

Whisky Reviews

The following table summarizes region, bottling strength, ratings, and current prices. The ratings are out of 100 points and are compiled from several sources, listed as follows with corresponding notation formats:

- **Ralfy:**¹ During each whisky review Ralfy gives nose and taste comments and ends the episode with a rating mark, which is included in the summary table. Following the table, Ralfy's nose/tasting notes are provided for a number of whiskies. The number of the review is provided for reference.
- **MaltMatrix:**² A summary of whisky ratings given by a panel of 18 experts who have tasting experience anywhere from 200-2,000 single malts.³ Since the matrix features a panel of diverse tastes, scores sometimes vary widely. Tastings have also included many older bottlings that may not be the same as what is currently available. Therefore, only bottlings after the year 2000 will be used. Ratings will be in the format of "low-high/average (number of bottles rated)." For example, Ardbeg 10 has three listed bottlings after the year 2000 that were reviewed, with a low of 83 and a high of 91 and the three bottles having respective averages of 86, 87, and 87. Thus the Ardbeg 10 rating based on the matrix would be: "83-91/87 (3)"
- **Connosr:**⁴ This is a community/open reviewing site. Ratings probably vary quite widely based on experience and taste, however it is a fairly comprehensive site with lots of "layman ratings." Ratings will be given as low-high/average (number of reviews). An example for Ardbeg 10 would be: "60-95/81 (25)". In this particular case, there were ratings of 3 and 5; these are considered outliers and due to the particular taste preferences of the reviewer (one can verify this in the comments for each of these ratings. Ratings that low will be ignored.
- **Whisky Advocate:**⁵ Ratings given by one or more of five Whisky Advocate veteran writers, who the magazine claims are world whisky experts and experienced reviewers. If more than one review exists, they will be separated by a slash (/).

¹Ralfy's WhiskyMarks: <http://www.whiskymarks.blogspot.com/>

²WhiskyFun malt matrix: <http://www.whiskyfun.com/MaltManiacsMatrix.pdf>

³MaltManiacs review panel member credentials: <http://www.maltmaniacs.org/ADHD/credentials.html>

⁴Whisky Connosr: <http://www.connosr.com/>

⁵Review section of the Malt Advocate site: http://www.maltadvocate.com/whisky_reviews.asp

Summary Table

| | Info | | Ratings (out of 100) | | | | | Prices | | | |
|--|----------|---------|----------------------|---------------|---------------|----------|--------|---------|----------|----------|--|
| | | ABV (%) | Rally | MaltMatrix | Connosr | Advocate | Merwin | Surdyks | Haskells | France44 | |
| | Region | | | | | | | | | | |
| Aberlour A'bunadh Aberlour 12 DoubleCask Aberlour 16 DoubleCask Amrut Fusion An Cnoc 12 An Cnoc 16 Ardbeg 10 Ardbeg Uigeadail Balvenie 12 Doublewood Balvenie 12 Signature Benriach 10 Curiositas Benriach 12 Tawny Port Benriach 15 Tawny Port Benriach 15 Arumaticus Benriach 15 Pedro Ximenez Benriach 15 Madiera Benriach 16 Black Bottle Bruichladdich Rocks Bruichladdich 12 2nd Ed. Bunnahabhain 12 Bushmills Black Bush Caol Ila 12 Compass Box Asyla Compass Box Peat Monster Compass Box Oak Cross Compass Box Hedonism Compass Box Spice Tree Connemara Peated Single Malt Connemara Cask Strength Cragganmore 12 Dalmore 12 Dalmore 15 | Speyside | 60 | 91 | 76-93/87 (11) | 65-95/89 (30) | 90/90 | \$69 | \$60 | \$63 | - | |
| | Speyside | 60 | - | 79-86/83 (1) | 50-90/74 (5) | 84 | \$40 | \$38 | \$45 | \$40 | |
| | Speyside | 60 | - | 77-90/83 (3) | 65-97/84 (6) | 90 | \$53 | \$60 | - | \$60 | |
| | India | 50 | 88 | - | 75-95/85 (10) | 89 | \$60 | \$65 | - | \$65 | |
| | Speyside | 40 | 89/90 | 72-89/80 (6) | 78-86/81 (7) | - | \$32 | - | - | - | |
| | Speyside | 46 | - | 76-88/81 (1) | 75-84/79 (4) | - | \$49 | - | - | - | |
| | Islay | 46 | 90 | 83-92/87 (3) | 60-95/81 (25) | 93 | \$47 | \$50 | \$50 | - | |
| | Islay | 54.2 | 92 | 80-93/87 (3) | 80-99/90 (26) | 95 | \$68 | \$83 | \$90 | - | |
| | Speyside | 40 | 83 | 72-88/81 (4) | 60-93/80 (25) | - | \$40 | - | \$43 | \$45 | |
| | Speyside | 40 | 85 | 70-87/78 (1) | 60-88/79 (7) | 83 | \$55 | \$50 | - | - | |
| | Speyside | 40 | - | 72-90/81 (2) | 74-86/77 (7) | 87 | \$55 | - | - | - | |
| | Speyside | 46 | - | 82-86/84 (1) | 84 (1) | 86 | \$65 | - | - | - | |
| | Speyside | 46 | - | 74-79/76 (1) | - | - | \$75 | - | - | - | |
| | Speyside | 46 | - | 80-84/82 (1) | 81 (2) | - | \$75 | - | - | - | |
| | Speyside | 52.3 | - | 78-82/80 (1) | 87 (1) | 92 | \$100 | - | - | - | |
| | Speyside | 46 | - | 70-88/80 (2) | 83 (1) | - | \$75 | - | - | - | |
| | Speyside | 40 | - | 70-88/80 (2) | 79-84/82 (3) | 83 | \$75 | - | - | - | |
| | Blend | 40 | 89 | 74-80/77 (1) | 65-95/78 (9) | - | \$20 | - | \$21 | \$16 | |
| | Islay | 46 | - | 70-86/81 (1) | 80-92/82 (3) | 78 | \$45 | \$50 | \$55 | - | |
| | Islay | 46 | - | 73-90/80 (1) | 67 (1) | 83 | \$55 | \$59 | \$65 | - | |
| Islay | 46.3 | 91 | 72-89/81 (4) | 50-90/73 (9) | 87/89 | \$49 | \$42 | \$50 | \$50 | | |
| Irish Blend | 40 | - | 63-80/72 (1) | 75-98/84 (10) | - | \$27 | \$30 | - | - | | |
| Islay | 43 | 89 | 69-90/83 (4) | 50-92/83 (16) | 88 | \$49 | \$50 | \$57 | \$55 | | |
| Misc Blend | 40 | - | 74-87/82 (2) | 72-80/83 (2) | 88 | \$50 | - | - | - | | |
| Islay / Highland Blend | 46 | - | 58-98/84 (2) | 81-90/85 (3) | 92/94 | \$47 | - | - | \$37 | | |
| Highland Blend | 43 | - | 71-88/80 (1) | 70-80/81 (3) | 83 | \$39 | - | - | \$44 | | |
| Highland Blend | 43 | - | - | 73-86/80 (2) | 87 | \$83 | - | - | \$85 | | |
| Highland Blend | 46 | - | 50-90/83 (1) | 80-89/86 (8) | 84 | \$57 | - | - | \$40 | | |
| Ireland | 40 | - | 73-87/81 (4) | 76-81/79 (4) | - | \$39 | \$44 | - | \$45 | | |
| Ireland | 60 | - | 73-92/83 (4) | 92-93/90 (2) | 85 | \$63 | \$62 | - | - | | |
| Speyside | 43 | - | 71-85/80 (3) | 75-85/79 (8) | - | \$40 | \$43 | \$42 | \$45 | | |
| Highlands | 40 | - | 76-82/79 (3) | 75-94/84 (10) | 84 | \$37 | - | \$44 | \$40 | | |
| Highlands | 40 | - | 80-85/82 (1) | 80-86/84 (4) | 88 | \$65 | - | \$90 | - | | |

| Info | | Ratings (out of 100) | | | | | Prices | | | |
|------|---------------------------|----------------------|-------|--------------|----------------|----------|--------|--------|----------|----------|
| | Region | ABV (%) | Rally | MaltMatrix | Connors | Advocate | Merwin | Surdys | Haskells | France44 |
| | Dalmore Gran Reserva | 40 | - | 76-82/79 (3) | 75-80/78 (2) | 84 | \$55 | \$60 | \$65 | - |
| | Dalwhinnie 15 | 43 | 90 | 69-83/78 (2) | 40-88/72 (12) | - | \$45 | \$47 | \$46 | \$50 |
| | Edradour 10 | 40 | 90 | 35-80/62 (3) | 70-95/81 (6) | - | \$52 | - | \$52 | \$50 |
| | Glen Moray 12 | 40 | - | 72-72/72 (1) | - | 81 | \$27 | \$27 | \$29 | \$28 |
| | Glen Moray 16 | 40 | - | 72-78/75 (1) | 91 (1) | - | \$45 | - | - | - |
| | Glendronach 15 | 46 | 90 | 74-86/82 (2) | 80-89/83 (6) | 93 | \$75 | - | \$90 | - |
| | Glenfarclas 105 | 60 | - | 72-90/85 (3) | 70-90/83 (7) | - | - | - | \$81 | - |
| | Glenfarclas 10 | 40 | 89 | 78-84/80 (2) | 62-75/71 (4) | - | \$45 | - | \$45 | - |
| | Glenfarclas 12 | 43 | - | 72-88/82 (3) | 85-87/84 (3) | - | \$45 | \$50 | \$49 | - |
| | Glenfarclas 17 | 43 | - | 75-89/84 (1) | 84-90/86 (3) | - | \$85 | - | - | - |
| | Glenlivet 15 French Oak | 40 | - | 77-86/80 (1) | 55-85/75 (5) | 90 | \$45 | \$41 | \$42 | \$50 |
| | Glenlivet 18 | 43 | - | 70-85/80 (3) | 65-89/82 (8) | - | \$75 | \$80 | \$73 | \$85 |
| | Glenlivet 16 Nadurra | 57.7 | 87 | 72-90/84 (3) | 75-90/84 (10) | 90 | \$50 | - | - | - |
| | Glenmorangie 10 | 40 | 87 | 73-82/78 (1) | 65-94/82 (12) | 93 | \$35 | - | \$40 | \$33 |
| | Glenmorangie 18 | 43 | - | 72-88/83 (4) | 85-90/86 (3) | 89 | \$80 | \$80 | \$96 | \$85 |
| | Glenmorangie Astar | 57.1 | - | 81-88/84 (1) | 85-85/89 (2) | 93 | \$74 | \$80 | \$77 | \$75 |
| | Glenmorangie Finealta | 46 | - | - | 86 (1) | 88 | \$80 | - | \$86 | \$60 |
| | Glenmorangie Lasanta | 46 | - | 79-85/80 (1) | 55-96/77 (7) | 79 | \$45 | \$50 | \$50 | \$50 |
| | Glenmorangie Nectar | 46 | - | 68-86/81 (1) | 60-100/87 (12) | 89 | \$70 | \$76 | \$86 | \$75 |
| | Glenmorangie Quinta | 46 | - | 71-86/78 (1) | 70-95/82 (8) | 87 | \$48 | \$50 | \$50 | \$50 |
| | Hazelburn 8 | 46 | - | 72-89/82 (2) | 60-81/70 (3) | 84 | - | - | - | - |
| | Hazelburn 12 | 46 | 88 | - | 87 (1) | 87 | - | - | - | - |
| | Highland Park 12 | 43 | 88 | 73-86/82 (4) | 60-100/82 (27) | - | \$50 | \$43 | \$43 | \$35 |
| | Highland Park 15 | 43 | - | 78-84/82 (1) | 81 (1) | 90 | \$57 | - | \$66 | \$70 |
| | Highland Park 18 | 43 | - | 70-92/85 (7) | 85-100/89 (17) | - | \$100 | \$110 | \$120 | \$110 |
| | Isle of Arran 10 | 46 | 89 | 78-85/81 (1) | 75-95/80 (7) | 81 | \$45 | - | \$49 | - |
| | Isle of Arran 14 | 46 | - | - | 80-85/82 (4) | - | \$79 | - | - | - |
| | Isle of Jura 10 | 40 | - | 69-83/76 (2) | 40-85/68 (4) | - | - | \$33 | - | \$40 |
| | Isle of Jura 16 | 40 | - | 71-89/76 (1) | 88 (1) | 86 | - | \$55 | - | - |
| | Isle of Jura Superstition | 43 | - | 61-84/76 (2) | 75-91/82 (9) | 86 | \$40 | \$44 | - | \$40 |
| | Isle of Skye 8 | 43 | 85 | - | - | 84 | \$27 | - | - | \$28 |
| | Johnnie Walker Black | 40 | 86 | - | 75-90/81 (6) | - | \$37 | \$38 | \$37 | \$38 |
| | Johnnie Walker Green | 43 | 89 | 68-84/77 (1) | 75-92/85 (6) | 89 | \$57 | \$55 | \$74 | \$75 |
| | Lagavulin 12 | 56.5 | 91 | 80-94/87 (6) | 81-93/88 (5) | 90/95 | \$69 | - | - | \$100 |
| | Lagavulin 16 | 43 | 90 | 80-92/87 (5) | 75-100/89 (32) | 94 | \$67 | \$73 | \$74 | \$70 |
| | Longrow 10 | 46 | 85 | 70-90/85 (4) | - | 82 | \$90 | - | - | - |
| | Campbeltown | | | | | | | | | |

| Info | | Ratings (out of 100) | | | | Prices | | | |
|--------------------------|---------|----------------------|--------------|---------------|----------|--------|---------|----------|----------|
| Region | ABV (%) | Rally | MaltMatrix | Connors | Advocate | Mervin | Surdyks | Haskells | France44 |
| Longrow CV | 46 | 85 | 75-89/81 (1) | 70-82/85 (9) | - | \$62 | \$55 | - | - |
| Oban 14 | 43 | - | 71-88/80 (3) | 60-87/76 (7) | - | \$60 | \$63 | \$60 | \$55 |
| Old Pulteney 12 | 40 | - | 67-89/79 (6) | 40-88/74 (12) | 87 | \$32 | - | - | - |
| Old Pulteney 17 | 46 | - | 73-90/80 (3) | 86-90/87 (3) | 87 | \$74 | - | - | - |
| Redbreast 12 | 40 | - | 67-89/82 (1) | 55-95/83 (12) | 96 | \$39 | \$39 | - | \$38 |
| Redbreast 15 | 46 | - | 82-89/85 (1) | 81 (1) | 92 | \$73 | - | - | - |
| Springbank 10 | 46 | 86 | 75-87/81 (3) | 70-98/83 (10) | 84/85/88 | \$45 | \$70 | \$59 | - |
| Springbank 15 | 46 | 86 | 74-90/82 (4) | 70-95/82 (5) | 86 | \$90 | \$80 | \$100 | - |
| Talisker 10 | 43 | 89 | 78-92/85 (7) | 75-97/82 (24) | 90 | \$50 | \$50 | \$49 | \$50 |
| Teacher's Highland Cream | 40 | 88 | - | 70-91/76 (3) | - | \$20 | - | \$21 | \$20 |
| Tomatin 12 | 40 | - | 69-83/80 (3) | 70-86/74 (4) | 79/80 | \$25 | \$24 | \$28 | \$28 |
| Tomatin 15 | 43 | - | - | 76 (1) | 83 | - | \$43 | - | \$40 |
| Tomatin 18 | 43 | - | 71-89/83 (2) | 75-87/80 (3) | 87/88 | \$55 | - | \$68 | - |
| Yamazaki 12 | 43 | - | 74-88/80 (2) | 73-98/79 (7) | - | \$43 | - | \$45 | \$46 |
| Yamazaki 12 | 43 | - | 75-90/85 (2) | 86-92/89 (4) | 93 | \$115 | - | \$125 | \$130 |

Ralfy's Single Malt Review Notes

A compilation of single malt notes from Ralfy.⁶ His nose, taste, and some other miscellaneous tidbits from each review episode are provided. The number of the review is listed for reference.

- Aberlour A'bunadh (Review 3)
 - *Nose*: Medicinal sherry, lots of fruit, dried fruit, rum-like intensity.
 - *Taste*: Hugely flavorsome, intense sherry malty syrup, toffee mocha, rum, herbal absinthy, cough mixture from heaven.
 - *Misc*: Has never run across an Aberlour that wasn't good.
- Amrut Fusion (Review 225)
 - *Nose*: Soft but substantial barley, soft root, almondy yeast, nuttiness, cinnamon, apples, roasted mixed nuts, saw dust, mild malt vinegar, mild honeyed citrus, cumquat, apricot.
 - *Taste*: Young intense, spirity, heat but not much burn, honey and soft fruits, spices, apricot, sweet exotic wood, vanilla, red cola, licorice, hint of sea salt, mace, coriander.
 - *Misc*: Indian whisky. First Indian whisky that surpassed European standards. Not chill-filtered, probably no caramel or not much. Thinks well of Amrut in general. Rapid fade in the finish. Sounds a little hesitant on this one in its youth. Not exceptional, but good.
- Ancnoc 12 Year (Reviews 129 and 148)
 - *Nose*: Fresh honeyed barley, hints of citrus and lemon rind, waft of peat, vanilla bourbon oak.
 - *Taste*: Barley arrives honey, then big thunderclap of pepper and sourness, licorice, bitter oak, dry vanilla, and taste holds and holds. Lemon and grapefruit rind, wiffs of slightly unripe banana.
 - *Misc*: Used to be called Knockdhu, but it was getting confused with Knockando. One of his favorite Speysides. No caramel. Highly recommends the 13 and 16 year variants as well.
- Ardbeg 10 Year (Review 28)
 - *Nose*: Big peat smoke bomb, creamy, vanilla, buttery cream, white pepper, brininess, medicinal, bonfires in autumn.
 - *Taste*: Peat rush, toffee, mint, wood resin, eucalyptus, charcoal, bitter marmelade, maple, salt, iodine, stewed tea, myhrr, myrtle, sea water.
 - *Misc*: No chill-filtration, no caramel
- Ardbeg Uigeadail (Review 29)
 - *Nose*: None given.
 - *Taste*: Woody, complex. Nothing else given. Just says that it's so complex it leaves you behind trying to figure out what's going on, and that's a very good thing with whisky.
 - *Misc*: Sherry influence, cask strength at 12 years. Speaks very, very highly of this whisky.

⁶Ralfy's malt reviews: <http://www.whiskyreviews.blogspot.com/>

- Bunnahabhain 12 Year (Review 150)
 - *Nose*: Complex nutty creaminess, banana, dusty cinnamon, syrupy soft vanilla, slight icing sugar, sherry.
 - *Taste*: Lovely fresh clean sherry, dried treco, nutmeg, corriander, salty finish, lovely quality finish.
 - *Misc*: Very positive. No chill-filtration, no caramel. Least peaty of the Islays. One of his favorite standard Islays.
- Caol Ila 12 Year (Review 94)
 - *Nose*: Apples, pears, fine aged white wine, reisling, brininess, delicate intensity, bonfires, autumnal, sweet slightly oily nature.
 - *Taste*: Fire infused warming glow, apple smoke, peat and white port, sweetness/dryness together, citrus, spicy.
 - *Misc*: Less well known (compared to Ardbeg, Laphroaig, and Lagavulin), but not lacking in character. Largest distillery in Islay region. Independent bottler; no chill-filtration, no caramel. One of his favorites. Recommends bottling at cask strength (and there is a version at cask that he said is amazing).
- Dalwhinnie 15 Year (Review 150)
 - *Nose*: Honeyed sea salt Glenlivet, rich barley sugar, fudge, citrus.
 - *Taste*: Understated complex rounded sweetness with touch of bitterness. Tea, lemon, lemon rind, grapefruit rind, heather honey, summer meadow honey.
 - *Misc*: Doesn't think it should be overlooked. Highest distillery in Scotland.
- Glendronach 15 Revival
 - *Nose*: Jack Daniels, soft woods, citrus, aromatic spices, dried fruit, herbal, sherry.
 - *Taste*: Sweet and sour, toffee malt, tannins, walnut, dark chocolate, raisins, mint, menthol, salty, beautiful mouth coat, savory, tea, coco, floral.
 - *Misc*: Probably no chill filtration and no caramel. Aloroso sherry cask maturation.
- Glenfarclas 10 Year (Review 202)
 - *Nose*: Sweetness, golden syrup, substantial, fresh syrupy, grappa, soft cherry, herbal, banana cream, vanilla.
 - *Taste*: Sweet arrival of cough mixture, herbal lozenges, good clean quality, cherry stones, herbal sour, complex interesting clean.
 - *Misc*: Good entry level single malt. Doesn't think there's any caramel added.
- Glenfarclas 15 (Review 202)
 - *Nose*: Sherry, sweet and clean, phenol, a bit like Glenfiddich, brown sugar, orange peel, raisins, nutmeg, cough sweets, floral notes, baked banana, toffee.
 - *Taste*: Rich, big cream sherry, tanninic, tea arrival, cherry stones, almond, American whiskey, cola, menthol, mint, pine, aromatic note (woody Angnostura) bitters, cough sweets, sweet and sour.

- *Misc*: A lot going on. Producing fairly consistent bottles. Substantial Speysider. Largest stills in Speyside. Only see a 17 year around (\$85 at Merwin).
- Glenfarclas 30 (Review 200)
 - *Nose*: Treeco toffee, mocha, dried fruit, dried raisins, floral spirit, touch of pine and chamfer, very complex.
 - *Taste*: Raisin, minty, chamfer, eucalyptus, more mint, youthfulness.
 - *Misc*: Family owned, independent distillery. Classic Speyside signature. Not much/any peat. Same family has had the distillery since 1865. Only see a 25 year around (\$140 at Merwin).
- Glenmorangie 10 Year (Review 21)
 - *Nose*: Spiced malt, rose, cinnamon, violet, buttercup, floral, vanilla creams, creme toffee, not a lot of peat.
 - *Taste*: All spice, mixed woods, slightly bitter, a little peat, citrus, lemon/lime rind, punchy finish.
 - *Misc*: Best selling single malt in Scotland. Very complex at a young age. Doesn't think the older versions are any better.
- Hazelburn 12 Year (Review 180)
 - *Nose*: Creamy, barley sugar and vanilla, oak, complex fruit, intense, delicate, port, tawny port, sherry, bananas, tea, rum.
 - *Taste*: Vanilla, creamy grain, sweet and sour, big oak, fruity, boiled sweets, coconut, peach stones, saltiness, toffee apples.
 - *Misc*: A bit rare right now. Unpeated triple distilled. No chill-filtration and no caramel added. Distilled by Springbank.
- Isle of Arran 10 Year (Review 199)
 - *Nose*: Dry wood, saw dust (in a nice way), rice vinegar, vanilla, sherbety, coffee, lemon rind, fresh fruit, floral, ozone, sea salt, complex.
 - *Taste*: Barley sugar, vanilla sugar, white sweeter wine, lemon souffle, creme brulet, delicate fresh wood vanilla, aromatic, fragrant floral, white fruits, and a touch of nuts (walnut and almond), sweet eggs.
 - *Misc*: Independent bottler. No caramel, non chill-filtered. At 10 years, shows character, but would have given it another year or two.
- Lagavulin 12 Year Cask Strength (Review 92)
 - *Nose*: Lovely barley citris, honey notes, bitter tea, intensely flavored smokey tea, beautifully interwoven, rose.
 - *Taste*: Steady delivery, rose hip, plenty of peat and smoke, fresh, matured, complexity, bright spice notes.
 - *Misc*: Very high quality. Michael Jackson, whisky expert, wrote very highly of it as "the best of Islay." Interestingly, rated higher than Lagavulin 16.
- Longrow 10 (Review 179)

- *Misc*: Peated whisky, but not Islay. More similar to Connemara peated Irish Whisky than other Islays like Lagavulin or Laphroaig. Recommends adding water and letting sit for 10min before nosing/tasting. Distilled by Springbank.
- Springbank 10 (Review 178)
 - *Misc*: Not recommended for beginners. Give it a while with water to sit. No chill-filtration and no caramel. Challenging/complex whisky.

Bits and Pieces

Local Liquor Stores with Online Prices

- *Merwin Liquors*: ⁷ By far the easiest to search. Scotch -> Single Malts -> View All and then Ctrl+F the page for the item of interest.
- *Surdyk's*: ⁸ Not nearly as easy to search. Sometimes it works, other times the search results in a "There has been a problem" message. Second best selection compared to Merwin.
- *Haskell's*: ⁹ Also big selection and very searchable.
- *France 44*: ¹⁰ Decent selection and definitely worth price checking

⁷<http://www.shopmerwins.com/>

⁸<http://www.surdyks.com>

⁹<http://www.haskells.com>

¹⁰<http://www.france44.com/>