



THE SCOTCH MALT  
WHISKY SOCIETY

# OUTTURN

Explore: March 2025 Issue 161



**WHISKY WITH  
HIDDEN DEPTHS**

ADVENTURES IN FLAVOUR AWAIT AT [SMWS.CA](https://www.smws.ca)

# WHISKY WITH A TASTE FOR ADVENTURE

The focus for 2025 is all about adventures in whisky – and that could mean adventures in the pursuit of different flavour experiences, or it could also mean taking our whisky off the beaten track and experiencing and bringing it to life in various ways.

Whether it's taking your drams outdoors, brushing up on your whisky knowledge or exploring flavour from the comfort of your couch – get 2025 off to a great start with a variety of whisky adventures, whether you're new to the Society or a seasoned flavour hunter.



## JUICY, OAK & VANILLA

### CARAMEL CRÈME BRÛLÉE

CASK NO. 59.82

\$177.99



REGION	<i>Highland</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>1st Fill Ex-Bourbon Hogshead</i>
AGE	<i>13 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>11 January 2011</i>
OUTTURN	<i>279 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>55%</i>

We prepared a tiramisu with juicy, sweet red gooseberries alongside plum jam, and sweet and savoury pretzels which had been dipped in lye, before baking and toasting brioche. On the palate we found a sweetness next to a delicate sourness, like a fruit salad of strawberries, melon, kiwi and pineapple with a drizzle from a dressing made using lime juice, honey, salt and cayenne pepper.

Following reduction, notes of yeast, white bread and buttery shortbread appeared, as well as vanilla, toasted almonds and dried apricots. To taste, the fruitiness came to the fore next to the gentle smokiness emanating from a caramel crème brûlée.

## OILY & COASTAL

### AN UNEXPECTED FEAST

CASK NO. 93.211

\$167.99



REGION	<i>Campbeltown</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>1st Fill Ex-Bourbon Barrel</i>
AGE	<i>10 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>1 October 2013</i>
OUTTURN	<i>219 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>60.4%</i>

A cask floated in on the tide; a laundry worker left their washing to investigate, finding honeyed ham, lemony oysters and blue cheese inside – an unexpected feast! Actually, the palate gave us strawberry chews, pear drops, honey, ginger, rhubarb and lime; with charred oak and extra strong mints afterwards.

The reduced nose revealed old ship's timbers, tobacco, peppermint and a beach scene (with sun lotion, beach huts and tropical fruit ice cream). The palate now combined zingy pineapple, mango and lime fruit cocktail with engineer's rags and tinned pears eaten from an ashtray, before a tongue-twisting finish of chilli, ginger and salted oak.

## JUICY, OAK & VANILLA

### A BYGONE ERA

CASK NO. G8.26

**\$404.99**



REGION	<i>Lowland</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>1st Fill Ex-Bourbon Barrel</i>
AGE	<i>32 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>18 June 1990</i>
OUTTURN	<i>228 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>56.3%</i>

In the year this whisky was distilled Germany won the football World Cup and the highest sale of music cassettes was recorded in the USA with 442 million – a bygone era, and we aren't referring to Germany winning the World Cup! The very elegant aroma evoked the scent of blossoming gorse bushes in a pine forest. A rich and luscious mouthfeel, still fresh and vibrant, reminded us of a sweet South African wine called Constantia, established in 1685.

It does not do it justice but imagine an elderflower gin and tonic garnished with lemon. No dilution is necessary, however if you so wish the scent was that of a sweet perfume from the olden days, and a classic gin fizz on the palate.

## SMWS HISTORY - THE WORLD IN YOUR GLASS

*International Whisky Day on March 27th is a celebration of whisky from around the world, and of the life and work of late whisky writer Michael Jackson. At the Society, members have come to love our offering of global whiskies. But you don't have to go back all that far to a time where the attitude was quite the opposite.*

Whether you're new to the Society, or a long-time member, it's always worth keeping up to date with all we have to offer. Despite the name, the Society's offerings stretch much further than incredible Scotch. Over the last 20 years bottling unique whiskies from outside Scotland has become equally important to the Society's identity. Our Whisky Team pride themselves in hunting down the most flavoursome spirits from all over the world.



If you include our range of Single Cask Spirits, which features one-of-a-kind rums, gins and armagnacs, the SMWS now bottles from a wide range of international distilleries. With a selection of whiskies and spirits from 15 countries, it's fair to say this is a popular offering with our members. But it hasn't always been that way.

Although there wasn't too much of an uproar in 1988 when the Society bottled from distillery 51 in Northern Ireland, the first non-Scotch in SMWS history, it didn't stay that way. It wasn't until 2002 that the Society released our next international bottling, from distillery 116 in Japan.

Bottling an international whisky was an outlandish concept in the early 2000s, and the first cask from distillery 116 was widely criticised by members, as Tasting Panel chair Olaf Meier remembers: "Members sent us their membership cards in the post, cut in half, with a note saying 'if you bottle s\*\*t from Japan, we want nothing to do with you.' Wind the clock forward a few years when we bottled another Japanese whisky, this time members queued around the block to buy a bottle as soon as possible."



Thankfully over time people's preconceptions began to soften, and members became more open to exploring the wide range of flavours international whiskies have to offer. Olaf continues: "Those early days are thankfully long gone, and since distillery 128 from Wales, there have been plenty of new distilleries outside of Scotland.

"I always say to members, just try the whisky, or indeed any spirit we are bottling, without any knowledge and therefore you won't have any preconceived ideas. See what you think first and then get the information afterwards – you might be in for a surprise.

"The SMWS is all about keeping an open mind and trying different things. The idea of single cask or small-batch bottlings is very different to the industry mantra of a brand which lives on consistency."

SMWS head of whisky creation Euan Campbell is also glad to see whisky lovers moving towards a more flavour-first approach. "Over the past few decades, non-Scotch whiskies have cropped up from all over," he says. "The Society has always been open minded and has a history of championing these whiskies when the moment is right for us to add them to our offering.

"We taste many international whiskies over the course of a year, and not all make the grade, it's very competitive out there. Consumers are more adventurous than ever and enjoy exploring this side of the whisky world."

There have been a few special bottlings to pop up from overseas since the very first international bottlings, but Olaf still remembers the first bottling from Japan that changed it all: "There are so many highlights it is hard to recall them all, but Cask No. 116.1: *Coconut peapods and tropical hothouses* was special. I had the honour of being part of its Tasting Panel, and for me it was an absolute revelation!

"The Nordic countries surprise me as well, places like Denmark, Sweden and Finland. Not to forget the whisky from Brittany in France. Members who went to my 20th anniversary tastings last May might have been a little surprised that I chose distillery 157, but I had my reasons. One simple one is that it's delicious malt whisky!"

So don't be afraid the next time you hear of a Society bottling from further afield. As Olaf says, taste first and ask questions later!

#### A GLOBAL SOCIETY

We have now bottled whisky from over 50 international distilleries in 15 countries, including:

Australia: Distilleries 147, 148

Canada: Distillery 152

Denmark: Distilleries 141, 153, 154

England: Distilleries 137, 146

Finland: Distillery RW6

France: Distillery 157

Northern Ireland: Distilleries 51, 150

India: Distillery 134

Ireland: Distilleries 117, 118

Israel: Distillery 155

Japan: Distilleries 116, 124, 130, 131, 132, 158, 159, 160, G11, G12

Sweden: Distilleries 144, 145, 151

Taiwan: Distilleries 138, 139

US: Distilleries 133, 140, 142, 143, B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, RW1, RW2, RW3, RW4, RW5, RW7, CW1, CW2

Wales: Distillery 128



## SPICY & DRY

### THRILL SEEKERS WANTED

CASK NO. 12.76

**\$147.99**



REGION	<i>Speyside</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>2nd Fill Ex-Bourbon Barrel</i>
AGE	<i>12 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>11 October 2010</i>
OUTTURN	<i>189 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>59.6%</i>

The sweet fragrance of carnations, pink roses and lemon sherbet mixed with banana sweets, strawberry tarts and marzipan sandwiched in a vanilla sponge cake. Waves of spice and fresh ginger on the palate softened to orange caramel, honey and fudge before vanilla complemented freshly chopped oak.

With some water we found the soft fruits of guava, raspberries and pears poached in port and served with toasted coconut, heather and charred oak staves. The spice had now mellowed to pink peppercorns and a dash of wasabi while golden raisins, marshmallows and breakfast cereals morphed into red liquorice with hints of salt on the finish.



## DEEP, RICH & DRIED FRUITS

### BAKE-OFF

**DISTILLERY 68  
RARE RELEASE**

**\$215.99**



<b>REGION</b>	<i>Highland</i>
<b>CASK TYPES</b>	<i>1st Fill &amp; Refill Oloroso &amp; Bourbon Hogsheads</i>
<b>AGE</b>	<i>14 Years</i>
<b>DISTILLED ON</b>	<i>22 February 2008</i>
<b>OUTTURN</b>	<i>1174 Bottles</i>
<b>ABV</b>	<i>53.5%</i>

A heady aroma came brimming with confectionery and baked pastry vibes. Some clear impressions of pomegranate molasses drizzled on lemon sponge cake were joined by coffee crème caramel and hints of aromatic VORS (i.e. very old) oloroso sherry. This evolved nicely to cherries, marzipan and orange liqueurs.

Water brought out notes of rum fudge, ginger cake, peppermint tea and a wonderfully deep leather and tobacco combo. The palate neat opened up with hot cross buns, a deep and satisfying spiciness, booze-soaked trifle and a smorgasbord of fig jam, cinnamon pastries and a lovely, syrupy texture evoking runny honey and fruit compotes. With water it moved more towards dark chocolate, Turkish Delight and candied walnuts, with a long, warming and citrus-tinged afterglow. Bottled for the 2023 Highland Spirit Festival.

## LIGHTLY PEATED

### FAUX FOIE GRAS

CASK NO. 53-477

**\$234.99**



REGION	<i>Islay</i>
INITIAL CASK	<i>Ex-Bourbon Hogshead</i>
FINAL CASK	<i>1st Fill Oloroso Hogshead</i>
AGE	<i>13 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>1 June 2010</i>
OUTTURN	<i>296 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>57.4%</i>

We melted butter and brown sugar together in a pan to make a butterscotch sauce which we then poured over rum and raisin ice cream. Yet before we finished the sauce, we added a bit of salt and tried it on a wooden spoon – “just about perfect!”

Water added a ‘dirty’ aspect on the nose, with tarry ropes, engine oil and hot pistons, before we got all cleaned up with carbolic soap. On the palate, we tried an alternative to foie gras: smoked cod liver in its own oil, smooth and pâté like, and not at all like a dose of cod liver oil. Following nine years in an ex-bourbon hogshead, we transferred this whisky into a 1st fill Spanish oak oloroso hogshead.

## PEATED

### CINNAMON SAUNA SMOKE

CASK NO. RW6.3

**\$184.99**



REGION	<i>Finland</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>New Oak Charred Barrel</i>
AGE	<i>5 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>16 December 2017</i>
OUTTURN	<i>252 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>59.2%</i>

In a traditional sauna workshop the aromas of sticky sap from fresh pine and birch mingled with wood glue and leather polish. Then sweet smoke reminiscent of burning pencils wafted over a lunchbox of hard pears and salted liquorice. On the palate, wood transferred to birch water infused with thyme, cinnamon and spruce tips while olive oil burned on a hot barbecue.

A dash of water brought out burnt caraway seeds and juniper wood, with a hint of cough syrup and spirit. Back in the workshop, linseed oil was being worked into balsa wood and sourdough rye bread was toasting on sizzling sauna stones.



# WHERE TO BUY

*The exclusive retail stores of The Society in Canada:*

## **KENSINGTON WINE MARKET**

1257 Kensington Road NW, Calgary, AB

Phone: 403-283-8000 (1-888-283-9004)

Email: [scotchguy@kensingtonwinemarket.com](mailto:scotchguy@kensingtonwinemarket.com)

[www.kensingtonwinemarket.com](http://www.kensingtonwinemarket.com)

## **KEG N CORK LIQUOR COMPANY**

3845 - 99th Street, Edmonton, AB

Phone: 780-461-0191

Email: [ordering@kegncork.com](mailto:ordering@kegncork.com)

[www.kegncork.com](http://www.kegncork.com)

## **THE STRATH ALE, WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANTS**

919 Douglas Street, Victoria, BC

Phone: 250-370-9463

Email: [whisky@strathliquor.com](mailto:whisky@strathliquor.com)

[www.strathliquor.com](http://www.strathliquor.com)

## **LEGACY LIQUOR STORE**

1633 Manitoba Street, Vancouver, BC

Phone: 604-331-7900

Email: [Darryl@legacyliquorstore.com](mailto:Darryl@legacyliquorstore.com)

[www.legacyliquorstore.com](http://www.legacyliquorstore.com)

## **ARC LIQUOR**

1973 Harvey Ave, Kelowna, BC

Phone: 236-420-4060

Email: [kls@armstrong.coop](mailto:kls@armstrong.coop)

[www.armstrong.coop/arc-liquor/](http://www.armstrong.coop/arc-liquor/)