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COCKTAILS

Aaron
Flaherty
Hinch
Distillery
Ireland



LOT 40
DARK OAK
Dancing in the Dark

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Whisky Relish

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by Daniel Szor





COTSWOLDS SINGLE MALT WHISKY

The Cotswolds Distillery began production at its idyllic North Cotswolds site in 2014, under the guidance of renowned industry experts Harry Cockburn & the late Dr Jim Swan. They laid down their first casks of Single Malt in September of that year, and have since filled just over 5000 casks of various types.

The first whisky ever to be distilled in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Cotswolds Single Malt Whisky is a rich and fruity single malt. It has been bottled non-chill filtered and at its natural colour, at 46% ABV.

Since then the whisky has gone on to win numerous awards including Whisky Magazines 'Icons of whisky' in 2018.

Made from 100% locally grown, floor-malted barley, the distillers have used long fermentations, unusual yeast strains and innovative distillation cuts to achieve a spirit that is smooth, fruity and balanced.

It has been matured in first-fill ex-Bourbon casks from Kentucky and reconditioned shaved, toasted and re-charred (STR) red wine casks, giving it an incredible maturity and depth of flavour in a young whisky.



— Estd  2014 —

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Whisky^{Relish}

MAGAZINE

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Geo. G. Brown



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When George Garvin Brown sealed Bourbon in a bottle for the very first time, he did so knowing it would guarantee quality and consistency for Bourbon lovers everywhere. Five generations and nearly 150 years later, our family still watches over the production of every drop of Old Forester with that same care.



This whiskey is distilled by us only, and we are responsible for its richness and fine quality. Its elegant flavor is solely due to original fineness developed with care. There is nothing better in the market.
— GEORGE GARVIN BROWN, FOUNDER

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Spring Is In The Air



In a cottage, on the hillside of Rossbeigh, County Kerry, Ireland, the day before seeing the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Limerick. This year again, we shall be more tame. No parades, but memories of parades.

At least, and hopes of travel again soon becoming reality. We love a celebration with friends, especially on St Patrick's Day. The colours come out, the Guinness lines the bar, and whiskies are held high with thanks to the angels for leaving this glass alone.

As we look to the future with hope and optimism our rainbow will shine. Our stories will be shared and our glasses will be full. For now, sit back and enjoy our Spring issue just in time for St Patrick's Day at home. Slainte.

Robert Windover
Editor/Publisher

Winter is still with us but be sure of it, Spring is approaching. With the change in season, it's amazing the calming effect a glass of whisky has on you. If you're fortunate enough to be in front of a peat fire, well, even better. I had a chance to sip on an Irish Whiskey with a fireside view of the ocean a few years ago.







Lot 40 Dark Oak

Dancing in the Dark

By Blair Phillips and Davin de Kergommeaux

When Mary Shelley's Frankenstein was published in 1818, it spawned burial crazes such as safety coffins with feeding tubes, escape hatches and bells, just in case someone had been buried alive. Mercifully, this dark craze had long disappeared by the late 1990s when the original Lot No. 40 met its demise. But there was no need to tie a bell to this whisky. We thought it was done.

Nevertheless, a decade later, a team of blenders at the Hiram Walker distillery set out to revive it. And as everyone knows, if you're going to reanimate something, you need two things – a doctor and some new parts. That's precisely what happened at the Hiram Walker Distillery. Just as Don Livermore was hanging his doctorate on his office wall, Lot No. 40 began to stir. Rather than maturing pot distilled rye and rye malt in used bourbon barrels, as in the original, Dr. Livermore decided to mature unmalted rye spirit in new number 2 charred American oak barrels. "I had found in the PhD studies that Number 2 char will have slightly more wood extracts such as vanilla, caramel and toffee notes than a Number 4," he recalls. "The thought was to balance the nice spicy rye character with the sweeter notes of a number 2 char barrel."

The reprised Lot No. 40 quickly became a Canadian hit and soon new Lot No. 40 expressions began to appear, including three annual limited-edition cask strength versions. But with dark days upon us, plans for a fourth in 2020 were put into COVID-19 isolation. Still, Canadian whisky fans need not mourn. Hiram Walker's attentive doctor still makes house calls on his ageing whisky. And from those visits comes an exceptional new Lot No. 40 called Dark Oak. Essentially, it is the classic Lot No. 40 finished in new American Oak Char #4 barrels. "The first batch was finished for about

11 months, but in reality, the majority of wood extracts will come to equilibrium in about 90 days," says Livermore. "We also know that diffusion in cask-finished whiskies occurs rather quickly, and number 4 casks with a thicker char will pull out or adsorb more sulphur than a cask with thinner char."

"Dark Oak is a natural progression for a rye style whisky," thinks Livermore. "We also increased the strength of alcohol to 48% for the Dark Oak line. At higher strengths, woody or grain characteristics

will dominate. At lower strengths, fruity and floral notes will start to shine through. Even before we started the concept, we could anticipate what would happen."

Lot No. 40 Dark Oak is alive with aromatic vanilla, juicy apple, layered balsamic notes and enough oak to build a sturdy bench for the other flavours to rest on. Caramel and oak resins are massive on the palate, then the rye spices hit you right in the chest with peppermint, cloves and charred wood pulling ahead on the finish without burying the palate.



The whisky landed on British Columbian soil first in November 2020 as part of the BC Liquor Board's Premium Spirits release and sold out the first weekend. In 1975, when Led Zeppelin tickets went on sale for a three-night run at New York's Madison Square Gardens, it took thirty-six hours for the concerts to sellout. A batch posted for sale on the J.P. Wiser Experience Website, sold out in three seconds. There is a whole lotta love for this whisky.

The good news is that the whisky is back for a limited time on British Columbia and Ontario liquor store shelves. The brand's managers plan to roll it out to the rest of the country this coming Fall with the intent that Lot 40 Dark Oak will become a permanent release. This is a whisky with the potential to cause a stir for Canadian whisky. We encourage our readers to join us in buying a bottle then telling everybody what you think of it. Help make Lot No. 40 Dark Oak a permanent fixture on the Canadian whisky landscape. It is that enjoyable.

Dancing In The Dark Cocktail

(Dave Mitton)

Dark Oak also makes a wonderful foundation for whisky forward cocktails. "I didn't reinvent the wheel here," says Dave Mitton, Global Brand Ambassador for Corby spirits. "I simply took this stunning whisky, which has loads of oak notes, sweet caramel and menthol, and combined it with flavours that paired well with those."

"The spiced fig syrup is made from dried mission figs, resulting in a sweet, spicy and fruity mouth explosion. There's almost a balsamic like flavour to them compared to fresh figs," explains Mitton. "They pair naturally with the fragrant flavours of cardamom, which is spicy, minty and citrusy. A little clove and vanilla go along for the ride with this gorgeous expression of rye. Sherry is also a natural companion



and this Pedro Ximenez is no exception, with notes of pear, ginger and marzipan. Finished off with Dale Degroff's Pimento bitters, which felt like a natural fit with all the flavours rolling around in the glass."

2 oz. Lot No. 40 Dark Oak
¼ oz Alvear Pedro Ximenez de Añada Sherry
¼ oz Spiced Fig Syrup
2 dashes of Dale DeGroff's Pimento bitters
Orange zest for garnish

For the Spiced Fig Syrup:
1 dozen dried mission figs, quartered
¼ cup cardamom
1 tbsp whole cloves
1 vanilla bean, split
1 cup demerara sugar
1½ cups of water

Combine all ingredients in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Stir until sugar starts to dissolve and figs begin to soften. Mash figs to incorporate. Once the sugar has dissolved and figs are breaking apart, remove from heat and allow to sit, covered, for 30 minutes. Fine strain into a jar, cover and keep refrigerated for up to 2 weeks.

For the Cocktail:

Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass, add ice so mixing glass is ¾ full and stir about 15 to 18 times. Strain over one large cube of ice in a rocks glass. Then squeeze zest across the drink to release the oils, then use for garnish. ♦

The Hinch Story

*A brand-new Irish distillery
with an eye on the future*

By Andrew Hardingham







There's a place where whiskey has been produced for so long it's steeped in the veins of its culture and people. A place where whiskey has long been ingrained, longer than leprechauns.

A place where many explore to experience not only the time-worn spirit itself but also the way of life that produced it. Yet make no mistake, the rebirth of Irish whiskey is here. And innovation is the name of the game. Sporting a deep-rooted appreciation for the past with an eye on the future, boutique distilleries such as Hinch are setting a new pace. One of which, any true whiskey connoisseur would be wise to keep an eye on.

Irish whiskey has always been compared to its more shelf present brother Scotch whisky. The comparison is futile, however, as they are completely different products. Although similarities exist, they are fundamentally different and should be appreciated for what they are—as opposed to what they are not. In many circles, and for many decades, Scotch whisky has won more hearts than Irish whiskey. Maybe it's because scotch exports considerably outnumber Irish—or maybe it's because many more scotch brands exist. With only 36 distilleries in all of Ireland, it's hard to

compete with Scotland, home to over 130 malt and grain distilleries. Scotch promotes a grain forward influence with its twice distilled process; however, it's a third distillation process that separates traditional Irish whiskeys from that of scotch, leaving them smooth and often more approachable.

Irish whiskey has been the fastest growing spirit in the world since 1990, and it has tripled in sales over the last decade. The Irish Whiskey Association projected 12 million cases to be exported from the Isle in 2020. And that number seems to keep growing.

Why is Irish whiskey now so popular? For that answer, I wanted to speak to a new distilling team with a fresh eye on the industry. I asked Aaron Flaherty, head distiller at Hinch, a new 30,000 sq ft facility on the Killylaney Estate in the County Down countryside, just south of the city of Belfast. Aaron doesn't believe it's just because the world is moving onto something new. The intricate history of whiskey in Ireland is long and well documented, at one point seeing the island's industry decimated. Though Aaron is optimistic about its future, noting, "There's always been a historical nod to Irish whiskey as a quality spirit, but what we're doing is bringing that forward." And although the industry was all but wiped out, he is

thankful for the few distilleries, such as Bushmills and Middleton, that were able to keep the industry alive.

However, Aaron's eyes are on the future. He points to the new distilleries that are opening up and trying to do something different, and it's this that excites him. "We're trying to create something bigger and better than we've seen for many years. And once you add the fact that we can do different spirit types like single malts, pot stills, and use peat if we want, you see Irish whiskey allows us freedom to create." Yet Aaron doesn't believe these new efforts should grant carte blanche to makers in Ireland where they "can do this-that-and-everything." But he does value the artistic freedom of a clean slate. "I like the fact that we can use some different grain and wood types as long as the underlying key process is followed. If I was a consumer, this type of thing would really excite me. And that's probably why Irish whiskey is growing."

From the very first drop of ethanol to leave their newly built still in November of 2020, Hinch has laid down an extensive whiskey plan. They understand where they are going and how to get there. That's why they hired Aaron, a highly accepted voice in Irish distillation and blending.

Since receiving his degree in chemical engineering from Strathclyde University in Scotland, Aaron has already used his vast knowledge of blending malt whisky in Scotland at Diageo. He also spent time working at Bushmills distillery and was widely accepted by industry professionals before accepting the role of Master Distiller at Hinch. When Diageo acquired the oldest remaining Irish distillery, Aaron expanded his knowledge of Irish whiskey under the tutelage of the highly regarded Colm Egan, Master Distiller at Bushmills, before making the move to Hinch.

Knowing that Hinch has just begun barreling its newmake spirit, it may seem as though this article would be better suited for publication in five years' time. However, right out of the gate, Hinch has created something special: An Chéad Dún.

Pronounced "Ankade-Dun," Hinch's first signature release is available to collectors and connoisseurs via an exclusive opportunity to buy 1 of 161 first fill bourbon casks with Hinch's newmake single malt. The exclusivity of this one-time run was intentional. Aaron added, "There won't be any of this cask #1 or lucky #7 that sells at a premium, nothing like that. We're trying not to differentiate between the 161, it's the first and only cask release we'll do. You're either in the 161 casks or you're not."

But the An Chéad Dún isn't just a concept spirit created to generate publicity. A lot of preparation and thought went into this inauguration concept. They selected these Maker's Mark bourbon casks because of their significance to Ireland and their historical stature. Maker's Mark was founded by the Samuels family whose forefather John Samuels Senior was one of the first Irish scout immigrants to set sail from the North of Ireland for America in 1713. The first recorded distillation of the rye mash in America was by members of this group. In 2010 (Robert) Samuels became Chief Operating Officer, and the 10th successive generation of the family to be involved in the Maker's Mark distillery took the helm. It was this heritage that made Maker's the natural choice for Hinch whiskey.

It's no secret that to create its core line Hinch has sourced all of its current aged whiskey stock from other Irish distilleries—and they make no apologies about it. This resourcefulness is an excellent way for Hinch to enter the market with a solid

product while the new distillery develops their signature spirit. Hinch has also used their sourced Irish whiskey to release a limited-edition cask finished whiskey with remarkable flavour that is available now. I had the fortune of tasting some of their barrel finished expressions from this reserve and I was pleasantly surprised.

For the foreseeable future, Hinch is acting as a private bottler with a twist. And they are also finishing their sourced whiskey independently in some unique casks before offering it to the world. Something Aaron made clear was that the company was driven to secure some of the world's finest wood to complement their future whiskey. Aaron's imagination knows no bounds. All of his experimental whiskey is placed in full size casks so that he can discover what will work before Hinch ages their final whiskey. With this, he aims to explore processes that are not often considered in Ireland. And while he seemed very calculated and set on a direct path, he was quick to explain how it will not affect creativity. After all, he has the resources to do just about anything his

heart and palate desires. Aaron has already finished many of the initially sourced whiskey in interesting wine and Amarone casks.

It's important to mention that the founder and visionary of Hinch, Dr. Terry Cross, also has a special place in his heart for fine wine. Over 20 years ago, Cross, who made his fortune in print and packaging, took ownership of Château de la Ligne in Bordeaux, France. A man with a refined palate, Cross has had the opportunity to experience many of the world's finest wines. This affinity comes as music to the ears of any creative distilling team; Hinch will have the opportunity to play with rare and sought-after casks to finish, like select bordeaux casks from Château de la Ligne.

With unique casks at his fingertips and freedom to experiment, creatively Aaron has felt like a kid in a candy shop. While he doesn't expect every blend to take the way he wants it to, he's open to surprises. And that's what really excites him about casks. For Aaron, the point isn't just to make something exclusive, but to invest in the future. Where he saw much of the product being produced





in Ireland aging in all bourbon casks only to be thought of in 10 years, Aaron prefers a proactive approach. "I would like to see an equal percentage of my newmake matured in bourbon, sherry, Port and a lot of other inventory equally matured in something else that I haven't even got in my mind yet." Aaron wants to style his future whisky around the current core line once the perfect cask has been determined.

"I want to know where these flavours play their part with our signature spirit I don't want it to just be a special release here and there. That's the excitement for me!" He gave me an example. "Let's just say for arguments sake that our 18-year-old single malt could lie for 14 years in bourbon and then 4 more years in something else (rather than just a cask finish for 3-6 months) and then that's our (core line) 18 year-old forever. It will always follow that profile." Although that's not necessarily what Aaron plans to do, it does reflect his creative thinking and speaks to the company's passion for creative whiskey.

To this point, Aaron spoke of his freedom to experiment. With Hinch he can source casks and play with the newmake without shouldering the weight of playing it safe. "I quite like getting full casks in here and filling them for these experiments," Aaron added. This freedom to experiment differs from the restraints on operations that use smaller casks to get faster results on flavour profiles due to the greater contact with wood. It takes far more time and whisky to see results but it seemed a better and more pure way to do it.

Hinch's marketing team touts their impressive results as evidence of the brand's vision and future success. For instance, while distribution only began mid-2019, by early 2020 they had sales in 20 international markets. Furthermore, they plan to be sold in 35-40 markets by 2021.

However impressive, numbers aren't what I find inspiring about a whiskey company; I like to hear more about the creativity that goes into the whiskey. So, to speak to ethos, I asked Aaron what was his favourite distillery to work with during his time at Diageo. To this, Aaron spoke highly of his time at Diageo and



was honoured to have had the opportunity to work in so many iconic Scotch whisky distilleries. He worked at distilleries producing whiskies for Glen Elgin, Dalwhinnie, Cardhu and many others. Working at these distilleries allowed him to consider whiskey in a new way and appreciate all of the aspects that go into it. Each stage in the process is crucial to creating and understanding the final product. And for me, it's Aaron's pragmatic experience and mindful understanding that makes the future of Hinch so exciting.

But I wanted to know what excited Aaron when considering the future of Hinch whiskey. For him it was the impressive production turnaround and the promise of compelling spirits that harboured his excitement. "From the day we turned the stills on, which was just a few months before Christmas (2020), to be producing a spirit and a newmake that just excited me was incredible! And then to be able to lay down all of these An Chéad Dún casks for 2020, it was also very impressive." Even with all of last year's tumult and a busy construction schedule at the distillery, the team at Hinch was determined to create this 161 cask program. And especially for Aaron, it was important to create that perfect newmake spirit in the very beginning. It's easy to understand how being equally involved with the concept spirit as the finished product is

a good way to make great whiskey. And after speaking with Aaron, it seemed as if he had a time machine and could taste the finished product, 18 years into the future. "What really excites me about this place is that a whiskey drinker today will actually be able to experience from concept to an 18-year-old and beyond. And I love that! No one ever really had this opportunity back in the day, to taste whiskey this way."

After researching much of the company's plan, it occurred to me that this wasn't just a story about a great whiskey. Instead, the Hinch story is about an optimistic future for Irish whiskey and what it has the potential to become. Hinch is a new distillery in an old world, and although at Hinch it's clear that they value the historical Irish product, my interpretation of their "whiskey to be" is as a hybrid adaptation of a classic.

There is no doubt that Hinch will create nostalgic and quintessential Irish whiskey because well, they're nostalgic and quintessentially Irish. But what's more is that they're also in love with the country, its rich history and the Irish whiskies that have made their mark on the world. With the country's deep history and the wealth of knowledge that guides their brand, I'm optimistic that Hinch will take that classic model and expand it well beyond our expectations. Or, at the very least, I know it will be a fun one to watch. ♦

Test Your Whisky Wisdom

How well do you know Your Whisky?





Test Your Whisky Wisdom Answers on page 53

1. Jamie Johnson The Balvenie Brand Ambassador, Canada

Q. David C Stewart, MBE is our current Malt Master, can you name his current apprentice?

Q. Can you name the burgh in Speyside where The Balvenie is located?



Jamie Johnson

3. Derek King Powers Whiskey Global Ambassador

Q. The POWERS brand was established in 1791. The brand and family alike steeped in heritage and history with some of the most amazing Irish whiskey stories coming from inside the walls

through a label and bottle change. Gold label carrying the iconic red Diamond P, Three swallow wearing teal blue and Johns Lane in striking metallic silver. The bottle inspired by the silhouette of our famous pot stills but do you know where the inspiration comes from for all or any these colours?



Derek King



Iain Forteach

2. Iain Forteach Global Brand Ambassador & Master Blender Angus Dundee Distillers PLC

Q. What is the name of our lesser-known, heavily Peated Whisky from Tomintoul Distillery?

Q. What is unique about Glencadam's Still Shapes?

of the Old John's Lane Distillery. The iconic Diamond P became one of the first registered trademarks in Ireland in 1877. POWERS were known innovators as well. What year did POWERS become the very first company to bottle a miniature spirit, or as we call it the "baby POWERS"?

Q. The POWERS brand has recently gone



Halle Garrus

4. Halle Garrus The Macallan Brand Ambassador

Q. What was the inspiration behind the blue color of The Macallan Edition No.6?

Q. What are the core differences between The Macallan Sherry Oak Range and The Macallan Double Cask Range?

**5. TISH HARCUS,
Canadian Club Brand Ambassador**

- Q.** When did Club whisky become Canadian Club?
- Q.** When did the Canadian Club Hide A Case Campaign begin?



TISH HARCUS

**7. Shane Merriam
National Brand Ambassador For
Garrison Brothers Distillery**

- Q.** In what year did United States Congress recognize Bourbon as a distinctive product of America?

- Q.** Where did Dan Garrison obtain his very first copper still?



Shane Merriam



Jacques Tremblay



Casey Gray

**6. Jacques Tremblay
Head Distiller
Bridgeland Distillery**

- Q.** What unmalted grain needs to be included in an Irish whiskey mashbill?
- Q.** To be classified as Straight Bourbon, how long must the Bourbon be aged in that charred oak container ?

**8. Casey Gray
Brand Champion,
Brown-Forman**

- Q.** Old Forester, founded by George Garvin Brown in 1870, is celebrating its 150th Anniversary this year! This historic brand is responsible for 2 big innovations, or “firsts,” in bourbon. What are they?

- Q.** Woodford Reserve Double Oaked is known for its smooth, sweet, and oak-forward flavor. Our Master Distiller, Chris Morris, even refers to Double Oaked as “the world’s first dessert bourbon.” What makes this product different from the original Woodford Reserve Bourbon and lends to this dessert-like flavor profile? ♦

Whisky ^{Relish}

Taste & Share

Maureen Linehan
@canadianproof

Was that the winter of our discontent? Lockdowns, curfews, closures, isolation, fear, frustration. Every one of us affected by Covid in some way, shape or form. We miss being together. We crave the human connection. Longing for warmer days, the hope and renewal of spring and backyard gatherings, even if they have to be socially distanced. But while so many of us felt disconnected, for me the winter saw many new friendships begin. Virtual connections were made and in many cases, over a common interest: whiskey and more whisky. Bottle hunting stories were shared, tasting notes discussed and samples were swapped. We learned about each other's lives, families, day to day routines. This liquid commodity that takes years to mature for our enjoyment has sprung groups of enthusiasts quick to share life stories over a dram. Stuck for the most part inside our homes, we embraced these new friendships, we zoomed with them, attended virtual whiskey tastings, watched cocktail classes and sat in on more virtual lock-ins and whiskey chats than we can count. Whiskey is a bond that kept us moving forward through the dark winter months. Spring brings us the hope of all things new. A return to our gardens, shedding our scarves, standing in the sunshine and breathing in the fresh air. Spring makes us yearn to get out there and shake off the dust. I have many drams to share with friends, old and new and the promise of meeting new friends "TRL" when it is safe. If that was indeed our winter of discontent, then you better believe that hope "springs" eternal and we welcome it with open arms. Cheers, friends.

Bottle #1 Method and Madness Single Grain Irish Whiskey, Midleton Co, Cork, Ireland 46% NAS

I am loving all the smaller craft distilleries experimenting with grains, finishes and exploring the possibilities with whiskey. Midleton is a giant among distilleries and certainly have the capacity and funding to flex their muscles and try some new things and ask the question “what if?” Enter the M&M line up. This Single Grain is aged in ex-bourbon barrels



and finished in virgin Spanish oak. They have provided tasting notes on the label which I find most helpful when perusing the shelves in liquor stores. I love the bottle design, the etched straight methodical lines on one side and the wavy madness on the other side. I see what you did there...

Tasting Notes:

Colour: Amber Honey

Nose: Pencil shavings are indicated on the label and this note is prevalent all the way through this pour. First nosing was of freshly cut wood but then it hits

you. You see that gun metal sharpener attached to the wall in primary school and recall jamming those #2 pencils in and cranking the handle. Oh damn, I broke the lead, again. That’s how distracted this whiskey made me. A perfumey, floral note floated above the shavings that developed into a citrus note on further nosing.

Palate: Initial sips were of new wood, with a spicy kick. A pleasant, creamy mouthfeel with forward mouth heat and the ever present pencil shavings. Next sips were definite menthol notes much like a cough candy with lingering sweetness. The menthol notes got bigger and bigger with each sip.

Finish: Baking spices lingered with a light sweetness that was interwoven with a heavy layer of menthol. It wasn’t minty for me, but much heavier, deep menthol.

Bottle #2 Macallan Edition No 6, The Macallan Distillers Ltd, Scotland 48.6% NAS

This may be a shock to some, if not a scowl, but this is my second taste of a Macallan product. I know, I know! But so many bottles and so little time! In the days of Covid, we are seeing so many small businesses succumb to the economic fallout of the pandemic. Local businesses have had to pivot (yes, I used that trendy word) and with changes to the alcohol regulations, at least in Ontario, bars are now able to sell mixed cocktails and ounces of whiskey as take out. I love it! While we cannot slide onto a bar stool and chat with our favourite bartenders, we do what we can to support them. What a great opportunity to try whiskies you may otherwise shy away from and hopefully discover some new favourites while supporting small biz. This sample was purchased at The Capitol, a whiskey bar in Hamilton that

is brimming with close to 200 bottles on their shelves. I was given the heads up by the owner Derek that he was getting a bottle of the Edition No 6 and the timing couldn’t be better. Previous Editions have paid tribute to the creativity of the distillers and apprentices. This Edition gives a nod to the River Spey, part of the Highland landscape on which the distillery sits. This Edition has used a combination of American oak and European sherry casks.

Tasting Notes:

Colour: Light Amber

Nose: Fruity golden raisins and apples, toasted cereal with a hint of oak and vanilla. Hints of orange surfaced. Very pleasing to this newbie scotch drinker.

Palate: Lighter sweetness with just a tinge of darker fruits, indicative of the sherry casks with a surprisingly thick mouthfeel. Orange, oak and then toffee.

It’s quite a lovely whisky and if the hook hadn’t been firmly set by previous scotch whiskies for me, this particular pour has caught my attention. I am doomed.

Finish: Lingering rich fruits and baking spices with some bitterness hanging around.



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Bottle #3: BiB Old Tub, James R Beam Distilling Ltd, Kentucky, USA 50% NAS, min 4 yrs

This bottle was recommended as a daily sipper, with nutty notes commonly found with Beam products. I appreciate the Bottled In Bond ABV and the intention of the Act behind the term. The Bottled in Bond Act of 1897 was a consumer’s guarantee that they were buying real, untampered whiskey. Way back when, it was not uncommon for other products to be added by the re-seller to stretch the whiskey further and those products were not the most appealing or healthy. The BiB standardized rules are as follows: the whiskey must be the product of one distillation season by one distiller at one distillery. It must be aged for a minimum of 4 years in a federally bonded warehouse and bottled at 100 proof or 50% ABV. The label must identify the distillery that made the whiskey and

indicate the bottling location if different than the distiller. Lesson over. Now onto the fun stuff.

Tasting Notes:

Colour: Golden Amber

Nose: Lots of nuttiness. Shelled peanuts to be precise. Then along comes caramel and a very light oak note. It took a bit to get past the peanuts.

Palate: Nuts all day long. Baking spices and vanilla and delicious caramel with the familiar oak notes. A kick of spicy heat with a forward mouth burn happens to remind you what you are drinking.

Finish: Dry on the finish with the nuttiness continuing and a wisp of burnt sugar sweetness that hangs on for a while.

Bottle #4: High West Campfire Whiskey, High West Distillery, Utah, USA 46% Aged 4-8 yrs

Founded in 2006 by biochemist David Perkins, High West Distillery is reportedly the first legal distillery in Utah since 1870. Campfire is a blended whiskey that is comprised of rye whiskey, straight bourbon and peated scotch whisky. The mashbills are disclosed but the proportions are a guarded secret. This bottle has been recommended to me by a few people when I expressed an interest in delving into scotch whiskies. It’s a fantastic intro to peated whiskies while still having that sweet bourbon backbone. Kind of like swimming in the deep end and hanging onto the buoy line. You know you don’t need it but you still hang on for dear life. After this bottle, I think I am ready to dive right in, no floaties required.

Tasting Notes:

Colour: Amber with shades of orange

Nose: The smoke hits you immediately much like an Islay whisky and you get a bit nervous knowing what will come, then the spiciness of the rye calms you down. I am not ashamed to admit that

the big peated whiskies scare the hell out of me. This nose is complex; a hint of floral but orchard apples lying beneath. Further down the line as the smoke pulls back, are notes of pine and orange zest. I’m intrigued.

Palate: Lots of leather up front with a slightly oily mouthfeel but the flavour is much less smoky than expected. Sweet fruits roll in, with a little bitterness alongside. A honey sweetness floats throughout from first sip to finish.

The gentleness of the smoke caught me completely off guard.

Finish: Smoke lightly wafting above a sweetness that settles in and coats the mouth with a lingering bitter touch. This whiskey did exactly what it was intended to do – it made me long for a big roaring fire. So much so that plans are currently underway to put a fire pit in my backyard and enjoy nights by the fire, whiskey at my side and guitar in hand. Who’s coming over? ♦



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Tennessee Whiskey Trail

The Great Relaunch

By Sara Beth Urban

“Adventures run on Tennessee Whiskey,” but in a year of grounded flights, cancelled festivals, and social distancing, adventures were put on hold. The Tennessee Whiskey Trail is heading into its fifth year of existence, but after the chaos of 2020 and the shutdowns that kept distillery tasting rooms closed and visitors from traveling the trail, 2021 feels like a bit of a relaunch. As vaccines roll out and restrictions get lifted, the distilleries that pumped out hand sanitizer by the gallon to protect frontline workers from COVID-19 look forward to welcoming visitors back and again introducing them to Tennessee whiskey and spirits.

Haven’t heard of the Tennessee Whiskey Trail before? You’re about to get a crash course in the Volunteer State’s distilling history. Though whiskey is steeped in Tennessee’s DNA, it wasn’t until 2009 when the Tennessee General Assembly amended the statute that had, for many years, limited the distillation of drinkable spirits to just three counties; thus—except for Jack Daniel, George Dickel and Prichard’s—the other 23 distilleries on the Trail are just 10 years old or younger. Hearing the word “young” in the whiskey world can set off red flags, but Tennessee distillers are challenging

that stereotype.

From Nicole Austin winning the 2019 Whisky of the Year with George Dickel Bottled in Bond to Lost State claiming the title of USA Today’s Best New Craft Distillery, the Trail’s members are racking up awards for their efforts. While “Tennessee whiskey” must be made using the famed Lincoln County process, which involves maple charcoal filtering, many distilleries in Tennessee are experimenting with other types of whiskey and spirits.

Out in East Tennessee, moonshiners pay homage to Appalachian culture by creating myriad flavors that appeal to the millions of tourists who flock to the Smokies every year. In Middle Tennessee, distilleries like H Clark and Prichard’s win visitors over with their famous gin and rum, respectively. Meanwhile, in West Tennessee, Old Dominick’s Hot Toddy is made from an original family recipe used before Prohibition and is a Trail favorite.

Though starting with clear spirits may have given some of these distilleries flight, they aren’t shying away from the product that made the state famous: Jack Daniel, the father of Tennessee whiskey, continues to make the most popular whiskey in the world; Nelson’s

Green Brier in Nashville has resurrected the family’s original Tennessee Whiskey recipe; and Roaming Man from Sugarlands out of Gatlinburg is an award-winning Tennessee Straight Rye Whiskey. Other distilleries across the state are putting their own twists on American whiskey, like Corsair’s Triple Smoked—a whiskey that immediately brings to mind that other Tennessee delicacy: barbecue—and Chattanooga Whiskey’s Tennessee High Malt, which was the first aged whiskey released in Chattanooga in 102 years.

It’s through these stories that the best parts of the Tennessee Whiskey Trail emerge: the culture, the traditions, the history that knits the industry together and the sheer reality that there’s something for everyone. From the aficionados to the novices, from the shot-takers to the slow-sippers, from the cocktail connoisseurs to the whiskey-neat-is-the-only-way drinkers, the Trail is an unforgettable experience with stories to match: stories about historic family recipes recrafted for today, organic and sustainable operations that use Tennessee grains, old prisons refurbished into distilleries, and even the story of the former slave, Nearest Green, who taught a young man named Jasper “Jack” Daniel how to work a still.

The Tennessee Whiskey Trail isn’t just a quick trip and a few sips; it’s an immersive experience from the Mississippi River delta to the foothills of the Smoky Mountains. The Trail encourages visitors to meander along the backroads, explore historic town squares, and see attractions and communities near the distilleries. It’s a marathon, not a sprint, and in 2021 the Tennessee Whiskey Trail is ready for visitors to come back. ♦

Returning Spirits *To Their Origins*

Richard Anderson



B

OURBON WHISKEY
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BARRELS
46% ABV // 92 Proof // 750
ML (Very Limited Release)

Mythology attributes the origins of Mezcal to a lightning strike of the sacred agave plant, bringing the heavenly, smokey complexity of this quintessential Mexican spirit to earth. The essence of that sacred fire lives in the precious and limited stock of mezcal barrels into which we poured the rich caramel and vanilla notes of our carefully sourced bourbon. This limited pairing explores the subtle interplay of smokey-sweet agave, toasted American oak and subtle rye spice. Happy travels.

Tasting notes:

Batch # 2 is delightfully, slightly sweet due to wine barrels favored by the Mezcal distillery in aging their spirit, producing notes of sweet agave that collide with the subtle rye spice and vanilla/caramel aromas of this high rye bourbon.

Mission:

We create exceptional spirits from the ground up, growing our own grain and sourcing grain from Michigan farmers with practices that respect the health of nearby watersheds. Our true passion is to offer customers and visitors the craft of soil-to spirit distilling from a family business that cares about our employees, community, and the living land.

SUSTAINABLE SPIRITS PLEDGE

Even before Iron Fish Distillery produced its first bottle of spirits, we decided that our production and business practices would be as sustainable as possible. We would restore and protect the land, water, and air we depend on—not just do less harm, but do more good. We would rebuild the health of the soil on the 120-acre abandoned farm we were bringing back into production. We would use farming practices that protect the surface and ground water of the Betsie River watershed, our home. We would reduce our carbon footprint



by installing solar panels and state-of-the-art heat pumps that extract heat from the air, without burning fuel. We would plant trees, compost organic material, use spent mash (high protein, low sugar) as feed for bison, and recycle what's used in the distillery and tasting room.

All of this has come to pass. Our farming practices have been certified by the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program. Our solar panels produce 7,000 kilowatt hours of electricity annually, adding to the Michigan-leading renewable energy we obtain from Cherryland Electric. Our planting of cover crops—clover, winter peas, forage turnips, and more—improves soil health naturally and acts as a carbon sink. Our farm fields act as a carbon sink. We also manage and preserve 47 acres of maple forests. And we reduce our water footprint by limiting irrigation to just gardens and using a closed-loop chiller in the fermenting process.

But there is always more that we can do. So we are piloting the planting of Sunn Hemp as a cover crop with accelerated production of nitrogen and organic matter to build up the soil and capture more carbon. We are starting a conversation with glass suppliers and label printers to increase recycled content. We are also looking at ways to capture more of the carbon produced in the distilling process.

This is Iron Fish's "Sustainable Spirits" pledge to our customers, partners, community and Mother Nature:

We will continue to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. We will use renewable and recyclable materials as much as possible. We will use sustainable farming methods. We will maintain our forests in a sustainable manner. We will always strive to be better and better stewards of our watershed and ecosystem. Crafting a community, valuing a sustainable 'soil to spirit' approach to production, Iron Fish Distillery is Michigan's first working farm solely dedicated to the practice of distilling small-batch craft spirits. Inspiration can come from anywhere. For brothers-in-law Richard Anderson and David Wallace, it arrived on the Isle of Islay, over 3000 miles from their Michigan home.

A Hebridean island famous for its whiskey, Islay played host to Richard and David in 2013, when the pair toured the area's century-old distilleries and smaller craft operations, including Kilchoman, Islay's only independent farm distillery. Prior to the trip, David and his wife had purchased their own farm in northern Michigan, but the site had lain mostly dormant since 1995. That wouldn't be the case for long.

Combining visions of Islay with the limitless potential of the farm, David and Richard returned home to Michigan with a plan. Less than three years later, with the help of their wives, Heidi and Sarah, the group had transformed a historic farm into a craft distillery producing small-batch spirits from their own grain.



Iron Fish Distillery planted its first fields of winter wheat in 2015 and opened its production facility less than a year later, in the autumn of 2016. By 2019, over 100,000 people were visiting the distillery annually and Iron Fish rose to number one in spirits sales volume for its Michigan distributor.

Named after the steelhead trout that thrive in the Betsie River watershed adjacent to the farm, Iron Fish Distillery is connected to nature both in name, and through the sustainable values that guide its farming and distilling practices. On every bottle neck tag, the phrase “Returning Spirit to its Origin” can be found, reminding consumers that just as the steelhead trout return up the Betsie River each year, past the farm to their origin, Iron Fish is returning the practice of distilling spirits to its origins as an agricultural activity.

“As a farm distillery, Iron Fish controls every step of the process, from growing grain using natural practices, cleaning and milling grain into flour, mashing in the flour with water drawn from its own deep well glacial aquifer, to fermenting, distilling, aging and bottling,” explains Richard, now a Partner and Chief Operating Officer at Iron Fish. “With 120 acres of farm fields and hardwood forests, we strive to operate sustainability, sequestering carbon to offset our carbon

footprint. We also upcycle spent grain by donating daily mash runs to a nearby bison farm that in turn, is a source of meat for the distillery’s restaurant, which features a wood-fired menu.

“We firmly believe that people, when given the choice, will align their purchases with companies that reflect their values,” Richard continues. “Our Sustainability Pledge to customers, partners, the community and the environment, guides our day-to-day decisions. We work to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels through the use of solar energy; we seek ways to minimize waste and focus on compostable supplies; we engage in low till farming techniques and subject our practices to a third party audit in operating our farm to MAEAP environmental standards; and our maple forest is managed to promote healthy woodlands, while yielding maple sap for distillation of spirits and pathways for outdoor cycling, horseback riding and walking.”

As of 2020, the spirits Iron Fish produces on its sustainably managed land can be purchased in five US states. In line with the distillery’s growing popularity, California and Colorado will be added to this list in 2021. Along with a wide library of barrel finished bourbons, including maple syrup, cognac,

imperial stout, and tawny port cask varieties, the company’s product range currently includes rum, unfiltered wheat and rye vodkas, and American-style gin. It is through a spirit of collaboration, Richard claims, that Iron Fish has been able to develop such a diverse and popular offering.

“We have been lucky enough to work with some amazing collaborators who have brought their passion and expertise to the task of product development and innovation,” he says. “For example, the distillery worked with a company specializing in cultivating wild yeasts to capture and identify native strains found along the river and farm fields. We piloted several distillations of whiskey, now aging at the distillery. The result is that the nature and character of the spirit comes from the farm: its grain, water and yeast!

“Elsewhere, partnership with a local Christmas tree farm has provided us with a supply of fir trees that give Iron Fish gin its scrumptious citrus-like botanical flavor. Similarly, we have partnered with a five-generation maple syrup sugar bush, whose syrup is placed in bourbon barrels to finish our farm-blended bourbon whiskey, and also with a local apiary to locate bee hives on the farm, from which the honey is later barrel aged and bottled.” ♦

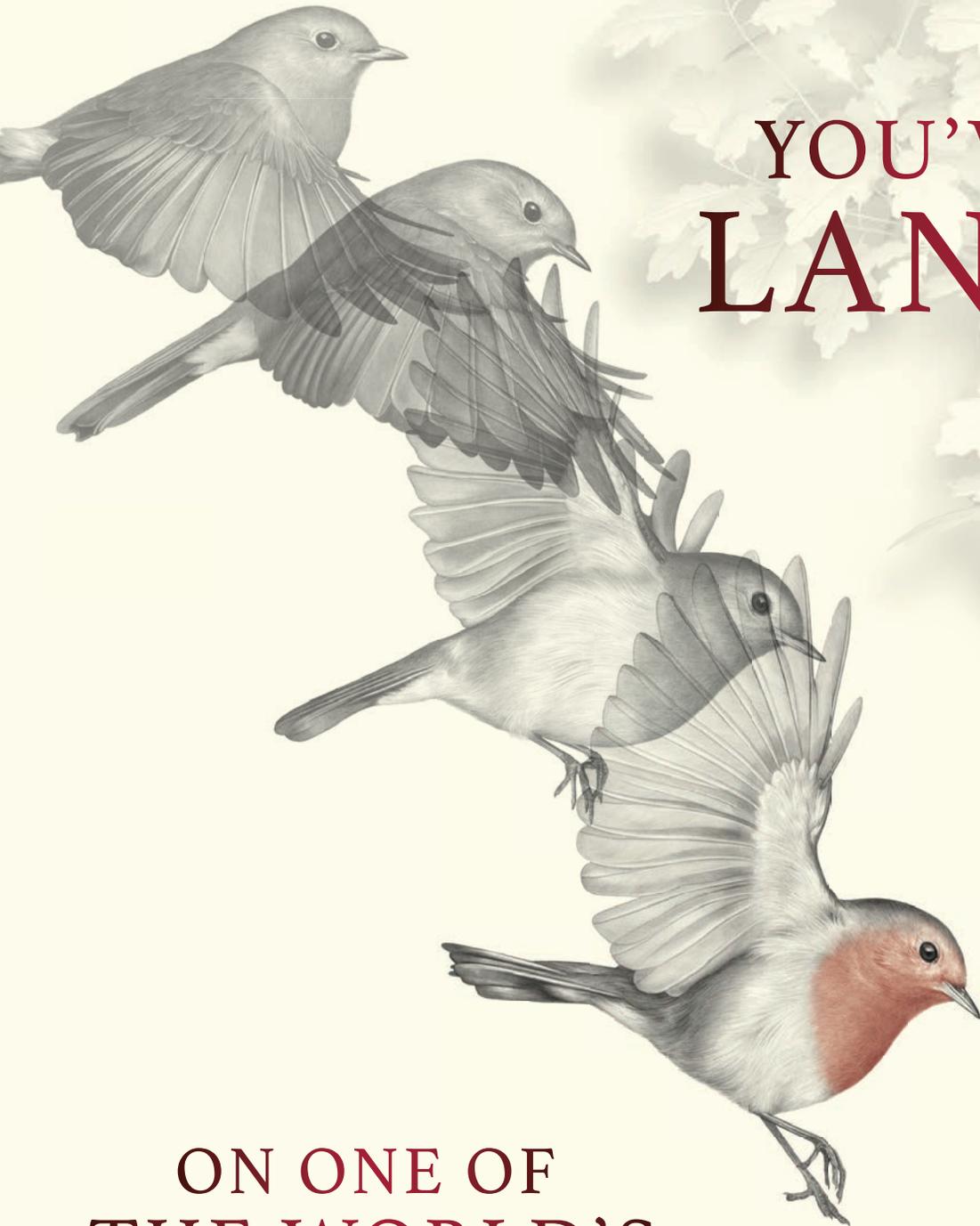
A stag with large, dark antlers stands on a rocky outcrop, looking out over a valley. The sky is a mix of orange, red, and blue, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The valley below is filled with fields and some buildings, all under a dramatic sky. The entire scene is framed by a thick, curved orange line that separates it from the dark background on the right.

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Locally Grown bitters

with Global Appeal By Nik Sinha and Richelle Volk

They say that nowhere worth going is worth going alone, and that's the spirit with which Token Bitters was born in the spring of 2016.

Based in Edmonton, Token Bitters has grown from a small project between friends into an internationally distributed line of handcrafted, locally-sourced cocktail bitters. Token Bitters has its roots in the Canadian cannabis industry. Founders and longtime friends Keenan Pascal and Jamie Shtay had just started on the road to creating a cannabis company, Token Naturals, and were waiting through the long process of regulatory approvals. They saw an opportunity to create a complementary, subsidiary business making aromatic cocktail bitters. While there might not be a clear correlation between the two businesses at first blush, Jamie and Keenan were building a facility that would extract cannabinoids from the plant to create drinks and other edible products. Bitters, similarly, are made by extracting scent and taste compounds from herbs, fruits and spices and are used to round out the flavour of beverages. Though they've been around since the 1800s, bitters have seen a recent resurgence in popularity due to a modern renaissance of mixology and cocktail making. Keenan had

been involved in the hospitality industry throughout his university studies, while Jamie owned and operated a successful nightclub in Downtown Edmonton. Together, they tapped into their networks and dropped off bottles to bartender friends, encouraged local bar owners to put the bitters on their cocktail menus and set up stalls in local farmers markets to help get the word out about their products.

The product spoke for itself: smooth, all-natural flavours made locally by a small team. They continued to refine their processes and set up shop in the heart of Edmonton, staying close to the people who helped to support the business in its inception. Token soon became a familiar presence in liquor stores, specialty stores and restaurants across Alberta. They've been steadily expanding throughout Canada; making their way into the Yukon, British Columbia, Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Their Sample Set, a collection of the four original flavours, is a top seller online and across retail stores today. What began as a small side endeavour resulted in a product sold nationally across Canada, exported to Japan and at the precipice of export to Mexico and Europe. With support of organizations such as the Edmonton Economic Development

Corporation (EEDC), the team was able to achieve the export of their products quite quickly. Team members at EEDC had their ear to the ground and identified Token as an export opportunity early on. Keenan and Jamie were approached to join a trade mission to Japan – one that directly resulted in an importer relationship and recurring purchase order.

The team has continued to work closely with their Japan partners since the days of their first export. In the summer of 2019, Token sponsored a cocktail competition in Tokyo with some of the city's most reputable and talented bartenders. The winner – Oba San of Bar Cacoï – was awarded the opportunity to visit Edmonton for a tour of the local hospitality industry and create his own bespoke flavour, miso-inspired bitters that blend Japan's most savoury flavours. Token recently completed their second large export to Japan, which included a custom line of flavours representing the best of what Canada has to offer, such as Montreal Maple and Muskoka Smoke.

Despite Token's rapid growth, one thing remains constant: the appreciation for the city where it all began. Their flavours are named after beloved Edmonton neighborhoods and streets. Shoppers can choose between products like Ritchie Cherry – the neighbourhood where Keenan grew up – or Whyte Lavender – a hub of arts, food, and nightlife adjacent to Edmonton's River Valley where founder, Keenan had his first bartending job. Token has always valued community above all else and has continuously pushed for collaboration between small businesses, working to grow Edmonton's industries and economy, and the government agencies that support them.

Today, you can find the Token team doing what they do best: listening to what their customers and friends want and experimenting with new flavours. This past year has seen their best year of sales yet, and they're looking forward to what's next to come.

If you are seeking the perfect complement to your next cocktail, visit tokenbitters.com ♦

Fat Washing *For The Perfect*
Whisky
Cocktail

By Andrew Hardingham





I first heard about fat washing whisky five years ago and was immediately intrigued. Infusing whisky with fatty ingredients adds incredible complexity to a cocktail, so with all of the extra time at home I've been finding myself with, I knew it was something I had to try.

In order to make the finest homemade Canadian old fashioned possible, I wanted to discover which fat binds best with whisky. And, with that, my experiment began.

Over the last decade I've had the opportunity to harvest my own animals, and last fall during the hog harvest it occurred to me that fat was my favourite part of an animal. I've even come to realize that I use fat to gauge the value of different animal species.

And while it is widely understood that the fat on an animal contributes to much of its flavour, what is lesser known is that there are several different kinds of fat located around an animal's body—and each can have vastly different flavour profiles. So, for my experiment I chose the three main fats from one particular animal: a heritage breed pig.

A rewarding element of self-harvesting is that I get to choose based on breed, diet and location, which kind of pig to use. For my experiment I chose an organically raised local Tamworth hog. By going organic, I knew the fat would be delicious and that the animal had lived a good life before it met my plate. We call this “one bad day” farming, and if you ever get into harvesting your own meat, I would highly recommend seeking it out. The payoff will change the way you appreciate your food.

If you're reading this, there is no doubt you are a whisky lover and you probably appreciate Canadian whisky. So bear with me, as the point of all this meat-madness was to discover the perfect ingredient to compliment Canadian rye to create an old fashioned cocktail with a strong bacon influence. After several days, many cocktails, and perhaps going beyond the norm in search of great flavour—I can honestly say that I've found it!

The following process is for meat and whisky nerds like me that find themselves going above and beyond to discover the

exceptional. If you are the kind of person who would rather spend your free time with your family, feel free to skip to Step 7 and use store bought bacon to achieve similar results. Either way, you won't be disappointed.

Three types of pork fat were used:

Leaf Lard

This is the flaky fat that is harvested from inside the animal's body cavity. It is a neutral fat and doesn't have a strong meaty flavour. Leaf lard is mostly used in traditional pie crusts and other baking, as well as for deep-frying donuts because of its light flavour profile.

Caul Fat

Caul is a web like fat that surrounds the animal's digestive organs. It has a slightly sour odour and is often used to wrap meats for charcuterie or fancy burgers. It can't be rendered down at low temperatures, but it can be fried on a pan to liquify it for washing. Caul fat is low in calories and high in protein (100g serving contains 122 calories, 6g are fat and 12g are protein).

Back Fat (otherwise known as fatback)

Similar to the fat found on the belly (strip bacon), fatback is harder and more structured with a delicious meat odour and flavour. It's the fat of choice for adding to other lean meats to make hamburgers and sausage. Fatback is extremely high in calories and low in protein (a 100g serving can contain as much as 795 calories of which 98% is fat and 2% is protein).

My Path to Fat-Washed Whisky:

Step 1. Selecting the Right Whisky

I have about 15 Canadian whiskies on my home bar, but felt I needed something more wood heavy for my experiment. After trying a few double and triple barreled options, I found that J.P. Wiser's Triple Barrel Rye was the winner for its heavy flavour concept. It's affordable and delicious, so I bought a few extra bottles to use later (mostly knowing I would fall in love with this cocktail).

I also wanted to challenge my belief that a good old fashioned needs to use a wood forward whisky like multi barreled rye or bourbon. So, I purchased a bottle of J.P. Wiser's 15 Year Old. I knew it was a tasty rye blend and wanted to see how a more delicate aged whisky translated through the fat. After the following 5 steps, I also washed the final fat product (Step 7) with this whisky.

Step 2. Rendering the Three Fats

With my whiskies selected, I began rendering the fats.

I placed the leaf lard and back fat separately in cast iron pans in the oven at 105°C (225°F) for four hours until much of the fat had reduced to a liquid. I then measured 150 ml and stored the rest in a jar in the fridge. I did this for each of the three fats used.

To remove some of the sour odour, I soaked the caul fat in a mix of vinegar and water (100ml of each) for 30 minutes. I then rinsed it and fried it on medium in a cast iron pan for 20 minutes, until most of the fat became liquid.

Step 3. Fat Washing

When fat washing, people often use a small amount of fat (for example, 30 ml fat to 750 mL whisky). However, I wanted to make it all about the fat; I knew the whisky could handle it. So, I upped the ratio. I added 150 mL of fat (less for the caul fat, approx. 70 mL) to a cast iron pan over medium heat until it was just about to smoke. I then turned the heat off and let it stand for about 10 minutes, or until a drop of water didn't splash up when it hit the hot oil.

Then I poured 300 mL of the double barrel rye into each of the three pans with the different warm fat and stirred vigorously to bond the molecules. I immediately set the pans outside in some fresh snow to cool so that I didn't lower the ABV (Alcohol by volume) too much. A freezer works great too.

After a few short minutes in the snow, the mixes had cooled and I transferred the fat-washed whiskies to mason jars, shook like hell, sealed all three and placed them in the fridge to cool.

Step 4. Tasting for the final selection Admittedly, the caul fat had a slightly sour nose and taste. It also had a strong pickled vegetable, sour plum smell. This fat would be amazing for mixologists that like to play with vinegar and sour ingredients.

The leaf lard was mellow but still heavy on the tongue. I found it almost softened the whisky and gave every sip a French fry smell. Leaf lard might be the best fat to use in a fat-washed spirit created for a Caesar or Bloody Mary. And while I liked the flavour, I had something else in mind.



The back fat was my favorite; it was meaty and perfectly complemented the spicy 100% rye. After the first sip I immediately craved pork chops and mashed potatoes; I knew this was the best fat to cure and smoke for my cocktail.

Step 5. Curing Your Fat

Now that I had a clear winner, it was time to move onto curing and smoking.

Curing fat for this cocktail is the exact same process used to make bacon. Here, however, I used back fat instead of pork belly because it was my preferred taste, it's cheap as chips, and I didn't want muscle contributing to the flavours of my cocktail. I often make my own bacon and if you're interested, it's easy and very rewarding to try.

To cure your fat, add equal parts kosher salt and demerara sugar (basic brown sugar works too) in a bowl and mix well (note: this differs from the precise ratio used for bacon). Then rub over the back fat until no more will stick and place it in a non-corrosive container and cover.

Let sit in the fridge for five to seven days, making sure to drain excess liquid. After a week,

rinse the fat well and let it dry out before it hits the smoker.

Step 6. Cold Smoke It

Cold smoking (below 40°C) allows the meat to absorb more smoke for a longer period of time. Be sure to choose a wood that will complement the meat. I chose hickory and cherry wood. Hickory is the classic bacon smoke and I wanted that nostalgic nose with each sip. Cherry is sweet and subtle but somehow still complements the strong hickory wood.

Place the cured fat in the smoker, after three hours the fat will be ready for rendering. (If you don't have a smoker just use a BBQ with foil pouches of wood sitting over the flames. Place the fat in a pan on the far side of BBQ away from the heat and flame.)

Step 7. Rendering & Fat Washing the Back Fat Render down the cured and smoked back fat for three to four hours in the oven at 105°C (225°F). For me, this step is the most exciting as it's the one that gets the entire house smelling like bacon!



After the fat liquifies, take it out of the oven and add in your whisky (1 part fat to 3 parts whisky). This ratio changed from the first round of fat washing. The cured and smoked fat added more complexity to the final product; so to let the whisky shine, I pulled back on the fat to whisky ratio.

As soon as you add your whisky, pour everything into a jar, shake like hell while it's still hot and refrigerate until the fat solidifies.

Step 8. Make Your Cocktail

You're now ready to make your cocktail! Break the surface seal on the fat inside the whisky jar and filter your fat-washed mix through a tea strainer, fine cheesecloth, or tea towel to separate the solids.

You can then use your infusion to make incredible fat-washed cocktails—or even just sip the stuff. Apart from the old fashioned I made, I added the murky whisky to a snifter

glass on a brandy stand and heated it up; it was like breakfast for dinner—and oh so delightful! I also found the fat washed J.P. Wiser's 15 was better for sipping and the triple barreled Rye was king in my old fashioned recipe.

With my experiment now over, I'm compelled to share a few notes. While overall the back fat won this battle, I would still urge any future fat washers to try leaf lard if they want a more subtle finish, and caul fat if they want the unexpected.

Other fats like olive oil, coconut oil and peanut oil can be used, if you don't eat meat, or just prefer their flavours. During this experiment I also smoked 250 mL of coconut oil and fat washed it with the more subtle J.P. Wiser's 15 whisky and gave it to Caillab, one of my favorite bartenders in Banff, so that he could create a Vegan alternative cocktail recipe.



Cocktail Recipe:

The Fatback Bacon Canadian Old Fashioned

2.5 oz BC fatback washed triple barreled J.P Wiser's Rye (Ontario)

6 drops Quebec maple syrup

8 drops Token Ritchy Alberta Cherry bitters

Shake on ice, pour onto a large cube in a rocks glass.

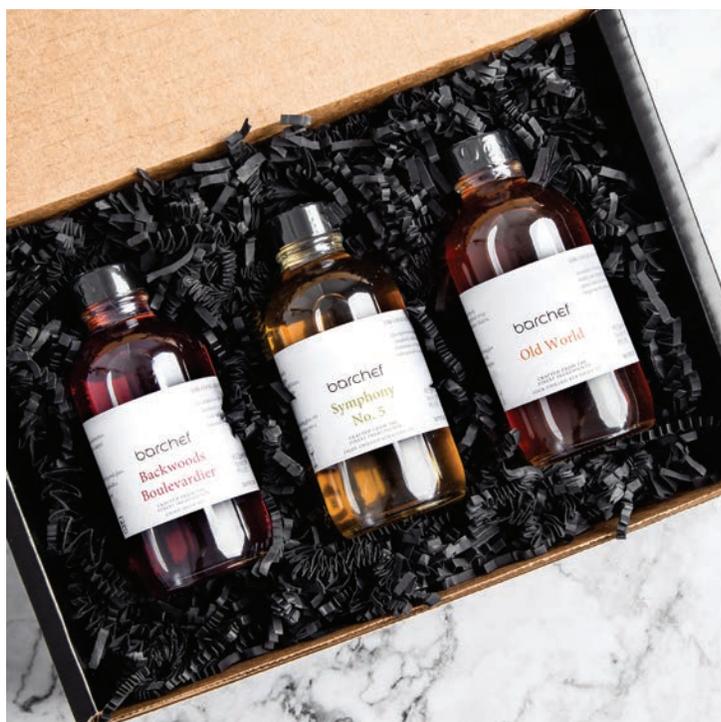
Add a preserved cherry and a squeeze of orange zest. ♦



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**BE MINTY
BE GOOD
BE GREEN**





Barchef

Cocktails at Home

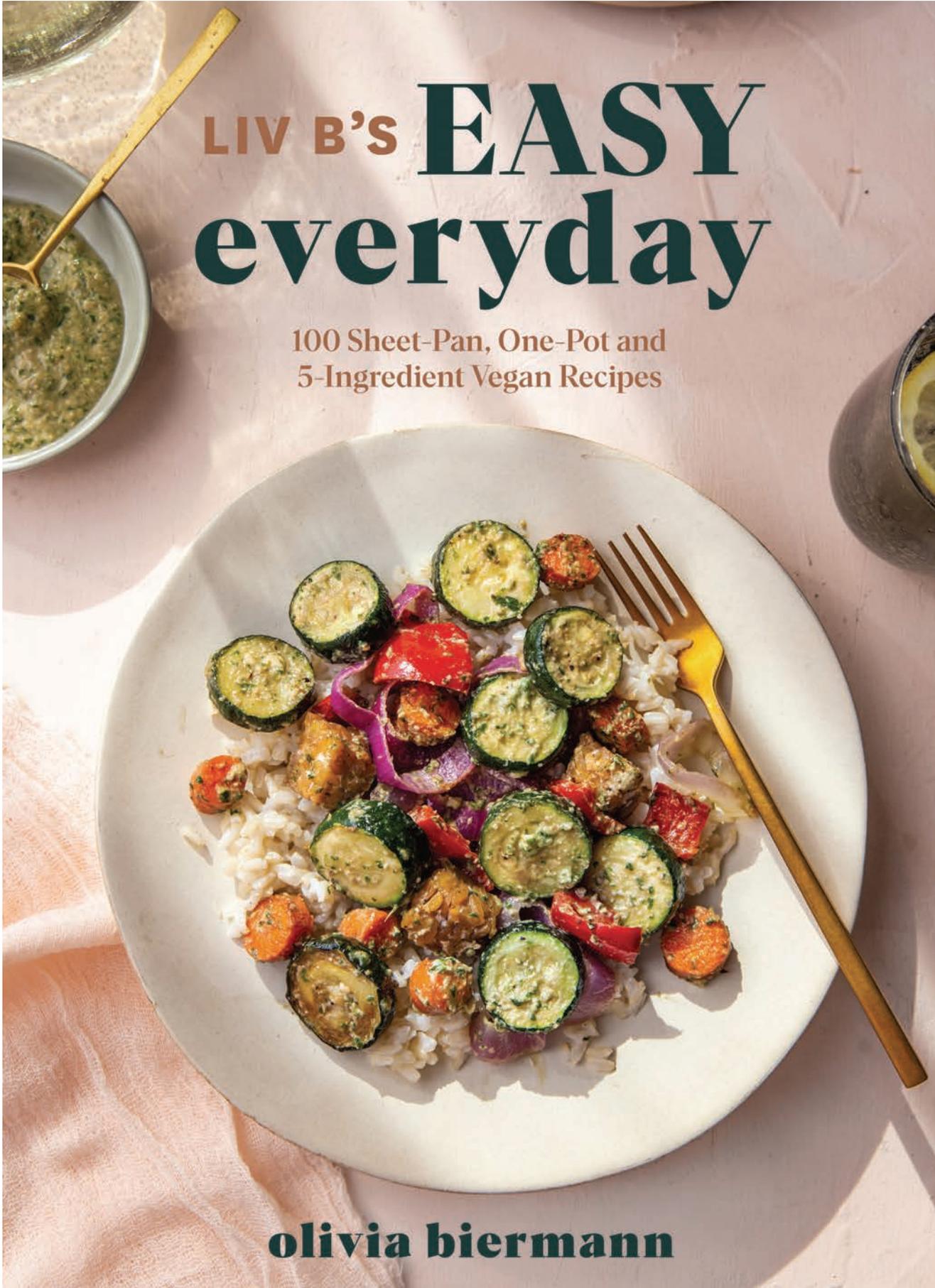
By Frankie Solarik

With the recent changes of Ontario liquor laws, being able to bottle cocktails for sale directly from Barchef has opened up opportunities to provide our guests with additional means to enjoy Barchef cocktails at home. We have prepared and bottled 3 cocktail set options, which are available for purchase at barchef.com. These include our “Best of BarChef Vol. 1” featuring some of our most prolific cocktails over the years, including the guest favourites, our “Backwoods Boulevardier” featuring Backwoods Bourbon, Campari and sweet vermouth, our “Old World” featuring vanilla infused brandy, cacao bitters, patchouli syrup, Madeira, caraway infused maraschino liqueur, and our “Symphony #5” featuring London dry gin, Green Chartreuse, dill bitters, rosemary syrup, range blossom

water and vanilla infused brandy. Also, we have our “Best of BarChef Vol. 2” featuring an additional set of 3 options of our guests’ favourites over the years, featuring our “Apricot Sazerac” with our in-house Apricot infused brandy, cherry and vanilla bitters, sugar and absinthe, also our “Toasted Islay” featuring Islay Scotch, bitter almond liqueur, star anise syrup, toasted chamomile and saffron bitters, and sweet vermouth as well as our “Dark Necessities” featuring Bourbon, rosemary syrup, sweet vermouth, cacao bitters, violet liqueur and caraway infused maraschino liqueur. We also have available a cocktail set of 3 cocktails composed by our team of globally celebrated mixologists featuring Mixologist Cayden Kim’s “Bourbon and Essex” a delicious blend of Bourbon, cacao bitters, vanilla syrup,



balsam fir bitters, cacao infused maraschino liqueur, Amaro Montenegro, port and cherry and vanilla bitters. As well as Mixologist Gianluca Passuello’s “Raconteur” featuring Port, Campari Cask Tales, Islay Scotch, green cardamom infused maraschino liqueur, thyme syrup and bourbon as well as Frankie Solarik’s “The Nordic” with Brandy, Madeira, cacao infused maraschino, balsam fir bitters, and rosemary syrup. Truly difficult to summarize twelve years of the program into three sets but we personally feel they truly embody a beautiful representation of our approach. ♦



LIV B'S **EASY**
everyday

100 Sheet-Pan, One-Pot and
5-Ingredient Vegan Recipes

olivia biermann

Courtesy of Liv B'S Easy Everyday by Olivia Biermann © 2021 Published by Firefly Books Ltd. Image Credit: Ashley Lima



chocolate soufflé cake

Serves 8 • • Time: 40 minutes

This cake is amazing for entertaining because it is crazy-easy to make and your guests will never guess it has only five ingredients! The texture is light but still decadent, and rich in chocolate flavor. I love serving it with a big dollop of sweet coconut whipped cream and fresh berries.

1 2/3 cups (400 mL) all-purpose flour
1 cup (250 mL) organic cane sugar
2/3 cup (150 mL) unsweetened cocoa powder (see my tips)
1 tsp (5 mL) baking powder
Pinch salt
2 cups (500 mL) boiling water
1/2 cup (125 mL) canola oil

8-inch (20 cm) round cake pan, lined with parchment

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).

1. Whisk together the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt. Add the water and canola oil; stir to combine. The batter should be fairly smooth, but a few small lumps are okay.
2. Pour the batter into the prepared cake pan. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes or until the top is set and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool completely before slicing and serving.

my tips: For an Instagram-worthy presentation, sprinkle a dusting of unsweetened cocoa powder over the top just before serving.

This cake is best made and served on the same day. However, leftovers can be stored in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 3 days.



coconut & maple banana cake

Serves 9 • • Time: 45 minutes

You never need a reason for cake, but when I make a “just because” cake, I don’t want it to take a ton of time or effort. This recipe is beyond easy and takes less than an hour to whip up. I use coconut yogurt instead of oil here to provide the moisture and to add a delicious coconut flavor!

3 large overripe bananas, mashed
1/2 cup (125 mL) vegan coconut yogurt
1/4 cup (60 mL) pure maple syrup
1 tsp (5 mL) vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups (375 mL) all-purpose flour
1 tsp (5 mL) baking powder
1 tsp (5 mL) baking soda
1/2 tsp (2 mL) ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp (2 mL) salt

8-inch (20 cm) square metal baking pan,
lined with parchment paper

Preheat the oven to 350°F (180°C).

1. Place the mashed bananas in a large bowl. Add the vegan coconut yogurt, maple syrup and vanilla; stir well to combine.
2. Add the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and salt; stir until combined. The batter will be thick.
3. Spread into the prepared pan. Bake in the preheated oven for 33 to 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean and the top is golden and slightly cracked.
4. Remove from the oven and let cool completely in the pan. Slice and serve. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 3 days or in the fridge for up to 5 days.

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vanilla buttercream

Makes 2 cups (500 mL) • •

Time: 10 minutes

In my opinion, everyone needs to know how to make frosting. Sure, you can buy it from the store, but where's the fun in that? This vanilla "buttercream" has become a staple in my kitchen for holidays, birthdays and "just because" Sunday-afternoon baking.

3 cups (750 mL) confectioners' (icing) sugar, divided
1/3 cup (75 mL) vegan butter, softened
1/4 cup (60 mL) unsweetened nondairy milk
1 tsp (5 mL) vanilla extract
Electric mixer

1. Combine 1 cup (250 mL) confectioners' sugar, vegan butter, nondairy milk and vanilla in a large bowl.
2. Using an electric mixer, beat for about 1 minute, until smooth. Add the remaining confectioners' sugar, 1/2 cup (125 mL) at a time, then beat for about 2 minutes, until smooth. Use immediately or store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 5 days.

my tip: Frosting can also be frozen! Simply store in an airtight container in the freezer for up to 3 months. To reuse, place the container in the fridge to thaw overnight.

Whisky and Craft Chocolate Pairing

By Shay Pal

Sometimes two luxuries which are amazing by themselves when put together, have the power of creating something breathtaking only if we dare to try it. That's what whiskies and craft chocolate create when tasted together.

Both craft chocolate and whisky are molded from very few ingredients to bring out their nuances. Whisky makers use the basic building blocks of barley/corn, yeast and water and may add wheat, rice, rye and other types of grain to create the expansive world of scotch, bourbon and Indian, Japanese, Canadian, Irish whiskies. Similarly craft chocolates are made from cacao nibs and sugar; sometimes cacao butter, milk and other inclusions are added to complete the full spectrum.

The similarities don't end there, whiskies are sometimes finished in different casks like sherry, port, rum and wine to further complement the palate similar to craft chocolate using various inclusions.

The terroir or the sense of place plays such an important part in both whisky and chocolate. Scotch from different regions of Scotland taste variedly different, very similar to how cacao varies from farm to farm (or co-operatives) in the cacao growing regions. Different cacao growing countries also provide a wide variety of tastes similar to whisky made in different parts of the world using the same genome of materials and techniques.

The human element of "the craft" makes the similarities between craft chocolate and whisky complete. As two bourbons from Kentucky are different because of what character the distiller chooses to express by

roasting, distilling or aging; chocolate makers also play around with their roasting to highlight the flavor notes, using the same cacao from the same country or farm, This human element adds a new dimension to both whisky and chocolate that opens the door to endless flavor possibilities, making every batch of whisky or craft chocolate unique in their own way.

ART of CRAFT CHOCOLATE

The making of "bean to bar" craft chocolate begins with the sourcing of the cacao bean from the farms where they are grown, fermented and dried. This obvious yet studious step makes the craft chocolate maker stand out from most confectioners, chocolatiers, and pastry chefs who generally prefer to source pre-manufactured chocolate and then melt it to make confections, bonbons, truffles, and all manner of treats. A craft chocolate maker invests a lot of time in the sourcing process, and takes pride in transparency, which shines through in the tasting notes. Most craft chocolate makers proudly put the country of origin and the region the beans were sourced from (co-op/farm), sometimes even the harvest year is prominently on their packaging.

Once the chocolate maker has roasted the whole beans to their desired level, they crack & winnow them into nibs; the nibs are then ground into a liquid paste called chocolate liquor. Most chocolate makers follow a process called conching that involves heat/time/motion and a specialized piece of equipment, as the next step. The process of conching further develops the flavor, where chocolate makers (exactly like the master

distiller deciding when to make the distillation cut) must use their palate and intuition to decide when it is ready to be tempered and poured into moulds.

CRAFT CHOCOLATE and WHISKY Pairing

When setting up a tasting for one, or a group, start by pouring out the whisky in your favorite glass (a round bottom nosing glass just makes it easier). There is no incorrect way to taste chocolate and whisky, but tasting the chocolate first before the whisky helps you to taste the nuance of the chocolate without getting affected by the alcohol first. The suggested tasting steps are meant as a starting point and can be modified and/or changed as per personal preference.

- 1. Take the chocolate bar out of the package and snap off a piece of chocolate. The snap should be pleasant and not brittle or very soft. If you have multiple bars then observe the color differences. Based upon the beans and the process the chocolate can be all shades of brown, varying from dark brown to cinnamon/tan.**
- 2. Smell the piece of chocolate like you would your whisky. Similar to nosing whisky, smelling the chocolate gives you clues of what's to come.**
- 3. Smell your whisky separately followed by together with the chocolate.**
- 4. Finally taste the chocolate, but let the chocolate melt on your tongue. Some people like to give it a few chews before it melts. The idea is to have your mouth coated with the taste of the chocolate. Taste the whisky when the piece has completely gone and you are left with the lingering flavors.**
- 5. Go for a second round of whisky tasting when only a small percent of the chocolate has melted. You are looking for a combined flavor to be enjoyed together. Do you get similar notes from both? Do they complement each other or contrast?**



Peated Scotch

When you think of peaty scotch, your mind invariably goes to Islay. Peated scotch is defined by flavors of peat, smoke, iodine along with medicinal and barbeque notes. This group of whisky encompasses very peaty Ardbeg to slightly peaty and iodine forward Laphroaiq, as well island whiskies like Talisker, Jura and Highland Park, to name a few. A regular caramel or salted caramel inclusion single origin chocolate pairs really well with the peaty, smokey and iodine flavours. Also a higher percent (80-90%) chocolate made with cacao from regions of Vietnam and Ecuador with nutty and citrus flavors compliments the smoky and medicinal/barbecue flavors of the peaty scotch.

Ardbeg wee beastie with Wellington chocolate salted caramel

Unpeated Scotch

The category of unpeated scotch includes the distilleries from Highland and Speyside. The conventional style is ex-bourbon cask finish while a wide variety of whiskys from this region have been experimenting with finishing in sherry butts, port pipes or rum and wine barrels to add complexity to the scotch. The ex-bourbon cask finishes are easy to pair well with almost all craft chocolate. Each cacao region has the capability of bringing out different flavors of the scotch as long as the ABV is not very high. Generally speaking, cherries, dates and raisin forward flavors from cacao sourced from Tanzania or India make a beautiful accompaniment. The finishing cask choice strongly influences the chocolate pairing and is a topic for a separate discussion. As a quick guideline, for sherry and port finished scotch, pair a chocolate made with cacao from Madagascar.

Clynelish 14 with Moka Origins' Tanzania





Bourbon, Ryes and American Single Malt

With the caramel, honey, vanilla, toffee and oaky notes of Kentucky bourbons, chocolate made with cacao from the Dominican Republic works like a charm. Sometimes it's the fruity fudgy sweetness of this cacao that you are looking to pair strongly with higher ABV bourbons. Sometimes when a chocolate maker decides to highlight the toasty and nutty notes of Dominican Republic cacao as a prominent flavor, toffee and vanilla notes of bourbon takes you to flavor overdrive.

As for ryes, a chocolate origin with some spice and earthy notes like cacao grown in Honduras and Haiti can become an easy crowd pleaser. Rye Whiskies with higher rye content balance well with the earthy malty notes from these origins. Trying chocolate with warm spices as inclusions with rye whisky works great as well. American Single malt is the third sub-category in this group which generally has prominent notes of honey, malt and citrus. This makes cacao from Belize or fruit forward Madagascar a quirky pair with the whiskey.

Woodford Reserve Double Oaked with Dandelion Chocolate's Dominican Republic



Whisky Cocktail

This is where you can experiment with your pairings the most. For a classic bourbon or rye based cocktail like the Manhattan or Old Fashioned, try a craft chocolate with citrus inclusions. Something which has candied blood orange or navel orange pieces in the bar complements the flavors of Angostura and Peychaud's in the cocktails. The Sazerac for instance, can be paired with chocolate made with Belize cacao which has tobacco and earthy notes to contrast with the rye and absinthe.

Sazerac Riff (Nikka from the Barrel, Mr Black Coffee liqueur and AntiMixologist tropical bitters) with Dick & Taylor's Belize

If you are experimenting with making your own unique cocktails at home, try to get a chocolate highlighting the flavor of one component of the cocktail. Whether it's the whisky itself or the other liquor & liqueur juices used in the cocktail, pair a chocolate with similar flavors for a compliment delight or go completely contrasting and enjoy the journey of trying. Here, the world is your oyster! ♦

Answers
From Page 26

Test Your Whisky Wisdom

Jamie Johnson

1-A. Kelsey McKechnie

2-B. Dufftown

Iain Forteach

1-A. “Old Ballantruan”. This whisky is so different to our unpeated Tomintoul that we named it after our water source: ‘The Old Ballantruan Spring’. The Old Ballantruan is peated at 50ppm and bottled at 50% ABV and a real ‘peat-bomb’ from Speyside. The Tomintoul ‘Peaty Tang’ is a medium peated alternative in the Tomintoul range crafted from a careful blend of unpeated Tomintoul and Old Ballantruan spirit.

2-B. Both stills have inclined Lyne arms. The stills at Glencadam have upward-sloping Lyne arms that incline at an angle of 15 degrees. This means that the spirit vapours have to fight that bit harder to rise through the stills to reach the condensers. During distillation, much of the spirit vapour condenses inside the arm and falls back down into the stills, forming a process known as ‘reflux’. This process enhances the copper content of the Glencadam spirit, crafting structured whiskies bursting with tropical fruit characteristics.

Dereck King

1-A. 1889

2-B. The red diamond P celebrates the ambition of the POWERS family and everything they achieved, did business by, and essentially their code of ethics. Also a bar call for POWERS whisky at a time when adult literacy was minimal in Dublin. Teal blue from our three swallows, the colour that the swallow bird takes in flight when in sunlight

during the Irish summer before the long migration to Africa. Metallic silver, a colour to celebrate the industrious ambition and achievements celebrated by the POWERS family during their distilling days in Johns Lane Distillery.

Halle Garrus

1-A. The Macallan Edition No.6 takes its inspiration from the breathtaking landscapes around our distillery. Inspired by nature, Edition No.6 tells the story of this unique whisky inspired by the mighty River Spey flowing through The Macallan Estate. The legendary River is not only part of our home but home to the wild Atlantic Salmon who are at risk of becoming an endangered species. Through a partnership with The Wild Atlantic Salmon Trust, The Macallan is working to support the Vital conservation work on and around The River Spey.

2-B. The Macallan Sherry Oak Range showcases whiskies ranging from 12-40 years old and uses predominately European Oak. The spirit is exclusively matured in Oloroso sherry seasoned oak casks from Jerez, Spain. The use of these casks provide The Macallan Sherry Oak Range with rich, fruity aromas and hints of spice and toasted oak on the palate. In comparison, The Macallan Double Cask Range showcases whiskies ranging from 12-18 years old and celebrates the harmonious blend of two different oak species, with the predominate use of Oloroso sherry seasoned American oak casks, the newly expanded Double Cask Range gives familiar aromas of butterscotch and vanilla with hints of fresh citrus and caramel on the palate.

Tish Harcus

1-A. By 1880 Club Whisky was outselling Bourbon in the U.S., so the U.S. government insisted that all whiskies from other countries had to put the country of origin on the label – HW built our country name into his branded whisky and the name Canadian Club Whisky was born in 1882. By doing this he increased the sales of Canadian Club whisky in the U.S. and to this day, the U.S. is the number one country for Canadian Club whisky sales.

2-B. 1967 - Canadian Club launched its

“Hide A Case” advertising campaign, enticing drinkers and CC fans to search the world for cases of CC hidden in exotic locations such as mount Kilimanjaro, Angel Falls, Mount St. Helens and the Arctic Circle. Although the campaign ended in 1991 there are still a number of cases that have not been found. This campaign is still considered the most successful spirits campaign to be launched.

Jacques Tremblay

1.A. Unmalted barley

2.B. 2 years

Shane Merriam

1.A. May 4, 1964 thus declaring that Bourbon can be legally produced anywhere and only in the United States of America.

2.B. Dan obtained our very first still from Vendome Copper & Brass Works with some facilitation by Elmer T. Lee. This 100 gallon copper batch still was the very same still that Mr. Lee developed his recipe for Blanton’s Bourbon on. Nicknamed “The Copper Cowgirl”, this still now stands proudly in the stillhouse at our distillery in Hye, Texas.

Casey Gray

1.A. Old Forester became the first bottled bourbon and the first commercially batched bourbon when it hit the market in 1870. Prior to 1870, George Garvin Brown worked as a pharmaceutical salesman in Louisville, KY, and the doctors he visited often complained of the poor quality and inconsistency of the whiskeys available. So, GGB decided he would develop and introduce an entirely new bourbon, which would be batched using whiskey from three local distilleries to ensure proper consistency, and sold exclusively in a sealed, glass bottle to ensure quality and prevent tampering.

2.B. Woodford Reserve Double Oaked actually begins Woodford Reserve Bourbon. Once the bourbon is fully mature, it is finished, or rebarreled, in a second, new barrel for up to a year. This secondary barrel is heavily toasted and very lightly charred, and is custom crafted at our Brown-Forman Cooperage and designed to bring forth the sweet aromatic notes of the American white oak barrel. ♦

Books Worth Reading

Scotch: A Complete Introduction to Scotland's Whiskies

By Margaret Waterbury

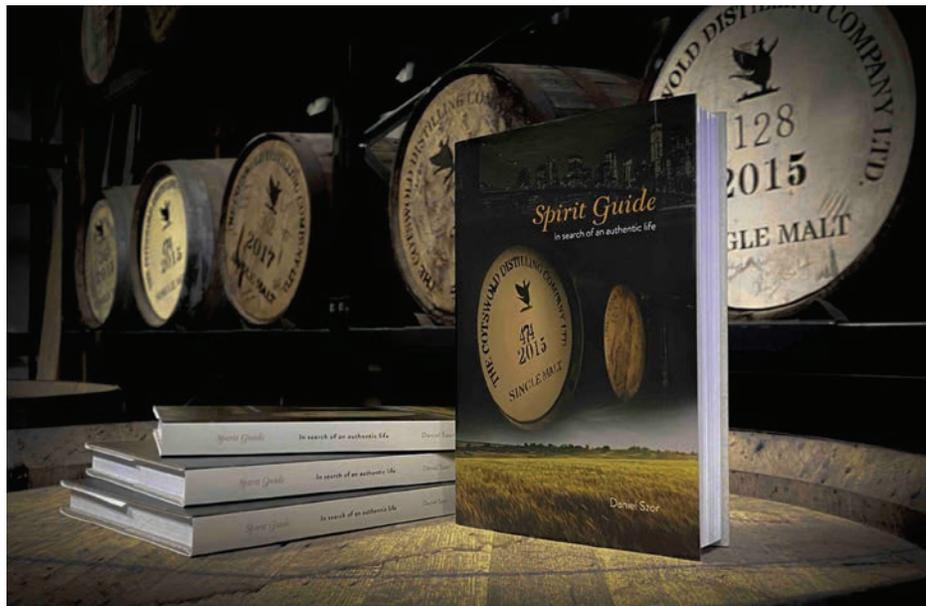
Scotch: A Complete Introduction to Scotland's Whiskies was written for anybody who's ever been intrigued by Scotch whisky, but balked at the bewildering array of Glens, tartans, and unpronounceable Gaelic words at the back of the bar. This approachable yet in-depth introduction to Scotland's whiskies describes how whisky is made, from barley varieties and malting to cask selection and blending. It also introduces the history and cultural context of Scotch whisky, from its origins as a monastic art to modern trends in cask finishing. The book includes profiles and tasting notes of more than 200 whiskies, from popular blends to coveted single malts, with a special focus on bottles you're likely to find stateside with ease. Whether you're newly malt-curious or a diehard fan, this book was designed as a go-to resource for demystifying the greatest of whiskies.



Spirit Guide – In search of an authentic life

By Daniel Szor

Daniel Szor, founder and CEO of the award winning Cotswolds Distillery has today launched his first book, Spirit Guide - in search of an authentic life. This autobiography tracks the life of Dan, a native New Yorker, who over 30 years built up a very successful career in finance, primarily in New York and then in Paris. However, his aspirational life in finance was not enough and this is the story of how Dan, an American businessman, became the founder of an English distillery in the heart of the Cotswolds, turning his dreams into a reality.



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OF A DRAM



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