



THE SCOTCH MALT WHISKY SOCIETY

The Scotch Malt Whisky Society presents The Only Drop

The Scotch Malt Whisky Society bucks the trend with its inaugural contribution to the Distillers One of One auction at Sotheby's with a minimalist, environmentally friendly sculpture that puts the whisky at the heart of the offering and proves luxury can be both simple and sustainable.

The Only Drop by The Scotch Malt Whisky Society is a decadent, elegant dram that has spent 33 years in sherry casks and is encased by a bespoke paper pulp sculpture that's infused with wood shavings from the original casks, reuniting the liquid once again with the vessel it matured in.

The Scotch Malt Whisky Society, part of the Artisanal Spirits Company, curated a team of maverick artists, thinkers and craftspeople with outstanding luxury, artisanal and sustainability credentials to deliver fresh thinking for this prestige project. The creative concept was led by STCKMN in consultation with sustainable British paper innovators, James Cropper, and was handcrafted for the auction by Matter Agency. With both the 33 Year Old sherry matured single malt scotch whisky along with and the minimalist, environmentally conscious design, the Scotch Malt Whisky Society's The Only Drop balances tradition with modernity.

The whisky arguably started in a very classic direction. On 25th September 1989, a spirit from a revered Speyside distillery (Scotch Malt Whisky Society distillery no 24) that was renowned for its use of sherry casks began maturing in an Oloroso sherry butt. Thirty years later, on 7th May 2019, at the bequest of the spirits experts at The Scotch Malt Whisky Society its contents were unconventionally divided equally between a first fill Oloroso hogshead and a first fill Pedro *Ximénez* hogshead. Three years later they were reunited to create one unique bottle, never to be repeated.

This bottling is a sculptural celebration of the relationship between whisky and cask. The one-of-a-kind handcrafted release serves as a visual narrative of the 33-year partnership that gave birth to this unique whisky. The liquid is represented by a ripple formation on the sculpture that's inspired by the unrepeatability of water in nature, with a droplet portal allowing a glimpse of the precious whisky within.

Euan Campbell, Head of whisky creation at the Scotch Malt Whisky Society: "With such a unique one of one we decided to delve into the warehouse of some of the most rare casks that we have. The casks that I decided on in the end have an interesting backstory – a tale to tell – and when the samples arrived in the lab we had fun trying to put them together and figure out the right combination and arrive at the best flavour profile possible.

"The whisky originally started its life in 1989 and was left to mature in a single oloroso butt, but in 2019 I decided to split the contents of that sherry butt into two sherry hogsheads – one oloroso hogshead and one Pedro *Ximénez* hogshead. This bottling is the reuniting of these two liquids to create something one off and very special. We have very nutty dry flavours from the oloroso and sweeter dark treacly notes from the Pedro *Ximénez*, and they complement each other really well. There's a real elegance to this that only comes with age. Overall, it's a very decadent, elegant, old dram."

This entirely one-off bottle and one-of-a-kind whisky was created exclusively for The Distillers One of One auction, which brings together an unparalleled collection of never-to-be-repeated Scotch whiskies from distilleries across the length and breadth of Scotland. The proceeds from the purchase of this whisky will principally go to The Youth Action Fund which helps transform the lives of the most disadvantaged young people by helping them develop their confidence, resilience, and skills so they are ready for life and work.

This one-of-a-kind set consists of a truly exclusive, authoritatively selected rare liquid bottled in iconic Society glassware with unique One of One artwork and is encased by a meticulously designed and lovingly handcrafted 'The Only Drop' sculpture. Accompanying the traditional 700ml bottle will be a 100ml miniature to allow the buyer to sample the whisky. It shares the same design features as the main bottle, such as the hand-dipped wax neck and foil embellishments. It also includes a hand-bound stitched and copper-foiled paper book documenting the concept, the journey and tasting notes of this exclusive release.

Rebecca Hamilton, Chief Marketing & Experience Officer for The Scotch Malt Whisky Society: "The Distillers One of One auction gives whisky creators the opportunity to support and come together as an industry to celebrate our craft. We donate a one of a kind whisky that will never be available after the auction closes. It was important to us that we did things a little differently, so instead of an elaborate, expensive bottle, we created a stripped back, sustainable design which puts the whisky at the heart and lets it shine as the hero. This is a very special whisky flavour curation – and a complete one off.

"That said, it would not feel very Society if the liquid inside this incredible bottle never got tasted. For that reason, we provided a 100ml bottle alongside the 700ml bottle of The Only Drop so hopefully, with our best wishes, whoever is lucky enough to win it at auction will be able to taste a piece of liquid history and cherish the unique one of one bottle too."

Designed by STCKMN, the creative studio of multi-disciplinary designer Chris Wilson, and handcrafted by Matter Agency using both contemporary and traditional techniques, 'The Only Drop' packaging is a sculptural piece of art, celebrating the relationship between the whisky and its cask. Chris Wilson, STCKMN: "I was excited to be commissioned by the Scotch Malt Whisky Society to create a one off, one-of-a-kind piece of art for the Distillers One of One release. As it was the first time the society had taken part in the prestigious event, it was a real opportunity to create something with visual impact to capture the attention of those attending the auction. With craft at the heart of the whisky making process, I wanted to reflect this in the design and the methods of production.

"The Only Drop is a handcrafted paper moulded sculpture that celebrates the relationship between liquid and cask. The liquid itself is represented by a ripple formation that's inspired by the unrepeatable pattern of water in nature. With a single droplet representing the rarity of the release and to honour the casks' contribution to the flavour in the whisky, we took wood shavings from the original casks and embedded them into the paper pulp sculpture. The idea being that when you place the sculpture onto the bottle it reunites the whisky with the cask as they once were during maturation."

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About The Scotch Malt Whisky Society

- The Scotch Malt Whisky Society is a global whisky club that celebrates 40 years of sharing delicious drams with its members in 2023.
- The Scotch Malt Whisky Society was established in Edinburgh in 1983 when a group of friends stumbled on the delights of whisky drawn directly from a single cask – undiluted and unadulterated.
- Over the past 40 years, the society has expanded to almost 40,000 members in 25 countries and its focus on flavour discovery has never wavered.
- The Scotch Malt Whisky Society specialises in single cask bottlings of single malt whisky – it seeks out whisky in its most natural form and prizes the discovery of flavour above all else. Each bottling has a unique number identifying its origins and is given a curious name.
- The Scotch Malt Whisky Society releases almost 1,000 different bottlings a year, including rare single casks and single malt whiskies, exclusive blends and a range of other Single Cask Spirits.
- It is owned by The Artisanal Spirits Company (ASC) plc.
- The Society has bottled whisky from 180 distilleries from Scotland and beyond.
- Members have enjoy exclusive access to a constant variety of cask strength whiskies hand-picked by the Scotch Malt Whisky expert tasting panel, as well as access to four exclusive Scotch Malt Whisky Society Members' Rooms in Leith, Edinburgh, Glasgow and London along with a global network of 100 partner bars.

For more information about the Society, visit: <https://smws.com/>, Twitter: @SMWSUK
Facebook: @thesmwsuk Instagram: @smws_uk

About The Artisanal Spirits Company (ASC)

- The Artisanal Spirits Company (ASC) plc is based in Edinburgh.
- The Artisanal Spirits Company (ASC) plc is building a portfolio of premium brands that bring together some of the world's best spirits producers with a growing movement of discerning consumers by curating unrivalled collections of craft spirits.
- The Artisanal Spirits Company (ASC) plc owns The Scotch Malt Whisky Society. In 2021 it launched J.G. Thomson & Co. which was inspired by its namesake who was originally a wine and spirits merchant in Leith, Scotland, in the 1700s. J.G. Thomson is a new, adventurous blender, creating small batch blended malt whiskies, blended grain whiskies, rum and gin.