

Kingston Single Malt Society

kingstonsinglemaltsociety.webs.com

A social club for the appreciation of Single Malt Whisky since 1998

MARCH 18th, 2013 VOLUME 6; NUMBER 9



This evening's menu in the company of Irish & the Islands

1st Nosing: **CONNEMARA 12 YEARS OLD PEATED**

(Introduced by: John Creber)

Soup: **Tomato Roasted Red Pepper Bisque**

2nd Nosing: **LEINBURN 12 YEARS OLD**

(Introduced by: Gavin Wood)

Salad: **Mixed Baby Greens**

Dressing: **Cilantro Lime**

3rd Nosing: **GLENDRONACH 18 YO ALLARDICE**

(Introduced by: Dick Alford)

Entree: **Stuffed Pork Loin**

Boneless pork loin stuffed with cranberry dressing or stuffed with apricots and cheese

Rice: **Rice Pilaf**

4th Nosing: **BALVENIE DOUBLEWOOD 17 YEARS OLD**

(Introduced by: Bill Gorham)

Dessert: **Banana Caramel Cheesecake**

5th Nosing: **HIGHLAND PARK 18 YEARS OLD**

(Introduced by: John Leighton)

COST OF THE MALTS

I know members are always interested in the cost of the single malts we taste. Plus the \$75 Special Occasion Permit and the 16% levy charged by the LCBO for all alcohol served at the dinner.

- **CONNEMARA 12 YEARS OLD PEATED SINGLE MALT** VINTAGES 695445 | 700 mL bottle **Price \$ 138.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Irish 40.0% Alcohol/Vol.

- **LEINBURN 12 YEARS OLD SPEYSIDE SINGLE MALT** VINTAGES 291716 | 750 mL bottle **Price: \$ 89.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Single Malt Scotch 43.0% Alcohol/Vol.

- **GLENDRONACH 18 YEARS OLD ALLARDICE HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY** VINTAGES 288233 | 750 mL bottle **Price \$ 139.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Single Malt Scotch 46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

- **THE BALVENIE DOUBLEWOOD 17 YEARS OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY** VINTAGES 280099 | 750 mL bottle **Price \$ 167.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Single Malt Scotch 43.0% Alcohol/Vol.

- **HIGHLAND PARK 18 YEARS OLD ORKNEY ISLANDS SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY** VINTAGES 500231 | 750 mL bottle **Price \$ 149.95** Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Single Malt Scotch, 43.0% Alcohol/Vol.

Explain about ...

Differences between Scottish and Irish whiskies

<http://whiskyforeveryone.blogspot.com/2008/04/explain-about-differences-between.html>

Scotland and Ireland both have a rich heritage in the whisky industry. Both say that their whiskies are the best in the world but only you can really decide which you prefer. So what are the differences between the whiskies from these two nations?

1. The spelling

This has been the basis of many arguments! The Scots spell it whisky and the Irish spell it whiskey, with an extra 'e'. It is not known why this is. Whiskey with the extra 'e' is also used when referring to American whiskies. This 'e' was taken to the United States by Irish immigrants during the 1700s.

2. The distillation process

It is here that one of the main differences occurs. Generally, Scottish whisky is distilled twice and Irish whiskey is distilled three times (there are exceptions to the rule, in both cases). Distilling three times produces a lighter and smoother spirit.

3. The stills

The size and shape of the stills used in the distillation process are different. In Ireland, pot stills are frequently used. These are short, fat, large stills with a round base that produce softer and more rounded spirits. In Scotland, distilleries use a wide variety of shapes and size of still and this gives wider diversity (see [Explain about ... How whisky is made](#)).

4. The use of peat

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

5. The use of grains

The Scots use malted barley in most whisky that is produced, however this is not the case in Ireland. They also use malted barley, but may mix other grains in with it. Traditionally Ireland has had a poorer economy than Scotland and barley is expensive to buy. Therefore, it is cheaper to use other grain to produce whiskey. This grain whiskey lends itself to blending and historically it has been used to make cheap blends.

6. The distilleries

The oldest registered distillery in Ireland is Bushmills, which has been in production since 1608. In Scotland, the oldest one opened in 1772 (Littlemill, which has now closed down). Glenturret is the oldest current distillery in operation, opening in 1775. In Scotland there are currently over 80 distilleries in production but in Ireland there are only three. These three are the result of smaller distilleries joining together. At each distillery they adhere to the traditional recipes and techniques from each of the original distilleries. This gives the resulting whiskies their own individual characteristics. The three distilleries are Bushmills, Midleton (which produce Jameson's, Powers, Paddy, Tullamore Dew and Midleton) and Cooley (Connemara, Kilbeggan, Locke's and Tyrconnell).

Our Top 10 whiskies of 2012

<http://whiskyforeveryone.blogspot.co.uk/2013/01/our-top-10-whiskies-of-2012.html>

2012 has been a productive year for new whisky releases. Many companies are developing and releasing more products to meet or drive consumer demand, as the category continues to grow in both sales and consumption across the globe. We have reviewed over 100 whiskies this year, with many being new releases. It is impossible to sample every new release, but we have been lucky to try some of them through this blog.

The four of us have spent the last week or so deliberating (and arguing about) our choices and we have now selected our Top 10 whiskies of 2012. Some people like Top 10s, some don't. They are always subjective and therefore potentially contentious as a result - everyone has differing opinions at the end of the day. Previous whiskies to be voted the Whisky For Everyone *Whisky of the Year* are Benromach 10 years old in [2009](#), Bowmore Tempest in [2010](#) and Great King Street [last year](#).

We have tried to select our Top 10 on a ratio of quality, value for money and availability to the public. To this end, there are not really any single cask or independent bottlings included, despite some excellent ones being sampled throughout the year. However, some are limited edition bottlings that are still available to purchase.

Unlike previous years, we have not selected an outright winner of *Whisky of the Year*. Basically the four of us each chose a different whisky that we felt was the best and we could and would not want to distinguish between them. Also each of our Top 10s were different, which made it impossible to determine positions for each whisky. Therefore, we have simply decided to present our Top 10 new whiskies for 2012 in alphabetical order.

Drum roll please - our Top 10 Whiskies for 2012 are ...



Balvenie Tun 1401 (Batch #5)

The *Tun 1401* series of single malts are quickly gaining a reputation as being some of the most sublime and high quality whiskies on the market. Each batch is relatively small and created for different markets around the world by the legendary Balvenie Malt Master David Stewart, who celebrated his 50th year at the distillery in 2012. The individual casks for Batch #5 come mostly from the 1970s, with the oldest being from 1966. It is a truly outstanding whisky.

[Reviewed on 07/08/12 - read now.](#)



Glenfiddich 21 years old

At the beginning of 2012 the famous Glenfiddich announced that it was relaunching its 21 years old expression and in new packaging. The new version is a mix of ex-bourbon and a small amount of ex-sherry cask matured whisky, which are then married together in ex-Caribbean rum casks. The result is a lovely, sweet single malt that has a sublime combination of character, depth and complexity. Glenfiddich make some great whiskies and this is one of them.

[Reviewed on 07/03/12 - read now.](#)



Highland Park 21 years old

This re-issue of the Highland Park 21 years old was high up in each of our individual lists and laid down the gauntlet to all other new releases at a very early stage of 2012. This mouth watering whisky offers a complex and heady mix of notes - vanilla, honey, hazelnuts, wood spice, delicate soft tobacco-like smoke, ginger, hay, oranges, milk chocolate, tropical fruits, malty cereals ... the list could go on and on. You almost run out of superlatives - it's supreme stuff.

[Reviewed on 01/03/12 - read now.](#)



Jim Beam Devil's Cut

The only American whiskey in this year's Top 10 is an absolute stunner and one of our all-time favourite bourbons tasted to date. A delicious mix of intense woody spices, butterscotch, vanilla and burnt orange, all for a good price and with an interesting story. The UK launch also wins 'our favourite launch event of the year' award and involved an innovative evening in a crypt of a deserted church in central London in the company of Jim Beam's long lost and reclusive brother.

[Reviewed on 08/03/12 - read now.](#)



Johnnie Walker Blue Label - The Casks Edition

Back in the Spring, the famous Johnnie Walker brand announced that they were to release a natural cask strength version of the iconic *Blue Label* blended whisky. *The Casks Edition* was eagerly anticipated, bottled at 55.8% ABV and priced within reasonable reach of the regular *Blue Label*. A superb mix of butterscotch, vanilla, citrus and background earthy smoke gave us a rare treat and glad they attempted and released a cask strength expression.

[Reviewed on 02/08/12 - read now.](#)



Bowmore 1985 Vintage

Over the last couple of years Bowmore, the oldest distillery on the famous whisky island of Islay, have been releasing a limited edition series of whiskies that were distilled in the 1980s. The 1985 Vintage was the offering for 2012 and was the best yet in our opinion. The whisky is a combination of one ex-bourbon and one ex-sherry cask and is the most limited in our Top 10 with just 727 bottles. Effortlessly classy - the 80s were obviously a good decade at Bowmore ...

[Reviewed on 15/08/12 - read now.](#)



Connemara 12 years old

It is widely regarded that the Irish whiskey industry is on the up and this is reflected by the fact that we have two entries in our Top 10 for the first time. Connemara is the only peaty Irish whisky and the new 12 years old impressed us greatly. Produced at the creative Cooley distillery, which made its name as an independent before being sold to the Beam Global company in late 2011, this was one of the first new whiskies released under the new ownership. Hats off.

[Reviewed on 25/04/12 - read now.](#)

Kilchoman Machir Bay

2012 seemed to represent the year that Kilchoman, the youngest distillery on Islay, really started to come of age and the *Machir Bay* was at the pick of the year's releases. Previous bottlings had shown much promise but *Machir Bay* mixed youthful vibrancy with increased savoury notes, plenty of peat and added depth and complexity that belied its age. A period spent finishing in ex-Oloroso sherry casks helped with this and it will be exciting



to see what 2013 brings for Kilchoman.

[Reviewed on 06/05/12 - read now.](#)



Macallan Gold

This year saw a decent amount of Macallan-bashing from bloggers and whisky writers alike. This was on the back of news that they were to get rid of their younger age statements in various markets, and replace them with the non age statement *1824 Series*. Amidst the furore, the quality of the new whiskies seemed to get lost. Macallan *Gold*, the first to be released, is a sweet and sumptuous whisky that offers great quality, depth, complexity and value for money.

[Reviewed on 10/09/12 - read now.](#)

Yellow Spot

The second Irish entry in this year's Top 10 is the older sibling to the cultish *Green Spot*. The Yellow Spot offers an interesting and unique combination of ex-bourbon, ex-sherry and ex-Malaga fortified wine cask maturation and is packed with gorgeous rich, sweet, spicy aromas and flavours. An excellent example of the Irish pot still style of whiskey and one that would have been right in contention for the *Whisky of the Year* title, if we were having one.

[Reviewed on 07/06/12 - read now.](#)



So there it is - our Top 10 whiskies of 2012. With so many new releases last year, there were plenty of other whiskies that we could have included. What do you think to our choices? Let us know via the comments

section below - what was your favourite whisky of 2012? As we begin 2013 all we can hope for is that the standard of new whisky remains as high, or grows higher, than what we have witnessed and tasted to date. All we will say is - it's going to be fun finding out ...

The next VALHALLA..

A good whisky should have plenty of personality, character, balance and flavour. And in the same way every good story should have a range of amazing characters, The Valhalla Collection is no different.

It's coming to that time of year again where the gods reveal themselves and, as we await the second edition from this collection, we've noticed a lot of speculation on our social media channels as to who the next god will be... the line up in Asgard is strong with Odin, Fenrir, Freya and a host of others looking to step down from the spirit world into our reality. All we know is that the next god is booked to arrive in March, just in time to be settled down on earth nicely for April the first... any guesses? Answers on a postcard to: Highland Park Distillery, 2 Valhalla, Asgard, AG1000.

New release - Highland Park Warriors Series

<http://whiskyforeveryone.blogspot.ca/2013/02/new-release-highland-park-warriors.html> posted by Matt C

Last week we were invited to the launch of a new series of whiskies from the award-winning Highland Park distillery. The distillery is located on the Orkney islands, which sit just off the northernmost tip of the Scottish mainland, and the islands are rich in Nordic heritage dating back to ancient times. It is this heritage that the brand are increasingly tapping in to. Following on from previous releases, such as *Thor* and the travel retail exclusives of *Leif Eriksson* and *Drakkar*, comes this new range of six single malts - the *Warrior Series*.

Highland Park is the most northern whisky distillery in Scotland. It is found close to the Orkneys' capital of Kirkwall and is

one of only two distilleries on the islands (Scapa being the other). Highland Park has grown to be one of the best selling and most highly awarded single malt whisky ranges in the world. It is currently owned by the Edrington Group and has an annual production capacity of 2.5 million litres. Highland Park is also one of the oldest whisky distilleries in Scotland and was established in 1798 by Magnus Eunson, who was known as the 'whisky priest' because he was allegedly a priest by day and an illegal whisky distiller by night.

The launch for the *Warriors Series* was held in the cold and slightly eerie surroundings of the crypt under St. Andrews Holborn church in the City of London. The reason for this was that Magnus Eunson apparently used to hide his illegally made whisky in the crypt of Kirkwall cathedral to escape the prying eyes of visiting Customs & Excise men. The crypt was set with red lighting, which silhouetted the brooding figures of the six statuesque Viking warriors after which the whiskies were named. These figures came to life as their respective whisky was introduced.

The evening was hosted by Gerry Tosh, Highland Park's Global Marketing Manager, and he explained that the *Warrior Series* was designed to showcase the distillery at its best, "The *Warrior Series* is a natural progression for Highland Park, both in brand terms and in global travel retail. By continuing the celebration of our rich and distinctive Norse heritage we are able to tell stories which bring the brand and its products to life. To further this evolution, the whisky maker has crafted six individual whiskies which collectively offer drinkers a new style of taste journey, still classically Highland Park from start to finish, but giving them a different and holistic experience."

The six whiskies will be exclusive to the European travel retail market initially, with the first three expressions - named *Svein*, *Harald* and *Einar* - released very shortly and three further expressions appearing later in 2013. These are named *Sigurd*, *Ragnvald* and *Thorfinn*. All are named after real figures from Nordic history with connections to Orkney, with each being depicted by a characteristic icon which is featured on their respective bottle labels.

All of the *Warriors Series* carry no age statements or vintages, but clearly contain more older components as you progress through the range. This is reflected in the prices, which start at €40 for *Svein* and finish at €1000 for *Thorfinn*. The range begins with a heavy influence of ex-American oak casks at the lower price range, and this changes to include higher percentages of ex-European and Spanish oak casks as you progress through the series. But what do they taste like? ...

Highland Park Svein

This whisky kicks off the series and is scheduled to cost €40 for a one litre bottle at 40% ABV. It is approximately 90% ex-American oak and 10% ex-European oak, and is named after Svein, one of the central characters mentioned in the legendary Nordic book *Orkneyinga Saga*. This book charts the journeys and innovations of the Nordic people and warriors in and around Orkney. Svein was a great adventurer and his whisky is symbolised by a drinking horn given to him at birth. The colour is golden yellow and the nose is full of soft earthy smoke and vanilla and honey aromas. There are also hints of wood spice, cereals and orange oil. The palate is delicious - a mix of woody, spicy notes (think of cinnamon, nutmeg and freshly sawn oak) along with honey, vanilla, burnt caramel and some dried fruits, particularly sultana and tangy candied orange. The soft earthy smokiness is again prominent and knits everything together. The finish is long with the sweeter notes fading to leave the oaky and smoky notes. This turned out to be the smokiest of the range and seems a bargain.

Highland Park Einar

This whisky is named after a particularly nasty character called Einar. He was the joint Earl of Orkney in 1014 and was well known for going on long exploratory journeys and not being very nice to those that he came in to contact with on his travels. He also killed his younger brother to obtain some land using an axe, which is depicted on his whisky label. Einar is bottled at 40% ABV and will retail for €53 for a one litre bottle.

The whisky is again golden yellow and is immediately a little feistier on the nose - there is a mix of aromatic wood spices (think of cinnamon,



cedarwood and oak), vanilla, malty cereals, golden syrup and a whiff of earthy smoke. On the palate, these elements are replicated with notes of syrup and wood spice prominent. There is a note of fruitiness that develops - it begins with a tropical edge (think of dried pineapple) but moves to be more citrus-like and made us think of candied lemon zest. The smoke also lingers around in to the finish which again has the syrupy sweet notes, along with some nutmeg and vanilla.

Highland Park Harald

This will be retailing at €75 for a 70cl bottle at a strength of 40% ABV. It is named after Harald Fairhair, the King of Norway, who set up the Orkney earldom and was one of the founding pioneers of spreading the Vikings and their heritage around the northern hemisphere and developing their army. His whisky carries a shield motif to reflect this.

The whisky is golden yellow with an orangey amber tint and the nose is instantly fruitier than the previous two. There are aromas of raisins, candied orange and fresh red berries, along with some vanilla, soft baking spices, warming earthy ginger and a whiff of very gentle peat smoke. On the palate, this feels viscous and rich with the elements from the nose combining to give a lovely depth and complexity. It feels like all of those elements have been mixed up in a cake and then presented to you in a glass, although the baking spices do seem a little more prominent. The finish is long and lingering with a particularly woody

and spicy edge to proceedings, with the earthy ginger and delicate peat smoke putting in one last appearance.



The three whiskies that are to be released later in 2013 - *Sigurd*, *Ragnvald* and *Thorfinn* - have been made but are currently undergoing a marrying process up in Scotland. To this end, there are no bottles, packaging or final details for us to pass on as yet. However we were lucky enough to get to taste a few sips of each of the three which Gerry and the team had siphoned off for us. The prices are still hazy but it looks like the top of the range *Thorfinn* will retail around the €1000 mark. We have discovered that *Sigurd* will be bottled at 43% ABV, *Ragnvald* at 44.6% ABV and *Thorfinn* at 45.1% ABV.

The *Warrior Series* is a lovely range of whiskies and one which shows the complexity, depth and nuances of Highland Park. The six whiskies are of high quality and are well positioned to cater for a variety of tastes and wallet size. If we had to pick a favourite then it would be difficult, but probably between the entry-level *Svein* and the little sip of the *Sigurd* that we had later on.

Upcoming Dinner Dates

- April 15th, 2013 - Islay - VIMY
- May 13th, 2013 - Highlands/Islands - FFOM
- May 31st, 2013 - Glenmorangie Night - River Mill
- June 24th, 2013 - BBQ (Final Exam) - VIMY
- July 22nd, 2013 - International - VIMY
- Thurs. Aug 29th, 2013 - 6th Annual Premium - River Mill
- September 23rd, 2013 -
- Oct 21st, 2013 -
- November 18th, 2013 -
- December 9th, 2013 - Christmas Dinner -

Membership and Dinner prices for 2012-2013

Membership Fee:	\$40 (singles)
	\$60 (couples)
One Time Initiation Fee:	\$15
Standard Dinner Fee:	\$60 (member)
	\$70 (non-member)
Dinner only - No Single Malt:	\$50 (member)
	\$60 (non-member)
Robbie Burns Dinner Fee:	\$70 (member)

\$80 (non-member)
 (includes \$5 donation per attendee to RMC Pipes & Drums with Highland Dancers)
 June BBQ Dinner Fee: \$70 (member)
 \$80 (non-member)

February Raffle Results

Arran 10 Year Old. Congratulations to Diane Judge. During the course of the raffle a total of \$240 was raised. Thank you everyone!



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.

Reservation policy

- Our contract with the Officer's Mess Kitchen requires that we provide seven (7) business days notice for them to guarantee accommodation for our requested numbers. Each month an invitation will be sent out to all members of the Society in the first week of the respective month in which the dinner will be held. 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. After that members will be placed on a waitlist.
- For these individuals the process will be as follows, using the Monday October 22nd 2012 dinner date as an example:
- Dinner invitations will be sent out Friday September 28th, 2012. Please respond to me (rdifazio@cogeco.ca). 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 (613-634-0397).
- Accommodation at the dinner will be guaranteed for all members who respond by Friday October 5th, 2012 @ 6pm.

Cancellation policy

- Using the same example as above, anyone who cancels anytime prior to Wednesday October 10th, 2012 @ 6pm will be removed from the list.
- Anyone canceling between Wednesday October 10th, 2012 @ 6pm and Monday October 22nd, 2012 will be expected to pay for the cost of the dinner and scotch (\$60). 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 available, then the member will be asked to pay for 50% of their dinner cost.
- Anyone who fails to attend the Monday October 22nd 2012 dinner without having cancelled and been successfully replaced will be expected to pay the full cost (\$60). A member will be responsible for their guest's cancellation (\$70).
- If a member asks to be included at the dinner between Wednesday October 10th, 2012 @ 6pm and Monday October 22nd, 2012, their name will be placed on a waitlist and be accommodated on a first-come first-serve basis.

If you have any questions or comments please free to contact me. Thank you for your understanding, Roberto



Kingston Single Malt Society

Roberto Di Fazio, President

827 Old Colony Road

Kingston, Ontario, K7P 1S1, Canada

613-634-0397

rdifazio@cogeco.ca

<http://www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.webs.com>

