

# FLAVOURLY

ISSUE TEN | FLAVOURLY.COM

熊猫精酿

PANDA BREW

ALL THE WAY FROM CHINA  
TO THE UK FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME

PLUS: BOSS BREWING // YOUR FESTIVE GIFT GUIDE // BEER & GIN TASTING GUIDES // MORE!

# #DRINKDIFFERENT

Every month, we pick the best photos shared online with the hashtag #DrinkDifferent and showcase them right here in the Flavourly magazine with a prize for the best of the bunch!

## Winner



**DANIEL EDWARDS**

*Congratulations!*

Looks like it was some party round yours, Daniel.

You've won £20 to spend on our bottleshop!

Email [support@flavourly.com](mailto:support@flavourly.com) to claim your prize!

## Honourable mentions



Sharon&Mark on Twitter



Ginger Mountain Man on Twitter



Jonny on Twitter

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**ig** @FLAVOURLYHQ

This magazine is proudly brought to you for free. It comes with your monthly discovery club box or gift of either great craft beer or gin.

Box Alcohol Contents\*: Craft Beer 10 x 330ml, £25. Craft Gin 3 x 200ml, £35

\*discount offers excepted, subject to change

# Welcome

## A hello from the editor

Again, I say this in every single issue but we have some really exciting stuff for you this month. Like, really exciting.

We're bringing PandaBrew beers to the UK for the very first time, all the way from China. You are going to be some of the first people in the country to try these beers - how cool is that? What's more, I got to chat to some of the PandaBrew team so I'll be telling you all about the craft beer scene over there and how the palates of Chinese beer drinkers alters their brewing philosophy, leading to some pretty unique brews.

Closer to home, Cameron got chatting to the Welsh brewery that's breaking boundaries LIKE A BOSS! It's Boss Brewing. Their name is Boss Brewing. Meanwhile, Anna is teaching you all about beer and food pairing.

The gin people are getting a very, VERY special treat this month: Verdant Gin. Winner of Gin of the Year at the inaugural Scottish Gin Awards just months after release, Will Moss spoke to Verdant Spirits founder Andrew Mackenzie about just how he did it and what's next for one of the most exciting distilleries on the UK scene today.

Plus, we're following up our Festive Gift Guide with its much-anticipated sequel (Electric Boogaloo anyone?). With that, I'll leave you to get stuck in and have a read - why not pour yourself a drink while you do so? You deserve it.

Cheers!

*Kevin O'Donnell*

## The Team



### **Kevin O'Donnell, Editor**

Writer, beer geek and self-confessed crazy cat man. When not drinking beer, can be found watching professional wrestling.



### **Graeme Pickles, Designer**

Artist, film lover and part-time pirate. Believes we all need a little more horror in our lives and everything is more fun with rum.

## Contributors



### **Cameron Willis, Writer**

Beer-loving writer with a penchant for mischief and a passion for travelling. Digs life, friends and anything by John Steinbeck.



### **Anna Aitken, Writer**

Flavourly's Beer Sommelier and buyer. Believes the stories of the people behind craft beer is second only to the beers themselves.



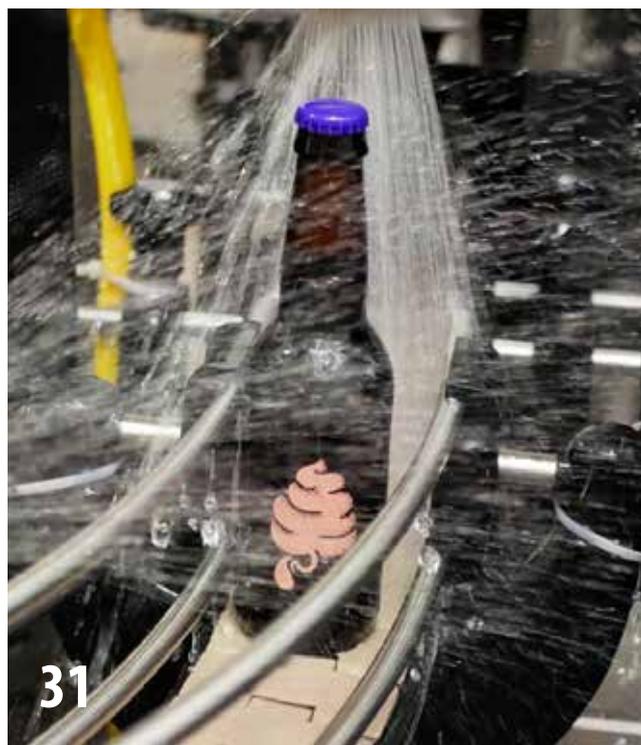
### **Will Moss, Writer**

Music-lover, avid reader and rock climber. Happiest when exploring new places. Particularly partial to a decent pint and/or cup of coffee.

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# **Beer Discoveries**

**Each month, Flavourly's resident beer geeks scour the globe for the most delicious craft beers that the brewing world has to offer and delivers them right to our community members' front doors.**

**Here's what they found...**

**PANDA EYES** - PANDA BREW  
5.5% ABV, RED HONEY ALE

This honey ale is the most popular among visitors to PandaBrew's Beijing bar. The Australian barley malt with fresh American hops are further enhanced by the finest Bailhua honey from China. Rounded off with a little bitterness.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**MOCKING IMPERIAL STOUT** - PANDA BREW  
10.0% ABV, IMPERIAL STOUT

Craft beer is not just about showing off. This imperial stout demonstrates the brewers art, balancing the richness and toasted bitterness of darker malts, giving mouth-coating sweetness with flavours of chocolate and espresso.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CELLAR (10-13°C)



**BLISS** - BOSS  
4.6% ABV, STOUT

Luxurious Belgian cocoa nibs and caramel provide rich, indulgent caramel and chocolate flavours and heaps of cocoa aromatics. Celtic sea salts lend a savoury touch, expressing and raising the decadent chocolatey goodness.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**BLACK** - BOSS  
5.0% ABV, STOUT

This stout is black through and through. From its dark, burnt chocolate aroma to its tangy, berry, black malt flavour. There's also a lingering bitter liquorice and hint of wood in there as well. Seriously complex!

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**BLONDE** - BOSS  
4.0% ABV, BLONDE ALE

Dive into this light, bright and racy blonde. A biscuity malt backbone quickly yields to a hopilicious hit of grapefruit, spicy pine and a wash of pleasant bitterness. This punchy blonde throws a mean hook but you'll be back for more.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**BARE** - BOSS  
5.0% ABV, HELLES LAGER

Don't be fooled by the name of this beer, unless it means simply brilliant! Pouring straw yellow with a frothy head, this lager has a pleasant fruity aroma. The flavour is moderately bitter with a dry, crisp, refreshing, fruity finish.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: COLD (4-7°C)



**WINTER IPA** - TICKETYBREW  
6.0% ABV, IPA

Bitter like the British wind yet smooth and caressing like your favourite jumper. Jam-packed full of hops and perfect for the festive season with its Christmas tree pine aromas. Expect haze and deliciousness!

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**BREHON RISING** - BREHON BREWHOUSE  
5.0% ABV, OATMEAL STOUT

Brehon Rising is oozing with sweetness and rich depths of coffee and chocolate while being soaked to the core with sugary raisins. It's creamy and full-bodied, a bit like a pudding, and certainly something to enjoy slowly.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**WHITER SHADE OF PALE - BAD CO.**  
3.2% ABV, OATMEAL PALE ALE

This pale ale has been brewed with just one hop but they weren't shy about it; heaps of Cascade hops gives it a powerful, citrus bite. The torrified wheat beefs up the body and there's grapefruit on the nose with very subtle hints of fresh grass.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**LET IT SNOW- BAD CO.**  
4.5% ABV, PALE ALE

Who needs a stocking stuffed with festive treats when you have can this snowball hazy pale? A full bodied, creamy ale with notes of lemon, lime and cream followed by a sumptuous sweet brandy and toffee aftertaste.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**VANILLA SKY - BAD CO.**  
5.5% ABV, VANILLA STOUT

BAD Co. have graced us with this decadent vanilla stout that doesn't feature Tom Cruise. Chocolatey and rich with a sweet, vanilla aroma. You could pair it with ice cream but that might be over doing it a bit. Nah didn't think so.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**EQUINOX - METALMAN BREWING CO.**  
4.6% ABV, WHEAT LAGER

Taste the sun with this bright and refreshing wheat lager. Brewed with lemon and orange peel for a citrusy kick. A pinch of coriander spices things up to liven up your senses one mouth-watering sip at a time. Smooth, light and dry to finish.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: COLD (4-7°C)



**ELF JUICE - BAD CO.**  
5.1% ABV, SPICED ALE

A winter seasonal beer to enjoy this Christmas period. Amber in colour, it's a six-malt mash-up infused with soothing spices like cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg and cloves. It's like a Christmas pudding and will shake off that winter chill.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**ORANGE WEDGE - BAD CO.**  
4.8% ABV, CHOCOLATE ORANGE STOUT

It may sound like a popular garnish for gins but that's for another section! Here we have a delicious stout with a thick, creamy body. Filthy rich with chocolate and, of course, orange notes. Great beer to enjoy with a Christmas duck!

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**HEAT SINK - METALMAN BREWING CO.**  
5.0% ABV, CHILLI PORTER

This fiery beer is brewed with a German smoked malt that combines with the chocolate and coffee aroma for a rich character. Cayenne pepper is added to the kettle during the brewing process, giving the beer a spicy kick.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**PALE ALE - METALMAN BREWING CO.**  
4.3% ABV, AMERICAN PALE ALE

This pale ale has the classic American style blend of fruity aroma and bitter hoppy flavours but is dark gold in colour. It oozes floral and citrus scents with the taste of grapefruit and mandarin characterising the American hops.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**SESSION IPA - BOYNE**  
4.0% ABV, *SESSION IPA*

Boyne has blessed us with another legendary beer in this bright and refreshing IPA. This is a light bodied and lemony beer with a clean uncomplicated finish. It's a perfect thirst quencher after a hard days work.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**SIMCOE IPA - BLACKS OF KINSALE**  
5.0% ABV, *RED IPA*

A red beer with attitude, a super tasty hoppy ale with great hop flavour and lovely attractive maltiness. It unleashes a candyfloss and biscuit aroma, red berry and sweet pine follow with a pleasant bitterness to balance the malts.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**RED TRAIL - MOURNE MOUNTAINS BREWERY**  
5.5% ABV, *RED IPA*

The red trails of the Mourne Mountains give this IPA its name. Roasted barley and malts of the Crystal and Caramalt variety gives it that robust colour. A generous helping of hops dominate the flavour and make for a dry finish.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**ENDLESS RIVER - FLAVOURLY**  
3.8% ABV, *SESSION IPA*

Some days are made for taking it easy. Some beers are too. This rich, golden IPA brewed in collaboration with BAD Co. is the perfect session sipper. Swimming in notes of tangy lemon and lime with just a little spritz of pineapple in the shallows.

SERVING TEMPERATURE: CHILLED (7-10°C)



**BE SURE TO VISIT YOUR ACCOUNT ON FLAVOURLY.COM  
TO RATE AND REVIEW ALL YOUR FAVOURITE BEERS**

# Partners in Beer

Before making their way to your doorstep, the delicious craft beers in your Flavourly box are lovingly created by some of the best brewers in the world. Meet our latest partners in beer.



## PANDABREW

PandaBrew is one of the chief innovators in the fledgling Chinese craft beer scene. Their Beijing brewpub has become a haven for beer geeks in China's capital, a two-floor mecca for good beer and good times, while their beers have introduced the people of the People's Republic to great beer. They brew quality, balanced beers for everyone in China.



## METALMAN BREWING CO.

Metalman is the result of two beer lovers who were disgruntled at the tiny range of craft beers in Ireland and decided to just make their own. It's been growing in scope ever since. The name is rooted in their region's heritage, the figure of the Metal Man being a navigational aid on the coast of Waterford, keeping those at sea on the right course.



## BOYNE BREWHOUSE

In the heart of the Boyne valley in Ireland's Leinster lies Boyne Brewhouse. The River Boyne is embedded in stories of Irish culture, having major historical, archaeological and mythical significance. Boyne Brewhouse has resurrected the brewing heritage of the Drogheda region after the last of the old breweries closed in 1960.



## BRETHON BREWHOUSE

Nestled amongst the rolling, northern Irish countryside, Brethon's beers effortlessly reflect the surroundings in which they're made. Crafted with great care and affection, Phil and his small team put everything together (where possible) by hand, taking the imbiber to a sun lathered field of unspoiled green grass as soon as they take a sip!



## BOSS BREWING

Boss' mission is to create a craft beer democracy. They believe that craft beer is and should be for the people and their commitment is to making truly glorious lagers and ales that are truly accessible. Craft beer should never be pretentious, intimidating or bewildering. Instead, their ethos is that no one should miss out on the wonderland of taste explosions that craft beer has to offer.



READ ALL ABOUT **PANDABREW** ON PAGE 12



READ ALL ABOUT **BOSS** ON PAGE 19

## BAD CO.

Authentic, honest, irreverent. Bad by name, their beers are anything but. Inspired by the American approach to ale production and the current British craft brewing renaissance, BAD Co. Brewing's award-winning range of beers are craft-brewed, with outstanding flavours and impact. Their beers make a statement; they are bold and they are expressive.



## BLACKS OF KINSALE

This husband and wife duo have been living the dream since 2013. A harmless little beer making kit was given to Sam as a Valentine's Day gift, now the pair of them have their own brewing company in Ireland's Cork region. They set out to challenge the mundane beers of the mass market with their passion-fuelled brews that ooze personality and are packed full of hops.



## TICKETYBREW

With a taste for Belgian beer, husband and wife Duncan and Keri Barton embarked on the adventure that was starting the TicketyBrew brewery in 2013. Their beers are characterised by finding the perfect balance of yeast, Belgian yeast being their not-so-secret ingredient. They aim to pour something tasty yet different, without getting too wacky, down the throats of the nation.



## MOURNE MOUNTAINS BREWERY

This Northern Irish Brewery takes inspiration from the Mourne Mountains' natural beauty and heritage. The mountains used to be a major source of gold and craftsmen would work the minerals into dazzling creations, which is exactly what the brewery seek to do with their beers. They blend pure mountain water with carefully picked ingredients to produce a unique story in flavour with each beer.





WORDS: Kevin O'Donnell

# 熊猫精酿

## PANDA BREW

LEADING THE CHINESE CRAFT BEER REVOLUTION

**O**ne night in Edinburgh we are all gathered round, bunched together and sitting on desks, as we await the moment we've been anticipating all day at Flavourly HQ in Edinburgh. We sit quietly, attentively and yet still energetically, watching with expectation for the evening's festivities to begin. With a pop and a gentle hiss, Pan Dinghao pulls the top off a bottle of PandaBrew beer, pours it into an awaiting tulip glass and begins to speak.

I should explain, PandaBrew co-founders Pan Dinghao and Kurt Xia are in town and, now, their beers are in your box. For the very first time,

China's leading craft beer brand has come to the UK and the Flavourly community are the first people to get their hands on these incredible, unique beers.

If you didn't know, PandaBrew is one of the chief innovators in the fledgling Chinese scene. Their Beijing brewpub has become a haven for beer geeks in China's capital, a two-floor mecca for good beer and good times, while their beers have introduced the people of the People's Republic to great beer.

Pan takes us through the core six of PandaBrew's range – Panda Eyes Red Honey Ale, Kuding Pale Ale, Safe Date Ginger Ale, Aviator

Single Hop IPA, Outlaw Witbier and Mocking Imperial Stout – telling us their stories, their ingredients, their flavour profiles and the brewing philosophy behind each of them. It's an eye-opening experience, one that opens us up to an entirely new (so similar, yet so different) area of the craft beer world.

The Kuding Pale Ale seamlessly blends the customary, bittersweet flavours of malts and hops with traditional Chinese tea herb Kuding. In their Safe Date Ginger Ale, specially imported European malts pair up (deliciously) with old ginger from Shan Dong to produce a beer unlike anything I've ever tasted



before. Every sip brings something familiar alongside some new. PandaBrew's beers are unmistakably different, unmistakably Chinese.

#### **A different kind of craft**

There's more between UK and Chinese craft beers than the (roughly) 5000 miles they travelled to reach our shores; a completely different set of palates means a completely different approach to brewing if PandaBrew want to appeal to their local market.

I speak to Sam from PandaBrew who explains: "Chinese beer drinkers are more inclined to drink lighter beers with low IBUs – like wheat

beers. Because Chinese people's taste is relatively light and, at the same time, the development of craft beer in China is relatively late, people haven't found it easy to accept beer with a high degree of bitterness.

"From the very beginning, we made our position that PandaBrew is for everyone in China. PandaBrew serves for Chinese people's tastes, brewing for every Chinese person."

With this in mind, the team at PandaBrew have had to put a focus on brewing incredibly balanced beers that put as much (if not more) emphasis on the malts as they do hops – a relatively rare sight in the western beer scene.

Their most popular beer – Panda Eyes Red Honey Ale – takes on only the slightest hint of bitterness from American hops, with Australian malts and the finest Baihua honey from China taking starring roles. You'd be forgiven for thinking this was a traditional English ale – with the powerful malt character – were it not for the added intrigue of the Chinese honey. It's all finished with just a flash of dry, spiced bitterness. 'Balanced' is absolutely the word.

Even their most challenging beer – the 10% ABV, 60 IBU Mocking Imperial Stout – is more balanced than you would ever believe when looking at it on paper, and it's named



## “The real challenge in a brewer’s life is true balance.”

for this fact. “The pursuit in craft beer is not high ABV, high IBU, high aroma,” Sam says. “Malt, hops and yeast are the variables of beer, and the brewer’s job is to find balance, that equilibrium point between these materials. This beer is to mock those fake masters who have the wrong understanding of craft beer. The real challenge in a brewer’s life is true balance.”

When drinking Mocking Imperial Stout, you’re never hit over the head with its mammoth 10% ABV. Nor are you ever blown away by its 60 International Bitterness Units.



Instead, what you have is a real depth of flavours; dark chocolate, rich espresso and a slightly biscuity malt sweetness, backed up by a rich malty aroma. It’s full-bodied yet soft and delicate. It’s both bitter and sweet in just the right amounts. The balance on show is a truly remarkable feat.

While the palate of the Chinese





craft beer drinker may have painted PandaBrew into a corner, this has forced their hand to think differently, to innovate and to achieve a balance in their beers like few others have.

### **An international approach**

Though firmly and proudly Chinese, there's a global approach to things at PandaBrew too. While their water is sourced from the deep-layer underground Dongtinghu lake in Hunan Province, their malts mainly

come from Australia and Germany (a fine choice), their hops from America (as you would) and their yeast from Belgium (where else?).

Their personnel, too, comes with a touch of international flair. Like so many of the UK's top brewers, PandaBrew head brewer Chen Zhengying received his masters in Brewing and Distilling from the International Centre for Brewing and Distilling at Heriot-Watt in Edinburgh – where he would make

experimental homebrews in the flat of (now Stewart Brewing head brewer) Craig Scotland.

In fact, if you were lucky enough to be in Edinburgh last September, you may even have tried one of these experimental collaborations yourself when Chen and Craig teamed up at Stewart Brewing to produce Flying Panda, a scotch ale with peated malt and rye – inspired by Chen's love of Scotch whisky.

### **The craft beer revolution in China**

The craft beer revolution is said to have really kicked off in China in 2012. Sam says: "From that time to now, five years, the development of Chinese craft beer brands has been amazing. In the Chinese first-tier cities, a large number of pioneering craft beer brands have emerged; in Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, Wuhan, Chongqing, Nanjing and other places, craft beer has been a booming trend.

"Even in the two or three tier cities, the development of craft beer also has good prospects, and even Tibet and Ningxia have their own brewing brands."

Though the movement may be relatively young, it's clear that Chinese beer drinkers are going through the same metamorphosis as their counterparts in the UK before them. With palates and demand changing, it's now up to the brewers to give the people what they want and to make sure the scene continues to thrive. With great breweries like PandaBrew and the innovative beers they're producing at the helm, though, it's safe to say that the Chinese craft beer revolution is in very good hands.

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO

# BEER AND FOOD PAIRING

WORDS: ANNA AITKEN

The aroma of a roast wafting from a nearby kitchen can take your thoughts back to your Grandma's kitchen. Perhaps you've got a favourite sweet that always makes you think of your best friend from school. Flavour and memory are intricately linked and that's why it's so important to get right. At a time of year when we get together with friends and family to eat, drink and celebrate together, I want to share some tools with you to make any meal more memorable with well-matched beers.

The unquestionable king of beer and food matching is Brooklyn Brewery's very own Garrett Oliver. In his book *The Brewmaster's Table*, he introduces the subject poetically: "If you love food, but you only know wine, then you're trying to write a symphony using only half the notes and half the orchestra."

The sheer variety of beer, with a spectrum from crisp pilsners to the full-bodied intensity of imperial stouts, is what makes it so uniquely suited to pairing with every conceivable meal. That said, the number of options can be overwhelming, so a few rules can come in handy – but never forget, rules are made to be broken.



## INTRODUCING THE THREE C'S (AKA THE SCIENCE BIT)

### 1. Complement

When you have similar flavours in both the beer and the food, you'll get a complementary pairing. A classic example is the sweet yet toasted flavours of a piece of seared steak with the roasty malts of a stout.

### 2. Contrast

Exactly what you think it would be – you take two opposing flavours and put them together, resulting in always interesting and often pleasant flavour sensations. A simple way to try this out is to get a gooey, rich chocolate brownie and pair it with a sharp and sour fruit beer like a classic Belgian Kriek.

### 3. Clear

There's more than one element of beer that makes it an excellent palate cleanser, the carbonation, alcohol and bitterness all come together to cut through cloying flavours and fats that coat your mouth, leaving your taste buds free to enjoy the next morsel.

A really good Pilsner cuts through the fat of a prosciutto and draws out the saltiness, allowing you to enjoy the other flavours fully.

**And that's all there is to it** – think about the flavour combinations you enjoy and then think of beers that will enhance them with one or more of the three Cs. If you want to start taking things further, start thinking more about the subtleties of the beer and how you can bridge those flavours to the food. The resinous and herbal aromas of American hops are reminiscent of rosemary which you could roast with potatoes, or a Belgian dark ale has fruity esters and a dark caramel character which would pick up the same in bacon wrapped dates.

I would say the most important thing to keep in mind when choosing the perfect beer to go with a meal, is that there are no wrong answers – sometimes a pairing that works on paper fails to impress when you try it. If you make bold choices, you'll quickly learn what works and hopefully have a few pleasant surprises.

## HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO GET YOU STARTED

**Beer Style:** Pilsner

**Example:** Tempest Easy Living Pils

**Classic pairing:** A ham and cheese sandwich

**Adventurous Choice:** Caviar

**Why it works:** A perfectly dry pilsner is one of the few drinks delicate enough to drink with caviar. It also works with caviar's frequent partner smoked salmon, a far more wallet friendly treat than the traditional pairing of champagne and much tastier too!



**Beer Style:** Saison

**Example:** Them Apples by Austmann Bryggeri & Redchurch

**Classic pairing:** Pork & Apple sausages

**Adventurous Choice:** Seared beef tacos with lime and coriander

**Why it works:** In all honesty, I sometimes find saisons a bit hard work with so much going on in their complex and funky flavours – but paired with food they are a revelation. The earthy flavours, sharp bitterness, tart and dry finish – there's always going to be something interesting going on with all but the most delicately flavoured dishes.



3

**Beer Style:** Porter

**Example:** Island Records Jamaica Porter

**Classic pairing:** Oysters

**Adventurous Choice:** Mole Poblano

**Why it works:** The classic pairing here shows contrast at work – the sweetness of the porter creating a foil for the salty taste of the sea you get from the oysters, and this particular porter goes the extra mile for flavour, with coconut bringing smoothness and the vanilla an exotic lift. If you like salted caramel, this is the one for you to try.



WHAT ABOUT

## BEER AND CHEESE?



Blessed are the cheese-makers and as far as I'm concerned there is no greater combination than beer with cheese. Wine and cheese is fine, but it's so easy to get it wrong and ruin your cheese, your wine or to kill the flavours of both dead in your mouth with a poor selection. On the other hand, the milk-sweetness of the cheese and the maltiness of beer, make it hard to get a pairing wrong and the absolute right choice can be sublime.

Barley wines are made to go with rich, strong flavoured British cheeses – try Five Points Old Greg's Barley Wine with a ripe stilton – the higher strength and sweetness working together with the sharper flavours of the blue cheese for a velvety combo.

Matching a tangy cheddar with a dry-hopped, West Coast IPA can seem like a surprising choice but the almost citrus sharpness of the cheddar is brought out by the fruity hop character and the cheese can work to counter some of the bitterness in the beer.

With brie there are two equally fulfilling routes you can go down – a strong golden ale clears the palate nicely and the yeast character plays nicely with any stronger flavours. But the sweet creaminess that comes with ripeness can really come into its own with a dark lager – try Eyeball Brewing's Eyeball Black, East Lothian's answer to the classic Munich Dunkel.

### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

I'm Flavourly's beer buyer and I'm also a qualified beer sommelier, which involved learning far too much about all this stuff. If you're ever looking for an idea for the perfect beer to complement a special meal or a recipe to try with one of the beers in your discovery box, just get in touch with Flavourly through the usual channels and I'll be happy to help.

# BREAKING BOUNDARIES LIKE A BOSS

WORDS: Cameron Willis

**T**he best brewers have never cared much for convention.

They strive to produce beers that match their heady ambition and creativity, transcending race, sex, age and just about any other vaguely attributed aspect of our character. They're the yin to the beer drinkers' yang. They don't just stroll in and get the job done; they redefine what the job is. Like a boss.

Meet *the* Boss, Sarah John, head of the multi-award-winning Boss Brewing, one of the UK's only female-led breweries. Alongside her partner Roy, Sarah is redefining the beer we're drinking and where it comes from. It's all borne from a mutual passion for making the finest beers around and they're doing an unbelievable job.

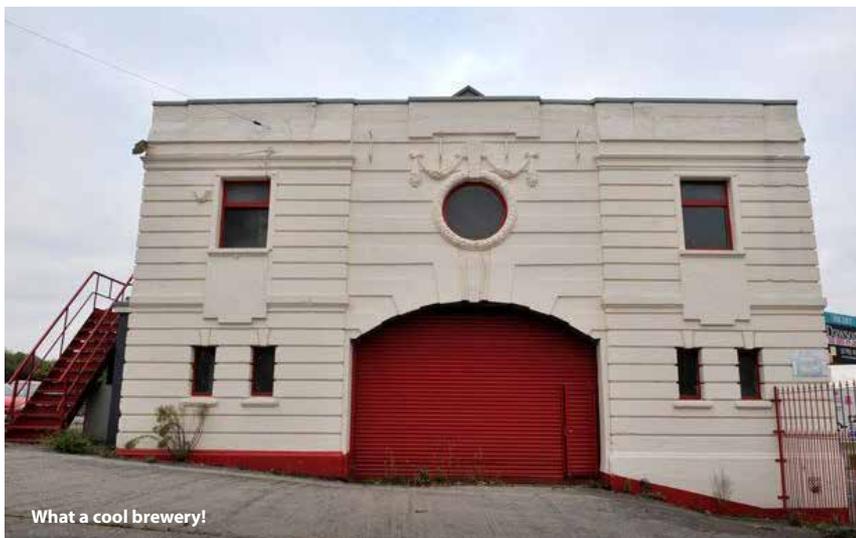
"We were avid home brewers and had been passionate brewers of beer for many years," explains Sarah, who worked in sales before taking the leap into the world of craft. "I remember us going to a masterclass just before launching on how to start a microbrewery and the overarching message was "Don't do it. There's no money in it!" So, it was actually nothing to do with starting a brewery at all. We're both really head strong and driven so it spurred us on more. We were determined to do it and make it a success and we're so glad we did."

The Boss Brewing brand matches this brave backstory. It's about being fearless, not caring what people think and generally, doing things like a boss. They like to be tongue in cheek with their marketing, not taking

themselves too seriously, and this comes across in the likeable and approachable nature of both the company, and their beer. Sarah's ambition is for the brand to be associated with having a good time, making fond memories and, maybe, being a nostalgic throwback to beer aficionados countrywide in a decade's time.

Sarah takes ownership of this direction and, like a true leader, is determined to stamp her own style on the beers Boss make, even if it isn't flavour of the month with everyone.

"My own style preferences definitely come in to it. I'm a huge dark beers fan so perhaps it's no surprise that our two award-winning beers – Boss Black and Boss Bliss – are both stouts. I think with the craze still being for hop forward beers, dark beers are still



What a cool brewery!



The Boss, Sarah John

massively underrepresented,” muses Sarah.

“That’s a real shame as it is far harder to make a really well-rounded stout than it is to chuck in a load of hops and this explains why you get the depth, layers and complexity from stouts that is quite unlike any other style. I will always advocate the humble stout - bring on the year of the dark beers!”

That’s why it’s so impressive that their self-confessed flagship, Boss Black, an absolute boss of a stout, has already racked up eight awards in two years – including the Society of Independent Brewers Gold Award just six weeks after launch.

Other beers in their range include Boss Bare, a 5% Munich Helles lager, Boss Blonde, a 4% pale ale, Boss Brave, a 5.5%

American IPA, Boss Boss, a 7.4% Double IPA and Boss Beatle Juice, a 4.8% juicy pale ale. There’s even plans for gluten free efforts and non/low alcoholic choices.

Balance is also at the forefront of Boss’ thinking when it comes to beer. They want their beers to have “repeat drinkability,” not just be one-off, crazed inventions designed to be tried and left behind. The focus is on creating beers of superb quality that are accessible and approachable, and which stand the test of time. These are beer fans, beer drinkers, beer scholars doing their best to bring you guys at home the best brews they can. It’s not only admirable, it’s working. They’re even bringing the craft revolution to their hometown Swansea in West Wales.

“Generally speaking West Wales

is a little more old school and trends such as craft beer usually come to us a few years later. That makes it all the more exciting for us though as it puts us in the privileged position of being able to introduce people to craft beer and convert them over,” explains Sarah.

“We opened our first brewery bar in Swansea called Copper in August 2016, which has been amazing for them. It’s the first of its kind (a craft beer bar) in Swansea and the reception has been amazing. People are keen to try beers unlike anything they’ve ever tried before. It’s catching on.”

From Swansea, Boss have spread their beery reach to every corner of the UK and beyond. In 2017, the brand exported their brews globally for the first time, reaching France and Canada.

Now, they've got European craft beer hotspots Denmark, Sweden, Italy and Germany in their sights.

At home they're also making huge moves. Boss recently sealed the deal on a new brewery site, with work beginning on a space that is ten times the size of their current site. The idea is to bottle, can and label everything on site, and keep up with the demand for their beer. The new site will also house a taproom, their second bar in Swansea. They're not forgetting where they come from either and they're also retaining a vision and ambition to be much more than just beer manufacturers.

"There's a huge yard too [at the new site] so we're hoping to establish an annual craft beer festival there a bit further down the line, which will be a first for Swansea," said Sarah. "It is a beautiful building with lots of character and history - it was actually a cinema during the First World War. So, an idea we've had is to also utilise the yard as a drive-in cinema, perhaps once a month. We're just looking into the licence for it now - how incredible would that be? Plans are also underway for a third brewery tap, which I will be able to tell you more about in the near future."

Boss Brewing is everything a modern brewery should be. Brave, bold, creative and ambitious; this positive, progressive attitude is



The multi-award-winning Boss Black

“

**I WILL ALWAYS ADVOCATE THE HUMBLE STOUT - BRING ON THE YEAR OF THE DARK BEERS!**

sutured through everything Boss does.

In just two years, they've already left a huge, stouty mark on the British beer map, and they've never once rested on their laurels. Not only that, but there's nothing conventional about the way Boss go about their business, not that they care.

In fact, they're proud to be redefining beer in West Wales and beyond, and the image of who's behind it. Like a Boss.





# Gin Discoveries

Each month, Flavourly's team of top gin drinkers (we mean... "experts") helps our community discover the best small batch craft gins from the most exciting micro-distilleries in the country - and beyond!

Here's what our community of gin lovers is sipping...

# DAFFY'S GIN

Daffy is the Goddess of Gin. First written about in the 1700s, Daffy is the essence of great gin, a lover of life who has transcended the decades.

Daffy's is an exceptional gin, created from the French grain spirit, distilled on an ancient copper pot whisky still with Lebanese mint and the finest botanicals to create a gin that is classic, complex, perfectly balanced and fresh with a world of intrigue.

The adventure started with the discovery of what Lebanese mint can bring to the recipe. Balanced with eight other carefully chosen botanicals, Daffy's have created a fresh, smooth and truly original gin.

## **Tasting notes:**

The nose is woody, floral with sweet toffee. The palate has a smooth and vibrant spice, leading to lively citrus and Lebanese mint then to red fruit followed by juniper. A long, buttery, warm finish.

**Botanicals:** Juniper, Mint, Coriander, Angelica Root, Lemon Peel, Cassia Bark, Orris Root and Orange Peel.

**Perfect serve:** Head to page 29 to find out how to make the perfect D&T.





# DINGLE ORIGINAL GIN

Dingle Original Gin is the product of a considerable amount of research, both technical and historical. Their aim was to create a totally unique gin, one within the great tradition of gin distilling but also with a certain degree of innovation.

In terms of its broad style, this is categorised as a London dry gin but the unique character and flavour come from a very original choice of botanicals. The combination of flavour elements are macerated in spirit for 24 hours. When the spirit is distilled, it passes through a flavour basket in the neck of the still. This attention to detail is an essential part of Dingle's approach to the art of distillation.

**Tasting notes:** The unique combination of Irish botanicals results in a wonderfully fresh, floral gin which maintains a delicate balance with the traditional Juniper notes.

**Botanicals:** Juniper, Rowan berry, Fuchsia, Bog Myrtle, Hawthorn and Heather.

**Perfect serve:** Dingle Original Gin is best served with large cubes of ice, a wedge of fresh orange and a sprinkling of juniper berries.

# VERDANT GIN

Verdant gin is distilled in small batches from the highest quality ingredients in their 500 litre pot still "Little Eddie". It is aromatically juniper-led with fresh notes of citrus on the nose and palate with warm, earthy undertones of spice.

The carefully curated blend of botanicals was inspired by Dundee's rich trading history and reflects the routes once sailed by the traders.

Dundee has a long and successful association with the spirits trade; Stewart's Cream of the Barley, O.V.D Rum and Watson's whisky warehouse. Surprisingly there hasn't been a new distillery in the city for almost 200 years... Until now!

**Tasting notes:** An earthy, herbal aroma. There's a delicate sweet aniseed note along with a peppery spiciness. A citrusy long finish while the coriander tempers the bitter elements.

**Botanicals:** Juniper, Coriander, Lemon, Orange, Cassia Bark, Orris Root, Green Cardamom, Angelica, Licorice and Grains of Paradise.

**Perfect serve:** These characteristics make it perfect served neat (or on the rocks) or as a G&T with your favourite tonic.



WORDS: Will Moss

# JUTE, JAM, JOURNALISM *and gin*

How Dundee's first distillery in 200 years made Scotland's best gin.

**T**he Scottish port city of Dundee made its name in the industrial revolution when it became known as the global centre for the three Js; jute, jam and journalism. The city's fortunes may have ebbed and flowed like the tides that lap the banks of its Firth of Tay home but, in the last few years, Scotland's fourth largest city has enjoyed something of a renaissance. Dundee has become a hub of the creative arts, so much so that the famed V & A museum is opening an outpost in the city next year. This creative spirit is manifesting itself outside of the arts, too. Small innovative businesses are capitalising on and contributing to this growing movement, including the subject of this month's gin boxes.

Verdant Spirits was set up in 2014 by Andrew Mackenzie who, after going back to university as a "very mature student" to study a Masters Degree in Food and Drink Innovation, was inspired to start a

distillery.

"I had very different ideas to pursue when I started, but a lecture from Alan Wolstenholme (now Chair of the Scottish Craft Distillers Association) on innovation in the Scottish spirits industry really sparked my interest," Mackenzie tells us. It took a little while from the purchase of the premises, a small former engine house in Dundee, to getting the actual distilling under way and their first deliveries only started in April of 2017, but the demand for Verdant gin has been growing rapidly ever since. And for good reason.

Verdant is a classic London dry gin and while there are many London dry gins on the market, inside the zig-zagged Verdant bottle clearly dwells something very special. Mere months after the first bottles left their premises, Verdant won Gin of the Year at the inaugural Scottish Gin Awards, besting many more established distillers. This is even more impressive when you

consider that Verdant was effectively

being made by one person, Andrew himself, with his partner Judy looking after the finances.

"The Scottish Gin of the Year Award is a fantastic accolade for us to achieve so early on, and really makes all the hard work to date feel worthwhile," Andrew says. "We heard on the grapevine that our gin had caused a bit of a stir amongst the judges in the London Dry Gin category and so we were hopeful of doing well there. But with it being the busiest category, with 15 other finalists, we knew competition was stiff, so even winning that category was a great result."

To then beat contestants from five other categories was even more of a shock for Andrew: "That was beyond anything we could have expected - with so many more established and bigger brands in the fray. I hope it gives encouragement to other small, craft



producers out there to continue to develop and produce cracking products full of care and integrity.”

The award-winning recipe is made up of 10 botanicals, with one or two reflecting its Dundee home. The city is the home of marmalade, so bitter orange from seville orange peel was an obvious choice for the mix. “Obviously juniper had to be the predominant flavour, as laid down in the definition of a dry gin,” Andrew explains. “Coriander and citrus flavours are also classics so they are both there and, because we bottle at quite a high strength, we have a touch of liquorice in there to round out the flavours and keep it from being too harsh.”

The ingredients, while all obviously of great quality, are not necessarily unusual in the gin world. It’s Andrew’s rigorous quality control that makes Verdant what it is. He says: “I felt that many gins just ‘disappeared’ when paired with many of the modern tonics and get equally lost when used in cocktails.”

So, Andrew came up with three



key criteria that his gin had to meet to avoid being lost amongst its rivals: “You had to be able to enjoy it neat, it had to make a cracking G&T (or what was the point?) and it had to make one my favourite drinks: a five to one dry martini, something very special.”

This no-frills approach to making the best drink possible is the defining ethos of Andrew’s business model. “It’s easy to get side-tracked into novelty botanicals or relying on local appeal and loyalty but that’s not, in my view, a good basis on which to build a brand with any future,” he muses. “I firmly believe that if you put your heart and soul into what you produce it shows and people appreciate that.”

It’s still very early days for

**“ If you put your heart and soul into what you produce, it shows. ”**

Verdant but with such rapid success comes the need to evolve equally as quickly. This partly means employing more staff. It also means making the most of the space they have available to them. Andrew explains that work to restore and develop the old engine house into a visitor centre is now underway, and



will become a retail space and gin school come spring 2018.

When it comes to what's next for Verdant, Andrew is looking beyond gin. Dundee has a centuries-old history of being a centre for the spirit trade, with the OVD Rum and Watson Whisky warehouses deeply ingrained in the city's heritage. "Our next development will probably be our rum. I think it's a really exciting spirit that's been underrated for too long and its broad definition allows room for distillers to really express themselves in all sorts of ways." Andrew has already developed a recipe with the brewing and

distilling aficionados from Heriot Watt University, so keep an eye out for that next spring.

Most of all, however, Andrew wants Verdant to become more involved in the local community and a stop on the city's ever-growing list of tourist destinations. With the new V & A gallery due to open and an increasing number of cruise ships dropping anchor in Dundee, there's certainly the opportunity for Scotland's best gin to find its way into the glasses of those from far beyond the country's borders.

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# MIX IT UP



source: bojongourmet.com



source: thetaste.ie



## Verdant Lady

### Ingredients:

40ml Verdant Gin  
15ml fresh strained lime juice  
10ml simple syrup  
5ml Green Chartreuse  
fresh mint

### Method:

In a cocktail shaker filled halfway with ice, combine the gin, lime juice, syrup, Chartreuse and mint leaves. Shake for 30 seconds, then strain into a coupe. Garnish with a mint sprig and serve.

## Blackberry & Thyme

### Ingredients:

50ml Dingle Gin  
100ml tonic  
fresh thyme  
1 cup of sugar  
frozen blackberries

### Method:

To prepare the syrup, mix a cup of sugar with a cup of water in a pan and heat until dissolved. Add the thyme and boil for 10 mins. After cooling pour into a couple of glasses with the other ingredients, stir and enjoy!

## Daffy's D&T

### Ingredients:

50ml Daffy's Gin  
100ml tonic  
a fresh lime  
sprig of fresh mint

### Method:

Cut three lime wedges and squeeze one into a chilled glass. Gently pour Daffy's, followed by some tonic water. Stir in the two remaining lime wedges and garnish with a sprig of mint.

# DINGLE GIN

IRISH · ARTISAN · POT STILL

## A SENSE OF PLACE

Located on the fringe of Europe, Dingle enjoys a pristine environment like no other. Buffeted by winds from the Atlantic Ocean, the air is fresh, just like our gin.



  #dinglegin

[www.dingledistillery.ie](http://www.dingledistillery.ie)

Buy 1 Dingle Gin (70cl) at [Flavourly.com](http://Flavourly.com) and receive a Dingle branded glass with every bottle (while stocks last)



*Flavourly's*

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FESTIVE

GIFT GUIDE

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*part 2*

This year, Flavourly has all your gift-giving needs covered. From craft beer to gin, whisky and beyond, we've got something for everyone. Even better, though, is that every item listed in this guide is available on [Flavourly.com](https://flavourly.com). Present shopping has never been so easy!

## Gifts for a beer lover

Need some help with what to get the beer lover in your life this festive season? Never fear, Flavourly is here! From gift subscriptions to beery bundles to seriously special bottles and cans, there's something to satisfy every kind of beer drinker on [Flavourly.com](http://Flavourly.com).



### 1. Craft Beer Discovery Club

Give the gift that keeps on giving. Give the gift of craft beer discovery. With gifts starting at just £25, available in single boxes or three, six or 12 month gift subscriptions, you can't go wrong with a Flavourly Craft Beer Discovery Club gift. Probably the greatest gift of all time for beer lovers, they'll receive:

- 10 carefully-curated craft beers from the world's best brewers
- A personalised tasting profile (light, dark or mixed beers)
- The exclusive Flavourly Magazine in every box
- FREE tracked delivery

### 2. The Flavourly Collection

Give the beer lover in your life, **beer made just for them** with a collection of Flavourly's brand new Crowdsourced Craft Beer. Each collection comes with a Flavourly beer tasting glass.

### 3. SBA Winners Collection

Give the best that the Scottish brewing industry has to offer with the Scottish Beer Awards 2017 Winners Collection, featuring a selection of the beers that picked up awards on the night.



4



6



8



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#### 4. Safe Date, PandaBrew

Made with specially imported European malts that pair up (deliciously) with old ginger from Shan Dong to produce a beer **unlike anything you've ever tasted before**.

#### 5. Crazy Mountain Amber Ale

Give someone a taste of Colorado with this mountaineous amber from Crazy Mountain Brewing Co. A nice transition between blustery autumn and chilly winter, it's a hoppy, spicy ale.

#### 6. Milk Stout Nitro, Left Hand

This is a **legendary** beer. Milk Stout Nitro cascades beautifully, building a tight, thick head like hard whipped cream. The aroma is of brown sugar and vanilla cream. The rest is pure chocolate bliss.

#### 7. Texas Pecan Ice Cream, Buxton

One of Buxton's infamous collaborations with the insanity that is Omnipollo. This one is a caramel pecan imperial porter, a **dessert beer in every sense of the word**. That's ice cream on the bottle...

#### 8. Mexicake, Tempest

A Mexican cake inspired imperial stout. Carefully balanced cinnamon, vanilla, cocoa, and chillies make this a smooth, velvety, and delectable brew perfect to pair with puddings and ice cream.

#### 9. Slot Machine, Brewdog

Brewdog's latest seasonal is a delicious Red Rye IPA, a perfect blend of citric hops, caramel malts and the light spice of rye. **This with a mince pie may be perfection.**

## Gifts for a gin lover

We all know a fussy gin drinker but you can't go wrong with any of the picks here. We've got your back. From gift subscriptions to gift packs to bottles so stunning you won't want to open them (though, you should), these gifts are sure to satisfy even the fussiest gin drinker. Available now on [Flavourly.com](https://www.flavourly.com).



### 1. Gin Discovery Club

Give the gift that keeps on giving. Give the gift of gin discovery. With gifts starting at just £35, available in single boxes or three, six or 12 month gift subscriptions, a Flavourly Gin Discovery Club gift shows them just how special they are. They'll receive:

- 3 x 200ml carefully-curated small batch craft gins
- Mixers and snack paired perfectly with the gins
- The exclusive Flavourly Magazine in every box
- FREE tracked delivery



### 2. Edinburgh Christmas Gin

The true spirit of the festive season, Edinburgh Christmas Gin is flavoured with an array of unique botanicals - including frankincense and myrrh! A warming gin to sip or mix.

### 3. Pickering's Gin Baubles

The only Christmas decoration that you'll need this year, Pickering's Gin Baubles; six brightly coloured baubles, each one filled with 50ml of marvellous, multi-award-winning gin.



#### 4. Verdant Dry Gin

Winner of Gin of the Year at the inaugural Scottish Gin Awards, Dundee's Verdant Dry Gin speaks for itself. It is distilled in small batches from the highest quality ingredients.

#### 5. El:Gin

Winner of Distilled Gin of the Year at the Scottish Gin Awards, this is no ordinary gin. Scottish oats go in to add a soft creaminess unlike anything you've experienced in a gin before.



#### 6. Plymouth Gin

The authentic spirit of discovery, this gin has been distilled using the same blend of seven exotic botanicals, soft Dartmoor water and pure grain alcohol since 1973.

#### 7. Tanqueray London Dry Gin

The very epitome of dry gin. An absolute classic since it was first released in 1830, it has remained one of the most prestigious brands to this day. Simple, balanced, crisp, excellent.



#### 8. Ginerosity

Give the gift that gives back - Ginerosity's profits go back into the community to help disadvantaged young adults. A stunning gin, distilled from ten ethically sourced botanicals.



#### 9. JJ Whitley Elderflower Gin

Filled with the light, flowery aroma of elderflower for a delicately sweet taste. A hint of honey and orange blossom trickle through to create a **flavoursome and refreshing gin**.

## Gifts for a **whisk(e)y** lover

Know someone that likes a wee dram? Then surprise them with one of these awesome gifts and show them you really care. Whether they like a single malt, a blend, an Irish whiskey or even a whisky cocktail or two, all the bases are covered on [Flavourly.com](https://flavourly.com).



### 1. Auchentoshan American Oak and Tin Cup Gift Set

Triple distilled and matured solely in American bourbon casks, Auchentoshan American Oak is a Lowland Single Malt Whisky with the sweet aromas of vanilla and coconut - along with the signature smooth, delicate, Auchentoshan taste.

Like all Auchentoshan, American Oak is a really versatile Single Malt. It works wonders as an Auchentoshan & Ale, is happy to stand on its own neat or over ice but also shakes up some classic cocktails that you might not think work with Single Malt whisky.

With this gift set, you can enjoy American Oak however you like from their famous tin mug.



### 2. Glen Scotia Gift

Send someone on an adventure to one of the great **historic whisky-making capitals of the world** - Campbeltown - with the Glen Scotia gift pack. Includes three 5cl tasters of the distillery's finest.

### 3. Jameson Caskmates

One for whiskey lovers and craft beer geeks alike, having been aged in stout-seasoned whisky casks for plenty of depth of flavour with rich notes of coffee, cocoa and butterscotch coming through.





#### 4. Talisker Skye

The Isle of Skye is renowned for its varied landscape, from serene shores to jagged mountain peaks. This is **the distillery's ode to the isle**, with a smoky sweetness, maritime notes and a spicy edge.

#### 5. Talisker Storm

Storm has all the warm, smoky, peppery characteristics we love in the standard Talisker 10 year old - but they've been turned up, with more smoke, more spices, and a **bigger than ever flavour**.



#### 6. Singleton Spey Cascade

The Singleton's signature release, this single malt Scotch whisky The Spey Cascade from Dufftown is a balanced mix of whiskies aged in a combination of ex-sherry and ex-bourbon casks.

#### 7. Singleton Tailfire

In tune with the berry red label, the Tailfire is aged in a combination of European and American oak casks, producing a **vibrant, fruity and fresh** style of whisky.



#### 8. Redbreast 12 y.o. Whiskey

One of the most decorated Irish whiskeys, Redbreast is the largest selling Single Pot Still Irish whiskey in the world and is regarded as the definitive expression of traditional pot still whiskey.

#### 9. Raasay While We Wait

Raasay While We Wait is a single malt Scotch, to give you a taste of what's to come from the Isle of Raasay Distillery. This particular whisky is a **blend of both peated and unpeated** expressions.



## Gifts for a **spirits and liqueurs** lover

Truly a one-stop-shop when it comes to gifting this festive season, Flavourly has gift-worthy bottles across every drinks category you can think of. Whatever your loved one's tipple of choice, there's a bottle that's right for them on [Flavourly.com](https://flavourly.com).



### 1. **Ciroc French Vanilla**

French Vanilla is the newest rich tasting spirit by Ciroc. The spirit is masterfully infused with a distinctive blend of vanilla from Madagascar and further afield to give its uniquely rich and creamy taste.

### 2. **Martell VS Fine Cognac**

As the oldest of the big four Cognac houses, the Martell family have been passing down their knowledge and **quality Cognac** expertise for **three centuries**.

### 3. **Absolut Vodka**

**One of the most iconic vodkas** around, this Swedish gem has been on the go since 1879 and remains a world favourite. It's one of the cleanest vodkas you can get, known for its purity.

### 4. **Kahlua**

A bottle of Kahlua takes seven years to make, yes seven whole years. It's a sweet coffee flavour and a **staple in many classic cocktails** for the coffee lovers out there - White Russians, dude?

### 5. **Dunedin Rum**

Developed over the last year at Strathearn Distillery, probably **the first Scottish golden rum for over 100 years**. It has a bold fruity nose with notes of dark chocolate.

### 6. **Salted Caramel Vodka**

Salted Caramel has become one of the tastes of winter, this vodka from The Lakes Distillery is the perfect festive treat with notes of caramel, toffee, white chocolate and marshmallow.

**SEE YOU**  
**NEXT YEAR**

**IT'S GOING TO BE THE BEST ONE YET**

**FESTIVE**  
GIFT GUIDE INSIDE



YOU CAN'T FIT A BOTTLE IN THERE

## Give them something they really want this year Give the gift of drinks discovery with Flavourly.com

This year, Flavourly has all your gift-giving needs covered. From craft beer to gin, whisky and every bottle in between, there's something for everyone - all under one virtual roof.

It's about more than just the right selection, though; we confidently promise a fast, ultra-reliable delivery service (FREE on orders over £50) and tremendous value.

**Visit [Flavourly.com](https://www.flavourly.com) for all your drinks gifting needs, today.**

