

RETHINK SCOTCH: TRY IT IN A COCKTAIL

DAMN THE PURISTS—DON'T FEEL COMPELLED TO SIP IT NEAT. A NEW WAVE OF MIXED DRINKS MAKE THE MOST OF SCOTTISH WHISKY'S COMPLEX FLAVORS.

APPLE OF MY ISLAY #3

Even smoky, peaty Islay scotches have a soft side, and at the Tippler in New York City, the underlying fruity notes of the Ardbeg 10 really come to the fore after it's shaken with apple butter, amaro, honey liqueur, and fresh lemon juice.

SCOTCH MEASURE

Opposites attract at the Paris Club in Chicago, where two very different single-malts—the rich, citrusy Dalmore 12 and the robust, briny Laphroaig 10—are combined with a little honey syrup and Angostura bitters.

FLY BY NIGHT

Sheep Dip, a blend of 16 single-malts, is stirred with a healthy dose of bitter-gentian and spicy-ginger liqueurs for this staple at Sotto in L.A., which has both sprightly citrus and herbal qualities.

PUDDLE JUMPER

A scotch cocktail that Negroni fans can embrace—the Bookstore Bar in Seattle cleverly combines sweet vermouth, artichoke-centric Cynar, and herby green Chartreuse to make a complex, sweet-and-savory foil to the fruity Highland character of Speyburn.

PRINCE EDWARD COCKTAIL

At New York's Saxon + Parole, the smoky, floral notes of the blended scotch Great King Street are accentuated when the cocktail is barrel-aged with lemon bitters, Lillet Blanc, and a touch of Drambuie, all of which is stirred, strained, and served with a lemon twist.

THE SCOTTISH PLAY

At Russell House Tavern in Cambridge, Massachusetts, this twist on a Rusty Nail—two parts blended scotch to one part Drambuie—gets a savory kick from Cynar and a bitter-sweet shot from Aperol to go with the Drambuie and the peaty Laphroaig 10.



Tasting Terms

SINGLE-MALT SCOTCH:

A whisky produced in one distillery in Scotland from malted barley.

PEATINESS: An earthy flavor derived from smoking malted barley with bits of heather, grass, and moss. It's especially prominent in the scotches from Islay.

BLENDED SCOTCH: A combination of malted-barley and grain (wheat, corn, rye) whiskies.

MATURATION: The process by which unaged whiskies placed in casks develop flavor and lower alcohol content.

Japanese Whisky Is Blowing Up

IT MAY SOUND LIKE A NOVELTY, BUT CONNOISSEURS KNOW THAT THE JAPANESE—LONG ENAMORED WITH SCOTCH—ARE DISTILLING THEIR OWN SUBTLE, REFINED VERSION OF THE SPIRIT. ALONG WITH SUNTORY'S NEWEST U.S. RELEASE, HAKUSHU 12 (SEE "THE RIGHT STUFF," PAGE 117), THE DEBUT OF RIVAL PRODUCER NIKKA'S YOICHI 15 AND TAKETSURU 12 PROMISES TO MAKE 2013 THE YEAR OF JAPANESE WHISKY.