



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 Glenfiddich 21 year old Gran Reserva. This is an outstanding whisky, which I first tasted at the Gaia Hotel in Anderson, California where I hosted a whisky evening. I have tasted it a number of times since. Kudos to Brian Kinsman the Glenfiddich Malt Master; this is "class in a glass", a sublime dram.

The 21 year old matures in American oak casks then the liquid is decanted into hand-selected Caribbean rum casks for up to four months, which imparts a rich toffee sweetness.

A bottle will set you back about \$150.00, but if you want to splash out on a luxury bottle for any reason, then I highly recommend this one.

Tasting Notes;

Nose - Honey, vanilla, toffee, dates, cinnamon

Palate - Rich honey, toffee & spice

Finish - Long buttery & warm, with spicy citrus

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

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett





A wee bit of History

William Grant & sons are the owners of the Glenfiddich brand, here follows a small piece on the septs of clan Grant, for the full article go to www.clangrant-us.org

"Sept" is an Irish concept, a term meaning "family within a family", and it has come to be associated with the Scottish clans. Some historians take issue with this term as they consider it inaccurate and inappropriate in the context of the Scottish clan system. Others take the view that while the term may not be accurate from a purely historical context, it is a term that has now come to take on such meaning in the modern clan societies that it is quite appropriate to be used in a modern context.

Allan (Allen, Alan, etc) - A "patronymic" derived from the first name of "Allan Grant", the son of an early Chief of Grant. Since there were other families who also derived their surname from the first name "Allan", this surname could possibly be associated with Clan MacDonald, Clan MacFarlane, or Clan MacKay as well as with Clan Grant. You may need to do some genealogy work to decide which clan is the one to which you most likely belong. If your family comes from the Strathspey region in the northeast, or the region of Glenmoriston on the western shores of Loch Ness, then you are in all likelihood a "Grant". Allan and its variants are Grants by blood.

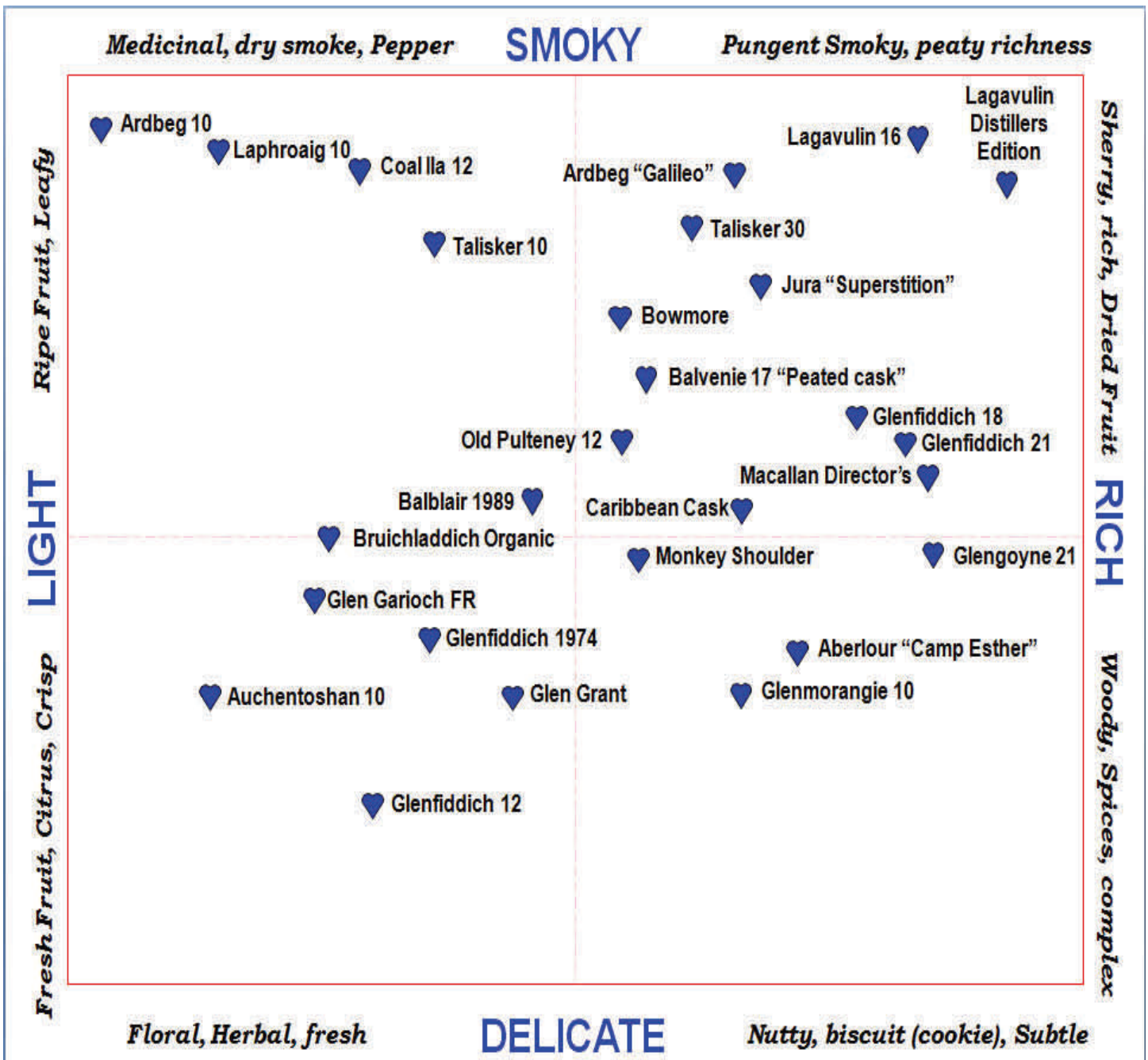
The Allans of Rhynagairn, descending from George Allan of Rhynagairn in Birnie is currently the only line of this name accepted as a member of Clan Grant without further documentation.

Bisset (Bissette, Biset, Bizet, etc) - The Bissets are an ancient family from Normandy who history tells us had strong ties of friendship with the Grants. There are some who think that the Grants were brought north to Scotland when the Bissets returned from their exile in the 1240's. There are others who believe the opposite, that the Grant's ventured south in the company of the Bissets after establishing a strong friendship with the family in Scotland. There is documentation recording the bonds of friendship between the Grants and Bissets in the north and two Grants were witnesses to a charter for a Bisset in the late 13th century.

William le Graunt married Albreda Bisset in England, bringing the Grant's lands in both Nottinghamshire and in Stratherrick. The Bissets are an example of an adopted surname, as the two families have ancient ties of friendship. Clan Fraser also claims the Bissets as a sept name.



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; Glenfiddich 21 year old For more information go to <http://www.glenfiddich.us>





Five Scotch Myths

by Charles MacLean

I travel the world educating drinkers about Scotch for a living. Most recently, I was in Taiwan for the annual Whisky Live show in Taipei. Over the course of two days, I conducted 10 masterclasses, during which a number of misconceptions surfaced. I thought I would debunk them in print, since plenty of you no doubt have similar questions.

PALE WHISKIES ARE NOT AS GOOD AS DARK WHISKIES.

This is a common mistake, especially in Asia, but color is an unreliable indicator of quality. In fact, many brands use flavorless spirit caramel to darken their products and maintain color consistency from batch to batch. But a pale spirit can be robust—like Cutty Sark, which was created specifically for the United States during Prohibition by London wine merchant Berry Bros. & Rudd.

WHISKY SHOULD BE DRUNK STRAIGHT.

No, whisky should be enjoyed just as you like it: straight, on the rocks, with soda (currently very popular in Japan), green tea (the Chinese love this) or coconut water (the craze in Brazil). But for full “appreciation,” particularly of single malt, skip the ice and try a little water, which opens up the aroma and makes it easier to evaluate the taste.

HIGH-STRENGTH WHISKIES AREN'T WORTH IT.

Over the last few years, most distillers have introduced potent cask-strength bottlings. But these whiskies are not just gimmicks. Usually, the higher the proof of the alcohol, the more congeners it retains, which means bigger flavor. If you add a dash of water to a dram, these elements become volatile, enhancing the aroma.

PRICE = QUALITY.

Not necessarily. Quality is a matter of personal taste and is influenced by who you're drinking with and where. But there is no guarantee you'll like an expensive whisky more than you will an inexpensive one. The price reflects rarity, how long the distillery has had to hold on to the whisky and the cost of the packaging.

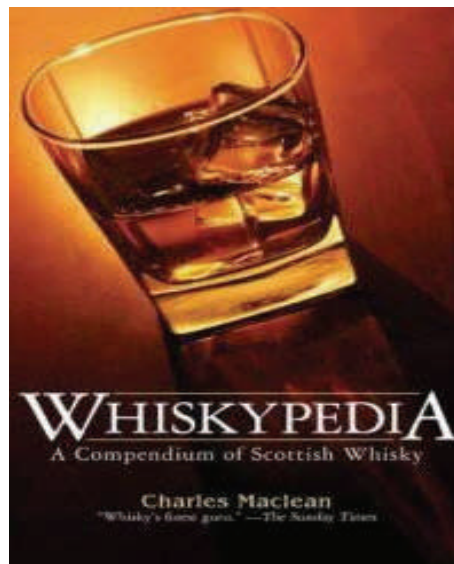


Cont.

AGE = QUALITY.

This is perhaps the most debated topic. Older whiskies are usually, but not always, better. And there is a limit to how long a spirit can age. Too long and the original spirit character is dominated by flavors coming from the wood. But for many consumers, the age is really a justification for the price they paid.

Charles MacLean, Master of the Quaich and James Beard Award winner, is the author of ten books on Scotch, including the [Whiskypedia](#).



"We frequently hear of people dying from too much drinking. That this happens is a matter of record. But the blame is always placed on whisky. Why this should be I never could understand. You can die from drinking too much of anything - coffee, water, milk, soft drinks and all such stuff as that. And so as long as the presence of death lurks with anyone who goes through the simple act of swallowing. I will make mine whisky."

(W.C. Fields, 1880-1946)