



# Washington State Liquor Control Board

## Scotch



5 Things You Need To Know

# Origin

The Scotch section in any LCB store encompasses both blended Scotch and single malt Scotch. The two are decisively different and most often appeal to different types of consumers. As the name indicates, blended Scotch is a blend of several types of Scotch married together to produce a consistent quality product (sometimes with the addition of grain spirits). Single malt Scotches are entirely different and are complete and produced from one distillery and are produced entirely from the grain, barley. While blended Scotch is known for its smoothness and consistency, single malts are known for the aroma, character and varying degrees of intensity. Blended Scotch whisky may contain a combination of whiskies from over 40 or 50 different malt and grain distilleries. The normal ratio of malt to grain is 60 percent grain and 40 percent malt. The percentage of malt used will determine the quality and smoothness of taste and character. Each whisky used in the blending process will normally have been matured for about five years. However, there are a number of higher aged blended Scotch whiskies available – Chivas Regal and Johnnie Walker Black for example, each aged 12 years.

# What does it taste like?

Blended Scotches are, as mentioned earlier, known for their smoothness while single malts are known for their distinct character. Scotch in general tastes like and has aromas of what some say reminds them of heather, honey, peat or smoke. Single malts are definitely stronger in flavors with pronounced flavors and aroma of smoke, peat, sherry and other components whether used in the distilling or aging process. For example, some Scotch is aged in casks that were once used to store sherry, thus the sherry flavor is imparted in the Scotch. Single malt regions also have distinct characteristics they are known for. Smoke, seaweed and peat are among some of the flavors and aromas one may observe in particular Scotches, especially a single malt.

# Scotch in WSLCB Stores: By the numbers

- There are currently 62 different Scotches available in the 750 ml size in WSLCB stores.
- Single Malt Scotches are available in 37 offerings to the consumer.
- Irish whiskey choices total nine in the 750 ml size.
- In 1979, comparative figures show 49 blends and three single malts available.
- As a category including Irish whiskey, Scotch contributes nearly six percent of profits from the sale of liquor returned to the State.
- Blended Scotch as a category is trending even.
- Single Malt Scotch sales are trending up nearly 14 percent.
- Irish whiskey sales are up 23 percent in the past year.

# Category Leaders

In Washington the leaders in the Blended Scotch category are:

1. Johnnie Walker Black
2. Chivas Regal
3. Johnnie Walker Red

Leaders in single malts:

1. Glenlivet 12 Year
2. Macallan 12 Year
3. Glenfiddich

# How it is used and what the future holds

Traditionally, Scotch is consumed on the rocks or neat (straight without ice) or with water.

A classic Scotch cocktail and one that's been enjoyed for many years is the Rusty Nail (Scotch and Drambuie).

The future of Scotch appears to be strong, especially in the single malt area that is always gaining new devotees. Scotch is the one 'acquired taste' liquor that appeals to a different segment of the market than say, flavored vodka or liqueurs. Along with its history and world wide appeal, especially in the over seas Asian market Scotch, both blended and single malt should continue to see steady growth.