



## 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. "Slainte."*

In this issue I look at "Monkey Shoulder", a whisky I had been hearing about from my friends in Britain for the last two years. It has finally been released in California, so at last I get to try it. This is a new **blended malt** which is made up of Balvenie, Glenfiddich and Kininvie, all of which are owned by William Grant & Sons, as is Monkey Shoulder.

Don't confuse Blended Malt Scotch Whisky, which comprises only Single Malt Scotch Whiskies (100% malted barley) from more than one distillery with a Blended Scotch whisky. A blended whisky may contain as many as 40 or 50 different malt and grain whiskies. The normal ratio of grain to malt is 60% grain: 40% malt. This is a superb creamy malt whisky with a nice overlay of subtle orange flavor. A nice bonus, this whisky retails for around \$30.

### Tasting Notes;

**Nose** - Pear, cinnamon, butterscotch, vanilla

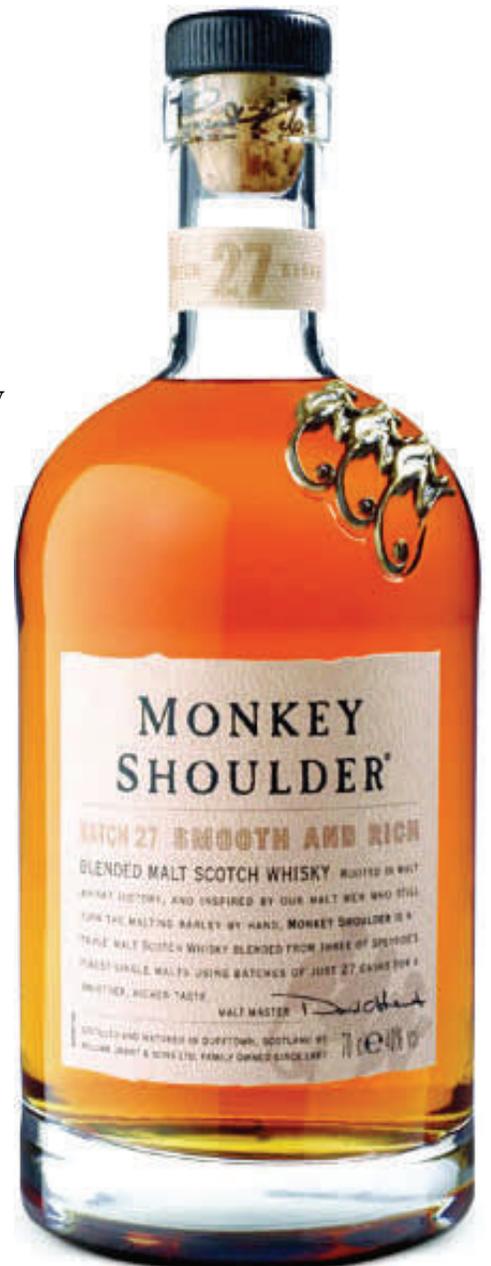
**Palate** - Oak, orange zest & a hint of spice

**Finish** - Medium with light vanilla, orange & cloves

*If you have a personal favorite and you would like it to feature in future "Slange" newsletters, please let me know. I can be contacted at my website [www.scot-talks.com](http://www.scot-talks.com)*

*"Slainte Mhath"*

*Paul Bissett*





## A wee bit of History

In the past "Monkey Shoulder" referred to an injury suffered by the malt men who turned the barley by hand as it lay drying on the floor of the maltings. Today's working conditions are such that the injury has been consigned to the past.

Malting is the process of converting barley into malt (Maltose sugar), for use in distilling and takes place in a maltings (or malthouse).

The barley is steeped (immersed) in water two or three times over two or three days to allow the grain to absorb moisture (moisture content of around 45%) and to start to sprout.

After soaking, the sprouted barley is dried by spreading it on a perforated wooden floor, where it is constantly turned over for around five days as the heat/smoke rises up from below drying the barley (if peat is used as the fuel, this is where the peatiness comes from in your whisky).

A typical floor maltings is a long, single-story building with a floor that slopes slightly from one end of the building to the other.

Floor maltings began to be phased out in the 1940s in favor of "pneumatic plants". Here, large industrial fans are used to blow air through the germinating grain beds and to pass hot air through the malt.

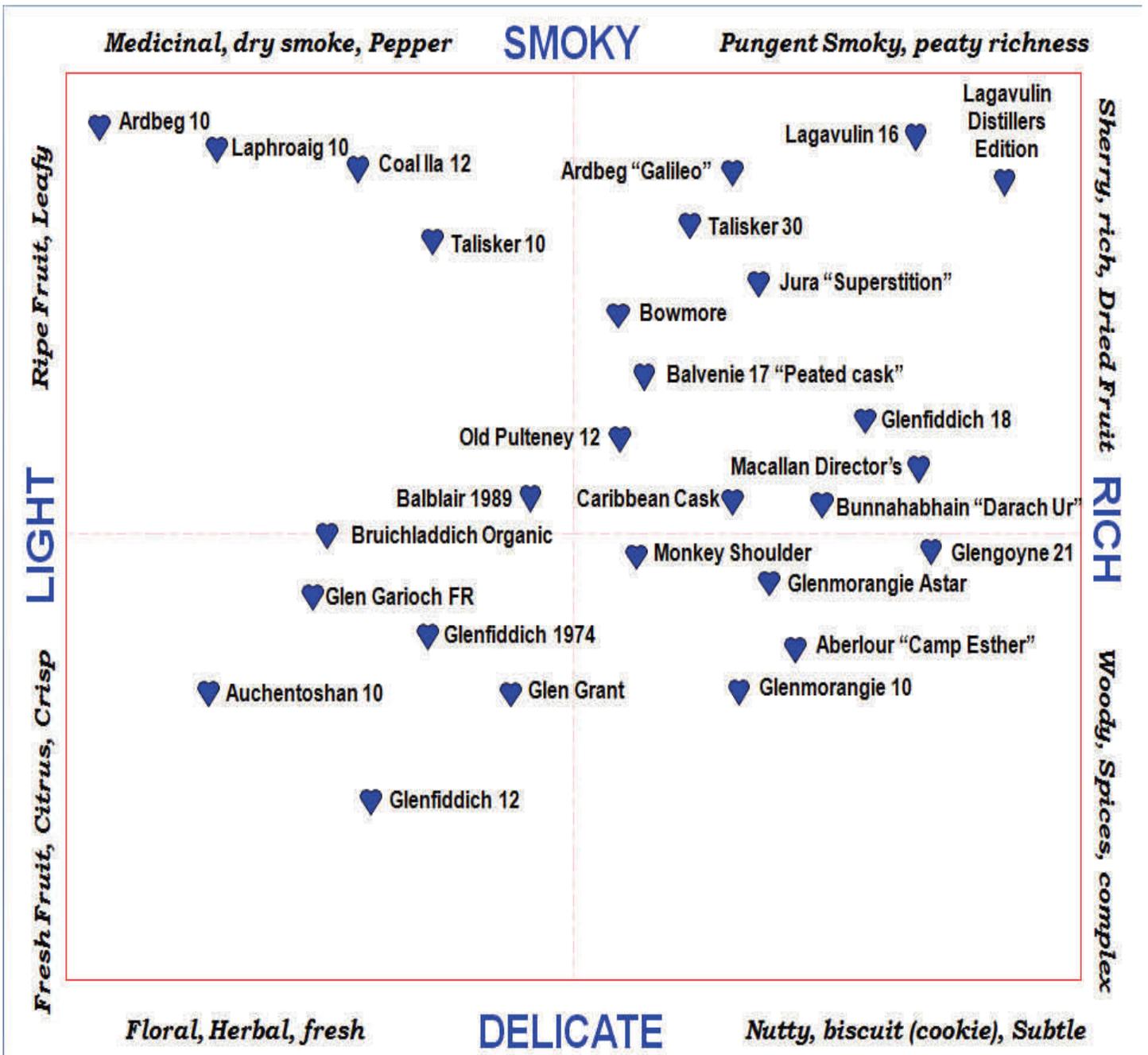


### "A Cowboy's Guide to Life"

Lettin' the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier 'n puttin' it back in.



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. With each issue of the newsletter I will add in another Whisky to the flavor map. This Issue; Monkey Shoulder For more information go to <http://www.monkeyshoulder.com>





## CNN names Scotland as world's top destination

<http://edition.cnn.com/2013/01/01/travel/top-destinations-2013/index.html>

Scotland came ahead of Morocco and Amsterdam, with scenes from the latest Bond film cited as evidence of the country's appeal for tourists.

CNN said anyone who had seen Skyfall, part of which was filmed in Glencoe, would have left the cinema wishing they could "race through Scotland's dramatic countryside."

### **VisitScotland welcomed the accolade.**

CNN highlighted the myriad of outdoor events taking place in Scotland in 2013, including the Open Championship golf tournament in July, the Scottish Food and Drink Fortnight in September and the Dumfries and Galloway Wildlife Festival, which starts in March.

It also noted Scotland's Great Trails, a network of long distance routes for walkers.

A feature **published on the broadcaster's website** said: "Scotland has seen fit to dub 2013 the "Year of Natural Scotland," and what better time to do it?

"Anyone who saw the 2012 James Bond thriller "Skyfall" walked away wishing they too could race through Scotland's dramatic countryside and hide out in its misty highlands (granted, while not being pursued by a homicidal Javier Bardem).

"The entire length of the country - all 750 kilometers of it - can be walked via the recently announced Gore-Tex Scottish National Trail. The trail, which runs from the English border to Cape Wrath, travels past pristine lochs and haunting glens as it follows mainly existing routes, such as the West Highland Way and Rob Roy Way."

Scotland was followed by the Moroccan capital Rabat, with the Slovakian city of Kosice third in CNN's list of top travel destinations.

In fourth place was Sub-Saharan Africa, fifth was Gettysburg in Pennsylvania and Amsterdam came sixth.

Mike Cantlay, chairman of VisitScotland, said: "Undoubtedly the global success of Brave and the awe-inspiring images of Scotland in Skyfall will have whetted the appetite of many potential visitors from home and around the world. Throughout 2013 we must capitalize on this success and position the majesty and magnificence of natural Scotland on the world stage.