



Object of the Newsletter

To promote the appreciation of fine Scotch Whisky, the area from which it comes, the people that inhabit the land and it's history. By the way, I do not profess to be an expert, I am merely expressing an opinion on the whiskies I am tasting.

I now look at the Loch Lomond 12-year-old single malt whisky, which has a nice fruity character of peach and pear layered with a vanilla sweetness and as you would expect from Loch Lomond whiskies, there is a hint of peat and smoke on the finish.

Loch Lomond, you say? "I've heard of Loch Lomond, but I didn't know there was a distillery of that name?" Indeed there is and of course it is situated on the banks of the famous loch, see the map on page 2.

The first site of the former Loch Lomond Distillery dates back to 1814, sited at the north end of Loch Lomond near Tarbet. Sadly in the old days relatively few paper records were kept and the closing date of this distillery remains unclear.

The current Loch Lomond Distillery was founded in 1964 by the former owners of the Littlemill Distillery, in Bowling, a few miles up the road towards Glasgow.

You can buy Loch Lomond 12-year-old for around \$50.00 a bottle.

Tasting Notes;

Nose - Green apple, Pear, lemon

Palate - Pear, lemon, vanilla & Biscuit (cookie)

Finish - Medium with a hint of peat & smoke

"Slainte Mhath"

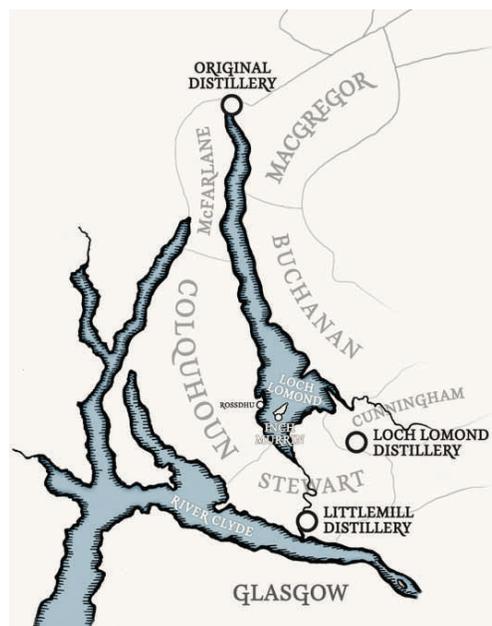
Paul Bissett





The West Highland Way

The next few pages are from my book, that I have just written, about hiking the “The West Highland Way”



Each morning at breakfast, I told my fellow travelers what clan lands we would be hiking through and any sights to look out for on the days hike

After eighteen months of anticipation the hike starts (after walking a mile from our hotel) with a photo opportunity at the Obelisk on Main Street in the town of in Milngavie. Heading North/West, out of town, the trail goes though parkland, open fields and follows a disused railway, with no major climbs.

This is a relatively easy day’s hike through fields and latterly forest, this is why I prefer to hike from Milngavie to Fort William, rather than the reverse, the hike gets progressively harder as you head north so your body (and mind) get used to the exertion.

Another consideration for starting in Milngavie is the weather, you are likely to get rain at some point on the hike, and the prevailing wind is usually from the South West, which would have it generally blowing from behind you and over your left shoulder as opposed to blowing in your face if you start the hike in Fort William.

We deliberately started a little late (9:30am) as I remembered (from previous hikes) that there was a Whisky Distillery (Glengoyne) about 30 minutes walk from the start. I had suggested to David and Tracey that we take one of the tours that started at 10am.

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Below is a simple guide to help you choose your single malt Whisky, and the flavor notes you should expect from it. Being Scottish I recommend you find a likely candidate and try it in a bar before buying the whole bottle. This Issue; [Loch Lomond 12-year-old](http://www.lochlomondwhiskies.com). For more information go to <http://www.lochlomondwhiskies.com>





The West Highland Way cont.

For the next three and a half hours I kept saying it must be just over the next hill or around the next bend, when we finally reached the Distillery, it would have involved climbing over a couple of fences and walking through a herd of cattle for about a quarter of a mile, we all agreed that it was not worth the effort. We stopped for lunch at the Beech Tree Inn, where we sampled the Glengoyne 10-year-old Whisky, and concluded we had made the right choice not to visit the Distillery. In retrospect, having gained a greater understanding of whisky and having tasted the full Glengoyne range of whiskies, that conclusion was wrong.

So far, the trail had been through undulating (hilly) parkland, woods and fields, most of the remainder of the day's walk would be along quiet country roads, until we reached the Queen Elizabeth National Forest, which would have been more scenic had not major logging been going on. This logging caused the first of our detours; We had planned to cross over Conic hill as the views from the top of Loch Lomond and the mountains behind are breathtaking, and if you have not hiked this trail before, quiet surprising. Unfortunately the way ahead was closed, so we headed down to Drymen, a long and at this point in the days hike, hard descent. This detour fortunately took us straight to the Clachan Inn (Licensed 1734) www.clachaninndrymen.co.uk, reputed to have been managed by the sister of the famous Scottish outlaw Rob Roy. Prior to the hike, I had read about the "Heather Ale" they served in the Clachan, unfortunately they had stopped serving it some years before. Fortunately we found it in a bar in Glencoe later in the hike.



Ready for a drink



Concerning midges (extract from “The West Highland Way”)

As I have aged (and gained experience) I have come to realize that my need to prove myself has diminished as measured against; stopping to take in the views, letting someone else carry my pack and sleeping in a comfortable bed each night. I believe that’s called wisdom, but I fought against it for a long time and it took my wife Tracey and our friend David McDonald to get me to relent on my need for self flagellation. I have now been converted to the dark side, and as I relax between clean sheets after a hot shower, a fine meal and a couple of drinks, call me shallow, but I don’t really miss sleeping under canvas or getting eaten by midges*.

**As you would expect from the country that brought you “Nessie” the loch Ness monster, the Highland midge” has taken on an almost mythical status.*

I have heard it described as being about the size of a period (full stop) at the end of a sentence, with the teeth of an alligator.

First things first, midges do not transmit diseases to humans, about the only thing transmitted will be the tall tales that you’ll tell when you return home.

The “midgie” as it is known in Scotland, is so small that if you are walking, the wind of your passing will stop it from landing on you.

If there is a slight breeze you are safe, in fact about the only time that you are likely to get bitten is while asleep and only then if you are camping, almost every hotel in the highlands of Scotland will have a warning about keeping your windows closed, because of the midges.

After all that, the bite doesn’t hurt it just itches.

You can use any insect repellent that would work for mosquitoes to keep them at bay or the old traditional method is to crush bog myrtle (sweet gale) leaves in your hands and rub it on the exposed areas of skin.

Which I have done to good effect in the past.



Bog myrtle (sweet gale)



A gathering of midges