



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 Fettercairn "Fior", which I tried with dinner recently at the Witchery Restaurant in Edinburgh, Scotland. Fior is Gaelic for "true" (or pure), and is a reimagining of their prior 12-year-old release, bottled at 42%. The "Fior" is ageless, or at least, comes as a No Age Statement (NAS) whisky. Have they used younger whiskies in this single malt?

To my suspicious mind, probably. This is becoming a more and more common practice these days, and if you speak to anyone connected to the distillery (any distillery that is producing NAS), you will here, how it frees the master distiller/blender from the constraint of putting an age on the bottle and allows him to produce a great product.

Funny how the proliferation of NAS whiskies follows hot on the heels of projections that said; we were looking at a shortage of whisky stocks? As I said, just my suspicious Mind. Having just turned into a conspiracy theorist, let me add, it is not always to the detriment of the quality of the whisky in your bottle. this whisky demonstrates, you can make an NAS whisky that tastes good and is relatively inexpensive (pay attention Macallan, with your colored nonsense).

You can buy Fettercairn "Fior" for around \$60.00 a bottle.

Tasting Notes;

Nose - Citrus fruits & coffee

Palate - Coffee, dark chocolate, hint of smoke & spice

Finish - Sherry & pineapple

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett





The Fettercairn Distillery

Fettercairn Distillery was founded in 1824 by Alexander Ramsay, owner of the Fasque estate, who converted a corn mill at Nethermill into a distillery. After losing his fortune, Alexander was forced to sell the estate to the Gladstone family in 1829. John Gladstone's son William Gladstone, went on to become Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer and was instrumental in passing various reforms on the taxation of whisky.

The distillery is owned by the Whyte & Mackay company, who acquired it in 1973 and is located as you could probably guess, in the town of Fettercairn which is nestled under the Grampian foothills in the Howe of Mearns.

The town's name is loosely based on the phrase 'the foot of the mountain'.

The arch and the unicorn symbols used on the whisky labels are heavily associated with Fettercairn. The arch is at the entrance to the town and was built to commemorate a visit by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1861.

The unicorn is said to stand for purity and strength and has been a symbol of Scotland since the reign of King Robert III. It is also used within the Ramsay clan crest, of which the founder Alexander Ramsay brought with him to the distillery.

Fettercairn is a pure spirit which is crafted by its unique stills and forged through temperate maturation. Within its process, the distillery uses a unique irrigator ring that surrounds the stills which drenches the still to deliver only the purest spirit.



Fettercairn Distillery

"You can't drink all day if you don't start in the morning."



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; Fettercairn "Fior." For more information go to <http://www.fettercairndistillery.co.uk>





The village of Fettercairn

The name of Fettercairn is well known to anyone who listens to Radio Scotland traffic broadcasts in winter. It lies at the southern end of the B974 Cairn o' Mount road, a road that climbs over the eastern extension of the Cairngorms to Banchory.

As a result it is regularly the first road in Scotland to close when the snows sweep in from the east.

Fettercairn itself is a glorious little village with a population of some 250. Its origins date back over a thousand years, and it was here in 995 that, according to the chronicler John of Fordun, Lady Finella killed King Kenneth II. In 1504 it was made a burgh and permitted to hold weekly markets and an annual fair dedicated to St Mark. By the mid 1600s Fettercairn was a thriving place, though this came to a sudden - if temporary - halt when the village was sacked and burned by the army of the Marquis of Montrose in 1645.

Undaunted, the residents rebuilt, and what emerged over the following centuries was the remarkably attractive village you see today. Built largely from a reddish sandstone, over 20 of the village's buildings are listed, including a number of those gathered around The Square, the home of the traditional markets held here. Fettercairn is also home to a fine church, built in 1803 and dedicated to St Martin. The beautifully slender spire is a later addition.

In the centre of The Square stands Fettercairn's mercat (or market) cross. No trace survives of the cross that would have stood in the village from 1504, and the shaft of the current cross is believed to have been moved to Fettercairn from nearby Kincardine when the latter was displaced by Stonehaven as the administrative focus of Kincardineshire. This probably happened in 1670, when a new head bearing that date was added to it.

Multifunctional, the cross incorporates a sundial and was also the village stocks: you can still see where an iron collar could be attached. On the west side of the shaft is a groove that is 37.5 inches (or one Ell) in length. This served as a standard length for traders doing business here.

For the visitor, the most obvious structure in Fettercairn is its arch, through which light traffic still squeezes. This was erected in 1864, at a cost of £250, to celebrate an overnight stay in the village by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in September 1861. They were on an excursion from Balmoral and had crossed Mount Keen before arriving in Fettercairn. They returned to Balmoral the following day over the Cairn o' Mount road in thick fog. The visit had been intended to be a secret, but by the time of their departure crowds of villagers had gathered to cheer the royal couple.



Fettercairn cont.

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The Fettercairn arch

On the north west side of the village, set beautifully against the hills beyond, lies the whitewashed Fettercairn Distillery. This dates back to 1824, though much of what you see today is later.

A mile to the north of Fettercairn is Fasque, a superb stately home built in 1809 and from 1829 the family home of the Gladstones, whose most famous son was William Gladstone, one of the Prime Ministers to serve under Queen Victoria.

Less remains of the area's original grand residence, Kincardine Castle, first built in stone in the 1200s on the site of a series of earlier wooden castles, all intended to guard the southern end of the strategically important Cairn o' Mount road.

The castle, which originally had curtain walls 24ft high, was demolished in 1646, and today there is virtually no sign of it above ground.

With thanks to Undiscovered Scotland; www.undiscoveredscotland.co.uk