

Please note the disclaimer at the bottom.

Hello everyone!

We hope you will join our Scotch Masters, Larry Kascht, Harold Hansen, and Kevin Hansen, for our 2nd online ZOOM SAS Scotch Tasting.

The tasting will take place at 8:00 p.m. following our February 8th Member's Meeting. In keeping with their goal of continuing education in all things Scotch whisky, they will be introducing you to *Blended Malts* (not blends that contain grain whiskies). This is a very interesting subject that they have not previously addressed.

The Blended malt whiskies that they will be featuring are the Auchavan 8 year old 46% abv Islay (peated) whisky, and the Kinnoir Auchindoun 8 year old 57% abv whisky by independent bottler Duncan Taylor.

If you would like to purchase one or both, that's great, but you are welcome to join the event without purchasing either one, just join them for the conversations and camaraderie.

The Auchavan may be purchased for \$45 at Total Wine: Brookfield, Greenfield, and Bayshore locations.

Kinnoir may be purchased for \$50 at Total Wine: Brookfield and Greenfield locations.

These are available exclusively through Total Wine stores.

We would like for you to participate in the creation of your own Blended Malt, *but first* read "Discovering Blended Malts", then you'll understand a bit more about how to create your own.

Discovering Blended Malts!

Think of a favorite Single Malt Scotch Whisky as a vibrant color.

Then think of another favorite single malt as another vibrant color, and another, and another.

Then, using this selected pallet of vibrant colors, make a one-of-a kind painting, with the colors shading, highlighting, complementing, and contrasting with each other. That's what a blended malt is, it's an artistic creation of combined flavors, using assorted single malts as the color ingredients.

Well, first of all, to be clear, a Blended Malt is different from just a blended scotch (or blend).

A blended scotch (or blend) would be something like Dewar's, Chivas Regal, or Cutty Sark, in which single malts are mixed with grain whisky (corn, wheat, or rye). This mixing strategy produces a very consistent flavor profile that's characteristic of a particular whisky brand. The use of grain whisky (corn, wheat, or rye) in the blend introduces familiar flavor elements that appeal to many whisky drinkers (especially in America), that tones down the bold flavor of the single malts, and that allows for a cheaper price. All this certainly makes for a successful marketing strategy, and is responsible for the worldwide popularity of blended scotch.

A Blended Malt, on the other hand, is a strong, bold exploration of premium flavors in combination.

A Blended Malt uses only single malts, and uses no grain whisky (no corn, wheat, or rye). So the bold and assertive flavors you expect of individual single malts are fully present in a blended malt, but carefully mixed and combined, to explore interesting ways their flavors can influence each other.

A Blended Malt is sort of the best of both worlds—with the strong character of single malts, but with a potentially unlimited set of options and combinations.

(By the way, Blended Malts used to be called Vatted Malts, a term that some of us still like. You will still run across this term in old books and articles on whisky, and sometimes in the pronouncements of old whisky enthusiasts.)

I like Blended Malts, and I've had the good fortune to taste a good number of them, thanks in large part to generous sharing by Harold and Kevin. My current list of Blended Malts is as follows:

Angels' Nectar, **Auchavan 8 Islay**, Big Peat, Big Peat Christmas Edition 55.7 ABV, Gordon & MacPhail Secret Stills Islay Blended Malt, Compass Box Oak Cross, Compass Box Peat Monster, Compass Box The Spaniard, Cu Dhub ('Black Dog'), Cul na Creagan 12 Gaelic Whisky Blended Malt (Canadian Birthday Bottling), Epicurean Lowland Blended Malt, Gerston Archivist's Selection, Johnnie Walker Green, **Kinnoir Auchindoun 8 2008 Duncan Taylor**, Monkey Shoulder, Naked Grouse, Poit Dhubh 12, Rock Oyster Blended Malt (Orkney, Arran, Jura, Islay), Scallywag Speyside, Sheep Dip 13 Lost Cask 41.8 ABV, Sheep Dip Islay, Shackleton Blended Malt 3rd Edition, Signatory Vintage Islay, Timorous Beastie Highland.

I share these to give you an assist in looking up Blended Malts to try yourself.

Note that the 2 in **bold** are the ones we'll be tasting on 2/8.

If you think about the concept of Blended Malts for about 5 minutes, it's bound to occur to you that you could make your own Blended Malt. Since you probably have some single malts on hand, why not try your luck at mixing them, to make a cool Blended Malt?

Great idea, but you need a plan! Possible plans include—

- Build complexity and greatness, from single malts you already really like!
- Salvage a single malt that you had high hopes for, but disappointed you!
- Consolidate those old bottles with only a little single malt left in them!
- Create a Blended Malt that will make you famous,

so that you can move to Scotland and become a whisky hero!

Well, whatever your plan, go ahead and select your single malts, and courageously mix them.

(Note that if you add peated whisky to an unpeated whisky, add very little—since a little peat goes a long way. We recommend that no more than a quarter of your blended malt be peated whisky, or the unpeated whisky could be overpowered—you can always add more of the peated stuff if you feel it needs it. This applies to any strongly-flavored whisky, when added to a whisky that's less robust.)

Be sure to record what single malts you've mixed, and how much of each. Then taste your new creation, using the tasting methods and techniques we've all learned together. And then record some tasting notes, and go ahead and share them at our 2/8 Tasting!

It appears the whiskies (Kinnoir and Auchavan) that we had originally selected are now sold out. If you haven't gotten yours yet, feel free to choose any blended malt, such as one of the following; *Big Peat, Johnnie Walker Green, Monkey Shoulder, Naked Grouse, Sheep Dip, Sheep Dip Islay, and Shackleton.* Therefore, whichever of these blended malts you are able to find and purchase, you will be able to participate in our Tasting presentation and Tasting notes (as well as share the accompanying fellowship!).

If you were not able find a Blended Malt that we recommended, or just didn't want to buy a blended malt, you can still join us with a blended malt or your own creation.