



Ballechin – The Discovery Series

Ballechin is the registered brand name used for the heavily peated distillations produced at Edradour, Scotland's smallest Distillery.

In times long gone, Edradour was one of seven farm distilleries operating in Perthshire. Today, sadly, it is the only one remaining. Ballechin was another of the original farm distilleries and operated between 1810 and 1927. It is as a tribute to the efforts of these pioneering farmers that we have resurrected the name Ballechin.

Since acquiring Edradour distillery in 2002, I have pursued an extensive programme of experimentation. Several heavily peated distillations have been produced, initially on a very limited scale, and these are being matured in a wide range of wood types. The phenol content of the malt used in production is not less than 50 parts per million.

The Burgundy matured is our first release of Ballechin, and has been matured solely in first fill Red Burgundy casks. There were a total of 6,000 bottles produced – (5,100 70cl and 900 750ml)

Over the next 5-7 years we will be releasing further “progress reports” on Ballechin's development, featuring the other wood types, so that the whisky enthusiast can take part in our journey of establishing another truly formidable single malt whisky, born out of passion and the pursuit of quality.

These progress reports will be bottled collectively under The Discovery Series. Each release will be at approximately 9 monthly intervals and will be 6,000 bottles only and be bottled at 46%. Each featured wood type will only be released once, and will not be released again in this format, or prior to the introduction of the core product Ballechin, which we currently believe will be released as an 8 or 10 year old.

Background

We started producing heavily peated single malt scotch whisky at Edradour to help make the distillery more self-sufficient. Historically, large proportions of the annual output was used in Pernod Ricard blends. This is no longer the case. It is our intention that virtually 100% of our stock and distillation will be sold as single malt.

As you know, Islay malts are currently those with the greatest rate of growth and we believed that the small stills at Edradour, which produce a heavy oily spirit would be ideal for producing a heavily peated malt. We also wished to broaden the appeal of the Edradour Distillery franchise.

We were very impressed with the quality of the first heavily peated distillations. Also based on the results of the wood finishing activity on Edradour we decided to mature the whisky in several types of first fill wood. We have used 9 types of cask to date – Bourbon, Burgundy (red), Burgundy (white), Olorosso Sherry, Port, Claret, Sauternes, Madeira, and Manzanilla. We also have some spirit in 2nd fill sherry casks. All casks are of the highest quality, a philosophy applied to both Edradour and Ballechin.

Whilst up to 50% of long term distillation capacity could be allocated to Ballechin, it is important to understand that Ballechin is being accommodated within existing capacity and within the context of us continuing to run the distillery at the 90-100k litres of alcohol level, which has been its historical output level for at least the last 20 years.

We have been monitoring development of Ballechin in cask closely, and have taken various samples to a number of whisky shows. Knowledgeable consumers and trade personnel have consistently fed back the view that the spirit displays character/complexity dramatically in excess of its real age, and were keen to see bottlings available at an early stage.

We also believe the whisky to be of exceptional quality and character with great depth. Tasted blind it is unlikely that the consumer, or the connoisseur, would place the burgundy matured at less than 4 years old.

This, the first bottling, whilst attractive to collectors, has been done with the intention of it being consumed and enjoyed by the consumer.

The 6,000 bottles were split 5,100 70cl and 900 750ml, the latter for sale only in the USA. Stocks have been fairly allocated across markets and customers based on the historical purchase of Edradour 10year old. Allocations which are not taken up by mid October will be reallocated. The final allocation of this first release will become the baseline allocation for the second release.

As indicated The Discovery Series is a journey that consumers can enjoy whereby the other wood types will be released over the next 5-7 years, by which time we expect the core Ballechin product to be launched.

The product will be on sale at the distillery shop at £58 per bottle from Friday 22nd September. It will be launched in Paris on 16 September and be available for distribution to UK customers from 20 September.

The product is packaged in the standard Edradour dump bottle and is in a tube which compliments the bottle labels.

Des or I will be happy to field any questions you may have.

“Enjoy the journey”

Andrew Symington
September 2006

