



THE SCOTCH MALT
WHISKY SOCIETY

OUTTURN

Explore: May 2025 Issue 163



**WHISKY WITH
ADVENTURES ON THE ROCKS**

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

JUICY, OAK & VANILLA

CONIFERS IN THE RAIN

CASK NO. 60.34

\$145.99



REGION	<i>Highland</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>2nd Fill Ex-Bourbon Barrel</i>
AGE	<i>9 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>3 April 2014</i>
OUTTURN	<i>117 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>57.7%</i>

Our initial snifter was of warm custard, crushed cream crackers, alpine butter and icing sugar. The palate was mace-spiked custard, lemon drops, icing sugar and a pinch of pink peppercorns. The Panel noted the experience of the flavour of spice, rather than the sensation of spice per se.

Water produced a hint of new-make spirit, damp pine timber, conifers in the rain, custard and orange zest. The palate by this stage was mineralic-sweet, with blackcurrant and almond joining a prevailing custard.

SPICY & SWEET

AND ME AND MY TRUE LOVE WILL YET MEET AGAIN

CASK NO. 135.62

\$233.99



REGION	<i>Highland</i>
INITIAL CASK	<i>Ex-Bourbon Hogshead</i>
FINAL CASK	<i>HTMC New Oak Hogshead</i>
AGE	<i>16 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>30 July 2008</i>
OUTTURN	<i>288 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>55.1%</i>

A wonderfully zesty and vibrant initial nose was dominated by crushed nettles, tart exotic fruits and impressions of New Zealand sauvignon blanc. This evolved quickly into passion flower, mint julep cocktail and tropical fruit teas. Reduction brought a more floral profile, scented hot-house flowers, runny honey, firm wood-resin notes and still-abundant tropical fruit aromas. The palate was similarly dominated by tropical fruits and showed a gorgeously syrupy texture, full of sweet mango, passion fruit, pineapple and impressions of very old Irish whiskey.

Water maintained this superb fruitiness and oiliness of mouthfeel, the overwhelming feeling being of a beautiful balance between wood and distillate having been achieved. This was matured in a bourbon hogshead for 12 years before being transferred to a heavily toasted medium charred new oak hogshead.

DEEP, RICH & DRIED FRUITS

MOROCCAN MEDJOOL MYSTIQUE

CASK NO. 85.77

\$209.99



REGION	<i>Speyside</i>
INITIAL CASK	<i>Ex-Bourbon Hogshead</i>
FINAL CASK	<i>1st Fill PX Hogshead</i>
AGE	<i>15 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>13 December 2007</i>
OUTTURN	<i>277 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>57.4%</i>

The aroma was all over the place, with buttered fruit loaf, mango-filled doughnuts, brandy snaps, rum and raisin ice cream and, not to forget, apple-scented shampoo. On the palate it settled down nicely with a slice of banana loaf straight out of the oven, marshmallows dipped in chocolate, and a warm black and blueberry sauce. After reduction we found treacle toffee, butterscotch and a whiff of hot miso soup on the nose.

To taste, simply delicious, sweet and juicy medjool dates bursting with honey, toffee and caramel-like flavours. Following 11 years in an ex-bourbon hogshead, we transferred this whisky into a first fill American oak Pedro Ximenez hogshead.

DEEP, RICH & DRIED FRUITS

OLDE FUNKEY BUTTE

CASK NO. 78.68

\$159.99



REGION	<i>Highland</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>2nd Fill Oloroso Butt</i>
AGE	<i>9 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>5 November 2013</i>
OUTTURN	<i>439 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>67.3%</i>

The nose neat bristled with sherry influences that suggested tangy dark-fruit chutneys, HP sauce, bruised apples, ginger wine, orange peels, mulling spices and a sumptuous leathery richness. We also got plenty of freshly baked brown bread, treacle cake, tobacco and black miso. Reduction brought dark liquid seasonings, game-meat stocks, aged pinot noir, dried eucalyptus, orange oils and marzipan.

The palate neat was superbly herbal and darkly earthy up front; robustly sooty and gamey impressions, with leather, bitter dark chocolate, herbal cough mixtures, salted Dutch liquorice and natural tar extracts. Water brought more gingery notes, crushed brazil nuts, black pepper, motor oils, damp pipe tobacco, walnut wine, paprika and fruity red chilli. Tars, aged Armagnac and stewed dark fruits graced the aftertaste with a gorgeous rancio note.

SMALL BATCH SINGLE GRAIN

GASTRONOMIC FUSION

CASK NO. N/A

\$109.99



REGION	Highland
CASK TYPES	1st Fill Ex-Bourbon Barrels & 2nd Fill Ex-Bourbon Hogsheads
AGE	8 Years
DISTILLED ON	7 October 2015
OUTTURN	1314 Bottles
ABV	50%

The aroma was that of the ultimate ham and cheese sandwich done the French way; a croque monsieur made using Dijon mustard and béchamel sauce – simply delicious. And so was the palate, lightly smoked porridge oats topped with slices of banana and sprinkled with cinnamon and brown sugar.

Following the careful addition of water, we got a large skillet of paella rice topped with artichokes, shrimps and spiced with sweet smoked paprika. To taste, we found fried garlic mushrooms with lightly smoked salmon and lemon-zested crème fraîche. This truly was an example of individual delicate flavours achieving that fascinating fusion of sweet, savoury and smoke.

See the next page to read more about this latest release from the Society's Heresy range.

GASTRONOMIC FUSION - A DEEPER DIVE

Sometimes you don't see things coming and they hit you square in the tasting glass in the most surprising way. The latest among such unexpected moments stems from our clear glass 'Heresy' small-batch range, Gastronomic fusion. In many regards, this new arrival is a first for the Society. And whatever you're expecting, it's safe to say that this isn't it! So, what remote corner of whisky's flavour empire are we exploring this time?

Even for the Society's 'Heresy' range, and where flavours are concerned, Gastronomic fusion is about to take you on an unexpected trip, to where things are both entertaining and far from normal. This bottling takes a look at a style of whisky some of you may be familiar with, while others may be entirely new to. Still no guess? In a nutshell, you're about to get stuck into a peated single grain whisky. How is that interesting, you ask? Well, give it a minute, we're going to have a look at why there is more behind this whisky than meets the eye.



There is a distillery in Scotland that produces different types of whiskies – from malt to grain, in various types of stills. Gastronomic fusion is a single grain, but not because it's distilled from a mash of non-malt grain. This offering is made 100 per cent from malted barley but it was distilled in a column still. To be a single malt, this whisky would have required to be distilled in pot stills at least twice. That's not all though – some 40 per cent of the whisky in this batch was distilled from peated malt. And that is something that you really don't see every day...

So, forget everything you know about grain whisky and its industrial production, and let the words of those who turn up their nose at this style of whisky fall on deaf ears. This release has so many unusual traits that comparing it to traditional grains would be futile. Gastronomic fusion uses only malted barley to create this grain whisky and was distilled in a copper column still, yielding a spirit with a strength of around 85% abv, much lower than normal for grain whiskies. And that is significant, as many well-known grain whiskies are distilled closer to 94% abv. This lower strength leaves a lot more room for flavour-bearing molecules to go through the still and into the cask.

Just as this grain whisky is made from a mash bill of 100 per cent malted barley, it is also entirely matured in bourbon casks. The peated casks in this recipe were fantastically active second fill hogsheads, whereas the unpeated casks were top quality first fill barrels. The synergy between active casks and lighter, yet peated and characterful distillate, produced unique flavours that didn't fail to win over the Society's Tasting Panel.

While one panellist let slip a discreet yet still audible "stonker!" the others marvelled at the decadently foodie mix of aromas and flavours you would not normally associate with an 8-year-old whisky, with a lunch of ham croque monsieur and bechamel sauce on the opening nose, and even a surprisingly pleasant hint of Dijon mustard. This was followed by a sweet breakfast of smoked oats, brown sugar cinnamon and banana. A splash of water, and you're shown to the dinner table and served a paella. Will you have a dusting of smoked paprika on top? Don't answer that, it was rhetorical. A complete contrast of aromas and flavours and yet such a superb balance unanimously won over the Panel. On the subject of water, though, the seasoned panellist chairing the review of this whisky cautions our members to "be careful when adding water".

This one of those drams that blurs the lines of expectations, but also the frontier between spirit character, and cask influence. Of course, you could always pin the smokiness to peated malt, some fruitiness to high-ester new-make and cinnamon to cask influence. But none of this really matters if on an enjoyment level it scratches an itch you never knew you had. Be it a whisky, grain or malt (or a friendly 'frankenmalt' like this one) it's how balance is achieved that matters. And here it is as surprising as it is tasty.

Despite this word of caution regarding dilution, our Panel concluded that Gastronomic fusion is "truly an example of individual delicate flavours achieving that fascinating fusion of sweet, savoury and smoke."

If you're into an affordable, rare, slightly experimental, delicious, foodie dram to share and discover with your friends...or something to put in your hiking hipflask in case you get peckish and the cereal bars run out then this one's for you!



PEATED

A DIFFERENT SHADE OF PEAT

CASK NO. 11.55

\$149.99



FIRST APPEARANCE FROM THIS DISTILLERY FOR SMWS CANADA

REGION	Highland
CASK TYPE	2nd Fill Charred Hogshead
AGE	9 Years
DISTILLED ON	9 December 2014
OUTTURN	306 Bottles
ABV	58.8%

We found this one immediately bright and smoky, with a chiselled, bone-dry peat profile. There was also a wonderful coastal edge that brought persistent freshness, brittle smoke, bubble gum, aniseed distillate and bath salts. We all really enjoyed this one! With water it maintained this sharp and salty balance, but added in notes of salted peanuts, seawater, grapefruit and charred pineapple.

The palate neat was superbly clean, sharp and pristinely peaty, with a big streak of medicine in the form of bandages and ointments. With water it got surprisingly waxier in texture, along with a 'farmier' profile and a broader, richer peat flavour. We noted camphor, lanolin, pickling brine and malt vinegar.



WHERE TO BUY

The exclusive retail stores of The Society in Canada:

KENSINGTON WINE MARKET

1257 Kensington Road NW, Calgary, AB

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Phone: 236-420-4060

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