

The Culdearn House *Selection of Fine Malt Whiskies*

We are particularly proud of our fine selection of single malt whiskies, many of which are produced within 30 miles of Culdearn House.

In particular, we have an unusual and interesting selection of single-cask cask-strength malts, which are separately listed. These are all individually described and are unrepeatable. Please also note that these whiskies have not been diluted, and so they are at a considerably higher alcohol level (often over 50%). Furthermore, these single-cask whiskies have not been chill-filtered, a process which removes many of the oils in the whisky, and so when you add water to them, a certain cloudiness may appear. This is normal and shows that you are drinking a completely natural full-flavoured spirit.

We recommend that you try adding just a little water to 'awaken' your whisky. This will reduce the alcohol strength, remove some of the pungency of the aroma, and allow the whisky to fully develop.

All our malts are served by the 25ml measure in a crystal glass at room temperature and with a small jug of water.

Some of the nearby Speyside Distilleries welcome visitors and offer tours around their premises.

Lowland Whiskies

Malt whiskies from the lowland area are usually delicate in colour, aroma and flavour and have a dry finish. They are often floral, grassy and sweet in character and are best enjoyed in the afternoon or early evening, perhaps as an introductory dram or as a pre-dinner drink.

GLENKINCHIE – 12 years old. A great example of the typical lowland whisky character. Recently known as “The Edinburgh Malt” it is distilled about 15 miles from the capital near the village of Pencaitland. The nose is softly aromatic with hints of lemon grass and sweet lemons. A great way to start any tasting of Scotland’s whiskies.

ROSEBANK - DISTILLED 1990. 17 YEARS. This lowland distillery which triple distilled its fabulous whisky was established by James Rankine who converted the maltings of the earlier Camelon distillery. Situated close to the centre of Falkirk between the A9 and the Forth-Clyde Canal. Rosebank took its water from the carboniferous lavas of the Campsie Fells. Production ceased in 1993 and the distillery has since been torn down, so this is drinking history! This example is Straw/ light amber in colour. The nose is grassy- flowery. The taste is malty sweet, it stays flowery but becomes dry and picks up ginger.

Speyside Whiskies

Speyside is the heart of the whisky distilling industry in Scotland. It produces whiskies of the highest quality, which are often complex with rich honeyed and chocolaty flavours. There are an enormous variety of different whiskies produced in this region, so be sure to read the tasting notes carefully. Do enjoy exploring this fabulous collection of whiskies...

ABERLOUR – 10 years old. Aberlour Distillery lies in the heart of the Speyside region and draws its soft water from the Ben Rinnes. It has a good sherry colour; a nutty, rich and warm flavour, and is ideal for relaxing in front of the fire or at the end of a meal.

THE BALVENIE – 12 years old. The Balvenie is a classic Dufftown Distillery tucked away behind its much larger neighbour Glenfiddich. It is a rich and elegant dram held in great affection by whisky lovers the world over. It is golden in colour and has the character of honey with a salient orangey note. A superb after dinner dram.

CARDHU – 12 years old. A mere stone's throw from Culdearn House (admittedly by a giant!), this whisky lies at the heart of the Johnnie Walker blends. It is a mellow and stylish whisky. It is fairly light in colour and flavour with a malty sweetness and vanilla taste. In the finish it is well rounded and becomes dry.

CRAGGANMORE – 12 years old. This is a Culdearn House favourite and is distilled just 10 minutes drive away from here. It is one of UDV's six "Classic Malts" and well deserves its growing reputation. On the nose it is fragrant and pleasant, and to taste it is clean with herbal notes. The finish is long and dry with perhaps a hint of peat smoke.

DALWHINNIE – 15 years old. Matured in the Grampians at over 1000ft. above sea level, this is a good sweet spirit with a heather and honey character and soft undertones of peat. A good representative of the Highland-Speyside region.

DUFFTOWN GLENLIVET – 15 years old. Described by Michael Jackson as a good no nonsense Highland whisky. This house's style is aromatic, dry, malty and it is recommended as an aperitif. This 15 year old is an older example of the distillery's output. It has a pale golden colour with an assertively aromatic nose. The body is lightly syrupy and on the palate the whisky tastes dry and flowery. There is a light lingering finish.

DRUMGUISH – No age statement. One of the newest distilleries in Scotland, having made its first spirit in 1991. Its opening was the realisation of a dream of its owner George Christie who had planned it for several decades. The whisky exhibits a very nutty nose and on the palate there is a creamy richness quickly developing to an oily nut character and a sweetish dried grass note that recalls great Scotch whiskies of the past. On the finish we can identify cookies and toasted marshmallows along with a dry fruitiness.

GLENDRONACH – 15 years old. Distilled and matured near Huntly in Aberdeenshire, the distillery uses its own barley malted on the premises. The copper stills were traditionally heated by coal fires. The whisky is matured in oak and sherry casks to produce a beautifully balanced, full hearted and deeply satisfying dram.

GLENFARCLAS – 10 years old. A typical, elegant Highland-Speyside whisky widely regarded as one of the classic top-flight Speyside malts. It is produced just 20 minutes away from Culdearn House at a distillery that is proud to say it is independent and wholly family owned and run. It is warm and dry with a fine bronze colour and has a sweet and long finish.

GLENFIDDICH – 12 years old. The biggest selling malt in the world is produced close to Culdearn House in Dufftown. The Special Reserve is light and smooth with a dryish, pear-like character, the finish is restrained and aromatic.

THE GLENLIVET – 12 years old. A rightly famous distillery even before its malt was legalised in 1824. The Glenlivet is one of the classics of Scotch Whisky. It has a golden colour and a flowery, clean nose. To taste, it manages a wonderful balance between sweetness and malty dryness. The finish is long and reassuringly warming. A malt to be enjoyed in the evening.

THE GLENLIVET – 18 years old. This is a definite step up in class and quality from the standard 12 year old, and is worth every extra penny. It is a superb example of what a Speyside whisky should be like, and exhibits a deep gold colour, a smooth and firm body and a fabulous long sweet finish. Heartily recommended at any time of day, but particularly in the evening, perhaps after dinner.

GLEN MORAY – An exceptional Speyside malt produced near Elgin since 1815. Distilled in traditional copper pot stills and matured in aged oak casks. An old gold colour, full of aromatic aromas such as apples and cloves. Smooth and firm in the body, this malt has a clean and sweet finish.

IMPERIAL - DISTILLED 1991 43% - This distillery in the village of Carron was built in 1897, Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee year, hence the name. The plant was closed in 1985, reopened in 1989 and mothballed again in 1998. This example is mahogany moving to treacle in colour. The nose is powerful like demerara rum with smoke underlying. The taste is hot and sweet. With water, prunes and raisins develop. There is no trace of sulphur in the after taste which is moderately long. Imperial's unusually large stills make it hard to use efficiently. "You either make a lot of Imperial or not at all" commented one observer. We think a lot is the better choice. If you are a "Sherryhead" you cannot miss this elegant vice free gem.

INCHGOWER – 14 years old. This is a slightly unusual malt for the Speyside region with hints of the sea as a typical characteristic. It is pale gold in colour, sweet and malty to taste with a certain hint of salt on the finish.

KNOCKANDO – Distilled close to Culdearn House, this malt could be anywhere between **10 and 15 years old**, as the distillery chooses each cask individually when they feel it is mature. Culdearn's current Knockando dram was distilled in 1990 and bottled in 2002. It is a pale golden malt with a light body, hints of berry fruits and a soft creamy finish. An ideal malt as an aperitif.

LINKWOOD – 12 years old. It is well known that at one stage in the history of this distillery, the management forbade the removal of spiders' webs in case a change in the environment should affect the whisky! Such matters are surely superstition, but the resulting malt is a fine one. It is a fragrant malt with a flowery character, but the palate could pick up anything from marzipan to roses! The finish is dry, with perhaps a suggestion of fruitcake.

LONGMORN - GLENLIVET- 25 years old. One of the greatest Speyside malts, cherished by connoisseurs but not widely known. Produced near to Elgin, this malt is full gold in colour and is big and malty on the nose. It has a well-rounded body and a healthy cereal flavour on the palate. This distillery is built on the site of an ancient chapel hence the name Longmorn, meaning "Place of Holy Man".

PITTYVAICH – 12 years old. Built as a sister to Dufftown and operated in conjunction with it Pittyvaich was closed in 1993 and demolished in 2003. The whisky is amber in colour with a hint of old gold. Round on the nose and quite full with malty, spicy and almost meaty aromas finishing with coffee. Medium dry on the palate with a long 'chewy' finish

THE MACALLAN – 10 years old. The Macallan is renowned for its high standards in distillation and maturation and the whisky it produces has for decades been regarded as some of the best in the world. The whisky is big, bold and beautifully rounded, and has a fine sherry character. It provides complete satisfaction on the nose, palate and finish. An ideal whisky for post-prandial quaffing.

THE MACALLAN – 18 years old. The extra years of maturation gives this Macallan the famous deep chestnut colour. It is a full-bodied whisky, and is delightfully sweet, rich and warming. Ideal for after dinner drinking. A true whisky for the connoisseur.

SPEYBURN – 10 years old. Built in 1897 this distillery is undoubtedly one of the most beautifully situated in Scotland. The colour is solid gold, the nose flowery and the body medium and gentle with notes of heathery dryness

TAMDHU – 10 years old. A pleasant and smooth Speyside malt with a light to medium body and a pale amber colour. It has a smooth toffee flavour and a flowery finish.

TAMNAVULIN – 12 years old. On the steep side of the Glen of Livet the river is joined by one of its tributaries, a stream called Allt a Choire. This is the site of the Tamnavulin Distillery. Tamnavulin has been mothballed since 1996, shortly after its owners, Invergordon, were acquired by JBB (Jim Beam). The whisky is the colour of Vino Verde and has a very aromatic nose with a touch of peat, hay and heather with a hint of medicinal vapours. On the palate it is light but smooth – lemon, flowering currant, winey and Vermouth-like.

THE SINGLETON – 10 years old. The traditional name “Auchroisk” was thought too difficult for consumers and so ‘The Singleton’ was born. The whisky is sweet with a hint of aniseed. This enjoyable Speysider has gone mainly to Japan, but deserves greater availability.

THE SINGLETON of Dufftown– 12 years old. Deep Gold in colour with polished mahogany highlights. This whisky is light in the body, on the nose one can detect toasted nut and rich fruit aromas. Adding a touch of water brings out the classic Speyside fruit-sweet aroma. The taste is of sweetness and perhaps crunchy nuts, then smooth fruity richness. Firm, with a balancing sweetness; hints of blackcurrant, brown sugar and espresso coffee. Warming and pleasant

Highland Whiskies

Geographically, this is the largest region, and produces a great variety of different malts. The whiskies are often complex with flavours ranging from rich toffees and fudges to earthy, spicy and salty tastes. Speyside whiskies are broadly banded under the Highland region, but are so numerous and eclectic that they usually are considered to form their own region. Often distilleries within the Speyside region describe themselves as Highland whiskies rather than simply Speyside whiskies. This usually suggests that they are slightly darker, richer and sometimes more earthy than the norm for Speyside.

CLYNELISH – 14 years old. Distilled at Brora on the North-East coast, this whisky has a pale gold colour with a medium to full body. It is slightly fruity and sweet, and has hints of seaweed, sea air and peat. The finish is slightly smoky. A dram for drinking anytime. Ideal for those who want a little peat in their whisky, but don't want to venture into the Islay whiskies.

THE DALMORE – 12 years old. Round and full bodied with the aftertaste of peat and heather and a faint tang of salt of the sea. Established in 1841, this dram is recommended as an after dinner malt, and is widely regarded as a good accompaniment to a cigar.

EDRADOOR – 10 years old. Matured in the smallest distillery in Scotland, this malt from near Pitlochry is light and golden with a minty-clean creamy malty taste. A malt for any time of day.

GLEN DRONACH – 12 years old. Distilled at Deveron in rich Aberdeenshire farming country the colour of this dram is deep amber with perhaps ruby. Sherry notes, lots of malt and heather are distinguishable on the nose. On the palate it gradually develops from light but definite sherry to a touch of oak, malt heather and faint background peat. The finish is long and dry

GLEN GARIOCH – 15 years old. Distilled at Old Meldrum near to Aberdeen, the colour of this dram is a full gold with earthy, oily smoke and aromatic elements distinguishable on the nose. On the palate it gradually develops from malty (and perhaps liquorice) through to a heathery, flowery and perfumy smokiness. The finish reveals honey and heather and a hint of spice. (Pronounced: Glen Geery)

GLENGOYNE – 10 years old. A quality highland malt which is reputed to have been the late Queen Mother's favourite. Produced from completely unpeated malt near the shores of Loch Lomond, this is a light to medium malt with a clean sweetish taste. It has a full body with hints of apple, oak and sherry. Ideal for drinking with dessert or as a quick dram before bed.

GLENMORANGIE – 10 years old. This is the most popular malt in Scotland and is hugely popular with whisky drinkers the world over. It is an enticing light to medium malt with a pale golden colour. It has a malty sweetness and a buttery creaminess. There is also a hint of spice detectable on the palate. The finish is classic, long and well-rounded.

GLENMORANGIE (PORT WOOD FINISH) – Typically this malt is between 10 to 12 years old. It has an orangey colour with a pinkish hue, and the nose is immediately different from the standard 10 year old. On the nose it is fruity and suggests a good rich red port. This continues into the smooth body of the whisky and the warming flavours on the palate. The port wood brings out a spicy note, perhaps that of mulled wine. To finish it is soothing and warm. Delicious at the end of a good evening.

GLENMORANGIE – 18 years old. This rarer bottling of Glenmorangie has a full reddish amber colour, and the nose is immediately different from the standard 10 year old. The nose is fruity sherry and suggests mint, walnuts and oak. This continues into the smooth body of the whisky and the warming flavours on the palate. The extra aging brings out a whole pot-pourri of spiciness. To finish it is aromatic, nutty and lightly oaky. Delicious at the end of a good evening.

GLENSHIEL – 8 years old. A pure Highland malt matured in oak casks for many years by Loch Shiel where Prince Charles Edward Stuart (Bonnie Prince Charlie) raised his banner to the assembled Highland clans at the start of “The 45” (1745 uprising).

GLEN TURRET – 12 years old. This whisky is produced near Crieff and is one of the most southerly of the Highland whiskies. It is a major contributor to the ever popular Famous Grouse blend and is equally well-rounded. It is strong and smooth with a wonderful bouquet and a good strong colour. A dram for enjoying on a winter’s day.

OBAN – 14 years old. Distilled right in the centre of the picturesque west coast town. Medium to full bodied, smooth and malty with a smoky dryness. It also has slightly spicy hints, perhaps nutmeg, and is a good progression away from the sweeter Speyside whiskies.

OLD FETTERCAIRN – 10 years old. An important contributor to the Whyte and Mackay blends, this whisky has a very full gold colouration. On the nose there is a hint of sherry, nuts and faint peaty and burnt notes. Some tasters have even identified wet wool! The body is light and smooth and the whisky has a nutty dryness and a toffeeish sweetness. You might also detect a hint of rhubarb. The finish is gentle yet lingering.

STRATHISLA – 12 years old. The oldest and prettiest distillery in the north of Scotland Starthisla which has also been known as Milltown is a significant contributor to Chivas Regal. Using lightly peated malt the colour is deep gold and the nose gives apricot, cereal and fresh oak. It is medium. The palate is sherryish and fruity the revealing Starthisla’s teasing sweet and dry character. At the end one might detect both vanilla and violet.

TULLIBARDINE – 10 years old. Near Gleneagles is the moor of Tullibardine, on the Ochil Hills. Silent since 1995 this distillery was a major contributor to blends such as Scots Grey and Glenfoyle. The whisky is bright gold in colour with a soft lemony, malty sweetish nose. The palate is full with clean grassy-malty tones, and it develops into a fruity, almost Chardonnay-like ‘wineyness’. The finish brings to mind a big fragrant Vanilla-pod spiciness.

Island and Campbeltown Whiskies

Island and Campbeltown whiskies use peat to malt their barley, and this gives the whiskies a deep earthy, smoky character. The flavours are often heathery or seaweedy, and may be pungent with a briny note. These are whiskies ideally suited to a winter's day sitting in front of the fire or for enjoying after a good meal or a long evening.

HIGHLAND PARK – 12 years old. The northernmost of Scotland's distilleries, this is a fabulous whisky from the Orkney Islands. Very highly regarded by whisky connoisseurs, this whisky has an amber hue and a sweet, heathery and smoky nose. It is medium bodied and has a smoky dryness on the palate. The finish is a glorious honey-heather juxtaposition. To be enjoyed in front of a warm fire, perhaps with a good cigar.

ISLE OF JURA – 10 years old. Deer outnumber people on this fabulous West Coast Island just north of Islay. This whisky uses lightly peated malt, and this is reflected in the flavour. It has a slightly sweet, malty and dry character, which gives just a hint of salt in the finish.

SPRINGBANK – 8 years old. This is Campbeltown's most famous product, and is the flag-bearer of a region which has shrunk from over thirty distilleries, to just Springbank and the intermittent production from Glen Scotia. It is a highly regarded malt that provides a real taste of sea air in its aroma and flavour. The palate picks up a saltiness and the finish is long and lingering, perhaps with hints of coconut. This bottling from a single cask comes from our friend and wine merchant Jack Scott who just happened upon a cask and was so taken by it that he bought it.

TALISKER – 10 years old. This whisky from the only distillery on the Isle of Skye provides a real taste of the west coast. It has a good deep colour and rewards the palate with sea air, spice and seaweed. A complex malt which is wonderful for warming the cockles on a cold or wet winter's day.

Islay Whiskies

There are seven working distilleries on Islay and six are represented here. The distilleries on the south coast offer the strongest flavours, but all are distinctively peaty. Islay whiskies are renowned for their phenolic, iodine, smoky and seaweed-like qualities. These flavours come primarily from the peat, which covers over a quarter of the island, but the strong sea breeze and the wet climate also play their part in producing these, the most distinctive Scotch malt whiskies.

BOWMORE – Legend. This is a light unaged version of the whisky from the main town on Islay (perhaps 8 years?) and is a delight to behold. It is characteristically heathery, and offers a well-rounded peatiness with a seaweedy tang. Bowmore is a compromise between the strong flavours of the southern three distilleries and the more delicate peating of the northern bunch. To be enjoyed with a good book before bed.

BRUICHLADDICH – 12 years old. Bruichladdich is a wonderful whisky recently brought back into production. This whisky epitomises all that is great about the more delicate Islay whiskies. On the palate it is firm and dry at first with a touch of iron. There is a slight oiliness and a suggestion of peat becoming maltier and sweeter with touches of heather. A very classy malt. (pronounced: bru-ich-laddie). If you like this then do ask to try the 20 year old which can be prised out of our grasp from time to time!

BUNNAHABHAIN – 12 years old. This malt from the most northerly of the Islay distilleries is light to medium bodied with a remarkable fresh sea aroma. It is gentle and clean with a nutty-herbal sweetness. Perhaps best enjoyed as an aperitif. (pronounced: boona'havn)

LAGAVULIN – 16 years old. Everything about this whisky says it is a heavyweight. It has a huge smoky bouquet and this smoke remains on the palate and into the lengthy finish. Peat is also extremely evident on the palate, and explodes over the senses. At 16 years old, you may also find some oily, grassy or buttery notes. This is a real thoroughbred whisky and difficult to beat. It should be enjoyed after a hearty meal or to round off an evening.

LAPHROAIG – 10 years old. This is the quintessential Islay malt, and uniquely on Islay, this distillery still has its own on-site maltings. A classic in every way, this whisky has a full golden colour and a medicinal seaweedy, iodine taste; often described as TCP. On the palate there is lots of peat, and it is very dry. A dram to love or hate! No in betweens. Ideal as a nightcap.