



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 Glen Garioch (Glen Geery) 12-year-old, this whisky is matured in both Ex-Bourbon and Sherry casks and bottles at a slightly higher than standard 48%.

I have in the past had a bottle or two of this on my bar, as I was fortunate to have presented it at whisky events and was given them.

As to taste, this whisky's flavors remind me of the Glenfiddich 15-year-old Solara Reserve, which is high praise indeed, as I think that is one of the best whiskies for the money available on the market.

Would I buy it, probably not, as you can buy the Glenfiddich 15-year-old Solara Reserve for around the same price and although they taste similar the Glenfiddich 15-year-old Solara Reserve is by far the better of the two (in my opinion).

[You can buy Glen Garioch 12-year-old for around \\$65.00 a bottle.](#)

Tasting Notes

Nose - heather & Pear.

Palate - Banana, Crème brûlée & pear.

Finish - Honey, pear & spice.

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett





The World's Ten Most Underrated Whiskies

By Richard Thomas

If you have been a whiskey enthusiast for a long time, then you have watched as the world's whiskey boom keeps on gaining momentum. Even the coronavirus pandemic seems to have been little more than a hiccup. The newcomers from a decade ago are now well-entrenched fixtures, more newcomers (both individual distillers and entire countries) have kept coming, and all the while a flood of new expressions have hit the market. Even those who monitor spirits as a full-time job cannot keep on top of it all.

In an environment like that, many whiskeys are underrated. That statement is more true today than it was 4 1/2 years ago when I first tackled this subject. So, take this round-up of a mere ten underrated whiskeys as just the tip of the iceberg, because whatever category or style is your favorite, I guarantee you there are plenty of worthy bottles to try that even the best informed pundit has never heard of.

American Whiskeys

Jim Beam Bonded:

With bottled in bond whiskeys having become all the rage, one would think Jim Beam Bonded would have more of a buzz attached to it, would have become the go-to for more people or at least replace Jim Beam Black in the affections of more people. After all, this is a whiskey I have heard lovingly referred to as "Baby Knob Creek" by many a bartender, but I rarely see it written about and never hear it spoken of outside those circles. Go figure: this is a bonded version of Jim Beam, and invariably available for less than \$25 a bottle.

Old Forester Rye:

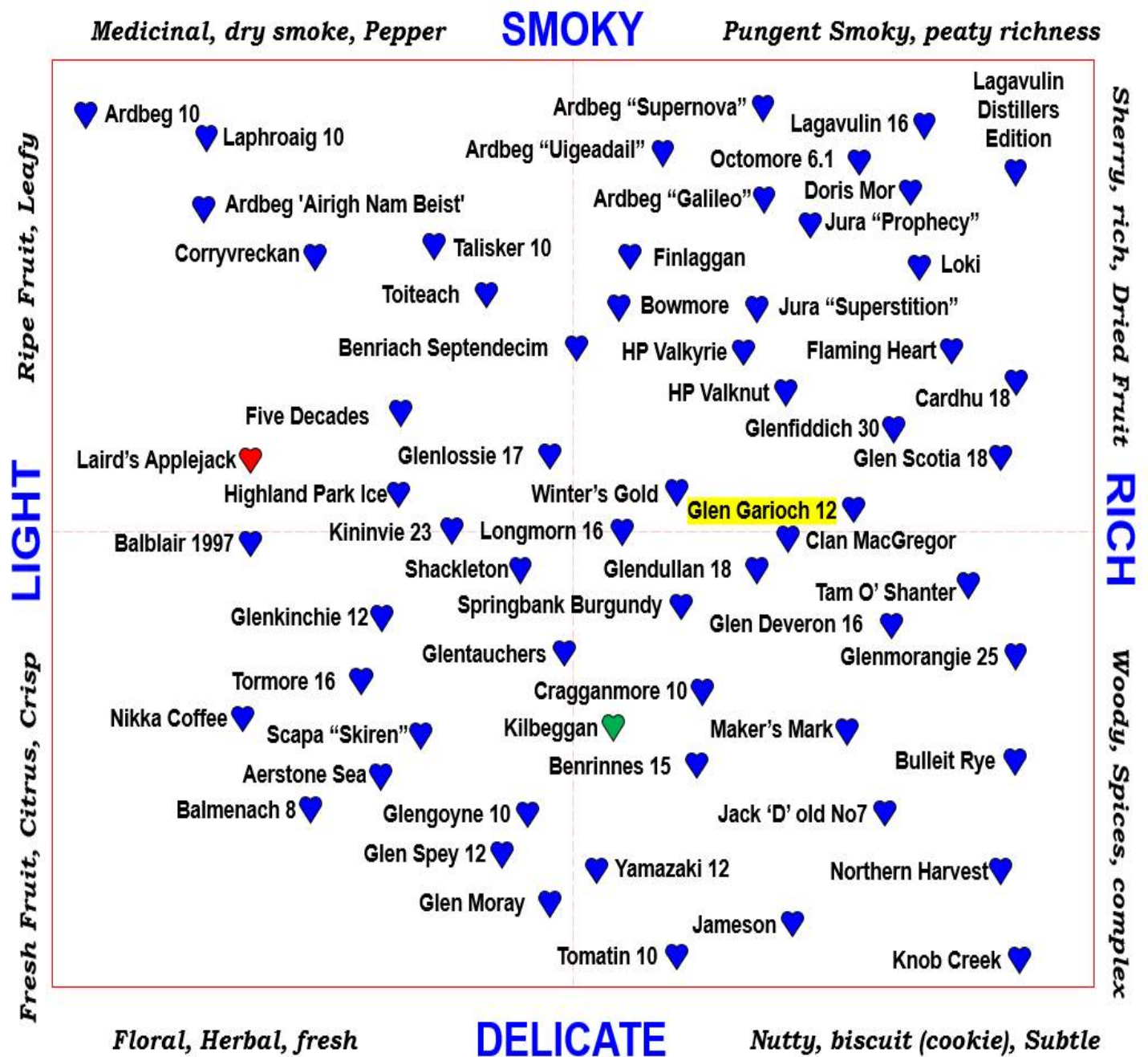
Another example of a whiskey that is, insofar as I can see, is well-appreciated by professionals, but not as much as it should be by the public at large, is Old Forester Rye. Introduced in 2019, bartenders swiftly came to appreciate this rye, and so clamored for a stronger version of the expression that Old Forester introduced a cask strength, single barrel version of the whiskey just a couple of weeks ago.

Laws Centennial 5 Year Old Wheat Whiskey:

The list of craft whiskeys that go without due appreciation is a long one, and for a variety of reasons, but the most pernicious is that too many enthusiasts can't let go of the outdated concept that all whiskeys from small distillers are under-aged. Over in Colorado, Laws Whiskey House is one of the outfits disproving that notion, having based so much of their line on bottled in bond expressions. Their recently released Centennial 5 Year Old Bottled in Bond Wheat Whiskey is a wonderful pour, and quite unlike anything in its category.



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; [Glen Garioch 12-year-old](#). For more information on Glen Garioch whiskies go to www.glengarioch.com





The World's Ten Most Underrated Whiskies Cont.

Irish Whiskeys

Teeling Single Grain: Underlining the whole issue of how a great whiskey buy can be not just underrated, but remain underrated, is Teeling Single Grain. This expression regularly appears on round-ups with titles like "whiskeys you need to try," but somehow it never manages to attract any real buzz. It's truly a lovely pour and offered at a very reasonable price (in the U.S., pricing varies from \$35 to \$50, and anything approaching \$50 would be completely fair in my opinion), and the only reason I can think of as to why Teeling Single Grain remains a sleeper of an Irish Whiskey is because it is a grain whiskey.

Grain whiskey has a certain reputation for being lighter, less flavorful and cheaper than malts. That was, in fact, pretty close to the desired set of characteristics for early grain whiskeys, which were destined for blending. To apply that reputation to anything labeled "single grain" is an act of a particularly arrogant and toxic form of idiocy, however. Their loss is our gain, though, so go try this one and know you are thumbing your nose at the snobs while you enjoy it.

Jameson Caskmates Stout Edition: In whiskey, what I call the "beer barrel cycle" has become a thing. This is when a distillery or brewstillery (joint distillery-brewery) sends their used whiskey barrels over to the brewer for use in aging beer. When that maturation cycle is over, the barrels then go back to the distillery to put a finish on their whiskey, closing the cycle. Whatever else the merits of this daisy chain, putting the beer and either form of the whiskey together makes for a killer boilermaker.

But taken as a sipping whiskey and on its own merits, only a couple of examples have been worth singing about in my experience. The original Jameson Caskmates, their Stout Edition, is one of them (the other is a Scotch single malt). You might look at our review, see the B-, and think "really?", but our editorial policy is to consolidate all reviews and grading into one piece. That review has three voices, and not all of us agreed on it, which is another reason why one might call a whiskey underrated: different folks, different strokes.

Scotch Whiskies

GlenDronach Port Wood: If one is looking around for whiskies that are easier to find and priced well because they are underrated, a good place to start is with no age statement single malts. This is because poseurs on both sides of the Atlantic turn their noses up at anything without an statement on it. This expression, aged first in a mix of Sherry casks before receiving a second round of fortified wine aging in the namesake Port wood, proves how that mentality leads to an underrated whisky.



The World's Ten Most Underrated Whiskies Cont.

Glen Grant 15 Year Old: When it comes to single malts, 15 year old expressions tend to get overlooked as a rule. The bargain hunters focus on 10 and 12 year olds; those looking for something older on any kind of budget look at 18 to 21 year olds; and those with a deep enough pocket book shoot right past all that into the realm of the ultra-aged.

Let's add to that some other points. Glen Grant is far from the most famous distillery in Scotland. This particular expression was created for the U.S. market a few years ago, so the Scotch snobs in Europe are scarcely aware of it. Moreover, it was aged entirely in first-fill ex-bourbon barrels and bottled at a batch strength of 50% ABV, rather strong for a Scotch Whisky. All this is available for only about \$75 a bottle, and it's superb stuff. Add all that up and the only conclusion is that Glen Grant 15 is quite underrated.

Springbank 10 Year Old: Among Scotch circles, snobbery and ignorance tend to kick in whenever an age statement is absent or drops below 12 years old (go back and look at some commentary on Lagavulin 8 Year Old). That simple fact tells you all about why a fine and fairly priced bottle like Springbank 10 continues to go underrated, year after year.

Rest of the World

Crown Royal Northern Harvest Rye: Sometimes a whisky is underrated because all the hype it has received had the opposite result. I'm sure Crown Royal and the folks at their parent company, Diageo, thought they had struck a vein of gold when Jim Murray named Northern Harvest Rye his top whisky in the 2016 *Whisky Bible* (indeed, scored it so high it remains one of his top whiskies ever). Yet the result was a fully predictable backlash against the expression, among experts and enthusiasts alike. Washed away in that storm of outrage, vendetta and controversy was the question of whether Northern Harvest Rye was a worthwhile pour. The short answer is, yes, it is. Being grossly overrated by Murray has led it to become underrated by most everyone else.

Starward Solera: In my opinion, many whiskeys made outside the five major and traditional whiskey-making nations of Canada, Ireland, Japan, Scotland and the United States suffer in the shadow of unfamiliarity.

Lavishly funded outfits like Kavalan in Taiwan overcome that with big marketing budgets, but many worthy international distillers remain relatively obscure. Others, like Australia's Starward, fall in between: you can actually get a good bottle like Starward Solera in the United States with minimal fuss. Keeping that in mind, the only reason a whisky like Solera remains underrated is more people haven't heard of whisky from Down Under, let alone this particular Australian whisky.