrin. 'For me it's therapy. Whenever I've had a hard day, I just sit there and go through the bottles and remember where I got each one.'

Innkeeper and inveterate [Port Ellen](#) collector, [Jon Beach](#), says: 'It was always something I did on the sly. Obviously, being married with a young family, I couldn't go throwing money at bottles.' Sometimes he gets carried away, and sometimes finds it hard to follow his own advice on online auctions – make your bid, and walk away. 'With the phased shut down on these auctions you go back and see that "oh, it's still live ... and oh, it's an extra £10"', he says. 'So it does take quite a bit of self-restraint.' Here, the psychology appears similar to gambling, but Andy Simpson insists that only applies if you are investing. 'For a collector it's not a gamble,' he says. 'It's the pleasure of owning and collecting that set.'

But when it comes to tracking down a full set of whisky that old saying of 'it's better to travel than arrive' certainly seems to apply. Well, it does for Sandrin who says: 'I collect the Italian bottler [Samaroli](#) and whenever I see one I haven't got it brings me alive a little bit. If I thought I'd got to the end, then the game is over.' Having collected all Ardbeg's official bottlings, Geert Bero has moved on to those of the [Scotch Malt Whisky Society](#). 'So far, I'm missing 20 bottles,' he says. 'It is a journey, but it's very hard.' Driving him on, he happily concedes, is the thrill of the chase.

This hunting instinct is clearly part of the psychology of collecting. 'For men in particular,' wrote the American academic, Steven Gelber, 'the image of the hunt as both a search for game and as a form of game, imbued collecting with an air of masculinity that legitimised it as an expression of superiority in a Darwinian world.' Unfortunately, as discussed above, such alleged superiority would be lost on most women. To put it crudely, that shedload of old whisky ain't no babe magnet. Indeed if the collection gets out of control it could have the opposite effect.

'You either shelve out your spare bedroom and your wife divorces you, or you put your duplicate bottles in professional storage,' says Simpson.

'Or, if you find yourself in bed cuddling a bottle rather than your wife, that's even worse,' adds Bero. For a psychologist, the dark side of collecting would be when it slips into hoarding, but so long as you are out there breaking open bottles with kindred spirits you have little to fear. 'The sheer pleasure of people enjoying a whisky that was distilled 30-40 years ago is amazing,' says Bero. 'Even if it's the last bottle, so be it. That's what it was made for.'

Membership and Dinner prices for 2018-2019

Membership Fee:	\$50 (singles) \$75 (couples)
One Time Initiation Fee:	\$15
Standard Dinner Fee:	\$70 (member) \$85 (non-member)
Christmas Dinner Fee:	\$75 (member) \$90 (non-member)
Robbie Burns Dinner Fee:	\$80 (member) \$95 (non-member)
June BBQ Dinner Fee:	\$80 (member) \$95 (non-member)

Reserved Seating

- Reserved Seating will only be provided in the case of groups consisting of four (4) or greater.

Reservation policy

- The agreement with the Kitchen's requires that we provide seven (7) business days notice for them to guarantee accommodation for our requested numbers. To accommodate the Kitchen's needs and meet our contractual obligation with them; our members are requested to respond to the emailed invitation seven (7) business days prior to the respective dinner to guarantee a seat at the dinner. Following the RSVP date members will be placed on a waitlist.
- For these individuals the process will be as follows, using the Monday September 17th, 2018 dinner date as an example:
 - Dinner invitations will be sent out Friday August 24th, 2018. Please respond to me (rdifazio04@gmail.com). I will then acknowledge that you have a seat. Please understand that if you do not receive a response you are not guaranteed a seat at the respective dinner. In such circumstances (e.g., computer glitches) please e-mail me again or call me (613-532-5285).
 - Unless otherwise stated accommodation at the dinner will be guaranteed for all members who respond by Friday September 7th, 2018 @ 6pm.
 - Once the RSVP date has been achieved I will e-mail a spreadsheet informing everyone of their status and amount due.

Cancellation policy

- Using the same example as above, anyone who cancels anytime prior to Friday September 7th, 2018 @ 6pm will be removed from the list.
- Anyone canceling between Friday September 7th, 2018 @ 6pm and Monday September 17th, 2018 will be expected to pay for the cost of the dinner and scotch (\$70). It is the responsibility of the member who cancels their (or their guest's) reservation to find a replacement. If I am asked to find a substitute and one is found, then the member will be asked to pay for 50% of their dinner cost.
- Anyone who fails to attend the Monday September 17th, 2018 dinner without having cancelled and been successfully replaced will be expected to pay the full cost (\$70). A member will be responsible for their guest's cancellation (\$80).
- If a member asks to be included at the dinner between Friday September 7th, 2018 @ 6pm and Monday September 17th, 2018, their name will be placed on a wait-list and be accommodated on a first-come first-serve basis.

Just a note because we care.

Please understand that for the purpose of each event you are advised to drink responsibly and refrain from excessive consumption. The dinners hosted by the Kingston Single Malt Society are sampling events. By agreeing to pay and thereby attend the dinner you agree to release from legal responsibility and hold harmless Kingston Single Malt Society, its President Roberto Di Fazio, and any other volunteers from liability or claims arising from these events.



Kingston Single Malt Society

Roberto Di Fazio, President

827 Old Colony Road

Kingston, Ontario, K7P 1S1, Canada

613-532-5285

rdifazio04@gmail.com

<http://www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com>

