



Object of the Newsletter

To promote the appreciation of fine Scotch Whisky (and the drinking of it) amongst my friends and to spread the word on the joys of single malt. By the way, I do not profess to be an expert, I am merely expressing an opinion on the whiskies I am tasting. "Slange"

This issue I look at the Oban (pronounced Obin) 14 year old, as recommended by my friend David Klausner. I tasted this for the first time in Foley's Irish pub in Reno, which has (unless you know better) the largest selection of single malt Scotch in Reno (I counted over 40 different scotches).

I like this single malt; in fact, I just finished a bottle of it at home and would recommend it to everyone, even Speyside fans, who live in fear of smokey/peaty Western Isle whiskies. This is west coast, not islands, and it's smoke and peat are restrained. This is a nice whisky.

Tasting Notes;

Color - Dark gold/Amber

Nose - Sweet, fruity, with sea salt, small amounts of peat and smoke

Palate - Rich fruit, honey, malt, spice and light smoke

Finish - Sweet oak with a pinch of salt

Food suggestion: Oban goes well with Dark Chocolate Torte.

If you have a personal favorite and you would like it to feature in future "Slange" newsletters, please let me know at www.scot-talks.com.

"Slainte Mhath"
Paul Bissett

With thanks to Google images.





A wee bit of History

The town of Oban is known as the “Gateway to the isles” and the Oban distillery (one of the oldest in Scotland, founded in 1794) is physically and spiritually at the heart of Oban. The town grew up around the distillery and the distillery has played an important role in local life. Distillery owners and managers to the present day have embraced this tradition of community involvement and hospitality - a tradition that came naturally to John and Hugh Stevenson, founders not only of the distillery at Oban but of the town itself.

They were local men - their mother had come from Port Appin upon the death of their father, a stone mason. Both learned the stonemason's craft. Hugh opened a shop selling whisky and later took over slate quarries. His brother became a farmer, architect and builder.

Together they established a boat building yard and a tannery and, in the 1790s a brewery, which had become Oban distillery by 1794. Two further generations of Stevenson's continued the family's business interests in Oban. Hugh's son, Thomas, who had been farming in Buenos Aires, returned and purchased the distillery and the slate quarries from his father and uncle's trustees.

Later he built the Caledonian Hotel, but, alas, he ran into financial difficulties through supporting his brother in a printing business in Edinburgh. He attempted to satisfy his creditors by supplying them with slates and whisky. His son, John, who had been living in Peru, but who returned and took over the running of the distillery in 1830, helped Thomas. He managed Oban until shortly before his death in 1869, when it passed out of the family.

In 1883 J. Walter Higgin bought the distillery. Between 1890 and 1894 he dismantled and rebuilt it bit by bit, in order to keep it in production - such was the demand for Oban's malt. He carefully replicated the famously small stills and other traditional features in order to preserve the quality of the whisky.



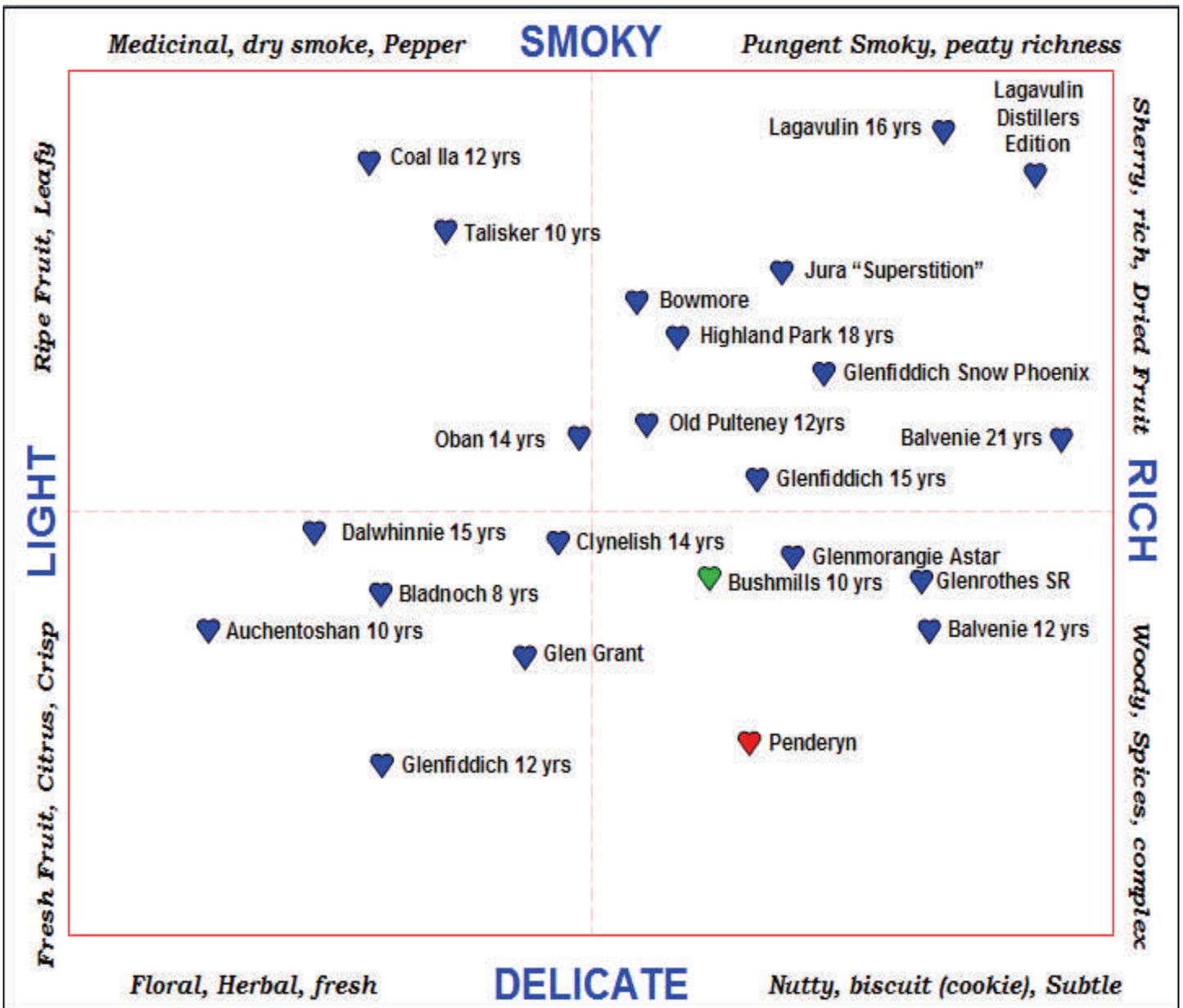
Calories (noun)

Tiny creatures that live in your closet and sew your clothes

A little bit tighter every night.



Below is a simple guide to help you choose your single malt Whisky, and the flavor notes I get from it, hopefully you will get something similar. 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, but because the map is filling up, I will remove the oldest whisky. This issue; **Oban 14 years old**. For more information go to <http://www.scotchwhisky.net/distilleries/oban.htm>





The town of Oban (With thanks to the town of Oban website <http://www.oban.org.uk>)

Travelling to Oban, on the west coast of Scotland, is an enjoyable journey, which takes around three hours by car, coach or train from Glasgow or Edinburgh and less than 2 hours from Stirling, the scenic journey is a memorable part of a visit to this bustling sea side town.

Your first view of Oban is one you are unlikely to forget. From the north, you glimpse this bustling port from the top of the 'Bealach-an-Righ'. As you sweep down the hill towards the expanse of the bay, the view opens up before you and one begins to appreciate why Oban has developed into Scotland's most popular west-coast holiday town.

Beyond Oban ("little bay" in Gaelic - Scotland's ancient Celtic language) lie the islands of the Inner Hebrides: Kerrera, which protects the town from Atlantic storms; the low, green island of Lismore; majestic Mull, and the granite mountains of the Morvern peninsula. Beyond them, the sacred island of Iona, Coll, Colonsay and Tiree.

Oban today has a resident population of 8,500 and is the unofficial capital of the West Highlands - the "Gateway to the Isles". The panoramic views of the mountains, lochs and islands which have captivated artists, authors, composers, and poets for centuries are as striking now as they were when Dunollie Castle, a ruined keep which has stood sentinel over the narrow entrance to the sheltered bay for around six hundred years, was the northern outpost of the Dalriadic Scots.

It is no surprise to find Oban in the 21st Century remains a magnet for travellers from all over the world. The town's present day popularity owes much to the Victorians, and as early as 1812, when the Comet steamship linked Oban with Glasgow, the town played host to intrepid travellers touring Staffa - the inspiration for Mendelssohn's Hebridean Overture - and Iona - home of Scottish Christianity since St Columba stepped ashore in AD563.

Indeed once Oban had the royal seal of approval from Queen Victoria, who called it "one of the finest spots we have seen", the town's destiny as an endearingly enchanting holiday destination was as firmly set as the lava columns of Fingal's Cave on the island of Staffa.

