

Title:

Tullamore Dew Irish Whiskey

Word Count:

622

Summary:

Tullamore Dew

The roll-call of distilleries and brands which disappeared when the Irish industry imploded is an extensive one. Locke's Kilbeggan (now revived under Cooley), Dundalk, Allman's Bandon, Comber and Tullamore are just some of the famous and respected distillers who simply found it impossible to carry on, no matter how good people thought their whiskey was.

Keywords:

food, drink, alcohol, recipe, whiskey

Article Body:

Tullamore Dew

The roll-call of distilleries and brands which disappeared when the Irish industry imploded is an extensive one. Locke's Kilbeggan (now revived under Cooley), Dundalk, Allman's Bandon, Comber and Tullamore are just some of the famous and respected distillers who simply found it impossible to carry on, no matter how good people thought their whiskey was.

Most of the brands simply disappeared, the names of the distillers and their whiskeys slowly slipping into a vaguely remembered past. Some, however, managed to hang on. Tullamore Dew is one of them. It also represents a history of the Irish industry in miniature.

The Tullamore distillery was built in 1829 and was bequeathed to the Daly family in 1857. In 1887, Captain Daly-a man more interested in playing polo, hunting and racing horses - made Daniel E. Williams manager. Williams was a bit like an Irish Jack Daniel, having joined the plant at age 15 and speedily worked his way up to this lofty position. The fact that a country gentleman like Captain Daly was involved in making country whiskey is evidence of how wealthy landowners began to take over from farmer-distillers as the rural population declined and new laws were passed.

Williams expanded the distillery, began exporting and created a new triple distilled pot still brand, Tullamore Dew (the 'Dew' taken from his initials)

which was sold with the slogan 'Give Every man His Dew'. The quality of his 8-year-old whiskey even moved that normally crusty old historian Alfred Barnard to poetry. Eventually the Daly family sold their shares to the Williams', but popular though it was, even they couldn't keep the distillery running. In 1954, the Tullamore distillery closed.

It was a tough time for Irish whiskey. The government had, for reasons best known to itself, restricted exports of whiskey during the Second World War arguing that it would ensure ready supplies on the domestic market and continue to bring in guaranteed revenue. The UK government, on the other hand, had decided that while the whiskey industry was run down, some distilleries could stay open and exports should continue. It was a monumental blunder by the Irish. The distillers, meanwhile, were still holding firm to their belief that traditional pot still whiskey was superior to blended Scotch.

When the government raised taxes again in 1952 the writing was on the wall for distillers like the Williams' of Tullamore. No way could the domestic market support so many brands. The Irish may be famous drinkers, but even that was beyond them. In 1953 a survey by the Irish Export Board discovered that 50 per cent of whiskey-drinkers in the States had never heard of Irish whiskey. Irish emigrants now saw themselves as Americans, they had turned their backs on the 'ould country'.

Thankfully, Tullamore Dew was saved when the business was sold to Power's in 1965 and the next year became part of the Irish Distillers portfolio. These days it is owned by Cantrell & Cochrane, though the whiskey is still made at Midleton. A classic blend of traditional pot still with light grain, it's in the lighter end of the spectrum, though a 12-year-old version shows considerably more weight - probably from a higher percentage of pot still.

The overall lightness has endeared it to German and, more recently, American palates. People are interested in the brand once more and Cantrell & Cochrane has opened a heritage centre at the old Tullamore distillery site. All positive enough, but you can't help but wonder, what if...

## TASTING NOTES

### Tullamore Dew

On the lighter side of the Irish fence. Clean crisp and light, but not hugely exciting. \* \* Tullamore Dew 12-year-old So different from the standard bottling that you wonder initially if it is from the same stable. Ripe, fleshy and rich, this is the one to try. \*\*\*(\*)