



ULTIMATE SPIRITS CHALLENGE

LIKE NO OTHER COMPETITION

2015 Ultimate Spirits Challenge

Tried & True Award

Ultimate Spirits Challenge lists below the **Tried & True Award** recipients for 2015. Tried & True Award recognizes brands that provide unflinching quality to consumers year after year.



A note on the icons:

 **Product Image:** to assist you with visual identification, we've included an image for each product evaluated. (Please note that age statements, vintages or label may vary slightly from the specific product evaluated but it represents a helpful portrayal of the brand.) *Click icon to view.*

Vodka

Unflavored Vodka All vodkas were judged in category flights of like-with-like. The Chairman's Trophy - Vodka was awarded based on the highest scoring vodka across all the unflavored categories.

Award	Score	
Finalist	94	Khortytsa Platinum Vodka Ukraine, 40% abv, \$14.99, 700 ml Spring water clear. Big, assertive, snack cracker-grain aroma. Toasty on the palate, dry, creamy texture. A winner on all levels. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
Finalist	94	Purity Vodka Sweden, 40% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml The name reflects this vodka's admirable balance, integration, and overall delicate graininess. A world-class spirit of grace and elegance. Excellent, Highly Recommended
Finalist	93	Belvedere Vodka Poland, 40% abv, \$39.99, 1 L This supple vodka owns snap, a rich, substantial charm to the aroma and the flavor that last long into the aftertaste. A classic European style that never grows old. Excellent, Highly Recommended

- Finalist 93 **Finlandia Vodka Finland, 40% abv, \$19.99, 750 ml**
- Opens with lemon pith, sweet grass, and vanilla bean on the nose with deeper tropical notes. It envelops the palate in a happy marriage of honeydew melon and sea minerals before finishing clean. Outstanding. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- Finalist 93 **Luksusowa Vodka Poland, 40% abv, \$13.99, 750 ml**
- Crisp and clean notes of snack cracker, freshly cracked black peppercorn, and a hint of thyme. Pure and fresh, minerals and sea spray with a delicate fruitiness on the palate. An invigorating finish ensues. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- Finalist 93 **Prairie Organic Vodka United States, 40% abv, \$24.99, 750 ml**
- Clean rainwater appearance. The toasty, slightly sweet breakfast cereal aroma is tantalizing and fresh. In mouth, it's weighty, dry, chewy. An organic beauty. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- 92 **Belvedere Unfiltered Vodka Poland, 40% abv, \$45.99, 1 L**
- Translucent appearance. Deep, assertive bouquet is supported by a flavor profile that's meaty, deep, earthy, mineral-like, but elegant. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- 92 **Fuzzy's Ultra Premium Vodka United States, 40% abv, \$24.99, 750 ml**
- Clear as rainwater. Clean, grainy, gently dry aroma leads to a long, substantial flavor that's chewy, breakfast cereal-like, enormously pleasing. This vodka is consistently good from year to year. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- 89 **Crop Organic Artisanal Vodka United States, 40% abv, \$28.99, 750 ml**
- Pristine clarity. Smells of sweet corn, breakfast cereal, cornmeal. Flavor profile showcases sweet corn, corn syrup, honey. Superbly satisfying aftertaste is delicately sweet. Excellent distilling. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

88 **Bainbridge Legacy Organic Vodka United States, 40% abv, \$34.95, 750 ml**

There's an appealing herbal snappiness to the nose that's mirrored in the zesty, crackling flavors. Defines "graininess" in style. Suitable to be drunk neat. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

87 **Breckenridge Vodka United States, 40% abv, \$27.00, 750 ml**

Crystalline clarity. Offers pleasingly toasty aromas of honeywheat toast, Cheerios. Taste profile is substantial in texture, dry, long in the aftertaste. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

86 **Reyka Vodka Iceland, 40% abv, \$19.99, 750 ml**

Crystal clear, pure appearance. Nose is clean, fresh, neutral, dry as a bone, faintly grainy. Taste profile is more assertive than bouquet, offering medium deep flavors of cereal, unsalted snack cracker far into the aftertaste. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Vodka

Flavored VodkaAll flavored vodkas were judged in category flights of like-with-like flavors. The Chairman's Trophy - Flavored Vodka was awarded based on the highest scoring flavored vodka across all the flavor categories.

Award

Score

Finalist

91 **Crop Organic Cucumber Flavored Vodka United States, 35% abv, \$28.99, 750 ml**

The delicate cucumber aroma is like freshly sliced English cucumber and is therefore tart. Flavor profile is rich, zesty, vegetal, fresh. Excellent flavoring job. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

86 **Belvedere Pink Grapefruit Flavored Vodka Poland, 40% abv, \$39.99, 1 L**

Transparent, pure appearance. Enticing aroma is deeply citrusy, grapefruit-like, zesty, astringent. Taste echoes aroma, with the acidic grapefruit character coming through. Highly appealing. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

85 **Belvedere Citrus Flavored Vodka Poland, 40% abv, \$39.99, 1 L**

Gentle bouquet features lemon peel and lime juice. Taste is keenly citrusy and refreshing with a long and astringent finish. The flavoring is a supplement to the vodka, which is how it should be. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Gin

Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award	Score	
Chairman's Trophy	97	Cold River Gin United States, 47% abv, \$26.99, 750 ml Wonderfully fragrant and complex with bright scents of juniper taking the lead with supported by orange, cardamon, coriander, and fresh herbs. Lush and silky on the palate being decadent while ideally balanced. A new American classic. Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96	Beefeater London Dry Gin United Kingdom, 47% abv, \$19.00, 750 ml A true classic and a staple in any respectable bar. The nose is generous and complex while ever-evolving in the glass. Vibrant and focused on the palate with a silky texture. The quintessential London Dry Gin. Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96	Citadelle Gin France, 44% abv, \$25.00, 750 ml Wisps of juniper with subtle blanched nuts, brown spice, fennel, and leafy herbs fill the generous nose. Superbly balanced and complex on the palate with clean citrus notes that carry to the finish. Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96	Tanqueray London Dry Gin United Kingdom, 47.3% abv, \$19.99, 750 ml Balance and sophistication are the descriptors that leap to mind. Juniper, lemon and orange zest, dry and fresh pine needles, and an underlying mineral note. A benchmark. Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	95	Tanqueray No. Ten Gin United Kingdom, 47.3% abv, \$29.99, 750 ml Bold and complex this classic offers layers of citrus fruits, juniper, brown baking spices, angelica, and citrus zest. Rich while balanced with a defining black pepper eruption on the finish. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation

Finalist

94 **Plymouth Navy Strength Gin United Kingdom, 57% abv, \$35.00, 750 ml**

Beautifully grainy and crisp with scents of pine needle, orange blossom, a dried herb melange, juniper, and dried flowers. Voluptuous on the palate while maintaining perfect balance with the juniper notes rising with each passing second. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Finalist

94 **Plymouth Gin United Kingdom, 41.2% abv, \$30.00, 750 ml**

Splendidly unique and vibrant with juniper being nearly equaled by citrus fruit and candied zest, coriander, cardamon, and bold black pepper on the palate. Ideally proportioned and versatile for the bar. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Bombay Sapphire East London Dry Gin England, 42% abv, \$22.99, 750 ml**

Clear, pure appearance. First nosings pick up more of coriander and angelica than any other botanicals. Taste profile introduces the juniper and citrus aspects. Sophisticated, stone dry, with plenty of textural grip. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Fords Gin England, 45% abv, \$27.99, 750 ml**

Ultra fresh and vibrant on the nose with lemon, coriander, and jasmine tea in support of the bright juniper. The palate is delicate and floral with flanking citrus and pepper notes. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 **Ungava Gin Canada, 43.1% abv, \$29.99, 750 ml**

Pretty bright yellow color. Nose is vivid with scents of rosehip, berries, moss/lichen, juniper, pine needle. Taste profile features the zestiness of citrus peel with the natural snap of cedar/pine. Elegant. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

89 **No. 3 Gin London Dry Gin United Kingdom, 46% abv, \$39.95, 750 ml**

Vibrant and fresh with scents of red grapefruit and pine needles with juniper in support. Generous on the palate while deftly dry with bright acidity and lingering citrus, dry cooking spice, and pine notes. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

89 **The Botanist Islay Dry Gin Scotland, 46% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml**

Alluringly floral with bright juniper and sweet citrus notes filling the nose. Ideally proportioned with complex and subtle botanicals mingled on a soft grain spirit bed. This Gin deserves to be enjoyed neat. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

88 **Greenall's The Original London Dry Gin United Kingdom, 40% abv, \$15.99, 750 ml**

Subtlety is the coin of the realm here with soft fruit and floral notes in the lead with hints of cardamon and vanilla bean. The palate is more expressive with bitter lemon and black pepper rising on the finish. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

87 **Beefeater 24 Gin United Kingdom, 45% abv, \$30.00, 750 ml**

Assertively fragrant with vibrant tangerine and orange peel supported by lemon, juniper, pine, and gunpowder tea. The palate is equally bold offering layers of citrus driven spirit with hints of green herbs, citrus zest, and pine needle. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

87 **BLOOM London Dry Gin United Kingdom, 40% abv, \$28.00, 750 ml**

Wonderfully herbal with citrus and juniper not far behind. Hints of caraway, coriander and an underlying grassiness dominate the palate with flanking notes of vanilla bean, ripe orchard fruits, cedar, and dried flowers. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

86 **Hendrick's Gin Scotland, 44% abv, \$34.99, 750 ml**

Fresh and vibrant best describe the nose with scents of wild flowers, dried juniper, cucumber, and lemon zest in the lead. The palate is round while balanced and zesty with hints of red rose, bitter lemon, green grass. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

86 **Prairie Organic Gin United States, 40% abv, \$24.99, 750 ml**

Fresh cut herbs greet the nose with hints of mint, sage, brown boing spices, dried berries, and citrus zest. The palate is in full agreement with the nose delivering a vibrant and zesty Gin with an underlying tonic note. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Rum

Unflavored Products were judged like-with-like. The Chairman's Trophy was awarded to the highest scoring product in the category.

Award

Score

- Finalist 96 **Banks 5 Island Rum West Indies, 43% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml**
- Somewhat funky, vegetal nose that also features citrus and a dollop of earthiness. Crisp in the mouth, with some vegetal flavors, licorice, spice (including pepper) and also a touch of sweetness. A long, lingering spice finish—some of the vegetal greenness comes back intertwined with the molasses. A lot going on. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**
- Finalist 95 **Banks 7 Golden Age Rum West Indies, 43% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml**
- Given its dark amber color, the bright, citrusy nose is a surprise. There are oranges, orange blossoms and vanilla. The flavors are consistent: it's bright, dry, complex, woody and citrusy. The flavors linger. Very nicely put together. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**
- Finalist 95 **Don Q Gran Anejo Rum Puerto Rico, 40% abv, \$59.99, 750 ml**
- A wonderfully complex bouquet of coconuts and ripe tropical fruit. Similarly complex on the palate with flavors of juicy pineapple and rich coconut with a thread of light caramel enhancing the fruit. Soft and lovely. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**
- Finalist 94 **Phraya Deep Matured Gold Rum Thailand, 40% abv, \$49.99, 750 ml**
- Golden hued. The nose is full of butterscotch, coconut, pie crust and a not-unpleasant bit of acetone. The flavors are intense, with wood, butterscotch, caramel, coconut, cola and sugar, ending in a long, spicy finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- 93 **Diplomatico Blanco Rum Venezuela, 40% abv, \$27.99, 750 ml**
- Clear as mountain spring water, colorless. First nosing detects deep notes of molasses, fresh sugarcane, grass, vegetation, damp earth, yet there is a subtle sweetness to it that makes for endless sniffing possibilities. Total dry and brittle in the mouth at entry, then the flavor menu opens widely, offering lean, even austere and very dry flavors that are complex and luscious at the same time. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Bacardi Reserva Limitada Rum United States, 40% abv, \$109.99, 750 ml**

Sepia-colored appearance. There's a fruity succulence in the first nosing that's immediately impactful and positive, then the aroma levels off into a more oak-driven fragrance that's toasty, resinous. Flavor-wise, it's chockfull of black raisins, prune Danish, BBQ sauce, pork rind. Lovely, understated finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Bacardi 8 Rum United States, 40% abv, \$22.99, 750 ml**

Pretty auburn/topaz color. Aroma is ripe, juicy, fruitcake-like, with pronounced dried fruit, candied walnut, hickory smoke scents. Taste profile is long, delicately sweet, toasted, nutty, tarter than the aroma. Finishes deep, roasted, regal. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Plantation Grande Reserve 5 Years Old Rum Barbados, 40% abv, \$21.99, 750 ml**

Medium amber. Somewhat reserved nose that opens up to coconut, vanilla and brown sugar. Big, sweet and rich with brown sugar, chocolate, caramel and honey flavors. Finishes dry so you want another sip. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

90 **Bacardi Anejo Rum Mexico, 40% abv, \$18.99, 750 ml**

Topaz/amber in color. Excellent, sturdy, roasted nut bouquet is quite vegetal, brassy, brown sugar-like, bakery shop-like, spicy. Taste profile highlights the vegetal/grass aspect which underpins the spiciness that lasts long into the aftertaste. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

90 **Bacardi Solera 1873 Rum Mexico, 40% abv, \$22.99, 750 ml**

Attractive nut brown color. Aroma is animated, full, with hints of molasses, brown sugar, brown rice, soy, honey. Taste profile features the honey and molasses elements most of all, with side flavors of mint, herbs, grass, treacle. Intriguing aftertaste which is drier than the midpalate and pleasingly toasty. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Rum

Spiced Rum

Award

Score

87 **Shellback Spiced Spiced Rum Barbados, 40% abv, \$16.00, 750 ml**

Very subtle aromas of demerara sugar and coconut cream are pretty. Incredibly soft and smooth in the mouth, the texture is silky with flavors of citrus and vanilla running throughout. Light and easy to enjoy. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Tequila

Blanco, 100% Agave Tequila

Award

Score

Chairman's Trophy

95 **El Tesoro Platinum, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$50.00, 750 ml**

Aromas are mostly savory with green peppers and minerals, with a touch of candied sugarcane. Smooth and elegant on the palate, the flavor of green chillies is well integrated with green grass and hints of citrus. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Finalist

94 **Siete Leguas Blanco, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml**

Savory aromas of green chillies and dark green moss are soft and inviting. Opulent and clean in the mouth with deep concentration of minerality, lime rind and a touch of brown sugar. A touch of spice on the finish keeps it fresh. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Finalist

93 **Lunazul Blanco, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$19.99, 750 ml**

Opulent and crisp on the nose, hints of mango and lime shine through. Silky on the palate, the texture is rich and luscious, complemented by soft fruitiness and strong minerality that lasts in the mouth. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Olmecca Altos Plata, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$24.99, 750 ml**

Green mango and a distinct saline quality make the aromas decidedly savory. Clean and light on the palate, there is tons of lime, sweet ripe fruit and generous white pepper spice. Smooth and round, it is incredibly fresh. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 **Corazon Blanco, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml**

A distinct charred grass earthiness mixed with sweet citrus and vanilla aromas is nicely layered. Very fresh and round in the mouth, it is mostly sweet with earthy undertones and a lime and mineral finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 **IZKALI Silver, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$28.00, 750 ml**

Sweet and fresh aromas of grass and melon are incredibly inviting. The texture is smooth and medium rich with plenty of white flowers, lime, white pepper and a trace of earthy mushroom. The overall effect is light and clean. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 **Tres Agaves Blanco, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$29.99, 750 ml**

Incredibly pungent aromas of papaya, fig, and cotija cheese jump out of the glass. Round and complex on the palate the texture is rich and mouth coating. Flavors start out spicy before turning to fresh green vegetation and finally sweet ripe tropical fruit. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

90 **Agave 99 Silver, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml**

Fresh and limey aromas intermingle with minerals and subtle flowers. Robust in the mouth with tons of spice and a very mineral-driven core. It is clean and refreshing, leaving a faint floral essence lingering on the palate. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

90 **Casamigos Blanco, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$45.99, 750 ml**

Crisp fresh grassiness and red fruits are incredibly appealing aromas. Rich and luscious on the palate, it is bright and clean with hints of custard and tropical fruits and just enough minerality shining through all in balance. Truly refreshing. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

89 **el Jimador Blanco, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$19.99, 750 ml**

Fresh and cool with aromas of cut green grass and mineral water. In the mouth it is spicy with white pepper and jalapeno, unfolding to reveal slightly creamy vanilla custard flavors. The finish leaves a pleasant tingling on the tongue. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

89 **Herradura Silver, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$39.95, 750 ml**

Bright citrus and fresh herbs bloom in the glass, giving way to a lush-bodied tequila bursting with flavors of cooked agave, green pepper, jalapeno and pineapple. The finish is marked by a spicy prickle. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

87 **Tequila Cabeza Blanco, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 43% abv, \$41.99, 750 ml**

Sweet scents of flowers, grass and sugarplums are nicely pungent. In the mouth it is spice laden and earth driven, with flavors of charred earth and wheat dominating, giving way to floral undertones and a long cinnamon finish. Spicy. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Tequila

Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila

Award

Score

Finalist

94 **Lunazul Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$21.99, 750 ml**

Soft aromas of lightly toasted cinnamon and hints of vanilla are pleasant and tame. It is suede in texture with concentrated flavors of burnt sugar and toasted clove that give way to a fresh and floral finish. Balanced between light and dark flavors. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Finalist

93 **El Tesoro Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$55.00, 750 ml**

Earthy aromas are pungent with pineapple skin and moss. Considerably sweeter on the palate there are grapefruit and orange rinds and a sweet candied coffee flavor. It is ultra smooth and round, leaving a pleasant mouthfeel. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 93 **Siete Leguas Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$42.99, 750 ml**

Caramel and pineapple aromas abound on the nose. Soft and slightly sweet flavors of cooked tropical fruit turn into spice-laden caramel with a hint of coffee with cream. The fine grained texture enhances the pleasant spiciness. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 92 **Tres Agaves Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$34.99, 750 ml**

Aromas of roasted chestnuts and light caramel with hints of earth are lively and inviting. An absolutely silken texture is indulgent and complemented by flavors of cinnamon, lightly roasted coffee beans and toasted bread pudding. Delightful. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 91 **Casamigos Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$49.99, 750 ml**

The aromas of cooked earth and light caramel are gentle and integrated. Light in the mouth, it has a decidedly dark roasted flavor with notes of coffee and roasted green vegetables that give way to a lingering hint of sweetness. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 91 **IZKALI Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$33.00, 750 ml**

Sweet yellow mangoes and lime rind characterize the generous aromas. The palate is delicately sweet with thoughtfully integrated confectionary and dark brown sugar, a medium amount of mouth tingling pepper spice pervades through the finish. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 91 **Olmecca Altos Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$24.99, 750 ml**

Rich and pungent on the nose with plenty of charred earth and roasted pineapple aromas. Soft and silky, deep flavors of dark roast coffee, tobacco and roasted green vegetables are of a dark tone, with light spice to keep it fresh. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 90 **Herradura Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$41.99, 750 ml**

The bright golden hue of this reposado hints at the caramelized aromas of cooked agave to come. In the mouth, it's more caramelized agave, with a mineral edge. The finish is earthy and peppery with a pleasant whiff of musty library books. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 89 **Agave 99 Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$44.99, 750 ml**

Lightly toasted aromas are slightly nutty and candied, with a core of moss-like earthiness. Gently smoky flavors are thick with spice, fresh ground coffee and dark toffee, with sweet and rich flavors developing long after each sip. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 88 **Corazon Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$42.99, 750 ml**

Decidedly sweet and caramel-laden aromas waft from the glass. The texture is like fine smooth leather and matched nicely with a strong core of coffee, caramel and sweet spice, with roasted fruit flavors shining through. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 87 **el Jimador Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$19.99, 750 ml**

An elegantly balanced nose of roasted agave heart is decidedly earthy and a touch peppery. In the mouth it offers more sweet pineapple fruit and hints of charred earth. The overall effect is light, with a buoyant and vibrant character. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 87 **KAH Reposado, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 55% abv, \$45.99, 750 ml**

Light tan in color. Subtle aromas are mostly savory of hay and wheat, with a touch of light caramel shining through. Round and intensely spicy in the mouth, the flavors are deeply laden with cinnamon, cayenne and tobacco with a long smoky finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Tequila

Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila

Award

Score

Chairman's Trophy	97 Siete Leguas Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$44.99, 750 ml
	A rich mossiness is the main aroma from the glass, with well integrated notes of spice box. Light in the mouth it is savory and aromatic with spiced tobacco, charred moss and coffee. Subtle and focused. Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	95 Tres Agaves Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml
	Aromas are structured with lots of minerality and savory earth. Luxuriously smooth on the palate, the effect is warming with plenty of sweet baking spices, roasted tobacco and a touch of charred barrel. Overall soft and spicy. Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	94 el Jimador Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$22.99, 750 ml
	Richly layered aromas of slow roasted pineapple, dark green moss and minerals make up the nose. The flavors are broad, encompassing sweet fruit, earthy grass and spiced cake with hints of brown sugar and sea salt. Wonderfully complex. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
Finalist	94 IZKALI Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$38.00, 750 ml
	Aromas are rugged and earthy with a subtle nuttiness. In the mouth it starts out saline and quickly turns to full on spice box, dark caramel, vanilla and suggestions of orange peel. It is fine grained in texture with a pleasant leatheriness. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
Finalist	93 Lunazul Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$22.99, 750 ml
	Rich and leathery aromas of cigar box are nicely spiced. Ultra smooth in the mouth, layers of spice unfold one at a time revealing woody flavors with hints of campfire and a touch of medium dark caramel. Long lasting. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended

92 **El Tesoro Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$60.00, 750 ml**

Complex aromas of charred pineapple and hay are richly perfumed. Dark and sweet flavors abound in the mouth with plenty of caramel and vanilla, all the while with spice roasted tropical fruit at the core. Nicely suede in texture. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Herradura Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$49.99, 750 ml**

The aromas are marked by cinnamon and fresh green pears. A hint of savoriness on the palate is accompanied by tart and juicy red berry flavors with suggestions of slight smoke. Delicate spice keeps the finish intriguing. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **KAH Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$49.99, 750 ml**

Golden amber in color. Fresh earth aromas are supported by vanilla and creme brulee. Soft and smooth in the mouth, flavors are mostly sweet and custard like with hints of clove and subtle cardamom on the finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

88 **Agave 99 Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$49.99, 750 ml**

Candied orange zest jumps from the glass with hints of green earth coming through. A rich roasted earth flavor comes through on the palate with cinnamon spiked coffee and deep chocolate. The texture is round and weighty yet still bouyant. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Tequila

Extra Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila

Award

Score

Chairman's Trophy

96 **Malinalli Extra Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$107.00, 750 ml**

Deep amber/topaz color. Aroma bursts open with vegetal, herbal fragrances of asparagus, thyme, dill, sage. Flavor features tightly wound tastes of dill, pickle brine, saltine cracker, tobacco, black tea that last deep into the smoked, toasted aftertaste. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Finalist

93 **Herradura Seleccion Suprema Extra Añejo, 100% Agave Tequila Mexico, 40% abv, \$350.00, 750 ml**

Deeply concentrated aromas of cigar box and slight maple. The spice continues on to the palate with cinnamon and hot red chili balancing the ultra smooth body. Subtle sweetness rounds out the flavors, allowing the spice to flourish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Mezcal

Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairmen, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award

Score

Finalist

97 **Del Maguey Santo Domingo Albarradas Mezcal Mexico, 48% abv, \$70.00, 750 ml**

Smoke and custard aromas abound. The flavors are fiery with red chilli, red berries and sweet papaya. A gentle smokiness perfumes from start to finish along with a warming spice that lasts and lasts on the palate. A pleasure to sip. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Finalist

95 **Del Maguey San Luis Del Rio Azul Mezcal Mexico, 47% abv, \$100.00, 750 ml**

Aromas are layered with brine, smoked pineapple and minerals. Very bright on the palate with high toned spiciness, lime rind, minerality, and an almost meaty savory quality. Smoked red peppers and roasted root vegetables offer sweet undertones. Delightful. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

92 **Del Maguey Chichicapa Mezcal Mexico, 46% abv, \$70.00, 750 ml**

Sweet and creamy aromas play nicely with subtle smokiness. Unbelievably rich on the palate with flavors unfolding to reveal ripe tropical fruits, warming red chilli spice and delicate campfire smoke. The texture is unctuous, leaving a long lasting impression. Divine. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 **Los Amantes Reposado Mezcal Mexico, 40% abv, \$59.99, 750 ml**

Sweet cedar and grass are pleasantly smoky in the nose. Decidedly savory on the palate there is tons of deeply concentrated charred wood flavor with notes of coffee and mesquite, and a piquant mouth feel that lingers long. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Whiskey

American Whiskey Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairmen, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award	Score	
Finalist	93	Balcones 1 Texas Single Malt American Whiskey United States, 53% abv, \$70.00, 750 ml Bright bronze/copper color. Smells stunningly of malted milk balls, tropical fruits (guava, papaya), cornbread, unsweetened breakfast cereal, Graham crackers. Taste is alluringly sweet, sappy, maple-like, biscuity, honeyed, spicy (clove plays the major role), with a curious nuance of mustard seed. Finishes long, toasty, woody, supple. Excellent, Highly Recommended
	86	Bernheim Original 7 Year Old Kentucky Straight Wheat Whiskey United States, 45% abv, \$29.99, 750 ml Exquisite notes of toffee, candied apple, vanilla bean, and banana. Soft yet incredibly flavorful with baked cherry, coffee, and a lingering smokiness. Finishes dry with brown sugar and more cherry. Very Good, Strong Recommendation

Whiskey

Bourbon Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairmen, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award	Score	
Chairman's Trophy	98	Pappy Van Winkle Family Reserve 20 Years Old Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 45.2% abv, \$149.99, 750 ml Incredible aromatic layers of malted grains, honeyed oats and salted caramel. Buttery and rich in texture, the flavors are deeply concentrated and warming with more salted caramel, baking spices and hints of baked stone fruit. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	97	Old Forester Birthday Bourbon Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 48.5% abv, \$59.99, 750 ml Bright orange, bronze color. Fragrance is of burnt match, sulphur, espresso in the first inhalations then the bouquet unfolds in stages of breakfast cereal, oatmeal, toasted bread, hominy, wet hay aromas that while disparate really work well. Taste phase is warming, bordering on fiery, but tightly controlled, semisweet, peppery, spicy. Lots happening here from start to long, charred finish. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation

- Finalist 96 **W.L. Weller 12 Years Old Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 45% abv, \$24.99, 750 ml**
- Fresh and complex aromas combine red and stone fruits with brown butter and light brown sugar. Focused and clean on the palate with more fruit flavors, dark molasses and hints of coffee and cacao are deep and long lasting. **Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**
- Finalist 95 **Blanton's Original Single Barrel Bourbon United States, 46.5% abv, \$55.00, 750 ml**
- Orange blossom honey and wheat berry aromas fill the nose. Dark caramel, coffee, tobacco and burnt brown sugar all intermingle on the palate, creating a dark flavor profile. The texture is smooth and flavor long lasting. Very nice. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**
- Finalist 95 **Four Roses Single Barrel Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 50% abv, \$39.00, 750 ml**
- Burnt orange color. **Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**
- Finalist 95 **Four Roses Limited Edition Small Batch 2014 Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 55.9% abv, \$99.00, 750 ml**
- Bright copper/bronze color is an eye-catcher. Hearty, expressive aroma is chockfull of toasted marshmallow, candied citrus peel, toffee, baked pear notes. Taste-wise, there's a wide array of flavors, from baked pineapple to crème brulée to pine, that challenge the palate while simultaneously delighting. Aftertaste is long, pruny, built for post-prandial consumption. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**
- Finalist 95 **Knob Creek 9 Years Old Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 50% abv, \$30.99, 750 ml**
- The nose is distinctly floral and fruity with notes of red fruits and peaches. Powerfully spicy and woody in the mouth with hints of smoke, cigar box and tobacco leaf that lingers long on the palate. **Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Finalist

95 **Old Forester Signature Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 50% abv, \$22.99, 750 ml**

Highly attractive bronze color. Aromatic notes of honey, marzipan, nougat, candy bar, and candied walnut make for delightful sniffing enjoyment. Flavor profile is ripe, fruity, semisweet, succulent, slightly toasted, buttery. Aftertaste highlights the cereal grain, cornmeal aspects. Hefty, robust. **Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Finalist

95 **Woodford Reserve Double Oaked Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 45.2% abv, \$54.99, 750 ml**

Bronze/ochre color is pretty. Notes of white pepper, parsley, cardamom, cola nut, jasmine highlight the early aroma which then turns toastier, roasted in the latter stages. Flavor impact is immediate in the forms of deep oak resins, maple syrup, vanilla bean. Aftertaste is long, oily, buttery, semisweet. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

94 **1792 Ridgemont Reserve Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 46.85% abv, \$29.99, 750 ml**

Sweet maple and caramel cream are pungent in the nose. In the mouth it is thoroughly imbued with nutmeg, coffee and hints of red fruits and tobacco leaf. The texture starts off smooth and rounded before the piquant finish. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

94 **Bulleit Bourbon United States, 45% abv, \$27.99, 750 ml**

Dry, restrained nose with some herbs and a hint of orange peel. Rich, with plenty of corn sweetness and impressively long, rich flavors. The tannins and spice on the finish cleanse the sweetness from the palate. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

94 **Larceny 6 Year Old Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 46% abv, \$24.99, 750 ml**

Delicate aromas of sponge cake, orange marmalade, and pecan pie. Wonderfully soft mouthfeel with vanilla latte, baked cherry, and almond. Well balanced and exquisite whiskey. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

94 **Woodford Reserve Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 45.2% abv, \$34.99, 750 ml**

Old gold/bronze coloring. Toasted marshmallow, oatmeal, spirty aromas abound in this generous fragrance that's hearty and assertive, ending in a roasted peanut scents that's appealing. Flavor-wise, there's a piquant element of black pepper that fades by midpalate, leaving the door open for cornmeal, caramel corn, treacle, marzipan. Long, roasted finish is attractive and robust. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

93 **Jim Beam Devil's Cut Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 45% abv, \$23.99, 750 ml**

Smells grainy, sweet, woody and a bit like root beer. In the mouth there's sweet oak, cinnamon, root beer and vanilla. The woodiness follows through on the finish as well. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

93 **Knob Creek Single Barrel 9 Years Old Bourbon United States, 60% abv, \$40.99, 750 ml**

Fruity aromas intermingle with light tobacco and maple. Sweet and spicy on the palate, the flavors start with sweet brown sugar then turn to intense cinnamon spice and even further develop with coffee and dark caramel on the finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Buffalo Trace Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 45% abv, \$24.99, 750 ml**

Rich in the nose with cinnamon and maple aromas. Luxuriously soft and round in the mouth with perfectly integrated layers of caramel, vanilla, tobacco and baking spices that linger on through the finish. Very nice. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Elijah Craig Barrel Proof 12 Year Old Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 64% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml**

Deep and complex with warm cherry pie giving way to cinnamon, fennel seed, overripe mango, and toasted coconut. Rich and robust yet balanced by a sweetness reminiscent of pure maple syrup and caramelized pear. Smooth and beautiful finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Four Roses Small Batch Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 45% abv, \$29.00, 750 ml**

Bright orange color. Smells of lead pencil, minerals, parched earth, desert, dry breakfast cereal, white bread toast. Flavors include toffee, brown butter, brown rice, caramel corn, toasted marshmallow. Long aftertaste is sap-like, honeyed. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

90 **Hillrock Solera Aged Bourbon United States, 46.3% abv, \$80.00, 750 ml**

Burnished orange color. Really lovely and elegant fragrances of clove, cinnamon, baked pineapple, bacon fat, unsalted butter, cooking oil, wax paper all work in harmony. Taste-wise, the focus is more on the oak resins, cooking oils than the cereal grains and that makes for substantial flavors that are creamy and rich. Finishes semisweet, toasted, sophisticated. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

89 **Four Roses Yellow Label Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 40% abv, \$19.99, 750 ml**

Pale amber/topaz color. Toasted corn, corn-on-the-cob aromas are clearly evident right from the start, then with further air contact the bouquet blossoms into a full-blown cornfest. Taste-wise, the flavors are integrated, corn-driven, not as toasty as roasted, mellow, supple, straightforward. Ends medium long, crisp. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

88 **Benchmark Old No. 8 Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 40% abv, \$11.99, 750 ml**

Aromas of cereals are light and sweet. Smooth and quite spicy, it is definitely savory on the palate. What starts off spicy and a touch smoky gives way to rich coffee with cream for a softer finish. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

88 **Breckenridge Bourbon United States, 43% abv, \$44.00, 750 ml**

Delightful aromas are reminiscent of freshly baked granola bars. Clean and fresh in the mouth with flavors of coffee and cedar and a slight charred moss undertone. The texture is light and buoyant throughout. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

88 **Kentucky Tavern Kentucky Straight Bourbon United States, 40% abv, \$10.99, 750 ml**

Savory aromas of grains are supported by a touch of honey. Very smooth in the mouth with incredibly well balanced flavors of cherries, cedar and light cinnamon spice that keeps on going after each sip. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Whiskey

Rye Whiskey Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award

Score

Chairman's Trophy

97 **Thomas H. Handy Sazerac Straight 6 Years Old Rye Whiskey United States, 64.6% abv, \$80.00, 750 ml**

Deeply concentrated aromas of toasted grains, brown rice and molasses. Equally rich and deep in the mouth with layers of baked goods, cigar box and fresh herb flavors. On the finish it is lightly spiced with dark caramel. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Finalist

94 **Sazerac Rye Whiskey United States, 45% abv, \$26.99, 750 ml**

Interesting aromas of wheat and red berries. Decidedly savory and spiced in the mouth, the flavors develop into dark coffee and vanilla caramel after each sip. A fine grain texture is a nice balance of smooth and rustic. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Bulleit Rye Whiskey United States, 45% abv, \$27.99, 750 ml**

Cherry and spice on the nose. This is a big and spicy rye, but also fruity, with cherries and stonefruit. Nicely astringent finish that goes on for a good long time. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Knob Creek Rye Whiskey United States, 50% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml**

Enticing aromas of oats and honey waft from the glass. Focused on the palate with plenty of hearty spice and whole grain flavor. Round and earthy, it leaves the mouth with a pleasant flavor of brown bread. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Whiskey

Tennessee Whiskey

Award

Score

Chairman's Trophy 95 **George Dickel No. 12 Tennessee Whiskey United States, 45% abv, \$24.99, 750 ml**

Opening with fresh fig, honeysuckle, and very intriguing allusions to fresh sourdough bread. Round and elegant, with morel cherry, vanilla, and barrel spice. Baking spices line the finish, which is delicate and long. **Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Finalist 93 **George Dickel Barrel Select Tennessee Whiskey United States, 51.5% abv, \$44.99, 750 ml**

Banana and bakers dough come to mind followed by baked apricot and toasted coconut. Very mellow with complex fruit and nut flavored balanced by sweet brown sugar notes. Brown sugar notes continue onto the finish dotted by baked apricot. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Whiskey

Blended Irish Whiskey Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award	Score	
Chairman's Trophy	97	Jameson 18 Years Old Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$85.00, 750 ml
		Pretty topaz/sienna color. Assertive bouquet is long on deep, dry, and concentrated breakfast cereal fragrance. Taste profile offers baked cherry, strudel, pastry, yeasty notes. Luscious, viscous delights await. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96	Midleton Very Rare Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$125.00, 750 ml
		Auburn/russet appearance is gorgeous. Concentrated aromas are layered in waves of prune, pie crust, baked cherry, toasted marshmallow. Highlighted flavors of buttered toast, dry cereal, oatmeal, plum pudding, treacle thrill the taste buds with their integration. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	95	Jameson Rare Vintage Reserve Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 46% abv, \$250.00, 750 ml
		Burnt orange appearance. Scent profile features oak, vanilla, clove, dried orange rind. Flavor stage is lush, oily, creamy, moderately toasted, complex in its deep graininess that is multilayered. Robust classic that deserves wide recognition. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation

94 **Kilbeggan 18 Years Old Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$n/a, 750 ml**

Attractive orange/russet color is vibrant. Wow, the intense fruitiness is wildly charming in the animated bouquet, which is also a bit citrusy. Flavor profile is a sophisticated mixture of campfire smokiness and baked fruit pastry that hits the right balance. Lovely, robust. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

93 **Bushmills Black Bush Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$49.00, 750 ml**

Deeper notes of ripe red delicious apple and sage with lifted vanilla and honeyed aromas. Rich and honeyed in the mouth, with baked cherries, lemon zest, and brown sugar. Very mellow fruit-tinged finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

93 **Jameson Black Barrel Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$35.00, 750 ml**

Pretty burnt orange/rust color. Aroma is laden with baking spice piquancy, in particular, nutmeg and clove. Flavor-wise, there's a bounty of baked tropical fruits (pineapple, banana) that are heavily spiced with thyme, sage, parsley. The herbaceousness continues deep into the aftertaste. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

93 **Jameson 12 Years Old Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$50.00, 750 ml**

Topaz color reflects the light beautifully. Bouquet is a fine-tuned melange of prune, black raisin, oatmeal cookie. Taste stage features more of the oatmeal and grain than the fruit aspects and therefore finishes totally dry, oaky, spicy. Elegant. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

93 **Kilbeggan Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$23.99, 750 ml**

Lightish goldenrod/marigold color is brilliant and eye-catching. Delicate aroma features pine nut, oak plank, white pepper, orange peel. Flavor profile highlights the nuttiness and mild cooking spice in an elegant manner. Lovely, straightforward. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 93 **Midleton Barry Crockett Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 46% abv, \$240.00, 750 ml**
- Soft-focus orange color is pretty. Loads of ripe fruits explode in the ambrosial bouquet, in particular, ripe pear, spiced apple, quince. Taste-wise, the flavor stage highlights the honeyed aspect that's barely perceptible in the aroma but comes alive in the taste and finish. Classy, highly sensual. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- 92 **Jameson Gold Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$60.00, 750 ml**
- Deep amber/sepia appearance. Soft, pillowy aromas are stuffed with ripe fruits (quince, banana), baking spice (cinnamon, allspice), toasted marshmallow. Taste profile is long, oily, dry to off-dry, intensely woody, almost resinous but nicely balanced, bold, hearty. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- 92 **Jameson Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$28.00, 750 ml**
- Amber color, with pretty orange core highlights. Nose is alive with toasted malt, dry breakfast cereal, light baking spice (clove) elements that are harmonious and light. Taste mirrors the bouquet, especially in the cereal replication. Toasty, oaky, entirely pleasing. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**
- 89 **Concannon 4 Years Old Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$24.99, 750 ml**
- Lovely 14-carat gold color. Intensely grainy in the straightforward, no-nonsense bouquet. Taste profile reflects the simplicity of the bouquet and goes grainy, cereal-like all the way through the dusty dry finish. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**
- 88 **Bushmills Original Blend Blended Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$39.00, 750 ml**
- Toasted oats, honey roasted walnuts, coconut flesh, and golden plum dominate the nose. Smooth and round mouthfeel, with fruit coming forward backed by minerals and honey. A sweet but balanced finish ensues. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Whiskey

Irish Pot Still Whiskey Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairmen, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award

Score

Chairman's Trophy	98 Redbreast 15 Years Old Irish Pot Still Whiskey Ireland, 46% abv, \$75.00, 750 ml
	Deep ginger color. Truckloads of baking spices, including allspice, clove, toasted cereal in aroma. Toasty, slightly saline flavor that's intensely grainy, breakfast cereal-like. A bona fide pure pot still classic. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96 Redbreast Cask Strength 12 Years Old Irish Pot Still Whiskey Ireland, 57.7% abv, \$65.00, 750 ml
	Golden sunset yellow color. First aromas are spirty, buoyantly aggressive, then the bouquet turns meaty, intensely grainy. Flavor profile highlights the cereal grains more than anything else. Finishes long, oily, textured, peppery. Not for the timid drinker. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	94 Powers John's Lane Reserve Irish Pot Still Whiskey Ireland, 46% abv, \$65.00, 750 ml
	Brilliant straw yellow/golden hue is eye-catching. Nose is vibrant with succulent tropical fruit (banana, guava) scents that are dry but ripe. Flavor profile oozes with luxurious tastes of honeydew melon, sherry, oaky vanilla, and sweetened breakfast cereal, wrapped in a viscous cloak. Excellent, Highly Recommended
Finalist	94 Redbreast 12 Years Old Irish Pot Still Whiskey Ireland, 43% abv, \$40.00, 750 ml
	Marigold/wheat field yellow appearance that shines. Assertive, breakfast cereal bouquet is desert dry, woody/oaky, slightly pine needle-like. Taste profile features integrated flavors of white raisins, buttered honey wheat toast, cooking oil, and baked pear. A fine-tuned whiskey of preeminent class. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
	91 Powers Gold Irish Pot Still Whiskey Ireland, 43.2% abv, \$30.00, 750 ml
	Attractive hay/straw yellow color, bordering on 14-carat gold. Nose is a banquet of dried fruits (raisins, figs), baking spices (clove, nutmeg), dark honey. Taste profile is a mirror image of the aromatic attributes, finishing off with a burst of pepperiness in the zesty aftertaste. No wallflower, this one. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended

Whiskey

Single Malt Irish Whiskey Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award	Score	
Chairman's Trophy	97	Bushmills 16 Years Old Single Malt Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$91.00, 750 ml Malty with notes of cocoa, rhubarb, cherry liqueur, and honey. Nutty and full on the palate, with a savory edge. Baked apricot and honey linger onto the finish, which is luscious and lengthy. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96	Bushmills 21 Years Old Single Malt Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$120.00, 750 ml Red wine poached pear, dried tobacco, baking spice, and baked apricot on the nose. Much softer and honeyed on the palate with guava and roasted cherry tomato. Quite exotic with an exacting and complex fruit-forward finish. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96	Connemara Peated Single Malt Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$34.99, 750 ml Topaz color. Aromas of pine nut, wood smoke, baked pear come alive right from the first inhalation. Flavor profile is long, oily, roasted, savory. Superbly delicious! Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
	93	Bushmills 10 Years Old Single Malt Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$58.00, 750 ml Kiwi, lemon oil, honeysuckle, and allusions to oyster mushroom fill the nose. Very exotic. Much softer and savory on the palate. Honey-tinged and nutty with guava and lime. A soft and sweet finish ensues. Excellent, Highly Recommended
	93	Tyrconnell Single Malt Irish Whiskey Ireland, 40% abv, \$44.99, 750 ml Pale 14-carat gold color is bright. Herbal bouquet is rife with dried spices, especially black pepper, thyme, mace. Taste is burgeoning with smoked cereal, tobacco leaf, honeysuckle flavors that bleed over into the succulent, dry finish. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended

Whisky

Canadian Whisky Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award

Score

- 91 **Caribou Crossing Single Barrel Canadian Whisky Canada, 40% abv, \$49.99, 750 ml**

Fresh roasted coffee, baked green apple, apricot, and cinnamon on the nose. On the palate it is mellow and sweet with more apricot and brown sugar, redolent of cobbler. Clean and concise finish.

Excellent, Highly Recommended

- 91 **Wiser's Legacy Canadian Whisky Canada, 45% abv, CAD49.95, 750 ml**

Opulent in color and aroma with dense stone fruit, acacia honey, vanilla, and barrel honey. Round on the palate with burnt honey, toasted walnuts, pine resin, and caramel. Luscious and soft finish.

Excellent, Highly Recommended

- 90 **Wiser's 18 Years Old Canadian Whisky Canada, 40% abv, \$69.99, 750 ml**

Rather complex with black licorice, quince, brown sugar, and stewed apricot on the nose. Slightly floral as well. More reserved on the palate alluding to baked fruit and brown sugar. Delicately sweet and soft finish. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 89 **Wiser's Deluxe Canadian Whisky Canada, 40% abv, CAD27.45, 750 ml**

Delicate nose of vanilla bean, white flower, nougat, and toffee. Fruit-forward on the palate with apricot, peach, Anjou pear, and green apple. Pleasantly soft and spicy on the finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 88 **Collingwood Canadian Whisky Canada, 40% abv, \$27.00, 750 ml**

A gentle mesquite smokiness fills the nose with maple, walnut, and baked apple. A pleasant sweetness on the palate accompanies spicy cinnamon and nutmeg notes with a touch of orchard fruit. Fruit-forward and mellow finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Recommendation

- 87 **Royal Canadian Small Batch Canadian Whisky Canada, 40% abv, \$19.99, 750 ml**

Apple cider, nutmeg, sea salt, and caramel punctuate the nose followed by a well defined menthol characteristic. Honeyed and apple-y with a savory and floral spice on the palate before leading into a smooth and succinct finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

- 85 **Rich & Rare Reserve Canadian Whisky Canada, 40% abv, \$11.99, 750 ml**

Soft and decadent with vanilla, clove, and caramel notes rising from the glass. Lighter in body with a nutty sweetness, licorice and honey notes, also a touch of green apple, followed by a lengthy finish. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Whisky

Single Malt Scotch Whisky Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award

Score

Chairman's Trophy

- 98 **Aberlour A'bunadh Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 59% abv, \$70.00, 750 ml**

Gorgeous chestnut brown color is dazzling. Huge aromatic thrust is led by toasted barley malt, oak-influenced vanilla, plum pudding, dark chocolate scents, maple. Taste profile mirrors those attributes and adds a deft touch of honey. **Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Finalist

- 97 **Bowmore Darkest 15 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$69.99, 750 ml**

Gorgeous auburn/henna color. The aroma is chockfull of toasted, roasted grain elements plus hallmark sherry cask traits of black raisins, figs, and high cocoa content chocolate. Taste profile is offers a generous, satin-like viscosity that supports the rich, dark caramel, dark roasted malt, and espresso flavors. A titanic Islay malt that echoes the legendary Black Bowmore 1964. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Finalist	96 Ardbeg Uigeadail Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 54.2% abv, \$78.99, 750 ml
	Color of golden wheat field. Smells seductively of peat smoke, cigar ash, tobacco, sea salt, smoked fish, campfire. Taste profile is toasty, semisweet, honeyed, multilayered, toffee-like. Amazingly elegant, considering the peat level. Classic. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96 Glenfarclas 25 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$149.99, 750 ml
	Copper/bronze color. Amazing fruitcake aromas of roasted walnut, dried pineapple, dried apricot, nutmeg, dark honey dazzle the senses. Flavor profile highlights the bakery-like richness found in the bouquet. But it's the sumptuous, wholly integrated aftertaste that's the star attraction. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96 Glenfarclas 105 Proof Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 60% abv, \$89.99, 750 ml
	Russet/tawny color. Seductive aromas include roasted chestnut, leather bound books - men's club, vanilla wafer, candle wax, pork rind. Flavor profile features heady, big-hearted, robust tastes of sherry, cocoa, hazelnut, tree sap/maple, dark toffee. Hearty aftertaste is ribboned with zesty, salty sherry. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96 Highland Park 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$45.99, 750 ml
	Golden yellow appearance. Elegant aromas include nut paste, almond, sea air, light peat smoke, baked banana, leather. Taste profile features more grain than found in the bouquet. Integrated, harmonious finish is a model of perfection. Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96 Highland Park 18 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 18% abv, \$104.99, 750 ml
	Brilliant burnt orange/ copper color. Majestic aroma offers sea air, malt, saltine cracker, coffee bean, light peatiness/smokiness, pork rind fragrances that are integrated. Taste highlights the maltiness and beaniness wrapped in a toffee-like flavor that lasts deep into the dry finish. Top rank maritime malt. Elegant, swank. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation

96 **Talisker 10 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 45.8% abv, \$50.00, 750 ml**

Wheat field yellow/amber color. Distinctive aroma serves notice immediately that this is a spirited, robust malt of consequence. Flavor profile supports the bouquet, adding traces of sea salt, tobacco, cooking oil, sage. Maritime malt magnificence in a glass. **Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

95 **Aberfeldy 21 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$169.99, 750 ml**

Bright russet/amber color. Smells of butcher's wax paper, brown rice, lanolin, palm oil, grain kernel. Taste profile is round, nutty, keenly toffee-like, peppery, off-dry. Finish is softer than midpalate, oily. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

95 **Ardbeg Corryvreckan Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 57.1% abv, \$89.99, 750 ml**

Honey color. The aromatic emphasis is not - surprisingly - on the peat but rather on the soft malt/cereal grain fragrance. Flavor profile is toasty, roasted, intensely grainy, lean, austere, incredibly complex but straightforward. Finishes dry, beany/kernel-like, zesty. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

95 **Auchentoshan Three Wood Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$69.99, 750 ml**

The dry, herbal, nearly delicate opening aroma is seductively tangy but after a few minutes of air contact it explodes into aromatic fireworks that include toffee, seared meat, new leather, lightly sweetened breakfast cereal, marshmallow, lanolin. The taste menu features deep flavors of toasted malt, sherry, fresh, new honey, black pepper, citrus rind. Finishes long, supple, gently fruity, succulent. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

95 **Glenfarclas 17 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$89.99, 750 ml**

Deep copper/chestnut brown color. Rich, luxurious aromas abound of sherry, prunes, cocoa, treacle, cake frosting. Taste profile is oily, creamy, sweet, honeyed, and totally charming in its candy shop splendor. Finishes complex, concentrated, harmonious. A model of malt whisky in its prime. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

95 **Glenmorangie Nectar D'Or 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 46% abv, \$69.99, 750 ml**

Golden raisin-like color. Sumptuous aroma of baked fruits (pears, nectarines, quince), wine grapes, malt, fruit salad, honeysuckle -- amazing bouquet. Flavors include white raisins, honey, apple butter, wine, biscuits. Finishes long, succulent, divinely ambrosial.

Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation

95 **Glenmorangie Signet Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 46% abv, \$199.00, 750 ml**

Lovely deep russet/tawny color. Smells of toasted malt, dried fruits (raisins, prunes), candied nuts, orange zest, dark honey. Flavor features a rich, chewy, viscous texture that underpins tastes of maple apple, baked pears. Finishes toasty, slightly peated, juicy.

Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation

95 **Glenmorangie Extremely Rare 18 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 46% abv, \$119.00, 750 ml**

Amber/gold color. Lightly toasted aromas of bread dough, sesame, palm oil, roasted malt delight the senses. Flavors include cookie batter, brown sugar, honey, praline, mustard seed. Aftertaste is extended, chewy in texture, oily, resinous, classy.

Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation

95 **Glenmorangie Lasanta 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$53.99, 750 ml**

Beautiful rusty/copper color is lovely. There is no mistaking the sherry influence in the succulent aroma that's simultaneously ambrosial and grainy. Taste-wise, the fruit/grain marathon continues all the way into the thrilling, fruity finish. Wood finishing at its finest.

Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation

95 **Highland Park 15 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$69.99, 750 ml**

Straw yellow appearance. Nose is vibrant with light peat, malted milk, breakfast cereal, seaweed, salted fish, pearl onion scents. Flavor offers a banquet of maritime treats, from sea air to salt, in addition to bakery tastes of bread dough, yeast. Classic island malt CV.

Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation

95 **Laphroaig Quarter Cask Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 48% abv, \$54.99, 750 ml**

Straw yellow color, bordering on goldenrod. Aroma is chockfull of tobacco ash, campfire, kippers, green pepper, new leather scents that delight from the first moment. Flavor is refined, but robust and loaded with toasted marshmallow and brunt orange peel tastes. A pleasing mouthful of Islay. **Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

95 **The Glenlivet Nadurra Oloroso 16 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 53% abv, \$79.99, 750 ml**

Brilliant burnt orange/bronze appearance. Toasty aromas of sherry, ripe grapes, malted milk ball, old leather book binding, truffles are aromatic highlights. Flavor profile features assertive, spirity, warming tastes of oak, baking spice (vanilla bean, especially), caramel that extend deep into the robust, rowing aftertaste. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

94 **anCnoc 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml**

Golden honey appearance. Smells of newly tanned leather, cooking oil, freshly mown hay. Flavor features peanut butter, caramel, praline, marzipan. Aftertaste turns leaner and drier than midpalate. Seriously good. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

94 **Glenfarclas 21 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$119.99, 750 ml**

Brilliant copper/bronze color. Assertive aromas of honey and sherry take immediate charge and don't relent through entire nosing. Taste profile is oily, sherry sweet, malty, cocoa-like, completely luscious and decadent. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

94 **Glenmorangie Quinta Ruban 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 46% abv, \$55.99, 750 ml**

Orange hue is tinged with ruby coloring. Bouquet is toasty, fruity, ripe, grapy, porty, malty, luscious. Taste profile features the sensuous interplay of the malt with the ruby port and all the dividends that pays. Aftertaste is toasty, biscuity, semisweet. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

94 **Glenmorangie The Original 10 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml**

Hay field golden color. Delicate aromatics highlight ripe fruits such as white grapes, lemon, quince plus a measure of spice, namely cardamom. Taste profile highlights the dry cereal grain/malt as the flavor slips easily into the finish, like a whisper. **Great Value.**

Excellent, Highly Recommended

94 **Lagavulin 16 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$90.00, 750 ml**

Gorgeous orange/bronze appearance is bedazzling. Sports the emblematic Islay aromas of campfire, smoked fish, tobacco ash, toasted marshmallow, coffee bean. Taste profile highlights the peat smoke but doesn't sacrifice elegance and harmony in the process.

State-of-the-art Islay. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

94 **Oban 14 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$65.00, 750 ml**

Beautiful in the glass, a bright copper hue. Complex, concentrated, deeply grainy/malty aromas rise from the glass in waves. Tastes of malt, unsweetened dry breakfast cereal, brown rice. Elegant, hearty, classic Highland malt of genuine substance. **Great Value.**

Excellent, Highly Recommended

94 **Old Pulteney 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 43% abv, \$59.99, 750 ml**

Orange/topaz color. Richly malted aroma is lush, opulent, bordering on being sweet, very cereal-like, clean, cooking oil-like. Taste profile highlights honey, sweet malt, wax, toffee, light caramel, fudge flavors that last deep into the viscous finish. **Excellent, Highly**

Recommended

93 **Ardbeg 10 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 46% abv, \$56.99, 750 ml**

Bright gold color. Reluctant bouquet is measured but potent early-on then with aeration it explodes in waves of sea salt, sea air, campfire. Flavor direction is all about the peat suddenly as the malt takes a back seat until the aftertaste when it reemerges with a bang.

Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended

93 **Glen Garioch 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky**
Scotland, 48% abv, \$69.16, 750 ml

Attractive wheat field gold color. Bouquet features roasted grain nuttiness, toasted malt, cigarette ash, new leather, grapefruit. Taste thrust is towards the dry graininess that's nicely supported by oaky vanilla, honey, and toffee through the long aftertaste. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

93 **Glenfarclas 10 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland,**
43% abv, \$44.99, 750 ml

Harvest gold/honey color. Lots of animated scents, including malted barley, bread dough, newly tanned leather, pipe tobacco, amontillado sherry, marshmallow. Flavors highlight the sherry aspect, making the midpalate winey, slightly toasted, lightly smoked, and full of dried fruits, especially quince, apricot. Long, creamy, warming finish. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

93 **Speyburn 10 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland,**
43% abv, \$24.00, 750 ml

Bright golden/wheat field yellow color. Properly malty and cereal driven aroma is biscuity, cookie batter-like. Flavor features off-dry, fruity tastes of baked cherry, baked apple, muesli. Honest, straightforward, nice. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Aberfeldy 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland,**
40% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml

Bright golden/honey color. Soft, delicate malty aromas are cradled by scents of lemongrass, sage, thyme. Taste features animated, deep flavors of malted milk ball, cocoa, dark caramel. The aftertaste has an undercurrent of saltiness that sums up the experience well. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Glenfarclas 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland,**
43% abv, \$49.99, 750 ml

Honey/harvest gold color. Frontline aromas are vibrant, animated, juicy, fruity, semisweet, raisiny, pruny, but underneath that is a dry layer of malt. Taste-wise, the dominant flavor is the dried fruit aspect, which is sherried, honeyed, roasted, baked, charred. Aftertaste reflects the midpalate, adding a trace of flowers. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 **Auchentoshan 12 Years Old Single Malt Scotch Whisky**
Scotland, 40% abv, \$47.99, 750 ml

Pale gold color. The vivid aroma comes right at you from the first inhalation as the fragrance features dry breakfast cereal, multigrain bread dough, baker's yeast, cigarette tobacco. Flavor profile is narrower than the generous bouquet but its concentration on the desert dry malt is what's so attractive from entry through finish.

Excellent, Highly Recommended

90 **Bowmore Small Batch Single Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland,**
40% abv, \$39.99, 750 ml

Pretty flaxen/yellow color. Toasty notes are clearly evident in the aroma, but there's also traces of vegetation, palm oil, marzipan, oaky resin, black pepper. Taste profile highlights the toasted grain/malt component while the finish features a sweeter, spicier flavor that concentrated, slightly peaty/smoky.

Excellent, Highly Recommended

90 **Glen Garioch Founder's Reserve Single Malt Scotch Whisky**
Scotland, 48% abv, \$55.32, 750 ml

14-carat gold color shimmers with purity and oils. Tobacco-like aroma is dry to off-dry, grainy, slightly buttery/oily, with nuances of sawdust, oak plank, white pepper. Taste profile is loaded with focused grain flavors, especially malt, oatmeal/porridge, breakfast cereal toastiness. Very appealing malt of substance.

Excellent, Highly Recommended

Whisky

Blended Scotch Whisky Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award

Score

Chairman's Trophy

97 **Dewar's 18 Years Old Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40%**
abv, \$79.99, 750 ml

Attractive amber/goldenrod color. The aroma leaps from the glass in tsunamis of cocoa, coffee bean, tobacco scents that are perfectly integrated. Flavor profile highlights the tangy beaniness that's dry and piquant, almost peppery. Finishes long, oily, viscous, majestic. Utterly spectacular. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Finalist	95 Buchanan's Special Reserve 18 Years Old Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$69.00, 750 ml
	Bronze/copper color, with orange core highlights. Very toasty, doughy, yeasty aroma at first that expands to include cocoa, brown sugar later on. Flavor profile is multilayered, caramelized onion-like, burnt, charcoal-like, toasty yet fruity. Superb blending of the highest order. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	95 Grand Macnish Sherry Cask 15 Years Old Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$37.99, 750 ml
	Attractive marigold/amber color. Nose offers traces of spice cake, lanolin, nutmeg, candied almond, gooseberry. Flavor elements are finely integrated, off-dry, intensely grainy, slightly waxy, a touch winey. Excellent finish of gentle smoke, toastiness, maple. Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	94 Buchanan's DeLuxe 12 Years Old Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$31.00, 750 ml
	Topaz/amber appearance. First inhalations detect dry grains, peach then later sniffs get new leather, lanolin, cooking oil. Flavors include toasted marshmallow, baked apple, nutmeg, peanut butter, black pepper. Aftertaste is long, deep, complex. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
Finalist	94 Buchanan's Master Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$48.00, 750 ml
	Fiery orange color. The floral inland malt bouquet mingles with a bit of peatiness and maritime influence to make a big impression. Flavor features toast tastes of baked bread, S'mores, toffee, cocoa. Finishes long, creamy, sweet. Excellent, Highly Recommended
Finalist	94 Johnnie Walker Double Black Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$42.00, 750 ml
	Auburn appearance. Smells upfront of prunes, figs, black raisins, dark caramel, mace, sage. Flavor profile is equally fruity and grainy, highlighting the dry breakfast cereal aspect as well as the figs, dates. Concludes long, rich, a touch smoky, floral. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended

- 93 **Buchanan's Red Seal Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$149.00, 750 ml**

Copper/bronze color. Regal, stately aromas of malt, breakfast cereal, toasted bread, peanut butter prevail. Taste profile features off-dry flavors of dates, figs, olives, baked apple, honey that reach deep into the aftertaste. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 93 **Dewar's 12 Years Old Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$28.99, 750 ml**

Attractive straw yellow/wheat field gold color. Subdued aroma features delicate scents of new leather, hay, grass, malted milk ball. Taste profile is chewy, nutty, marshmallow sweet, oily, deeply cereal-like, elegant. Aftertaste is medium long, toasty, off-dry. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 93 **Dewar's Signature Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$199.99, 750 ml**

Brilliant copper/bronze color. Smells of praline, toasted marshmallow, hazelnut, old leather, oatmeal. Flavor profile is buttery, sensual, nutty, a bit like winter holiday fruitcake. Finishes long, earthy, minerally, semisweet. Terrific, sophisticated blend. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 92 **Grand Macnish Dual Cask 12 Years Old Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$26.99, 750 ml**

Topaz/amber color. Smells upfront of dry, unsweetened snack crackers, grain kernels, toasted oats, malted milk ball, cocoa, campfire. Taste profile highlights the intense graininess, but turns marginally sweeter than the bouquet, ending well in a cascade of biscuits, cookie batter, honey wheat toast. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

- 92 **Johnnie Walker Black Label 12 Years Old Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$35.00, 750 ml**

Brilliant amber/topaz color offers orange core flashes. Mature, biscuity, salty aromas are harmonious, roasted, candied, bittersweet, bakery-like. Tastes include baking spices, in particular, allspice plus more subtle notes of sea salt, wood smoke, smoked fish, peat, dark caramel. Finish is a banquet of varied, but integrated flavors. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Johnnie Walker Blue Label Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$225.00, 750 ml**

Deep amber/chestnut brown color. Estery, astringent nose is full of red cherry, red plum, sweet oak, vanilla bean, parchment. Flavor profile is off-dry, nutty, toasty, sappy, cedary, multilayered, complex, mature. Aftertaste lingers a long time in the throat and is fruity, ripe, smoky. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Johnnie Walker Red Label Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$25.00, 750 ml**

Golden amber color. Multiple fragrance layers, including dried flowers, salty sea breeze, grain husk/grain kernel, multi-grain bread, light peat. Flavor profile is tangy, zesty, spicy/peppery, lightly smoked, off-dry. Ends on a campfire smoke note that's alluring. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Johnnie Walker Gold Label Reserve Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$79.00, 750 ml**

Color of honey and harvested wheat. Nose is alive with vibrant scents of almond paste, black pepper, baked pineapple, dried banana, buttered toast. Flavor-wise, there's an acceleration of viscosity, creaminess that couch the sweet oak, vanilla wafer, baked apple tastes in grand style. Long, elegant aftertaste. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

89 **Cutty Sark Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$21.99, 750 ml**

Bright golden yellow color. Smells pleasantly of unsweetened breakfast cereal, unbuttered toast, baked pear, brown sugar. Taste profile offers simple, no-nonsense flavors of malt, cookie batter, brown sugar. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

89 **Dewar's White Label Blended Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$21.99, 750 ml**

Pretty gold/bronze color. Aroma features off-dry scents of holiday fruitcake, candied nuts, baked apple, new leather. Taste highlights the candied aspect as the flavor moves to a sweeter place than the bouquet. Simple semisweet finish. **Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Whisky

Blended Malt Scotch Whisky Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairmen, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award**Score**

Chairman's Trophy

96 **Sheep Dip Islay Blended Malt Scotch Whisky Scotland, 40% abv, \$64.00, 750 ml**

Roasted peaches and tomato aromas mingle with notes of campfire smoke on the expressive nose. Flavors in the mouth are thoroughly smoky with sweet undertones of sugared grains, creating a pleasant balance that is long lasting. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Whisky**Single Malt Welsh Whisky****Award****Score**

Chairman's Trophy

95 **Penderyn Single Malt Welsh Whisky Wales, 46% abv, \$69.99, 750 ml**

Aromas of grape jelly and sweet cream give way to a lush, creamy mouth. Toffee dominates at first, then notes of baking spices, pepper and a hint of the vegetal reveal themselves. A sweet, toasty whisky. **Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation**

Whisky**French Whisky****Award****Score**

Chairman's Trophy

94 **Armorik Single Malt Sherry Finish French Whisky France, 46% abv, \$62.00, 750 ml**

This French whisky drinks a lot like a Scottish single malt. Traces of rubber, peat and toffee comes through on the nose. In the mouth, it's apples and sherry with a peppery edge. Still, fresh and vibrant. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Flavored Whisk(e)y

Flavored Whisk(e)y - World Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairmen, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award**Score**89 **Bushmills Irish Honey Flavored Whisk(e)y Ireland, 35% abv, \$34.00, 750 ml**

A delicate nose offering aromas of fresh oats and wheat with a touch of golden honey. In the mouth the sweetness is tame and balanced by flavors of fresh wheat and a slight spiciness and smokiness. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Brandy

American Brandy Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award	Score
	91 E&J XO American Brandy United States, 40% abv, \$14.99, 750 ml
	The nose is enticing and reminiscent of warm bread pudding with salted caramel. Both sweet and savory in the mouth, fresh stone fruit is mixed with dark caramel and a generous amount of spicy cinnamon. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
	89 E&J VS American Brandy United States, 40% abv, \$10.99, 750 ml
	The bright aromas of lime blossom and green mango are fresh on the nose. In the mouth there is more tropical fruit with hints of coconut and vanilla that give a sweet edge to the long lasting flavor. Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation
	88 E&J VSOP American Brandy United States, 40% abv, \$12.99, 750 ml
	Aromas are decidedly fresh and fruity with figs and apricots. Light in the mouth with vanilla caramel flavors along with hints of spice cake and baked apples showing through. The finish is long and caramelized. Great Value. Very Good, Strong Recommendation

Brandy

Calvados Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award	Score
Finalist	94 Boulard XO Calvados France, 40% abv, \$459.00, 750 ml
	Rich aromas of spiced apple cake, apple tart, and sweet cider are complex and enticing. Equal depth on the palate offers deeply concentrated flavors of roasted apples, mace, nutmeg and medium dark caramel that carry on through the long finish. Excellent, Highly Recommended
	92 Calvados Lecompte 5 Years Old Calvados, Pays d'Auge France, 40% abv, \$50.00, 750 ml
	Subtle aromas of orange blossom and white tea mingle in the glass. The flavors are balanced between a spicy earthiness with a blanket of sweet baked goods, like a cinnamon danish. The spice lingers on the warm finish. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended

Brandy

Cognac Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award	Score	
Finalist	96	Cognac Frapin Chateau Fontpinot XO Cognac France, 41% abv, \$150.00, 750 ml Slightly earthy on the nose with subtle herbs and orange zest aromas. The pleasant mouth coating texture is richly laden with baking spices and a touch of tobacco. Clove-spiked oranges and light caramel round out the finish. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	96	Delamain Extra Cognac France, 40% abv, \$307.99, 750 ml Pungent aromas of white grapes and nectarines. Bright and citrusy flavors pair well with the smooth and somewhat suede-like texture that is laden with spices such as white pepper, mace and cardamom. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	95	Delamain Pale & Dry XO Cognac France, 40% abv, \$124.99, 750 ml Aromas are pretty with honeysuckle and hints of dried peach. Sweet in the mouth, the texture is clean and crisp. Stone fruit flavors mix with baking spices like nutmeg and mace before revealing a rich coffee and toffee finish. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	95	Martell Cordon Bleu Cognac France, 40% abv, \$130.00, 750 ml Dark and caramelized aromas are spicy and rich. Thick with spice, the flavors are reminiscent of sandalwood and cigar box with sweet cream and coffee and roasted peaches showing through on the finish. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
	89	D'Usse VSOP Cognac France, 40% abv, \$50.00, 750 ml Nutmeg and fig pleasantly perfume the nose. Brown sugar and roasted stone fruit characterize the flavors in the mouth, with hints of spicy tobacco coming through on the finish. Overall smooth and rich. Very Good, Strong Recommendation

Brandy

French Brandy

Award	Score
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86 **St-Remy XO Authentic French Brandy France, 40% abv, \$25.00, 750 ml**

The nose is subtle with light aromas of apricots and nectarines. Considerably richer on the palate, it is sweet with suggestions of nutmeg and allspice and a distinct vanilla bean flavor that lasts in the mouth. **Very Good, Strong Recommendation**

Brandy

Grappa Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairman, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award

Score

Finalist

94 **Bocchino Riserva Carlo Bocchino Grappa Italy, 43% abv, \$250.00, 700 ml , *seeking US Importer***

A rich golden color and an opulent body. Aromas of overripe fruit, black tea and vanilla are followed up by a mouth of wood spice with a trace of tobacco and a crack of white pepper. Round and lush, yet dry. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Nonino Il Moscato Grappa Italy, 41% abv, \$79.00, 750 ml**

Subtle on the nose with hints of white tea, pears and apple blossom. Incredibly soft and pillowy in the mouth, almost creamy in texture, the flavors play between sage, thyme, and tea leaf, with fresh green pear at the core. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Brandy

Pisco

Award

Score

92 **Pisco Capel Elqui Pisco Chile, 40% abv, \$16.99, 750 ml**

Delightfully pungent in the nose with plenty of fresh tropical fruit. Starting with a hint of sweetness, aromas of guava and kiwi unfold on a smooth and satiny texture. Touches of white pepper on the finish. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

91 **KAPPA Pisco Chile, 42.5% abv, \$34.99, 750 ml**

In the nose it is pungent with tangerine, flowers, and white grape jelly. Light on the palate the flavor is incredibly perfumed with flowers and a generous spiciness that lasts on and on in the mouth. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Brandy

Spanish Brandy Chairman's Trophy and Finalist status are determined by the judging chairmen, using a scoring curve based upon the number of entries and overall categorical scoring.

Award	Score	
Chairman's Trophy	94	Cardenal Mendoza Solera Gran Reserva Brandy de Jerez Spain, 40% abv, \$44.99, 750 ml Rich and nutty aromas offer raisins and sugared walnuts. Agre-dolce on the palate with deeply concentrated layered flavors of Tahitian vanilla spiked raisins, hazelnuts, and burnt sugar. A slight and sweet texture features baking spices throughout. Excellent, Highly Recommended

Liqueur

All liqueurs were judged in category flights of like-with-like (e.g., flights of dairy liqueurs, flights of herbal liqueurs, etc.). The Chairman's Trophy - Liqueur was awarded based on the highest scoring liqueur across all the liqueur categories.

Award	Score	
Finalist	95	St-Germain Liqueur France, 20% abv, \$33.99, 750 ml Incredibly aromatic with heady notes of elderflower, grapefruit zest, golden plum, and honeysuckle. Sweet but balanced with perfumed notes of lemon, cantaloupe, and sage. Such a graceful finish. Great Value. Extraordinary, Ultimate Recommendation
Finalist	94	Merlet Crème de Cassis, Blackcurrant Liqueur France, 20% abv, \$34.99, 750 ml Enticing and deep with tart blackberry, chocolate, and blueberry aromas. Decadent yet maintains a tart currant and blueberry character which lends a hand to a well-balanced, tart blackberry finish. Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended
	93	Belle de Brillet Pear Liqueur France, 30% abv, \$60.99, 750 ml Light golden color. Delightfully aromatic, bursting with ripe juicy anjou pear. Sweet in the mouth the pear flavor is focused and powerful, enhanced by notes of white flowers and a touch of light caramel. Lovely. Excellent, Highly Recommended

92 **Merlet Crème de Fraise, Strawberry Liqueur France, 18% abv, \$34.99, 750 ml**

Strawberry fruit leather is pungent on the nose. A bracing acidity keeps it fresh on the palate. Characteristics combine fresh strawberries with stewed strawberry and rhubarb and roasted strawberries for a complete spectrum of flavors. **Great Value. Excellent, Highly Recommended**

92 **Plymouth Sloe Gin United Kingdom, 26% abv, \$37.00, 750 ml**

Light ruby with blood orange flecks. Red and black berry aromas abound. Slightly viscous in the mouth with hints of coriander underneath the concentrated berry flavors. Walks the line between sweet and tart with great balance. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

90 **Merlet Crème de Peche, Peach Liqueur France, 18% abv, \$34.99, 750 ml**

Peach candy is sweet on the nose. In the mouth it is sweet-tart with lemony brightness nicely balancing the candied peach sweetness. A perfume of peach flavored candy is left to slowly fade from the palate. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**

Bitters/Amaro

Products were judged like-with-like. The Chairman's Trophy was awarded to the highest scoring product in the category.

Award

Score

92 **Breckenridge Bitters United States, 36% abv, \$29.00, 750 ml**

Pale straw color with light yellow highlights. The aromas are clean and herbal. It is slightly sweet on the tongue, balanced by intense herbaceousness, with thyme and a touch of cinnamon, that gives way to a deep bitterness that refreshes the palate. **Excellent, Highly Recommended**