



SCOTCH WHISKY REVIEW™

EDITION 12

AUTUMN 1999

VARIETY FOR LIFE

The acquisitions, mergers and manoeuvres continue in the Scotch Whisky trade as each egotist jockey to produce another unwieldy brand-dominated monolith. Rumours and speculation make for interesting dramming but this column believes that the whisky enthusiast is going to suffer.

The combined editorial might of the specialist whisky press (!) is unlikely to influence the strategies of the world's great brand owners so perhaps we should try to educate the marketeers of the benefit of the independent bottler.

There are industry elders who are happy to tolerate the apparent conflict between their trademark distillery bottling and an 'independent' selling with the same precious name. This tolerance has a long historical precedent but is mince as the new breed of brand manager seeks to stamp out competition, especially those 'parasites feeding off his marketing budget!'

The smug new-breed brand manager must learn that it is the independents who have created the highly profitable niche market of malt whiskies—profits that he is in danger of destroying. Once the profits go, so does the excitement and, eventually, the interest; all branded toilet paper is the same.

We accept that there have been some diabolical bottlings from independents, both respected and other and this column hopes that these guys will learn the importance of policing themselves.

Only the independent bottler has the flexibility to deliver single cask bottlings for a cost that enables a novice connoisseur (yucky word but none better) to develop the all important interest in the artistic output of the distiller.

Producers, of which there are increasingly few, should look upon the independent bottler as a new canvas, an alter ego, and through them grant the informed consumer exceptional and extraordinary drams for us all to enjoy rather than to see them disappear into another routine vatting.



STANDING ON TABLES AND CHEERS

Highland Honours returns to Inveraray after a considerable absence during our *Season of celebrity tasting evenings* thanks to Jim McEwan of Morrison Bowmore Distillers (left). This traditional toast is described in full on page 9.

GLEN SCOTIA—PROMISING

As reported in the last SWR, a trial distillation was conducted at Glen Scotia using a team on loan from Springbank Distillery. The quality of the spirit was so impressive that owners Glen Catrine Bond expect to be producing whisky there on a regular basis.

Between April and July 80,000 litres was produced using lightly peated malt, in the Glen Scotia style. The final distillation involved 15 tonnes of heavily peated (30ppm) malt yielding 6,000 litres. Now with four months' maturation complete, the spirit is reported to be very encouraging, so much so that a further two months' distillation is underway now, using new employees as well as the Springbank team.

It is unlikely that the distillery will go into full-time production but will almost certainly be producing every year.

Your Invitation to our

HEILAN' BANQUET

The final part of our season of celebrity tasting evenings features Iain Stothard of Highland Distillers who demonstrates the pleasures of combining malt whisky with superb food prepared by the George Hotel's new super-chef Bruce Mackie. Tickets are £25 all inclusive and the event is Thursday 9th December. Places are limited so call now to reserve.

By way of a taster here is the last menu:

- Chilled Ogen Melon with Scottish Berries & Fruit Coulis • accompanied by Glengoyne unpeated Single Malt Whisky
- Medley of West Coast Seafood with a white wine sauce • accompanied by Bunnahabhain Islay Malt Whisky
- Fillet of Beef with Haggis & Wild Mushrooms en Croute • with boats of tasty whisky sauce and Scottish vegetables of the season accompanied by The Macallan 18 year old
 - Crème Brûlée • accompanied by *more* Macallan
 - Orkney Cheeses & Oatcakes • accompanied by Highland Park Orkney Malt

THE MASTER BLENDER



There is no blender in the Scotch Whisky Industry more respected than Richard Paterson.

LFW: What is your job?

I am the Master Blender for JBB (Greater Europe), part of Jim Beam Brands World-wide Inc., which incorporates Whyte & Mackay and Invergordon Distillers. Our leading products include Whyte & Mackay Scotch Whisky, Jim Beam Bourbon, Glayva Liqueur, Vladivar vodka and the single malts Isle of Jura, Dalmore, Bruichladdich, Old Fettercairn, Tamnavulin, Tomintoul and Tullibardine. We also have the grain distillery at Invergordon.

My job as master blender is ensuring that all the products in our portfolio achieve and surpass the quality criteria that we set out to attain. I am also responsible for the development of new blends for clients which is the key part of our group's business.

LFW: But you are not the first Paterson blender.

My father and my grandfather were both whisky blenders. I started with my father when I was very young. I recall that when I was about eight he would ask, what did I think of this whisky? I could smell it on his breath and I wouldn't think very much of it! So he would whack me on the back of the head and say what do you mean, is it dry or sweet? So it built up from there and gave me a very good foundation, as well as a sore head! My first job was with a small company called A. Gillies and Company (which had Glen Scotia distillery) in Glasgow where I spent my first four years learning every aspect relating to production, blending and bottling. Being the son of the great 'Gus' Paterson of WR Paterson Ltd and Stockwell Bond caused considerable difficulties for me

so I was determined to broaden my horizons and I studied with the Wines and Spirits Education Trust for three years. My first job as a blender was in 1970 here with Whyte & Mackay and I became their Master Blender when I was twenty six, the youngest in Scotland, I believe.

Now Whyte & Mackay has been my lifeblood for thirty years.

My grandfather — the old sod — William, started W R Paterson in the thirties, (please don't confuse with Pattison's of Leith). Originally grandfather supplied coal to distilleries up north but when the coal trade started to decline he thought whisky appeared to be making more money so he moved into distilling, blending and bottling. Eventually he bought the Stockwell Bond which was a great old building, sadly now the site of the St Enoch shopping centre in Glasgow. I remember vividly as a small boy visiting it for the first time, all dark with a great smell and the noise of the bottling hall. It's true, they were good old days!

*Whiskies are
like people;
you get to
understand
them better
as you
get older.*

LFW: Are blenders born or created?

A bit of both, but what is required is total and utter commitment; 100% dedication, passion, and pursuit of the highest quality. And time. Whiskies are like people; you get to understand them better as you get older.

The greatest thrill I think is when I produce something that I think is right but is then endorsed by the customer or gets an award.

LFW: Who ultimately controls the blend quality, you or the finance department?

Me. Quality is as important to the company as it is to me. I control the consistency of the blend in order to ensure that the customer is consistently happy. We've just learned that Whyte & Mackay is number one in the whole of Scotland off-trade, possibly helped by our new blue label launched in January 1998. It was a very positive move

reflecting the prestige of Whyte & Mackay and has been very successful.

LFW: Isn't it an expensive whisky to produce?

You bet! There are 35 to 38 malts which we 'marry' for four months. Highlands, Lowlands and Campbeltown are brought together; the main baseline is from the highlands providing big heavier characters but I also let the Islays play their part. We then bring the married malts and grain together and finish it off with a further second marriage.

We handle our whiskies with the greatest respect, giving them plenty of 'time'; time to settle, time to marry before the next step.

The marrying takes place in our 'soldiers', over one thousand former oloroso sherry butts, standing on end in regimented fashion in situ at our Invergordon blending centre.

This is the key to our success. Not only do the butts provide the final quality, but more importantly they ensure the consistency of the blend, achieving the quality objectives it has done now for many years. Successful in over 100 countries, the character is acceptable everywhere. The blend is not bold or brash but smooth, mellow, elegant and refined, thanks to the marriage. Something to be sipped without large lashings of water or ice.

LFW: But Whyte & Mackay is often cheaper than its main competitors.

Listen! What more can you want? This is an extremely high quality whisky which is one of the most expensive whiskies to produce, including the double maturation and which we make available to the consumer at an attractive price!

LFW: Is it always the same components employed?

I always try and maintain the same rigorous formulation, but being realistic during the last thirty years there have been distillery closures, changes in trading arrangements and so, like any other whisky company, I have to adapt accordingly. But it takes years rather than months. Our bulk stock manager Norman Matheson has built up stocks so that we can react well in advance when we see that in the future there is going to be a shortfall in certain stocks. Having so many aged malts in the blend means component changes can be made well in advance. The best part is the long marrying period which is a great asset to attaining continuity and conformity with all the little edges being smoothed out with time.

Good stock management and efficient planning enable you to respond to a change in supplies without any discernible changes in the final quality.

LFW: How many whiskies are you responsible for?

I don't know for sure; it is well over a

hundred.

At JBB we produce whiskies for many different clients such as major stores, supermarkets down to small prestige outlets all over the world. The Japanese say 'the customer is king' and we take great efforts to make sure that we remain the best at our business, supplying a whisky which meets the customer's price level coupled with individual style objectives and quality of delivery and service.

LFW: If I gave you a sample of our Loch Fyne, could you replicate it?

We are constantly being asked to do things like that and given enough time then I would like to think I could get close. However to really crack it I would ask you to come back in one year.

Making up a blend in the sample room and then sending it to a customer only gives a rough indication and is just the first step in the process. The rest is down to careful selection, ageing and giving the individual malts and grains time to 'bed down' with each other—it must be a lasting union. I would come up with a good match. When do you want me to start?

I love creating new whiskies. Denis Charpentier, a Frenchman specialising in Cognacs, came to me after I won the 500th anniversary award in 1994 and asked that I produce an award-winning blend for him. I asked what kind of style he wanted and we discussed it at great length; he wanted something soft, elegant and distinguished and I told him this was going to take at least a year and a half. Having waited, he entered it in the International Wine and Spirit Competition in 1997 and 1998. Each time it got the trophy for the best blended whisky which gave me great personal satisfaction.

Let me tell your readers that once such a blend has been produced it must be drunk properly. I believe that to get the best out of it, a little splash of good still water like Highland Spring to bring the alcohol down to 38% is ideal—too much water (or any bloody ice!) masks and upsets the flavour. Hold the whisky in the mouth and allow the warmth of your tongue to reveal the whisky's attractive flavours. The wait is well worth it.

LFW: And Coke?

As long as they are drinking the amber nectar that's fine by me. Hopefully as palates become better educated there will be a move to a single malt or a deluxe blend which will not need such a mixer—but listen, no matter what I say, it's for the consumer to decide how to drink it.

LFW: What is your policy on your single malt bottlings?

For the standard bottlings where consistency is essential such as with Jura 10 or Dalmore 12 years, I like to allocate as many casks as possible, up to 150 to 200 at one time, drawing from

various positions throughout the warehouse, which I believe has some considerable effect on the whisky character. To overcome this and to bring uniformity we do large vattings which will encompass all these subtle variations and give us the desired style we seek.

In the case of Dalmore 12yo, 30% is oloroso sherry wood and the rest is ex American bourbon. The Cigar malt which we produce for America is Dalmore with a 60% oloroso. That was released two or three years ago as a complement for those who want a cigar with a malt. America is where Dalmore's great success lies.

Jura has a style of its own and it performs better with ex bourbon. We have done tests with sherries which have worked relatively well but we still find that good old American white oak suits it. We are also looking at peating levels; we are in no hurry to change the present style in any way, but we are always reviewing options.

*If you have
something
good then
for goodness
sake drink it!*

When it comes to the Stillman's Drams, the 25 to 30yos, it is entirely different. These are personally selected at rare ages that reflect the true character of each malt. Just recently I selected a 30 yo Dalmore which is unbelievable. If you compare that with the one from 18 months ago there is a significant difference. This one is superb; for the last nine years I had transferred it to an oloroso butt that previously had held some 50 year old Dalmore, which made it exceptionally rich and very complex. I try not to worry about variations in limited products; the style and character changes are subtle and depend on actual wood use.

With these fine, big whiskies I recommend that you savour it; sip it and combine it with Colombian coffee and high cocoa fat chocolate, the combination will highlight the taste. And remember if it is matured for thirty years then give it as many seconds in the mouth.

LFW: Out of seven distilleries you have three which are closed.

These are not closed, they are simply not in production at present. Production at our distilleries is geared to meet the market place and is constantly under review.

Bear in mind we have done a small production at Bruichladdich and the same may happen either at Tamnavulin or Tullibardine. We ran Bruichladdich for two months last year which produced sufficient for many years supply as a single malt. Bruichladdich is a great malt with a great potential.

LFW: You have a fine collection of W&M bottles dating back 150 years; what changes could we identify over the years?

During the early years, especially the 1890s, Whyte & Mackay were using a high proportion of Campbeltown malts, (not surprising with there being so many)—and even the age was about 8 years—with the result you can expect the overtones to be big and heavy in body compared with today's more mellow flavour.

It is a shame that in 1887 Barnard wrote about 129 Scotch Whisky distilleries but he never referred to the taste of the whisky! It wasn't until Wallace Milroy's Almanac in 1984 that consumers have had the chance to acquire a taste and love of malts, yet we have produced it since 1494. I wonder why we kept this so quiet?

LFW: Will the character have changed in the bottle?

If you open a bottle that is fifty or sixty years old, you find that the whisky is stuffed, numb and closed—it needs air. Swirl it in the glass for five minutes and it will recover. If it has been lying on its side against the cork, sadly that will have an unwanted effect as years ago corks were very heavy and can give quite a flavour.

Once any bottle is opened, please finish it! Keep it at an even temperature—not in the sun or an illuminated cabinet—and a good strong seal is important for keeping the character. But if you have something good then for goodness sake drink it! Once I get to a quarter full, I think that is an awful lot of air and this bottle should be finished soon. Certainly I think it should be within a year.

LFW: There are a lot of changes in the industry, including within your own company.

It's not just the drinks industry. The pace of change is increasing dramatically and the need to remain alert is essential if we are to continue being one of the leaders in our trade.

I would like to see much more long term thinking, less short term injections, less gloom and doom and more passion. Producing a good Scotch Whisky is not just the achievement of the blender, but everyone in a great team working at distilling, blending and bottling. Slainté to them all.

LFW: Your desert island dram?

A Whyte & Mackay at lunch time, Bruichladdich 27yo with my afternoon tea and any Dalmore as a night-cap.

LFW: Thank you.

THE ARMCHAIR CONNOISSEUR—ESSENTIAL READING



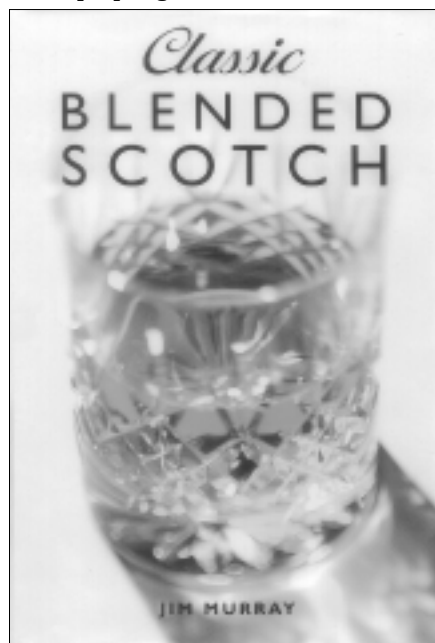
While Wallace Milroy's *Almanac* is the original dissertation on single malts and, now in its seventh edition, remains a handy pocket guide, it is Michael Jackson's *Malt Whisky Companion*, now in its tenth year, that remains the essential resource for tasting information. Jackson wins on a variety of counts: the book has good weight to it, it is properly bound reflecting the prestige of the subject matter; the layout, in classic Dorling Kindersley style, is comfortable and unfussy; tasting notes are clear and it is easy to identify which particular bottling is being considered (it should be obvious that the LFW Stock List must be used in conjunction with the *Companion* and no other book). The style of the tasting notes is that of rapid, quick fire, suggestions and usually an appetising description.

The real point of difference is the scores. It is essential to remind oneself on a regular basis of the logic behind the scores (page 30 and SWR 2); a score of 75 is not poor but 'especially worth tasting'. More important, be aware that these are *his* scores not yours and, thank heavens, we all have different tastes. It is clear that Michael likes the big drams; of 39 bottlings scoring 90 or more only nine distilleries are represented, the bulk of his approval going to stonkers like Ardbeg, Bowmore, Highland Park, Laphroaig, Lagavulin and Macallan. It follows that Michael likes a good strong vindaloo.

Even if you already have the third edition number four is essential for your library. This edition is fully revised, thicker by 64 pages, with 500 new bottlings and 120 revisions.

£12.99; order before December 15th, £10.99

If Richard Paterson wonders why it has taken 490 years for a dedicated malt whisky taster's guide to be written it is an even greater mystery why it has taken a further thirteen years to publish a proper guide to blended Scotch.



Jim Murray's third contribution to Prion's Classic Drinks series is a whisky publishing landmark both for being a first and worthwhile. A lesser writer may have produced on the subject but will not have done such a service for the sector. Murray's passion for all things whisky is evident as in all his musings but there is clearly a great appreciation for the blenders here and if you are one of the idiots who thinks blends are inferior to malts this book should set you straight.

The material starts with a consideration of the history of blends and the importance of grain, with some fascinating reviews on the variety of grain whiskies produced and the individual contribution each makes to a blend. 'A question of balance' considers how a blend is made and the bulk of the book, nearly 200 pages, covers the history and flavour of Murray's Classic brands (about 75 in all, including our Loch Fyne—thus ensuring a favourable review here!).

You don't know about whisky until you have read this book. **£12.99**



Another whisky publishing first is *Worts, Worms and Washbacks*, an enjoyable biography of the career of John MacDougal as a distillery manager both on the mainland and Islay.

Written with great wit and easy style, here is a unique insight into whisky making over the last 35 years that is unputdownable for the beach or yuletide digestive. **£7.99**



An astonishing book. Or more correctly, an astonishing collection.

Rino Zagatti is known in international whisky collecting circles as 'the blind man' having lost his eyesight at the age of eleven. However such a handicap has not reduced his enjoyment of assembling one of the most complete collections of Scotch malt whisky bottles in the world. This book is a catalogue of that collection presented, without comment or appraisal, in the fashion of an auctioneer's listing. The text is in Italian and English recording facets of each bottle but is secondary to the pictures. Many of the bottles are presented full size, others make available all the necessary information for a collector to drool over the range and depth portrayed.

It is a large format book, just short of 300 pages, and the print and paper quality is faultless.

Loch Fyne Whiskies is importing the book on behalf of the publisher and during the few weeks that the book has been in the shop, every serious collector of whiskies who has seen it has bought a copy on the spot. We immediately found it an essential reference work when discussing matters with our customers—particularly when identifying a bottle found in dad's cabinet.

For less than the price of a Macallan 25yo, this book gives you 2,400 bottles—a complete collection for just £80.00.





Of all the bottles we stock, and there are plenty of them, we elect just one as our bottling of the year. How do we decide? There are a variety of factors that come under consideration but by far the biggest is the response from our customers. With a very positive, active sampling policy in the shop, we can test malt whiskies and decide by virtue of democratic vote which is a goodie worthy of our recommendation.

This year we and our customers approve of the OB bottling of Knockdhu 21yo.

Knockdhu Distillery is in Huntly, on the easternmost edge of the Speyside classification. Its usual product is sold as 'An Cnoc' 12yo (this recent handle to avoid confusion with the unrelated Knockando), but the distillery's real name is Knockdhu meaning 'black hill' (as opposed to Knockando—'little black hill').

Knockdhu 21yo, 57.5% is a limited edition bottling of 6,400, in a very attractive presentation of black bottle and black box. The whisky is not a novice's drink; the aroma is of whisky sweetness, on tasting there are mixed and strong characters with the mouthfeel changing from soft to hot/prickly back and forth. The whisky thickens on the tongue to a gingery oiliness and the finish is particularly long and gingery.

A cask strength 21yo for £46.90 is good value; at the deal price of £39.99 it's a must!



GOING GOLD AND GONE

In the last SWR we reported that we had secured all remaining stock of Inverarity Ancestral. This was because Bacardi, (the new owners of Aultmore, the source distillery), were refusing to sell any stock for bottling as a single malt (ignorant bums!). As Inverarity Vaults were unable to source adequate supplies of this unique sherry cask matured malt elsewhere, they have had to select a different source malt for their Ancestral which is now Balmenach (see right).

IWSC GOLD

Since that report we learned that Inverarity Vaults had entered the Aultmore-Ancestral in the International Wine and Spirit Competition (the world's most influential) and won the gold award as the best Speyside whisky—a very prestigious recognition by a very distinguished panel of judges. Further proof that our appraisal of a good dram can be relied upon!

We have enjoyed selling Aultmore-Ancestral in the shop over the last six months but sadly now we have come to the last 250 bottles, ahhh!

In recognition of this unique whisky's achievement we have had the red capsule replaced with a gold, added the gold award sticker and relabelled the bottles as the 'last 250 from Aultmore.' Each label is endorsed with a stamp and individually initialled and dated by Inverarity's MD, Hamish Martin.

These final few award winners are further differentiated from the new Balmenach-Ancestral by their price of £32.90. At that price we hope that collectors will be persuaded to hoard one and open another—it is after all a dram recognised for its superb quality.

Don't delay, order your stock of the last remaining 250 bottles of sherry cask matured 14yo Aultmore-Ancestral.

Ancestral, last 250 from Aultmore £32.90



THE INVERARITY RANGE

adopted as our house malts

The Inverarity range is now complete and we have adopted all three as our house malts because of their extremely high quality and good value.

Not to be outdone, the new Scottish Parliament has also adopted the range as the only official whiskies to the parliament, an outstanding achievement both for Inverarity and the government and we can only hope they continue to make such wise decisions!

Our first house malt, The Inverarity 10yo is an all-day every-day dram which our customers have been enjoying for many years. It remains for the moment a bourbon cask matured Aultmore. £ 19.90

NEW ANCESTRAL FROM BALMENACH

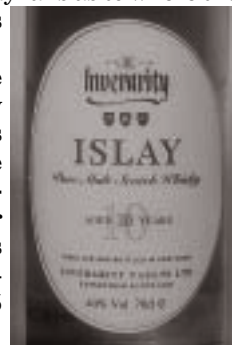
Ancestral is a sherry cask matured 14yo. With the loss of Aultmore, Inverarity Vaults' Hamish Martin has selected a 14yo sherry cask matured Balmenach as successor. The whisky remains as enjoyable as before, extremely smooth with a great strength and complexity, very slightly sherry-cloying in the mouth. A wonderful after dinner dram. The price of the new Ancestral remains at £ 27.90.

NEW INVERARITY ISLAY

The Inverarity range is now completed with the addition of Inverarity Islay, a ten year old all-Islay vatted malt made up of four components.

Launched at the end of this summer, sales to Islay fans have been fantastic. There is a very emphatic phenolic and medicinal character—peat and iodine—which is classic Islay; a good oiliness, powerful flavours yet also a breeze of fresh air. This is an excellent variation on Islay malts which will provoke much debate among Islay fans as to where the four components come from.

The normal price of Inverarity Islay 10 years old is £23.90 but we have an **introductory offer** price for orders placed before December 13th of £5 off—just £18.99.





ONE FROM THE TOP SHELF
If you ever needed an excuse to open a decent bottle of whisky then surely the forthcoming New Year celebrations is such an opportunity.

We have talked to the producers and asked for some exceptional incentives to persuade you to enjoy some extraordinary malts. Open them now—this is the chance of a lifetime!

Order before Dec. 13th to qualify for these prices. Every order of one bottle or more gets a 5cl Balblair, courtesy of Inver House Distillers. Over £200 gets a Cellar Book from LFW.



GOSH! — END OF YEAR DEALS — SAVE ££££S!!

Picture #	DEAL PRICE	SAVE	Picture #	DEAL PRICE	SAVE
7	ARDBEG — 5A	17 40% £ 24.80	12	GLEN ORD	40% £ 16.90
8	ARDBEG — A	'75/23 43% £ 34.90	12	HIGHLAND PARK — 3A	40% £ 19.90
6	ARDBEG — Provenance WB — A	'74/23 56% £ 215.00	18	HIGHLAND PARK — LFW bottling, 1998	43% £ 35.90
5	ARDBEG — N.B. no WB — A	30 40% £ 70.90	24	INVERARITY — ISLAY — 5	10 40% £ 18.90
9	AUCHENTOSHAN	'65/31 46% £ 59.90	10	ISLE OF JURA	40% £ 18.90
10	BOWMORE — A	17 43% £ 28.60	21	KNOCKDHU — LFW bottling for 1999	58% £ 39.90
11	BOWMORE — Darkest — A	43% £ 26.60	15	LONGMORN — 3A	45% £ 21.90
3	BOWMORE — Dragon Ceramic D — A	30 43% £ 124.00	22	MACALLAN — 3	10 40% £ 19.90
12	BRUICHLADDICH — A	15 43% £ 27.90	12	STRATHISLA — 3	43% £ 19.90
1	BRUICHLADDICH — A	27 45% £ 53.50	27	CHIVAS CENTURY OF MALTS	43% £ 24.90
21	BUNNAHABHAIN — 4	12 40% £ 19.40	27	MALT WHISKY COMPANION — New Michael Jackson	£ 10.99
2	BUNNAHABHAIN — A	1968 40% £ 50.90	MULTI-BUY 1; Buy two bottles of the following and save £10		
13	DALMORE — 3	12 40% £ 17.80	15	GLENFIDDICH — Cask Strength	51% £ 26.90
14	GLENFIDDICH	40% £ 16.90	15	GLENFIDDICH — Solera — 3	40% £ 28.90
14	GLEN GARIOCH	'68/29 56% £ 50.90	18	GLENFIDDICH	40% £ 39.90
	GLENGLOSSAUGH	1973 40% £ 66.60	10	BALVENIE — Founder's Reserve	40% £ 22.90
	GLENLIVET (The) — A	18 43% £ 24.90	12	BALVENIE — Double Wood — 2	40% £ 25.90
15	GLENMORANGIE	10 40% £ 18.90	15	BALVENIE — Single Cask	50% £ 37.90
16	GLENMORANGIE — Port Finish — A	12+ 43% £ 25.90	MULTI-BUY 2; Buy two bottles and receive a miniature pack worth £ 22.90		
18	GLENMORANGIE — Madeira	12+ 43% £ 25.90	12	CRAGGANMORE — 3A	40% £ 23.50
17	GLENMORANGIE — Sherry Finish	12+ 43% £ 25.90	15	DALWHINNIE — 2	43% £ 23.50
19	GLENMORANGIE — Millennium	12 40% £ 22.90	10	GLENKINCHIE	40% £ 23.50
20	GLENMORANGIE — WB	'77/21 43% £ 44.90	14	OBAN — 4	43% £ 23.50
	GLEN MORAY — Wine mellowed	12 40% £ 16.70	10	TALISKER — 5A	45% £ 25.50
	GLEN MORAY — Wine mellowed	16 40% £ 20.60	16	LAGAVULIN — 5A	43% £ 28.50



Contrary to expectations there have not been many bottlings celebrating the forthcoming Millennium. A few producers have made an effort, or capitalised, depending on your point of view.

Gordon & Macphail have produced a 2,000cl ceramic whisky jar of malts from the 1930s to the present day. If you add all the ages of the whiskies it is said that they total 2,000 years.

Glenfarclas's affordable 22yo Spirit of the Millennium is £ 49.90. Old Pultney 15yo Millennium at £ 46.70 is reasonable and the Loch Fyne First Foot™ 2000 unmissable at £14.60!



0 21 22 23 24 25 26 27

Spend over £200 - free Cellar Book!

GLENFARCLAS

Some very special millennium bottlings have been prepared, the most imaginative being the Glenfarclas 40yo which features a series of 30 different labels;

gathering the lot would set you back £45,000!

The series celebrates three Scottish writers, Sir Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson and Robert Burns with the assistance of three contemporary Scottish artists. Each artist commemorating two works, making a total of 30 different labels, part of a total limited release of 600 bottles.

Single bottles are available, price £1,500 each, call us to discuss the options!



MACALLAN

The Macallan Millennium Decanter, filled with 50yo Macallan is (in our view) the most elegant presentation. A unique shape of Caithness crystal glass decanter in a refreshingly simple wooden box, handsomely engraved and with copper trimmings recycled from number nine still at Macallan.

A release of considerably less than 1,000 decanters ensure this is a sought after bottling of Macallan. £1,750.

DEALS DEADLINE

Please note our deadline for all deals and second deadline for deliveries during the forthcoming special celebration season, (see back page).

FREEBIES

All orders for one bottle or more will receive a miniature of Balblair and all those over £200 a copy of Neil Wilson's Malt Whisky Cellar Book; with an informative introduction, the book allows you to record for posterity your impressions of your preferred drams.

LASTLY

Last year we offered this Glenlivet set of 5 x 20cl vintage bottles. Limited in release we sold out very quickly, BUT we have managed to secure a few more unsold elsewhere, a wonderful second chance at £169, open them!



FIRST FOOT™ FORWARD

THE FIRST FOOT

ANDY BURNS

For those not familiar with the term, the first visitor to enter a home on New Year's morning is commonly known in Scotland as the **First Foot**. This person of great importance is known by different names in different regions or indeed in different countries.

While in Scotland he is the *First Foot*, Yorkshire has the *Lucky Bird*, the Isle of Man *Quaalagh* and elsewhere in Europe he goes by various other names. Irrespective of the title, they are traditionally supposed to influence the fortunes of their host in the following twelve months, both by the gifts they bring and by their own character and appearance.

Traditionally nothing should be removed from the house nor should anyone leave until the First Foot has been. Visiting as early as possible on January 1st, he or she should be admitted by the front entrance and, since they are the luck bringer, the host is required to entertain the First Foot with food and a plentiful supply of *uisge beatha* (water of life).

The First Foot brings with them symbolic gifts of food, fuel and drink. In the distant past the latter would have been the first water drawn from the well, pond or stream as soon after midnight as possible; this water was known as the *cream of the well* or *flower of the well*, today more commonly known as *uisge beatha* or whisky.

As well as water from the well or whisky, the First Foot usually brings a piece of bread, a lump of fuel and a coin or a little salt, the latter symbolic of wealth for the coming year.

These symbolic gifts vary from region to region, from a herring in some Scottish fishing communities like Loch Fyne, as

a promise of good fishing to come, to a sheaf of wheat in the case of some English rural areas for a good harvest in the coming year.

The origin of the custom is unclear but perhaps it has its roots in the pagan belief that he who was born feet first was perceived to be an omen of good luck and possessed healing powers.

Wherever you are and whatever your beliefs may be for welcoming the New Year, **may prosperity, good health and good luck accompany you throughout 2000.**



THE LOCH FYNE

FIRST FOOT™ 2000

For the forthcoming celebrations we have created a label variation of our Loch Fyne blend for you to enjoy as part of your New Year festivities.

The whisky remains its superb self, only the label is changed. Every 70cl and 5cl bottle is individually numbered (on the back of the label) and there is a total (topical) release of just 2,000 bottles.

BOTTLE ONLY:

FIRST FOOT™ 2000 70cl £ 14.60

FIRST FOOT™ 2000 5cl £ 3.50

HOGMANAY PARTY PACK: (picture above)

A 70cl bottle, pack of Walkers Millennium Malt Whisky Shortbread, a symbolic piece of peat, and a millennium or silver carrier (specify)—you add the salt! £ 17.90



20cl GIFT PACK: (picture above)

20cl bottle, twin pack of Walkers shortbread, LFW dram glass and symbolic piece of peat in a satin-lined box £ 13.90



Dalvey stainless steel sporrans flask with

First Foot™ miniature £ 35.00

Quich with First Foot™ miniature £ 19.90

MUGSHOTS

(Literally)

In response to a request from a gentleman customer who wanted a picture of 'the lady' we publish one here amongst mugshots of the three main protagonists in the shop. (Our summer assistant Darren Pirie pretended he had to go to university to avoid getting his taken.)

Further we thought that we should ask each which bottle, of all those in the shop, they would like to take home for inside their mugs to welcome the New Year.

Initially put as 'what would you like for the New Year?' the question was rephrased after responses of 'world peace and an end to all suffering' and 'a new tie and a universal socket set'.



Laura Simpson: "The Macallan Millennium Decanter; it's beautiful and I can imagine a wonderful aroma. That's all I need to keep me quiet and content."

Andy Burns: "Well that's an interesting question and one that requires a great deal of thought. I feel that personally, and I mean speaking for myself, rather than, that is, for anyone else, that after due consideration and given the benefit of the fullness of time, I feel—that is, my inclination is—that I would have to go for, and this may, or indeed may not, suit anyone else's personal preference and does not in any way constitute a recommendation but is merely an indication of a personal preference of my own rather than anyone else's (what was the question?) I'm going to go for the Family Silver bottling of Bunnahabhain, not necessarily my all time favourite whisky but I think the ideal one for this particular occasion".

Darren Pirie: "All those in the shop."

Richard Joynson: "What do you mean 'apart from the Loch Fyne award winning blend, First Foot™ 2000 version'?"

In that case, this time I'm taking home the 5 x 20cl vintage Glenlivet, very rare but very tempting!"

Donald R. Greeter: "Cheers! (Can I get out of the rain tonight, please?)"



1999 SEASON OF CELEBRITY TASTING EVENINGS

Our four whisky tasting evenings over the summer enabled participants to enjoy a varied program of differing facets of the world of whisky.

Richard Paterson of Whyte & Mackay treated us to an updated version of his history of Scotch followed by his blending competition. The zeal with which Richard tells us about his passion for Scotch coupled with his highly amusing delivery always make his presentations informative and memorable.



Richard and his 'no-parrot' sketch.

On this occasion the evening concluded with an open tasting of many of Richard's company's products including his treasured sample of 50 year old Dalmore which he omitted to recover and hide after showing it earlier. Not much more where that came from!

Jim McEwan (far right) of Morrison Bowmore was kept in check by a surprise guest and old friend, Etta Shaw, a former Islay resident who has known Jim since he was a small boy!

Jim took us on an intimate tour of Scotland through the distilleries under his control: Auchentoshan from the Lowlands, the characterful Highlander Glen Garioch and, Jim's real love, Bowmore which produced the evening's favourites 15yo and 'Darkest'.

His easy-going style coupled with the excellent timing of his stories and jokes made this a very enjoyable evening which concluded with the Highland Honours toast (see right).



Bill Lumsden, the man who seems to sign most bottles of Glenmorangie these days, fascinated us with an assortment of goodies from his company's warehouses. Starting with Glenmorangie's new spirit, (thus ensuring the best hangover of the season), Bill treated us to samples of Glenmorangie from a standard cask at six years and from a 'designer cask' also at six years. The latter was a slow grown oak from the Ozark mountains, air (rather than kiln)-dried and used at Heaven Hill's unheated Bourbon warehouses before shipping to Scotland. The result was a far more advanced degree of maturation, well beyond the normal ten year old style, but mixing the two six year olds produced a superb dram.

We then sampled the Glenmorangie Port Wood finish, Ardbeg 17yo and, most spectacularly, the very rare Ardbeg 'Manager's Choice', a selected single sherry cask matured Ardbeg, chosen and bottled by distillery manager Stuart Williamson—a fantastic whisky!



Murray McDavid was unable to attend our fourth evening for 'technical reasons' but **Gordon Wright** (above) filled his shoes, wide-brimmed hat and cape with suspicious ease, adding further fuel to the rumour that they are the same man, never having been seen in the same room at the same time!

If the secret of a great tasting evening is great whiskies then Gordon knows his stuff! All of the eight drams sampled (for just seven quid, mind) were distilled in Argyll. In sequence they were; Bruichladdich, Bunnahabhain, Springbank, Caol Ila, Longrow, Leapfrog, Ardbeg and finally a 34 year old Springbank! Gordon explained the role of the independent bottler with reference to why he was serving 'Leapfrog' rather than the Lappy-doo-da Islay malt after an unhappy legal argument. A great evening with some great whiskies.



THE HIGHLAND HONOURS TOAST

If you've wondered what was going on in our poster for the tasting season it is the toasting of the Duke of Rothsay with Highland Honours.

Jim McEwan's research has unearthed the procedure and it was performed at Inveraray at the end of Jim's presentation during the summer.

Jim tells us, "Toasting with Highland Honours is now a thing of the past, and to pledge anyone with these is a great compliment. This toast was generally given from the chair and the procedure was on these lines. The chairman rises and places his left foot on his chair and his right on the table and says, "Let us drink to _____ with Highland Honours." The company then stand up, each gentleman placing one foot on his chair and the other on the table. The chairman then calls:

"*Suas e Suas e Suas e*" (up with it), the whole of the company raising their glasses above their heads three times (as with Jim pictured below).

"*Sios e Sios e Sios e*" (down with it), the company lowering glasses to the chest.

"*Null e Null e Null e*" (thither with it), the company stretching their glasses in front of them to the full extent of the arm.

"*Nall e Nall e Nall e*" (hither with it), the company bringing their glasses towards themselves.

The glasses are then emptied (no heeltaps) followed by three ringing cheers. Then "*A ris! A ris!*" (again, again) as a finale to the toast with final cheers. When toasting royalty or anyone deserving of special honour, the empty glasses are flung over the left shoulder and smashed.



TWELVE DATES OF WHISKY

Gavin D. Smith

The recorded history of Scotch whisky stretches back more than half a millennium. Here we explore the heritage of the world's greatest drink by focusing on a dozen key dates in its development.

1494

The first written reference to Scotch whisky occurs in the Exchequer Rolls of Scotland: *'...eight bolls of malt to Friar John Cor wherewith to make aqua vitae'*. Eight bolls is 1,120lbs or 50kgs—a sufficiently large quantity of malt to suggest that whisky-making was already well-established by this time. *Aqua vitae* is the Latin for 'water of life', in the Gaelic *uisge beatha*, from which the modern word 'whisky' is derived.

The Arabs are usually credited with discovering the art of distillation, or, at the very least, perfecting it and it is believed to have been brought to Europe in the tenth century, principally for medicinal purposes and it is thought that the secrets of distillation travelled from Ireland to the west of Scotland.

1505

The Guild of Surgeon Barbers in Edinburgh was granted a monopoly on the manufacture of whisky. This action reflected whisky's traditional role as a medicine, though by this time it was almost certainly being consumed for pleasure as well as to relieve pain. Writing in 1564 Raphael Holinshed made such elaborate claims for the curative effects of whisky as to make even a modern day advertising copywriter blush: *'Beyng moderately taken it cutteth fleume, it lighteneth the mynd, it quickeneth the spirits, it cureth the hydropsie, it pounceth the stone, it repelleth the gravel, it puffeth away ventositie, it kepyth and preserveth the eyes from dazelyng, the tongue from lispynge, the teethe from chatterynge, the throte from rattlyng, the weasan from stieflyng, the stomach from wombllyng... and truly it is a sovereign liquor if it be orderlie taken.'*

Whisky once again assumed the status of medicine during the period of Prohibition in the USA (1920–1933) when it was theoretically only available with a doctor's prescription. 'Medicinal' whiskies such as the Islay malt Laphroaig were particularly popular. Judging by the amount of spirit consumed during Prohibition, America must have been a very sick country indeed. The larger-than-life whisky figure Tommy Dewar, of John Dewar & Sons of Perth, wrote of travelling through a dry state of Canada during the 1920s and being advised to try a pharmacy if he wanted to buy whisky. This he duly did, only to be rebuffed, and offered instead a bottle which announced its contents as being 'Cholera Mixture'. On the reverse of the bottle was the familiar label of his own family blend!

1644

The first tax on spirits was imposed by the Scottish parliament. This was intended to raise revenue for the Royalist army during the Civil War. The level of duty was set at 2s. 8d. Scots per Scots pint, a measure of just less than half a gallon. In 1707, the Act of Union between England and Scotland led to the formation of the Board of Excise, which began to enforce the laws relating to excise duty quite rigorously. Thus, the battle lines were drawn up, with the excise officers or 'gaugers' versus the native whisky-makers or 'smugglers'.

The opposition between law-enforcer and law-beaker has provided some of the most fascinating factual stories and less verifiable anecdotes connected with Scotch whisky, and the ingenuity of the smugglers could be quite extraordinary. They had the great advantage over their adversaries of intimate knowledge of the physical terrain in which they operated and they enjoyed the—at least tacit—support of most of their neighbours. Nonetheless, no fewer than 14,000 illicit stills were detected during the year of 1823 and this must have been the tiny tip of a massive alcoholic iceberg.

The levels of duty levied on whisky have remained a matter of controversy ever since their initial imposition. The Scotch Whisky Association wrote in 1997 *'Taxation in the UK is extremely high, accounting for as much as 70% of the retail price of a typical bottle of standard blended Scotch Whisky.'*

1784

The Wash Act of 1784 reduced the level of duty and simplified regulations, as well as establishing a precise, geographical 'Highland Line' which separated the Lowlands from the Highlands for purposes of differential excise levels. The Act aimed to stimulate legal distilling in the Highlands and to reduce smuggling. Accordingly, lower rates of excise duty were applied to small-scale distilleries north of the line which used locally-produced barley.

The Wash Act also led to a great expansion of legal Lowland distilling, as it encouraged distillers to produce more spirit from each batch of 'wash', with the licence fee being based on each distillery's capacity. Lowland whisky consequently gained a poor reputation as a result of being distilled very rapidly in extremely shallow stills. Writing in 1788, the poet Robert Burns described Lowland whisky as *'a most rascally liquor.'*

Single malt whiskies are still categorised geographically, with the 'Highland Line' of 1784—running between Greenock on the Firth of Clyde in the west and Dundee on the Firth of Tay in the east—continuing to divide Highland from Lowland malts. Other geographical categories now in general use include Islay, Speyside and Campbeltown, though many writers and industry experts sub-divide within categories.

1823

The Wash Act and a number of subsequent pieces of legislation failed to curb illicit distilling to any significant degree and in 1822 the Illicit Distillation (Scotland) Act was passed, imposing more severe penalties for illegal whisky-making. The Highland distillers had an influential supporter in the Duke of Gordon, a substantial landowner in north-east Scotland, where the problem of illicit distillation was particularly serious. Gordon and some of his fellow landlords promised to help stamp out the illegal trade if the government provided an incentive for the smugglers to distil on the right side of the law. The result was the Excise Act of 1823, which cut duty dramatically to 2s. 3d. per gallon, while a distilling licence cost just £10 per annum. The first new distillery to be licensed under the Act was built by George Smith of Glenlivet, one of the Duke of Gordon's tenants.

As a consequence of the 1823 Act, the number of licensed distilleries in Scotland doubled in two years and production of duty-paid whisky rose from 2 million to 6 million gallons per annum. Illicit distillation fell dramatically, with the 14,000 detections of 1823 falling to 692 in 1834 and to just 6 in 1874. The 1823 Excise Act was a major stepping stone on the way to the multi-million pound Scotch whisky industry which exists today.

1826

In 1826 leading Lowland distiller Robert Stein of Kilbagie distillery in Clackmananshire patented a revolutionary type of still, one which would change the whisky industry forever. Stein had invented a method of continuous distillation, which meant that spirit could be produced much faster and in appreciably greater quantities than had previously been the case in pot stills, which had to be cleaned and re-charged between batches. Stein's pioneering work was perfected by former senior Irish Excise official turned distiller Aeneas Coffey, who produced a twin-column version of Stein's still in 1830. Two years later he patented the new design, which could distil 3,000 gallons of wash per hour. Not only was the Coffey still ultra-efficient compared with the pot variety, but it also utilised a variety of cheap grains rather than malted barley. Vast quantities of comparatively inexpensive but quite characterless spirit could now be produced and initially much of it was exported to England for redistillation into gin. By the middle of the nineteenth century grain whisky was also being exported to Australia, South Africa, India, Canada and the USA.

1853

As grain whisky was comparatively characterless and pot still single malt whisky was considered too characterful and variable for polite society, it was

inevitable that someone would decide to try mixing the two.

Until 1853 it was not lawful to vat or mix whiskies of different ages, even when they came from the same distillery, though the blending of different batches of malts had been taking place for many years in order to achieve a level of consistency. Some legal whisky-makers had even added illicit whisky to their own coarse spirit to improve its flavour and it was also not unknown for merchants and publicans to mix malt whisky with cheap grain to increase their profit margins.

The prominent Edinburgh spirits merchant Andrew Usher is credited with being the first person to blend whiskies commercially, creating Usher's Old Vatted Glenlivet in 1853. The Spirit Act of 1860 paved the way for whiskies from different distilleries to be blended without payment of duty. Usher used his vatting experience to mix malts and grains and create a palatable, comparatively inexpensive product which was likely to have a very wide appeal. Blended whisky had been created.

The global growth in sales of blended whisky during the last three decades of the nineteenth century owed much to the audacious marketing and salesmanship of men like Tommy Dewar, James Buchanan and Peter Mackie. Of great assistance in the battle to make blended whisky a drink for the world was the absence of brandy from the drinks cabinets of the great and the good. This was due to the fortuitous havoc wreaked on French vineyards by the insect *Phylloxera*. Blended whisky now accounts for some 95% of all Scotch sold.

1877

In 1877 the Distillers Company Ltd was formed by six of the foremost Lowland grain distilleries, namely Cameronbridge, Kirkliston, Glenochil, Cambus, Port Dundas and Carsebridge. The aim of this amalgamation was to create a powerful and influential grouping in the booming world of Scotch whisky. In 1919 John Haig & Co Ltd joined DCL and the Dewar, Buchanan and Johnnie Walker companies were enticed into the DCL fold in 1925, being joined two years later by White Horse Distillers Ltd.

By 1930, DCL was the largest player by far in the Scotch whisky industry, controlling one-third of all operational distilleries in Scotland and owning virtually all the major blended whisky brands, as well as having a number of other significant commercial interests. The Distillers Company Ltd continued to dominate the industry, through good times and lean, though it closed more than twenty of its distilleries during the over-production crisis of the 1980s. In 1987 DCL was acquired in acrimonious and highly controversial circumstances by Guinness, who had fought a bitter battle for control of the company with the Argyll Group. The new venture was

named United Distillers.

1899

As blended Scotch whisky took the world by storm, so there was an accompanying rush to increase whisky-making capacity and many new distilleries were built. The Speyside area of north-east Scotland was at the centre of this boom in construction, with no fewer than 21 of the 33 new distilleries that opened during the 1890s located on Speyside. Whisky came to be seen as a sound financial investment, with potentially high returns on capital invested and, inevitably, there was to come a time when boom turned to bust due to over-capacity within the industry.

The crash came early in 1899, when the Leith-based blending and whisky wholesale company of Pattison's Ltd went into liquidation, at which time the firm's liabilities were found to amount to more than £500,000, while its assets were worth less than half that figure. This was major bankruptcy and the collapse of Pattison's sent shock-waves through the industry. A considerable number of individual investors were ruined and many companies were financially affected due to the complex network of credit arrangements within the industry. Several distilleries were also forced to close down.

Pattison's had approached the marketing of blended whisky in an energetic and brash manner, but behind the rapid rise to prominence of the company was serious financial mismanagement and fraud on the part of the Pattison brothers, Robert and Walter, both of whom served prison sentences for fraud as a result of the firm's collapse.

As depression set in, several of the recently-opened Speyside distilleries closed almost as soon as production began and after Glen Elgin was completed in 1900 it was to be more than half a century before another malt distillery, Tormore, was constructed in the Highlands. Prohibition in the USA, a world-wide economic slump and two world wars all conspired to keep the Scotch whisky industry in the doldrums.

1906

In 1906 a court case in the unlikely setting of Islington, London, turned out to have great significance for the Scotch whisky industry. Malt distillers had been concerned for some time that the reputation of their product was suffering due to the high level of poor quality, blended whisky being passed off as 'malt' and the Islington case concerned a publican and off-licence trader who was charged with selling as malt a product which turned out to contain 90% grain spirit.

Islington Borough Council won their case against the publican, but the judge's conclusion implied that a blend of malt spirit made in a pot still and grain spirit from a Patent still could not be sold as whisky and ultimately a Royal Commis-

sion was set up to investigate the 'What is Whisky?' case. Not surprisingly, the Distillers Company Ltd was at the forefront of those lobbying on behalf of blended whisky.

After eighteen months of deliberation, the Commission came up with a definition of whisky, which stated that it was '*...a spirit obtained by distillation from a mash of cereal grains saccharified by the diastase of malt.*' The blenders had carried the day.

1930

In 1930 the Canadian company Hiram Walker bought Glenburgie distillery near Forres, followed by Miltonduff six years later. In 1936 the company also acquired the blending firm of George Ballantine & Son and began to create a vast, integrated distilling, blending and bottling complex at Dumbarton. The arrival of Hiram Walker in Scotland signalled the start of 'globalisation' of the Scotch whisky industry, which continued apace after World War Two when fellow Canadian distillers Seagram bought Strathisla distillery in Keith and proceeded to create Glen Keith distillery from a derelict flour mill nearby.

Both companies pursued energetic acquisitions policies in Scotland, building up impressive portfolios of distilleries and brands, with Seagram now owning such prestigious distilleries as The Glenlivet and Glen Grant, along with the deluxe blend Chivas Regal. In 1990 Whyte & Mackay was taken over by the US company American Brands.

The Japanese had begun to develop a domestic whisky-making industry in the 1920s and in the 1980s they began to take a significant interest in Scottish distilling. Suntory bought into and, ultimately acquired control of, Morrison Bowmore Distillers, while Tomatin distillery in Inverness-shire and Ben Nevis distillery at Fort William are both now in Japanese ownership. Today, few Scottish distilleries remain in the hands of private individuals or domestic companies.

1997

A new company—United Distillers and Vintners—emerged from the £27 billion merger between Guinness and rival GrandMet. UDV is the largest spirits company in the world.

Scotch whisky is unquestionably the world's leading spirit, with a global consumption of 84 million cases (1,008 million bottles) in 1998. The industry employs more than 12,000 people directly, and around 60,000 indirectly. Some 90% of whisky produced is exported, and Scotch whisky is one of Britain's top five export earners, selling in over 200 countries. Fascination with the process of how whisky is made leads more than one million people to tour Scotland's distilleries each year.

Gavin D. Smith's new book *Scotch Whisky is a fascinating pictorial history of the Scotch Whisky industry price £9.99*



PAY ATTENTION

—THIS BIT IS IMPORTANT!

Christmas Day is December 25th and New Year's Eve is December 31st. We only mention this because it always seems to come as a bit of a shock to many. Collections from the shop in person as pictured above (or smaller) may be made right up to either Christmas Eve or New Year's Eve.

The last day for orders expecting deals, as described on pages 6 & 7 and in the stock list, is **Monday, December 13th**. The last day for orders to be delivered in time for Christmas or the New Year is **Monday, December 20th, but no deals**. After that no undertakings can be offered in case we all get wiped out by the MM bug. (LFW has been assessed and is immune, so we are told).

However, the suppliers are warning that they expect (or hope for?) delivery problems as a result of the weight of business, so there is a very real possibility that we may not be able to replenish our stocks between now and the New Year. **The best advice we have is, if you want to order with confidence, then do so immediately.**



DALMORE 50yo

We spotted this wonderful presentation on display outside Richard Paterson's sampling room and just had to stock this magnificent Dalmore 50yo.

Only 26 have been produced (but more can be bottled if necessary). This is a truly great whisky, as many at Richard's tasting evening can verify. £ 4,500.

VISITING DISTILLERIES

As the holiday preparation season is due soon, we thought that some useful contacts throughout whisky country may be of use. Over one million people visit Scotch whisky distilleries each year and, according to a SWA handbook, there are 40 that welcome visitors, albeit by varying degrees. Some have restricted open periods and require you to book ahead (e.g Tormore) while others have all-singing / dancing visitor experiences, with a range of catering options, shops and audio visual extravaganza (Glenturret).

We have copies of the 1999 version of *Distilleries which welcome visitors* which lists all the options with opening times etc. When the new one is available next Spring it is not expected to be significantly different. If you would like a copy either send us a stamped, addressed envelope or ask for one with your delivery. Here is some additional information not in the book we thought useful:

Islay & Argyll

Bowmore, Islay Tourist Information Centre (TIC)	01496 810254
Campbeltown TIC	01586 552056
Inveraray TIC	01499 302063
Oban TIC	01631 563122

Islay and Western Isles Ferries:

Caledonian Macbrayne	01475 650100
Islay Car Hire (on a short (one or two night) stay it can be cheaper to leave your car on the mainland and hire):	
D&N MacKenzie	01496 850200

Springbank Distillery: not listed in the SWA book; tours are possible from April to end September, but you must phone ahead 01586 552085

Speyside

Elgin TIC	01343 542666
-----------	--------------

Islands

Kirkwall, Orkney TIC	01856 872856
Portree, Skye TIC	01478 612137
Orkney Ferry, P&O	01224 572615

Other

Edinburgh (main Scotland) TIC;	0131473 3800
Stirling TIC	
(Perth to Argyll) TIC;	01786 475019

Travel

Bus, Citylink	08705 505050
Railways	0345 484950
British Airways	0345 222111
Highlands & Islands Airports at Islay, Orkney & Inverness	01667 462445.
British Airports Authority at Glasgow International	0141 887 1111



DISTILLERIES
WHICH
WELCOME
VISITORS
1999



No edition of the *Scotch Whisky Review* would be complete without some form of derogatory remark about the industry big boys but this time we only reproduce part of a label of a bottle of Bell's purchased by customer Alan George at his local office in Cheshire. We leave the wondering of the explanation to you.



SWR BINDERS

A few of our customers have asked if we can supply binders to keep your SWRs nice and fresh. We put the problem to our stationers and they have come up with a very natty system that we now use and recommend. However, this being Sunday evening and we're off to print tomorrow, I can't remember the price—ask if interested. They are in stock. (You want professionalism as well?....)

INTO THE 20th CENTURY



www.lfw.co.uk

After a long period of neglect our website has been revised and we promise it will be updated on a frequent basis from now on. If you are hooked up to the 'net, you will find all the essential information to deal with LFW on our refreshingly simple and elegant site, plus a new *news* section devoted to new products as they arrive in the shop—exciting stuff!

email

Because of its time consuming nature, we cannot cater for email correspondence. Therefore please telephone, fax or write with any requests for information.

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.** We are no longer sending out Stock Lists and SWRs to prospective customers more than once. If you or a friend would like a current stock list please ask and you will be sent one with a back-issue SWR. Your name will not be placed on our mailing list for further mailings until you have bought by mail order from us. Your name will not be passed to any other organisation.

© COPYRIGHT RESERVED 1999

LOCH FYNE WHISKIES

Tel. 01499 302219 www.lfw.co.uk