



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 consider "Valkyrie" the latest (just released) whisky from Highland Park and recent winner of the Chairman's Trophy in the 2017 Ultimate Spirits Challenge, scoring 99 out of 100.

It has the usual flavors that you would expect from a Highland Park with smoke and fruits nicely balanced, however the smoke is more pronounced than in a regular Highland Park.

The Valkyrie has approximately 50% peated barley malt and being Orcadian peat that means, you get the classic smoky heather notes.

But it does not overpower the fruit and the hint of chocolate is a nice taste accompaniment.

Valkyrie is the first bottling in Highland Park's "Viking Legend" series in partnership with Danish designer Jim Lyngvild who can trace his lineage back to Viking times. What do I think of it? I bought a bottle for my bar, so yes, I recommend it.

You can buy "Valkyrie" for around \$70.00 a bottle.

Tasting Notes

Nose - Cocoa, orange & heather smoke

Palate - Green apple, plum, chocolate, smoke & spice

Finish - Chocolate, Liquorice & smoke

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett





Orkney (Scottish Gaelic: Arcaibh)

Also known as the **Orkney Islands** (and sometimes incorrectly as "The Orkneys"), is an archipelago in northern Scotland, situated 16 kilometres (10 mi) north of the coast of Caithness. Orkney comprises approximately 70 islands of which 20 are inhabited.

The largest island, known as the "Mainland" has an area of 523.25 square kilometres (202.03 sq mi) making it the sixth largest Scottish island and the tenth-largest island in the British Isles. The largest settlement and administrative centre is Kirkwall.

The name "Orkney" dates back to the 1st century BC or earlier, and the islands have been inhabited for at least 8,500 years. Originally occupied by Mesolithic and Neolithic tribes and then by the Picts, Orkney was invaded and then forcibly annexed by Norway in 875 and settled by the Norse.

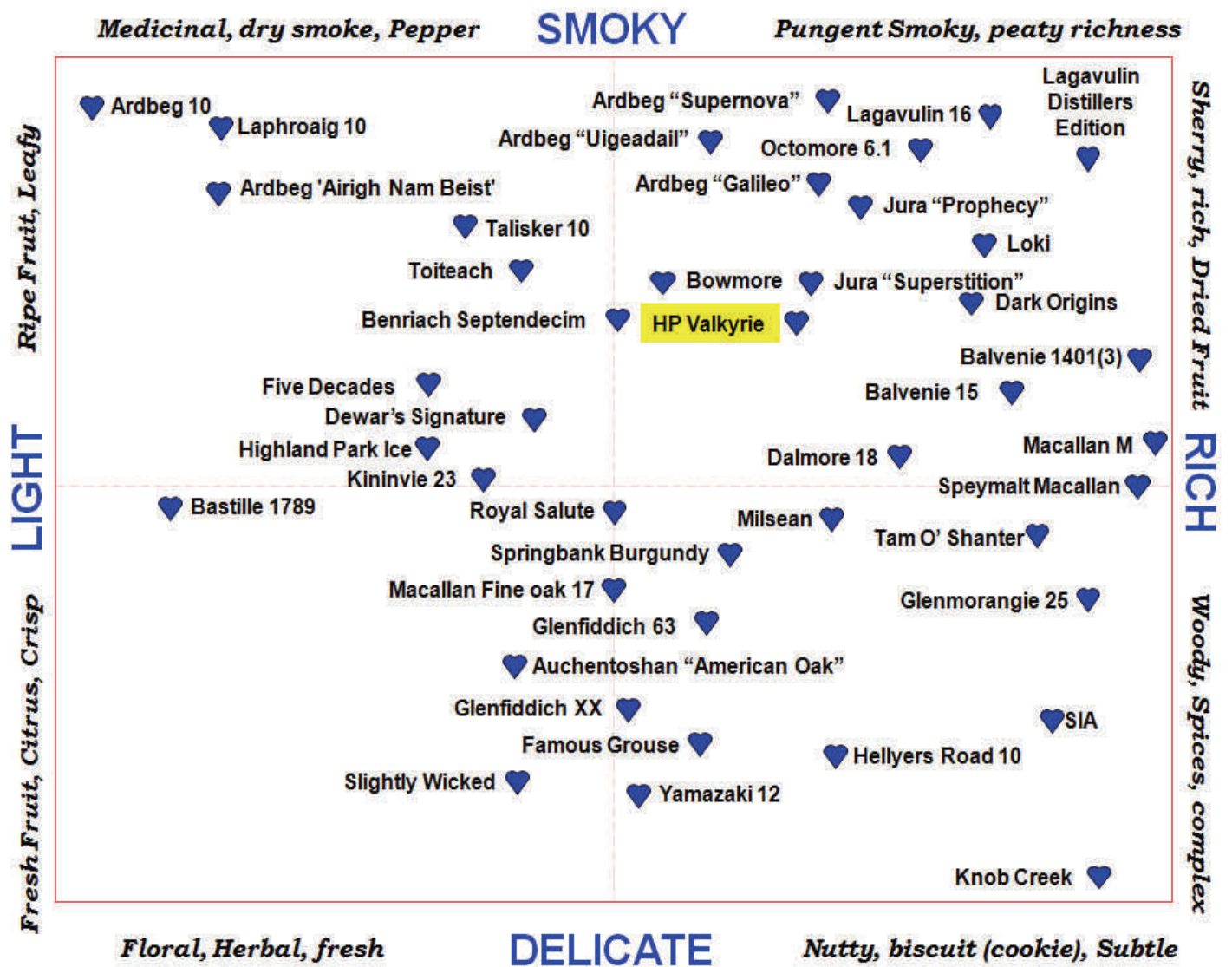
It was subsequently annexed to the Scottish Crown in 1472, following the failed payment of a dowry for James III's bride, Margaret of Denmark. Orkney contains some of the oldest and best-preserved Neolithic sites in Europe, and the "Heart of Neolithic Orkney" is a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Orkney Islands with the Scottish mainland below left.



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; [Highland Park "Valkyrie"](#). For more information on [Highland Park](#) go to www.highlandparkwhisky.com





Highland Park Distillery

The origins of the northernmost distillery in the world are heady and colorful. Highland Park Distillery began as an illegal still in the 1790s on a hill outside Kirkwall in Orkney, Scotland. Magnus Eunson of Gallowhill, a church official by day and a smuggler by night, began Highland Park Distillery and using the exceptional waters of the region.

This classic single malt distillery is unusual in that it uses hard water, mostly from the Crantit Spring.

Highland Park was founded in 1798, and in 1813 it was taken over by a syndicate that purchased the High Park estate and distillery. It was actually known as Highland Park from 1818 when Robert Borwick and his son-in-law, John Robertson, who was Eunson's arresting officer, became its official co-founders. The distillery was purchased in 1876 by Stuart & Mackay.

From its early years Highland Park whisky was renowned for its high quality and flavor. It was bought by manufacturers Chivas Brothers, Haig & Co, George Ballantine & Co and John Dewar & Sons to add to their blends of Scotch. In 1895 James Grant became the partner of James Mackay after the death of William Stuart.

The Grant family controlled Highland Park until 1937 when it became part of the Highland Distillers' Group. It was run as a subsidiary and retained the name James Grant & Co for many years.

Today, the distilleries with their twin pagodas and 26 warehouses are a dominant feature of Orkney. Its Visitor's Centre and tour are highly popular and it is a good place to learn about the age old distilling process. The high quality of the whisky is attributed to the adherence to tradition, exacting standards and integrity in the manufacturing process.

Highland is one of the few distilleries in Scotland that still have their own floor maltings. It may be expensive, physically demanding and time consuming, but the malt is still turned by hand. 20% of the malt comes from Orkney and the rest from one of its sister distilleries.



Highland Park Distillery cont.

The peat for the kiln comes from the company owned Hobbister Moor; and is cut shallow in April and dried during summer.

This is crucial to the whisky's distinctive peaty flavor. The casks are made from Spanish and American oak, which give this single malt its unique character.

It wasn't till 1979 that the distillery launched its own proprietary brands and bottles, beginning with Highland Park 12 Year Old single malt. This is rated very highly by experts and appeals to a wide range of tastes. Highland Park 1967 was launched in 1991. In 1997 and 1998 they introduced Highland Park 18 Year Old, which is slightly lighter in color, and Highland Park 25 Year Old. Several limited editions such as Highland Park 35 Year Old, Goodwin's Reserve were very successful. The commemorative Bicentenary Edition 21 year old was released in 1998. 40 Year Old Highland Park 1958, released in 1999 and 2,000 bottles of Highland Park 2000 to mark the millennium were instant hits.

A limited edition whisky, Capella, commemorated the 60th anniversary of Orkney's world famous Italian Chapel. Others include Highland Park 15 Year Old, introduced in the UK in 2003 and Highland Park 30 year old that was launched in 2005. Highland Park 16 Year Old was also launched in 2005 exclusively for global duty free markets.

From: <http://www.scotland.com/scotch-whisky-distilleries/orkney/highland>

