

WHISKY

Whisky is the spirit distilled from distillation of a fermented mash of grain, usually barley, with wheat or maize or a mixture of the two.

The distilled drink is then aged in wooden barrels, especially those made of oak. These barrels may be new or used and charred or un-charred on the inside, depending on the style of whisky being produced.

Production of Whisky

Screening & Cleaning



Malting



Kilning/Drying



Grinding/Milling



Fermentation



Distillation



Maturing



Blending



Dilution



Colour Adjustment



Bottling

REGIONS OF WHISKY PRODUCTION IN SCOTLAND

- **HIGHLAND** – the majority of Scotch Whisky distilleries are classed as highland.
- **SPEYSIDE** – the area produces some of the finest malts in Scotland, this is due to outstanding natural resources found in and around the area.
- **LOWLAND** – these are the lightest in style and make excellent blending bases.
- **ISLAY** – the distilleries off the west coast produce some of the most fully flavoured and peaty malts often with hints of iodine and tar. This reputedly comes from the local peat created from marine vegetable matter.
- **CAMBELLTOWN** – probably home to the first distillers in Scotland, however only two remain and produce smoky whiskies.
- **ISLAND** – this includes all other islands scattered around the coast of Scotland. They taste salty or have a sea-weed flavour.

MEANING OF SCOTCH

By law Scotch whisky means whisky which has been:

- Distilled at a distillery in Scotland from malted barley to which whole grains or other cereals may be added.
- Distilled at an alcohol strength less than 94.8% by volume so that the distillate has an aroma and flavour of the raw materials.

- Matured in an excise warehouse in Scotland in oak casks of a capacity not more than 700 litres for a period of not less than three years.
- Bottled at a minimum alcohol of 40% by volume.

The quality and flavour of scotch are greatly influenced by type of cereal used, malting process, peat drying process, the quality of water, the air, the climate, the distilling method and the *skill* of the distiller and blender. Many countries try to imitate scotch but are not able to succeed. This is primarily attributed to climate, peat, and very fine quality of water.

TYPES OF SCOTCH

MALT WHISKY

Malt whisky is made from malted barley and then double distilled in pot still.

PRODUCTION

- Barley is malted by soaking it in water for about two days and then spreading it on the floor for germination.
- During the germination process, the enzymes converts the barley starch into soluble sugar.
- Germination is then stopped by kilning.
- The smoke of the peat contributes a unique character and flavour to the whisky.
- The dried malt is then crushed to extract the sugar.
- The crushed malt is placed in mash tun with boiling water and brewed to extract flavour.
- The resultant 'wort' is then cooled and transferred to a wooden or steel fermenting vessel where cultured yeast is added.
- Yeast acts on sugar and converts it into alcohol. (ALCOHOLIC WASH)
- This alcoholic wash is then distilled twice in pot still.

- The spirit is then reduced to 63.5% abv and aged in oak casks.
- Legal maturation of minimum three years.

BRAND NAMES

- Glenfiddich
- Glenlivet
- Glen Grant
- Glenmorangie
- Highland Park
- Cardhu
- Cragganmore
- Jura
- Macallan
- The Balvenie

GRAIN WHISKY

Grain Whisky is made chiefly from corn or wheat with a small percentage of barley and barley malt and distilled in patent still.

PRODUCTION

- Made from mash consisting of wheat or maize and a small quantity of malted barley.
- The un-malted cereals are milled and then steam cooked to release the starch.
- This solution is placed in mash tun and malted barley is added with hot water.
- The mixture is mashed and brewed to get wort.

- Wort is then cooled and then fermented with yeast, creating alcoholic wash.
- This alcoholic wash is then distilled in a patent still, hence producing lighter and milder spirits.
- It is then aged for a minimum period of three years.
- Grain whisky matures more rapidly compared to malt whisky as it is light bodied.
- Majority of the grain whisky is used for making blended scotch whisky.

BLENDING WHISKY

- A mix of malt and grain whiskies. Most scotch sold in the market are blended scotch.
- Proportion of malt to grain whisky is between 20 and 40 %.
- The cheaper blend will have more percentage of grain whisky.
- The blender must maintain flavour consistency of the blended whisky.

BRAND NAMES

- Johnnie Walker Red
- J&B Rare
- Ballentine's
- Chivas Regal
- Dewar's
- Grant's
- Cutty Sark
- Black & White

- Vat 69
- Teacher's

IRISH WHISKEY

- It is distilled in Ireland from a wash of malted and un-malted barley with some grain.
- The germination of the grains is stopped by heating grains in kiln by hot air produced by anthracite coal.
- This is thrice distilled in pot still and matured for a period of five years.
- However, now-a-days produced by patent still.

BRAND NAMES

BLENDS

- Jameson
- Black Bush
- Powers
- Paddy
- Tulamore Dew
- Millars

SINGLE MALTS

- Bushmill
- Locke's Single Malt
- The Irishman Single Malt
- Tyrconnell

- Brogan's Legacy Irish Single Malt.

Differences between Scotch Whisky & Irish Whiskey

- Check the spellings
- Kilning done on a solid floor (no peaty flavour)
- In many cases, triple distillation carried out
- Minimum legal maturation period – 5 yrs
- Typically used for Irish Coffee

AMERICAN WHISKEY

All American Whiskies are made from cereal (generally, a mixture of various grains of cereals), distilled mostly in patent still at no more than 90% and aged in oak barrels (except for corn whiskey which may not be aged) and bottled at not less than 40 % alcohol v/v.

BOURBON WHISKEY

- It is named after the county Bourbon in Kentucky.
- Produced from alcoholic wash consisting of corn, rye, wheat, and malted barley.
- The minimum corn to be used for this mixture must be 51%.
- Usually the mash mixture consists of 70% Corn, 20% Rye & 10% Malted Barley.
- It is distilled in patent still.
- Matured in charred new oak casks for a minimum period of two years.
- Usually Bourbons are aged for 6 to 10 years.
- The charred barrels contribute special flavour to the whisky.

- The main feature of Bourbon Whiskey is both 'Sweet Mash' and 'Sour Mash' yeasting is done.
- Sweet Mash – Use of freshly cultured yeast.
- Sour Mash – At least 1/3rd mash left over from previous fermentation, so that each new batch is 'related' to the previous batch and develops more complex flavours.
- Brand Names: Old Forester, Old Grand-dad, Four Roses, Old Crow, Old Kentucky, Jim Beam, Kentucky Tavern.

TENNESSEE WHISKEY

- It is a sour mash whisky produced from mixture of grain consisting minimum 51 % corn, distilled in Tennessee.
- After distillation it is filtered/seep very slowly through vats packed with charcoal made from wood of sugar maple tree.
- This gives it a softer/smooth character.
- Matured in new charred oak barrels.
- Most Tennessee Whiskeys are made from the mash of corn (80%), rye (10%) and malted barley (10%).
- Tennessee Whisky is the protected name for a sour mash of American Whiskey.
- Brand Names: Jack Daniel's, George Dickel, Pritchard's.

CANADIAN WHISKY

- These are blended whiskies using corn, wheat and other grains with a very small proportion of rye for flavouring.
- They are distilled in Patent Stills.
- Blending takes place before or during ageing period.

- Maturation takes place in charred white oak barrels for at least three years.
- In practice usually matured for minimum of 6-7 years.
- These are excellent light bodied whiskies.

Brand Names:

Alberta Premium, Canadian Club, Canadian Five Star, Canadian 83, Crown Royal, Gibson's Finest, Forty Creek, Walker's Special



IHM NOTES