



SCOTCH WHISKY REVIEW

EDITION 4

AUTUMN 1995

TRUMPET FOR TWO

“An excellent mail order business” is the accolade awarded us in a recent *Decanter* magazine article.


This sort of comment is something that has to be earned and we are proud to have done so. Because of our hands-on approach it is easier for us to look after you, the customer, on a personal basis. As a private partnership we are dependent on the shop in Inveraray and our mail order business and so we are very careful about our quality of service and the suggestions and recommendations we make.

This edition of the *SWR* is twelve pages, the additional four pages being occupied by our ‘glossy’ catalogue, full of desirable products for you to buy and enjoy. All of the items featured come with our recommendation and should you wish to return anything to us because you are disappointed, no problems.

We also give news of the appointment of our house malt, *The Inverarity*. We weren’t looking for a house malt but found this so worthy of frequent recommendation that we made it ours. The Loch Fyne Whiskies House Malt is an ‘award’ that we can give only once. We are delighted with our choice and commend it to you, whatever your taste. Ronnie Martin, founder of Inverarity Vaults with his son Hamish, also has an excellent blend but we have refrained from appointing a house blend at this time as we have asked “The Professor” to create a blend reflecting the warmth and character of Argyll. Order at least one bottle from us before Christmas and you will get a miniature of that proposed blend for your comments. The results of this exciting mass tasting and the launch of our new whisky will be announced next year.

Please order for Christmas as soon as possible. We try to be very quick in turning orders around but inevitably we may get a bit slower in the next month. Despite that, it will still be an excellent mail order business. Happy Christmas.

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO PAY SO MUCH FOR YOUR BOTTLE OF SCOTCH WHISKY?



The Government is the main beneficiary from the sale of a typical bottle of blended Scotch Whisky:

Excise duty	5.77
VAT	1.64
Total tax (67%)	7.41
Scotch Whisky (33%)	3.59
	£11.00

Dear Chancellor

I was devastated to discover that the UK has one of the highest tax rates on Scotch Whisky in Europe. This is ridiculous treatment of a drink that can only be made in this country.

I also learnt that 70% of the price of a typical bottle of blended Scotch is tax. This is appalling.

Please support one of Scotland's most successful industries by cutting the tax on Scotch Whisky in your next Budget.

NAME

TOWN

TAX CAMPAIGN RESULTS AWAITED

Visitors to our shop, distilleries and the recent round of Party conferences have had the opportunity to sign this card appealing to the Government to reduce the punitive tax on Scotch Whisky. How effective the campaign has been will be known at the end of November when the Chancellor gets up on his back legs for the Budget. (*I thought we weren't going to mention tax in this issue – Ed.*)

ONE DOWN...

GLEN GARIOCH distillery will be closed by the time you read this. The distillery has been on the market for three years but the owners Morrison Bowmore Distillers have been unable to find a purchaser.

The surrounding land and associated distillery workers' housing is to be sold for further housing development whilst the ultimate future of the distillery is discussed with Grampian Council.

Bowmore and Auchentoshan distilleries are secure.

“We are very sorry to have had to take this decision but we are not isolated from the market conditions which are affecting the industry. This distillery has been working at below 50% of capacity for some time.” said Brian Morrison, who added: “This has nothing to do with our new Japanese owners.”

...AND ONE UP!

The Isle of Arran is producing legitimate malt whisky for the first time since 1835. Distillery manager Gordon Mitchell made the first cut of new spirit at 2.29pm on June 29th. Whisky writer Jim Murray sampled the first results of a six year campaign to finance and build the brand new distillery by Harold Currie, former managing director of Chivas Brothers.

“Stunning and bursting with charisma” is how Jim described the new spirit and this was confirmed by Gordon Mitchell's comment “I just couldn't believe how well it's turned out, it's so full of character.”

Part of the funding for the distillery was by the Arran Bond, an innovative scheme of futures sales of ten cases to subscribers. Now single case bonds are available. More on page 11.

THE INDEPENDENT



George Urquhart has worked for the business of Gordon & MacPhail for 62 years and continues as executive Chairman of what is now, indisputably, the world's leading malt whisky specialist.

The company, which is also managed by his three sons and one daughter, celebrates its centenary this year, and Loch Fyne Whiskies caught a glimpse of the industry over the years through Mr Urquhart's eyes.

LFW: Have you ever worked anywhere else?

I started full time at the age of 14; my father thought that I would learn more working here than staying on at school. Even before that, I used to dodge down from school to help with the whisky bottling.

LFW: How many worked for Gordon & MacPhail at that time?

About 35, we were significant local employers. We were large importers of foodstuffs as well as the whisky and grocery business.

LFW: How important was whisky to the business of G&M?

It was always very important. James Gordon was deeply involved with the local distillers and he concentrated on the whisky broking as well as wines and other spirits rather than the grocery which was dealt with by John MacPhail. Elgin was an important centre for the whisky industry. Many of the distillery owners lived in some of the most prestigious houses and a few descendants of those owners are in the town today. There is even a church in Elgin called the 'whisky Kirk' because quite a number of the congregation were involved in the distilling.

Many local distillers rented office space from us and when we repainted some years ago, under all the layers of paint, we found the names of the distilleries stencilled on the doors. All the offices had two rooms—a manager's office and

a room to the side housing a sink with a black marble surround with a fitment for upside down tasting glasses over the sink.

LFW: Were there many whisky brokers in Elgin?

No, most in Elgin were involved in distilling. With the exception of James Gordon, most brokers were based either in Glasgow or Edinburgh.

My father, who started working for Gordon & MacPhail from the earliest days, worked mainly in the broking and wholesale side and when James Gordon died in 1915 he carried on the broking side of the business on his own. I then looked after it for my father. Like James Gordon, father also had share holdings in several local distilleries including Longmorn, Strathisla and Glen Grant.

LFW: And presumably Mortlach.

No, the close association with Mortlach Distillery arose because my father was a close personal friend of the owner, Dr Cowie. Many distillers used to seek father's advice, particularly on marketing matters and occasionally, if stuck for a filling order, Dr Cowie would approach my father.

This was in the time when a private individual could go to a distillery and have a ten gallon cask filled. I can remember the local golf club used to fill casks with Glen Grant and water it down themselves, but they couldn't filter it and it was a murky looking whisky! Once it was in the glass it didn't look so bad and was enjoyed nonetheless.

LFW: So you started on the bottling line; any recollections?

At that time we used to have lovely spring water in Elgin. It came from Kellas and the Black Hills. Lovely water, untreated and pure. These days we have to purify the water before use but back then we could use it straight for reducing the whisky to normal strength without any further treatment. I particularly recall we had a water-powered lift to move casks throughout the four-storey building which was driven by the available mains water pressure, no pumps at all. It was amazing, this rickety old thing, but it worked! They had them in Glasgow stores and I was amazed with the speed of those lifts, they were so fast! We still had to move 1/2 ton casks down some stone steps to the cellar—that was hard work—and dangerous! Wearing a jute sack as an apron to protect our clothes, we stood in front of the barrel and carefully slid it down a pair of skids. Beer casks we could bounce onto a mat but not whisky!

Filtration was done by gravity using a big round filter on which you had to make a porridge-like filter bed, mixing the filter pulp with the whisky and letting it settle before turning on the flow of whisky. Once you had started you

couldn't stop otherwise the filter bed would lift and you would have to run the whole lot through again. Done correctly you could get the whisky really sparkling!

LFW: Was everything bottled?

No, we sold a lot of whisky in bulk in stoneware jars of up to six gallons. These were made for us by Buchan's in Portobello and the Blind Asylum in Aberdeen made and maintained the wickerwork that protected them. The jars had a cork, then a red wax seal and then our seal so it would show if it was tampered with. The publican filled his glass counter jar, which often had the name of the whisky gold-leafed onto it, from the stoneware jar.

Customs controls were strict. Whenever whisky left the warehouse it always had to be accompanied by a Customs permit. If a Customs Officer stopped a wagon carrying spirits without a permit he would assume it was smuggled.

LFW: Did you bottle for the distillers or only for yourselves?

Ourselves. Distillers were just making malt whisky—they had no interest in marketing and bottling themselves. Printers in Aberdeen would print bottle labels in bulk and then a local printer would overprint our name. We would be issued with so many labels from the distiller when we were paying duty for the casks at the distillery.

“the distillers had no interest in marketing”

LFW: Was this issue of labels to protect the integrity of their whisky?

That wasn't necessary; people in those days trusted each other. Business dealings were based on gentlemen's agreements. Any unscrupulous person coming on the scene was identified fairly quickly.

LFW: For how long was a malt matured in those days?

Distillers thought that if it was over eight years old then it was too old. In 1945 we started bottling Glen Grant at eight years old. It was my job to write the age on each label, by hand with an ordinary pen in red ink.

LFW: Now it's difficult to find a Glen Grant over five years old!

Glen Grant has got quite a good bouquet and it matures quite quickly; it was actually a nice whisky at five years old. Before 1939 we sold quite a bit of 'clear' Glen Grant, especially in Inverness where it was popular amongst the carters who worked with big Clydesdale horses from the railway station. 'Clear

Glen Grant' was their dram!

After the war I remember we took a few butts from the distillery with no colour in them at all, the whisky was very pale. I looked at these casks and decided to re-introduce clear Glen Grant whisky at 8 years old and that certainly took off! When our competitors followed our lead but sold at five years old and cut the price, eventually we were forced into doing the same because people were asking for five year old Glen Grant. For the distiller to get the money in five years rather than eight or ten was a great advantage.

In the 1950's we were the biggest bottlers of Macallan and I think it would be fair to say we helped that distillery to establish its malt market. They had their own labels, but they were late on the scene. The man controlling it was a Dr Shiach who was a G.P. in England. A nice man, he often came into the office and spoke to my father. He was keen that we should keep the price down on a par with blend whisky like Johnnie Walker. In those days blend might have been ten shillings a bottle, Macallan malt maybe twelve and sixpence—there was not much of a price difference. As a result it became quite popular locally. In fact most of the malt whiskies that are popular today got into the market because they almost 'gave it away' to start with.

LFW: Do you still buy mature whisky?

Whisky is produced by the distillery under contract to us and it is filled into our own casks. We mature it, either in our own warehouses in Elgin or at the distillery where it was produced.

LFW: Was a cask expensive or cheap?

A cask that now costs £200 was then maybe the equivalent of £20.

We bottled quite a lot of sherry and port in those days and kept the suitable casks for maturing our whisky. We also bought in, particularly from a firm in Aberdeen who had good connections with the big sherry firms. We got lovely old casks of

Gonzalez, Williams & Humbert and especially Harvey's; all were excellent—we've still got a lot of them in the bond even now. I also went to Spain quite a number of times and bought a lot of casks myself. We are prepared to pay a premium for good quality casks because it is well worth it for the whisky.

With the whisky boom in the 1960's, we went onto using bourbon casks as well, importing them either as full barrels or in 'shook form', that is that they had the staves numbered, the head removed, knocked down and strapped so they took up less shipping space. Then you had to sort out the numbers and remake them, like a jigsaw.

If we were having new casks made we bought new white Orleans oak which is just perfect for maturing whisky, very close grained. We imported the wood and gave it to the cooper and he made hogsheads. We were never keen on the smaller barrels because they're not an economic size.

“over eight years was too old”

LFW: You must be a leading expert on casks.

The suitability of oak for making strong casks varies from country to country. The best oak for whisky was memel oak from Poland but that wood was all cut down during the First World War. You could use those casks for 100 years, they were so strong with great thick staves. If they are too thin you get a whole lot of staves just cracking.

I remember I once bought a big batch of casks that came from Algiers that had been used by the French people producing wine in north Africa and those staves were very strong! They didn't crack, they were great thick staves, wonderful. We used them to mature grain whisky. Mediterranean oak is not very straight grained wood, and the staves are inclined to crack. French oak is not too bad, you can get some quite good cognac casks but that's not really used. I kept some malt whisky in good quality oak cognac casks as an experiment, with excellent results.

You can produce good whisky out of Portuguese oak but most of the port that comes into the country is in chestnut and only occasionally oak. We also matured some whisky in oak Port Pipes with very good results. They're an unwieldy cask! They're long with quite a curvature on

them and can hold 120 gallons!

Nowadays we have casks made and seasoned for us in Spain. We're able to specify stave length, thickness of wood, everything.

LFW: For how long are they seasoned?

About three or four years. It's quite expensive; we're paying for casks in June this year so that they can be made and filled with sherry. The ones we've just got in from 1991 are excellent.

LFW: How do you avoid conflict with distillery owners of the whiskies that you market?

We've been in the bottled malt whisky business longer than most of the distillers, with perhaps a couple of exceptions. Our relationships with a number of the distillers go back many years and we work hard to maintain these good relationships. It is appreciated that there is room for all of us in the market place, particularly as we are able to do some of the things that large companies are unable to do. We are able to offer much older vintages, for example. Way back in the fifties and sixties, far less the forties, no distiller had an interest in keeping back whiskies.

LFW: How's progress on the refurbishment of Benromach Distillery?

We are working slowly; it's always been a long term project. We've got some equipment in and the contractors are working there now. Production will start probably next year. We're putting in small stills with a view to producing a typical, classic, Speyside whisky. We want a Speyside whisky because that is where we came from originally. That is the Gordon & MacPhail style.

LFW: How do you view the whisky industry of today?

We're quite lucky that at the moment malt whisky seems to be well received. There's a lot of interest all around the world. The demand for malt whisky has never been greater and it's good that many companies bottle at varying ages and strengths. I am concerned that some of these companies are bottling whiskies at very young ages and often these whiskies are not at their best.

It is sad to see so much control of the industry being exercised by companies who have head offices outside Scotland. This means fewer jobs in Scotland and less of a Scottish influence on Scotch whisky.

LFW: And the whisky business of the future?

Bottled malt whisky represents less than 10% of the total Scotch whisky industry and I hope that sales will reach 10% by the year 2000. Sales of blended whisky have been under pressure but it's pleasing that export sales at least are improving.

But you will really have to talk to the next generation about the future.

LFW: Thank you, we will.



Gordon & MacPhail, Elgin by Alastair Buchanan

WHISKY WORK

Charlie MacLean

It's worth considering, even marvelling at the human nose and its capabilities. For whisky 'tasting' the nose is employed more than the tongue and palate.

Our nose is probably our most accurate and sensitive organ even though we don't use it to full capacity the whole time. It is considerably more sensitive than the tongue; for example, there are only four primary tastes but there are no less than *thirty-two* primary aromas. We can detect an odour diluted to one part in a million and most people will score around 70% in simple odour recognition tests. This high sensitivity is useful as the flavour elements in a bottle of whisky make up the merest fraction of its contents, all of 0.2%. The rest is pure alcohol and water.

Glenmorangie Distillery has done pioneering work in this area. Some years ago they sent samples of their 10yo malt for sensory evaluation to a leading Parisian perfumier, Christian St Roche. He identified no less than 26 aromas in the bouquet, from almond, bergamot and cinnamon to apple, quince and vanilla, and such daily scents as 'fruit-stone, ambergris, genista and verbena.'

Later they sent samples of both 10yo and 18yo Glenmorangie to Belmay Inc. of Long Island—worldwide suppliers to the perfume industry, whose staff include some of the most sensitive noses in the U.S.! They identified 22 aromas in the 10yo and 17 in the 18. Of these only 6 were found in both vintages. They had changed with longer maturation; for example, 'lemon/mandarin' at 10 years became 'orange' at 18; 'apple/mint/banana' became 'plum/raisin,' and so on. Perhaps more surprising was that only eight of Belmay's descriptions corresponded exactly with those of La Roche. Mr. Edward Schwartz, Head Perfumer at Belmay, felt this apparent discrepancy to be a perfectly natural difference between experts; he would have been even more surprised if their descriptions had been the same. So never be afraid to put your own words to the things you smell!

With a little practice you can soon learn to break smells down and identify their constituent parts. Putting names to them is more difficult.

So how do we go about this?

Presentation

Firstly, glassware and water are of vital importance. A whisky tumbler is hopeless for malts, it is designed for whisky and soda. Choose a clear, uncut glass that will gather the aromas. For serious nosing a cover over the glass will prevent flavour changes as the whisky 'breathes' during the session.

All whiskies benefit from the addition of a little water. This breaks up the chemical chains within it and releases

the aromas. Try two samples, one straight and one dilute. Soft, still (not carbonated) water is ideal and all Scottish bottled waters are suitable. Avoid hard or chlorinated water.

Aroma

Swirl the whisky in the glass and sniff it cautiously. Remember, if the whisky is at cask strength it may be as much as 68% alcohol, and too powerful a sniff can anaesthetise your sense of smell for a short time.

Now add a little water.

In tasting room conditions, professional tasters reduce the spirit to 20% alcohol—in other words, an equal measure of water in standard bottlings. Start with a drop of water and add more by stages. Nosing should embrace both the 'bouquet'—general impressions/salient notes—and the aroma proper. So swirl the glass and sniff first some distance from the top of the glass to collect the bouquet, then deep within to penetrate the aroma. Note your first impressions, the first scents you can identify.

Rest from time to time: with continued sniffing the intensity of the aromas you perceive will fade quickly so it is pointless to nose a single sample for too long.

Mouth feel and Primary Taste

Take a large enough sip to fill your mouth, then roll it over your tongue. First you want to register the 'texture' of the whisky. It may be smooth and viscous, spiry and vaporous or astringent and dry.

Primary tastes are registered by little sensory receptors on our tongues and palates. The time it takes to stimulate the different areas of the tongue varies, with the bitter receptors taking the longest, so it is important when tasting to hold the liquid in the mouth, coating the tongue properly.

Identify the primary tastes—the immediate flavours your tongue collects. There are only four: sweet, salty, sour and dry/bitter. Most whiskies will present a mixture of these flavours, sometimes beautifully balanced, sometimes less so.

Over the course of time, you will notice that the flavour changes, sometimes quite dramatically if your glass remains uncovered between sips.

Finish

Does the flavour linger in your mouth like a northern sunset, or does it fade rapidly like a shooting star? Are there any echoes of former tastes or aromas? Is there any aftertaste, pleasant or unpleasant?

It is very difficult to be objective and absolute in our description of Scotch Whiskies. Our tendency is to use terms which are often subjective and relative. Abstract terms are especially useful in describing the overall effect of the

whisky—its 'construction', general style and character—and to provide an overall rating of quality.

These abstract terms are relative, they make a comparative comment or relate to a standard. If you want to be precise you must bear in mind that if you describe a whisky as "mellow" you are implying a standard—mellow compared with other lowland, or all whiskies?

A useful list of definitions of the most common abstract terms has been produced by Pentlands Scotch Whisky Research:

Bland—lacking in personality.

Body—the amount of appropriate product character, usually used in conjunction with qualifiers such as full-bodied, lacking in body.

Clean—free of off-notes from any source.

Dry—an overall impact of astringency at an acceptable level.

Green—a preponderance of aldehydic aromas; leafy.

Heavy—possessing a high total intensity of detectable aroma and flavour.

Light—possessing an adequate intensity of aroma and flavour, but tending to be delicate in type.

Mellow—a condition associated with good maturation, whereby alcoholic pungency is suppressed and the effect of hotness reduced to a pleasant warming.

Neutral—lack of aromas, other than that of ethyl alcohol.

Rich—implies a high intensity of character; may also mean a preponderance of sweet associated aromatics.

Round—a good balance and intensity of aroma and flavour notes.

Robust—a high aroma intensity and flavour, powerful character.

Sharp—imparting nose or mouth prickle.

Soft—where the alcoholic pungency and other aromatics are suppressed.

Thin—lacking in the aroma and flavour which it should have; watery.

Some other useful terms are those that describe characteristics that arise during production:

Estery—the fruity, fragrant, pear drops aromas.

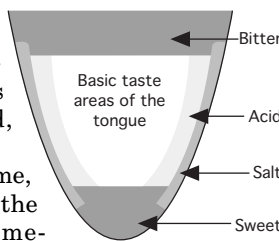
Phenolic—from wood smoke to tar, iodine to seaweed.

Aldehydic—leafy, grassy scents, sometimes like Parma violets.

Feinty—difficultly to describe, at worst redolent of sweat, vomit and rotten fruit, but they are essential to, and part of, all malts to some degree.

Feints are mellowed and transformed by maturation in good wood and the wood itself layers another range of aromas over those occurring during production. The most obvious scent is sherry from a sherry cask. Bourbon casks bestow the lovely rounded, vanilla-like, nutty, cigar box aromas which make well-matured malt whisky such a fine thing.

Charles MacLean is author of
*The Mitchell Beazley
Pocket Whisky Book.*



TIME FOR NEW GLASSES?

Presentation is all, so they say, but when it comes to whisky it's not just the looks of the glass which influence your appreciation. A whole science comes into play as the shape of the glass affects your perceptions. The traditional whisky tumbler is well suited to a blended whisky but to get the most out of a malt a different tool is best for the job. Or rather three different glasses:

CLASSIC, GRADUATED NOSING GLASS A big, wide, bulb bowl that allows enthusiastic swirling and a narrow aperture which focuses the vapours and essences to the nose. The glass is calibrated to ensure accurate dilution—with a glass this good, water is very desirable. This is the Blender's nosing glass and is supplied with watch glass cover to hold all the olfactory delights.

REIDEL SINGLE MALT WHISKY GLASS Designed by the Austrian glass makers noted for their range of 'wine- and spirit-friendly stemware'. The Reidel range is amazing—a different glass for almost every type of wine and/or grape variety and now a single malt whisky glass. Glasses are designed with consideration of the shape, density at the rim, whether the rim is cut and polished or rolled, how and where the spirit rolls onto the tongue (as different parts of the tongue are sensitive to the four tastes acid, bitter, salt and sweet). Is the flow narrow or broad? Where is the whisky's



first contact with the tongue (front, back or sides)? It is quite astonishing the effect a glass can have on flavour and this is an invaluable part of any connoisseur's collection.

The nosing glass is great for nosing but not a comfortable means of drinking; the aperture is narrow, pushing the rim into the nose when tipping to the mouth and it is necessary to tilt the head back uncomfortably to wait for the uncontrolled rush of spirit. The Reidel glass is a magnificent taster but holds no aroma at all. Its designer, Georg Reidel believes "spirit drinkers are less concerned with bouquet than wine drinkers." (Decanter 02/93). How wrong can he be?

So much for the cerebral, considered study. For relaxed, convivial, malt

whisky drinking, we consider the best compromise a **PORT GLASS**; a good bulb, a wide mouth with a slight flare, good nosing and tasting combined—and at a terrific price. It's what we use most of the time, comfortable and practical.

Our picture also features a small water **CARAFE**, no handle to fumble for, no spout to aim and no "oh blast, too much water, I'll have to put more whisky in!" A controlled flow into the glass ensured. Like the port glass, we use it all the time. Both the port glass and the carafe are available plain or branded Springbank (who introduced them to us).

CLASSIC NOSING GLASS £ 7.50(a)
REIDEL GLASS £ 11.00(a)
PORT GLASS (Plain or Sp'bank) £ 3.50(a)
CARAFE (Plain or Sp'bank) £ 3.50(a)

EXPLORING ISLAY—an armchair voyage



Islay—a small island bursting with full-flavoured, smoky, peaty whiskies and yet with a surprising range of tastes to explore. Glass in hand, (see above) settle down with our pick of the crop.

Bruichladdich—no peat in the malting but by age 15 the island is discernable, delicate. **Bunnahabhain**—delicately

peaty. **Caol Ila**—oily, with a long, long finish. **Bowmore**—mid point of the island, and the whiskies. **Port Ellen**—pure smoke and peat, slight lemony sweetness. **Lagavulin**—dry, spicy and peppery. **Laphroaig**—pungent with extra seaweed. **Ardbeg**—the most "Islay" of the lot, a challenge!

MH	BRUICHLADDICH	43%	15	£ 28.90
MH	BUNNAHABHAIN	40%	12	£ 21.90
MH	CAOL ILA	43%	15	£ 25.90
MH	BOWMORE	43%	17	£ 28.00
CC	PORT ELLEN	40%	'79/16	£ 25.80
MH	LAGAVULIN	43%	16	£ 25.50
MH	LAPHROAIG	43%	15	£ 31.90
CC	ARBEG	40%	'63/31	£ 45.60

Hesitation ill-advised

Winner of this year's single malt over 12yo category at the respected International Wine & Spirit Competition is The Glenlivet 18yo. Well deserving its accolade, it is rich and refreshing. Just 1,800 bottles are available in the UK—we've got a handful, but not many.

MH GLENLIVET 18 43% £34.90

To celebrate their centenary G&M have bottled some of their best whiskies from their extensive stocks. Titled *Centenary Reserve* these are truly excellent bottlings. The Glenburgie and Caol Ila are already almost completely exhausted, others are getting scarce.



Cent. GLENBURGIE '48/47 40% £ 199
 Cent. CAOL ILA '66/29 40% £ 45.90
 Cent. HIGHLAND PARK '70/25 40% £ 37.70
 Cent. BALBLAIR '73/22 40% £ 34.80
 Cent. BENRINNES '78/17 40% £ 29.10
 Cent. GLENROTHES '78/17 40% £ 29.10
 Cent. ST. MAGDALENE '80/15 40% £ 26.60
 Cent. MORTLACH '84/11 40% £23.70

Cask Strength / High Proof

These four high strength whiskies have been doing very well in tastings throughout the last season. Lowland **Bladnoch**, lemon zest and zippppp. Speyside **Mortlach**, great value and a great whisky, classic speyside elegance or fruit gums, choose your description! The new **Springbank** 12 year old, 100°—the Norton 500 of malts, very exciting, rich and no need to dilute! **Port Ellen**, the best from Islay, (according to the locals).



A* BLADNOCH '84/11 59% £ 37.30
 S* MORTLACH '83/11 60% £ 29.90
 MH SPRINGBANK 12 57% £ 29.30
 Cask*PORT ELLEN '80/15 65% £ 42.30



Scotch in a box...

Best value this Christmas. One of the greatest Speyside whiskies, a full bottle of Longmorn 15yo, 45% with four miniatures: the excellent Strathisla, Glen Keith, Benriach and Longmorn.

MH LONGMORN PACK £29.90

For the awkward type...

Three well-packaged, good value presents, suitable for gardenhand or favoured uncle. Two great single malts flank a well turned out Gordon Highlanders blend.



MH GLEN ORD—20cl 12 40% £6.20
 MH GORDON HIGHLANDERS £ 13.90
 MH GLEN MORAY(gift tin) 15 40% £22.20

The Best Whiskies in the World?

Couldn't resist the *Innovations* style headline. Quality products, a blend and two malts, all excellent.



MH J.WALKER BLUE 40% £ 112.00
 MH MACALLAN 25 43% £ 79.90
 MH SPRINGBANK 25 46% £ 65.00

Blended Whiskies

Five glorious blends that exemplify the Blender's art, a little unusual and only found in the best of establishments.

The Putachieside, with a very attractive old style of label and bottle, is a 25yo whisky for a reasonable price. This Spey Cast missed our photo-call because someone had tried it the night before and came in and bought the lot!



MH SPEY CAST 12 40% £ 16.90
 MH DIMPLE 15 40% £ 26.80
 MH PUTACHIESIDE 25 40% £ 47.00
 MH ANTIQUARY 12 40% £ 18.30
 MH BALLANTINE'S Gold 12 40% £ 20.80

Fancy a bottle?

Four good-lookers worth being seen in with. The Highland Park is particularly wonderful.



MH CARDHU 12 40% £23.40
 MH GLENROTHES '79/15 43% £33.40
 MH HIGHLAND PARK '67/24 43% £66.90
 MH DALMORE 12 40% £21.50

The Sweeties

Three liqueurs in descending order of sweetness: Scottish Island, strong, full flavoured, gingery and warming, very sweet. Athol Brose, honey and herbs. Glenturret Malt Liqueur, the least sweet, excellent after dinner or with shortbread and coffee, and a good remedy for tickly coughs—it's true!



MH SCOTTISH ISLAND 40% £15.90
 MH ATHOL BROSE 35% £17.90
 MH GLENTURRET Liqueur 35% £ 19.10

And for someone who already has everything...

(or at least all the 'Classic Six' Malts) what could be better than their very own bar stand! Given the number of times we're asked for this in the shop, this is going to be one of the most appreciated items this Christmas. We've managed to source it but stocks are limited. Dark green wood base, brass rail.

CLASSIC SIX BAR STAND £ 40(c)
or save £10 if bought with all six malts
BAR STAND WITH ALL C6 £ 177.40



Measure up

For those who prefer to know how much is in the glass we offer a range of measures to suit most occasions (and guests!) Pewter mini-tankards come in 3 sizes: 1oz(for relatives), 2oz(for friends) & 3oz(for yourself!), with optional thistle motif. The hand-made copper jug (left) holds 1/4 gill, and next time Auntie asks for "just a thimbleful" you'll be able to oblige with this pewter 2oz version.

1oz Tankard (with thistle) £ 5.45 (£ 5.95)(a)
2oz Tankard (with thistle) £ 5.75 (£ 6.25)(a)
3oz Tankard (with thistle) £ 6.45 (£ 6.95)(a)
"Just a thimbleful" £ 6.95(a)
1/4 Gill copper tankard £ 11.90(a)



The Quaich

Tradition has it that at gatherings of welcome and farewell whisky should be passed around and shared from the quaich, "Scotland's cup of friendship". The name derives from the gaelic "cuach"—a shallow cup, and our quaichs feature celtic patterns reflecting their origins. A fitting gift for many occasions, we supply in satin-lined boxes.

7.5cm (diameter) pewter quaich £ 17.50(b)
13cm silver-plated quaich £ 45.00(c)



Steady as she goes

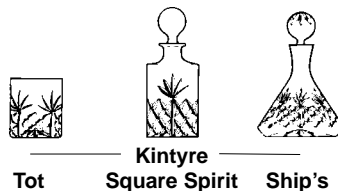
Difficult to do it justice here but guaranteed to draw admiring comments, this ship's decanter from Royal Scot Crystal is from their Flower of Scotland range, which as well as deep crisscross cuts and traditional "star" in the base, features distinctive opaque-cut thistle motifs. Holds more than a bottle (see above!) stands 26cm high and comes in silk-lined presentation box.

Ship's decanter £ 99.00(c)
Also available in the Flower of Scotland pattern (see above and below):
2 Tumblers — boxed set £ 25.50(c)
2 Large tumblers — boxed set £ 29.90(c)
Water jug (9cm high) £ 18.50(b)

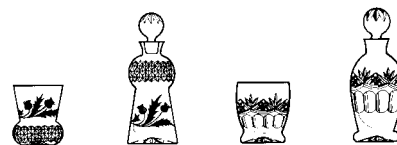
Mini decanters



From the same stable, but through the lower door, comes a range of irresistible mini decanters, presentation boxed with two matching tot glasses. Ideal for the crystal collector or indeed anyone who enjoys a wee dram! We offer four patterns (see above and below). Decanters are 12cm high, tots 6cm high.



Tot Kintyre Ship's
Square Spirit



Flower of Scotland Georgian

Mini decanter + 2 tot glasses boxed set:

Kintyre — square spirit £ 38.50(c)
Kintyre — ship's £ 42.50(c)
Flower of Scotland (thistle) £ 49.50(c)
Georgian £ 38.50(c)

Engraved lead crystal is also popular. The square decanter and square-sided tot glasses(below) feature a celtic design engraved onto one face. Decanter 15cm high, glass 6cm high.

The miniature & tot glass boxed set makes a popular gift. Choose either a glass engraved "A Wee Dram" or with our Loch Fyne Whiskies logo; a min of Springbank 21yo completes the treat.



Engraved mini decanter set £ 29.00(c)
Min. & tot set; dram or logo £ 10.00(b)

A flask to suit every pocket

Never be far from your favourite dram! With flasks in a wide range of shapes and sizes surely there must be one to suit every occasion and every pocket.



The Hip Flask

4oz pewter Golfer flask £ 17.00(b)
4oz pewter Fisherman flask £ 17.00(b)
6oz pewter plain flask £ 14.00(b)
s/steel & bridle calf leather:
5oz slimline flask (not shown) £ 22.00(b)
6oz flask, captive top £ 24.00(b)
8oz flask, captive top £ 28.00(a)

The Desk Flask

Pewter Pot Still flask, 15cm high £ 29.00(b)
Pewter Pot Still flask, 25cm high £ 37.00(c)

Not Really a Flask

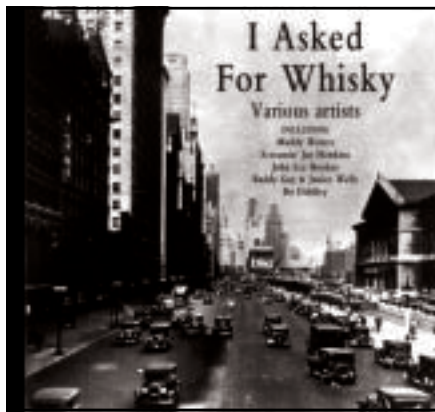
4 s/steel cups, calf leather case £ 25.00(a)
Plastic funnel £ 0.95(a)
Tippling stick £ 49.00(c)
A deluxe walking stick, knob top, hand-turned maple, generous glass tube flask, 2 "cups" (not shown—but very nice).

The Ultimate Flask

Dalvey flask £ 49.90(b)
The elegant 'Dalvey' flask with integral telescopic cup in gleaming s/steel.



I asked for whisky...



...she gave me a CD

So many people ask after the music we play in the shop that we thought we'd produce our own compilation. But no need, here it is, with the right title too... This blues CD includes a selection of 15 tracks and comes with the LFW customers' seal of approval. Artists include Sunnyland Slim & Lacy Gibson, Byther Smith, Buster Benton with Carey Bell, Big Walter 'Shakey' Horton, Mississippi Fred McDowell and Billy Boy Arnold & Sammy Lawhorn. Sounds good already!

I ASKED FOR WHISKY—CD £ 6.50(a)

Classic Six Miniature Packs



The Classic Six is a selection of single malts from United Distillers' portfolio and while one always has one's own classics, these six form a magnificent tasting team of the different regions. Even if the recipient has had some or all of them before it's very worthwhile going through them again as we recently enjoyed finding out. Michael Jackson's (no, not that one) video provides interesting insight.

MH CLASSIC SIX MIN PACK £ 15.80(b)
CLASSIC SIX + VIDEO £ 16.80(c)

Book Dept.



A comprehensive range of books for the whisky fan—see our Stock List.

Custom Labels

Our custom labelled bottles are very well received and the best advice we have is don't use an excessively expensive whisky—they often don't get opened but sit pride of place on the mantelpiece. A 'basic' label carries your message of about 25 words and our logo and costs an extra £2.50 over the price of the bottle you select.

A more complex label can be created using material supplied by you or by us after discussion with you—either a photograph, a character drawing or your company logo. This is charged by time but as an example the "Fiddler's Fuel" illustrated cost £ 7.50.

Perhaps the simplest and most popular option is our custom presentation—our magnificent house malt with cork seal, high quality wooden box and custom label, £ 30.00.



BASIC CUSTOM LABEL £ 2.50+bottle
CUSTOM LABEL PACKAGE £ 30.00
OTHER LABEL SERVICE POA

PLEASE CALL SOON
TO DISCUSS CUSTOM LABELS
FOR CHRISTMAS

Ho-Ho! Novelties Dept.

Surprise your friends with a full twelve-bottle case of whisky this New Year! Hours of fun and entertainment with this real Guinness Book of Records authenticated "smallest bottle of whisky in the world" a tiny 5cm high—gosh! Alternatively be the hit at your bar-b-que with this witty fake red alarm! Contains not a button to press, but a tiny bottle of whisky—IN CASE OF EMERGENCY—BREAK GLASS! Ha-Ha! (Not suitable for children.)



CASE OF TINY BOTTLES £ 8.50(a)
IN CASE OF EMERGENCY £ 1.99(a)

Tummy Dept.



A selection of goodies from the food hall—spot the favourite theme. Haggis meat (in a tin) soaked in Teachers or Glenturret whisky. Glenfiddich Rich Fruit Cake from Walkers of Aberlour, 950g. Double Chocolate, Blueberry and Pecan Cake with Glayva liqueur 450g—wonderful warm with cream! A Taste of Scotland—Patterson's Shortbread, three Arran Provisions jams and a miniature of Lungs Supreme. Gourmet Collection—marmalade, mustard and honey—all with whisky. Yummy-yummy!

HAGGIS £ 3.25(b)
GLENFIDDICH CAKE £ 10.50(b)
CHOCOLATE / GLAYVA CAKE £ 5.60(b)
A TASTE OF SCOTLAND £ 6.90(b)
GOURMET COLLECTION £ 4.90(b)

Resistance is Useless



Handmade chocs from Clarkes of Loch Ewe are sheer luxury. A 150g box of Glenmorangie Truffles includes: apricot, coffee, praline dakar and plain with vanilla—all with 18 year old single malt. GLENMORANGIE TRUFFLES £ 6.70(a)

And Remember...



No matter how big your order, the **maximum** you pay is **£5.90** for your delivery to one address, (see back of stock list). The letters in brackets following prices of whiskyware indicate the carriage charge for individual items if ordered separately. We're not setting Christmas delivery deadlines—as ever we'll do our best to get it to you quickly—but it's worth ordering soon (now?) for Christmas.



ALASTAIR BUCHANAN DISTILLERY PRINTS

Alastair has assembled a portfolio of over 60 different distillery illustrations—a unique record of the industry featuring some much-missed buildings.

Our black and white printing does little justice to his full colour gouache artwork. Each image measures about 3" x 4" and is in the style of the one he has done of our shop above.

A single print, with mount, in a narrow mahogany frame (6" x 7"), or cream coloured moulding, costs £6.95 (+50p P+P). Framed sets of four, eight and sixteen prints are available with mahogany frame. This includes our most popular, a set of all eight Islay distilleries, £38 (+£5 P+P).

Although we stock Alastair's delightful prints we ask that you deal with Alastair direct for mail order business. Write or 'phone him for a list and brochure of what's available. Your favourite distillery could be gracing your wall in about 7 days.

Alastair Buchanan
Scotch Malt Whisky Prints,
Old School House,
Cousland,
By Dalkeith,
Midlothian. EH22 2NZ.
Telephone 0131 663 1058
Fax 0131 663 0084.

Please remember to mention the Scotch Whisky Review when enquiring.



BENROMACH DISTILLERY
New owners Gordon & MacPhail
plan to start distilling next year.

tasters tasters **tasters** tasters tasters

What's new in the shop, Richard?

Most exciting is three new releases from **Glenmorangie**—two more finishes akin to the excellent Port Wood and a very attractive limited edition collector's "must have". The **Culloden Bottle** (limited edition of 2,500) is launched to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of (you guessed) the Battle of Culloden. The bottle is a replica of an 18th Century spirit flask that once belonged to Duncan Forbes of Culloden and now resides in the National Museum of Scotland. Encased in a solid mahogany box (environmentally chummy—natch) with C18th-style engraving on the lid and a signed, numbered certificate. All this desirability is further wrapped in a sleeve with a scene from the battle. This is a very attractive presentation (sorry no pic. yet) and a must for any serious collection. Distilled 1971, 43%, £125, don't hesitate.

Tain L'Hermitage is a limited release of Glenmorangie transferred to L'Hermitage casks at 12 years and raked in Tain (which is twinned with the Rhone town) for a further five years. Sweet and fresh with a winy finish and a long Burgundy/Rhone aftertaste, this is one for drinking and collecting. A one-off limited release, 43% at £32.90.

Finally the latest addition to the Glenmorangie port-finish-folio (geddit?) has spent 12 years in white yankee oak and then 'several' years finishing in Malmsey Madeira drums. No rush here but sounds good for Christmas! The **Madiera Finish** is the same strength and price as L'Hermitage.

UD's Glendullan, Glenury Royal and Linkwood bottlings join the **Rare Malts Selection**.

Otherwise, we have some stocks remaining of a Signatory bottling of **Longrow**, that has been very well received by our customers. Also new in is **Drumguish** from the new Speyside Distillery. Carrying no age, this 3 year old is more for the collector rather than the drinker: "Nice in cream sauce with steak" was one customer's less than enthusiastic tasting note.

Did we mention the appointment of **The Inverarity** as our House Malt? Response from customers at tastings is very gratifying—an easy-drinking dram with buckets of charm, well balanced and a sucker for a good, equal measure of water. We serve it with fruit deserts, trifles etc., pre-watered to 50:50, instead of wine—a real table hit!

For bookworms, a new expanded edition of **Milroy's Almanack** and a re-vamped **The Malt File** are awaited—haven't seen either yet.

Lastly, if you think our prices are downright reasonable, talk from the bar is that a major supermarket is to have a whisky for £6.99 this Christmas. Deduct £1.05 VAT, £5.77 excise duty and that leaves **18p** for the bottle, label, outer, transport, profit(?) and, yes, 3yo Scotch. We haven't tried it yet so we can't sing its praises...

nosingsnosings**nosings**nosingsnosings

What's new in the news, Richard?

The **Scotch Whisky Association** (SWA) has been very active in arguing for a staged reduction in the tax on spirits and has proposed a staged **reduction of 4%** each year until parity with beer and wine—spirits have twice their rate of duty at present. To kick start the programme the government is being asked for an 8% drop now. Evidence that this is a jolly good idea is a 1995 **record export** result compared with a **UK drop of 26%**, or a predicted £100m revenue lost to the exchequer, since the last increase.

A new calculation states that the Scotch Whisky Industry supports a total of **47,760 jobs**; 14,000 directly and the rest in farming, bottling, transport and other dependent jobs (including Lyndsay and me, presumably).

Allied Distillers have sold **Pultney Distillery** to Inver House Distillers. Further to Allied's continued program of rationalisation, West of Scotland favourite **Black Bottle** has been sold to Matthew Gloag (Famous Grouse). Allied own Teachers who are to follow Bell's recent lead with a **TV campaign** featuring Bob the Sheepdog and the strapline "you can't teach an old dog new tricks". Let's hope they can afford colour film.

Burn Stewart is to start **bottling in India**. The **USA** is considering dropping its **health warning** on alcohol. Now "Consumption of alcohol has benefits" and "may be safe and pleasurable". This compares with current U.S. advice such as "not recommended" and "no net benefit" (good grief!).

Surrey-based boffins reckon they've developed a **computer** that can accurately sniff Scotch and differentiate a **Bombay Bell's** or a Reel MacKoy from the authentic Scotch. Big business as **cratur counterfeit-ing** is rife throughout the world.

Local favourite **Scottish Island Liqueur** went belly-up last year but has been salvaged by an Argyll businessman who now has the necessary approval from the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and **Firearms** (Firearms? good grief!) to export.

Edradour Distillery hosted its first **wedding** this summer. (Presumably a small one.)

Whisky Open Day looks like being a regular event. About the last saturday in May the industry opens its doors to many facilities such as grain distilleries and maltings, otherwise too busy for visitors. Free drams, pipebands and **bouncy castles** are other attractions. We should have more info in early May; send a SAE then.

A Bavarian company has put a single malt into an **aerosol** can. "It's no joke, we have a schnapps in an aerosol" says the company's chairman. Yes, but why? Suggestions include, a) convincing your wife you really have been in the pub all night and, b) making your dram go further. LFW would like to hear from the importer. **AND** a customer told us of a Scotch Whisky Board Game as involved as Monopoly, sounds interesting—anyone know more? We're also still looking for that whisky-flavoured toothpaste...

SPEED AND VIOLENCE! —the magic of yeast

Roger Jones

Industry Manager, Quest International

Throughout recorded history and probably for a lot longer, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* has been closely associated with *Homo sapiens*. Put another way, we (mankind that is) use yeast a lot. Bread, beer, wine, cider, and spirits are all dependent on yeast as are many of the nutritional and flavouring products for foods. It may come as a surprise that there is about 1,000,000 tonnes of yeast produced and sold in the world each year!

I work at Glenochil Yeast Factory which is Scotland's only yeast factory. Situated at the foot of the Ochil Hills about five miles east of Stirling, it owes this location to the fact that it had originally been a distillery which was founded, we believe, by a local farmer in 1746.

By 1880 a large quantity of surplus yeast was sold to other distillers and to bakers. The operation gradually evolved over time and it became solely a yeast factory in 1930. So the factory site can claim nearly 250 years of industrial production. The factory belongs to Quest International which is part of the Unilever Group of companies.

Much rebuilding has been done over the years and now our state-of-the-art plant makes a range of distillery, food flavouring and bakery yeasts. However it is the distillery yeasts that concern us here.

Scotch Whisky production is just as dependent on yeast as is beer and wine, but what is yeast, where did it come from and what does it do?

The last is probably the easiest to explain. In fact we get more than a clue from its name in various languages. *Levure* in French and *Levadura* in Spanish are both derived from the Latin word for 'lifting', a reference to bread dough. In contrast the English word came from the Dutch *Gist* which also means 'foam', a reference to the well-known frothy head of an active alcoholic fermentation. Does this mean that alcoholic beverages were of more importance to the British and Dutch, whilst bread was regarded more highly in France and Spain?

Anyway we know that both effects have the same cause, the simultaneous production of alcohol and carbon dioxide by yeast that has encountered some sugar in relatively warm conditions. The yeast takes in the sugar and uses it for growing more yeast and for the maintenance of the existing cells in a good healthy condition. The alcohol and carbon dioxide so necessary to the baking and beverage industries today are merely the by-products of yeast doing what it wants to do!

To describe this in a little more detail, we must go back a step or two into the production process for Scotch Whisky, specifically *malt* whisky production. Barley malt is the source of the starchy material which eventually becomes whisky. The malt is milled and mashed. During mashing the starch is converted to sugar by the natural enzymes present in malt grains. The sugary worts are then extracted with hot water.

Even before the extraction of sugars is finished, the first running of wort is 'pitched' with yeast. Sometimes this is done literally by emptying 25kg bags of yeast into the washback (the fermentation vessel), sometimes the yeast is suspended in water before pitching.

A typical mash of 8 tonnes of malt grains could take 150kg of yeast. The yeast starts to ferment visibly within a few hours and the fermentation can be over in 50 hours.

The sheer speed and apparent violence of the fermentation accounts for the well-known difficulty that the distiller experiences in keeping the wash within the washback! In the bad old days young lads were employed to beat the foam into submission with heather or birch brooms. Now washback lids are fitted with a mechanical foam beater, a sort of paddle rotating above the foam danger level (hopefully). In reference to the old days, the foam beater is called a 'switch'. In all of this it is easy to forget that the yeast not only produces alcohol from the sugar but it also has a profound effect on the flavour of the Scotch Whisky. Much remains to be found out about this effect and the way in which it interacts with the other critical factors such as the malt, the distillation, the maturation and so on. However, it is certain that whisky would not taste like whisky without the action of the right yeast.

Yeasts are classified scientifically as microfungi and thus belong to the

mushroom world. The individual yeast cells are tiny, you need a magnification of x100 to see them at all well. They are round to oval in shape and often you can see a daughter cell forming by a process best described as budding. One gramme of yeast contains an incredible 10,000 million cells. They may be small but they are fast workers. At peak growth the cells can double in number in about 2 hours whilst producing alcohol at a prodigious rate. Yeast is usually delivered to the distilleries as a beige coloured solid with the consistency of slightly hard ice cream, packed in 25kg woven polypropylene sacks. To keep it alive and healthy it has to be transported and stored at refrigeration temperature.

So where did the distilling yeasts come from? The true answer is lost in the mists of time, but we can make some educated guesses. Probably originally from wet grain, a primitive beer or dough mixture fermenting with yeasts that were around in the environment. Since then a few thousand years worth of selection of yeast strains has been carried out by vintners, brewers, distillers and latterly yeast manufacturers.

At present there could easily be more than a thousand yeast strains in regular commercial use. All will be quite specialised for the role intended, such as whisky production.

This specialisation involves another fact of wonderment to those who work with yeast. In the process of yeast selection we have obtained yeast strains that not only produce alcohol, but also contribute positively to the flavour of Scotch Whisky.

When you savour your next dram, spare a thought for the yeast which helped to make it. Just 14 micrograms or 150 million cells is sufficient for one bottle of Scotch.

A little bit of nature's magic harnessed for the product we know and love.





CHRISTIE'S

AN AUCTION GUIDE TO COLLECTING SCOTCH WHISKY

Martin Green, Christie's, Scotland

Collecting Scotch whisky is a hobby enjoyed by many enthusiasts most of whom never touch a drop from the more expensive bottles in their collection but appreciate the bottles for their age, originality of design, shape, condition and design and colouring of the label. All of the above factors contribute towards the essence of the best collections in the world, some of which are housed overseas. The export market has seen many bottles which have never been available at home, hence the high quality of foreign collections.

No two bottles are the same where older examples are concerned. Above all the "golden Nectar" was produced for consumption; it never ceases to amaze that bottles which actually manage to survive from the last century are still in excellent condition to this day. Some brands have disappeared without trace whilst others which do materialise have never been heard of before.

Some of the best collections in this country are owned by the distilleries themselves. They are continually looking for bottles to replenish their archives; usually brands which are no longer produced or early examples of which samples have not been retained with the future in mind.

With my company holding whisky auctions twice a year there is a great variety of collectors' bottles available. Here are a few points to look for if you are thinking of starting a collection and are interested in authentic bottles from the 19th and early 20th century.

POINTS TO LOOK FOR—

CAPSULES, CORKS AND SEALS

The earliest form of seal, applied after the cork had been driven, was made of melted wax and often embossed with the producing company's name, brand name of the whisky or a crest.

Early capsules were usually made of lead or a metal based substance and fitted to the bottle after the cork had been driven in. Some are embossed with the company name logo or crest and/or name of the brand or distillery.

If the bottle does not have a driven cork it may have a stopper. In order to distinguish this, look for a slight indentation running around the neck underneath the capsule where the edge of the stopper meets the neck of the bottle.

Other types of seals were introduced in

the 1920's by some companies; for example, spring loaded caps made of tin or metal protected by lead or similar capsules were very common. Screw caps were also introduced at this time, similar to those which can be found on every-day drinking whiskies today.

GLASS

Early bottles were often hand blown or made in three pieces formed together whilst the glass was molten. Look for slight bubbles and imperfections in the glass which is usually clear or green in colour, bottles which do not stand perpendicular and those which are not conventionally shaped.

LABELS

The condition and legibility are highly important; look for date, name of bottler, company name, crest and logo. Some labels are very colourful depicting printed scenes of distilleries or views of Scotland; others can be very plain bearing only the basic details of the whisky. Where single malts are concerned look for the name of the distillery. The words "Liqueur Scotch Whisky", "Rare Old Liqueur Scotch Whisky", "Fine Old Scotch Whisky" etc., denote that the whisky was moderately mature when bottled. Where blends are concerned look for the words "Rare" or "Fine Old Blended Scotch Whisky". Some of the malts used in the blend may have spent between 3 and 25 years or more in the cask.

20th CENTURY WHISKY

Since the 18th century, some 860 malt and grain distilleries have existed, only a small proportion managing to survive.

THE SINGLE MALTS

The single malts available today for every-day drinking have been matured for between 3 and 15 years in the cask. Anything older is usually more special. On the whole, most distilleries have released onto the market a particular brand which is very special. Primarily produced for commemorative purposes or the collectors' market, it is also enjoyed by serious malt drinkers.

Christie's hold Whisky auctions in November and March each year. Telephone 0141 332 5759

SPRINGBANK LETTERS

Our Springbank sponsored letters page is being held over for one edition due to constraints on space in this edition and a natural justice that the award of a very valuable bottle of Longrow should go to the *best* letter rather than *the* letter!

The writer of the most worthy letter published will receive a much sought after bottle of Longrow courtesy of Springbank Distillery.

No suggestions for our caption competition, (it was a stinker) so the tenner goes in the West Highland Native Woodlands Box, (the *We Hate Sitka Spruce* gang). Other donations forwarded.

FIRST RUN

Isle of Arran Distillers are offering an attractive opportunity to play a part in their future. For those of you who missed their £450 Founder's bond (now closed) a single case bond is now on offer through Loch Fyne Whiskies.

A palatable £75 secures the bond holder a case of twelve bottles of Isle of Arran single malt to be delivered in 6 years. The price includes bottling and delivery but not excise duty (currently £ 69.24) or VAT on the resulting total (£ 25.24), both payable on removal from bond. Those of you who are less impatient can have their stock further matured on the island for £2.50 per year.

"Our faith in a new distillery on Arran has been borne out by the fantastic reaction to the new spirit," says Marketing Director Andrew Currie. "We were confident that Gordon Miller (Manager, left) was going to produce a good first production and to our delight he's produced an outstanding one".



LFW sampled the new spirit with the Chief Nose of discerning independent bottlers, Adelphi, and we agreed that it is very sprightly, light and lively. "A rich Dalwhinnie" is one prediction of Arran Distillers and we agreed but fancied we detected a dash of Campbeltown in there also. Whatever, we thought it to be very promising and this offer very attractive. Your money is assured by a reputable Scottish Bank.

12 bottle CASE ARRAN BOND £75.00

SPRINGBANK CASKS

Those of you with a bit more dosh to squander on drink may be interested in a full cask of Springbank. There are six cask options starting with a 330 bottle bourbon cask costing £850 (excluding duty and vat—payable on removal) including 10 years maturation. Further details on request.

CAVEAT EMPTOR

With a top-of-the-range new sherry butt (660 bottles) from Springbank costing £1,850 (the reasonable going rate) we wonder why there are 'Wine and Spirit Investment Advisors' offering whisky casks of unknown provenance for £3,000+. Be warned, there are some very dubious offers being touted.

INTRODUCING OUR HOUSE MALT

During the summer we finally got round to tracking down the producer of *The Inverarity* whisky, one we had heard of but not seen. We thought it worth investigating because of the similarity in name with Inveraray and maybe worth offering to visitors as a memento of their visit to the town.

Over the 'phone we were offered a malt at a very attractive price by a charming man, name of Ronnie Martin and we ordered a small quantity for further investigation.

The hooch duly arrived and we appreciated an old style label on a cork stoppered bottle. Inside resided a pale whisky with a full aroma and rich taste somewhere between a Dalwhinnie and an Edradour. With water huge volumes of perfume emerge and the whisky becomes a dessert wine, eminently drinkable—dangerously so in fact!

Here is a single malt (specifically, an eight year old Aultmore) that will certainly please an experienced malt drinker and also convince the novice of the benefits of buying quality. A very reasonable price for a superb product, quality and value. What better criteria for a House Malt we thought.



We contacted Mr Martin, told him the good news and asked of his background. Retired after 34 years with industry leader DCL (UD), ultimately as Managing Director of production, he was awarded the O.B.E. for services to Scotch Whisky and is now Professor of Distilling at Heriot-Watt University. Looks like we chose the right whisky and the right man!

LOCH FYNE WHISKIES House Malt

The Inverarity 8 40% £18.90


£2.00 OFF!
 your next purchase of
cask strength whisky
LONG-TERM OFFER

Remember, all our independent cask strength bottlings include a voucher worth **£2.00 off** a future purchase of a similar bottling.

Offer applies to *Cask, C, JM, S or A* labels of over 46% Alc. Does not apply to *MH* bottlings or those 46% and under. All this despite our new pricing structure of cask strength whiskies. Our stock list now has many cask strength whiskies for under £35. With two pounds off as well—jings! that's a good deal!



UNITED DISTILLERS DISTILLERY RANGE

Buy two get a 20cl Glen Ord free!

Our friends at United Distillers have offered a further quantity of midi Glen Ord's for UK mail order buyers of any two bottles from their Distillery range of malts. (Two of same qualifies.)

These are (all MH, 43% and £25.90):

Lowland

BLADNOCH 10yo ROSEBANK 12yo

Highland

ABERFELDY 15yo BLAIR ATHOL 12yo
CLYNELISH 14yo TEANINICH 10yo

Speyside

AULTMORE 12yo BENRINNES 15yo
BALMENACH 12yo CRAIGELLACHIE 14yo
DALLUANE 16yo DUFFTOWN 15yo
GLEN DULLAN 12yo GLENLOSSIE 10yo
INCHGOWER 14yo LINKWOOD 12yo
MANNOCHMORE 12yo MORTLACH 16yo
PITTYVAICH 12yo

Islay

CAOL ILA 15yo

The offer is very limited so order soon.

SCOTCH WHISKY REVIEW is free to all bona fide mail order customers. If you have not bought by mail order from the last (Spring) catalogue and do not buy from the accompanying (Autumn) list then we will not be troubling you again.

PLEASE TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT US!

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XMAS OFFER FROM GORDON & MACPHAIL

Buy any two bottles from the following range and get a **free 20cl bottle of Athol Brose liqueur.**

Choose any two bottles from: (two of same qualifies)

G&M ARDMORE 1980 40% £ 22.80
G&M BALBLAIR 10 40% £ 20.90
CC CAOL ILA 1980 40% £ 24.30
G&M GLENTAUCHERS 1979 40% £ 24.30
G&M INVERLEVEN 1984 40% £ 21.50
G&M LINKWOOD 15 40% £ 24.50

Caol Ila and Linkwood are obvious choices but we're always surprised we don't sell more Balblair or Ardmore.

So what if you don't like liqueurs?

At G&M's Centenary lunch at the Mansion House Hotel, Elgin in May the dessert was superb and praised by all at our table. So good in fact that we asked for the recipe and now recommend it to you. Use your freebie to try it!

Chocolate Athol Brose Bombe with Caramelised Oranges

Chocolate Ice Cream—15 fl oz double cream, lightly whipped; 3 egg yolks and 3oz sugar, whisked together; 3oz plain melted chocolate.

Athol Brose Ice Cream—5 fl oz lightly whipped cream; 1 egg yolk and 1oz sugar whisked together; 1 fl oz Athol Brose.

Caramelised Oranges—3 large oranges; 4oz sugar; 2 fl oz water.

First make the chocolate ice cream:

1—Mix egg and chocolate together.

2—Fold in whipped cream.

3—Fill 4 single bombe moulds or 4 small basins, remainder can go in a tub.

4—Set in freezer (overnight).

5—Scoop out centres of the moulds and put them back in the freezer while you make the Athol Brose ice cream by folding all the ingredients together.

6—Fill the centres of the bombes with the Athol Brose Ice Cream and leave in the freezer to set.

7—Segment oranges into a metal container. Add all the juice.

8—In a thick-bottomed pan, gently heat the sugar and water until dissolved and then turn up the heat to full, but do not stir.

9—When the mixture turns brown, pour it over the oranges (some of the caramel will turn hard, but leave in the fridge for two hours and this will soften).

10—Turn out ice cream bombes and serve with caramelised oranges.