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Whiskypedia: A Compendium Of Scotch Whisky



Synopsis

Why does Scotch whisky taste like it does? Where do the flavors come from? How might they have changed over the years? The flavor of Scotch whisky is as much influenced by history, craft, and tradition as it is by science. Individual distilleries give their whiskies unique characteristics. These characteristics do not arise magically (as was once thought), nor are they solely the result of the region (as is still thought, by some). They have their roots in the craft and custom of the distillery and of the district in which it is located, but the key influences upon flavor are the distilling equipment itself, how it is operated, and how the spirit is matured. Whiskypedia explores these influences. For the first time, the flavor and character of every malt whisky distilled in Scotland is explored with reference to how it is made. Introductory sections provide an historical overview, an examination of regional differences, and an explanation of the contribution made by each stage of the production process. This compendium is a comprehensive guide to all the distilleries in Scotland (both malt and grain). Each entry provides a brief account of the distillery's history and curiosities, lists the bottlings which are currently available, details how the whisky is made, and explores the flavor and character of each make. Malt whisky is the quintessential 'spirit of place,' and this element of the story has been captured by John MacPherson's camera in specially commissioned images which compliment the text. Skyhorse Publishing, along with our Good Books and Arcade imprints, is proud to publish a broad range of cookbooks, including books on juicing, grilling, baking, frying, home brewing and winemaking, slow cookers, and cast iron cooking. We've been successful with books on gluten-free cooking, vegetarian and vegan cooking, paleo, raw foods, and more. Our list includes French cooking, Swedish cooking, Austrian and German cooking, Cajun cooking, as well as books on jerky, canning and preserving, peanut butter, meatballs, oil and vinegar, bone broth, and more. While not every title we publish becomes a New York Times bestseller or a national bestseller, we are committed to books on subjects that are sometimes overlooked and to authors whose work might not otherwise find a home.

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Customer Reviews

This is a lovely book about Scottish whisky. MacLean starts by giving a quick history of Scottish distilling; this is helpful in understanding and appreciating the industry of today and it's also very interesting. Then he moves on to "Understanding the Label" with a color photo of a Scotch whisky label and a numbered explanation detailing what each part means. Next is the "Taxonomy" of Scotch and "Regional Differences". He also discusses where flavor comes from, the raw materials in making scotch, malt & the "Plant"/physical parts of a distillery: Mash tun, Washbacks, Stills, Condensers, Casks & Warehouse styles. This is the first 37 pages of the book. Then on to the part of the book you will use most often: The alphabetical listing of each Scottish distillery, including the new ones who have not yet released a bottling & the silent. There is a color photo of at least 1 bottle from each distillery which I find very useful when going shopping. I also really enjoy seeing the various labels & bottle styles. MacLean gives a history of each distillery going back to the earliest days, even the illicit days of the distilleries, describing various owners/investors. Each entry (distillery) has: -Expressions - The current bottling of the distillery owner (proprietary) not the independent bottler releases. -Raw Materials - Source of the distillery water, peat & malt. For all you "peat heads" (I like peaty whisky), he gives the maltings' phenolic content ppm. For example: Ardbeg - Port Ellen maltings at 55 ppm; Laphroaig- Port Ellen & mainland maltings at 35-40 ppm, peat from Machrie Moss. -Plant: Description of the mash tun, washbacks, stills & condensers. -Maturation: Type of barrel used & warehousing description. -Style: Describes the style or character of the new-make spirit, not the mature whisky. These descriptions are mainly provided by the distillery owner. -Mature Character: MacLean's opinion and description of samples usually in the 12 year old range. He does not use a point system or ranking; just his overall tasting description. ***This is NOT the book to buy if you are primarily looking for specific bottling tasting notes. Each distillery listed has its address, phone number, website, owner, visitor information & capacity listed on the left side of the page. The end of the book contains "Facts & Figures" which include a breakdown of who owns whom, the top ten single malts with liters sold in 2007 (I assume

although it doesn't state liters on the page) & a pie chart visual of their market share. Next is a breakdown of the major consumer countries of malt whisky. Also a listing & description of the 18 leading independent bottlers. This book has a very nice layout & is printed on heavy paper. It's not a pocket book but it's also not huge and heavy. I've carried it in to the liquor store and I find it very helpful in learning about Scotch whisky. Do yourself a favor and buy a whisky glass; it really does enhance the flavor and enjoyment! **Stolzle Glencairn Whiskey Glass Boxed**

Charles MacLean's Whiskypedia is a well written, comprehensive look at the Scotch Whisky industry. The book begins with a short but insightful history of Scotch, followed by a detailed explanation of how to understand a label on a bottle of Scotch. Then he gives you an explanation of the recognized regional differences that make Scotch Whisky so unique. The meat of the book is the "Gazetter of Distilleries", which takes up the largest portion of the book. Here MacLean shows off his vast knowledge of all things Scotch. Each entry is listed by the name of a Distillery, with a brief history of the brand, a listing of their range of products, information on the plant (stills, washbacks, etc.) how the spirit is matured (bourbon or sherry casks, etc.), and the style of whisky made there. MacLean finishes each listing with his personal tasting notes. The entries are very inclusive, listing all known distilleries that are currently in operation, those that are now closed, and a handful that are back in operation but haven't released anything yet. The historical notes and "curiosities" make each entry an enjoyable read that gives special insight on each distillery, their founders, and their current owners. This is a very well researched and enjoyable resource book that I know I will return to often. I doubt this book will have time to collect dust on my bookshelf!

While it's fun and fascinating to read the history and technique of the various famous distillers, don't expect much detail between bottlings. For example: you'll read a few pages about the Glenlivet distillery, but not a lot about the (rather significant) differences between a 25 and 12-year-old bottling. It's a good read if you want to get the general sense of a particular malt, but don't expect a comprehensive breakdown between the variants from the same distillery.

This book is well worth the money. It contains interesting history and lore regarding each distillery. However, I wish that it contained a bit more in the way of facts. Also, the grammatic syntax, that is, the writing is sometimes a bit confusing. All in all, buy this book if you are interested in Scotch whisky and Scotch whisky distilleries. You will not be disappointed.

This is an exceptional book for anyone who collects single malts (as I do!). MacLean lists different "expressions" that is variations, with each single malt, so it is the ideal book to make notes in, and take along, on a buying trip. I know of no other book that is as complete in this aspect of whiskies. The author also gives taste notes which enable one to find new whiskies, similar to old favorites.

Charles Maclean is a historian, and he has put a lot of great historical information in this book. Great as a primer on distilleries. I'm especially happy that he mentions the kinds of casks each distillery uses - not down to each expression, just by the distillery in general. Anything too specific would probably be out of date quickly anyways. Either way, I haven't found a better source for that kind of information.

The book gives history, details and stats about many distilleries. Better yet, it introduces you to many new brands. Fun to read and puts you in the mood to bring out a bottle. Thinking about it, I'm going to go pour myself a glass of Dalwhinnie, (that I can highly recommend -especially for novice single malt drinkers.) Slàinte!

An excellent resource for not only single malts, but blends and grain whiskys as well. While not every expression available is included, the major offerings from all of the distilleries are covered, along with interesting facts and stories about the makers of our beloved Aqua Vitae...

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