

101
WHISKIES
TASTE AND ENJOY!
ÖRJAN WESTERLUND

*h.f.*ullmann

FOREWORD

Two whiskies a week for a year—is that a big enough allocation to research all the best or most interesting kinds of whisky? No, that’s hardly enough with today’s overwhelming choice. But it’s a start. Sorting out the 101 best whiskies on the whisky market is a challenging assignment. Naturally this will be only a fleeting image of the aromatic amber-colored giant as it rushes by.

In spite of that, the hundred or so whiskies offer the opportunity of presenting an enjoyable collection of both classic gems and inspiring new ones. That is how the whiskies in this book are chosen. There are some that are the nectar of the gods that you really should try before you bring the shutters down. There are also some whiskies that have found a place in the book because they open up vistas, regardless of whether that is due to the fact that they come from Taiwan or the Czech Republic, or simply because they are artisan products made in Colorado!

You can get hold of every kind nowadays, thanks to all the suppliers on the net that offer such a wide range of whiskies. A large number can be obtained from well-assorted liquor stores, and finally there are many that can even be found in food shops with an ordinary assortment.

So—I hope you enjoy your read and that the book will be used and enjoyed. Feel free to use the blank lines for your own thoughts. I also hope that the book will inspire you to discover new whisky finds, so that maybe you can pick up that bottle together with your usual favorite next time you are standing in the shop and choosing!

Cheers, my friends, and good hunting!

The author with a dash of Ardbeg Uigeadail,
on a cool summer’s evening in 2014.

SELECTION AND DESCRIPTIONS

Giving scores in a book that just contains favorites and recommendations does not tell you as the reader much about how each whisky came to be in the book. I hope that the descriptions of the nose, palate, and finish will do that.

For a start, the whiskies in the book have mainly been analyzed and assessed without adding water. The descriptions reveal how the character of the whisky changes with water. If nothing is said about it you can assume that the description has been written without water having been added to the whisky.

The selection of the sorts of whisky found in the book has been made to open the eyes and nostrils of the person reading the book, preferably with a glass in their hand. The descriptions may seem unorthodox to the strict wine buff, but they have been written with a love of whisky just as much as with words and terms that you will recognize, everyday scent, and taste associations. Of course I have chosen many words that may be found in more stringent whisky assessments too, such as fruit candies, butter toffee, oak, and peat smoke. But, if I am honest, it is the more unusual ones like marmalade, rubber, gunpowder, glue, and licorice that are fun, especially when they are unexpectedly thrown up in the company of other people at whisky samplings or at home on the sofa with someone you like sampling whisky with.

Finally— do not take it for granted that you will think as I do. Taste and smell are personal things and depend on your mood, so think about it, enjoy or reject my descriptions, and write your own in the space provided. Remember that you know best, only you have your nose!

ABERLOUR[®]

ESTD 1879

HIGHLAND SINGLE MALT
SCOTCH WHISKY

A'BUNADH

Matured exclusively in sherry butts,
AberLOUR a'bunadh is bottled at full
strength and without the use of modern
chill-filtering methods ensuring a
luxurious and rich whisky.

SINGLE CASK SPANISH OLOROSO SHERRY BUTTS

STRAIGHT FROM THE CASK AT

60.2% alc./vol.

UNFILTERED

BATCH NO.

45

D. Cruickshank
Master Distiller

ABERLOUR DISTILLERY COMPANY LTD. ABERLOUR SPEYSIDE AB98 6PL

ABERLOUR A'BUNADH (60.2%)



I REMEMBER that day at the airport, about fifteen years ago, when I saw a mighty bottle on the shelf. A short, fat bottle with a wide neck and waxed cork stood out from the crowd then. It was more conspicuous than a colorful winter jacket in a cold gray street. In its character this whisky is still the same, relatively speaking. Thanks to the strength of the casks and the absence of cold filtering, there is an intensive breath of sherry on all levels. It moves up more than one gear compared with most other modest sherry maturations. A raisin and warm alcohol flavor together also bring out a slight aroma of flowery perfume with hints of ozone. The fruit tone and hint of woodiness are fresher than I remember from the early bottlings. Those tended to have a whiff of maturation in somewhat tired oak casks. Instead, here I find bright flowery, ester-like strength in sherry-colored stretch pants.

THE BODY—fiery in terms of strength, but absolutely quaffable without water. Moderately tinged with the oak cask, albeit with rapidly rising, jammy sweetness offset with alcohol and tannins. With a little water more of the oak and typical sherry notes emerge with a manifest bitterness.

THE FINISH is first dry and slightly bitter, but then comes a flavor that hovers between tutti-frutti and sweet sherry notes. The flavor of strawberry jam develops as the fieriness recedes. Then a certain sweet nuttiness before the whole subsides into an Anton Berg finale with a strawberry center. In a lingering finish the strawberry note remains, coming together and petering out with a very light ferrous taste of dark chocolate. A splendid coffee chaser.

STRENGTH ETC. / SCORE: 1 2 3 4 5

NOSE:

PALATE:

FINISH:

ESTD 1798

HIGHLAND PARK DISTILLERY
KIRKWALL, ORKNEY ISLANDS

PRODUCT OF SCOTLAND
**HIGHLAND
ESTD PARK 1798**

SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

43%vol

DISTILLED IN KIRKWALL

70cl

"WE GUARANTEE THIS WHISKY
TO BE DISTILLED WHISKY FROM THE
MOUNTAINS OF SCOTLAND"

AGED **18** YEARS

A uniquely smooth and balanced single malt, with a
TOFFEE SWEETNESS and a mouthwatering smokiness!

R. Gordon
DISTILLERY MANAGER

ESTD 1798

HIGHLAND PARK, 18 YEARS OLD (43%)



RICH FRUITY NOSE, with pear drops, a few dried apricots, and a hint of orange.

THE PALATE HAS AN UNOBTRUSIVE AND WELL-BALANCED SWEETNESS with a continuing fruity note, and also a bready dryness that gradually releases the peat flavor.

THE PEATY NOTE CONTINUES ON IN THE FINISH, which has light, fruity, almost perfumed, flowery elements that meander on toward peat and casks. Complex and unusually varied in its combination of character traits. A whisky to spoil yourself with, or otherwise a whisky to use to introduce someone to the world of malt whisky—with a great chance of success.

Forty-five percent blended from first-time casks.

STRENGTH ETC. / SCORE: 1 2 3 4 5

NOSE:

PALATE:

FINISH:



- ISLAY - ISLAY -

- ISLAY - ISLAY -



estab. 1934

MACLEOD'S

ISLAY
SINGLE MALT
SCOTCH WHISKY

PRODUCED AND BOTTLED BY
IAN MACLEOD AND CO LTD. EH52 5BU

Product of Scotland

40%vol. / 70cl.

91245

MACLEOD'S ISLAY (40%)



THIS UNNAMED SINGLE MALT from Islay is better value for money than many other whiskies for winter use. This blinder brings somewhat jaded senses back to life and thaws your fingers after a ski tour in the snow in January. The nose has a young, sharp sweetness with notes of cigarette ash and a hint of egg toddy.

THE PALATE is full and round, and the alcohol is not obvious, even though the character is young and straightforward. A fantastic balance between slightly peppery, fiery alcohol, and malty sweetness, with a clear but rounded smokiness.

THE FINISH has elements of licorice root, with just the balance of alcohol and a slightly caramel-accented round smoky note that has however barely reached adolescence, but in terms of age is more likely working on qualifying for middle school. And it is precisely that that is its asset—this is an incredibly well-picked whisky, albeit anonymous in so far as the maker is unknown. In spite of that it is full of qualities, especially considering the price tag!

STRENGTH ETC. / SCORE: 1 2 3 4 5

NOSE:

PALATE:

FINISH:



ESTD 1830

TALISKER
SINGLE MALT
SCOTCH WHISKY

From the rugged western shores of the Isle of Skye comes a richly flavoured, uncut dram with a warming afterglow. So easy to enjoy yet like Skye itself, so hard to leave.

AGED **18** YEARS

DISTILLED AT TALISKER

THE ONLY DISTILLERS ON THE Isle of Skye

TRADITIONALLY MATURED FOR 18 Years in OAK CASKS

H. M. Gill
CREATED BY THE TALISKER DISTILLERS

DISTILLED IN 5 UNIQUE STILLS & TRADITIONAL METHODS

MADE BY THE SEA

TALISKER, 18 YEARS OLD (45.8%)



STINGING SPIRIT NOSE with a faint whiff of wet dog. At the same time a compact, slightly dry-as-dust aroma of acidic dried fruit with a trace of vanilla. In the far distance there is a very, very faint whiff of smoke more reminiscent of an iron that has been left too long on a fine cotton shirt than of the peaty aroma of the 10-year-old.

THE PALATE is unappealing malty sweet, taut, and seed-husk-like, but with a growing sweetness. From the start there is the pepperiness typical of Talisker, and this increases and in the end acquires an increasingly clear peaty taste.

THE FINISH is caramel sweet and mild and clearly peat-smoky. The saltiness gradually increases and the initial taste is woven in to form more of a sweet cream sauce with a smoky bacon element.

One of my absolute favorites that in its quiet presence is more of a good friend to chat with than a party animal showering you with compliments and effusive garrulousness. A laidback whisky that is so moreish it is almost dangerous

STRENGTH ETC. / SCORE: 1 2 3 4 5

NOSE:

PALATE:

FINISH:

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