



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 am merely expressing my opinion on the whiskies I am tasting, as you know, everybody has one.

I now look at the Cardhu 18-year-old single malt scotch whisky. The Cardhu distillery was licensed in 1823, but had been distilling illegally for decades prior to that time. Located in Speyside and owned by Johnny Walker Cardhu whisky is a key part of Johnny Walker's blended whiskies. That's why you probably haven't seen a great deal of different Cardhu whiskies on the shelves of your liquor Stores.

As you would expect from an 18-year-old Speyside it is very fruit forward on the nose and palate. Being an 18-year-old it also has a nice oily mouthfeel to it.

Would I buy it? Absolutely. This is a great whisky!

You can buy Cardhu 18-year-old whisky for around \$90.00 A bottle.

Tasting Notes

Nose - Lots of fruit, plum, pear & with a hint of pineapple.

Palate - Stewed fruits, Plums, Cherries & Chocolate

Finish - Fruit with a touch of Cocoa.

"Slainte Mhath"
Paul Bissett





10 Essential Whisky Experiences in Scotland

By Life on Beacon

With more than 120 active distilleries in a country that's roughly the size of South Carolina, it's no wonder Scotland is at the top of many scotch lover's vacations. But with all of those options, how do you make the most of a trip to Scotland?

1. Create Your Own Single Malt Blend

Most single malts are the mix of multiple casks from the same distillery ("single malt Scotch whisky" must be distilled from pot stills at a single distillery).

Blending casks together to get the target characteristics to shine takes decades to master – but you can try it yourself at several distilleries in Scotland. On the Solera Deconstructed tour at Glenfiddich in Speyside, you learn about the differences between sherry, bourbon, and new oak maturation, then mix your own 50cl bottle in the lab above their tasting room.

2. Take A Tour From A Legend

There are a few people in the Scotch industry that have really made a name for themselves like Colin Scott (Strathisla, master blender for Chivas) and occasionally step in to lead a tour. Our favorite is the Warehouse Experience at Lagavullin, led by "the Islay legend", Iain McArthur. Iain has worked at Lagavulin for 50 years as of August of this year (!) and grew up on Islay. He's become the face of Lagavulin and one minute in the room with him, you'll understand why guests come back year after year for *the same tour with him*. One of our favorite souvenirs from the trip was a bottle of the Lagavulin Jazz Festival exclusive bottling that Iain signed for us, from casks he hand-selected, that we keep on display on our bar at home.

3. Stay At A Distillery

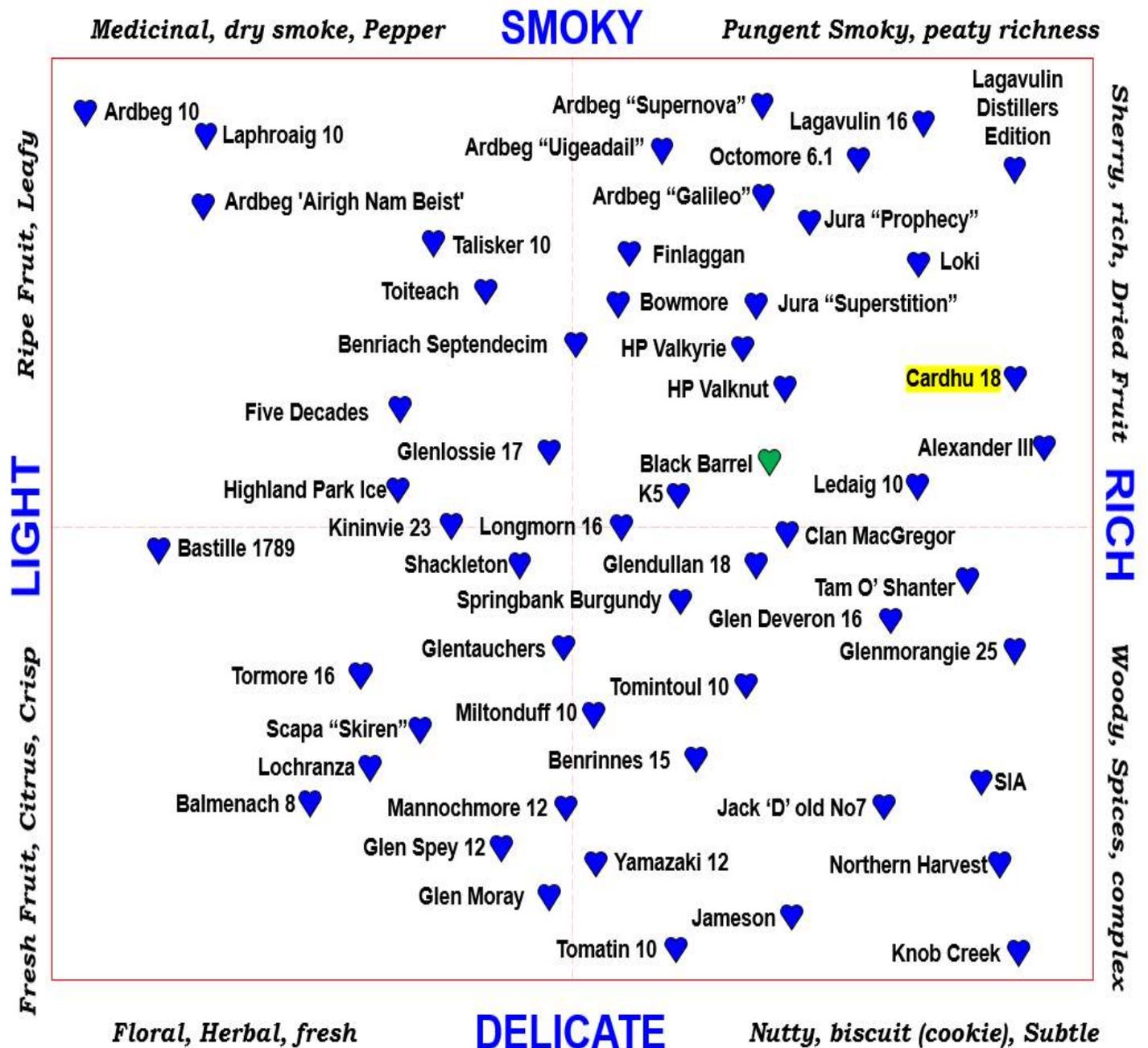
What's better than visiting a distillery? Sleeping at one!

On Islay, check out the Bowmore Cottages which are built into the walls of Bowmore Distillery or the Cottages at Ardbeg, both on Islay. Both are great for extended vacations or group trips and are equipped with all the conveniences of home. You can also opt for the Harbour Inn on Islay, owned by Bowmore Distillery but located across the street, for more of a hotel feel.

Book early though – availability goes quickly!



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; [Cardhu 18-year-old](#) For more information on this whisky go to www.malts.com/en-row/products/single-malt-whisky/cardhu





10 Essential Whisky Experiences in Scotland cont.

4. Sample Straight From The Cask

While single barrel bottlings are common for bourbons, it's rare to find a scotch single cask direct from a distillery (you can purchase from independent bottlers, though). This is because a single malt may contain whisky aged in a mix of bourbon or sherry casks, or might be matured in 2-3 different types of casks before bottling. Casks are blended together to get the target flavors.

Several distilleries in Scotland offer special tours where you can pull straight from the cask and sample the difference between different cask types and maturation processes. Our favorites were Laphroaig and Lagavulin on Islay.

5. Work A Malting Floor

The *best* malting floor experience is at Port Ellen Maltings where that's all they do. It's only open during the Islay Whisky Festival, so definitely get on the list for that if you're traveling to Islay in late May.

You can also view the malting floors at Laphroaig (Islay), Kilchoman (Islay), Highland Park (Orkney), and Benriach (Speyside), among others.

6. Visit A Cooperage

Scotch aged in a variety of different casks, from used Bourbon barrels to Sherry casks to new oak barrels. New barrels are the least common, so cooperages in Scotland focus on reassembling and repairing barrels that ship in from the US (bourbon barrels), France, and Spain (wine barrels).

Crafting and repairing crafts is still done by hand using traditional tools at many cooperages (Diagio's Cambus Cooperage in Alloa is the exception, with a High-tech automated production line). It's quite impressive to watch!

Several distilleries have their own cooperages you can visit but they all pale in comparison to the Speyside Cooperage, located near Glenfiddich and Macallan in Speyside.



10 Essential Whisky Experiences in Scotland cont.

7. Sample “Low Wines” and New Make”

When the grain completes the fermentation process, then resulting mixture is called “low wines”, a sour yellow/orange juice with an alcohol content similar to beer.

It then goes through pot stills to distill. The resulting spirit, before it has been aged, is called “new make spirit”.

A few distilleries will let you sample both the low wines and new make, where you can start to taste the unique flavors of the whisky come together. See if you can spot the impact of the peat fires in the low wines at Laphroaig or the subtle sweetness from the spring water at Glenfiddich.

8. Cut Your Own Peat

Peat is used as the fuel source for fires under the malting floor in several Scotch producing regions, and is an essential to giving a number of best-selling scotches that smoky flavor. The peat itself is partially decayed vegetation that takes thousands of years to form the dense fuel source. While it’s not a truly renewable resource given the amount of time it takes to regrow, they estimate there’s enough today to last another thousand or so years.

Islay has one of the largest peat reserves, which has made the island popular over the years with distillers and scotch enthusiasts. Stop off the A846 just South of the Islay Airport to walk around the Laphroaig peat fields or sign up for the Water to Whisky Experience during warmer months to cut your own.

9. Bottle A Distillery Exclusive

Many distilleries now offer single casks or special blends that you can bottle yourself in the gift shop for a one-of-a-kind souvenir. Some of the most popular include *The Laphroaig peat fields*, *Islay* and *Aberlour* (Speyside). Skip the bottling at places like Glenfiddich where the “bottle your own” option is a commonly available bottling with an up-charge to seal yourself.

10. Enjoy A Dram in a Whisky Library

Scotland is home to some of the most impressive whisky bars, with expansive lists of scotch by the dram. Many carry limited and exclusive bottlings you might not otherwise come across – or would be price-prohibitive to own in your own collection.

One of the most impressive is The Dowan’s Hotel in Speyside. Other libraries worth a visit include the Quaich Bar at the Craigellachie Hotel in Speyside and the Pot Still in Glasgow. Find a comfy chair and split a few drams with your traveling companions so you can each sample a few more – and just accept that you may be in for an expensive evening!

Life on Beacon website; www.lifeonbeacon.com/essential-whisky-experiences