



# OUTTURN

Flavour invasion: April 2024

*Issue 150*



ENDLESS DISCOVERIES AT [SMWS.CA](http://SMWS.CA)

## GET ACQUAINTED WITH THE SMWS FLAVOUR PROFILES

Exploration is the greatest joy of Society membership, roaming the broad vistas of flavour and aroma represented in our vast selection of whiskies. But exploration without a map can be frustrating.

So we have 12 distinct flavour categories, each represented by its own colour, from Young & Spritely to Old & Dignified; Light & Delicate to Heavily Peated. These 12 categories offer an alternative to the more traditional method of categorizing whiskies by their region of origin (Islay, Speyside, etc).

Our flavour map gives whisky lovers a far better way to navigate our endless and ever-changing selection of bottlings, many of which are not typical of their region.

**YOUNG & SPRITELY**

**SWEET, FRUITY & MELLOW**

**SPICY & SWEET**

**SPICY & DRY**

**DEEP, RICH & DRIED FRUITS**

**OLD & DIGNIFIED**

**LIGHT & DELICATE**

**JUICY, OAK & VANILLA**

**OILY & COASTAL**

**LIGHTLY PEATED**

**PEATED**

**HEAVILY PEATED**



## SWEET, FRUITY & MELLOW

### LEMON AND LIME SHORTBREAD

CASK NO. 35-348

**\$174.99**



REGION	<i>Speyside</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>2nd Fill Ex-Bourbon Barrel</i>
AGE	<i>10 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>28 June 2012</i>
OUTTURN	<i>197 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>59.3%</i>

We all noticed a fruity aroma on the nose neat. Descriptors included crispy green apples, mango and coconut smoothie, peach yoghurt, lemon mousse and orange drizzle cake. On the palate it was sweet and malty, with butter icing and orange zest next to a warm vanilla malted milkshake, with a finish of gooseberry and apple jam.

Following reduction we found even more vanilla on the nose and the fruits were now tangerines and papayas, plus an orange blossom citrus mojito. To taste, we enjoyed toasted coconut and lemon and lime shortbread, while notes of delicate savoury oak, almond butter and cinnamon added complexity and character.

## SPICY & SWEET

### SAY IT WITH FLOWERS

CASK NO. 46.140

**\$189.99**



REGION	<i>Speyside</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>1st Fill Ex-Bourbon Barrel</i>
AGE	<i>12 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>9 March 2010</i>
OUTTURN	<i>156 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>59.2%</i>

We were presented with a stunning arrangement of coconut and almond white chocolate truffles combined with a bouquet of flowers. On the palate it was smooth and silky at first, like a vanilla yoghurt with fresh fruits, nuts and a sprinkle of mint, followed by a big hit of aniseed spice, before moving nicely into fragrant rosewater territory.

Water added malted milk biscuits and fudge on the nose while the taste was that of salted caramel and sugar-coated cashew nuts. In the long finish we had an interesting combination of cinnamon swirls and Battenberg cake next to a lemon, lime and chilli sorbet.

## JUICY, OAK & VANILLA

### PUSH PINEAPPLE, SHAKE A BEE

CASK NO. 39.284

**\$187.99**



REGION	<i>Speyside</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>1st Fill Ex-Bourbon Barrel</i>
AGE	<i>11 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>5 December 2011</i>
OUTTURN	<i>180 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>62.1%</i>

In a honey-infused tropical fantasy, fuzzy little bees hurried back to the hive with pineapples, vanilla pods and apples to make their ever-popular apple chutney and pineapple candyfloss. Also in the hive were hoards of honeydew melons, guavas and waxed lemons, while from the kitchen came wafts of warm marmalade and peach ice cream.

With a dash of water we ventured deeper into the hive, passing crème brûlée topped with cinnamon, coconut sponge cake and their very special whipped cream with honey. All of a sudden the teatime buzz sounded and the bees took a well-earned break with chilled cream soda, chocolate macaroons and earl grey tea with nothing other than luscious heather honey.

# SMWS AND SHERRY

## Made to order

*Since legislation changed in Spain in the 1980s to determine that all sherry had to be bottled there before it was exported, there's now no such thing as a sherry 'transport' cask. That has led to a whole industry dedicated to building and seasoning casks with sherry, specifically for the whisky industry.*



The historic Bodegas Barón in Sanlúcar de Barrameda is one of many locations across the 'sherry triangle' that now offer an alternative business: seasoning casks with sherry specifically for use in the spirits industry in general, and the whisky industry in particular. The demand came from a change in legislation in the early 1980s, when the transportation of sherry in casks that could be bottled elsewhere was forbidden, meaning that all sherry had to be bottled in Spain prior to export. Before that, it was common for sherry to be shipped in cask for bottling in the market where it was going to be consumed.

Many a sherry butt would have sailed into the Port of Leith and likely would have spent time in the Society's very own Vaults building. Once the sherry was bottled, the casks could then be used by the whisky industry, to add complex layers to maturing spirit.

The sherry historian, Manuel Gonzalez Gordon in his book *Sherry: The Noble Wine* notes that: "Historically, the Scots are lovers of sherry. To re-use casks rather than return them to Spain would have appealed to a nation with a reputation for financial astuteness – and what better than to employ them to store the national product."

That process of re-using shipping casks is no longer possible, hence the rise in the production of the new cask which is seasoned specifically for the whisky industry. Unlike bodega casks, which are exclusively made from American oak, these new casks are also being constructed from Spanish and European oak. That's because it is prized for its unique flavour contribution, the high tannin levels contributing deep spicy notes and dried fruits.

The sherry industry's governing body, the Consejo Regulador, introduced a new certification process in 2015 for seasoned casks, guaranteeing that they have held genuine sherry wine for a minimum of one year in a registered bodega within the industry's defined production zone. Casks must be filled to at least two thirds of their capacity during the entire period, and the certification should include information on the type of sherry used to season the cask.

From the cooperage, the casks arrive in bodegas to be filled with sherry wine. The variety is really up to whoever is buying the cask, but in the whisky world, the deeper, richer varieties of dry oloroso and sweet Pedro Ximenez sheries are the most common. The casks are filled and then stored for anything between one and three years, during which time tannins are extracted from the fresh wood and the interaction between wood and wine elevates these casks to something highly desirable for whisky maturation.

After being seasoned for the required length of time, the casks are shipped with between 5-10 litres of sherry in them, to make sure they don't dry out. Once they arrive in Scotland, they are emptied and checked for quality – the SMWS Whisky Team inspect and nose every sherry cask that arrives at our warehouse. Only when they are satisfied with what they see and smell does any whisky go in.



The sherry that was used for seasoning the casks can go one of several routes once the cask is ready to be shipped. It can be sold in bulk and used for blending at the more affordable end of the sherry market. Another use is to distil it for alternative uses, such as liqueurs. Or it could be used to produce sherry vinegar.

From the perspective of Euan Campbell, SMWS head of whisky creation, that gives variety in terms of the kinds of casks he and the Society's Whisky Team end up being able to work with when it comes to maturing our stocks of SMWS whisky.

“The main variables we can play with are oak species, wine type and length of seasoning,” he says. “We tend to commission an equal mix of American and European or Spanish oak, seasoned equally with oloroso & PX wines, with a handful of other spanish wines on occasion. We then draw down from these casks at different times, at between 12 and 24 months of seasoning with sherry. All this ensures that we are delivering a variety of flavours and styles, and that's before we even consider the endless spirit types that we fill into the casks in Scotland and how long those are matured for.”

## DEEP, RICH & DRIED FRUITS

### BRAMBLE RAMBLE

CASK NO. 68.106

**\$229.99**



REGION	<i>Highland</i>
INITIAL CASK	<i>Ex-Bourbon Hogshead</i>
FINAL CASK	<i>1st Fill Oloroso Hogshead</i>
AGE	<i>14 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>22 February 2008</i>
OUTTURN	<i>260 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>55.1%</i>

Initial nosing suggested aromatic and herbaceous scents such as wintergreen, lemongrass and dried herbs, then citronella waxes, cinnamon sugar, mulling spices and aged ruby ales. In time we also found the richness of brown bread spread with treacle. Some water revealed elegant notes of heather flowers, sultanas, pinecones and blackcurrant cordial.

The neat palate opened with rich tones of camphor, heather, shilling beers, waxes and salted liquorice, plus a splash of mineral oil and boot polish. Water brought bramble wine, sugared cashew nuts, lemon bonbons and an earthy hint of turmeric – robust and delicious, we agreed. This was matured for 11 years in a bourbon hogshead before being transferred to a 1st fill Spanish oak oloroso hogshead.



## DEEP, RICH & DRIED FRUITS

### GARBANZO'S CAJUN TRAIN RIDE\*

CASK NO. 78.65

**\$188.99**



### GIVING SPIRIT BOTTLE

REGION	Highland
CASK TYPE	2nd Fill Oloroso Butt
AGE	9 Years
DISTILLED ON	5 November 2013
OUTTURN	529 Bottles
ABV	67.7%

We began our journey in a sooty and treacly old train carriage, with worn leather seating and corduroy curtains. As we worked towards the buffet carriage, we snacked on a mild chilli pepper. The heat didn't linger, instead leaving a grape and black cherry juice.

Introducing water brought an aroma of cajun-seasoned french fries, almonds and sweet Spanish onions atop poutine. Wintergreen and peppermint offered a refreshing coolness to the palate, usurped shortly after by turmeric-roasted garbanzo beans, dried mango, apples and cinnamon. **\*Giving Spirit bottle - 100% of SMWS Canada's profits from the sales of this bottle will go to The Ocean Cleanup; read more on page 13**

## PEATED

### 'POUDING CHÔMEUR' AT THE SHACK

CASK NO. 53-456

\$211.99



REGION	<i>Islay</i>
INITIAL CASK	<i>Ex-Bourbon Hogshead</i>
FINAL CASK	<i>1st Fill Oloroso Hogshead</i>
AGE	<i>9 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>3 April 2013</i>
OUTTURN	<i>295 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>57.9%</i>

Opening the door of the shack we are met with the smell of burning wood in the fireplace, burnt sugar and a plate of smoked maple syrup cured bacon. Seated around the shack we share a piece of maple pudding cake with a coffee spiked with spiced rum.

Water toned down the smoke and let the sugary sweetness shine through. Maple syrup and vanilla cake were back on the menu. Burned toast with cream cheese and a dusting of ashes and then smoked salmon with a smoky hickory glaze. This spent 6 years in an ex-bourbon hogshead before being transferred to an American oak oloroso hogshead. **(Cask selected, bottle named and tasting note written by Canadian member Mathieu Dureau for The Gathering 2023.)**

## THE STORY BEHIND CASK NO. 53.456 'POUDING CHÔMEUR' AT THE SHACK

*In December 2021 we held a contest to send a member and guest to Scotland to take part in the cask selection process for the 2023 Gathering bottlings; a winner from each branch around the world spent a few days with SMWS staff trying various cask samples to choose which would be bottled for their branch, and writing the tasting notes and bottle name. SMWS Canada's winning member was Mathieu Dureau of Gatineau QC. Here's a brief overview of his experience.*

“When I arrived at The Vaults on the first day I had no expectations or any idea as to what I was getting involved in. After introductions to the staff working the event, we hit the ground running. The first exercise was to do blind nose tests and try to figure out the profile of different styles, which was much harder than expected, but so rewarding.

The second exercise was the tasting of the different whiskies, and that was equally challenging, but it expanded my world on what can be done just from using different barrels & the aging process. Those two exercises really brought into focus what the soul of the Scotch Malt Whisky Society is about and gave me a much deeper appreciation of what the SMWS does.

When it came to the selection of the whisky chosen for Canada, my partner Melanie and I were very nervous since we've never done a tasting panel or even written any tasting notes. It started off by blind tasting three different bottlings which had no markings of any kind and then we had to choose our favorite. The next day was spent writing the tasting notes and choosing a name for our selection, and that was the biggest challenge.

Luckily there were people like Olaf [SMWS Ambassador] and Miguel [manager of The Vaults] who were around to help, as after tasting drams and having lunch our palates and noses were getting tired. We started off with the initial story and image we were trying to convey and that's when they both came in for the save; they were able to help provide different viewpoints on the taste and nose, and helped us describe our story, and with that help/guidance we were able to put the final touches on the image we were trying to convey: the palate and the nose brought back memories of sugar shacks which are very popular here in Quebec and the Ottawa region, and pudding chômeur is a sweet vanilla cake with maple syrup. For us how we came about choosing the name is that when you arrive at a sugar shack you get the smell of camp fires and on the palate you get the sweet taste of something like maple syrup, and so we wanted to come up with a name that was truly Canadian but also had something about the region where we live and our parents grew up.



The second aspect of the trip that that will forever be in my heart is the hospitality and the kindness of the people within the organization; the staff at The Vaults were the most amazing hosts, they provided incredible food, allowed us to sample so many different whiskies and if we had any questions they were always willing to answer. We also met people from 18 different countries and got to know a little about them and their cultures.

Overall this was a truly amazing and unforgettable experience that will always be near and dear to my heart and the other best part of the trip was that Melanie has been converted to a whisky drinker!!!”

## HEAVILY PEATED

### A FLASHING BLADE

CASK NO. 144.4

**\$237.99**



REGION	<i>Sweden</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>1st Fill Ex-Bourbon Barrel</i>
AGE	<i>7 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>15 May 2014</i>
OUTTURN	<i>215 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>60.8%</i>

No messing about here. Immediate notes of pickled gherkins in brine, elastoplasts, tar extracts, BBQ glazed pork ribs, peat fire embers in a cast iron hearth and green olive tapenade on salted flat bread. A brilliant peat-dominated distillate. With water we found carbolic acidity, hot mash water and smoky grist - touring a distillery in full peaty production mode - also malt vinegar doused oysters and smoked lemons.

The palate was pure seawater and lemon juice at first, before a big surge of petrol, mineral salts, engine oils and touches of camphor and paraffin. With water there was some more complexity emerging with aniseed distillate, mercurochrome and suggestions of paraffin, TCP, horseradish and soy sauce.

## APRIL - THE *GIVING SPIRIT* PROGRAM

In January 2021 we introduced our “Giving Spirit” program: each quarter, SMWS Canada donates to charity 100% of its profit from the sales of a designated bottle.

January 2024 marked the 4th year of our program, and to date we’ve donated over \$17,000.00 to various charities thanks to the bottles you’ve purchased! This past January we chose UNICEF and we have donated \$1351.17 from the sales of Cask No. G15.30 “Pleasing and delightful.”

**This quarter we’re turning our attention to the world’s oceans and the efforts to clean them up, by donating to The Ocean Cleanup: “*We develop and scale technologies to rid the oceans of plastic.*”**



**Our Giving Spirit bottle this quarter is Cask No. 78.65 “Garbanzo’s cajun train ride” - we’ll donate 100% of our profits from the sales of this bottle to The Ocean Cleanup ([www.theoceancleanup.com](http://www.theoceancleanup.com)).**

We hope you’ll continue to support the Giving Spirit program by buying a great bottle of whisky and supporting a great cause at the same time!

## A FEW PAST RELEASES STILL AVAILABLE

### LIGHT & DELICATE

**CASK NO. 70.53 FRAGILE FRUITS & FLOATY FLOWERS**  
14 years old; 2nd fill barrel; Highland \$201.99

An intricately structured, refreshingly light dram; a detailed patchwork of fruit and floral flavours that makes for entertaining sipping.

### SPICY & DRY

**CASK NO. 78.62 AT HOME ON THE RANGE**  
8 years old; 2nd fill PX butt; Highland \$171.99

Lentil stew and Scotch broth were followed by spicy chilli con carne – not for the fainthearted. Diluted, cowboys and cowgirls dine around a campfire.

### DEEP, RICH & DRIED FRUITS

**CASK NO. 46.137 LOSE YOURSELF BY THE FIRE**  
15 years old; 1st fill sherry hogshead; Speyside \$227.99

The cask and distillate vie for influence, but the result is an entertaining mash-up of dark fruits, wood tannins, chocolate and earthy heft.

### HEAVILY PEATED

**CASK NO. 16.87 DOWN WITH SUBTELTY!**  
9 years old; 1st fill #4 char hogshead; Highland \$167.99

The fusion of wood power and peat power go head to head with thrilling and mind-mangling effect – like quaffing distilled hot sauce in a barbecue.

## OLD & DIGNIFIED - VAULTS COLLECTION\* BOTTLE

**Cask No. 76.151 Cloves studded in honey-glazed ham  
30 years old; 1st fill sherry hogshead; Speyside \$1674.99**



*\*The Vaults Collection is a selection of the finest and rarest single cask, single malt whisky, set aside from The Scotch Malt Whisky Society's most remarkable stocks over the years. They have been released from the depths of our treasure trove of casks, after decades of slow maturation and careful nurturing.*

*The Vaults Collection represents the whisky lover's dream: a chance to journey back into whisky history, including the opportunity to experience styles or distilleries that no longer exist. The Collection takes its name from the Society's historical home at The Vaults in Leith, Scotland's oldest commercial building in continuous use whose connection with the drinks world dates back to the 12th century. Each bottle has a specially designed label and is offered in a beautiful wooden box.*

An irresistible concoction of coffee and cloves pulled us towards beef jerky smoked with pencil shavings and served with maple syrup on bacon. A prickly palate of peppercorns and pickles danced with glee to the sound of black pudding sizzling in whirling clouds of wood smoke.

A drop of water unleashed a compelling accumulation of chamomile, caramel and cooling camphor that skilfully merged with the heavyweight hues of molasses, prunes and almond-coated jamaica cake. Then cloves and saffron adorned poached pears alongside oloroso sherry trifle while we used burnt sticks to trickle rich honey over oily iberico ham. After spending 26 years in an ex-bourbon hogshead this was transferred to a first fill Spanish oak oloroso hogshead for the remainder of its maturation.



# 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/)