



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 SIA (pronounced See-a), this is a new blended scotch whisky launched with the help of Kickstarter (crowd sourced funding). SIA is the brainchild/dream of San Francisco resident Carin Castillo, who very kindly sent me a sample of her scotch to try. Carin may be from California, but the whisky is most definitely from Scotland and includes Speyside, Highland and Islay (Isla) whiskies. SIA weighs in at a standard (for the USA) 43% ABV.

Carin's plan was to produce a new whisky that would appeal to a younger demographic than has been traditionally aimed at with scotch. She has come up with a light and refreshing blended whisky that in my opinion would take a little ice for sipping on a warm evening and would also lend itself to mixing well in a cocktail.

Overall a nice addition to the pantheon of blended scotches and yes, I'd buy it.

You can buy SIA for around \$50.00 a bottle.

Tasting Notes;

Nose - Vanilla toffee.

Palate - Vanilla toffee, creamy malt with a touch of spice.

Finish - Medium-long with hazelnuts & toffee.

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 my website www.scot-talks.com

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett





5 Trends: Scotch

Thirsty? In just the last minute, more than 2,000 bottles of [Scotch](#) were sold worldwide. To keep up with this demand, distillers are producing practically a river of whisky, and much of it is flowing to the US, which is the industry's largest market by value. But such popularity requires brands to continually innovate and introduce new bottlings, so to help you stay on top of the latest developments, we asked Scotch expert Charles MacLean for the five biggest trends happening now.

GOODBYE, 18-YEAR-OLDS:

Success brings its own problems for distillers, who are facing a shortage of mature whiskies as well as trying to increase product diversity. As a result, the industry is moving away from defining whiskies by age. Outside the US, [The Macallan](#) has released the 1824 Series, which calls its bottlings by their color—Gold, Amber, Sienna and Ruby. The idea is to encourage consumers to judge a whisky solely by its flavor, and it allows the producer to extend its older stocks by mixing them with younger malts.

PRICES ARE GOING UP:

It's not your imagination: Scotch is getting more expensive. Shortages of aged whiskies combined with ever-increasing global demand leads to ever-increasing prices. This is occurring not only for highly collectable malts but also for everyday drams. Expect prices to be even higher in the new year.

SCOTCH IS GETTING STRONGER:

One way of justifying the higher price of a whisky—especially when there is no age statement—is to raise the proof. While there are some advantages of a higher-proof spirit, like potentially more flavor and better mixability in cocktails, it also likely means the malts are younger, since Scotch loses potency as it ages in the barrel.

MORE WOOD FINISHES:

It used to be that a brand's product range was solely based on whiskies of different ages. But increasingly, portfolios are filled with a variety of malts that have been aged in different casks (often former wine or port barrels) for the last year or so of their maturation. [Glenmorangie](#) is the leader in this game, but you'll see even more of these interesting malts on store shelves soon.

THE ULTRA, ULTRA HIGH END:

Super-premium bottlings...at super-premium prices! Distillers are digging through their warehouses to find very rare and very old malts, which are aimed at investors, collectors and oligarchs. Some of the recent limited editions include The Dalmore Aurora 45-Year-Old at \$4,000; [Bowmore](#) 1964 at \$13,500; and [Glenfiddich](#) 50 Year Old at \$25,000! <http://liquor.com/articles/scotch-what-to-drink-now/>



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; **SIA** blended scotch whisky. For more information go to <http://siascotch.com/>





Kirsteen Campbell

Master Blender for Cutty Sark blended Scotch whisky

Dispelling the Five Myths of Scotch Whisky

1) It's a man's game

Many people's initial perception of Scotch whisky is that it is still very much an (older) man's game. When I first stepped into this role I remember feeling very aware that I was a woman in a man's world and I knew I was taking on a big responsibility. Me, and my nose, are overall responsible for ensuring consistency across 10 million bottles of whisky a year. In peak production times I can smell (in the industry we call this 'nosing') up to 500 whiskies in a day to ensure each batch I put together tastes the same. Female master blenders are growing in our numbers, and the classic expectation of a man, in a traditional Scottish [tweed jacket](#) and a moustache is becoming less and less!

2) Single malts are better than everything else

I really want to dispel that blends are inferior to single malts. Blending a whisky is an art and is something I am hugely passionate about. Whilst people hear lots about single malts, learning about whisky flavours, how they are created, how they evolve over time, is hugely fascinating. Blends really sing to me as there are so many layers of flavour, like an artist works with colours to create images that are visually stimulating to the eye, I work with flavours in a way which are appealing to the palate. Single malts often get all the headlines and blended Scotch whisky is often underrated - 90% of all Scotch whisky produced is actually blend!

3) Scotch whisky is an acquired taste

I've been told by many people, none more so than my mum, that they don't like the taste of whisky. I suppose whisky is perceived as the marmite of the spirit world, but I've always firmly believed that there is a whisky for everyone. They don't all taste the same, some are darker with oaky undertones and some are lighter with floral and fruity scents - it's all about discovering the flavour that's right for you, a bit like red vs. white wine.

4) You should only drink it neat

One of the biggest misconceptions that I come across is that whisky can only be enjoyed neat or with a cube of ice. It's a myth and snobbery that we need to move away from. The whisky industry is changing and so are the rules about how you drink it. I have always been an advocate of drinking whisky how you want, and with Cutty, this is very much the case. Tonic, Cola, Soda, Spring water, Sprite, Appeltiser, on the rocks, neat or even with Coconut water - be adventurous and try it!



Kirsteen Campbell

Master Blender for Cutty Sark blended Scotch whisky

Dispelling the Five Myths of Scotch Whisky

Cont.

5) Whisky is old fashioned

My final, but most important point of all - the classic image of a greying man sitting in a leather armchair sipping a single malt is changing. As a Master Blender it is hugely exciting to introduce a new generation to blended Scotch whisky and revitalising a drink that has been part of our culture. Scotch whisky is now enjoyed the world over. Just like in the 1920s, today there is a large group of younger people rejecting traditional whisky due to its strong, demanding taste. I'm glad that I'm part of a time where people are experimenting and we can create mixed drinks and new serves to ensure that everyone can enjoy Scotch whisky.

A final comment from me;

To quote Bob Dylan "The times they are a changing." Can you still get your preferred single malt scotch whisky? In most cases, the answer is yes. However some whiskies are going the way of the dinosaurs, and if you want them, then some serious digging is required. It's not a case of adapt or die, for us older whisky drinkers. I would however encourage you to branch out a bit and exercise your taste buds, as the new SIA whisky and the articles posted on here are telling you, nothing stays the same forever.

And finally from Confucius

By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest.