

MORE AWARDS FOR KARUIZAWA 1971



We knew this was an epic dram when we first came across the cask at the distillery in November 2007. The critical acclaim was not entirely unexpected but, as ever, accepted with gratitude and humility. This has culminated in Cask #6878 being one of only six whiskies to receive a Gold Medal from the Malt Maniacs – www.maltmaniacs.org – as well as the prestigious Thumbs Up Award (for the most exciting new release in the Ultra Premium Category). This will be displayed with pride alongside the two Malt Maniacs awards from 2007.

This year has seen the launch of a new whisky blog called

www.caskstrength.net and it is very welcome. It has been created by two former music industry execs who, thankfully, inject a little youth into the creaking world of whisky commentary. Clearly they have a keen nose for quality as Karuizawa 1971 won their inaugural Best in Glass award, having edged a truly impressive shortlist by virtue of its “character, quality and overall genius.”

As if these weren't enough, Jim Murray scored Cask #6878 94 out of 100 in his Whisky Bible 2009 which means it is a “superstar whisky giving us all a reason to live.”

SCANDINAVIAN TASTING TOUR

Accompanied by Ichiro Akuto, we attended the Oslo Whisky Festival. In fact, Ichiro's well-attended and fascinating Masterclass was the curtain-raiser for the whole event, once again brilliantly organised by Chris Maile. Japanese whiskies made an impact on the show with Suntory and Nikka exhibiting as well as the whiskies of Karuizawa and Hanyu and the launch of Chichibu Newborn. Our Norwegian importer bottled a cask of Karuizawa from 1973 and we were delighted that this received the award for Best in Show (non-Scotch), voted for by visitors. We

celebrated in the appropriate manner at Dr Jekyll's Bar...

From Oslo we travelled to Trollhatten in Sweden where the local whisky club had organised a tasting for Akuto-san. There is no shortage of whisky expertise in Sweden; Sweden is a country of whisky clubs as Hasse Nilsson tells us. “There are more than one thousand clubs all around the country, from the frozen enthusiasts far up in the North to Malmö in the South. One of the most active clubs is Växjö Malt Whisky Society. They arrange tastings at least once a



month and the 200 members are truly devoted whisky buffs, or nerds, as they call themselves.” All bar half a dozen of the club members turned up to see Ichiro's presentation and to taste half a dozen of his whiskies.

Thanks to Marius and Martin in Norway and to Benny in Sweden for organising this extremely rewarding tour.

RECENT RELEASES

A bottling of Karuizawa from a Japanese wine cask, two new expressions in Ichiro Akuto's Card Series and spirit from Japan's newest distillery are now available.

Noh Series Karuizawa Cask #5004
Distilled in 1995, bottled in 2008 @ 63%

Nose: Huge sherry belter with a mass of wood notes. Tomato stalks, burnt sugar and well cooked oranges.

Palate: Sherry dominates with tinges of bitterness. A little water tames it and brings out sweet notes and that mint note lingers.

Finish: A veritable assault on the tongue and warms all the way to your toes. Recommended by Rob Allanson, Editor *Whisky Magazine*



Seven of Clubs Cask

Finished in refill American oak hogshead
Distilled in 2000, bottled in 2008 @ 59%

Two of Diamonds Cask

Finished in bourbon barrel
Distilled in 1991, bottled in 2008 @ 58.1%

Chichibu Newborn Cask #126

Distilled in July 2008, bottled in October 2008 @ 62.5%
Distillation began in March 2008. We have secured a single cask of this new spirit. Aged for four months in a bourbon barrel, the spirit has already taken on some colour. It is clean and fresh, reminiscent of a top-quality young grappa.

Look out for two exclusive bottlings for France; an amazing Karuizawa Single Cask from 1977 in the Noh Whisky Series bottled for La Maison du Whisky and a Hanyu 1986, unusual as the whisky was not finished in a different cask type, bottled for La Part des Angles.



DISTRIBUTORS

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