



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 the Singleton of Glen Ord 18-year-old. This was released by Diagio in 2019, the parent company and owner of Glen Ord distillery.

Diagio believe that tasting preferences differ around the world and they have developed the "Singleton" whiskies to be released to different regions, in this case for the Asian market. But thanks to the internet, you can buy it anywhere.

This whisky spends all 18 years in charred American oak hogsheads, which results in lots of fruit and spice on the palate.

What is also evident on first tasting is the heat, the whisky is bottled at 55% ABV (40 to 43% is normal for the US Market). After a drop of water and the burn goes away, but the flavor remains.

So, would I buy it? Probably not, the price is a bit high for an 18-year-old, and there are a lot of other 18-year-olds out there.

You can buy the Singleton of Glen Ord 18-year-old for around \$130.00 a bottle.

Tasting Notes

Nose - Orange & chocolate.

Palate - Orange & spicy chocolate.

Finish - Smooth with orange & a hint of spice.

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett





A Highland Affair

By Caroline Dewar

The Highland area begins north of the line drawn across Scotland from Greenock to Dundee. Within this the Speyside area is a subset and all islands except Islay are included – but more of islands another time.

Routes into this area by air can be Glasgow or Edinburgh, handy for Perthshire and some of the west and east coast respectively, or fly up to Aberdeen or Inverness.

Aberdeen has more access from Europe and both are convenient for Speyside and further north.

There is also the ferry service into Rosyth from Zbrugge.

Moving north from the Highland line, whisky visits tend to sort themselves into convenient pockets.

The Perthshire area is well served with five distilleries. First is Tullibardine – small but perfectly formed. John Black is manager there – one of those wonderful distillers who talks passionately about his subject and who enthuses even the most uncertain beginner.

Tullibardine benefits from a very good and reasonably priced café plus other retail outlets next door apart from its well stocked distillery shop.

Next up the line is Glenturret with The Famous Grouse Experience, where you can learn more about the blending process.

TFGE is open all year round apart from Christmas and New Year. It has long offered quality food in the self-service café and in the private dining rooms.

Space is available for evening hire, day time meetings and even wedding receptions.

A highlight is the computer generated flight over Scotland, guaranteed to keep your small people interested – if you have to take them with you – while you concentrate on the liquid.

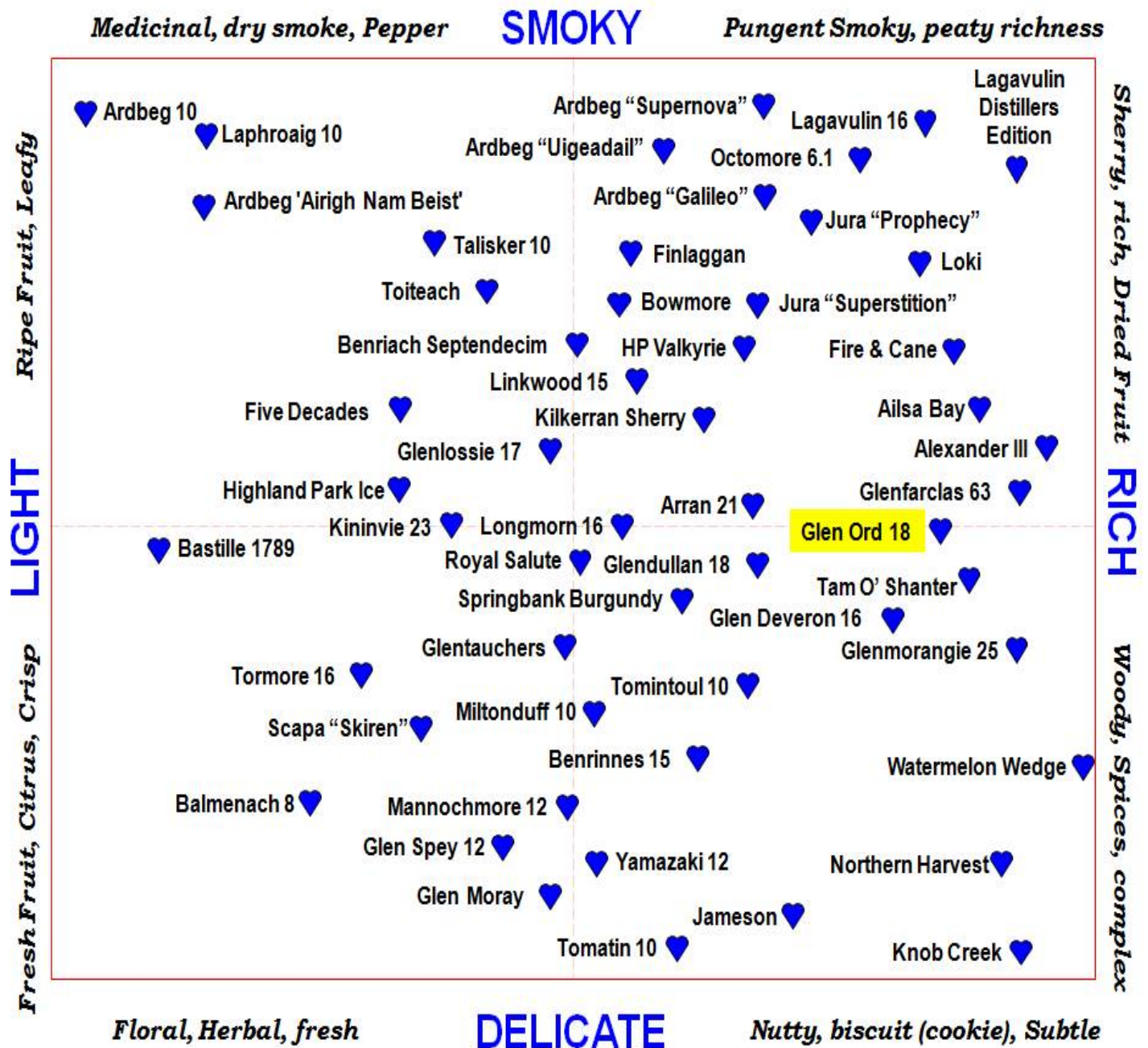
Deanston Distillery is not far away in Doune but open only to industry personnel, though it does have a shop. The premises are undergoing refurbishment so the current shop is a temporary affair but will be fully reinstated. Doune also harbors a motor museum.

Aberfeldy houses Dewar's World of Whisky. New features are a brand family room and an enlarged nosing table. There is always a welcome here with the coffee shop for before or after your tour.

Jane Grimley and team continue to run a fine outfit. There are local accommodations and plenty more not far away. One good place is The Kenmore Hotel, Scotland's oldest inn, in Kenmore village. Just down the hill from the hotel is the Crannog Centre housing the work of archaeologists of these ancient dwellings, now submerged in the loch.



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; [Singleton of Glen Ord 18-year-old](#). For more information on Glen Ord whiskies go to www.malts.com/en-gb/visit-our-distilleries/glen-ord





A Highland Affair cont.

You can try out ancient tools and tasks for yourself as well as hear stories about life thousands of years ago. It's a fascinating little place (closed in winter). This is also great fishing territory with local experts available for lessons.

We move on to Pitlochry and just inside the town is Blair Atholl – the heart of the Bell's blend and a large distillery with good tours. Near Moulin, just outside Pitlochry, there is little Edradour – one of the prettiest distilleries to visit, now with a new manager, Willie MacDougall.

House of Bruar Scottish goods and food centre is just up the road as is Blair Castle, seat of the Duke of Atholl and looking as baronial as a castle should. For scenery junkies, Queen's View at Loch Tummel is a must.

One advantage of Perthshire is that there is loads of accommodation. Perth itself is a good visit base. Scone Palace and Drummond Castle with its delightful formal gardens are nearby as non-whisky lures. The Scottish Liqueur Centre is just north of Perth at Bankfoot. It offers an interesting array of fruit liqueurs with whisky and other bases.

Pitlochry is teeming with hotels, guest houses and B&Bs to suit all tastes and budgets – some in lovely old buildings like The Moulin Hotel, another old coaching inn; some in modern constructions. One such is East Haugh House which looks like an old exterior, but was extensively reconstructed after Scotland's unexpected floods a few years ago. Now restored and gorgeous with great food.

Other areas such as Aberfeldy and Blair Atholl have their fair share of rooms, not to mention points north and south – such as Gleneagles at Auchterarder if you are in need of luxury.

Your choice from here is whether to wander west, east or straight north. If you go west, the distilleries to see are Oban and Ben Nevis. Unusually, Oban is right in the middle of the town and an excellent way to pass an hour or two. Parking is available in the various public car parks near the waterfront and it is not far to walk.

Oban is a very popular tourist town from spring to autumn and consequently also very well served for accommodation at all levels. The town is the main point for the ferry to Mull – more in a future article.

There are other tourist attractions nearby such as the Sea Life Centre and Arduaine Gardens as well as sights in the town itself.



A Highland Affair Cont.

As you might expect, there is plenty by way of seafood at local restaurants.

It's the same with Fort William where Ben Nevis Distillery nestles. As well as meeting mythical giant Hector McDram there is a shop and café if hunger pangs or a nonwhisky thirst strike.

Driving north here from Oban is a delight with phenomenal scenery, wet or dry. Fort William's main street is a good stroll if you need to park, stretch and find somewhere to eat. The street's unappetising rear view, as you drive through, scarcely matters if you look at the surrounding scenery – mountains, water, occasional mist, sometimes great sunshine and our famous Ben Nevis mountain not far away.

Plenty of really good accommodations here and nearby at Onich or Ballachulish. If you want to head far north west you come to Drumchork Lodge Hotel at Aultbea. It is famed for its huge whisky collection and has a private distilling licence too.

Going east from Perthshire, you encounter Glencadam in Brechin – also a town location. A tranquil little distillery.

Brechin is north of Dundee and Angus is an area rich in history, castles (notably Glamis – our most haunted) and more.

Dundee is the berth of Captain Scott's ship RRS Discovery. The city is well covered in accommodation and outlying towns also offer good choice. Letham Grange – familiar to golf enthusiasts – is in this region and a good base for a couple of nights. And not far from Dundee is Carnoustie, home of one of the Open Championship courses and a rather fine hotel.

South and west of Aberdeen is the famous Royal Lochnagar – reputed favourite of Queen Victoria and not far from Balmoral Castle where the grounds and selected buildings are open for a few months in spring and summer.

There are plenty of other castles in the area too – such as Kildrummie, Crathes and Castle Fraser. Ballater, Banchory and Braemar are all swarming with rooms and they get really busy in peak season. Don't let that put you off as the area is a great place to visit.

Aberdeen city houses all types of accommodation from top hotels to simpler B&Bs. There is a transport museum at Alford which used to house the steam wagon from Glendronach Distillery. It is now in private ownership but appears at events in the area.



A Highland Affair Cont.

Up from Brechin you come to Fettercairn at Edzell. It is in a good location on the way to or from Aberdeen. Nearby are Edzell Castle and Gardens. For literary fans, Laurencekirk has the centre covering the life and works of Lewis Grassie Gibbon, author of the haunting Scots Quair novels. At Oldmeldrum, on the far side of Aberdeen, is Glen Garioch. For many years this Morrison Bowmore distillery was largely ignored by visitors. In April this year it opened its new visitor centre and should add a new spark to tourism in the area. The excellent site includes a small malting floor which is a rare sight these days. The centre also houses a couple of business meeting rooms with catering supplied.

Further west, near Huntly is The Glendronach. The visitor centre offers a look at old distilling implements as well as a small but good quality shop. Extended tastings can be arranged here. Just up the road in Huntly is the whisky shop of Duncan Taylor & Co. which owns the Peerless Scotch Whisky range seen in a number of countries. It also runs tastings but you need to reserve those.

The Huntly area has some reasonable accommodations, notably the lovely Huntly Castle Hotel. The town is also home to Deans Shortbread – best in the world, in my view.

North of Aberdeen is Banff, home to Macduff distillery, arguably just outside Speyside. The distillery is not open for visits but there are other attractions like Duff House with its elegant architecture and artworks and the Marine Aquarium. Further east at Fraserburgh is the Museum of Scottish Lighthouses.

If you head north from Perthshire you come towards Dalwhinnie Distillery, set amongst scenic moorland and thought to be the highest distillery in Scotland. A fine visitor centre and also outside the classic Speyside area. Opening times accommodate our seasonal northern tourism.

And then we have Speyside which was covered in a previous feature so no need to dwell on it here. We'll keep heading north towards the city of Inverness – a good starting point for the northern Highland collection.

Nearest distillery here is Glen Ord which offers an illicit still as part of its exhibition.

Also open Sundays in summer. However, as with most Sunday opening distilleries, it cannot open till 12 noon then due to licensing laws. Near Inverness is the Culloden Battlefield, site of the most famous Scottish defeat and also sites of ancient burial grounds.



A Highland Affair Cont.

Porpoises can often be seen in the Moray Firth. West of the city is Loch Ness where Nessie spotters have facilities to help them look for her. Inverness is full of accommodation from B&B to good country house and chain hotels. Take your pick to suit your pocket.

Here we hang a right to the north east.

Next up is The Dalmore at Alness. Larger groups must book in advance. A very fine single malt in various expressions, its special Dalmore Cigar Malt is liquid Christmas cake and very droolworthy. Moving north east we arrive at Tain, home to the world famous Glenmorangie with its own luxury accommodation at Glenmorangie House. The town is well stocked with other accommodations too. Tours here are available all year round on days to suit the season. Edderton, up the road, is home to Balblair Distillery, owned by Inver House Distillers and offers visits by appointment only.

We wend our way a bit further north for the last few. A must-see on the way is Dunrobin Castle at Golspie. With its silver grey stone and turrets this must have inspired Walt Disney. There are fine gardens, art and armoury collections here.

Afterwards, amble on to Brora for Clynelish Distillery – a good tour with availability greater in summer than winter.

The last stop on our Highland trek is Wick for Pulteney, the most northerly mainland distillery. Inver House has done so much more with this one since Allied sold it to the company in the 1990s.

The Old Pulteney brand is more visible and available at more ages. It offers a splendid tour here with a good shop too where you can fill your own bottle from a cask. There is good accommodation in and around Wick.

And here we pretty much run out of whisky mainland. A little way north of Wick is John O'Groats and near there you can leap off the end of Scotland on to a ferry for Orkney. But that's a tale for another day.

For detailed opening times, it is best to check with each distillery by phone or internet or arrange the trip through a specialist. Please note that not all distilleries open at weekends out of season. Most which accept visitors open Monday-Friday, some on Saturdays.

*A good gulp of hot whisky at
bedtime—it's not very scientific, but
it helps.*

Alexander Fleming