

The Importance of Blended Scotch Whisky



Blended Scotch Whisky is one of the world's great spirit drinks, created in Scotland and enjoyed in 200 markets worldwide. Each blend comprises as many as forty or fifty single Scotch Whiskies, selected for their character, flavour and bouquet from the product of more than 100 distilleries, scattered throughout the highlands, lowlands, islands and glens of Scotland.

The task of creating a blend is that of the blender, whose skill is acquired over the years. He must develop a "nose", and an appreciation of the subtleties of aroma and flavour, as well as the influence of location, climate and maturation on the whiskies from which he makes his selection.

Each of the Scotch Whiskies which goes into a blend is unique, a Single Malt or Single Grain, entitled to the description Scotch Whisky in its own right. Each will have been matured for at least the minimum three years required by law, and many for far longer. The blender uses nothing but matured Scotch Whisky. No neutral spirits are present in any blend of Scotch Whisky - this is not simply a matter of practice, it is a crucial matter of law, laid down in its legal definition, whose purpose is to protect the integrity of Scotch Whisky.

The blender's task is to combine in the bottle a selection from these single Scotch Whiskies - of different ages, from different parts of Scotland - in such a way as to create a blend more complex, subtler and probably smoother than its component parts.

A blender will not always apply an age statement to his creation: but where he does, it will consist of one number only, and will indicate the age of the youngest Scotch Whisky in the blend. It is not an average age.

The blender is not simply mixing ingredients. His aim is to ensure that the whiskies complement each other, that none dominates nor masks the rest, and that the whole is greater than the individual parts that have gone into it.

Once he has created his blend, the blender's second - and equally important - task is to ensure that the blend he has created remains consistent as to quality and flavour down the years.

Scotch drinkers are faithful to their favourite: they want it to look and taste the same wherever and whenever they enjoy it.

The blender will have his secret formula: it will be up to him regularly to check and nose the single Scotch Whiskies he has selected to ensure that each repeat blend maintains and delivers the flavour, bouquet, character and quality of the last.

Blended Scotch Whisky is the bed rock of the success of Scotch Whisky worldwide. Its consistency, reliability and quality have made it first choice with consumers around the world. More than 95 percent of all Scotch Whisky enjoyed today is blended Scotch - a testament to the success of generations of master blenders.

Blended Scotch Whisky - a complex drink, offering the widest variety of tastes and styles to discerning drinkers the world over.



Further information from: The Scotch Whisky Association