

International Spirits Challenge 2009



Drinks
International



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Designed for impact

It's what's inside the bottle that counts. Consumers are only going to come back and buy your brand again if they enjoyed drinking the first bottle. But then the trick has to be to get them to buy the bottle in the first place.

This is where branding comes in, of course. Hitherto, the International Spirit Challenge has recognised and rewarded spirits brands and their producers at the highest level. Now, in its fourteenth year (and the first under the wing of Drinks International and Agile Media), the ISC has for the first time awarded products in a new Design & Packaging category (see page 30).

"Sometimes the purchaser consumes the packaging almost as much as what's inside," says competition judge and director of London branding agency, Paul Richards. "Often the cues on the outside inform them how to consume the products within."

In some research Richards conducted last year, results showed that drinks were consumed 27 times faster when kept in the fridge at home. "It's about increasing the rate of consumption, rather than volume," he adds. Citing the Design & Packaging overall winner, Corzo Tequila, Richards concludes: "A still small voice of calm can often be just as impactful on the shelf as the louder ones – if not more so."

One of the main objectives of a product's packaging must be to grab the attention of the busy shopper in a very short space of time. Research by Wine Intelligence in the UK showed that some supermarket shoppers can spend less than ten seconds making their choice in the wine and spirits aisles. More interested shoppers will "dwell" for longer, between 30 seconds and five minutes, depending on the type of drinking occasion and the type or location of the store.

So, we hope you'll spend more than five minutes



digesting the contents of this year's International Spirits Challenge results supplement.

Go straight to page 4 to see the winners of this year's Special Awards – including a first in the Liqueurs & Specialities category, as well as new awards for Spirits Retailer of the Year and for personal Outstanding Contribution to the industry. Good reading...

David Longfield, supplement editor

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Recognising the best in

The ISC Special Awards section has expanded this year. We've brought in three awards for excellence in spirits retailing, both in the UK and international markets, and another to recognise one person's outstanding contribution to the industry

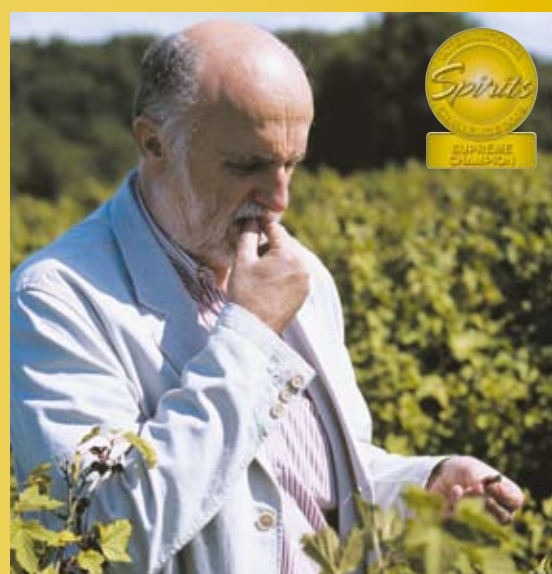
Supreme Champion Spirit Merlet Crème de Cassis

Cognac-based family producer Merlet has broken new ground for the ISC, with the first product from the Liqueurs & Specialities category to be awarded the competition's highest accolade. Chairman of judges in this category, Patrick van Zuidam, cited Merlet's "consistent attention to quality in the production of their Cassis". He added: "This year's entry of Merlet Cassis had something extra, it was simply perfect.

"The nose is rich and full of fruit. The flavour is delightfully fruity with a beautiful mouthfeel and exactly the right balance between the sweetness and the natural acidity of the blackcurrant. All the liqueur judges were quite unanimous in their praise for this product, as were all the ISC category chairmen when they later tasted all the Trophy winners for 2009." High praise indeed.

The Merlet family installed its first alembic pot-still in Saint-Sauvant, to the west of Cognac, in 1850, for the production of cognac eaux-de-vie, and the family was the first in the region to diversify into blackcurrants during the 1970s. Gilles Merlet (pictured) oversees production, making all the strategic decisions on time of picking, length of maceration and blending.

Merlet's position in the Charentais puts it at the southern limit of quality blackcurrant growing territory. The temperate climate and choice of Noir de Bourgogne variety limits yields naturally, and the company chooses to use "more berries than necessary" in the maceration, according to Luc Merlet, son of Gilles and head of marketing and sales. merlet.fr.



Excellence in Craftsmanship Destilería Sierra Unidas

Owned by Borco-Marken-Import of Germany, Destilería Sierra is situated in the regional capital of Guadalajara in central Jalisco, at the heart of quality tequila production in Mexico. Using its traditional copper potstills, the company employs a method of "double low-

grade distillation", in which the spirit is distilled first to 28-30° alcohol, then to 53-55° in a second process.

The Sierra tequila range is produced to standards that exceed the minimums set by law. At the top end, Trophy winner Sierra Milenario Extra Añejo (see p19)

is produced using small batches aged at least four years in barrels, compared to the legal requirement of three years minimum for the Extra Añejo category.

Sierra Antiguo (Gold medal, p24) is aged for two years, rather than the required one for Añejo. Milenario Reposado (Gold medal) receives at least nine months ageing, compared to the required two months for Reposado, while the company's standard Sierra Reposado is also aged for at least six months. Even the Milenario Blanco (Silver medal) gets in on the act, being distilled three times rather than two, the more commonly used method for blanco tequilas.

Tequila Sierra was first launched in the 1970s by Borco, now run by the Matthiesen family's third generation. According to IWSR figures, Sierra is now the number one tequila brand in both Borco's home market, Germany, and in Europe as a whole.

borco.com



Distiller of the Year William Grant & Sons



the world of distilling

The ISC Spirits Retailer Awards

For the first time this year, the International Spirits Challenge is recognising excellence in spirits retailing with its new Retailer Awards. Nominations in three categories (see below) were put forward by producers entering the competition and by the ISC judges, before the final winners were elected.



UK Multiple Spirits Retailer of the Year

Waitrose

Winner: Waitrose

Nominated: Sainsbury's; Tesco; Booths



UK Independent Spirits Retailer of the Year

THE WHISKY EXCHANGE
WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF FINE SPIRITS

Winner: The Whisky Exchange (thewhiskyexchange.com)

Nominated: Royal Mile Whiskies; Gerry's of Soho; The Drinks Shop



International Spirits Retailer of the Year

world duty free

Winner: World Duty Free

Nominated: Tesco, UK; Ahold, Netherlands; Sherry-Lehmann, New York, USA; El Corte Inglés, Spain

The decision-making process in selecting this year's Distiller of the Year was a tough one, thanks to each of the three potential winners scoring 27 medals in all. Such a close-run thing was it that the ISC management was forced

to instigate a weighted scoring system – as inspired by Formula 1.

In the end, it was a Trophy winner, The Balvenie Portwood 21 Year Old, and a slightly higher number of Silver medals that weighed things marginally in favour of the triumphant William Grant & Sons.

The award means that the family-owned independent – which has its headquarters in Lanarkshire on the route between Glasgow and Edinburgh – has taken the prestigious ISC Distiller of the Year accolade in four years out of the past five since 2005 – the exception being 2007.

The company's strength lies in its whiskies, of course, and the medal tally reflects this: a Trophy, two Golds, three Silvers, a Bronze for The Balvenie; a Gold, six Silver, a Bronze for Glenfiddich; a Gold, two Silver, a Bronze for Grant's, plus Silver for Monkey Shoulder. The rest of the portfolio did well too, with Silvers for Gibson's Canadian Whisky and Tequila Milagro, and Bronze for Hendrick's gin, Wood's 100 rum and Reyka vodka.

williamgrant.com



Outstanding Contribution

John Ramsay – Edrington Group master blender and ISC chairman



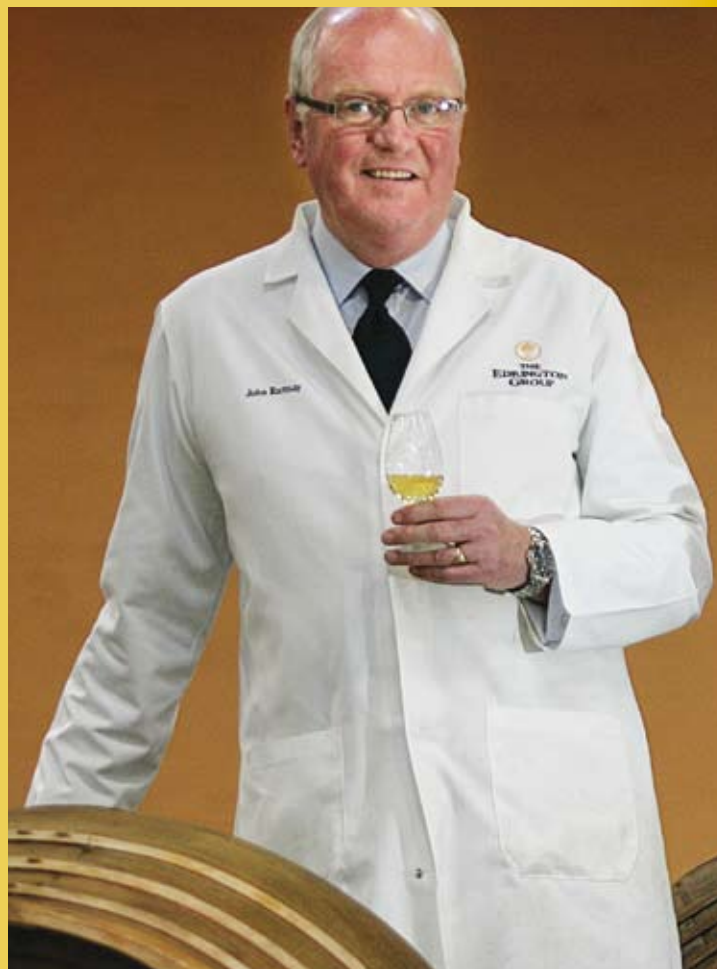
From his precisely barbered head and tweed suit to his highly polished shoes, John Ramsay is every inch the scotch whisky blender. A pillar of the industry, he retired this summer after 40 years in scotch.

John's achievements constitute a litany of whiskies that reflect the evolving nature of tastes in scotch. He is credited with creating the Highland Park 18, 25 and 40 year old expressions; he has been the "malt master" since the early 1990s for the seminal Glenrothes range developed quietly and effectively in conjunction with Berry Bros & Rudd Spirits.

The whiskies he is most proud of, however, are within the Famous Grouse malt range, which won the International Spirits Challenge's Malts Trophy in 2007.

At a farewell dinner (probably one of many) held at Berry Bros' famous offices in London's St James's Park, Ramsay was asked by Drinks International what he was going to do in his retirement. "Gardening and play a little golf", was his response.

When pressed, he was adamant that some secateurs and a putter was all he intended to pick up. Are we seriously expected to believe that a man with this amount of knowledge, expertise and experience is going to be left alone to sit quietly in a garden or potter around a golf course?...



SCOTCH WHISKY



TROPHY

Scotch single malts

The Balvenie Portwood 21 Year Old – William Grant & Sons

Scotch blends

Whyte & Mackay 30 Year Old – Whyte & Mackay



GOLD

Scotch single malts

Aberlour 12 Year Old – Chivas Brothers
Bunnahabhain 25 Year Old – Burn Stewart Distillers

Caol Ila Distillers Edition – Diageo
Glenfiddich Vintage Reserve 1977 – William Grant & Sons

Glenmorangie Sonnalta PX – The Glenmorangie Company
Highland Park 18 Years Old – The Edrington Group

Jura Elements Fire – Whyte & Mackay

Jura Superstition – Whyte & Mackay

Lagavulin 16 Year Old & Distillers Edition – Diageo

Old Pulteney 12 Year Old & 17 YO – International Beverage

Scapa 16 Year Old – Chivas Brothers

Singleton of Glen Ord 12 Year Old – Diageo

Talisker 57 North – Diageo

The Balvenie Golden Cask & Vintage 1978 – William Grant & Sons



The Glenrothes Robur Reserve – BB&R Spirits
The Macallan Sherry Oak 12 Year Old & 18 YO – The Edrington Group

Scotch blends

Black Bottle – Burn Stewart Distillers

Chivas Regal 18 – Chivas Brothers

Grant's 12 Year Old – William Grant & Sons

Hankey Bannister 40 Year Old – International Beverage

James Martin's 20 Year Old & 30 YO – The Glenmorangie Company

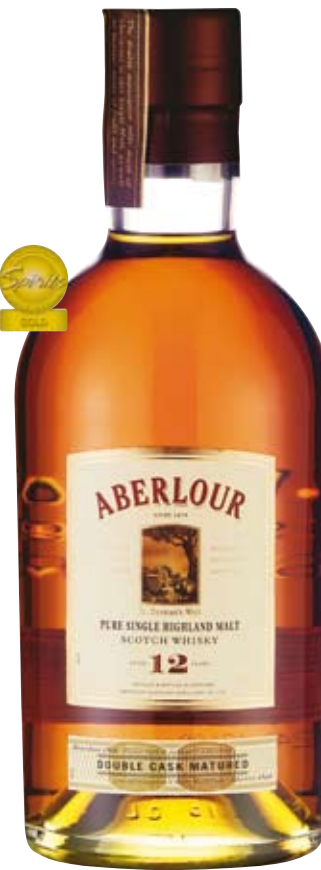
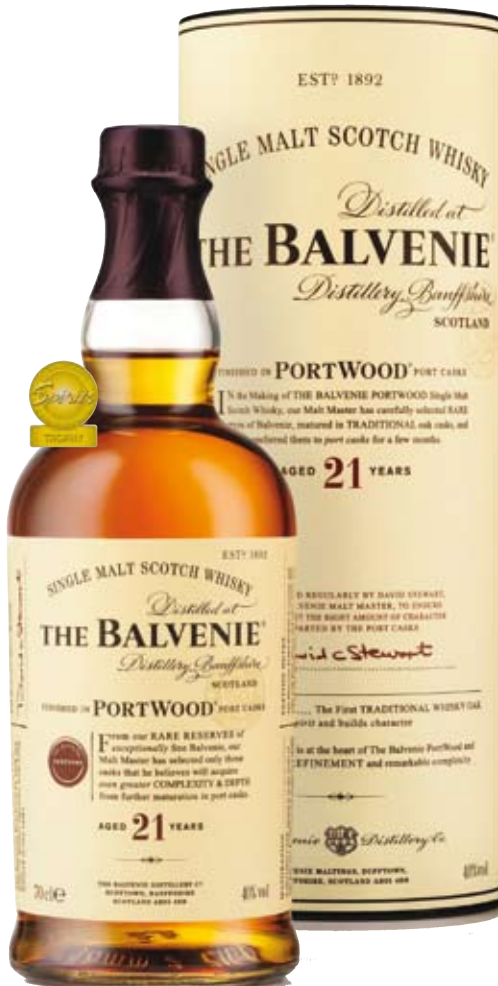
Royal & Ancient 28 Year Old – Cockburn & Campbell

The Bailie Nicol Jarvie – The Glenmorangie Company

Whyte & Mackay 40 Year Old – Whyte & Mackay

Scotch grain

Invergordon Single Cask Grain 36 Year Old – Whyte & Mackay





SCOTCH WHISKY

SILVER

Scotch single malts

Aberlour 10 Year Old, 16 YO & 18 YO – Chivas Brothers
anCnoc 12 Year Old – International Beverage
Ardbeg Corryvreckan & Supernova – The Glenmorangie Company
Ardmore 25 Year Old & Traditional Cask – Beam Global Spirits & Wine
Balblair Vintage 1975, 1989, 1997 – International Beverage
Benriach 12 Year Old – Benriach Distillery Co
Bunnahabhain 12 Year Old & 18 YO – Burn Stewart Distillers
Cardhu 12 Year Old, Clyneslish 14 Year Old, Clyneslish Distillers Edition, Cragganmore 12 Year Old – Diageo
Dalmore 40 Year Old & Dalmore 1974 – Whyte & Mackay
Dalwhinnie Distillers Edition – Diageo
Glendronach 12 Year Old, 15 YO & 18 YO – The Benriach Distillery Co
Glenfiddich 15 Year Old, 18 YO, 21 YO, 30 YO, 40 YO & Caoran Reserve – William Grant & Sons
Glenkinchie 12 Year Old – Diageo
Glenmorangie Astar, Nectar d'Or, Original, Quarter Century & Signet – The Glenmorangie Company
Highland Park 25 Year Old, 30 YO & 40 YO – The Edrington Group
Jura Elements Earth & Prophecy – Whyte & Mackay
Laphroaig 10 Year Old, 10 YO Cask Strength, 18 YO & 25 YO Cask Strength – Beam Global Spirits & Wine
Longmorn 16 Year Old – Chivas Brothers
Oban 14 Year Old – Diageo
Old Pulteney 21 Year Old – International Beverage
Royal Lochnagar Distillers Edition – Diageo
Singleton of Glendullan – Diageo
Smokehead 1840 Extra Black & Islay Single Malt – Ian Macleod Distillers
Strathisla 12 Year Old – Chivas Brothers
Talisker 10 Year Old, Distillers Edition & 25 YO – Diageo
Tesco 10 Year Old Islay Malt – Tesco
The Balvenie Doublewood, Signature & Thirty – William Grant & Sons
The Glenlivet 12 Year Old First Fill, 15 French Oak Reserve, 18 Year Old, 21 Year Old, Nadurra Cask Finish & XXV – Chivas Brothers
The Glenrothes Vintage 1978 – BB&R Spirits
The Macallan Fine Oak 10 Year Old & 18 YO – The Edrington Group
Tomatin 25 Year Old – Tomatin Distillery



SILVER

Scotch blended malts

Matisse 12 Year Old Blended Malt – Matisse Spirits
Monkey Shoulder – William Grant & Sons



SILVER

Scotch grain

Clubhouse – Old St Andrews

SILVER

Scotch blends

Ballantine's 12 Year Old, 17 YO, 21 YO & 30 YO – Chivas Brothers
Dewar's 12 Year Old Special Reserve, 16 Year Old Founders Reserve & Signature – John Dewar & Sons
Grant's Family Reserve & Sherry Cask Reserve – William Grant & Sons
Highland Black – Aldi
King Robert II Deluxe – Ian Macleod Distillers
Loch Lomond Single Highland Blend – Loch Lomond Distillers
Matisse 21 Year Old Blended – Matisse Spirits
Royal Salute 21 Year Old – Chivas Brothers
Royal Salute The Hundred Cask Selection No 7 – Chivas Brothers
Scottish Leader 12 Year Old – Burn Stewart Distillers
The Black Grouse & The Famous Grouse – Edrington Group
William Lawson's Finest Blend – John Dewar & Sons
Whyte & Mackay Special Blend & 13 Year Old – Whyte & Mackay



BRONZE

Scotch single malts

Aberfeldy 12 Year Old & 21 YO – John Dewar & Sons
Aberlour A'bunadh – Chivas Brothers
anCnoc 16 Year Old – International Beverage
Arbeg Blasda, 10 Year Old & Uigeadail – The Glenmorangie Company
Ardmore 30 Year Old – Beam Global Spirits & Wine
Balblair Vintage 1990 – International Beverage
Ben Bracken 12 Year Old Speyside – Lidl
Benriach 13 Year Old – Benriach Distillery Co
Birnie Moss Speyside – Benriach Distillery Co
Caol Ila 12 Year Old – Diageo
Cragganmore Distillers Edition – Diageo
Dalmore 1263 King Alexander III, Gran Reserva, 1980 & 15 YO – Whyte & Mackay

Dalwhinnie 15 Year Old – Diageo
Deanston 12 Year Old & 12 YO Un-Chill Filtered – Burn Stewart Distillers
Glencadam Highland Aged 10 Years & 15 Years – Angus Dundee Distillers
Glenronach 33 Year Old – The Benriach Distillery Co
Glenfiddich 12 Year Old – William Grant & Sons
Glenkinchie Distillers Edition – Diageo
Glenmorangie 18 Year Old, Lasanta & Quinta Ruban – The Glenmorangie Company
Highland Park 12 Year Old – Edrington Group
Jura Paps Mountain of Gold & Jura 1974 – Whyte & Mackay
Jura 16 Year Old & 30 YO – Whyte & Mackay
Lagavulin 12 Year Old – Diageo
Laphroaig Quarter Cask – Beam Global Spirits & Wine

Ledaig 10 – Burn Stewart Distillers
Loch Lomond Single Highland Malt – Loch Lomond Distillers
Matisse 15 Year Old Highland Single Malt – Matisse Spirits
Oban Distillers Edition – Diageo
Royal Lochnagar 12 Year Old – Diageo
The Balvenie Single Barrel 1540 – William Grant & Sons
The Glenlivet 12 Year Old – Chivas Brothers
The Macallan Fine Oak 15 Year Old – Edrington Group
Tobermory 10 Year Old & 15 YO – Burn Stewart Distillers
Tomatin 18 Year Old – Tomatin Distillery
Tomintoul Speyside Glenlivet 14 Year Old – Angus Dundee Distillers



COMMENDED

Scotch blends

Highland Earl Blended – Aldi
Matisse Old Blended – Matisse Spirits



BRONZE

Scotch grain

The Snow Grouse – Edrington Group



BRONZE

Scotch blends

Ballantine's Finest & Limited – Chivas Brothers
Chivas Regal 12 – Chivas Brothers
Dewar's White Label – John Dewar & Sons
Drummer Blended Scotch – International Beverage
Grant's 18 Year Old – William Grant & Sons
Hankey Bannister 21 Year Old – International Beverage
High Commissioner – Glen Catrine Bond
Hunter's Glen 8 Year Old (Clydesdale/Wallace & Young) – Lidl
Jacobite Blend – Booker
King Robert II Scotch Whisky – Ian Macleod Distillers
Label 5 18 Year Old – La Martiniquaise
M&S Kenmore Special Reserve Aged 5 Years – Marks & Spencer
Matisse 12 Year Old Blended Scotch – Matisse Spirits
Queen Margot 3 Year Old (Clydesdale/Wallace & Young) – Lidl
Royal & Ancient Fine Old – Cockburn & Campbell
Scottish Leader Supreme Old – Burn Stewart Distillers
Tesco Reserve 12 Year Old Blended – Tesco
The Antiquary 12 Year Old & 21 Year Old – Tomatin Distillery
William Lawson's Scottish Gold 12 Year Old – John Dewar & Sons
Whyte & Mackay 19 Year Old – Whyte & Mackay



COMMENDED

Scotch single malts

Croftengea Distillery Select Single Highland Peated – Loch Lomond Distillers
Dalmore 12 Year Old – Whyte & Mackay
Jura 10 Year Old – Whyte & Mackay
Tomatin 12 Year Old – Tomatin Distillery



BRONZE

Scotch blended malts

Ben Bracken Pure Malt – Lidl
Glen Orchy – Lidl
Jacobite 5 Year Old Malt – Booker
Poit Dhubh 8 Year Old Un-Chill Filtered – Pràban na Linne (The Gaelic Whiskies)
Usqueabach 15 Year Old – Whyte & Mackay





TROPHY

Japanese malts

Taketsuru 21 Year Old – Nikka Whisky Distilling Co



GOLD

Japanese malts

Hakushu 18 Year Old – Suntory Liquors
Yamazaki 1984 – Suntory Liquors
Yoichi 15 Year Old – Nikka Whisky Distilling Co



Japanese blends

Hibiki 17 Year Old – Suntory Liquors

Irish

Jameson 18 Year Old Limited Reserve & Rarest Vintage Reserve – Irish Distillers
Powers Gold Label – Irish Distillers

Canadian/American

Bernheim Original Kentucky Straight Wheat – Heaven Hill
Evan Williams Single Barrel Bourbon – Heaven Hill

SILVER

Japanese malts

Hakushu 10 Year Old, 12 YO & Heavily Peated – Suntory Liquors
Miyagikyo 12 Year Old, 15 YO & 1988 – Nikka Whisky Distilling Co
Taketsuru 12 Year Old & 17 YO – Nikka Whisky Distilling Co
Yamazaki 10 Year Old, 12 YO, 18 YO & Sherry Cask – Suntory Liquors

Japanese blends

Hibiki 12 Year Old & 21 YO – Suntory Liquors
Super Nikka – Nikka Whisky Distilling Co
Tsuru 17 Year Old – Nikka Whisky Distilling Co

Irish

Jameson Irish, Jameson 12 Year Old Special Reserve & Gold Reserve – Irish Distillers
Powers 12 Year Old – Irish Distillers

Tullamore Dew – C&C International

Tullamore Dew 12 Year Old & Heritage Blend – C&C International

Canadian/American

Forty Creek Barrel Select Canadian – Kitting Ridge Estate Wines & Spirits
Gibsons Finest 12 Year Old Canadian & Finest Rare Canadian – William Grant & Sons
Old Virginia Straight Bourbon – La Martiniquaise

Indian

McDowell's Oak Matured Single Malt Whisky – United Spirits

Whiskies from other countries

Three Ships Premium 5 Year Old – Distell



WHISKIES OF THE WORLD

BRONZE

Japanese malts

Yoichi 12 Year Old –
Nikka Whisky Distilling Co

Irish

Cassidys 5 Year Old – Marks & Spencer
The Irishman 70 – Hot Irishman
Tullamore Dew 10 Year Old – C&C
International

Canadian/American

Forty Creek Double Barrel Reserve
Canadian – Kittling Ridge Estate Wines & Spirits
Clarke's 1866 Straight Bourbon – Aldi
Wiser's Small Batch Canadian – Corby
Distilleries

Indian

DSP Black Deluxe – United Spirits

Whiskies from other countries

Bain's Cape Mountain – Distell
Millstone Dutch Single Malt 8 Year Old –
Zuidam Distillers
The Kavalan Single Malt – King Car Food
Industrial



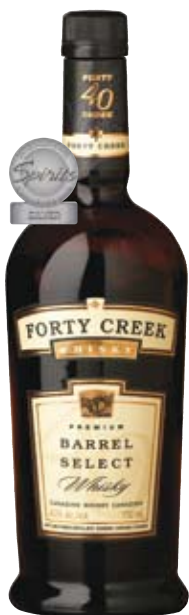
COMMENDED

Indian

McDowell's No.1 Reserve –
United Spirits

Whiskies from other countries

Dead Guy Whiskey – Rogue Spirits



TROPHY

Between 7 & 11 years old
Admiral Rodney – St Lucia Distillers



GOLD

12 Years and over
Flor de Caña Centenario Gold 18 Years –
Compania Licorera de Nicaragua



Between 7 & 11 years old
Angostura 7 Year Old – Angostura

Under 7 Years Old
Redheart – Pernod Ricard South Africa

Agricole or cane spirit
Savanna Créol – Distillerie de Savanna

BRONZE

12 Years and over
Mount Gay 1703 – Mount Gay Rum



Between 7 & 11 years old
Mount Gay Extra Old – Mount Gay Rum
Savanna Single Cask Traditionnel 8 Ans
Muscatel – Distillerie de Savanna

Under 7 Years Old
Santa Teresa Gran Reserva – Ron Santa
Teresa
Eclipse – Mount Gay Rum
Flor de Caña Gold 2 Year – Compania
Licorera de Nicaragua

Unaged (Brown, Golden & Dark)
Pott Classic 40 – Henkell & Co
Rogue Dark Rum – Rogue Spirits
Woods 100 Old Navy
– William Grant & Sons

White Premium Rum
Claro – Ron Santa Teresa
Tommy Bahama White Sand Rum – Sidney
Frank Importing

Flavoured or spiced
Lamb's Spiced – Corby Distilleries

Cachaça
Sagatiba Pura – Sagatiba

Agricole or cane spirit
Carafe Neisson 45 – Distillerie Neisson
Mainstay Premium Cane – Distell



SILVER

12 Years and over
Flor de Caña Centenario 12 Year Old –
Compania Licorera de Nicaragua



Between 7 & 11 years old
Abuelo 7 Year Old – Varela Hermanos
Selecto – Ron Santa Teresa

Under 7 Years Old
Angostura 5 Year Old – Angostura
Abuelo Añejo – Varela Hermanos
Chairman's Reserve – St Lucia Distillers
Tøz gold – St Lucia Distillers

Unaged (Brown, Golden & Dark)
Pott Classic 54 – Henkell & Co
Sainsbury's Superior Dark Rum –
Sainsbury's

White rum
Angostura Reserva – Angostura
Asda White Rum – Bardinnet
Cape to Rio Cane – Edward Snell & Co

Flavoured or spiced
Rhum Orange – Ron Santa Teresa

Cachaça
Sagatiba Preciosa – Sagatiba

Agricole or cane spirit
Las Iguanas – CMJ Agropecuaria

COMMENDED

12 Years and over
Santa Teresa 1796 – Ron Santa Teresa



Between 7 & 11 years old
Flor de Caña Grand Reserve 7 Year –
Compania Licorera de Nicaragua
Havana Club Añejo 7 Años – Havana club
International
Savanna Single Cask Traditionnel 8 Ans Port
– Distillerie de Savanna
Tesco Finest 8 Year Old
Trinidadian Rum – Tesco

Under 7 Years Old
Tommy Bahama Golden Sun – Sidney Frank
Importing

White rum
Eclipse Silver – Mount Gay Rum
Liberte – Lidl
Old Captain White Rum – Boomsma Distillery

Scotch single malt

The Balvenie Portwood 21 Year Old

Each expression of The Balvenie, states producer William Grant & Sons, shares: "The rich, luxurious smoothness and deliciously honeyed character of The Balvenie."

The company's malt master, David Stewart, oversees all aspects of The Balvenie's maturation.

Key to the individuality of the Speyside stalwart is its control of all stages of production: it still grows its own barley, retains its own traditional floor maltings, and still employs coopers and a coppersmith to tend the casks and stills.

The 21 Year Old Portwood finish is transferred to pipes which have previously held fine ports. The aromas have "fruity and ripe raisin notes, backed by nutty dryness", and the palate is described as: "Refined... creamy and silky, with fruit, honey and spice notes."



Scotch blends

Whyte & Mackay 30 Year Old

There are at least 25 different single malts and six single grains making up Whyte and Mackay's 30 Year Old blend, according to master distiller Richard Paterson. Whiskies aged between 30 and 36 years are put together and married for a period of 18 months, finished in oloroso sherry butts at the company's Invergordon blending complex.

The main influence on Whyte and Mackay 30 Year Old's style comes from the "charm and elegance" and "warmth and sensuality" of the Highland and Speyside regions.

Paterson recommends that it should be held in the mouth for between 30 and 36 seconds to allow all its complexity to be revealed, and is best consumed after dinner with "a good Columbian coffee and dark chocolate of 86% cocoa solids".



Whiskies of the world

Taketsuru 21 Year Old

Taketsuru 21 Year Old takes its name from the Nikka Whisky company's founder, Masataka Taketsuru. Originally destined to continue his family's sake brewing business at home, Taketsuru became the first man from Japan to study the art of whisky making in Scotland, after enrolling at Glasgow University in 1918.

Nikka's chief blender, Tetsuji Hisamitsu, takes component whiskies from the company's two distillery sites to make this complex 43% abv blend, which combines the peaty richness and power of Yoichi with the soft, fruity elegance of Miyagikyo.



Rum

Admiral Rodney

Admiral Rodney is the St Lucia Distillers Group flagship rum in terms of age and complexity. A blend of seven continuous column still rums of between four and 12 years of age, it consists of three different distillate types, which are tropical aged in 200-litre American white oak barrels.

Available in 70cl and 75cl sizes, only 2,000 cases of six bottles are produced annually, with super-premium positioning and a price tag of £32 in the UK.

Outside St Lucia, target markets for Admiral Rodney are currently the UK, France, Italy, Sweden, Japan and Caribbean travel retail, with the first shipment scheduled for the US in mid-October.



Brandy

Van Ryn's 12 Year Old

Part of the giant Distell group, the Stellenbosch-based Van Ryn's distillery has performed the impressive feat of repeating its Trophy-winning success in the 2008 International Spirits Challenge, with its 12 Year Old Distillers Reserve.

The company says it produces its brandies "as in Cognac". Using Colombard and Chenin Blanc grapes, Van Ryn's 12 Year Old is distilled in traditional copper stills dating back to the 19th century, before ageing in small French oak barrels.

As well as being among the longest-aged brandies on the local market, Van Ryn's claims to be the only brandy distillery in South Africa with its own cooperage. Certainly it is at the forefront of the growing wave of world-class brandies emerging from South Africa.



Cognac

Dupuy Hors d'Age

The characteristically floral Grande Champagne cognacs that make up Dupuy's Hors d'Age blend are complex and robust, requiring lengthy cask ageing in order to reach full maturity. Operations are overseen by the company's fourth generation Bache-Gabrielsen family owners, in conjunction with cellar master Jean-Philippe Bergier.

The rich character and dark colour of Dupuy Hors d'Age result from 50 years spent ageing in Limousin oak barrels.

Priced at around €200 a bottle, Dupuy Hors d'Age is targeted at lovers of top-end cognac, who can expect to enjoy, according to the company, "an enticing and complex old cognac with oak and fruit fondly intertwining in an elegant pas de deux".





Tequila

Sierra Milenario 100% Extra Añejo

Hot on the heels of its Trophy win in the Drinks International Tequila Challenge last November, Destilerias Sierra Unidas has come out on top again with its Sierra Milenario Extra Añejo.

The company employs a strict "triple-selection" process for its Milenario tequilas, involving plants selected from hand-tended parcels of land high in mineral content, which ripen for up to 12 years to a very high sugar level.

Juice from the first pressing only is distilled in copper potstills before maturation for a minimum of four years in white US Holm oak barrels.

Recommended retail price around €39 in Europe.



Gin

Martin Miller's Tenth Anniversary

Marking his eponymous super-premium gin's tenth birthday on 2 August this year, Martin Miller set about crafting a super-strength version.

A panel of experts was invited to taste a series of five high-proof strengths, made according to the original recipe, which, in addition to juniper, involves Seville orange and lemon peel, coriander, angelica, lime peel, liquorice root, cassia bark and Florentine iris.

After tasting neat and in the form of a gin & tonic and a martini, the optimum strength was declared to be 54% abv.

There are only 1,000 bottles, all hand-signed and numbered by Martin. Master distiller Rob Dorset produces Martin Miller's gin in Langley, in England's Midlands.



Vodka super-premium

Russian Premium

The Kuchino Distillery company produces about 30 brands of vodka and spirits in its modern facility in the suburbs of Moscow.

The company launched Russian Premium in January. It's a 100% wheat spirit, distilled using artesian well water and filtered five times, through charcoal, marble powder and silver.

Following its launch, Russian Premium won the Grand Prix at Russia's biggest food and drink show, Prodexpo, in February, earning the title of Best Product in Russia 2009.

Exports are currently concentrated in the CIS countries such as Azerbaijan, Armenia and Kazakhstan, but the company is looking for distribution partners in western Europe and the US.



Vodka premium

Poliakov

Styled as "The extreme vodka" in its marketing and advertising, Poliakov is a triple-distilled, 100% grain vodka, produced according to a traditional Russian recipe.

Sales in its home market, France, stood at around six million 70cl bottles in 2008, up 25% on 2007, making Poliakov the fastest growing brand for owner La Martiniquaise.

Poliakov is now sold in 30 countries and there are plans to launch in South America and Belgium in 2010, with a 75cl size bottle planned to launch at the end of this year.

Flavour extensions mandarin, peach, manzana, lemon and cranberry were joined this year by new vodka-based pre-mix Poliakov Mixology, in two flavours – Guarana and Cosmopolitan.



Liqueurs & specialities

Merlet Crème de Cassis

The Charente Maritime and Saintonge terroirs are key to the final character of Merlet's Crème de Cassis, says the company's marketing and sales manager, Luc Merlet.

The family-owned company uses no irrigation in growing only the Noir de Bourgogne variety of blackcurrants.

"The most important thing is the quality of the fruit," says Merlet. "As we control the whole process of production, including the cultivation, this allows us to have the best possible berries.

"Then the rest is to make sure we are able to extract as much of the fruit flavours as possible, and to respect their genuine taste with handcrafting production techniques."



Design & packaging

Corzo Tequila range

The strikingly individual looks of the Bacardi-owned ultra-premium tequila Corzo were created by world-renowned French designer, Fabien Baron.

Corzo's angular lines reflect Baron's highly prized work in all fields of design, fashion, and print media.

The bottle's integral "waterfall" pourer is a tribute to the design of a famous fountain, located in Los Cabos, by one of Mexico's foremost 20th century architects, Luis Barragán Morfin.

With retail prices in the US at \$47.99 for Corzo Silver, \$52.99 for Reposado and \$56.99 for the Añejo, Corzo is targeted exclusively at top restaurants, bars and clubs in selected markets.

In awarding the top prize, the ISC Design & Packaging judging panel was unanimous.





TROPHY

Cognac

Dupuy Hors d'Age – Bache-Gabrielsen

Brandy – South Africa

Van Ryn's 12 Year Old – Distell



SILVER

Cognac

Louis Royer VSOP Preference – Louis Royer

Maxime Trijol XO Grande Champagne –

Maxime Trijol

Maxime Trijol 1969 Petite Champagne –

Maxime Trijol

Maxime Trijol 1979 Fins Bois – Maxime Trijol



GOLD

Cognac

Distillerie Les Magnolias Grande

Champagne – Louis Royer

Leyrat Aged 6 Years – ABK6 Cognac Leyrat

Otard VSOP Fine Champagne – Château de

Cognac



SILVER

Armagnac

Janneau 5 Year Old – Giovinetti Partners



GOLD

Calvados

Tesco Calvados VSOP Pays d'Auge – Tesco



SILVER

Calvados

Comte Louis de Lauriston – Chais du Verger

Normand

Père Magloire VSOP Pays d'Auge – Debrise

Dulac & Cie

Père Magloire XO Pays d'Auge – Debrise Dulac

& Cie



GOLD

Brandy – South Africa

Van Ryn's 15 Year Old – Distell

Viceroy 5 Year Old – Distell



SILVER

Brandy – Spain

Gran Duque de Alba Oro – Williams & Humbert



SILVER

Brandy – South Africa

Klipdrift Export – Distell

Klipdrift Premium – Distell

KWV Brandy 15 Platinum – KWV

Martell 5 Star – Pernod Ricard South Africa

Martell VO – Pernod Ricard South Africa

Mellow-Wood 5 – Distell

Oude Meester Demant – Distell

Richelieu Liqueur Brandy – Distell

Van Ryn's 10 Year Old – Distell



SILVER

Grappa

Ottantotto Barriques – Distillerie Francoli



BRANDY

BRONZE

Cognac

Delamain Pale & Dry XO Grande Champagne Premier Cru – Delamain Cognac
Distillerie d'Aumagne Fins Bois – Louis Royer
Distillerie de l'Ecole Petite Champagne – Louis Royer
Distillerie des Saules Borderies – Louis Royer
Le Reviseur – ABK6 Cognac Leyrat
Louis Royer VS – Louis Royer
Louis Royer Extra Grande Champagne – Louis Royer
Louis Royer XO – Louis Royer
Monnet VS – Thomas Hine & Co
Otard VS – Chateau de Cognac
Taste the Difference XO Single Cru Grande Champagne – Sainsbury's



COMMENDED

Cognac

Braastad XO Superior – Arcus
Distillerie Chantal Bons Bois – Louis Royer
Louis Royer VSOP – Louis Royer
Louis Royer VSOP Fine Champagne – Louis Royer
Maxime Trijol XO – Maxime Trijol
Otard XO Gold – Château de Cognac
Tesco VS – Tesco
Tesco Finest XO – Tesco



COMMENDED

Calvados

Père Magloire 12 Ans – Debrise Dulac & Cie
Père Magloire 20 Ans – Debrise Dulac & Cie



COMMENDED

Brandy – France

St Remy Authentic VSOP – Rémy Cointreau
Brandy – Georgia
Sarajishvili VSOP – JSC Sarajishvili
Brandy – Moldova
Victoria – Tiraspol Wine & Brandy Distillery
 KVINT



Brandy – South Africa

Collison's White Gold – Distell
KWV Brandy 20 Pot Still – KWV
Nederburg Potstill Solera – Distell
Oude Molen VOV – African Wine & Spirits
Uitkyk Brandy – Lusan Holdings

BRONZE

Armagnac

Janneau 8 Year Old – Giovinetti Partners
Janneau 18 Year Old – Giovinetti Partners



COMMENDED

Acquavite d'Uva

Acquavite de Visciole del Pozzo Buono – Vico Vicari



BRONZE

Calvados

Calvados Drouin – C Drouin



BRONZE

Brandy – Spain

Gran Duque de Alba – Williams & Humbert



Grappa

Averna Grappa – Fratelli Averna
Grappa Teroldego – Distilleria Bertagnolli
Koralis – Distilleria Bertagnolli

Marc & other pomace brandies

Marc de Bugey 30 Year Old – Kario

BRONZE

Brandy – South Africa

Fish Eagle – Distell
Imoya VSOP – KWV
Klipdrift Gold – Distell
KWV Brandy 10 Vintage – KWV
KWV Founders Reserve – KWV
Oude Meester 12 Year Old Reserve – Distell
Sydney Back Brandy NV – Backsberg
Van Ryn's 20 Year Old – Distell



BRONZE

Grappa

Riserva 1870 – Distilleria Bertagnolli



TEQUILA

TROPHY

Añejo

Sierra Milenario 100% Extra Añejo – Borco-Import Matthesen



GOLD

Añejo

Sierra Antiquo – Borco-Import Matthesen



Reposado

Cazadores Reposado – Bacardi Global Brands

Sierra Milenario 100% Reposado – Borco-Import Matthesen

Mezcal

El Señorío Reposado – Bugarin Exportaciones

SILVER

Añejo

Cazadores Añejo – Bacardi Global Brands

Espolon Añejo – Destiladora San Nicolás



Blanco

Milagro Silver – William Grant & Sons

Sierra Milenario 100% Blanco – Borco-Import Matthesen



BRONZE

Añejo

Arette Añejo – Tequila Arette de Jalisco

Corzo Añejo – Bacardi

Reposado

Corzo Reposado – Bacardi

El Jimador Reposado – Brown-Forman

Espolon Reposado – Destiladora San Nicolás

Sauza Hornitos Reposado – Beam Global Spirits & Wine

Tres Generaciones Reposado – Beam Global Spirits & Wine

Blanco

Arette Blanco – Tequila Arette de Jalisco

San Nicolás Blanco – Destiladora San Nicolás

Tres Generaciones Plata – Beam Global

Spirits & Wine



COMMENDED

Añejo

Don Augustín Añejo – Tequila Supremo

Sauza Hornitos Añejo – Beam Global Spirits & Wine

Reposado

Arette Reposado – Tequila Arette de Jalisco

Maracame Reposado – Tequila Supremo

Blanco


Cazadores Blanco – Bacardi Global Brands

Corzo Silver – Bacardi



Gin

TROPHY
Premium
Martin Miller's Tenth Anniversary – Reformed Spirits Co



GOLD
Super premium
Tanqueray No. Ten – Diageo

Premium
Martin Miller's Westbourne Strength – Reformed Spirits Co



SILVER
Super premium

Jensen's London Distilled Old Tom – Christian Jensen/Bermondsey Gin
Beefeater 24 – Chivas Brothers
The London Gin – Gonzalez Byass
Berkeley Square London Gin – G&J Greenall
Junipero – Anchor Brewing Co

Premium
Whitley Neill – Whitley Neill
Tesco Finest Classic Gin No.1 – Tesco
Goa Gin – World Wide Distillers
Beefeater London Dry Gin – Chivas Brothers
Whitley Neill Limited Edition – Whitley Neill

Standard
Greenalls Gin – G&J Greenall



BRONZE
Super premium

Hendrick's – William Grant & Sons
Old Raj – Cadenhead's

Premium
Taste the Difference Blackfriars London Dry Gin – Sainsbury's
Tanqueray Export Strength – Diageo
Pink 47 – Old St Andrews

Standard
Cromwell Gin – Aldi
Stretton's Gin – Edward Snell & Co

Genever
Bols Genever – Lucas Bols




COMMENDED
Premium

Blue Ribbon – Oposit
Martin Miller's Gin – Martin Miller Reformed Spirits Co
Tesco 40% Gin Special – Tesco
London Hill Gin – Ian Macleod Distillers
Black Zephyr – Zephyr Imports


Standard
Castelgy Dry Gin – Lidl



White Spirits

SILVER

Gammel Opland Ettermodnet pa Portvinsfat – Arcus




BRONZE

Svedka Vanilla – Constellation
Shosho Kikori – Wakashio Brewing Co



COMMENDED

Svedka Citron – Constellation






TROPHY
Super premium
Russian Premium – Kuchino Distillery
Premium
Poliakov – La Martiniquaise

GOLD
Premium
Luksusowa – Pernod Ricard
Xerot Premium – Imported Brands
Stolichnaya – SPI Group

Flavoured
Bulbash Zubrovaya – Dionis
Wyborowa Lemon – Pernod Ricard



SILVER
Super premium
Smirnoff Black – Diageo
U'Luvka – The Brand Distillery
Orzel – Stock Spirits Group
Nemiroff LEX Ultra – Nemiroff
Arctic Circle – Arctic

Premium
Arsenitch Premium Quality Vodka – Jaunalko
Count Pushkin – Distell
Svedka Vodka – Constellation
Ledo – JSC Alita
Premium Gera – JSC Alita

Standard
Lithuanian Gold – AB Stumbras

Flavoured
Prince Edward Wild Blueberry – Julie Shore/
 Arla Johnson

BRONZE
Super premium
Wyborowa Exquisite – Pernod Ricard
Karlsso's Gold Vodka – Spirits of Gold AB
Stolichnaya Elit – SPI Group
Chase Vodka – William Chase
Bear Force – S-Design

Premium
Snow Queen Vodka – Snow Queen Vodka
Wyborowa – Pernod Ricard
Wodka Gorbatschow Platinum 44 – Henkell & Co Sektkellerei
Reyka Vodka – William Grant & Sons
Putinoff – Lidl UK
Flagship – Inter-Republican Winery Moscow
Vikingfjord – Arcus AS
Siwucha – Pernod Ricard
Danzka – Belvedere Scandinavia A/S
Grand Khaan – Spirit Bal Buram

Standard
S Serebrom Premium – Standart
Russian Bear – Edward Snell & Co
Dobra Shklianka (Wheat) – JV Dionis
Bulbash (Birch Buds) – JV Dionis

Flavoured
Wodka Gorbatschow Citron – Henkell & Co Sektkellerei
Nemiroff Rye Honey – Nemiroff
Finlandia Grapefruit Fusion – Brown-Forman
Polska Cherry-Wyborowa – Pernod Ricard
Pshenichnaya Sleza S Beriozovym Sokom (Birch) – Aleant
Nemiroff Honey Pepper – Nemiroff
Finlandia Mango Fusion – Brown-Forman
Finlandia Lime Fusion – Brown-Forman

COMMENDED
Super premium
Soyombo – APU Company
Oval 42 – Oval Vodka

Premium
Stalinskaya – Prodal '94

Standard
Nipernaadi – Dunkri Kaubanduse AS
Wodka Zoladkowa Gorzka Czysta de Luxe – Stock Spirits

Flavoured
Pincer – Pincer Vodka
Pshenichnaya Sleza anisovaya (Aniseed) – Aleant
Nemiroff Birch Special – Nemiroff

LIQUEURS & SPECIALITIES



TROPHY

Liqueurs – cassis

Merlet Crème de Cassis – Distillerie Merlet & Fils



GOLD

Liqueurs – cassis

Supercassis – Pagès Védrenne



SILVER

Liqueurs – anis based

Avena Sambuca Anice Stellato – Fratelli Avena



Liqueurs – creamy

Queen Margot – Lidl UK

Liqueurs – fruit berry

Chase Raspberry Liqueur – Chase Distillery

Liqueurs – fruit other

Juniper Green Organic Sloe Gin – London & Scottish International

Liqueurs – herbal

Bénédictine – Distillerie Bénédictine

Stellina Jaune – Kario

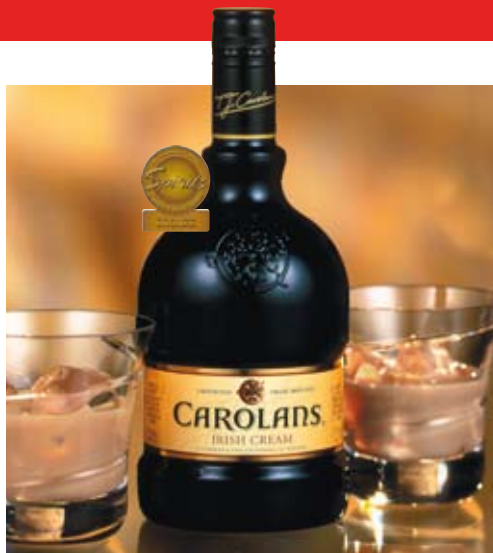
Liqueurs – whisky based

Glavya Liqueur – Whyte & Mackay

Other liqueurs & specialities

Frangelico – C&C International





BRONZE

Absinthe

Redux – Maison de la Vie

Aperitifs

Aperitif à la Fugue – Distillerie des Terres Rouges/Pagès Védrenne

Noilly Prat – Bacardi Global Brands

Umeshu Plum Liqueur – Zuisen Distillery Co

Bitters

Averna Amaro Siciliano – Fratelli Averna

Original Radeberger Bitter – Waldemar Behn

Liqueurs – anis based

Averna Liquirizia – Fratelli Averna

Liqueurs – creamy

Carolans – C&C International

Feeney's Luxurious Irish Cream Liqueur – First Ireland Spirits Co

Tesco Finest Irish Cream Liqueur – Tesco Stores

Tolón-Tolón Chocolate with Hazelnut & Vanilla – Destilerias Campeny

Tolón-Tolón Macadamia Nut Cream – Destilerias Campeny

Liqueurs – fruit berry

Crème de Framboise – Pagès Védrenne

Liqueurs – fruit other

Bramley & Gage Organic Sloe Gin – Bramley & Gage

Bramley & Gage Quince Liqueur – Bramley & Gage

Liqueurs – whisky based

Irish Mist – C&C International

Other liqueurs & specialities

Chase Elderflower Liqueur – Chase Distillery



COMMENDED

Absinthe

A L'Ancienne Boisson Spiritueuse – Distillerie Pierre

La Fée – La Fée LLP

Aperitifs

Aperitif Aibga – Krasnaya Polyana

Liqueurs – anis based

Antica Sambuca – Antiche Distillerie Riunite

Liqueurs – brandy based

Merlet C2 Cognac & Cassis – Distillerie Merlet & Fils

Merlet C2 Cognac & Citron – Distillerie Merlet & Fils

Liqueurs – creamy

Amarula – Distell

Asda County Cream Liqueur – First Ireland Spirits Co

Ballycastle Classic Irish Country cream – Aldi

Bloom Mountain Organic Irish Cream

Liqueur – First Ireland Spirits Co

Brogan's Original Irish Cream Liqueur – First Ireland Spirits Co

Cassidy Irish Cream Liqueur – First Ireland Spirits Co

Ilala Cream – Pernod Ricard South Africa

Marks & Spencers Crème Liqueur – Niche Drinks Co

O'Casey's Irish Cream Liqueur – First Ireland Spirits Co

Sainsbury's Taste the Difference Irish Cream Liqueur – Niche Drinks Co

Tesco Finest Coffee Cream Liqueur – Tesco Stores

Walders Vodka & Vanilla – Walders

Liqueurs – cassis

Beveland Crème De Cassis Liqueur – Beveland

Chase Blackcurrant Liqueur – Chase Distillery

Liqueurs – coffee, chocolate

After Coffee Liqueur – After SA

Galliano Ristretto – Lucas Bols

Liqueurs – contemporary

Hibiscus Liqueur – Tamborine Mountain Distillery

Wattle Toffee – Tamborine Mountain Distillery

Liqueurs – fruit citrus

Averna Limoni di Sicilia – Fratelli Averna

De Kuyper Grande Orange – De Kuyper Royal Distillers

Merlet Triple Sec – Distillerie Merlet & Fils

Solerno – William Grant & Sons

Liqueurs – fruit other

Bols Mango – Lucas Bols

De Kuyper Cherry – De Kuyper Royal Distillers

Midori Melon Liqueur – Suntory

Serenade – Lidl UK

Liqueurs – herbal

Balsam Krasnaya Polyana – Krasnaya Polyana

Stellina Verte – Kario

Zen Green Tea Liqueur – Suntory

Liqueurs – whisky based

Southern Belle Finest Style Liqueur – Aldi

Other liqueurs & specialities

Bramley & Gage Elderflower Liqueur – Bramley & Gage

Disaronno – Ilva Saronno

Tungi – The St Helena Distillery

TROPHY

Overall winner 2009
Corzo Tequila range – Bacardi



TROPHY

Best Established
U'luvka Vodka – The Brand Distillery



Best New

Corzo Tequila range (Silver/Reposado/Añejo) – Bacardi

Best Repackaged

Bruichladdich Islay Single Malt Scotch Whisky range (Waves, Rocks, Peat) – Crown Speciality Packaging

GOLD

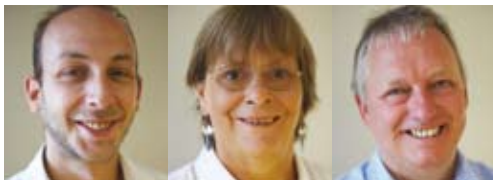
Potocki vodka – Echo Brand Design
Vivus vodka – Vivus Trading
Beefeater 24 gin – Chivas Brothers
Greenall's Bloom gin – G&J Greenall
Solerno Blood Orange liqueur – William Grant & Sons
Glenmorangie Signet – Glenmorangie Company
Scapa 16 single malt scotch – Chivas Bros



More often than not, it's the bottle or presentation pack that results in the consumer's final decision to buy. The inaugural ISC Design & Packaging awards are recognition of the efforts that go into perfecting this vital element of a brand's success



Design & Packaging judges



Dan Wilkes – director
Create Cocktails

Mary Murphy – director,
Intelligent Communications

Christian Davis – Drinks International editor



Paul Richards – director
Be Like Water

Nick Blacknell – Beefeater brand director,
Chivas Bros

Paul Foulkes-Arellano – MD,
Wren & Rowe





BRONZE

- Stolichnaya** – SPI Group
- Bear Force** – S-Design
- Prince Edward Wild Blueberry vodka**
– Julie Shore/Arla Johnson
- Mamont vodka** – Stranger and Stranger
- Ophimus 25 Year Old rum** – Spiritsland
- Mount Gay Extra Old rum** – Rémy Cointreau



COMMENDED

- Sierra Milenario tequila 100%**
Blanco/Añejo – Borco-World of Spirits
- Karlsson's Gold vodka** – Spirits of Gold
- Nemiroff LEX Ultra vodka** – Nemiroff
- Prince Edward Potato vodka** – Julie Shore/Arla Johnson
- Caracas Club rum** – Beveland
- Lamb's Spiced rum** – Halewood International
- Angostura 7 Year Old rum** – Angostura
- Brockmans gin** – Brockmans
- Goan Heritage Cashew Fenny** – Meredien Bottling Industries
- La Fée absinthe** – La Fée
- The Glenrothes Robur Reserve single malt scotch whisky** – BB&R Spirits
- Jack Daniel's perforated tin** – Crown Speciality Packaging



SILVER

- Danzka vodka** – Belvedere Scandinavia
- Soyombo vodka** – APU Company
- Pincer vodka** – Pincer Vodka
- Schiffmacher Olifant vodka** – Wenneker Distilleries
- Purity vodka** – Purity Vodka
- Mount Gay 1703 rum** – Rémy Cointreau
- Bols Genever** – Lucas Bols
- Tobermory 15 Year Old single malt scotch whisky** – Burn Stewart Distillers



Rum

(l-r) **Carsten E. Vierboom** – managing director, E&A Scheer BV
Chairman: Steve Hoyles – technical laboratory & sensory manager, Chivas Bros
Peter Martin – manager Europe, J Wray & Nephew UK
Dave Broom – freelance writer
John Barrett – Bristol Spirits



Tequila, Vodka & Gin

Chairman: Ian Wisniewski – freelance spirits journalist, author
Ben Hehir – cocktail consultant, drinks director Bamboo London
Ryder Butler – consultant in the hospitality sector



Joanne Simcock – master distiller at G&J Greenall

Alexander Zaitsev – director general Capital Style, Moscow

Alexey Zaitsev – vodka expert



Brandy

(l-r) **Chairman: Neil Mathieson** – managing director, Eaux de Vie
Dr Caroline Snyman – head of spirits, Distell Group
Olivier Paultes – maître de chai, Cognac Frapin
Simon Palmer – maître de chai, ABK6 Cognac Leyrat
Kobus Gelderblom – chief brandy master, KWW



Whiskies

(l-r) **Billy Leighton** – master blender at Irish Distillers
Tetsuji Hisamitsu – chief blender Nikka Whisky Distilling Co
Jimmy Russell – master distiller Wild Turkey Distillery
Seichi Koshimizu – chief blender at Suntory
Chairman: John Ramsay – recently retired master blender at The Edrington Group
Caroline Martin – master blender at Diageo
Robert Hicks – consultant master blender
David Stewart – master blender William Grant & Sons
Gordon Motion – new master blender at The Edrington Group
Richard Paterson – master blender Whyte & Mackay



Liqueurs & Specialities



Chairman: Patrick van Zuidam – master distiller, MD Zuidam Distillers



Gérard Chaussée – général manager Pagès Védrenne Distillery



Peter Hallgarten – specialist blending consultant



Adeline Loizeau – Cognac quality manager, Grand Marnier



Steve Hoyles – technical laboratory and sensory manager, Chivas Bros



Micaela Pallini – head of production Pallini (ILAR)



Piet van Leijenhorst – master distiller at Bols in the Netherlands



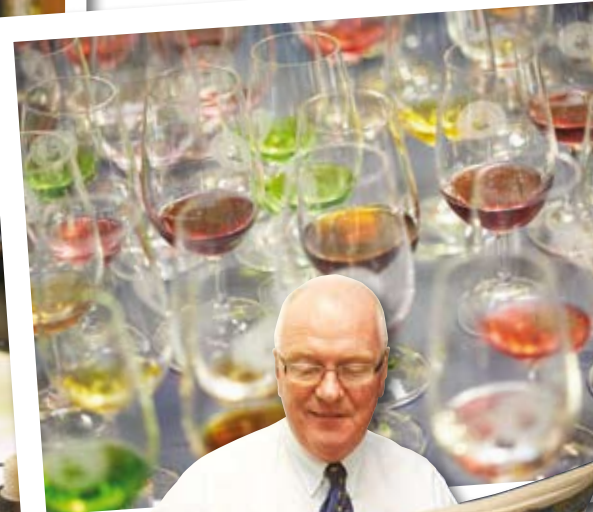
Kobus: "What do you mean, there's another seven flights before lunch!"



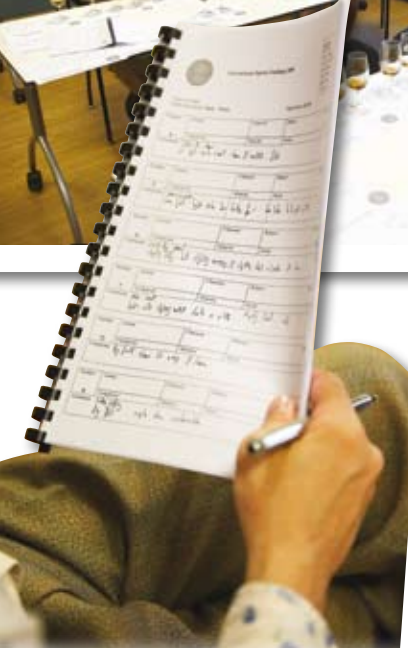
The rum judges give it some careful thought: yes, Dave, maybe it is time to consider letting the other half choose those shirts...



Suntory chief blender Seichi Koshimizu



Job well done: time for John Ramsay to take a well-earned rest



Richard Paterson and colleagues in full flow during the whisky judging

ISC 2009 sponsor: Nemiroff Vodka

Nemiroff is an international vodka brand produced by Nemiroff Ukrainian Vodka Company, one of the leaders in the world vodka market. Products under the Nemiroff brand are regularly shipped to 55 countries worldwide.

The Nemiroff range of beverages numbers 26 products in total, and the company's leading trademarks are Nemiroff Original, Ukrainian Honey

Pepper, Ukrainian Birch Special, Rye Honey, Nemiroff Premium, Nemiroff LEX and Nemiroff LEX Ultra.

Nemiroff Ukrainian Vodka Company, manufacturer of Nemiroff brand products, is a member of Nemiroff Holding, which also includes Nemiroff Managing Company, SC Alco Invest, Nemiroff Russia, Nemiroff Poland, and Nemiroff International, with its head office in Budapest, Hungary.

