



## 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.*

In this issue I look at Cardhu (Gaelic for “Black Rock”) 12-year-old Speyside whisky. Yes I went for the unusual shaped bottle again, not because I had this recommended or had read about it, I just saw it and thought “that looks different.” So I bought it, took it home and was not disappointed, my ability to spot a good tasting whisky by the shape of the bottle hasn't failed me yet.

OK, I got lucky, but I don't care, this is a nice tasting Speyside whisky and if you like Speysiders you'll like this One.

In 2003, Cardhu was the fastest growing single malt in the world, until a bit of a scandal caused it problems (more on page 4).

You can buy Cardhu 12-year-old for around \$65.00 a bottle.

### Tasting Notes;

**Nose** - Aromatic, heather and honey

**Palate** - Pears, apple, a little gentle smoke

**Finish** - Long with malt and a little smoke

*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 [paul@scot-talks.com](mailto:paul@scot-talks.com)*

*“Slainte Mhath”*

*Paul Bissett*





## Cardhu Distillery

Cardhu Distillery nestles in a picturesque setting in the heart of Speyside. Speyside is known all over the world as whisky country. The Cardhu distillery which is the only distillery started by a woman, really does stand out from all the other distilleries in the Speyside area. The light character of the 12yr old Cardhu is an excellent starting point for anyone starting on their whisky journey and the new additions to the Cardhu range, the 15 and 18yr offer flavors for those that are looking for something a little more complex. The Cardhu range of whiskies are an excellent representation of a Speyside whisky.

Cardhu is also part of the world famous Malt Whisky Trail which is an essential tool for any tourist wishing to visit a whisky distillery in the Speyside area. The Malt Whisky Trail offers visitors the opportunity to plan and visit distilleries in Speyside and includes many of the most famous brands including Glenfiddich, Glenlivet, Strathillsa, Benromach to name a few and also includes the Speyside Cooperage which is the only visitor centre in the UK which allows visitors to see the coopers at work.

Cardhu is not only a world renowned brand in itself but also has a very close connection to Johnnie Walker. Johnnie Walker is the biggest selling blended whisky in the world and Cardhu is the spiritual home of Johnnie Walker in Speyside. A visit to Cardhu will allow visitors to learn about the history between these incredible brands. The visitor centre also stocks a wide range of Johnnie Walker products for purchase.

The surrounding area has an abundance of lovely B&B's, hotels and restaurants and is only a very short walk from the beautiful Cardhu Country House and only a 10 minute drive from the Archiestown hotel. The villages of Craigellachie and Aberlour have a wide selection of pubs and restaurants offering great Scottish produce and also a vast selection of whiskies.

A drive to Cardhu from Aviemore, Grantown-on-Spey, Inverness or even Aberdeen will take you through some beautiful scenery that will make your journey wondrous

A visit to Cardhu and to Speyside really is a whisky lovers dream.

**One nice thing about egotists: they don't talk about other people.**



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; [Cardhu 12-year-old](#). For more information go to [www.cardhuwhisky.com](#)





## Cardhu

Cardhu is an exponent of the soft, sweet, approachable Speyside style and is Diageo's best-selling single malt with a huge following in France and Spain, the latter of which accounts for 75% of volume sales.

This popularity, combined with a rumored shortfall in mature stock, gave rise in 2003 to a notorious episode in the distillery's history when Diageo began selling a 'pure' malt under the name of Cardhu in the same packaging as the previous single malt expression.

This 'pure' malt was believed to include spirit from up to four other distilleries as well as Cardhu. Cue an almighty uproar, with questions asked in Parliament, Diageo vowing to stand firm and the rest of the industry threatening legal action against Diageo for misleading customers and devaluing the status of single malt whisky.

Thankfully the scale of this hullabaloo was sufficient to force Diageo into withdrawing the Pure Malt version of Cardhu (which has now become something of a collector's item), and re-instating the brand as a single malt, to general relief.

Cardhu is normally sold as a 12 year-old although, following the success of a couple of Rare Malt expressions at the end of the 1990s, a 22 year-old cask strength version was issued as part of Diageo's Special Releases in 2005.

The following year a no-age-statement Special Cask Reserve expression was also released and has proved a success. Cardhu is also a key constituent in the Johnnie Walker blend.

For reasons which should be very clear, independent bottlings of Cardhu are extremely rare to non-existent.

## Cardhu Distillery

Previously called Cardow – must be one of the best located distilleries in Speyside. High on the hills on the north side of the Spey Valley with extensive views to the south, it is set in attractive grounds ideal for picnics (complete with picnic tables).

The malt itself – which is presented in an elegant decanter with a beech wood stopper - is pretty typical of a Speyside malt.

It is highly approachable – smooth, sweet, mellow and uncomplicated. It has good body and length. Interestingly, the distillery is the only place in the UK where you can buy Cardhu single malt – which, naturally, adds to its very special nature.

‘The malt whisky produced at Cardhu has a cleanliness of taste – often described as silky. It’s a taste that is obviously popular as it is known and loved all over the world.’

Such is the popularity of Cardhu Single Malt in Spain that worldwide demand has outstripped the capacity of this small distillery, with the result that its malt is sadly no longer available in many countries.



### THE DISTILLERY IN THE PAST

By the time John Cumming bought a license for his Cardhu distillery in 1824, he and his wife Helen had already been producing illicit whisky for 13 years.

Whenever the Excise officers passed by, Helen would disguise the mashing and fermenting as bread-making. Then, while the officers drank the tea she made for them, she would fly a red flag from the barn to warn their neighbors that revenue men were around.

Once the distillery was officially licensed, John and Helen Cumming continued to value quality over quantity. Their son and daughter-in-law, Elizabeth, followed in their footsteps. The qualities of the malt they produced became essential to John Walker and Sons (of Johnnie Walker fame – unsurprisingly). So much so, in fact, that in 1893, Cardhu was the first distillery that they bought – although it was still run for a time by John and Helen's grandson, also called John.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Cardhu had gained a reputation as one of Scotland's top malt whisky distilleries.

Food suggestion: Cardhu Single Malt is the perfect accompaniment to pata negra ham – a dried ham from Spain.

Taste style: Strongly perfumed. This is a highly aromatic malt, often described as being one of the more 'feminine' single malts available.



**I went to a bookstore and asked the saleswoman, "where's the self-help section?" she said if she told me, it would defeat the purpose.**