

Talisker



[tal•iss•kur]

Owner: Diageo
Region/district: Highlands (Skye)
Founded: 1830
Status: Active (vc)
Capacity: 3 300 000 litres
Address: Carbost, Isle of Skye, Inverness-shire IV47 8SR
Website: malts.com
Tel: 01478 614308 (vc)

Talisker and Brora share the same background in the sense that they were both founded against the background of one of the darker chapters of Scottish history – The Highland Clearances.

In the early 1800s, land-owners across northern Scotland wanted to increase the yield of their land to create even more wealth. One easy way was to enter into large-scale sheep farming. Sheep need pasture and farmers which for centuries had held land were driven from their homes to make room for the sheep. Thousands of families were ruthlessly evicted, some of them forced to seek work in the coal mines or in the fishing industry while many saw no other opportunity but to emigrate to Australia or America. In Brora, the Marquis of Stafford was the landowner and he also founded Brora distillery in 1819. On Skye, the MacAskill brothers managed the Talisker Estate, owned by the MacLeods. They continued the eviction of farmers started by the previous leaseholder and they also founded Talisker distillery in 1830.

Through reduced shutdowns and by introducing one extra mash per week, the team at Talisker have managed to produce 3.3 million litres of alcohol – a new record for the distillery! It remains to be seen if this will be enough to cover future needs of the malt. In the last two years alone, sales have increased by 20% to just over 3 million bottles in 2017 and it's now one of the Top 10 single malts in the world.

The distillery is equipped with a stainless steel lauter mash tun with a capacity of 8 ton, eight washbacks made of Oregon pine and five stills (two wash stills and three spirit stills), all of which are connected to wooden worm tubs. The wash stills are equipped with a special type of purifiers, which use the colder outside air, and have a u-bend in the lyne arm. The purifiers and the peculiar bend of the lyne arms allow for more copper contact and increase the reflux during distillation. The fermentation time is quite long (65-75 hours) and the middle cut from the spirit still is collected between 76% and 65% which, together with the phenol specification, gives a medium peated spirit. Production in 2018 will be 20 mashes per week which accounts for 3.3 million litres of alcohol.

Talisker's core range consists of **Skye** and **Storm**, both without age statement, **10**, **18**, **25** and **30 year old**, **Distiller's Edition** with an Amoroso sherry finish, **Talisker 57° North** which is released in small batches, and **Port Ruighe**, finished in ruby port casks. There is also **Dark Storm**, the peatiest Talisker so far, which is exclusive to duty free. A second bottling for duty free, **Neist Point**, was launched in 2015. A new range of limited bottlings was introduced in summer 2018 – the Bodega Series which will explore the impact of different sherry cask finishes. The first instalment was a **40 year old** which had been finished in casks that once held 40 year old amontillado sherry. Finally, an **8 year old** matured in first fill ex-bourbon and bottled at 59.4% was launched in autumn 2018 as part of the yearly Special Releases.

History:

- 1830 Hugh and Kenneth MacAskill found the distillery.
- 1848 The brothers transfer the lease to North of Scotland Bank and Jack Westland from the bank runs the operations.
- 1854 Kenneth MacAskill dies.
- 1857 North of Scotland Bank sells the distillery to Donald MacLennan for £500.
- 1863 MacLennan experiences difficulties in making operations viable and puts the distillery up for sale.
- 1865 MacLennan, still working at the distillery, nominates John Anderson as agent in Glasgow.
- 1867 Anderson & Co. from Glasgow takes over.
- 1879 John Anderson is imprisoned after having sold non-existing casks of whisky.
- 1880 New owners are now Alexander Grigor Allan and Roderick Kemp.
- 1892 Kemp sells his share and buys Macallan Distillery instead.
- 1894 The Talisker Distillery Ltd is founded.
- 1895 Allan dies and Thomas Mackenzie, who has been his partner, takes over.
- 1898 Talisker Distillery merges with Dailuaine-Glenlivet Distillers and Imperial Distillers to form Dailuaine-Talisker Distillers Company.
- 1916 Thomas Mackenzie dies and the distillery is taken over by a consortium consisting of, among others, John Walker, John Dewar, W. P. Lowrie and Distillers Company Limited (DCL).
- 1928 The distillery abandons triple distillation.
- 1960 On 22nd November the distillery catches fire and substantial damage occurs.
- 1962 The distillery reopens after the fire.



History continued:

- 1972 Own malting ceases.
- 1988 Classic Malts are introduced, Talisker 10 years included. A visitor centre is opened.
- 1998 A new stainless steel/copper mash tun and five new worm tubs are installed. Talisker is launched as a Distillers Edition with an amoroso sherry finish.
- 2004 Two new bottlings appear, an 18 year old and a 25 year old.
- 2005 To celebrate the 175th birthday of the distillery, Talisker 175th Anniversary is released. The third edition of the 25 year old cask strength is released.
- 2006 A 30 year old and the fourth edition of the 25 year old are released.
- 2007 The second edition of the 30 year old and the fifth edition of the 25 year old are released.
- 2008 Talisker 57° North, sixth edition of the 25 year old and third edition of the 30 year old are launched.
- 2009 New editions of the 25 and 30 year old are released.
- 2010 A 1994 Manager's Choice single cask and a new edition of the 30 year old are released.
- 2011 Three limited releases - 25, 30 and 34 year old.
- 2012 A limited 35 year old is released.
- 2013 Four new expressions are released – Storm, Dark Storm, Port Ruighe and a 27 year old.
- 2014 A bottling for the Friends of the Classic Malts is released.
- 2015 Skye and Neist Point are released.
- 2016 A distillery exclusive without age statement is released.
- 2018 A 40 year old, the first in the new Bodega Series, and an 8 year old Special Release are launched.

Tasting notes Talisker 10 years old:

GS – Quite dense and smoky on the nose, with smoked fish, bladderwrack, sweet fruit and peat. Full-bodied and peaty in the mouth; complex, with ginger, ozone, dark chocolate, black pepper and a kick of chilli in the long, smoky tail.

Tasting notes Talisker Storm:

GS – The nose offers brine, burning wood embers, vanilla, and honey. The palate is sweet and spicy, with cranberries and blackcurrants, while peat-smoke and black pepper are ever-present. The finish is spicy, with walnuts, and fruity peat.



Port Ruighe

Storm

Skye



8 years old

Dark Storm



10 years old

Bodega Series 40 yo

Distiller's Edition