



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. "Slainte."

In this issue I look at anCnoc (pronounced as *a-nock*) 12-year-old single malt scotch, which I tasted for the first time when Jeff at Liquor bank (Paradise & Chico, California) gave me some to try.

This is an easy drinking single malt, which I enjoyed a lot. To me this is a quintessential Speyside whisky.

It has nice sweet malty notes with a subtle and distinctive complexity to it that, for me, makes it a standout Speyside whisky.

I can't say that I had even seen this whisky before Jeff gave it to me. I can only assume that the owners don't have a large marketing budget, which is a shame, as this deserves to be tasted. If you come across a bottle, I highly recommend you give it a try.

At around \$40.00 to \$50.00 a bottle it's a great dram for the price.

Tasting Notes;

Nose - Sweet malt, citrus spice & red apple

Palate - Honey, pear, light smoke, touch of pepper

Finish - Medium with sweet oak and fruit

Studies show that carrots improve your vision.

Whisky doubles it!!!

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





A wee bit of History

Previously named **Knockdhu** (located in Banffshire) after the distillery, the whisky was renamed anCnoc (Gaelic for "the hill") in 1994. This was done to avoid confusion with the **Knockando distillery** located in Knockando, Moray in Strathspey, Scotland.

The Knockdhu distillery was founded in 1893 by John Morrison, who bought the land from the Duke of Fife to produce whisky after several springs on the southern slope of Knock Hill were discovered. The site was also chosen for its proximity to the Knock Station on the Banff branch line of the Great North of Scotland Railway that ran between Aberdeen and Elgin.

Not only was the new location convenient to the railway, but was also within an area noted for its barley and peat.

The distillery started production in 1894 and remained in continuous operation until 1931, when it was forced to close for a few years due to the economic depression. Wartime rationing of barley forced a second closure from 1940 until 1945.

Knockdhu was closed in 1983, and sold to Inver House in 1988, after which production resumed in February 1989. Various bottling ages of Knockdhu are still available with the most popular being the 12 years old, there is also an annual vintage bottling around 14–15 years old, a 16 year old (matured solely in second fill bourbon casks) and a 30 year old.

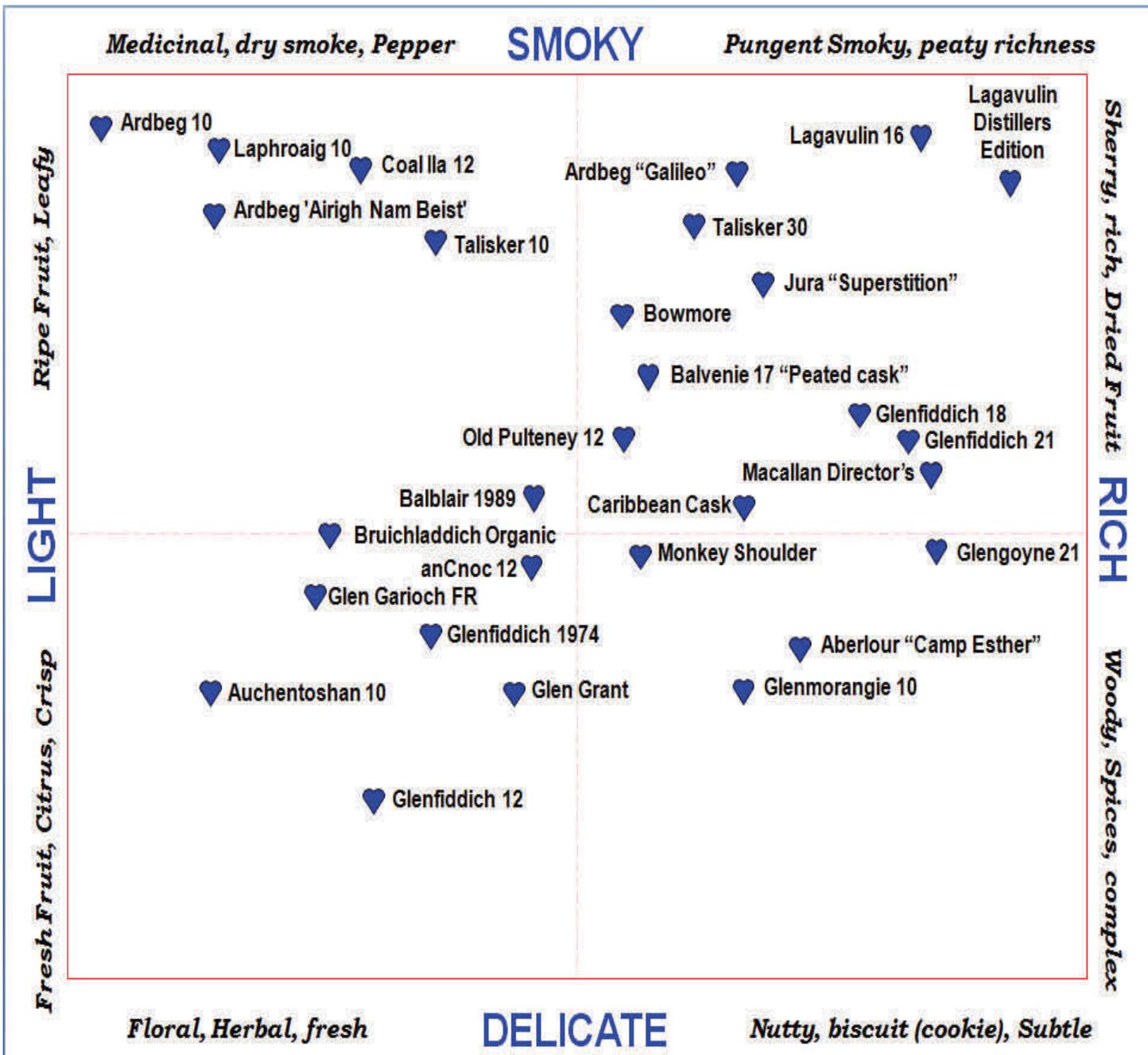
Knockdhu distillery is not officially open to the public, however I have heard that they never turn any visitor away and are willing to show you around.



Knockdhu distillery



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; **anCnoc** For more information go to www.anenoc.com





Bagging Scotland's Munros

by Gabi Mocatta, Lonely Planet



There is a particularly Scottish habit known as “Munro bagging”. This challenging -- and somewhat competitive -- sport involves climbing each of the peaks in Scotland that are more than 3,000ft high. There are 284 of these “Munros”, named after Hugh T Munro, the Scottish baronet and keen mountaineer who compiled the first list of them. They vary from easy day walks that barely require a map to airy scrambles, best tackled by those with climbing and navigation experience -- and a head for heights.

It is a badge of honor among hikers to have “bagged” all 284 Munros, which to the uninitiated, might sound like a joyless mountain slog. But even for non-committed trekkers, a spot of Munro bagging is an infinitely exhilarating experience in the wildest corners of the British Isles.

The six hills below are some of the most approachable and rewarding of Scotland's Munros.

Included are also some of the loveliest places to stay, so you will not even have to put up a tent.

Ben Nevis

Tallest first -- at 4,409ft, this king of the Munros is a fairly straightforward, but immensely rewarding walk. In fine weather you are likely to have company on the summit: “the Ben” in the Scottish Highlands is one of the most frequented peaks and rightly so, as the dramatic views across Loch Lomond to the mountains of Arrochar are sublime. For walkers (climbers scale many different routes) there are two possible tracks: the straightforward “tourist path” which is so well trodden, little route finding is needed (unless in snowy conditions); or the less-trodden route via the neighboring mountain of Carn Mor Dearg, which requires some scrambling.

Stay at luxurious Inverloch Castle Hotel near Fort William, close to the foot of Ben Nevis.

Schiehallion

This mountain's conical shape looks eerily like a volcano when viewed from across Loch Rannoch in central Scotland. When snow-covered in winter it could double as Scotland's Mount Fuji. From the town of Braes of Foss, the route to the summit crosses grassy sheep country and climbs onto stony ground strewn with quartzite boulders. Towards the top, at 3,553ft, the path is made up of cairns. The rewards are the extensive views --



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especially looking west across Rannoch Moor towards the peaks of Glencoe. Even this mountain's name is enchanting: it translates as "Fairy Hill of the Caledonians".

Stay at the comfortable Dunalastair Hotel, on the main square in Kinloch Rannoch.

Ben Hope

The most northerly of the Munros, this wedge-shaped mountain stands alone at 3,041ft above the peat-covered moorland of Sutherland. The route follows the picturesque Allt-na-caillich burn (waterway), before climbing towards steep rocky crags to the gully, which gives access to the escarpment. It is a steep scramble up the crags, then a stroll to the mountain's summit. There are vertiginous views down the craggy western face and huge panoramas over much of Scotland's far north in fine weather, even as far as the Orkney Islands. Stay at the tartan-decorated Altnaharra Hotel, near the village of Altnaharra in the Highland region of northern Scotland.

Ben More

This Munro is on the Isle of Mull, so you will need to travel by ferry to bag this one. The climb to the summit of the United Kingdom's youngest volcano (3,169 ft) starts at sea level on Loch Na Keal and follows farm tracks up the shallow valley of Abhainn Dhiseig. There is abundant wildlife here: you may spot sea eagles, otters, ptarmigan, mountain hares and red deer on the climb to the black scree-shrouded summit. Beware using a compass, as magnetic rock here makes readings unreliable. Stay between the forest and the loch at Tioran Country House Hotel.

Lochnagar

Located in the Cairngorm Mountains on the British Royal's Balmoral Estate, Lochnagar is the highest of a cluster of rocky peaks, gathered around a deep corrie (as a glacial cirque is known in Scottish Gaelic). Favored by mountaineers for its spectacular winter ice climbing, Lochnagar's summit (3,789 ft) can be an uncomplicated day walk in summer -- starting on a track through fragrant pine forests and ascending up around the rim of the corrie. The view down the cliffs into the corrie itself is dizzying. Stay at the Darroch Learg country hotel just outside nearby Ballater, whose name translates as "the oak wood on the sunny hillside". Inviting enough?

Buachaille Etive Mòr

Glen Etive and Glen Coe in the Scottish Highlands comprise some of the most spectacular and iconic mountain scenery in Scotland. Expansive, green valleys are bounded by towering peaks, like Buachaille Etive Mòr at 3,353 ft. You will have to be comfortable with walking on infinitely shifting scree to summit this mountain, but with its near-perfect pyramidal shape, standing free of the other peaks around it, the mountain offers incredible views over arguably the most gorgeous mountain country in Scotland.