

QUEST CORPORATE WHISKY TASTING - 13/12/17

Tasting notes and chocolate match

STRAIGHT FROM THE CASK - BRUICHLADDICH 11 - SHERRY HOGSHEAD AT 60.4% abv.

Nose: Sweet, sherried smooth with a hint of toasted oak and dark chocolate. A distinct sulphurous note of burnt matches, aka Mortlach!, with spicy overtones.

Palate: Smooth, rich, spicy fruit with vanilla tones and rich sultanas and raisins. A peppery note also detected and black cherry with an oily mouthfeel.

Finish: Again smooth and peppery with a long warming finish. Better with a touch of water to bring down to around 55% abv.

Match: Green and Black's Dark Chocolate.

WEMYSS - BLENDED MALT - TREACLE CHEST - KINGSBARNs at 46% abv.

The Wemyss Family Collection range was launched in 2017 with a pair of blended malts, each highlighting a different aspect of whisky production that influence the final spirit's flavour profile (the annual series will feature yet more expressions following on this theme - exciting!). Treacle Chest is a combination of two Highland single malts drawn from 14 first fill ex-Sherry hogshead casks, resulting in 6,300 bottles.

Nose: Granola bars filled with raisins and sultanas, Seville orange peels, Demerara sugar.

Palate: Cinnamon and nutmeg kick things off, softened slightly by sweet hints of white chocolate and strawberry. Richly malty.

Finish: Dense Oloroso and damson.

Match: White Chocolate.

ARDBEG - AN OA - AT 46.6% abv.

An Oa is intended to show a more approachable side to Ardbeg single malt that's as rounded as the Oa peninsular, without losing the characteristic distillery style. In the summer of 2017 this became the first addition to Ardbeg's core range in over a decade.

Maturation took place in a combination of casks including Pedro Ximénez, charred virgin oak and ex-bourbon, which were all brought together to marry in Dr. Bill Lumsden's new 'Gathering Vat'!

Nose: This sweet, creamy Ardbeg offers notes of butterscotch, fennel seed, tobacco leaf, Honey Nut Clusters and hints of mixed boiled sweets (fruit, Everton mint and menthol). The citrus notes are subtle and rich, coming through as flourless orange cake.

Palate: Still plenty of peaty oomph, although perhaps lighter in body. Notes of cigars and golden syrup flapjacks with sweet black tea on the tail and hints of chocolate limes.

Finish: Smoky treacle lingers with a little peanut brittle

Match: Butterscotch Chocolate

GLENFARCLAS - 105 - CASK STRENGTH - AT 60% abv.

Nose: Great depth, Sherry. Creamy and nutty. Honey on toast, touch of smoky coffee.

Palate: Silken, spicy and peppery oak. Almond, praline, hazelnut, dried peels, fruity. Touch of Armagnac?

Finish: Long, peppery and nutty.

Match: Green and Black's Dark Chocolate with Raspberry and Hazelnut

GLEN SCOTIA - 15 YEAR OLD - AT 46% abv.

This is the 15 year old single malt Scotch whisky from Glen Scotia in the Campbeltown region, released in 2015 as part of a redesign for their range. The distillers use specially selected American oak casks to age this expression, which compliment the fruit-forward and subtly coastal whisky rather well.

Nose: Lots of rich fruit here - apricot jam, satsuma segments and apple pie. Wafts of sea breeze and baking spices develop after a minute.

Palate: Vanilla and fruit, with ginger and cinnamon bring a subtle dryness to it.

Finish: Quite long with continuing spice.

Match: Dark Chocolate with Ginger?

ARDMORE - LEGACY - AT 40% abv.

Released in 2014 to take the place of the Ardmore Traditional, the Legacy brings a lightly-peated, wood spice-led flavour profile to the table. At its core, the Ardmore Legacy is made with 80% peated and 20% unpeated malt.

Nose: It leans more on the savoury than the sweet side of things, with light barbecue char and earthy notes up-front. Sweet cinnamon, fresh honey and vanilla toffee waft up at points.

Palate: More charred, smoky notes, joined by drying oak, pear drops and subtle grassy touches. Give it a minute for citrus zest and expressive heather to appear.

Finish: A lasting peat smoke finish, with a little bit of honey'd barley for good measure.

Match: Milk Chocolate with chunks of caramel and Sea salt?

