

Hunter Laing Masterclass



Date : Monday, 25th Nov 2013
 Time : 6:00 to 8:00 pm
 Venue : 12/F Hong Kong Wine Vault (Wong Chuk Hang)
 No. of Attendees : 24
 Whiskies Tasted : Old Malt Cask, 1991 Littlemill 21YO
 Old Malt Cask, 1992 Bruichladdich 20YO
 Old Malt Cask, 1975 Glen Grant (Brandy Finish) 36YO
 Old Malt Cask, 1996 Tobermory 15YO
 Old Malt Cask, 1998 Laphroaig 14YO
 Old & Rare, 1991 Ardbeg 22YO

At the Hong Kong Wine Vault, we are also keen to explore the world of spirits, and we are delighted to partner with Hunter Laing & Co., a highly respected independent bottling company (IB) in Scotland. It is our honour to have Mr. Stewart Laing, and his son Mr. Scott Laing, here to showcase their 2013 release of single cask whiskies to us and guide us through the tasting processes.

Experts like the Laing family would pay a premium to buy the best casks from the distilleries. These whiskies are then aged for a number of years before being released onto the market. The average production from one cask is limited to only about 300 bottles.



We began the tasting with Littlemill, a closed distillery from the Lowlands. It is a very welcoming and fresh whisky for beginners in particular. Next up was the Bruichladdich from Islay, but unlike other Islay whiskies, it is not a peaty beast and is therefore a more easy-going whisky of the region.

We then moved on to the 36-year Glen Grant. This particular whisky is aged in a Brandy cask, giving the extra flavours.

Laphroaig is arguably the most famous distillery from Islay. It is a peaty and smoky whisky, and many of us in Hong Kong would interpret as having a smell of “hospital”, because of the iodine coming from seaweeds that made into the peat. It is an acquired taste, just like a durian. There are those who love it and those who could not stand it.

To wrap up the event, Stewart has kindly offered us to taste the 22-Year Ardbeg from their premium Old & Rare series. The Laphroaig is great value for money but this Ardbeg is a step up. The finest from Islay is much more than about peatiness. This cask is incredibly elegant, complex and with an ultra fine and long finish that stands in a league of its own. A must-try!

It has been an exciting tasting experience that although all single malt whiskies are made with barley, the taste can be very different depending on the region, the soils, the use of barrels and the age in casks.