



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 partake of a little of the Finlaggan, Islay Single Malt, from, of all places Trader Joe's supermarket!

I was first introduced to this whisky, when a friend (Dave Berman) brought a bottle to our office for our traditional Friday, after work whisky get together.

Dave's enthusiasm for this whisky, seemed at odds with the price he said that he had bought it for, something that cheap couldn't taste that good.

Well, just goes to show that no matter what you think you know about whisky, there will always be something to trip you up.

I frequently say that the Glenfiddich 15-year-old is the best whisky for the price on the marked today, well I have to say that it has a contender and it's name is Finlaggan.

Does it taste as good as the Glenfiddich, no, but it's less than half the price and it does taste good. Would I buy it? Yes, I already have. Don't live near a Trader Joe's, then buy it from their website and have it delivered.

[You can buy Finlaggan Islay Single Malt for \\$18.99.00 a bottle.](#)

Tasting Notes

Nose - Smokey

Palate - Sweet Peat, smoke & a little spice

Finish - Long, smoky finish

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett





Why Peaty Scotch Is An Ideal Summer Whisky

BY AARON GOLDFARB



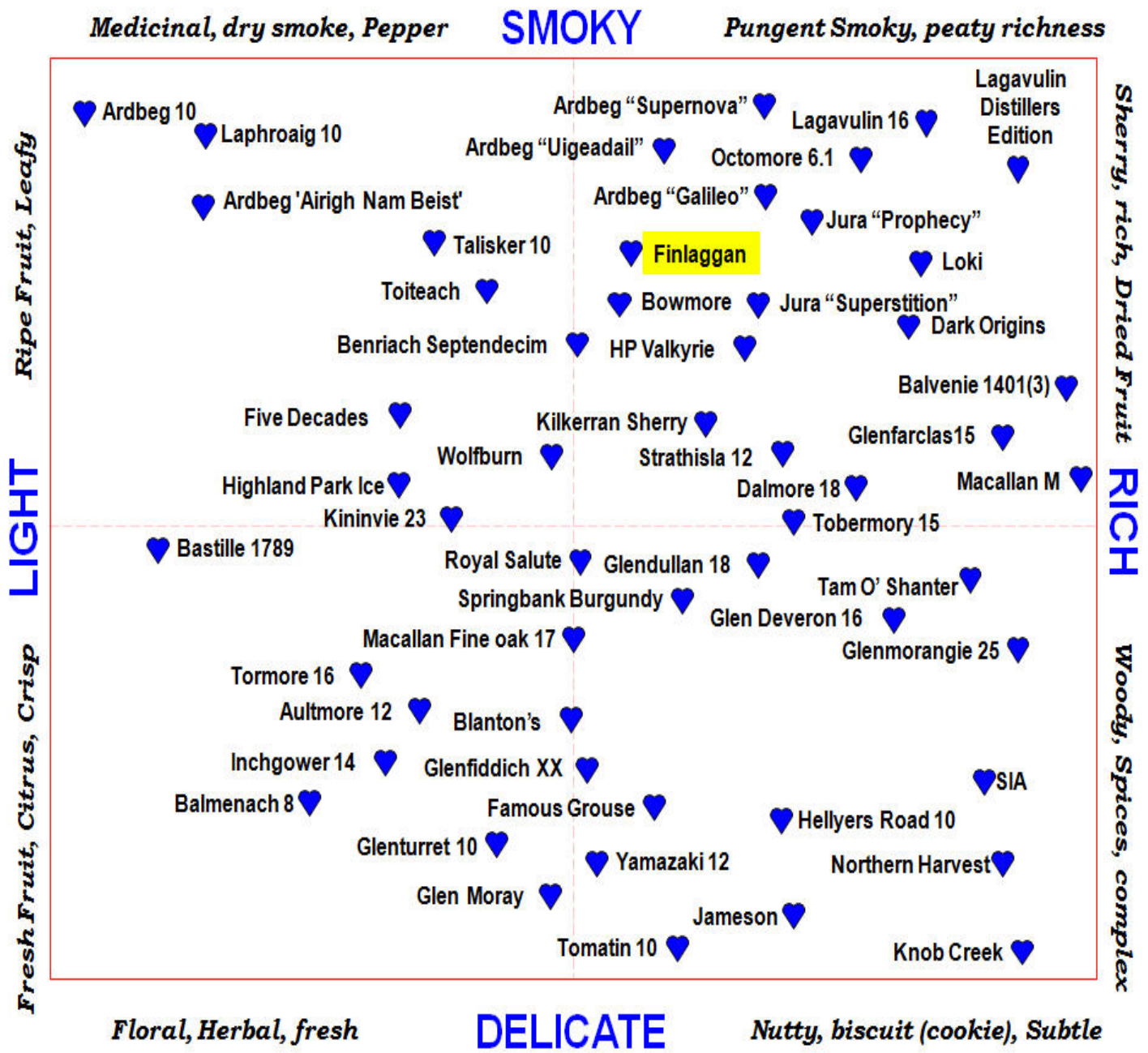
Humans have a weird binary when it comes to drinking alcohol—some beverages are strictly for cold weather, others for scorching hot days. So we drink rich stouts in the ski lodge, and save the crisp pilsners for golfing when it's 100 degrees.

We pull out a full-bodied red wine for the Christmas party and chill the riesling and rosé for a summer picnic. The same thinking often holds true for whisky: Peated scotch, we are told, is best reserved for chilly drizzles or windy winter nights.

But it doesn't have to be that way. For example, consider how camping, a [favorite summer activity](#), and peaty whisky can make a perfect match. "When the evening cools down at the end of a hot, sunny day, and you're huddled around a fire pit, a peated whisky's campfire profile is a surprisingly perfect complement," says Jessica Schultz, a senior brand manager at [Bruichladdich](#). In fact, peated whisky has many traits that make it perfect for warm weather imbibing. Think of the classic smells of summer: woody smoke wafting through the neighborhood in the early evening ("Hey, who's barbecuing?"); the pleasant tobacco aromas from an old man lighting his pipe on a park bench; those earthy notes of the garden soil, freshly tilled and bursting with herbs and other growing green things. That's exactly the profile of peated whisky!



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; [Finlaggan Islay single malt](#). **I can't refer you to their website, who makes Finlaggan is a closely guarded secret!** www.traderjoes.com/fearless-flyer/article/4231





Why Peaty Scotch Is An Ideal Summer Whisky

Likewise, the potent smoky notes of peated whisky actually make it perfect in chilled cocktails. An easy way to turn a high-proof dram into something more sessionable and thirst-quenching is by making a [Highball, the simplest of whisky cocktails](#)—just add ice and some soda water. Or try a Moscow Mule variation: Swap in a nice peated scotch for the usual vodka and you have a Glasgow Mule.

The Brooklyn bar [Diamond Reef](#) serves perhaps the most summery peated cocktail ever. The Penichillin is a play on the [Penicillin](#), a modern classic originally created in 2005 by Sam Ross that's topped with a float of Islay single malt. When he opened the tropical-themed Diamond Reef, Ross took the recipe of scotch, lemon, honey, and ginger and dumped it in a frozen slushy machine. Now whisky lovers have a summer cocktail to rival—and perhaps surpass—the Piña Coladas, Daiquiris, and frozen Margaritas of the world.

FEELING HOT? TRY THESE PEATY WHISKIES ON ICE.

High West Campfire—\$60, 84 points

Said to be the world's only blend of bourbon, rye, and peated scotch, this so-called “tug-of-war” whiskey features the best of all worlds with caramel sweetness, a punch of spice, and a prominent smoky note. Its name all but tells you how to enjoy it: around the campfire, unwinding after a hot day in the great outdoors.

Bruichladdich Port Charlotte Scottish Barley—\$72, 87 points

The only peated whisky in Bruichladdich's core range has an elegant and approachable profile, with sweet BBQ smoke. The palate is thick and fruity, with flavors of strawberry, lemon peel, and herbs like eucalyptus.

Ardbeg Kelpie—\$119, 88 points

Arbeg's whiskies can be a gut-punch of peat, but Kelpie is a tad more summery. With a proportion of the blend having aged in Russian Black Sea oak casks, a nose comes through that is briny and seaweed-like, while the taste has Ardbeg's classic herbal and peaty notes.



Instant Expert: Japanese Whisky

WHISKY ADVOCATE

Yoichi Distillery

WHERE IT'S FROM

Japanese whisky comes from Japan. It isn't made in just one style—in fact, it comprises a wide range of flavor profiles and characteristics.

WHAT IT'S MADE OF

Japanese whisky is similar to scotch in many ways, including the widespread use of malted barley as a main component and the practice of blending malt and grain whiskies. Some Japanese distilleries are producing aged spirits made of rice, which are sold as rice whiskies outside of Japan.

HOW IT'S MADE

There are few regulations governing how Japanese whisky is made. As in Scotland, Ireland, the United States or Canada, Japanese whisky is distilled using both pot and column stills. To learn the basics of whisky-making, check out “How Whisky Is Made.”

Japanese distilleries often import malted barley from Scotland and may or may not use peat. In addition, Japanese whisky is often mixed with imported whisky from Scotland or other foreign countries, largely because Japanese distilleries can't produce every type of whisky they need and—unlike their Scotch and Irish counterparts—rarely exchange whisky with each other. (See more about this under Burning Questions.) Cask types vary from traditional ex-bourbon white oak barrels to casks made of the rare mizunara oak. The lack of strict regulations allows for great creativity in whisky-making.

CLASSIC EXAMPLES

You may want to start your Japanese whisky exploration with brands like Suntory Whisky Toki and Hibiki Japanese Harmony, which are easy to find, light-bodied, and typical of Japanese blends. Try them in a Highball (mixed with soda water and served on the rocks), the typical way they're consumed in Japan. Nikka Coffey Grain and Coffey Malt offer two unique flavor profiles of grain and malt whisky made in a Coffey still, while Yoichi and Miyagikyo single malts showcase the distinct styles of Nikka's two different distilleries. Age-statement Japanese whisky can be pricy and tough to find these days, but Yamazaki, Hakushu, and Hibiki all have expressions from 12 years old and up.



Some smaller Japanese whisky brands have appeared in recent years, including Chichibu, Akashi and Iwai from Mars Shinshu.

BURNING QUESTIONS

Why is it so hard to find affordable Japanese whisky?

In the last few years, whisky drinkers worldwide have discovered how great Japanese whiskies can be—and they've bought accordingly. Unfortunately, Japan's whisky makers weren't prepared for the sudden surge in popularity, and they haven't been able to keep up with demand. Whisky takes time to age, you know! In response, brands like Suntory and Nikka have greatly reduced the amount of age-statement whiskies available, sometimes replacing them with non-age statement expressions. Whiskies like Hibiki Japanese Harmony and Suntory Whisky Toki are widely available, but aged single malts from Japan will continue to be limited for the next several years as distillers rebuild stocks.

Why is Japanese single malt whisky so similar to scotch?

For historical reasons. The founders of the Japanese whisky industry in the early 20th century studied whisky-making in Scotland and adopted many of the same practices. Japanese single malt whisky does have some of its own unique features, like a focus on balance and harmony, and a distinctive whisky culture focused on cocktails and highballs. But, per longstanding regulations, only whisky that's made and matured in Scotland can be called scotch.

How is it possible for Japanese distilleries to use whisky from other countries?

An official definition of Japanese whisky does not exist, and it's legal for producers to blend in whisky from Scotland or elsewhere. The practice, however, is rarely discussed openly. According to Rosemary Gallagher, head of communications for trade body the Scotch Whisky Association (SWA): "There is nothing wrong with mixing scotch with whiskies of different origin as long as the labeling of such products does not mislead consumers into believing the product is scotch. There is no official definition of whisky in Japan that we know of."

What's the deal with rice whisky?

Some Japanese aged spirits are made from rice. In Japan, these products can't be sold as whisky. But in the United States, the TTB recognizes rice as a cereal grain and thus these products can be labeled and sold as whiskies.

What's a pure malt?

Some Japanese whiskies use the term 'Pure Malt' on their labels, like Nikka Taketsuru Pure Malt. This designation is the same as a blended malt in scotch—a whisky whose components are 100% malted barley but come from more than one distillery.