

Summit Hill Scotch Whisky Society

Premium Vault

PV Bottle #1 - Clynellish "Candlewax and Red Berries" - \$10

At first this is solventy – marker pens and nail varnish remover, with a trace of shoe polish as a clue to what is to come, and a background of cake mix, vanilla, marshmallow and glace cherries. The taste is sweet and waxy, with a trace of scented smoke and Granny's raspberry jam. The waxiness – a key-note of this malt – rises magnificently with water, with old incense, tangerine skin, boiled sweets, cranberries and strawberries. Teeth-coating in the mouth; sweet overall, but not cloying – enlivened by lime sherbet and sea breeze. A classic example of this distinguished malt from a distillery which overlooks the North Sea.

Clynellish – (Northern Highlands) - 25 Years

1 of only 60 bottles

Proof: 97.8°

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PV Bottle #2 - Glenfarclas 105 - \$35

A really incredible Glenfarclas - a forty-year old expression of cask-strength cult favourite 105, bottled late in 2008 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the appearance of the 105 expression. It's astonishing that they managed to maintain the 60% abv over forty years in sherry casks - this will be an epic dram.

Tasting notes by Whiskyfun (Serge Valentin)

From two casks bottled in 2008 to commemorate the first regular '105' that came out in 1968.
Colour: amber.

Nose: oh, I didn't know this baby was that great! I should have tried it sooner... A complex, rich but very elegant sherriness, blending oranges, sultanas, milk chocolate and the most subtle notes of cinnamon and other spices. It really reminds me of some high-end mulled wine, maybe mulled wine made with some Hermitage Chapelle 1978? (the horror!) Seriously, it's a fabulous nose so far. High-end chocolate. With water: fa-bu-lous development on many herbs and spices. Sultry but not heavy at all and very complex. Amazing.

Mouth (neat): extraordinarily good! Stunning resinous and sappy attack, much more nervous than expected, more citrusy than other old Glenfarclasses. And many herbs and many spices... Only the high power is slightly 'too much' for this sissy of a taster so I'm eager to add a few drops of water to this utter beauty. With water: exceptional! Please call the anti-maltoporn brigade! Hundreds of candied fruits and thousands of herbs. And an amazing 'vibrancy'.

Finish: long, big, penetrating. Endless – warning, it'll kill your tasting session, which is what just happened here at WF Towers.

Comments: only one regret, not to have tried this one when it came out in 2008. What an utter sherried beauty! Vattings of two or three casks are often more complex than single casks, as we already found out several times with Mr. Samaroli's old bottlings, for instance. Or when mixing the remnants of a wee tasting session. This 40-105 is another perfect example! - 94 points.

Glenfarclas – (Speyside) - 40 Years

Proof: 120°

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PV Bottle #3 - Ardbeg 1977 - \$25

Rare and delicious Ardbeg! Jim Murray awarded this 96 points and described it as "simply one of the greatest experiences". This was distilled in 1977 and bottled in 2001, part of a release of 2,400 bottles.

Nose: As it warms, bonfires on the beach. Boats caulked with pitch. The tar-like Ardbeg trademark

Palate: Light-bodied but oily. Clings to the tongue. Lemony sweetness. Barbecue wood.

Finish: Clean coal-tar. Warming. Lingering.

Comment: Cleaner, more lemony and oily, and less assertive, than the 24 Years Old duty free edition.

Ardbeg – (Islay) - 24 Years

Proof: 92°

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PV Bottle #4 Port Ellen 11th Release - \$30

A limited edition natural cask strength Single Malt Scotch Whisky. From Port Ellen, a closed distillery on Islay. Now very rare, highly sought after.

Eleventh of a limited series of annual releases.

Annual allocation ensures availability of this irreplaceable malt for only a little longer.

From refill American Oak casks filled in 1978.

Just 2,988 individually numbered bottles available world-wide. The oldest release and first Port Ellen 32 year old to come from the distillers.

Port Ellen was established as a malt mill on Islay's famous south coast in 1825. It developed into a major distillery under John Ramsay from 1833-92.

Trading directly with North America, in 1848 Ramsay secured the right to export whisky in larger casks and to store it in bonded duty free warehouses prior to export.

In 1967, the distillery was rebuilt, producing throughout the 1970s before closing in 1983.

Appearance: Golden clear honey. Good beading for its age.

Nose: Mild nose-prickle, crisp and mouth-watering. Sweet, buttery, smoky and savoury (warm croissant with honey, a wood-burning stove briefly open). Dense, in time showing barley sugar and caramel sweets above a light charred note (wet sand and crushed charcoal) that at last reveals the place of origin. A little water increases the charred note, now faintly smoky, then indulgent marzipan or toffee notes grow, yielding lemon zest, cloves and rich vanilla.

Body: Medium.

Palate: Smooth, chewy, and sweet overall. Cooling and slow, with clean, fresh summer fruits and waxy, creamy biscuits. Later, chewy, with rich fruit-cake. When water is added, still oily, full-bodied and deeply characterful: sweet, with a trace of salt. Pine resin cavorts with honey and light eucalyptus before a faint backdrop of tropical fruitiness.

Finish: Long, warming, smooth and sweetish (Pecan nuts) then lightly astringent, before billows of 'welcome home' coal-smoke and late charred notes. Water softens the smoke and introduces elegant, late tannins and tartness.

Summary: An excellent example of the make that will be loved: extremely fresh, light and delicate yet immutably Port Ellen. Long maturation has brought charm, good manners, assured self-confidence and understated elegance, without losing any of the underlying personality.

Port Ellen – (Islay) - 32 Years

1 of only 2988 bottles

Proof: 107.8°

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PV Bottle #5 Lochside 1965 - 46Yr Adelphi - \$20 per dram

The nose holds deep and rich red fruits, mint leaves, plenty of grape seed tannins, deep notes of shoe leather, shoe polish, semi-sweet chocolate, damp cedar, candle wax, fresh Cuban tobacco and spiced pipe tobacco. the palate hits with gloriously sweet red fruit punch, tons of leather and tobacco, plenty of cloves, menthol, and a dash of those grape seed tannins. with water, the spicy red fruits diminish just a touch on the nose, giving vanilla, leather and tobacco more room to move, hints of lemon creme now. i could nose this one all day! the palate is just a nice as before, spicy and fruity, with plenty of leather and cigars still in the cedar box. summary: simply gorgeous. a flawless example of a heavily-sherried whisky.

Lochside – (Highland) - 46 Years

1 of only 299 bottles

Proof: 104.6°

Summit Hill Scotch Whisky Society

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PV Bottling #6 Tamdhu 21yr O&R Platinum - \$15 per dram

Nose: Dark chocolate and rich berry compote, marzipan, herbal liqueur, prunes, dates. Notes of cordite, Serrano ham and roasted chestnuts, cinnamon and cardamom spices.

Palate: Sherried and rich, prunes, dried figs, burnt sugar, notes of plum brandy, butterscotch, dark chocolate, espresso. Spicy, with star anise, black pepper with a touch of herbs.

Finish: Very long, fruity and slightly spicy with notes of aniseed, pepper and toasted barley.

Overall: The sherry influence on this malt is extreme, but it works very well.

Tamdhu – (Speyside) - 21 Years

Proof: 110.6°

Summit Hill Scotch Whisky Society

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PV Bottle #7 Balvenie TNU 1401 Batch 5 - \$15

The colour is a dark golden amber and the nose is instantly rich, fragrant and expressive. The immediate aromas are of milk chocolate and spiced orange. Other aromas include plenty of wood spices (imagine cedarwood, nutmeg and cinnamon bark), dark dried fruits (prunes, dates, figs and raisins), vanilla, butterscotch, honey, black coffee and a hint of peach/apricot and earthy ginger. It is a great smelling whisky.

On the palate this is rich, fruity and packs a little bit of a surprising punch. There are plenty of initial wood spice and warming citrus notes that penetrate the taste buds and grip hard - think of cinnamon bark, nutmeg and zesty, dried lemons and oranges. It makes the mouth water and as the saliva mixes, the whisky becomes more velvety and softer. The spices soften but the zesty orange is exaggerated and becomes almost marmalade-like. These notes combine superbly with others to create a palate of extreme depth, complexity and enjoyment - imagine honey, butterscotch, dried fruits (raisins and prunes especially), bitter dark chocolate, burnt caramel, toasted caramelized nuts and hints of demerara sugar and coffee.

The finish is long and uplifting with the elements mentioned carry through impressively, particularly the orange, dried fruits, burnt caramel and spices. The spices seem to come back with a vengeance right at the end and give a warming, slightly tannic dryness to the finish.

This whisky is well balanced as it is presented, but the strength makes you think to add water. After a few drops the dried fruitiness of the nose is highlighted with the intense wood spices knocked back a little. The palate still packs plenty of intensity in with the orange note still prominent, along with the burnt caramel and chocolate. A hint of peach also comes through very well. The result is equally as good as without water.

What's the verdict?

This is easy - this whisky is very impressive and an absolute cracker. The balance, depth, complexity and intensity is superb and shows David Stewart's incredible knowledge of selecting and then marrying casks to compliment each other in this way. The whisky is equally as expressive either with or without water and is truly outstanding.

Balvenie – (Speyside) - Vatted

Proof: 100.2°

Summit Hill Scotch Whisky Society

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PV Bottle #8 Auchroisk 30YO - \$15 per dram

Nose: Stewing dried fruits, then dates mashed with flour leading to burnt cake crumbs and citrus flavoured boiled sweets. There is also a big DIY flavour which could be described as saw dust, others might say varnish, either way it is awesome!

Palate: There is a big rush of autumnal fruits, for me dried apples macerated in sherry which forms part of a dry but luxurious mouth-feel.

Finish: The finish is dominated by spices particularly cloves and nutmeg but as soon as they fade there is a strong presence of powdered sherbet.

Overall: Perhaps the most drinkable whisky of the 2012 Special Releases, this Auchroisk offers big fruity flavours which you could sit with all evening.

Auchroisk – (Speyside) - 30 Years

Proof: 109.4°

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PV Bottle #9 - BenRiach 34yo 1977/2011

\$15 per dram

Strong Pedro Ximénez notes of fresh figs, raisins, fresh blueberries, walnuts and roasted almonds, toffee, even hints of creme caramel, a handful of spices (cinnamon, nutmeg, even some paprika), over a backdrop of lightly toasted oak. the palate is not as sweet as the nose suggests, with dried figs or prunes rather than fresh fruit, plenty of salted brazil nuts, somewhat dry overall with plenty of toasted oak on the finish, and quite some salt remains. water "simplifies" the nose quite a bit -- there's maple syrup now, a handful of raisins and some fresh plum, almonds linger in the distance. the palate is both sweeter and spicier now, concord grapes, blueberry juice, a generous dash of cinnamon and nutmeg, still plenty of oak on the finish and growing slightly herbal now. water makes for an interesting journey, but a bit nicer without.

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**PV Bottle #10 - Kavalan Tiawanese Whisky - 2011
"World Icon Whisky" Award Winner . . . \$20 per dram**

Colour: Dark gold amber

Nose: The rich aroma of sherry, with its creamy toffee and rich fudge qualities, and the slightest hint of chocolate blends with the fruity character of the spirit. The fruitiness is a complex, multi-layered blend of mango and over-ripe citrus fruit flavours that ends with a touch of green apples.

Palate: Natural sweetness on the tongue is accentuated with a gentle fudge flavour. The complex fruity flavours are layered with dry smoked wood aromas. This special anniversary edition of Solist cask strength whisky has a long finish and natural sweetness giving way to a pleasant mouth-drying sensation that leaves the connoisseur ready for the next sip!

**Kavalan – (Taiwan) - Fino Sherry Cask Matured Whisky
SHSWS has 2 bottles**

Proof: 117.2º

Summit Hill Scotch Whisky Society

Premium Vault

PV Bottle #11 - Blairfindy (Glenfarclas) 25yo - \$10 per dram

Colour: Honey gold

Nose: The nose is full of sweet fruits, orange, marmalade and apricots with a sherry influence.

Palate: Natural sweetness on the tongue is accentuated with lightly sherried citrus fruits followed by hints of pineapple. The complex fruity flavours are layered with vanilla and spice.

Finish: Finishes with soft vanilla, peat and a slight peppery spiciness on the tail.

The nose is surprisingly fresh and wonderfully sweet. Loads of fruit. I have mango, apple, pear, apricots, rhubarb, gooseberries and raspberries. You could turn this into a lovely marmalade. Loads of vanilla, but also brown sugar, the kind that goes onto pancakes. Very smooth.

The whisky is mouth coating, sweet and feisty. A lot of spices, now. Pepper, nutmeg and cloves. Again a whole fruit basket passes the tastebuds. Light touches of oak. Nice balance.

In the drying finish, all the sweets and spices pass one more time, with a nice hint of woodsmoke.

Blairfindy (Glenfarclas) 25 Year Old – (Speyside)

SHSWS has one bottle, number 87 of 566

Proof: 99.4°

Summit Hill Scotch Whisky Society

Premium Vault

PV Bottle #12 - Miltonduff - Spiced Infused - \$10 per dram

Colour: Straw gold

Nose: Murray mints, rosemary and vinegar along side musty perfumed scents.

Palate: Tastes of damson jam and orange oiled oak with a hot, sweet and juicy mouthfeel.

Diluted Nose: Much needed water brings out baked apples, wine gums and mulled wine spices. Floral notes with peaches and strawberries.

Finish: Lingering with fruits then heat and spice

Comments: With cheese and fruits.

Miltonduff – Speyside (Near Elgin) 29 Year old – Refill Bourbon Hogshead

Proof: 107.4°

SHSWS has 2 bottles of only 233