

Kingston Single Malt Society

www.kingstonsinglemaltsociety.com

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

AUGUST 23^d, 2019

VOLUME 13; NUMBER 2



Welcome to the 12th Annual Premium Night

MENU

Welcome & 1st Nosing: COLLECTIVUM XXVIII
(introduced by: Roberto Di Fazio)

1st Course: Roasted Vegetable Gazpacho,
Almond Garnish

2nd Nosing: BLAIR ATHOL 23 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Ken Goodland)

2nd Course: Fresh Oysters & Apple Cider Vinaigrette

3rd Nosing: PITYVAICH 25 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Bill Gorham)

3rd Course: Roasted Peaches, Pistachio, Prosciutto,
Pomegranate Reduction,

Goat's Feta, Patchwork Greens

4th Nosing: TOMATIN 36 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Chantaille Buczynski)

4th Course: Crabmeat Stuffed Shrimp, Local Corn,
Roasted Poblano, Ancho, Cilantro

5th Nosing: TEANINICH 17 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Doug Perkins)

5th Course: Osso Bucco, Saffron Risotto, Gremolata

6th Nosing: BENROMACH 30 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: Phil Henderson)

6th Course / Dessert: Double Black Chocolate Whiskey
Cake Infused with Bunnahbahain 12YO

7th Nosing: MACALLAN 21 YEAR OLD
(introduced by: John Leighton)

COST OF THE MALTS

COLLECTIVUM XXVIII BLENDED MALT SCOTCH VINTAGES
572403 | 750 mL bottle Price: \$ 273.75 Spirits, Whisky,
Scotch 57.3% Alcohol/Vol.

BLAIR ATHOL 23 YEARS OLD HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT
SCOTCH WHISKY VINTAGES 575837 | 750 mL bottle, Price
\$780.00 Spirits 55.9% Alcohol/Vol.

PITYVAICH 25 YEAR OLD VINTAGES 102314 | 700 mL
bottle Price: \$499.95 Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Scotch Single
Malts 49.9% Alcohol/Vol.

TOMATIN 36 YEAR OLD VINTAGES 102249 | 700 mL bottle
Price: \$900.05 Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Scotch Single Malts
46.0% Alcohol/Vol.

TEANINICH 17 YEARS OLD VINTAGES 575852 | 750 mL
bottle, Price \$589.00 Spirits 55.9% Alcohol/Vol.

BENROMACH 30 YEAR OLD VINTAGES 101488 | 700 mL
bottle Price: \$492.45 Spirits, Whisky/Whiskey, Scotch Single
Malts 43.0% Alcohol/Vol.

**THE MACALLAN 21 YRS "SIGNATORY 30TH
ANNIVERSARY LIMITED EDITION" 1997 BOURBON
HOGSHEAD** VINTAGES 283283 | 750 mL bottle Price:
\$920.50 Spirits, Scotch Whisky, 43.0% Alcohol/Vol.

Upcoming Dinner Dates

September 23rd, 2019 - Distell Tasting -
Ledaig / Tobermory / Bunnahbahain - Mike Brisebois
October 28th, 2019 - Glenrothes / Highland Park - Cameron Millar
November 18th, 2019 - Islands / Islay
December 9th 2019 - Christmas Dinner -
Campbeltown / Lowland / Speyside / Highlands / Islands / Islay
January 20th, 2020 - Robbie Burns Dinner - Speyside / Highlands
February 17th, 2020 - Islay
March 16th, 2020 - Irish / Speyside / Highlands
April 20th, 2020 - Campbeltown / Islay
May 25th, 2020 - Speyside
June 22nd, 2020 - BBQ (Final Exam)
July 20th, 2020 - 9th Matt Night
Friday August 28th 2020 - 13th Annual Premium Night
September 21st, 2020 - Campbeltown / Lowland / Speyside /
Highlands / Islands / Islay
October 20th, 2020 - Speyside / Highlands
November 16th, 2020 - Speyside
December 14th 2020 - Christmas Dinner



Kingston Single Malt Society

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VISITING SCOTLAND: THE BEST SCOTTISH DISTILLERY TOURS

By *Thijs Klaverstijn* August 8, 2019

There are over 120 working distilleries in Scotland. Visiting them all will cost you a lot of time and resources. And you'll need proper connections too, since quite a few don't allow outsiders at all. But even without those closed to the public, there are still tons to choose from. While most distilleries in Scotland have something unique to offer, some are just a little more worthwhile than others. In alphabetical order, these are ten of the best Scottish distillery tours, for varying reasons.

BALLINDALLOCH

Part of a new wave of distilleries opened in the past decade, Ballindalloch is a small distillery in the Speyside region that redefines the word manual. With a uniquely hands-on approach, Ballindalloch is a single estate distillery, meaning the barley is grown on the estate. It has won the title of Whisky Magazine's "Craft Producer of the Year" twice already, even though the brand has yet to release any whisky. Distillery tours are personal and immersive.



Ballindalloch Distillery / Photo Credit: Thijs Klaverstijn

BALVENIE

This is one of the only Scottish distilleries that allows you to see pretty much every aspect of whisky production, except for the growing of the barley itself. Balvenie still has its own malting floor, a working kiln AND its own cooperage (which it shares with sister distillery Glenfiddich). There are only two tours a day with a maximum of 8 people. The whisky that you get to try at the end of the tour is basically a bonus. Just touring the distillery is an experience you'll not soon forget.



Balvenie Distillery / Photo Credit: Thijs Klaverstijn

BOWMORE

While the Isle of Islay is on the bucket list of almost any whisky enthusiast, distilleries like Ardbeg, Laphroaig and Lagavulin are probably higher on people's lists than Bowmore. But don't sleep on this coastal distillery. Bowmore's No.1 Vaults (probably the oldest maturation warehouse in Scotland) sits below sea level and is a sight to behold. Don't skip the Whisky Tasting bar, which offers stunning views of Loch Indaal, and an impressive selection of Bowmore whisky.



Bowmore Distillery / Photo Credit: Bowmore

BRUICHLADDICH

When the skies are clear, you can spot Bruichladdich from the bar at Bowmore. Sitting on the opposite side of Loch Indaal, Bruichladdich is one of the most innovative, yet über-traditional distilleries in Scotland. The brand is known for experimenting with barley, terroir and maturation in many different types of casks. Bruichladdich also invested a boatload of money to fix their ancient mash tun when it broke down, instead of opting to replace it with a cheaper, more efficient, modern version. That's Bruichladdich in a nut-shell. Enjoy your visit and don't forget to check out the excellent distillery-exclusive bottlings.



Bruichladdich Distillery / Photo Credit: Thijs Klaverstijn

GLENFARCLAS

Most Scottish distilleries are part of large conglomerates, yet Glenfarclas is still family-owned. Acquired by the Grant family in 1865, Glenfarclas values maturation in sherry casks like no other distillery. Situated at the foot of Benrinnes, a popular mountain with hikers, the distillery has one of the most impressive stocks of whisky in the industry. If you really want to splurge, book the Five Decades Tour & Tasting. It's an exclusive in-depth tour of the distillery that's followed by a tasting of five whiskies, one from each decade from the 1960s to the 2000s. That alone makes it one of the best Scottish distillery tours that you can experience.



Glenfarclas Distillery / Photo Credit: Glenfarclas

JURA

One of the most difficult to reach distilleries, you have to take two separate ferries to get to Jura distillery. While the distillery itself is absolutely worth a visit, we've included it in part because of its unique location. The Isle of Jura is basically one big nature reserve: the population of 200 is far outnumbered by the roughly 5,000 deer that live on the island. It's incredibly tranquil and peaceful—George Orwell lived there when he wrote his classic novel 1984. So, visit the distillery, but don't forget to explore the island as well.



Jura Distillery / Photo Credit: Thijs Klaverstijn

LINDORES ABBEY

Lindores Abbey Distillery only opened in 2017, yet it has heritage to spare. Distilling has taken place on this site as early as 1494, which is why it is widely seen as the birthplace of Scotch whisky. The earliest written reference to Scotch whisky, which appears in the Exchequer Roll of 1494, mentions brother John Cor, a monk at Lindores Abbey. Visiting Lindores Abbey Distillery is a pilgrimage worth making.



Lindores Abbey Distillery / Photo Credit: Lindores Abbey

MACALLAN

Described as a Scotch whisky spaceship, the opening of the new Macallan facility in 2018 received a lot of publicity. It's been the ultimate luxury whisky brand for a while, and now Macallan also has the ultimate luxury Scotch distillery to go with its reputation—something you need to see to believe. Even if you don't take a tour, you can drop in and gawk at all the classic and priceless old Macallan bottlings. This includes the 60-year old Macallan Valerio Adami, which just last year sold for an incredible \$1.1 million dollars at auction.



Macallan Distillery / Photo Credit: The Macallan

NCN'EAN

Founded by Annabel Thomas in 2017, Ncn'ean is situated on the Morvern peninsula on the West coast of Scotland. You'll have to travel miles and miles of winding single track roads, but the trip is worth it. The distillery deserves to be on this list because of its leading role in the protection of the natural environment. Ncn'ean is the first fully organic distillery in Scotland completely powered by renewable energy. Also, the cupcakes on offer at the distillery bar are delicious, while the views of the neighboring Isle of Mull are spectacular.



Ncn'ean Distillery / Photo Credit: Ncn'ean

SPRINGBANK

If you want to discover what whisky distilling was like in the 19th century, look no further than Springbank. Time stands still in this small distillery in the whisky region of Campbeltown. The distillery performs an important function in the community and is one of the largest independent employers in the area. Everything is done by hand and the end result is all the better for it. There's good reason why Springbank has a dedicated cult following, and is one of the best Scottish distillery tours on our list.



Springbank Distillery

Why Ultra-Aged Spirits are Ripping You Off

BY KARA NEWMAN

If I may be frank, most super-old Scotches are super awful. Here's why: Most good [Scotch](#) is bottled starting at around 12 years old. Fantastic offerings can also be found up to the 18- to 21-year-old range. Beyond that, the oak tends to overpower everything else going on in the bottle. The effect can be even more pronounced with spirits that tend to age more quickly, like [Bourbon](#). If you sip a 40-year-old Bourbon or 50-year-old Scotch, you're basically sipping on oak tannins, bragging rights, a sense of history and little else.

Which is why it's so perplexing to see producers and others rolling out bottles that are decades past drinkability—think stunt Scotches like a 72-year-old [Macallan](#) single malt, produced in 1946 and that [fetched \\$110,085 at auction](#). It's an interesting nod toward history to own a World War II-era whiskey but forget about drinking it. After 72 years, you might as well go suck on an oak stave.

If you sip a 40-year-old Bourbon or 50-year-old Scotch, you're basically sipping on oak tannins, bragging rights, a sense of history and little else.

Yet, every barrel-aged spirit has a sweet spot in terms of the maturity where it tastes best.

Two key factors dictate how a spirit will mature: the barrel used to age the spirit (new barrels age a spirit fastest), and the climate where the spirit is aged (heat can accelerate the aging process). The rules aren't always hard-and-fast, but it's easy to tell when your pour is past its prime: as [Four Roses](#) Master Distiller Brent Elliott explains, it's "when the barrel influence is so strong that it has become bitter, astringent and has lost complexity."

Here's a guide, informed by input from the experts, on when some of the most-gifted spirits categories are likely to hit their stride. For those seeking a special bottle to commemorate a specific year, this may help in finding a vintage-year pour that's not just enjoyable, but possibly exceptional.

Bourbon and rum: Best aged 5-12 years

By law, Bourbon is made in new, charred oak barrels. That means the distillate extracts flavors from the wood relatively quickly, so Bourbon matures faster than most other barrel-aged spirits.

"The majority of barrels peak in the 5–10-year range," says Elliott. "In this range, all of the immature character of the white dog is gone, but there are still a lot of the bright and delicate flavors from grains and fermentation that have developed in the barrel, and with the barrel, to create that perfect balance." Beyond the 12-year range, says Elliott, "there will be fewer and fewer that are still 'improving' each year."

A unicorn does sometimes appear. [Orphan Barrel's](#) line of rare whiskeys has included some very good Bourbons aged around 20 years. Also, keep an eye out for single-vintage rum bottlings. Very few producers do this; most include a blend of rums of varying ages. But single vintages can be found from producers such as [Diplomático](#), [Foursquare](#) and [Plantation](#), including some 10–12 years old. Rum aged in warm climates, like the Caribbean, age two to three times faster than a spirit in a cold climate, experts estimate.

Scotch whisky: Best aged 12–25 years

Since Scotch whisky is aged typically in used barrels, it takes longer to extract vanilla or caramel flavors from the wood. The late distiller [Dave Pickerell](#) once described this as "the tea-bag effect." The second time that a tea bag is used, there's less flavor left to draw out, so it needs to steep longer. Scotland's humid climate also slows down evaporation, so the spirit isn't as concentrated as those aged in drier climates, like Bourbon.

The problem with pinpointing an ideal age for Scotch, is "it all depends on the style of whisky you want to bottle," says John Glaser, founder and whiskeymaker for [Compass Box](#), which releases primarily blended Scotch whiskeys. He deems a Scotch too old when the wood notes overtake the distillery character and flavor compounds that have developed over time. In other words, "the whisky loses its cohesiveness," he says.

Scotches aged 30, 40 and older can be sourced, but know that means paying a substantial premium for whisky that may be past its best years. Note: These ages only indicate the number of years the spirit has been in the barrel. Unlike wine, once bottled the aging process for spirits stops.

For those who seek to commemorate a benchmark birthday with a bottle, Armagnac may be your best bet.

Armagnac: Best aged up to 50 years

You'll almost never see a single-vintage [Cognac](#), because it's made with a blend of ages, with the designation signifying the youngest distillate in the blend. By comparison, many [Armagnacs](#) are sold as blends, but some producers also choose to release single-vintage bottlings when they are deemed exceptional. Some of these may be decades old. For those who seek to commemorate a benchmark birthday with a bottle, Armagnac may be your best bet.

According to Christine Cooney-Foubert, owner of [Heavenly Spirits](#), an importer of French spirits, Armagnac can age longer than Cognac because it is distilled just once, as opposed to twice for Cognac. This strips fewer fatty acids from the distillate, enabling "more sustainable aging" over longer time frames, she says. It's also not unusual for producers to reuse barrels over and over again, often to the point where the barrel no longer contributes tannins, but instead acts as a container that enables the brandy to "keep breathing and get rounder."

"Normally, we don't leave an Armagnac in the barrel for more than 40 or 50 years," Cooney-Foubert says, "but some Armagnac will age gracefully" for longer periods in such barrels.

Is there a ceiling, even for Armagnac? Yes, Cooney-Foubert says. "I have tasted Armagnac that had rested in barrels for 100 years and it was my opinion that they were too 'old.'"

www.winemaq.com - Published on August 12, 2019

Brora 40-year-old marks new era for distillery

14th August, 2019 by Amy Hopkins

Diageo has released a 40-year-old Brora Scotch whisky to celebrate the Highland distillery's 200th anniversary, one year ahead of its reopening.

Brora 40 Year Old 200th Anniversary Limited Edition is priced at £4,500 (US\$5,438)

Drawn from one dozen vintage American oak hogshead casks from 1978, the whisky is said to be one of the oldest releases from Brora, which is currently undergoing extensive refurbishment.

The distillery was founded in 1891 and mothballed in 1983. In 2017, brand owner [Diageo](#) [announced plans to revive the site](#) with a £35 million investment, which is also being used to bring Islay's Port Ellen back into production.

Diageo will aim to "replicate where possible the distillation regimes and spirit character of the original distilleries". Work on Brora has involved the restoration of its existing buildings and old pot stills, which remain on site.



The liquid used for the new limited edition hails from a time when Brora produced heavily peated malt. Master blender Dr Craig Wilson worked with Diageo's archive team to discover when the smoky style of Brora "was at its peak".

"Of all the stories of Brora, there is one that seemed particularly fitting to tell on its 200th anniversary," said Wilson. "From 1969-83, there was a new experimentation phase in production and the Brora distillers created a smoky malt used heavily-peated northern Highland barley.

"Used primarily in blends at the time, the few casks that are left from this 'age of peat', matured remarkably well and what remains is a multi-layered and complex single malt of astonishing quality. Little did the craftsmen at the time know, they had created a masterpiece.

"It is emblematic of the varied past of the distillery that makes it so special to all that know it: a humble story of experimentation, craft and happy coincidence."

Diageo will release 1,819 bottles of the limited edition – reflecting the year of the distillery's opening. It is priced at £4,500 (US\$5,438) and will be available from this month.