

OUTLINE OF WHISKEY PRESENTATION

1. History

- Distilling may have first come from Arabic countries making medicines
- This is how distilling first comes to Europe, in the form of making medicine
- It is thought that Christian monks spread the process
- Gradually, the Irish first apply this to spirits used exclusively for drinking
- The Scottish are thought to have refined the process
- None of these facts are certain

2. General Facts

- French are the biggest consumers of single malt whisky
- Taiwan is largest emerging consumer market for scotch in world
- Only spirits from Scotland can be called Scotch, all the rest are whiskeys
- Spirits from Scotland, Japan, Canada and much of the rest of the world are called "whisky" but from America and Ireland it is spelled as "Whiskey"
- There are many types of whisk(e)y – Tennessee, Kentucky, Canadian, Scotch, Irish, Japanese – all of which have differences in how they are made and/or what they are made of.

3. What is it?

- Whisk(e)y is a spirit distilled from the fermented mash of a grain (corn, wheat, barley and rye). Mash is made up of a grain, water and yeast. The mash is actually referred to as "beer" because this is what beer is made of. Grain that begins germination by mixing with water but is halted from additional germination by drying or roasting, is known as malt or malted grain. Once an acceptable spirit is distilled from the mash, it is cured in charred, oaken casks for some period of time. The casks can be made of virgin oak or are often repurposed from one type of spirit curing to another, e.g. bourbon casks used for single malt whisky.
- Different countries have different requirements for malting, fermenting, distilling, alcohol content and aging.

4. How to taste

- A tasting (also known as a nosing) is comprised of 5 components: **Sight, Nose, Taste or Palate, Finish and Balance**
 1. **Sight** – The color of a whisk(e)y can be a guide or indicator of its quality. For the most part the color results from the maturation or aging of the spirit in its cask. As a rule the longer the spirit remains in a cask, the darker the color will be. But caution is advised as some processes are bolstered or reinforced by adding a

caramel coloring to make a spirit consistent in color across many barrels and bottles. This is especially true with blended scotches.

2. **Nose** – this is the complex assortment of scents that you can discern and/or the scents you associate with the memories that are evoked when you smell the whisk(e)y.
3. **Taste** – this is the range of tastes or memories of tastes that are evoked when first you bring the whisk(e)y into your mouth.
4. **Finish** – this refers to the evolving variety of different tastes and sensations that you derive once you have swallowed the whisk(e)y.
5. **Balance** – this refers to the relative strengths or weaknesses of the other three to each other. When the other components are strong and in balance with each other, you have a good and often times rare whisk(e)y.

- Tasting usually consists of first trying the spirit as it comes out of the bottle, judging the four categories listed above. Then, one writes down their thoughts and observations. Next, one then adds a few drops of water (distilled or purified) to the spirit, swirls to mix and then tries the spirit again observing the above and then recording their impressions. A small amount of water tends to open up and release flavors, or soften flavors or scents that were overwhelming on the first tasting.
- A beginning taster should not expect to extract complex or myriad tastes or scents from the spirit. They should concentrate on getting one or two impressions from each stage of the tasting. Whisk(e)y tasting like anything else requires practice and as you gain more experience your variety of perceived scents and tastes will broaden.
- Some of the broader flavors or scents are oak, wood, charcoal, fruit, vanilla, caramel, sherry, earth, salt, citrus, melon, pepper, spice, smoke, etc.
- There are really no wrong tastes or scents. When first learning to taste (nose), just be honest with what you actually perceive.
- Formally, whisk(e)y is rated on a 100 point scale just the same as wine.

5. Taste/Nose

6. Compare to reviews