



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 Oban (Obin) Distillers Edition, which I first tasted at Jackson's Restaurant in Santa Rosa. I like this a lot, but I don't think, quite as much as the 14-year-old which I think is just superb, and which has been a favorite for many a year. I say the distillers edition runs it close and is my next favorite Oban whisky.

That may change, as I going to visit the Oban distillery in June of this year and hopefully get to taste some more of their fine whiskies.

Oban whiskies are generally know for their smooth honey-and-fruit character and this bottling continues that trend. The distillery is situated in the town of Oban, on the west coast of Scotland in the highland region. Unfortunately the distillery is Constrained from expanding as the town has grown up all around the distillery, which causes me some consternation. The inability to expand from only two stills, means production is rather small and as the world discovers Oban whiskies the price continually rises. Which is actually preferable to stopping producing your flagship bottlings and throwing out No Age Statements, under the guise of giving the distiller more freedom. Oops! Sorry went on a rant.

You can buy Oban Distillers Edition for around \$110.00 a bottle.

Tasting Notes;

Nose - Sherried fruit, heather, apple

Palate - Black cherry, apple, honey

Finish - Black cherry and a hint of smoke

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett





5 Trends: Scotch by Charles McLean

Thirsty? In just the last minute, more than 2,000 bottles of [Scotch](#) were sold worldwide. To keep up with this demand, distillers are producing practically a river of whisky, and much of it is flowing to the US, which is the industry's largest market by value. But such popularity requires brands to continually innovate and introduce new bottlings, so to help you stay on top of the latest developments, we asked Scotch expert Charles MacLean for the five biggest trends happening now. Here's what he had to say.

GOODBYE, 18-YEAR-OLDS:

Success brings its own problems for distillers, who are facing a shortage of mature whiskies as well as trying to increase product diversity. As a result, the industry is moving away from defining whiskies by age. Outside the US, [The Macallan](#) has released the 1824 Series, which calls its bottlings by their color—Gold, Amber, Sienna and Ruby. The idea is to encourage consumers to judge a whisky solely by its flavor, and it allows the producer to extend its older stocks by mixing them with younger malts.

PRICES ARE GOING UP:

It's not your imagination: Scotch is getting more expensive. Shortages of aged whiskies combined with ever-increasing global demand leads to ever-increasing prices. This is occurring not only for highly collectable malts but also for everyday drams. Expect prices to be even higher in the new year.

SCOTCH IS GETTING STRONGER:

One way of justifying the higher price of a whisky—especially when there is no age statement—is to raise the proof. While there are some advantages of a higher-proof spirit, like potentially more flavor and better mixability in cocktails, it also likely means the malts are younger, since Scotch loses potency as it ages in the barrel.

MORE WOOD FINISHES:

It used to be that a brand's product range was solely based on whiskies of different ages. But increasingly, portfolios are filled with a variety of malts that have been aged in different casks (often former wine or port barrels) for the last year or so of their maturation. [Glenmorangie](#) is the leader in this game, but you'll see even more of these interesting malts on store shelves soon.

THE ULTRA, ULTRA HIGH END:

Super-premium bottlings...at super-premium prices! Distillers are digging through their warehouses to find very rare and very old malts, which are aimed at investors, collectors and oligarchs. Some of the recent limited editions include The Dalmore Aurora 45-Year-Old at \$4,000; [Bowmore](#) 1964 at \$13,500; and [Glenfiddich](#) 50 Year Old at \$25,000!

Charles MacLean, Master of the Quaich and James Beard Award winner, is the author of ten books on Scotch, including the [Whiskypedia](#). <http://liquor.com/articles/scotch-what-to-drink-now>



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; [Oban Distillers Edition](#). For more information go to <https://www.malts.com/en-ca/distilleries/oban>





Airline Whisky by Fred Minnick

Ah, I'm 30,000 feet above ground, my ear buds playing my favorite band—Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young—and the beverage cart comes rolling up to my coach seat.

“What will you have, sir?” the airline attendant asks.

I reply: “What bourbons do you have?”

“Dewar's,” she says.

“That's a blended scotch, ma'am,” I say.

“Okay, we have...” She pulls the cart drawers in and out, the little minis sloshing around as other passengers peek at the selection. “Canadian Club, here we go.” She twists the cap before I can tell her that good old Canadian Club isn't bourbon. Other passengers are waiting for their pretzels and tomato juice; I don't have the heart to keep them waiting.

If you fly a lot, you've likely had to settle yourself. Sometimes the airlines don't have the whiskey and sometimes turbulence keeps you from that precious pour. And then there's the brand confusion. I once requested Jim Beam and received Jack Daniel's. It happens. But that's not to say that the flying whiskey lover should not have access to a preferred in-flight whiskey.

Here's who's serving what:

Alaska Airlines: Dewar's, Jack Daniel's, and Crown Royal.

American Airlines: Canadian Club, Dewar's, Jack Daniel's.

Delta: Canadian Club, Jack Daniel's, Jack Daniel's Honey, and Woodford Reserve.

Frontier Airlines: Breckinridge Bourbon, Jack Daniel's, and Dewar's.

Jet Blue: Dewar's and Jack Daniel's.

Southwest: Dewar's, Jack Daniel's, and Wild Turkey.

Spirit: Crown Royal, Fireball, and Jack Daniel's.

United: Buffalo Trace, Canadian Club, Crown Royal, Dewar's, Jack Daniel's, and Jim Beam Devil's Cut.



Airline Whisky Cont.

United: Buffalo Trace, Canadian Club, Crown Royal, Dewar's, Jack Daniel's, and Jim Beam Devil's Cut.

Virgin: Jack Daniel's and Glenfiddich Single Malt.

Of course, these products are subject to availability and the airline attendants' ability to find them in the cart. But there is hope. You can bring your own whiskey.

Yes, despite the incredible security measures placed upon passengers since 9/11, you can carry on alcohol. For amounts greater than 3.4 ounces, according to the Transportation Security Administration, it must be transported in checked baggage. Mike England, the national TSA spokesperson, told me, "Bottles of alcohol 3.4 ounces or less must adhere to the 3-1-1 rule for liquids:

containers must be 3.4 ounces or less; stored in a 1 quart/liter zip-top bag; 1 zip-top bag per person, placed in the screening bin. Larger amounts of liquids, gels, and aerosols must be placed in checked baggage. ... The FAA limits quantities of alcohol permitted on board planes based on the alcohol content (proof). In general, there is no limit on the amount of alcoholic beverages containing 24% or less alcohol in checked baggage.

You may take up to five liters of alcohol with an alcohol content between 24% and 70% per person as checked luggage if it's packaged in a sealable bottle or flask. Alcoholic beverages with more than 70% alcohol content (140 proof), including 95% grain alcohol and 150 proof rum are not permitted in either carry-on or checked luggage."

So, unless you're traveling with off-the-still new make whiskey samples, your whiskey should be permitted as carry-on at the appropriate ounce amounts and in checked baggage. But your checked bag still runs a higher risk of being searched. The whiskey's proof is likely to set off an alert and require further TSA inspection. What are you filling your travel flask with?



Is it just me or do you also think that Passport Scotch is an obvious choice for airlines?