

MONACO KEEPERS OF THE SPIRIT
2018 Annual Dinner
Palais Princier de Monaco
December 12, 2018

Presenter and author of the notes : Charles Maclean

The moto of the degustation been to taste all the 3 currently existing releases of the limited edition Keepers of the Quaich Collection

Talisker 1998

20YO Single Island Malt , 57.2%Vol

Appearance: Mid-gold, with khaki lights. Good beading and thick legs, indicating texture.

Aroma: Light nose prickle, and lightly nose-drying. An attractively oily top note (fragrant aromatherapy oil), with fresh maritime scents in the middle (iodine, salt, crispy edible seaweed) and a faintly smoky base with a suggestion of carbolic. Water introduces a hint of raw sugar.

Taste: An oily mouthfeel and a taste which begins lightly sweet, then salty and savoury and finishes long and warming, with Talisker's key-note chilli spice and a thread of smoke. Retains its character well at reduced strength.

Comment: A very fine expression of Talisker: mellow and sophisticated, which yet retains all the make's maritime and spicy character. Easy to drink straight or reduced. Put me down for a case...!

Highland Park 1998

20YO Single Island Malt , 55.7%Vol

Appearance: Mid-gold, with khaki lights; leonine. American oak refill cask? Good beading. Thick legs.

Aroma: Light nose prickle, refreshing and head-clearing. The top note is at once tart, fruity and mineral– unripe plums or greengages, sprinkled with chalk and sea-salt, on a buttery pastry base. A suggestion of fragrant smoke in the background and light coconut in the development. A drop of water introduces faintly medicinal scents of dry lint and plaster-cast.

Taste: At natural strength the texture is lightly oily. The taste is momentarily sweet, then very salty with a long spicy finish. A drop of water tames and softens it, makes it more accessible but does not change the essential profile.

Comment: An unusual example of Highland Park – aromatically complex and with a powerfully maritime taste: assertive at full strength, more polite when reduced but still full of character.

Strathisla 1998

18YO single cask Speyside , 59.5%Vol

Appearance: Amber, with golden lights; drawn from a 2nd fill sherry butt.

Aroma: A sweet aroma with a fruity top-note of boiled sweets, fresh peaches and pineapple; some desiccated coconut after a while and a suggestion of fresh oak, dry Virginia tobacco and moss.

Taste: At natural strength, the texture is rich and smooth; the taste sweet and fruity, with fresh peaches and chewy Starburst sweets (formerly Opal Fruits), enlivened by a warming, spicy finish. At reduced strength, the taste remains similar. The finish is long, fruity and warming.

Comment: A pleasant, complex whisky with bags of character, subtle and lively.