



## Object of the Newsletter

*To promote the appreciation of fine 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.*

I now give you my thoughts on the Bushmills Sherry Cask Reserve, which is a no-age statement whiskey, bottled at 40% ABV, after it has been exclusively matured in first-fill Oloroso sherry butts.

Unfortunately; it's only available to buy in the travel retail sector. I say unfortunately because, it is a lovely whiskey and quite the surprise, for me, at least, it is the first time I have tasted an Irish whiskey that has a sherry finish, but hopefully not the last.

A word of thanks at this point goes out to James, (the perfect host), who was very generous with this hard to come by whiskey, not just to myself, but to anyone with an interest in good whiskey.

One of the cool things about the packaging on this bottle, as well as that of future Steamship Collection releases, is that the design was inspired by the voyages of SS Bushmills in the 1890's carrying it's cargo of Bushmills Irish whiskey to the four corners of the world.

So it is rather appropriate that the first sales of this new line of whiskies, are being launched in travel retail, it is however my fervent hope that they will be released (soon) into the mainstream market.

You can buy Bushmills Sherry Cask for around \$130.00 a bottle.

### Tasting Notes;

**Nose** - Sherried fruits and honey

**Palate** - Dried fruits dipped in chocolate

**Finish** - Chocolate, spicy fruits

*"Slainte Mhath"*

*Paul Bissett*





## Irish Whiskey

Though sharing a common Celtic heritage in the art of whiskey (note the Irish spelling) making, pronounced differences in taste and style distinguish Irish Whiskeys from their Scottish counterparts. We'll never know who invented the "water of life " but what is known is that Ireland and Scotland each developed their own interpretations of the art of distilling long before the first Roman ever trod on British soil.

Irish whiskey is generally distilled three times (as opposed to twice (generally) for Scottish whisky), which further adds to the smoothness of its taste. To be called Irish, the whiskey has to be distilled from native grains in Ireland and stored in wooden casks for at least three years. Distillers avoid using new oak casks because they believe the wood imparts a rough taste to the whiskey. Instead, many distillers select used barrels that once held the contents of another type of liquor, such as bourbon or rum.

This practice accounts for subtle differences in whiskies that may originate from the same distillery. The rise of Irish whiskey occurred during the 16th century. Elizabeth I was said to be very fond of it, although she never took the opportunity to turn a profit on it. In fact it wasn't until Christmas Day 1661 that a tax was first levied on the brew and by 1815, this tithe had increased to a crippling six shillings per gallon of whiskey.

Ironically, this was also the zenith of Irish whiskey making with over 2000 stills believed to be in existence at the time. Many of these, however, produced "Poitien " or poteen as it was known; just as fiery as the Irish spirit itself, but illegal, since no tax was paid to the crown.

What led to the decline of Irish whiskey making? Like its true origins, this, too, is a mystery. The economic policies of the new independent republic, the unhappy history of civil unrest, and social complacency have resulted in the survival of only three active distilleries in Ireland with three others open only as museum.

However, the industry is growing again with two more distilleries projected to open soon.

### Irish proverb

**“What butter and whiskey will not cure, there's no cure for.”**



Below is a simple guide to help you choose your 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; [Bushmills Sherry Cask](#). For more information on Bushmills whiskies go to <http://www.bushmills.com/whiskey>





## 13 Irish Whiskey Distilleries To Visit This Year By Mike Gerrard

It's an intoxicating time for Irish whiskey, with several new distilleries recently opened in both Ireland and Northern Ireland, and others on the way.

It's also a confusing time for the visitor, but then, Ireland wouldn't be Ireland without a little craziness. While some distilleries no longer distill, they do have terrific visitor centers; some that continue to distill are not open for public tours.

There are two Jameson distilleries but they don't make Jameson at either of them; Jameson is distilled at the Midleton Distillery, as is Tullamore. But Midleton isn't open to the public. If you want to sample Tullamore Dew, you naturally have to go to the Tullamore Visitor Centre, where they no longer make it. Got that?

So now, hopefully you aren't fully confused, but regardless, here is where you should go if you want to get your whiskey on.

### **Old Bushmills**

On the beautiful Antrim coast of Northern Ireland, Old Bushmills provides one of the best distillery visits. It has the distinction of being the oldest licensed distillery in the world, its license being granted in 1608 by King James I of England. There's a real sense of history here, and the distillery shop is the only place where you can buy Bushmills Malt Distillery Reserve 12-Year-Old, which is matured mainly in old Spanish Oloroso sherry casks.

### **Old Jameson Distillery, Dublin**

This is the most visited distillery in Ireland, helped by the fact that it's in the center of Dublin. Technically it isn't a distillery as there's been no distilling here since 1971, but that doesn't stop over 300,000 people a year from taking a tour and enjoying a tippie. And a very good visit it is, to see a small-scale reproduction of the distillery that was established here in 1780 and learn all about whiskey-making in Ireland. Jameson is now distilled at...



## 13 Irish Whiskey Distilleries cont.

### **The New Midleton Distillery**

This new distillery opened in Midleton in County Cork 1975 and is the biggest distillery in Ireland. Here they produce Jameson, Powers, Paddy, Midleton Very Rare, Tullamore Dew and several other Irish brands. There are no tours. Instead, go next door to...

### **The Old Midleton Distillery**

Parts of this distillery date back to 1795, although in those days it was a mill before being converted into a distillery. It closed in 1975 when production moved to the modern new distillery next door. The old distillery was then converted into a Visitor Centre, which is also known as the Jameson Experience and is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Cork. It's about 30 minutes east of the city of Cork, with a connecting bus service. There are regular tours and for an extra fee you can add on a tutored Irish whiskey tasting session.

### **Tullamore D.E.W. Visitor Centre**

Tullamore near Kilbeggan is in the very center of Ireland, and it's where Tullamore was first distilled in 1829. The 'Dew' was only added in 1873 when Daniel E. Williams became General Manager of the distillery and decided to add his initials to the name. To recognize his role in the history of the company, the new Visitor Centre reverted to the name of Tullamore D.E.W. The center is based in an 1897 Bonded Warehouse and offers a choice of either a regular tour or a more expensive one which includes a tutored tasting.

### **Kilbeggan Distillery**

Seven miles from Tullamore is the Kilbeggan Distillery Experience, another slice of whiskey history. The distillery was founded in 1757 and whiskey was made here until 1954. It then fell into disrepair but in the 1970s the people of Kilbeggan decided to do something about it. They restored it and it is now a whiskey museum. It claims to be the oldest licensed distillery in Ireland, which is essentially accurate since Bushmills is in Northern Ireland, not Ireland. There are tours and tastings, although Kilbeggan Whiskey is now made at...



## 13 Irish Whiskey Distilleries cont.

### **Cooley Distillery**

The Cooley Distillery is owned by Kilbeggan but is not open to the public. It's in County Louth about 60 miles north of Dublin. Here they make Kilbeggan, of course, and also Greenore, Connemara and The Tyrconnell. Whiskey distilling only began here in 1989, and before that it was a plant for producing potato alcohol. If you want to sample Kilbeggan you'll have to do what the whiskey does and make your way back to the Kilbeggan Distillery, 85 miles away.

In addition to the distilleries listed here, several new ones have opened or are about to be opened, with some of them currently having spirits maturing in casks until the moment it can be called whiskey.

Newer distilleries to watch out for include:

### **The Echlinville Distillery**

In 2012 this craft distillery in Newtownards became the first distillery in Northern Ireland to be given a license in over 125 years. The first whiskies will be available in August 2016.

### **West Cork Distillers**

Based in the lovely town of Skibereen in a part of Ireland renowned for its food and drink, this 2003 distillery was established by three friends and now makes a range of whiskies and other spirits. No public tours, though.

### **Alltech Craft Distillery**

The American company Alltech established this distillery in Carlow in 2012, with the first whiskies distilled in Kentucky stills and matured in Kentucky barrels expected later in 2015.

### **Dingle Distillery**

Established in 2012 in a former sawmill, this craft distillery plans to have its first whiskies ready for sale by 2018. There are no public tours but a Visitor Centre is planned.

### **Teeling Distillery**

The building of this distillery began in 2014, and when it opens it will be the first new distillery in Dublin in 125 years.

### **The Belfast Distillery**

This distillery in the former Crumlin Road Gaol in Belfast is scheduled to open in early 2016. The whiskey distilling scene in Ireland is clearly in a healthy and optimistic state, and this doesn't include exciting new distillers producing other spirits, like Shortcross Gin. Sláinte!