



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.

In this issue I look at the Glengoyne 18-year-old, which I tasted at WhiskFest in San Francisco in October of 2012. Back in 2007 my wife Tracey, myself and our friend David McDonald hiked the West Highland Way from Milngavie just outside Glasgow to Fort William. The trail passes in front of the Glengoyne distillery. We did not stop there, and I've always regretted not stopping, well redemption can be had, the new John Muir trail also passes by the front door of this distillery (more information on page 3). I have tried the Glengoyne 10-year-old and thought it need a few more years in the cask, this on the other hand is well worth drinking, very, very nice. So if you hike either trail, take the time to stop and taste some fine scotch.

You can buy Glengoyne 18-year-old for around \$120.00 a bottle.

Tasting Notes;

Nose - Spicy candied peels, vanilla

Palate - Vanilla custard, spicy candied peels and butterscotch

Finish - Caramel, candied peels and malt

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 paul@scot-talks.com

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett





John Muir way opens across central Scotland

A new walking route stretching more than 100 miles across central Scotland was officially opened in April, celebrating the legacy of John Muir.

The naturalist was born in Scotland in 1838, but migrated to the United States of America at the age of 11, becoming a popular environmental campaigner and helping to establish national parks and conservation areas.

The John Muir Way runs 134 miles (215km) between Helensburgh on the West Coast, past Loch Lomond and through Falkirk, Linlithgow, Edinburgh and North Berwick, to his birthplace in Dunbar.

First Minister Alex Salmond will officially open the route in Dunbar on the 21st of April 2014 amid a celebration of Muir's legacy with a host of street performances and community events.

The path can be used by walkers, cyclists and even horse riders, and takes in coastal scenery, wildlife sites historic buildings such as Linlithgow Palace, Blackness Castle and popular tourist attractions like the Falkirk Wheel.

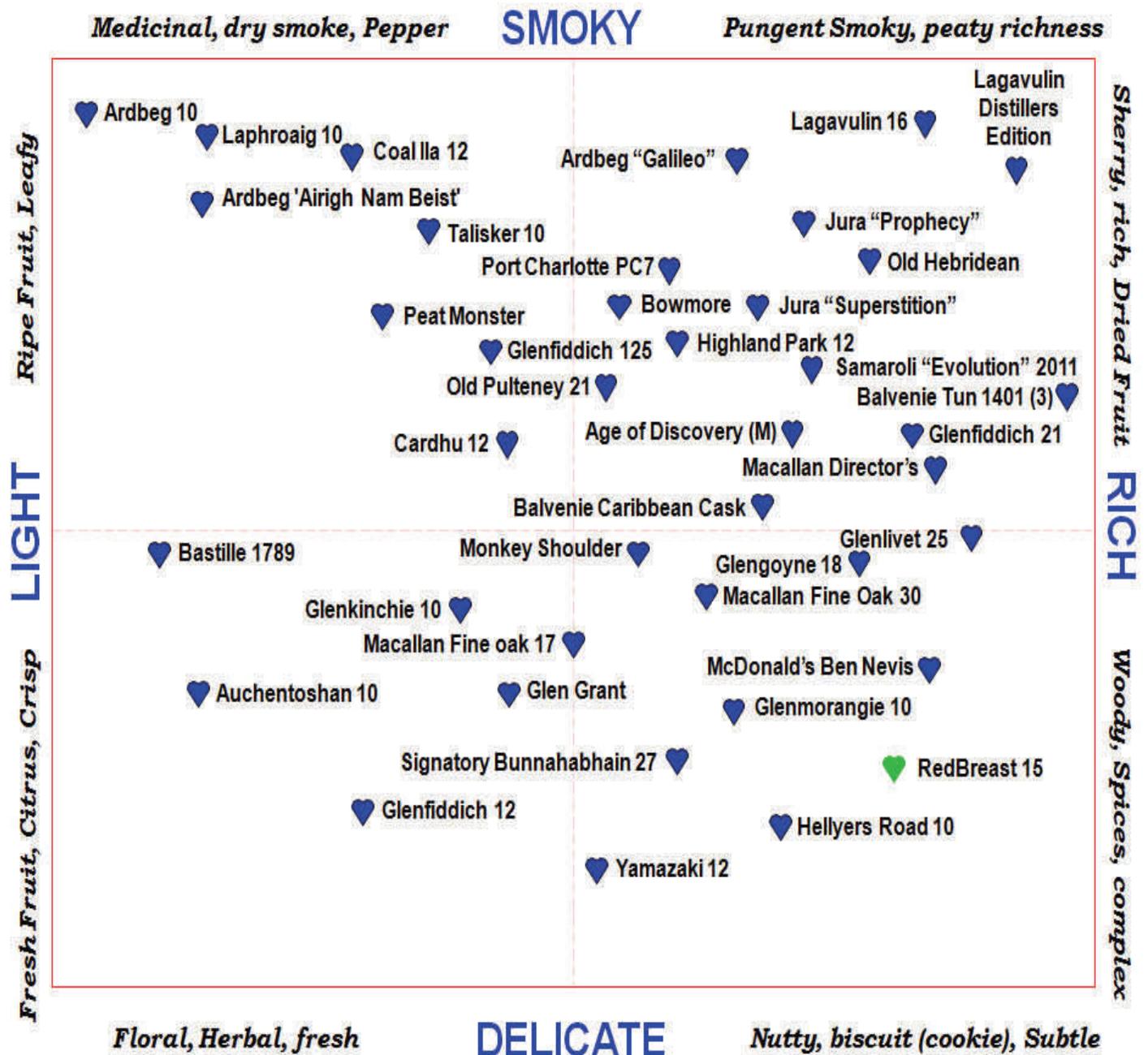
The route is marked with signs, there are also websites, such as <http://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/john-muir-way.shtml>, a book, leaflets and a map have been created to give people the information they need to complete all or part of the trail.



Blackness castle (where I played as a child), with the Forth Road Bridge and the Forth Rail Bridge behind. All of which you walk past on the new John Muir trail.



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; Glengoyne 18-year-old. For more information go to <http://www.glengoyne.com/our-whisky>





Scotland's Great hiking Trails

www.walkhighlands.co.uk/long-distance-routes.shtml

Scotland's Great Trails	Length	Completed
Annandale Way	88km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ayrshire Coastal Path	147km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Berwickshire Coastal Path	48km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Borders Abbeys Way	107km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cateran Trail	104km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clyde Walkway	63km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dava Way	38km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fife Coastal Path	183km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formartine and Buchan Way	86km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Forth & Clyde and Union Canals	101km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Great Glen Way	117km	<input type="checkbox"/>
John Muir Way	73km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kintyre Way	140km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Moray Coast Trail	72km	<input type="checkbox"/>
River Ayr Way	65km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rob Roy Way	128km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Southern Upland Way	338km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Speyside Way	106km	<input type="checkbox"/>
St Cuthbert's Way	100km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Three Lochs Way	53km	<input type="checkbox"/>
West Highland Way	151km	<input type="checkbox"/>
West Island Way	48km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Long Distance Walks	Length	Completed
Cowal Way	90km	<input type="checkbox"/>
East Highland Way	128km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Skye Trail	128km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cape Wrath Trail	378km	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scottish National Trail (not shown on map)	864km	Own page

Scotland's Great Trails are nationally promoted long distance routes. They provide superb opportunities to get out there on foot to discover and explore some of the best of Scotland's

landscape and wildlife. The trails vary greatly in character, from sections of the Clyde Walkway through the centre of the city of Glasgow to the mountain grandeur revealed by the ever popular West Highland Way.

What the Great Trails share is that all are continuous waymarked routes, largely off-road, with the potential for multi-day journeys on foot. All offer a rewarding experience and a chance to appreciate the natural, cultural and historic interest through which they pass. Whilst some of the trails are usually walked in a single holiday, others have good public transport links to each section allowing easy access and enabling you to walk them a stage at a time. Walkhighlands would like to acknowledge the support of Scottish Natural Heritage for its help with the funding of our guides to some of the above routes.



The Annandale Way

The Annandale Way is a new route that runs from the top of the valley at Annandale Head in the hills north of the town of Moffat to the mouth of the River Annan and the Solway Firth.

Annandale Head is the start of the route but it lies away from roads so the first day of the Annandale Way is a loop north from Moffat, climbing from the banks of the River Annan to heather moorland and rolling hills with the dramatic deep scoop of the Devil's beeftub prominent before descending back to the town. From Moffat the route makes its way south through farmland, forest and moorland, passing under the M74 motorway and over the West Coast rail line.

Stage descriptions	Length	Time
<u>Devil's Beef Tub circuit from Moffat</u>	22.5km	5 - 6 hours
<u>Moffat to St Ann's</u>	13km	3.5 - 4 hours
<u>St Ann's to Lochmaben</u>	15.75km	3.5 - 4.5 hours
<u>Lochmaben to Hoddom Castle</u>	21.5km	4.5 - 5.5 hours
<u>Hoddom Castle to the Solway Firth</u>	16.25km	4 - 4.5 hours
Alternative Lockerbie branch:		
<u>St Ann's to Lockerbie</u>	20.75km	4.5 - 5.5 hours
<u>Lockerbie to Hoddom Castle</u>	12.5km	3.5 - 4 hours

At Corncockle Plantation a decision has to be made as the route splits here, the eastern arm staying in the heart of the valley and passing close to the town of Lockerbie, the western arm passing through the little town of Lochmaben and then venturing up onto the hills edging the valley. The two routes come together again at another wood, Sorrysike Moor, from where the Annandale Way heads to the coast mostly along the banks of the River Annan, passing Hoddom Castle and going through the town of Annan before reaching the Solway Firth.

The mix of terrain makes this a wonderful walk for natural history, especially flowers, trees and birds. There are some magnificent woods and a wide variety of birds - moorland, woodland, field, river and coast. It's well worth carrying a pair of binoculars. There is much history along the way too, from standing stones, hill forts and pele towers to castles and mansions.

The route is mostly clearly waymarked, apart from at a couple of points highlighted in the text; the waymarks may be attached to fence posts, gates, trees or boulders. If you don't see one scan the area - some are not obvious at a glance. There are many gates en route, mostly metal ones with levers or large latches. These stand out from the usual farm gates tied up with twine and can be spotted across a field before you see a waymark.

THE CHALLENGE

The Annandale Way utilizes a mix of footpaths, country roads and forest and farm tracks with some cross-country sections. It is mostly a low-level route, though the first stage and the section up to Joe Graham's Monument are more challenging. The route is mostly waymarked clearly with fingerposts and circular markers.