



OUTTURN

Match made in heaven: November 2024

Issue 157



POURING 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

DOVETAILED MARSHMALLOWS

CASK NO. 55.94

\$140.99



REGION	<i>Highland</i>
CASK TYPE	<i>2nd Fill Ex-Bourbon Hogshead</i>
AGE	<i>9 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>2 July 2014</i>
OUTTURN	<i>282 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>57.8%</i>

On the floor of a carpenter's workshop sat a bowl of custard topped with toffee chunks, sweet pea flowers and scones. We found the palate matched this with the precision of a dovetail joint, as well as incorporating lemonade, grape and a creamy mouthfeel from vanilla-topped tiramisu.

Water offered wood oil on pancakes, melted butter and raspberries on the nose, while the palate maintained its creamy texture and added a tangy limeade float.

LIGHT & DELICATE

SUMMER GARDEN MEMORIES

CASK NO. 60.39

\$149.99



REGION	Highland
CASK TYPE	2nd Fill Ex-Bourbon Hogshead
AGE	10 Years
DISTILLED ON	24 October 2013
OUTTURN	254 Bottles
ABV	57.6%

A slice of warm coconut sponge cake arrived topped with lemon zest and served alongside a glass of cold-pressed apple juice. The light, delicate nose was full of summer garden memories. To taste, the Panel enjoyed the zest and tang of grapefruit rind, plum sauce, pear tarts dusted with mace, and wild fennel shavings.

Water championed delicate aromas of tinned peaches, thyme blossom and heather honey. The palate, too, was elegant, with lemon sherbet, cane sugar and marzipan floating across the tongue.

JUICY, OAK & VANILLA

BERRYLICIOUS

CASK NO. 48.171

\$201.99



REGION	<i>Speyside</i>
INITIAL CASK	<i>Ex-Bourbon Hogshead</i>
FINAL CASK	<i>2nd Fill Barrique</i>
AGE	<i>15 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>11 December 2008</i>
OUTTURN	<i>239 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>52.9%</i>

We cracked the hard caramel top of a mixed berry crème brûlée and had a bite of a coconut, almond and raspberry dessert square. The wonderful texture reminded us of chantilly cream, butterscotch sauce and a wild berry smoothie made from blackberries, strawberries, blueberries, pineapple chunks and orange juice – a real treat for the taste buds.

After the addition of water, a chai-spiced rocky road with dried cranberries sprinkled with mini marshmallows and a dusting of cocoa emerged. It still had a lovely mouthfeel: imagine Madagascar vanilla ice cream with a red berry coulis. Following 12 years in an ex-bourbon hogshead, we transferred this whisky into a 2nd fill high-lactone American oak barrique with toasted heads.

SCOTCH AND SHERRY- Meet the Sherry Masters

The Scotch Malt Whisky Society works with a range of cooperages and bodegas in Spain to source the very best sherry-matured casks for our whisky. Here are some of the suppliers who play a key role in making sure everything we offer is of the highest quality

TEVASA COOPERAGE

The team at Tevasa is led by Narciso Fernández, who oversees every part of operations from the felling of trees in Galicia in the northwest corner of Spain to the creation and seasoning of casks in Andalucía in the south. “At Tevasa cooperage we build 92 casks per day, and when they leave here they are totally ready,” he says. “But they aren’t sherry casks yet, they’re only casks. Next, we need to send them to the bodegas in and around Jerez, where they will start the process to be seasoned with the sherry wine that the customer prefers – normally oloroso, or Pedro Ximénez, or it could be amontillado or manzanilla – it depends on the customer. And that part of the process could last from a year and a half to more than two years, also depending on their preference.” The entire process, from cutting down the tree to sending the cask between the cooperage and the distillery, takes a minimum of five and more often up to six years.



XIMÉNEZ-SPÍNOLA BODEGA

The older ex-bodega cask is still a treasure to be sought out and cherished for what it can bring to a whisky. It’s just a little harder to track down, and that aspect of quality control is all important. There’s no better place to seek out some beautiful old bodega casks than at the Ximénez-Spínola winery at Las Tablas on the outskirts of Jerez.

This is the domain of husband-and-wife team José Antonio Zarzana and Laura Murphy. Sherry is in their blood and José Antonio is a ninth-generation winemaker, with a heritage at Ximénez-Spínola dating back to 1729. The bodega produces premium wines with a specialisation in the Pedro Ximénez grape – but everything about their production is a challenge to any preconceptions you might hold about what PX sherry has to be. José Antonio and Laura also want to showcase the diversity of wines that can come from the PX grape, from a dry ‘fino’ style through to the sweet PX we usually associate with the grape variety. That diversity is apparent when we enter the Ximénez-Spínola bodega, which is home to solera systems dating back to 1918 and 1964.

“The casks that we source from Ximénez-Spínola are very high quality,” says SMWS head of whisky creation, Euan Campbell. “They offer a more subtle impact than sherry-seasoned casks, and match particularly well with unpeated, fruity distillate styles.”

JOSÉ Y MIGUEL MARTIN COOPERAGE

“We source our Spanish oak from the north of the country,” explains Miguel Martin of Bodegas José y Miguel Martin. “It is a hybrid of *quercus petraea* and *robur*. It’s very difficult to work with and around 20 per cent is immediately unsuitable for use in coopering due to defects in the grain. Sometimes up to 50 per cent.”

Despite the inefficient processing, Spanish oak is highly prized for its unique flavour contribution. The wood is air seasoned in the yard at the cooperage near Huelva to the west of Seville. This process lasts for around 12 to 18 months but never more than two summers, as this would warp the wood beyond use.

The freshly coopered casks are filled with sherry wine sourced from a Jerez co-operative. The casks are then stored for a period of one to three years, during which time tannins are extracted and the interaction between wood and wine elevates these vessels to something highly sought after in the whisky industry.

The type of oak and the length of seasoning depends on the location where the casks will be maturing whisky and the desired end result. A one-year seasoned Spanish oak cask, for example, might work very well in the colder Scottish climate but would likely result in a highly tannic whisky in a hot and humid country with more intense extraction.

Comparing seasoned casks to ex-bodega casks, Miguel asserts: “It really depends on what you’re looking for, there’s no right or wrong, no better or worse. They are just different.”



FERNÁNDEZ-GAO BODEGA

Fernández-Gao dates back to 1750 and was acquired by brothers Antonio and Juan Carlos Sánchez Gago in 2014, who began small scale production of a range of sherries in 2016. The casks they have supplied to the SMWS are ex-wine barriques that have typically been used for between three and five years in wine production, which have then been rejuvenated by the STR (shave, toast, re-char) process. The casks are then seasoned with wines from the bodega for a minimum of 12 months.



Dive into the Society’s documentary [Scotch & Sherry: A Flavour Odyssey](#) to discover more about how we source casks and work with different varieties of sherry to season new casks, and also how we source casks from Andalucia’s bodegas at the SMWS YouTube channel, [SMWSSilverScreen](#).

DEEP, RICH & DRIED FRUITS

TAWNY GARIBALDI

**DISTILLERY 48
RARE RELEASE**

\$204.99



REGION	<i>Speyside</i>
CASK TYPES	<i>Refill & 1st Fill Bourbon & PX Hogsheads</i>
AGE	<i>14 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>11 December 2008</i>
OUTTURN	<i>880 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>49.8%</i>

We walked through the deep, dark forest, stepping over moss-covered tree roots and groups of wood mushrooms. As the wind whispered through the dense evergreens, the aroma of steamed raisin pudding with a tawny port wine sauce emerged. We followed our noses and found a little gingerbread house with vanilla-based frosting, supported by tonka beans, cinnamon sticks and garibaldi biscuits.

When we added a couple of drops of water the scent of chocolate-coated dark red cherries flirting with nougat ice cream and PX raisins dominated, while on the palate we enjoyed blueberries freshly picked from the woodland. Bottled for the 2024 Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival.

DEEP, RICH & DRIED FRUITS

AL FRESCO, IN THE SUN

CASK NO. 64.150

\$194.99



REGION *Speyside*

INITIAL CASK *Ex-Bourbon Hogshead*

FINAL CASK *1st Fill PX Ex-Bodega Barrique*

AGE *14 Years*

DISTILLED ON *12 May 2009*

OUTTURN *235 Bottles*

ABV *56.6%*

Things opened with the rich, thick air of cured and smoked hams and cheeses, sliced madeira cake and nuts, some of them smoky. These were joined by apple peel, caramel and baked stone fruits. The palate was awash with fruity syrups, dates, custard tarts, coriander and beurre noisette, with a mentholic sorbet to finish.

Having introduced water, red apple leapt forward, joined by lemon zest and baked sultanas on the nose. The palate was now vinho verde, sticks of toffee, plum jam and mace. After 12 years in an ex-bourbon hogshead, we transferred this to a 1st fill ex-bodega Pedro Ximenez barrique for the remainder of its maturation.

OILY & COASTAL

COASTAL QUARRY COOKOUT

CASK NO. 66.254

\$181.99



REGION *Highland*

CASK TYPE *Refill Ex-Bourbon Barrel*

AGE *12 Years*

DISTILLED ON *7 July 2011*

OUTTURN *242 Bottles*

ABV *54.4%*

The morning's rain kicked up dust in a coastal quarry. The dying embers of a fire turned rain to steam as the first aid officer reviewed their inventory of bandages. The palate was worthy of this cinematic opening scene, with sweet peat smoke warming vanilla pods, seaweed fried in peanut oil, soot-dusted peaches and smoked oatcakes.

Water introduced a maritime breeze along with lemon juice landing on oysters, smoked grapes and further lemons in brine. A fresh, minty and resinous sorbet cleansed the palate before burnt heather and cured meats were served.

HEAVILY PEATED

BACON BUTTER BUTT

CASK NO. 10.264

\$197.99



REGION	<i>Islay</i>
INITIAL CASKS	<i>Ex-Bourbon Hogsheads</i>
FINAL CASK	<i>1st Fill Oloroso Ex-Bodega Butt</i>
AGE	<i>10 Years</i>
DISTILLED ON	<i>24 October 2013</i>
OUTTURN	<i>481 Bottles</i>
ABV	<i>58%</i>

From deep in the dark depths of a Spanish bodega, the robust aromas of smoky bacon crisps and paprika mingled with miso paste melting into burnt butter with a splash of herbal vermouth. The blackened and crispy shells of marshmallows encased their molten sugary centres as they toasted on sticks above the flames of a coal fire. The sweetness was countered by earthy notes of spiced red cabbage, cloves and celeriac in chipotle sauce.

Adding water created a haze of medicinal fog that engulfed both fragrant tobacco and fudge. Now, nutty characters embraced walnuts in sea salt, served on oatcakes with a sprinkle of scorched rosemary and crumbled cassia bark. At 7 years of age, we combined two ex-bourbon hogsheads from the same distillery into a 1st fill oloroso ex-bodega butt for further maturation and marrying.



BLUE KIT BLOWOUT!

We've slashed the price on the Welcome Kits, from \$230 to \$180, which is a heck of a deal since they contain three 100ml bottles of SMWS whisky (that will never be bottled in the full-size format), two SMWS glasses, a hefty water jug, a pipette and a journal so you can record your thoughts on those three 100ml bottles!

AND, if you buy one, for yourself or as a gift (hey, Christmas is coming), then we'll knock a whopping \$40 off your next \$120 renewal cost. Supplies are limited and we'll be discontinuing them, so now's the time to grab one before they're out of the marketplace. Contact Kensington Wine Market in Calgary or Keg n Cork in Edmonton for all the details.





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

www.kensingtonwinemarket.com

KEG N CORK LIQUOR COMPANY

3845 - 99th Street, Edmonton, AB

Phone: 780-461-0191

Email: ordering@kegncork.com

www.kegncork.com

THE STRATH ALE, WINE & SPIRIT MERCHANTS

919 Douglas Street, Victoria, BC

Phone: 250-370-9463

Email: whisky@strathliquor.com

www.strathliquor.com

LEGACY LIQUOR STORE

1633 Manitoba Street, Vancouver, BC

Phone: 604-331-7900

Email: Darryl@legacyliquorstore.com

www.legacyliquorstore.com

ARC LIQUOR

1973 Harvey Ave, Kelowna, BC

Phone: 236-420-4060

Email: kls@armstrong.coop

www.armstrong.coop/arc-liquor/