



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.

I now consider the new Glenfiddich "Project XX". Which I have just tried, thanks to my good friend David McDonald who brought a bottle into the office for our Friday whisky. This is the second in the new Glenfiddich experimental series, the first being the "IPA" finish (issue 146). This whisky is quite unusual in that Glenfiddich invited 20 whisky experts from around the world, to come to the distillery. When they arrived they were tasked with each picking a different barrel from within the warehouse. From these 20 barrels the Glenfiddich Malt Master Brian Kinsman, would work his magic and combine/marry varying amounts from each barrel to make the finished product that would become "Project XX" (See page 2 for a visual of the process).

Unfortunately for me, this whisky, that was, at least partially made by committee falls a bit short of the superb standard that Glenfiddich normally adheres to.

It's a very rare day when you catch me being critical of Glenfiddich, but I am used to their whiskies having robust flavor profiles, with a nice oily mouthfeel to them. This whisky to my taste is a little young (NAS) and thin, with light flavors. But please keep experimenting!

You can buy Glenfiddich "Project XX" for around \$85.00 a bottle.

Tasting Notes;

Nose - Pear, apple & liquorice

Palate - Toasted almonds, cinnamon & cotton candy

Finish - Cotton candy sweetness

"Slainte Mhath"

Paul Bissett



Slange

project XX

EXPERIMENTAL PROCESS

MALT MASTER



20 WHISKY EXPERTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



GLENFIDDICH DISTILLERY
CONVAL WAREHOUSE



WAREHOUSEMAN
DRAWS SAMPLES

20 CASKS
17 BOURBON BARREL
2 SHERRY BUTT
1 PORT PIPE



SAMPLES DELIVERED
FROM WAREHOUSE



NOSING



20 MALT WHISKIES
IN THE PERFECT RATIO

MALT MASTER

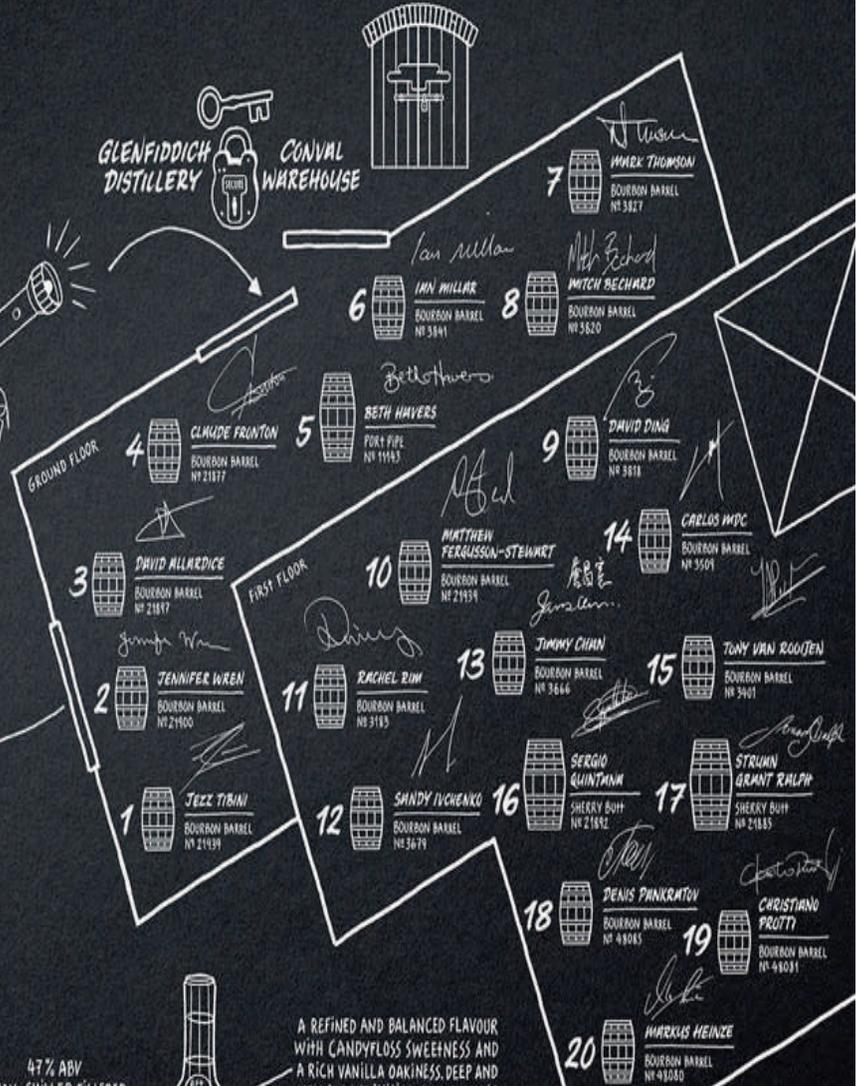


47% ABV
NON-CHILLED, FILTERED

VATTING

GLENFIDDICH PROJECT XX

A REFINED AND BALANCED FLAVOUR
WITH CANDYFLOSS SWEETNESS AND
A RICH VANILLA OAKINESS. DEEP AND
MELLOW, THE INITIAL SWEETNESS IS
COMPLEMENTED BY UNUSUAL
NOTES OF TOASTED ALMONDS,
CINNAMON AND A HINT OF
CRISP TANNIN.



Glenfiddich
EXPERIMENTAL SERIES

#02 PROJECT XX
SUMMER FRUITS & CANDYFLOSS



How to sound like a whisky expert (even if you're not).

By Annette Barlow

These days, there are dedicated national holidays for the most ludicrous things (Farmhouse breakfast day anyone? British sandwich week? Be nice to nettles day?), launched by big companies intent on flogging their wares to the British public under the guise of 'fun'.

One such celebration we can totally get on board with, however, is National Whisky Day (Saturday 21 May), a delightful excuse to frolic in this peaty, smoky nectar of the Gods, and impress your mates with your immeasurable whisky knowledge.

But what if you don't know your scotch from your rye? Your single malt from your blend? What if you think Coca Cola is the rightful bedfellow for this amber dram?

Well, lucky for you, we've distilled the expert advice into a handy bluffer's guide to the good stuff.

What's Your Poison?

Scotch, rye, bourbon – how much difference can there actually be? Well, a lot, actually. In a nutshell, Scottish whisky encompasses the product developed by the country's five distilling regions (Campbeltown, Islay, Lowlands, Islands, Speyside and Highlands).

Bourbon is an American whisky which contains a minimum of 51 per cent corn, and is aged in new oak barrels. (Once they're done with them, they often ship them to Scotland to age their whiskies).

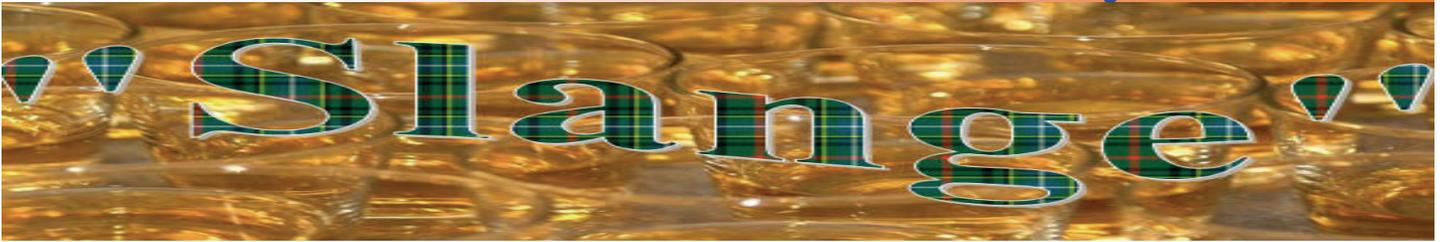
Rye is also an American whisky, and must be made with at least 51 per cent rye.

Tennessee whisky is its own beast, an offshoot of bourbon that adds in a supplementary charcoal filtering process. You're probably familiar with its most successful export: Jack Daniel's.

The Process

Little had changed in whisky production throughout the years, and although each distillery and region will have its own idiosyncrasies, whisky production generally follows a five-stage process: malting (where the grain is germinated, turning starch into soluble sugars), mashing (the grain is added to warm water), fermentation (the liquid is allowed to cool and ferment for around 48 hours), distillation and maturation (the whisky is aged in barrels).





How to sound like a whisky expert cont.

Geography

Scotch is short for Scottish whisky, and its origin is exactly what makes it special. The surrounding region's air quality plays an enormous part in the final product's flavour profile, as it seeps into the barrels during the ageing process: the sea-salty, floral Scottish atmosphere lends its whisky a substantially different quality to the humid, green surrounds of Tennessee, for example.

But it's not only Scotland and America who produce great drams. Japan has a long history of excellent whisky production, influenced heavily by Scotland's methods, and Ireland's sizeable output is largely triple distilled. Canadian whisky, often referred to generically as 'rye', is actually a corn-rye blend.

Single Or Blend?

Essentially, single malt whisky is produced at a single distillery using water, malted barley and yeast, then matured in oak casks. Single malts tend to be bolder in showcasing its flavours.

Blended whisky is a mixture of malt and grain whisky, often from different distilleries, and tends to have a more harmonious, consistent flavour profile.

Nosing

The worst word for the best practice: tasting whisky. As with all foodstuffs, the first impression you'll have is via sight: for example, clear whisky is unaged. You can buy bottles of unaged whisky and age it yourself in individual barrels. It has a distinct flavour (not good).

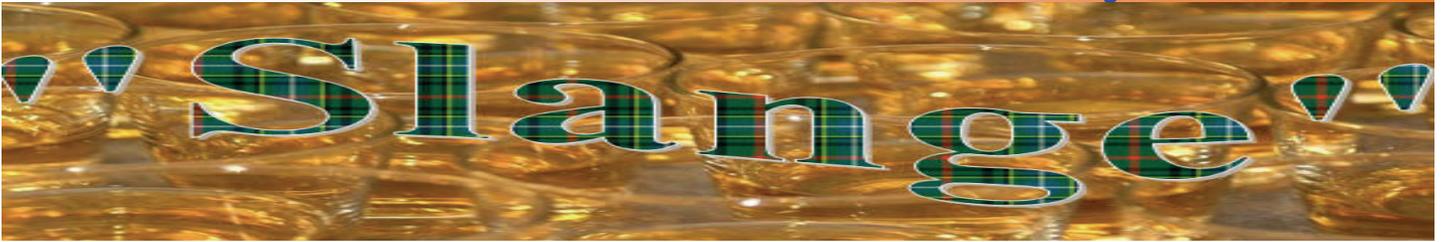
Light amber liquid means the whisky is young, and hasn't had much contact with wood barrels. It could also mean it has been aged in American white oak barrels.

Dark liquid means the whisky is older and has likely been aged in sherry or Madeira barrels.

To get the best out of your dram, taste it from a glass with a rounded bottom and tapered top, as this captures the drink's heady aromas. It is often encouraged to add a few drops of water to the whisky to open up the flavour, but bonus tip: single malts usually already have water added to them before bottling.

To taste, take a small amount of whisky in your mouth and hold it, swirling it around your tongue before swallowing. See what notes you pick up, and repeat the process.





How to sound like a whisky expert cont.

What To Say

You've selected your whisky, can discuss its origins, and you've supped to your heart's content. Now what? Well, whisky – unlike wine – tends to revolve around distinct key flavours: sweet, fruity, floral, spicy, herbal, oaky, nutty, dry and smoky. Bourbons and American whiskies will tend toward the sweet, spicy end of the spectrum, whereas Scotch will lean more towards fruit and floral notes. That said, you can describe your whisky however you please: terms that often come up are malty (bourbon, rye) and peaty (Scotch), but if you think your Scotch tastes like porridge and leather, and your rye tastes like children's medicine and cigars, speak up.

The Lingo

Cask: The barrel in which the whisky is aged.

Cask Strength: Whisky that is bottled straight from the barrel. This means no water has been added before bottling and the resulting drink will be more potent and fuller in flavour. If you buy cask strength whisky, be sure to add a little water to your glass before drinking unless you'd like to have your head blown off.

Ester: An organic compound formed during fermentation by the reaction of carboxylic acid with alcohol. They lend whisky its fruitiness.

Finishing: This refers to a process of re-aging the whisky once it has been fully aged. This produces complex new flavours.

Mash Bill: The ratio of grains used in a whisky.

Whisky Or Whiskey?

Depends where in the world you're living. Americans and Irish prefer whiskey, whereas we Brits, the Scottish, Canadians and Japanese prefer whisky.

Who cares how you spell it? Just drink it.

