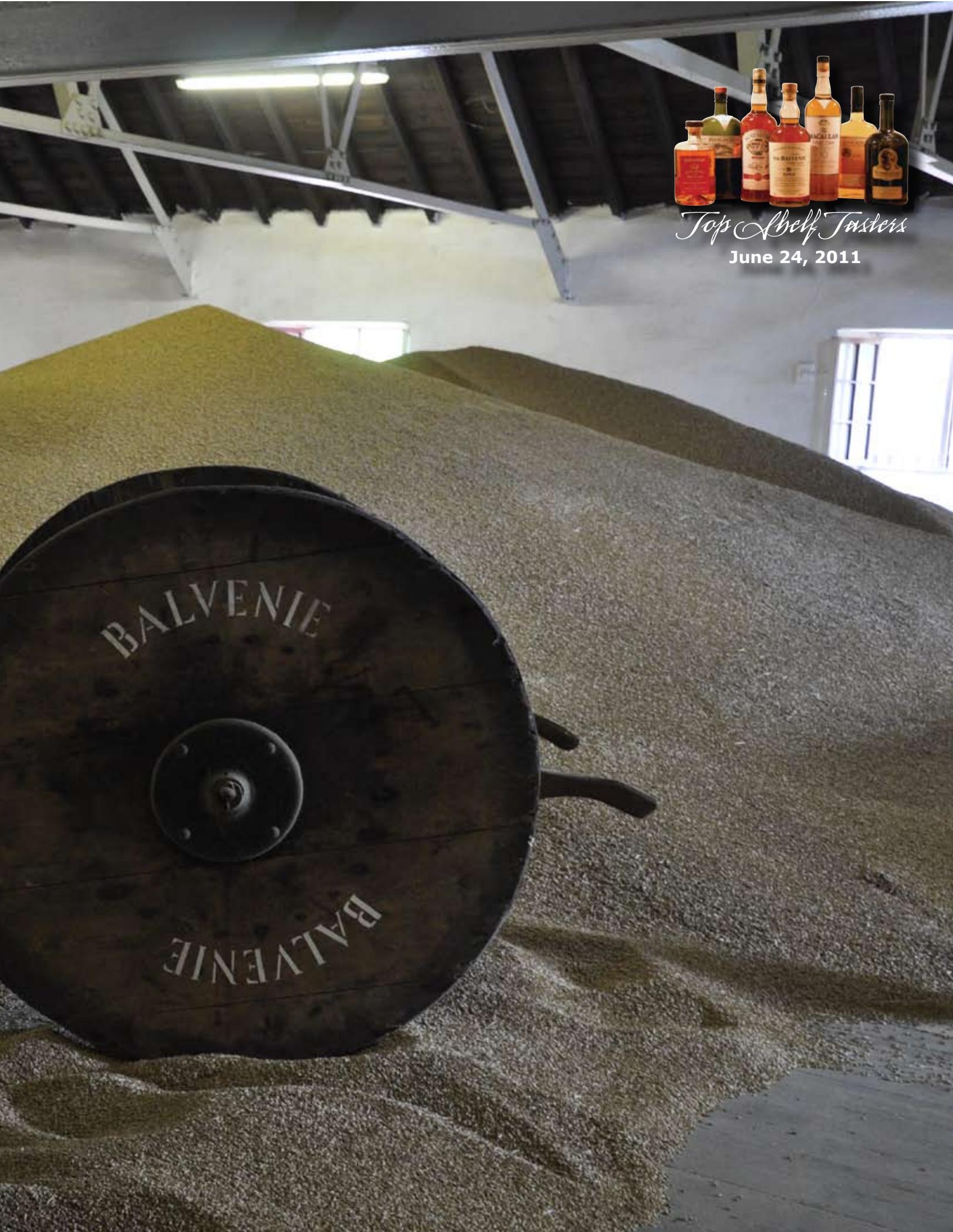




*Tops Shelf Tasters*

June 24, 2011





## Bowmore Feis Ile 2009

The Bowmore offering for Feis Ile 2009 had a limited availability of just 900 bottles (minus 12 that are kept in the Bowmore vaults for archive). It was distilled on the 14th of June 1999 and had a complex maturation in three types of wood: ex-sherry cask, ex-bourbon cask and a red wine finish.

Country: Scotland  
Region: Islay  
Bottler: Distillery Bottling  
Strength: 57.1%  
Bottle Size: 70cl

Nose: Big influence of the grapes. Harbour stuff as well: seaweed, boat rope. Some smoke. Hints of prunes, espresso and orange skin. Rhubarb. Soft balsamic vinegar. Somewhat reminiscent of the Bowmore Dusk (Bordeaux finish – which I didn't like) but this is much better. Stronger and more complex. After adding some water: more orange notes. Too bad the typical lavender / perfume smell also grows stronger when diluted.

Palate: Really powerful, the alcohol is a tad too strong. With water: tobacco and leather, blueberries... I would have sworn this was older than 9 years. Some cinnamon. The oak and cedar wood appears towards the end.

Finish: Spices, oak, berries. Long and beautiful

Nose:

Palate:

Finish:



## Orkney "Red Macgregor" 4.0% Scotland

A ruby red malty ale with roasted malt notes. Brewed with the addition of Crystal and Chocolate malts and Cascade hops

"A mid gravity beer which has a generous hoppy nose and a flowery hop flavour with a smooth malty finish."

**OVERALL**

**ratebeer**

**86**

Orkney Red MacGregor  
(Bottle)

Brewed by: Orkney (Sinclair Breweries)  
Origin: Stromness, Scotland  
Beer style: Premium Bitter/ESB  
Source: RateBeer.com • Jun '11

Reviewer descriptors are

sweet fruity **hops** deep amber  
offwhite floral clear malts  
**caramel** dry fruit colour white  
lacing dark creamy toffee **bitter**  
carbonation brown **malty** spice  
hoppy



Nose:

Palate:

Finish:



## Balvenie Tun 1401 Bottle 151/336

Balvenie Tun 1401 comprises whisky from six different barrels of varying ages, named after the marrying tun into which the half dozen whisky barrels were emptied and aged for a few months, before being returned to barrels and then bottled. The whiskies in question are from a 1973 Sherry Butt, a 1972 Sherry Hogshead and American casks filled in 1966, 1974, 1978, and 1988.

Country: Scotland  
Region: Speyside  
Bottler: Distillery Bottling  
Strength: 48.1%  
Bottle Size: 70cl

Nose: Sherry, raisins, sultanas and spicy vanilla cream on the nose.

Palate: Full and confident in the mouth, rounded and notably spicy, with notes of vanilla, blackcurrant and oak.

Finish: Long in the finish, with citrus fruits, a hint of liquorice and oak.

Nose:

Palate:

Finish:



## Orkney "Dragonhead" Stout 4.0% Scotland

A fine dark stout style beer with dark roasted malt and chocolate flavors. Brewed with Pale Ale, Chocolate, and Wheat malts along with Roasted Barley and hopped with Goldings.

A black stout which is brimming over with roast malt flavours, balanced with a complex hop blend. Really smooth with roasted aftertaste.

**OVERALL**

**ratebeer**<sup>™</sup>

**83**

Orkney Dragonhead  
(Bottle)

Brewed by: Orkney (Sinclair Breweries)  
Origin: Stromness, Scotland  
Beer style: Stout  
Source: RateBeer.com • Jun '11

Reviewer descriptors are

black **roasted malts** dry  
**coffee chocolate** dark tan  
carbonation brown creamy **bitter**  
fruit



Nose:

Palate:

Finish:



## Bunnahabhain Cruach-Mhóna

The otherwise unpeated Islay distillery Bunnahabhain did some peated runs in 1997, and occasionally they make it into a limited release like Bunnahabhain Toiteach or Bunnahabhain Moine. Now there's a peated expression for duty free shops (as often also available in a few regular stores). Cruach Mhóna is the name for a pile of drying peat bricks.

Country: Scotland  
Region: Islay  
Strength: 50%  
Bottle Size: 70cl

Nose: Starts savoury with coastal hints of dried algae. Toasted bread. Then some herbs and something that vaguely reminds me of Maggi or – strangely – Worcestershire sauce. Smoke with sweet liquorice. Faint eucalyptus. Less peaty than previous peated Bunna, or so it seems. A few fruity notes in the background that grow stronger over time.

Palate: More peat now. Ash tray, tarry ropes. More malty sweetness than the nose suggested. Develops on pepper, liquorice and a little salt. A few herbal notes.

Finish: Slightly drying and smokey. Medium length.

Nose:

Palate:

Finish:



## Meantime "Coffee Porter" 6% England

Cold fermented and lagered.

Our first formulation of this beer was the first UK brewed beer to carry the Fairtrade logo, and although we have reformulated it to create an even better blend of the malt and roast coffee flavours we can no longer get enough coffee in each bottle to qualify for Fairtrade status, we are still using the same Fairtrade Araba Bourbon beans from Rwanda's Abuhuzamugambi Co-operative. At the Meantime Brewing Co we love flavour, so it wasn't exactly difficult for us to see how the scents and aromas of coffee and barley would create a perfect match like just like mint and lamb, toffee and banana, peaches and cream, peanut butter and jam. Serve lightly chilled with as many chocolate truffles as your conscience allows.

**OVERALL**

**ratebeer**

**92**

Meantime Coffee Porter

Brewed by: Meantime  
Origin: London, Greater London  
Beer style: Porter  
Source: RateBeer.com • Jun '11

Reviewer descriptors are

**dark brown** white **roasted**  
malts chocolate clear roast  
sweet bitter watery tan cold i've  
lasting **black** sour character smoke  
front face clean makes ruby espresso  
aromas **burnt smooth** – reddish



Nose:

Palate:

Finish:



## Lagavulin Limited Edition

This variant of Diageo's leading Islay single malt has been 'finished' in Pedro Ximenez-treated American oak casks.

Country: Scotland  
Region: Islay  
Bottler: Distillery  
Strength: 52.5%  
Bottle Size: 70cl

Nose: Medicine cabinets, cured fish, new leather and freshly-struck matches. With time the leather becomes worn.

Palate: Smooth on the palate, smoked haddock in butter and sweet, fruity notes.

Finish: Long and smoky in the finish, with a sprinkling of black pepper

Nose:

Palate:

Finish:



## Meantime "Scotch Ale" 8.0% England

Brewed primarily for Michael Jackson's Rare Beer Club, but also available in limited quantities on tap at the Greenwich Union pub. After India Pale Ale and London Porter the third great British export beer was Scotch Ale. It was brewed at lower temperatures than English ales and cold conditioned for six to eight weeks. Scotland's remoteness from the hop gardens of Southern England & the softness of the water of the Scottish lowlands made Scotch Ale the world's finest expression of malt flavour in beer.

**OVERALL**

**ratebeer**

**95**

Meantime Scotch Ale

Brewed by: Meantime  
Origin: London, Greater London  
Beer style: Scotch Ale  
Source: RateBeer.com • Jun '11

Reviewer descriptors are

brown sweet **malts dark**  
chocolate earthy peat caramel tan



Nose:

Palate:

Finish:



## Laphroaig Feis Ile 2011 Cairdeas 8yr

This year's festival bottling is an eight year old Laphroaig that has been exclusively matured in Maker's Mark barrels. The quality of the barrels gives the spirit the smoothness of a much older whisky, yet it has extraordinary flavours that tend to get lost in older expressions.

Bottled at 50.5%, it has the characteristic "peat punch" but balanced with some floral notes.

Country: Scotland  
Region: Islay  
Bottler: Distillery Bottling  
Strength: 50.5%  
Bottle Size: 70cl

Colour: light gold, straw colour

Nose Uncut: Vanilla pod, buttery, cloves, candied orange then rose water. Enveloped by the earthy dampness from the dunnage warehouse

Taste uncut: American oak sweetness moves into buttery liquorice then quickly into huge oak spiciness that builds and builds. It then evolves into an orange marmalade flavour and slowly moves into a mulled wine with an underlying sweetness throughout, lingering charcoal ash finish

Body: medium bodied but good mouth feel

Finish: The flavour stays really lingers and if you lick your lips you get some more of the orange sweetness

Nose:

Palate:

Finish:



## Meantime 'London Porter' 8.5% England

George Washington was a big fan of imported English Porter. By 1769 he'd lost his taste for British beers. After all, it was keeping the Redcoats fighting. Our Porter is based on a recipe from 1750. We bring you the original aromas and flavours of the beer that made London the world's brewing capital, flavours we know Washington would have loved. Time, care and attention have enabled us to produce a blend of beers bringing you the flavour of the 1750's. Share this beer with friends and enjoy with barbeques, fish or shellfish. The ruby colour & bottle conditioning are proof of its heritage and authenticity.

**OVERALL**

**ratebeer**

**95**

Meantime London Porter

Brewed by: Meantime  
Origin: London, Greater London  
Beer style: Porter  
Source: RateBeer.com • Jun '11

Reviewer descriptors are

black **malts** brown roasted  
coffee **chocolate** dark  
fruit caramel roasty



Nose:

Palate:

Finish:





## Breath of Islay 16 Lagavulin (shhh! it's a secret) Single Cask @ Cask Strength

A flawless example of the make from this distillery – too bad we are sworn to secrecy! Drawn from a refill bourbon cask, it is 'harvest gold' in colour – a fine rich hue.

Country: Scotland  
Region: Islay  
Bottler: Distillery Bottling  
Strength: 56.6%  
Bottle Size 70cl

Nose: A penetrating smokiness on the nose: peat reek with smouldering heather and rosemary: 'suckling wild boar on a barbeque, stuffed with wild herbs'. In time it becomes more medicinal, with coal tar and dentists' mouthwash. Water reduces the smokiness but makes it more typical of the make, with unripe pears and hard plums and waxed jackets.

Palate: The taste bursts upon the senses with unexpected vigour! Even bigger than the unreduced aroma. A creamy texture, rich and fruity taste with surprising sweetness and a blast of smoke as you swallow.

Finish: A long, smouldering finish.

Nose:

Palate:

Finish:





