

Malt Maniacs Awards 2011 - Jury Report

JURY REPORT



Since 1997, the malt maniacs (an international collective of malt whisky enthusiasts) have been enjoying and discussing the pleasures of (single malt) whisky with like-minded whisky lovers from all over the world. Since 2003, we have organised our very own annual 'amateur' whisky competition. We like to think that, over the years, our modest little initiative has evolved into one of the leading (and most independent) whisky competitions in the world.

You can find more details about our collective and its history on: www.maltmaniacs.org.

Dear fellow whisky lover,

You find before you, the jury report of the 9th edition of our **annual Malt Maniacs Awards competition**. With **'only' 171 samples** on this year's menu, the task was much kinder on the noses, palates and livers of the jurors than in previous years. Some might think that the relatively low number of samples is a sign of the financial crisis, but that's probably not the main reason. We were forced to try and actively keep the number of samples down this year. Due to the **grueling schedule** in 2010 (we received a whopping 262 samples), three jurors were forced to give up midway. This year, **all jurors finished well ahead of the deadline**.

So, without further ado we'd like to present;

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Before we get to the winners, the malt maniacs would like to thank some of this year's participants.



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Legend

All awards and medal winners of the 2011 edition of our whisky competition are included in this jury report. This jury report contains all relevant details and additional commentary, but the **Score Card PDF** provides a better overview of all medal winners. It shows the scores of all jurors in a compact 'matrix' style document.

Some other competitions have dozens of different categories, but we don't roll that way...

All bottles in our whisky competition fall into one of the **three different 'price brackets'** below. However, please note that most bottlings are available in various countries with different tax and pricing structures. This means that the 'street prices' of whiskies could vary between countries and between (web)shops. We've taken an average. The three different price brackets in the Malt Maniacs Awards are:

- **Daily Drams** (Light Blue) - bottles with a retail price of up to 50 Euros,
- **Premium Whiskies** (Medium Blue) - bottles with a retail price between 50 and 150 Euros, and
- **Ultra Premium Whiskies** (Dark Blue) - bottles with a retail price of more than 150 Euros.

The only other distinction we make is based on the **availability** of bottles. We consider batches of less than 1,000 bottles as 'limited releases' (which includes single cask bottlings by definition), while batches of 1,000 bottles or more fall in the category 'widely available'. Should you not be able to find a bottle in your local liquor store, chances are that you will find it at a whisky specialist or in a few of the on-line whisky stores. Larger batches are printed **BOLD** on the score card on <http://www.maltmaniacs.org/2011-score-card.pdf>.

This jury report and the score card do not contain detailed tasting notes for each whisky. You can find those (together with much more information) soon in the Malt Maniacs Monitor on www.whisky-monitor.com.

Jurors

This year, there were 14 jurors on the tasting team - and all managed to finish their tour of duty on time.

Abbreviation & Name	Country	Certified malt maniac since
1. OH = Olivier Humbrecht	France	2003
2. RK = Robert Karlsson	Sweden	2006
3. KG = Konstantin Grigoriadis	Austria	2007
4. HY = Ho-cheng Yao	Taiwan	2004
5. PS = Peter Silver	U.S.A.	2003
6. KN = Krishna Nukala	India	2000
7. RH = Rich Howard	U.S.A.	2010
8. KW = Keith Wood	Germany	2011
9. OK = Oliver Klimek	Germany	2011
10. DW = David Wankel	U.S.A.	2009
11. PdS = Patrick De Schulthess	Switzerland	2010
12. PD = Paul Dejong	Belgium	2010
13. BC = Benjamin Chen	Singapore	2011
14. RM = Ralfy Mitchell	Isle of Man	2011

Truth be told, there were **some concerns** beforehand. Three of our most 'senior' jurors (Serge Valentin, Davin de Kergommeaux and yours truly) could not participate in the tasting this year, and a lot of junior jurors joined the blind tasting crew. Fortunately, most of the junior jurors performed admirably. What's more, our 'system' proved to work perfectly to smooth over any personal quirks. How? We often hide a double entry among the bottles to check how well the jury members are calibrated for the task that year. This year we had two instances of the **Talisker 30yo Limited Edition** (57.3%, OB, 2958 Bts, Btl. 2010); the difference in the average score for bottle #426 and bottle #682 was minimal: just **0.23 points**.

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Award Winners

Whenever we see an opportunity to do something differently, we take it. One of those differences is the meaning of **medals**. At the olympics (and in many other spirit competitions), there is only one gold medal in each specific category - as well as one silver and one bronze medal.

In the Malt Maniacs Awards, medals are for **merit**, similar to the system that is used by the boy scouts. The winners in specific categories receive **awards** instead - hence the name of our competition. There are **six award categories** in three price brackets. We distinguish between these six awards categories;

- **Non-Plus-Ultra Award** (Overall top scoring whisky out of all Malt Maniacs Awards entries that year)
- **Best Natural Cask Award** (Best whisky matured exclusively in 'untreated', regular casks)
- **Best Sherry Cask Award** (Best whisky matured exclusively in sherry casks)
- **Best Cask Innovation Award** (Best whisky matured or finished in 'special' or unusual casks)
- **Best Peated Malt Award** (Best whisky distilled from - relatively - peated malted barley)
- **Thumbs Up Award** (Most exciting new release in that price category that year)

Every bottle that is entered in our competition can win **only one award** (as well as only one medal). Apart from the six awards categories listed above, there are three different price brackets - **Daily Drams** (the bottles with a retail price of up to 50 Euros), **Premium Whiskies** (the bottles with a retail price between 50 and 150 Euros) and **Ultra Premium Whiskies** (the bottles with a retail price of more than 150 Euros). So, there are 18 'standard' awards that are assigned each year - provided we can find a suitable candidate. If we feel that a certain whisky, bottler or distillery deserves special recognition in a particular year, we sometimes add one or more 'special' awards. So, you now that you know all details, let's get to the...



AWARDS - Ultra Premium Category

> Non-Plus-Ultra Award (Ultra Premium)

GlenDronach 39yo 1972/2011 (49.9%, OB, Oloroso Sherry Butt, C#712, 466 Bts.)

> Best Natural Cask Award (Ultra Premium)

Glen Grant 59yo 1952 (49.2%, Gordon & MacPhail, Book of Kells, C#1134, 2011)

> Best Sherry Cask Award (Ultra Premium)

Karuizawa 1981/2011 (55.2%, OB, Sherry C#2634, Btl. 12/08/2011)

> Best Cask Innovation Award (Ultra Premium)

Lochside 46yo 1965/2011 (52.3%, Adelphi, Limited, Blended Scotch Whisky, 499 Bts.)

> Best Peated Malt Award (Ultra Premium)

Port Ellen 28yo 1982/2011 (60%, Wilson & Morgan, C#2033, 534 Bts.)

> Thumbs Up Award (Ultra Premium)

Strathisla 1970/2011 (43%, G&M Licensed Bottling, 514 Bts.)

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AWARDS - Premium Category

> Non-Plus-Ultra Award (Premium)

Yamazaki Sherry Cask (48%, OB, Suntory, Japan, Bottled 2011)

> Best Natural Cask Award (Premium)

Lagavulin 12yo Natural Cask Strength (56.5%, OB, +/- 2011)

> Best Sherry Cask Award (Premium)

GlenDronach 17yo 1994/2011 (59.2%, OB for Taiwan, Oloroso Sherry C#107, 607 Bts.)

> Best Cask Innovation Award (Premium)

Amrut Portonova (62.1%, Multiple cask maturation, +/- 2011)

> Best Peated Malt Award (Premium)

Breath of Islay 12yo 1999/2011 (56.1%, Adelphi, C#5877, 329 Bts.)

> Thumbs Up Award (Premium)

Hakushu Heavily Peated (48%, OB, Suntory, Japan, +/- 2011)

AWARDS - Daily Drams Category

> Non-Plus-Ultra Award (Daily Drams)

Lagavulin 16yo (43%, OB, +/- 2011)

> Best Natural Cask Award (Daily Drams)

Talisker 10yo (45.8%, OB, +/- 2011)

> Best Sherry Cask Award (Daily Drams)

Glenfarclas 2002/2011 (58%, OB, C#1575 & 1576, D. 25/4/'02, Btl. 18/8/2011, 630 Bts.)

> Best Cask Innovation Award (Daily Drams)

Aberlour 16yo Double Cask Matured (43%, OB, Traditional Oak / Sherry, +/- 2011)

> Best Peated Malt Award (Daily Drams)

Big Peat (57.8%, Douglas Laing, +/- 2011)

> Thumbs Up Award (Daily Drams)

Kilchoman 'Spring 2011 Release' (46%, OB, 1st Fill & Refill Bourbon)

AWARDS - Special Category

> Pressure Cooker Award

Macduff 10yo 2000 (56.6%, Exclusive Malts for Taiwan, Dst. 15/11/2000, C#5800, 349 Bts.)

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Gold Medals

You may have seen press releases, advertising and PR campaigns mentioning gold medals (or even **double platinum** medals) that were won in this or that wine or spirits competition. That's just great, and we fully understand that delighted participants are eager to share the news: receiving the **highest honours** in a competition. But... How high are these honours exactly?



If you think about it for a moment, the fact that any particular bottle won a medal **doesn't say very much** unless you know how many other bottles actually participated in that competition, and especially how many other gold medals were awarded that year.

We've seen **competitions** with dozens of different categories - and of course gold medals were handed out in every category. We've even seen a competition where more than 50% of all medals were made of gold and even nobler metals like 'double platinum' - **something close to 'unobtainium' or 'fairy dust'** I guess. ;-)
The malt maniacs don't roll that way, and quite frankly we'd like to think that our gold medals have a slightly higher **'intrinsic value'** than a gold medal in competitions where that the majority of the participants get one. In the Malt Maniacs competition, the various medals represent **(more or less) 'absolute' values**;

Gold Medal = **90 points or more** (The stuff of legends, all too often old single cask bottlings.)

Silver Medal = **Between 85 and 89 points** (Very highly recommendable whiskies indeed.)

Bronze Medal = **Between 80 and 84 points** (Recommendable whiskies - provided the price is right.)

No Medal = **Below 80 points** (the sort of stuff that might win a gold medal in other competitions... ;-)

With that in mind, I'm happy to announce that **'only' 8 bottles** managed to earn themselves a gold medal in this year's edition of the MM Awards. Meanwhile, there were **around 150 other bottles** that earned a silver or bronze medal - so only a little more than 5% of the bottles won gold. Even the Olympics don't go that far! Anyway - here's **'the cream of the crop'** for this year;

91,31	GlenDronach 39yo 1972/2011	(49.9%, OB, Oloroso Sherry Butt, C#712, 466 Bts.)
91,23	Karuizawa 1981/2011	(55.2%, OB, C#2634, Btl. 12/08/2011)
91,15	GlenDronach 39yo 1972/2011	(54.7%, OB for Taiwan, PX Puncheon C#2033, 450 Bts.)
91,08	Lochside 46yo 1965/2011	(52.3%, Adelphi, Limited, Blended Scotch Whisky, 499 Bts.)
90,62	Strathisla 1970/2011	(43%, Gordon & MacPhail Licensed Bottling, 514 Bts.)
90,23	Strathisla 1965/2011	(48%, G&M Single Cask for LMdW, 1st Fill Sherry, C#3473)
89,69	Port Ellen 28yo 1982/2011	(60%, Wilson & Morgan, C#2011, 534 Bts.)
89,54	Glen Grant 59yo 1952	(49.2%, Gordon & MacPhail, Book of Kells, C#1134)

All of this year's gold medal winners were **limited** or single cask bottlings, so it won't be easy to find a bottle. Furthermore, I'm afraid that you'll have to shell out **at least 150 Euro's** if you'd like to purchase one...

Krishna Nukala, India: *"It is surprising to note that the GlenDronach 39yo 1972/2011 (49.9%, OB, C# 712) seems to be a 'sister cask' of the overall winners in 2010 (which was cask C#700), but it seems there was some 'cask fondling' there. It is even more interesting to see that I have not missed the 'Guava' element in my tasting notes in both years. Last year I noted 'Well ripened Oriental fruits like guava' and this year 'Ripe Guava!'.."*

Paul Dejong, Belgium: (on Karuizawa) *"Sweet, raisins, dark chocolate, smoky and slightly peaty... Me like!"*

Ho cheng Yao, Taiwan: *"I am quite a Lochside fan, I found it very interesting and complex. I also see the price is growing increasingly sharp. Glad to see Adelphi won a solid gold medal too."*

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Silver Medals

Our gold medals may represent the **pinnacle** of our scale, but the silver medals are nothing to be scoffed at either. Better yet, this is the segment of medal winners where you can find the bottles that you can actually find at a reasonably well stocked liquorist.

To help you seek out the medal winners that were produced in larger numbers (meaning **at least 1000 bottles** were bottled), those larger batches are printed bold. Of course, there's always a chance to run into one of the more limited releases - so if you plan a shopping spree in the next few weeks, you might as well print out the **score card** on <http://www.maltmaniacs.org/2011-score-card.pdf>.



Silver Medals (89 - 88 points)

89,31	Karuizawa 1981/2011	(58.3%, OB, C#6207, Btl. 12/08/2011)
89,31	Yamazaki Sherry Cask	(48%, OB, Suntory, Japan, Bottled 2011)
89,23	GlenDronach 17yo 1994/2011	(59.2%, OB for Taiwan, Oloroso Sherry C#107, 607 Bts.)
89,23	Bunnahabhain 1979/2011	(54.7%, Berry's Own Selection for whisky.com.tw, C#1794)
88,69	Macduff 10yo 2000	(56.6%, Exclusive Malts for Taiwan, C#5800, 349 Bts.)
88,62	Bunnahabhain 31yo 1979/2011	(46.5%, Adelphi, Selection, C#8893, 516 Bts.)
88,54	Glenglassaugh 1967/2010	(40.4%, "Managers Legacy", OB, 200 Bts.)
88,31	Breath of Islay 12yo 1999/2011	(56.1%, Adelphi, C#5877, 329 Bts.)
88,23	Tomatin 34yo 1976/2011	(51.3%, The Whisky Agency, Refill Sherry Butt, 309 Bts.)
88,15	Amrut Portonova	(62.1%, Multiple cask maturation, +/- 2011)
88,00	Benriach 34yo 1976/2011	(57.8%, OB, Limited Release, C#6942, 469 Bts.)
88,00	Karuizawa 1981/2011	(57.5%, Number One Drinks, Single Casks, C#6256)
87,92	Bunnahabhain 42yo 1968/2011	(45.5%, Wilson & Morgan, C#3, 224 Bts.)
87,77	Linkwood 21yo 1989/2011	(61.7%, Signatory for LMDW, Sherry Butt, C#3207, 303 Bts.)
87,69	Speyside 40yo 'Secret Bottlings'	(40%, Master of Malt, , Undisclosed Distillery)
87,54	Amrut	(62.7%, Blackadder, BA12/2010, Bottled Oct. 2010, 195 Bts.)

[>>> Scroll down or turn to the next page for more silver medals... >>>]

Krishna Nukala, India: *"The Karuizawa distillery never fails to deliver gold and medal winners. The really unmistakable sherried notes are accompanied by the typical Indian taste of a chewing mixture called paan."*

Konstantin Grigoriadis, Austria: *"Olivier Humbrecht mentioned that this year there were less entries, but they were also more interesting ones and I agree. And as always, sherry is a big success factor again!"*

Ho cheng Yao, Taiwan: *"Old and special bottlings from G&M (especially sherried ones) are generally good. While Adelphi really have good cask selection. Blackadder seems to be not performing as well as 5 years ago?"*

Krishna Nukala, India: *"The Amruts make me feel proud to be an Indian - and especially this Amrut Portonova (62.1%, Multiple cask maturation, +/- 2011). Amidst all round mediocrity, there is something of Olympic Champion quality from India. In fact, Davin and I both scored it at 90 points while tasting the stuff at the distillery in August this year and at that time I mentioned to Surindra Kumar, the distillery manager, that this is by far the best Amrut that they have ever produced."*

Paul Dejong, Belgium: (on Yamazaki Sherry) *"Very concentrated and dry... But good quality sherry!"*

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Silver Medals (87 - 86 points)



87,46	Macduff 10yo 2000	(56.5%, Exclusive Malts, C#3525, 200 Bts.)
87,38	Laphroaig 20yo 1991/2011	(53.3%, Whisky Agency, Liquid Sun, 279 Bts.)
87,31	Lagavulin 16yo	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
87,23	Laphroaig 21yo 1990/2011	(56.3%, Wilson & Morgan, C#2351, 215 Bts.)
87,15	Brora 30yo Limited Edition	(54.3%, OB, 3000 Bottles, 2010)
87,15	Glenlossie 35yo 1975/2011	(51.6%, The Whisky Agency, Bourbon Hogshead, 195 Bts.)
87,08	Dumbarton 46yo 1964	(47.4%, Douglas Laing, Clan Denny, Refill Hogshead HH 7542)
87,00	Talisker 30yo Limited Edition	(57.3%, OB, Bottle #0682 of 2958, Btl. 2010)
87,00	Glenallachie 35yo	(46.9%, Specialty Drinks, Single Malts of Scotland, 685 Bts.)
86,92	Smoking Islay 11yo 2000/2011	(59.4%, Blackadder, Raw Cask, BA2011/429, 278 Bts.)
86,85	Laphroaig 25yo 1986/2011	(60.6%, AD Rattray, Bourbon, C#2123)
86,85	Lagavulin 12yo Natural C/S	(56.5%, OB, +/- 2011)
86,85	Highland Park 33yo 1978/2011	(55.7%, Douglas Laing, Platinum, Old & Rare, 207 Bts.)
86,85	Yamazaki Mizunara	(48%, OB, Suntory, Japanese Oak, Japan, +/- 2011)
86,77	Talisker 30yo Limited Edition	(57.3%, OB, Bottle #0426 of 2958, Btl. 2010)
86,42	GlenDronach 15yo 1996/2011	(57.1%, OB for Taiwan, Oloroso Sherry C#233, 196 Bts.)
86,38	Laphroaig 16yo 1995/2011	(57.4%, Signatory, CS Coll., Bourbon Barrel, C#44, 140 Bts.)
86,38	Linkwood 27yo 1984/2011	(53.2%, The Whisky Agency, Liquid Sun, 108 Bts.)
86,31	Springbank 1992/2011	(46%, BBR, Berrys' Own Selection, C#61)
86,31	Ledaig 1998/2010	(61.8%, Malts of Scotland, Sherry Butt, C# 800025, 256 Bts.)
86,23	Laphroaig 21yo 1990/2011	(55.9%, The Whisky Agency, Private Stock, 264 Bts.)
86,15	Aberfeldy 14yo 1997/2011 Single Cask	(58.1%, OB, Sherry Finish, C#3618, 185 Bts.)
86,15	Hakushu Heavily Peated	(48%, OB, Suntory, Japan, +/- 2011)
86,08	Glenlivet Founders Reserve	(55.6%, OB, 1824 Bts., +/- 2011)
86,08	Black Bull 40yo	(41.9%, Duncan Taylor, Batch #2, Btl. February 2011)
86,08	Glenfarclas 2002/2011	(58%, OB, C# 1575 & 1576, Btl. 18/8/2011, 630 Bts.)
86,00	Strathmill 1974/2011	(44.5%, Archives, Inaugural Rel., Bourbon, C#1231, 180 Bts.)
86,00	Bowmore 10yo 2000/2011	(58.4%, Douglas Laing OMC for LMDW, DL REF 7071, 516 Bts.)
86,00	Bowmore 18yo 1993	(61.6%, Specialty Drinks Ltd. Dist. 1/5/1993, 195 Bts.)
85,92	Caol Ila 1983/2011	(53.9%, BBR, Berrys' Own Selection, C#4800)
85,92	GlenDronach 21yo 'Parliament'	(48%, OB, +/- 2011)
85,92	Littlemill 1989/2011	(52.8%, Malts of Scotland, Sherry Butt, C#2511, 325 Bts.)
85,92	Port Ellen 1983/2011	(58.9%, Malts of Scotland, Bourbon HH, C#11011, 267 Bts.)
85,92	Port Charlotte 7yo 2002/2010	(63.5%, Whisky Doris, C# 1171, 298 Bts.)
85,85	Springbank 15yo 1995/2010	(49.9%, AD Rattray for Alba Import, Sherry Hogshead, C#96)
85,77	Drop of the Irish 14yo 1996/2011	(58.2%, Blackadder, C#543, Bottled Feb. 2011, 261 Bts.)
85,77	Lagavulin 1993/2009 DE	(43%, OB, Distillers Edition)
85,77	Macduff 2000/2010	(61.1%, Whisky & Rhum, L'Esprit, Sherry, C# 5778, 60 Bts.)
85,69	Dailuaine 27yo 1983/2011	(53.6%, Master of Malt, 231 Bts.)
85,54	Aberlour 'A'bunadh' Batch #30	(59.8%, OB, +/- 2010)
85,54	Tomatin 30yo	(46%, OB, +/- 2011)

[>>> Scroll down or turn to the next page for more silver medals... >>>]

Keith Wood, Germany: *"The best two whiskies I have tasted in 2011 were both MM awards whiskies and they couldn't have been any more different! Strathisla 1965 (Cask #3473, LMDW for Singapore) was luxuriously rich with typical sherry "dark fruits", chocolate & coffee beans, and a delightful floral complexity which lifted it to 94. It was matched by the Yamazaki Mizunara; the most delightful nose of gently toasted butterscotch & amazingly aromatic and floral woody notes. These all converged on the palate in a truly warming and satisfying way."*

Paul Dejong, Belgium: (on Brora 30yo Limited Edition) *"Strange, but very good!!! Fresh green vegetables and fruit... Very much like a good salad... Wow!"*

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Silver Medals (85 points)



85,46	Benromach 30yo	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
85,46	Longmorn 1976/2011	(52.2%, Malts of Scotland, C#5872, 174 Bts.)
85,38	Glenfarclas 25yo	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
85,23	Benriach 19yo 1991/2011	(57.9%, Blackadder, Raw Cask, C# 32284, 238 Bts.)
85,23	Bunnahabhain 25yo	(46.3%, OB, +/- 2011)
85,23	Caol Ila 1997/2010 DE	(43%, OB, Distillers Edition, +/- 2011)
85,15	Tormore 1982/2011	(55.1%, G&M Reserve for LMdW, C#13316, 463 Bts.)
85,08	Compass Box 'Flaming Heart'	(48.9%, Compass Box, Btl. Sept. 2010, 4186 Bts.)
85,00	Bunnahabhain 24yo 1986	(50.9%, Exclusive Malts for Taiwan, C#1283, 561 Bts.)
85,00	Kavalan Solist	(59%, OB, C#B070604002, Taiwan, +/- 2011, 209 Bts.)
84,92	Wemyss 1981/2011 'Wh. Smoke'	(46%, OB, 'Whispering Smoke', 228 Bts.)
84,85	Caol Ila 14yo 1995/2010	(58.4%, James MacArthur, Old Masters, Sherry C#10042)
84,77	Kilchoman 'Spring 2011 Release'	(46%, OB, 1st Fill & Refill Bourbon)
84,77	Mortlach 20yo 1990/2011	(57.9%, Signatory, CS Coll., Refill Sherry, C#6069, 521 Bts.)
84,75	Cragganmore 21yo 1989/2010	(56%, OB, 5856 Bts.)
84,75	Talisker 57° North	(57%, OB, +/- 2011)
84,69	Pitaud Cognac 'Extra'	(40%, OB, Bottled +/- 2011)
84,62	Glenlivet 33yo 1977	(53%, Blackadder, Raw Cask, +/- 2011)
84,62	Glenlivet 14yo 1996/2011	(55.4%, Signatory, CS Coll., Sherry Butt, C#105516, 526 Bts.)
84,58	Ledaig 9yo 2001/2011	(50.5%, Whisky Doris 'The Dram', 212 Bts.)
84,54	Miltoduff 1998/2011	(57%, BBR, Berrys' Own Selection, C#3605)

[>>> Scroll down or turn to the next page for the bronze medals... >>>]

Johannes van den Heuvel, Holland: *"Funny to see the young Kilchoman 'Spring 2011 Release' (46%, OB) beats the much older (and much more expensive) Pitaud cognac that was generously donated by Pit Krause. And the Talisker 57° North scores higher too. I guess that explains why they call us MALT maniacs... ;-)"*

Benjamin Chen, Singapore: *"I am pretty happy to see that the one entry from Singapore (via La Maison Du Whisky) snagged a Gold Medal. The Strathisla 1965/2011 G&M (48%) was actually bottled for the Singapore market and the manager of LMdW here told me before the awards process that he was optimistically hoping for a 'Silver Medal at best'. I think he'll be pleasantly surprised to see how it did in the end."*

Ralfy Mitchell, Isle of Man: *"Hard to believe the internet is only 20 years old."*

Krishna Nukala, India: (on Kavalan Solist) *"Rich fruity nose, some good wood and rich vanilla cake, mild orange skins, with a dash of water it becomes more enjoyable, opening up all descriptions mentioned further. Forced itself to gold in round 2 from 88 to 90. How can I miss not to give a Gold Medal to a Kavalan Solist?"*

Ho cheng Yao, Taiwan: *"In this years' MMA, the peaty ones did not really gain good scores, but Port Ellen is still our favorite. Looks like Port Ellen really gets good results when getting old. The 'traditional' peaty ones like Laphroaig, Lagavulin, Brora and Ardbeg (didn't see them this year?) did not really gain good results in 2011. Probably the "GOOD" ones are too easy to sell, so they are not submitted to our awards?"*

Paul Dejong, Belgium: (on the Longmorn 1976/2011 by Malts of Scotland) *"Nicely fruity."*

Johannes van den Heuvel, Holland: *"Three older official bottlings (Benromach 30yo, Glenfarclas 25yo and Bunnahabhain 25yo) score very closely together; all silver medals. However, earlier batches of them were entered into earlier editions of the awards, and they scored a little higher on those occasions. Just a case of changing profiles, or have this year's many heavy hitters pushed subtler malts to the background?"*

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Bronze Medals

We already mentioned that (at least in our own high minded opinion) the 'intrinsic value' of our own medals cannot really be compared to other **gold, silver and bronze medals** in other, more 'professional' whisky & spirits competitions.

We don't look at a bronze medal as a consolation prize. Quite the contrary; it's a **badge of honor** that says that we, as a collective, would **recommend this whisky** to anyone. (A fun fact: if you look a little closer at the list, you may even spot a few whiskies that have won gold medals elsewhere. ;-)



Bronze Medals (84 points)

84,38	Suntory 1998/2011 '1st Anniversary'	(60%, OB for Whisky Shop, C# CL 40795, Japan)
84,31	Caol Ila IB 28yo 1983/2011	(51.7%, Duncan Taylor, The Octave, C#400926, 70 Bts.)
84,31	Glen Scotia 33yo 1977	(49.1%, Prestonfield, C#2749, 177 Bts.)
84,23	Kornog Sant Ivy 2011	(57.8%, OB, Glann ar Mor distillery, France)
84,23	Talisker 10yo	(45.8%, OB, +/- 2011)
84,23	Springbank 18yo	(46%, OB, +/- 2011)
84,08	BenRiach 12yo 'Sherry Wood'	(46%, OB, +/- 2011)
84,08	Yamazaki Bourbon Barrel	(48%, OB, Suntory, Japan, +/- 2011)
84,00	Ballechin #6 Bourbon Matured	(46%, OB, Bourbon Casks, +/- 2011)
83,85	Ledaig 10yo	(46.3%, OB, +/- 2011)
83,85	Longrow 14yo	(46%, OB, +/- 2011)
83,83	Auchroisk 20yo Natural C/S	(58.1%, OB, 5856 Bts.)
83,77	Big Peat	(57.8%, Douglas Laing, +/- 2011)
83,75	Kilbeggan 18yo	(40%, OB, Ireland, +/- 2011)
83,69	King Car	(46%, OB, Kavalan distillery, Taiwan, +/- 2011)
83,62	Bunnahabhain 12yo	(46.3%, OB, +/- 2011)
83,54	Benromach 2001/2010	(59.9%, OB)

[>>> Scroll down or turn to the next page for more bronze medals... >>>]

Oliver Klimek, Germany: *"The biggest surprise for me was the Kornog Sant Ivy. Individual scores differ wildly for that one, but for me it was an extremely enjoyable dram worthy of a gold medal. And from France!"*

Johannes van den Heuvel, Holland: *"Looking at this edition of the Malt Maniacs Awards, it's hard to understand why many collectors focus on official bottlings while avoiding independent bottlings. It seems that the percentage of official bottlings and larger batches is highest in the 'bronze' segment of the list."*

Patrick De Schulthess, Switzerland: *"I was quite severe with some bottlings and too generous with others. BTW: as an accountant I like the two extra decimals behind the average score. It really means a lot to me."*

Benjamin Chen, Singapore: *"The MM Awards 2011 was a real eye opener for me. The quality of the whiskies that were submitted this year once again reflects the brilliance many of the world's whisky distilleries have."*

Johannes van den Heuvel, Holland: *"The Talisker 10yo won the 'Best Natural Cask Award' in the Daily Drams category. In fact, an earlier batch of the very same bottling won the very same award last year."*

Malt Maniacs Awards 2011 - Jury Report

Bronze Medals (83 points)



83,46	Aberlour 16yo Double Matured	(43%, OB, Trad. Oak / Sherry, +/- 2011)
83,46	Edradour 2003/2011 2nd Release	(57.4%, OB, Natural CS, 1820 Bts.)
83,38	Glenlivet 16yo Nadurra	(54.9%, OB, Batch 1010K, Bottled 10/2010)
83,38	Hakushu 12yo	(43%, OB, Suntory, Japan, +/- 2011)
83,25	Connemara Turf Mór	(58.2%, OB, Ireland, +/- 2011)
83,23	Glenkinchie 20yo 1990/2010	(55.1%, OB, 4854 Bts.)
83,23	Tomatin Decades	(46%, OB, Casks from 5 different decades, +/- 2011)
83,23	Wemyss 12yo 'Peat Chimney'	(40%, OB, +/- 2011)
83,15	GlenDronach 12yo 'Original'	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
83,08	Tobermory 15yo	(46.3%, OB, Gonzales Byass Finish, +/- 2011)
83,08	Bowmore 11yo 2000/2011	(46%, The Whisky Agency, Liquid Sun, 145 Bts.)
83,00	Clynelish 1993/2010 DE	(46%, Distillers Edition, OB)
83,00	Old Pulteney 17yo	(46%, OB, +/- 2011)
83,00	Kavalan	(40%, OB, Taiwan, +/- 2011)
82,85	Aberlour 12yo	(48%, OB, Bottled +/- 2011)
82,77	Clynelish 15yo 1995/2011	(46%, Blackadder, Aberdeen Distillers, ABD 1007, 224 Bts.)
82,69	Oban 18yo Limited Edition	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
82,69	Laphroaig 18yo 1990/2008	(46%, Hart Brothers, Finest Coll., D. 04/'90, Btl. 12/'08)
82,69	Glenfarclas 15yo	(46%, OB, +/- 2011)
82,67	Mortlach 13yo 1997	(46%, Murray McDavid for Flickenschild, C#001, 485 Bts.)
82,62	Aberlour 18yo	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
82,62	Edradour 2003/2010 Burgundy Cask	(46%, OB, Batch #1, 2600 Bts.)
82,54	Glen Moray 24yo 1986/2011	(51.7%, Duncan Taylor, Rare Auld, C#2306, 249 Bts.)
82,54	Fettercairn 14yo 1996/2011	(46%, Signatory UCFC for LMdW, C# 4241, 304 Bts.)

[>>> Scroll down or turn to the next page for more bronze medals... >>>]

Ralfy Mitchell, Isle of Man: *"It is an enlightening experience to participate in the judging panel, with much feed-back to be gained from putting a name to what was a blind sample. The MM Awards seem to work well as they are so I don't see any short-term need for much change to the format."*

Paul Dejong, Belgium: (on Tomatin Decades) *"Gunpowder, matches... this is a profile that I don't like! But many other people do... Well, that means that I don't have to drink it outside these bloody awards :)"*

Patrick De Schulthess Switzerland: *"Generally, this kind of tasting is a lesson of modesty and humility, one has to remember that we taste and score based on our own experience and background. I was much honored and please to participate to that competition. Thanks to all the ones who have organized this tasting."*

Krishna Nukala, India: (on Edradour 2003/2011 2nd Release) *"Some oily notes, not many complexities at first instance, but later developing into extract of boiled rice, suggesting maltiness, some fennels, star anise, coconut caramel toffee. Oh! This is not a plain and simple whisky as it looks! How can a whisky taste so good with such pale colour? Re-tasted after two weeks - This one gets a Gold Medal on its merit. It is demanding not to be ignored!"*

Keith Wood, Germany: *"MMA 2011 has been my first experience with such a large whisky competition. And to be honest, it appeared a daunting task, as I had to review 171 samples blind within the relatively short time period of six weeks. Yes, I managed to finish with a few days to spare, and was pleasantly surprised at being able to do this. I was equally surprised at the unforeseen difficulties I found; such as trying to find non-repetitive descriptions and keep my tasting notes as interesting as possible, whilst retaining 100% accuracy."*

Benjamin Chen, Singapore: *"It is great to see that some readily available OB's performed really well. The Lagavulin 16yo and Talisker 10yo seems to have cemented their places as the 'Daily Drams' to beat."*

Malt Maniacs Awards 2011 - Jury Report

Bronze Medals (82 - 80 points)



82,46	Great King Street 'Artist's Blend'	(43%, Compass Box, +/- 2011)
82,38	Glenlivet 18yo	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
82,31	BenRiach 12yo 'Horizons'	(50%, OB, Triple Distilled, +/- 2011)
82,31	Auchentoshan 12yo 1998/2011	(62.9%, J. MacArthur, Old Masters, Bourbon C#102338)
82,23	Cutty Sark 18yo	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
82,23	An Cnoc 16yo	(46%, OB, +/- 2011)
82,15	Clynelish 13yo 1997/2010	(52.1%, James MacArthur, Old Masters, Bourbon C#4643)
82,00	Caol Ila 12yo	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
82,00	Clynelish 14yo	(46%, OB, +/- 2011)
81,92	Ardmore 2003/2010	(56.2%, Whisky & Rhum, L'Esprit, Bourbon C# 6487)
81,85	Tobermory 10yo	(46.3%, OB, +/- 2011)
81,85	Longmorn 16yo	(40%, OB, +/- 2011)
81,85	Mortlach 16yo	(43%, Flora & Fauna, +/- 2011)
81,85	Kilkerran	(46%, OB, +/- 2011)
81,77	Kornog Taouarc'H Eilvet 11 BC	(46%, OB, Glann ar Mor distillery, France)
81,77	Wild Scotsman	(47%, Jeff Topping, Batch# CBVO, Bottled +/- 2011)
81,62	Deanston 'Finished In Virgin Oak'	(46.3%, OB, +/- 2011)
81,62	Springbank 15yo 1995/2011	(46%, Hart Brothers, Finest Coll., Dst. 11/'95, Btl. 07/'11)
81,54	Deanston 12yo	(46.3%, OB, +/- 2011)
81,54	Glenlivet Master Distiller's Res.	(40%, OB, +/- 2011)
81,54	Greenore 18yo	(46%, OB, Ireland, 4000 Bts., +/- 2011)
81,54	Glenkinchie 1996/2010 DE	(43%, OB, Distillers Edition)
81,38	Port Dundas 1991/2011	(46%, Whisky & Rhum, L'Esprit, C#15676, 302 Bts.)
81,23	Cask Islay Vatting #1	(46%, AD Rattray, +/- 2011)
81,15	Wemyss 1997/2011 'Vanilla Summer'	(46%, OB, 363 Bts.)
80,92	Penderyn Peated Single Cask	(61.2%, OB, C#128/2006, Wales, Bottle #176 of 176 Bts.)
80,85	Singleton of Glen Ord 12yo	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
80,77	Glen Spey 12yo 1999/2011	(59.8%, Blackadder, Riverstown, C#125, 298 Bts.)
80,69	Drop of the Irish	(46%, Blackadder, C#343, Bottled Feb. 2011, 314 Bts.)
80,69	Scapa 16yo	(40%, OB, +/- 2011)
80,69	Glenkinchie 12yo	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
80,54	Cutty Sark 12yo	(40%, OB, +/- 2011)
80,54	Inchgower 28yo 1982/2010	(56.6%, Whisky Doris, Bourbon Hogshead #6971, 192 Bts.)
80,31	Penderyn 'Portwood'	(41%, OB, Wales, +/- 2011)
80,15	Balblair 1989/2010	(43%, OB)
80,00	Oban 14yo	(43%, OB, +/- 2011)
79,50	Penderyn 'Madeira'	(46%, OB, Wales, +/- 2011)

[>>> Scroll down or turn to the next page for some highlights and conclusions... >>>]

Benjamin Chen, Singapore: *"One of the things that really stood out for me was how much I liked a blended whisky: the Cutty Sark 18... I was the real outlier on that one, not everybody else liked it as much."*

Konstantin Grigoriadis, Austria: *"The Pitaud cognac was better than quite a few single malt whiskies ;-)."*

Patrick De Schulthess Switzerland: *"I was quite astonished by my score for the Cutty Sark 12 yo blend. I feel I'll favor any whisky that is well balanced and I'll give better marks. Same goes for Deanston 12 yo."*

Malt Maniacs Awards 2011 - Jury Report

Highlights & Conclusions

OK, so these were the **full results for the MM Awards 2011**. Well, there's always the PDF SCORE CARD for those of you that would like to look at a more detailed view of the playing field... Available on: <http://www.maltmaniacs.org/2011-score-card.pdf>.

We can only hope that you had as much fun with the results of our **debauchery** as we've had with the actual debauching. ;-) Meanwhile, we keep tweaking the set-up of our competition in order to get the best possible results - and then present those results as openly and usefully as we can. One improvement in that respect is the extra insight that's provided by including **two decimal points** in the average score. Together with a presentation of the medals on **separate pages** instead of in one long list, this provides even more insight in our process than before. So - there's a method to our mania!

Well maybe not quite as much method as usual, actually. In previous years, Olivier Humbrecht always took care of the **logistics**, collecting the bottles that were sent by the participants, distributing their contents across a dozen or more blind sample bottles and then shipping them to the jurors all over the world. However, thanks to the strange weather of 2011, the wine harvest times conflicted with our awards schedule. Fortunately, **Keith Wood** stepped up to the plate. Keith carried **the brunt of the burden**, but 3 maniacs flew in to help out; Krishna Nukala, Oliver Klimek and Pit Krause. Further assistance was provided by Keith's lady Sabine and his friend Gareth. I'd like to use this opportunity to **thank them very much** for their efforts - and the same goes for our participants & jurors.



I'll wrap up my own 'highlights & observations' with a few points;

- This 9th edition of our whisky competition was even more **chaotic** than usual, and at some point phrases like *"Shut Your Sick Face!"* had to be used in e-mails to stop **'premature e-leakulations'**.
- Nevertheless, **it all worked out** in the end. All in all, I think we managed to achieve great results.
- From my point of view, the big winners among the distilleries seem to be **Glendronach, Strathisla, Bunnahabhain** and **Karuizawa**. On a bottler level, the official bottlings did very well (they picked up half of the gold medals), and so did **Gordon & MacPhail, Adelphi** and **Wilson & Morgan**.
- Apparently, the cask that produced the GlenDronach 39yo 1972/2011 (54.7%, OB for Taiwan, C#2033) was **heavily fondled**. It was actually sort of **a step-sister cask** of both cask #712 that won this year's top award AND cask #700 that won the same award last year. As it turns out, they bottled only half of the contents of cask #700 last year - the rest was vatted and re-casked into cask #2033.

Anyway, that's it from Malt Maniacs Central this time - but there's a little more 'meat' in this jury report. On the last pages you'll find some more highlights and conclusions from the jurors, a feeble attempt at some awards statistics and some additional information about our approach, rules and regulations.

Sweet drams,

Johannes van den Heuvel, Holland
Founder & Editor Malt Maniacs

Malt Maniacs Awards 2011 - Jury Report

Some More Highlights & Conclusions

Konstantin Grigoriadis, Austria: *"Glendronach distillery is for me personally the winner. Also it's interesting to see that Kavalan distillery from Taiwan didn't score as much this year as they did last year. Further it is interesting for me to see that I gave Gold where nobody did and that I like the Wemyss."*

Krishna Nukala, India: (on GlenDronach 39yo 1972/2011, 54.7%, OB for Taiwan, C#2033)
"Deeply sherried, tending towards bitter organics almost feels like a medicine; some dark chocolate, add some water and the dry fruits explode on nose with more organics. On palate it is like Vitamin B Complex syrup, more organics return on palate and the sweet notes turn into mildly bitter. Long medicinal finish."

Ho cheng Yao, Taiwan: *"It seems that heavy sherry is still the king of the Malt Maniacs Awards. Although I was kind of looking out for these heavy sherry ones through the award tasting, they still gained quite high scores from me. Glendronach and Karuizawa are really the ones out performs the others."*

Krishna Nukala, India: (on Port Ellen 28yo 1982/2011, 60%, Wilson & Morgan, C#2033)
"Beautiful smoke and peat, hospital disinfectant and horse stables, with a dash of water, it is sour like tamarind pulp juice, more smoke and some salty licorice notes developing some time later into some coastal notes. The nose is so good that you do not want to drink it, but you go on enjoy it without drinking. In fact I exclaimed while tasting "Ah, La, La" - meaning Ardbeg, Lagavulin or a Laphroaig!"

Keith Wood, Germany: *"Who said blends are inferior? I tend to be a little on the conservative or even mean side when it comes to scoring, especially when assigning 90+ scores which define a whisky as "Great" on my own personal scale. When I tasted the Lochside, 1965, 46 year old blended scotch whisky entry from Adelphi I was astonished to find many rich sherry overtones, but alongside some very light and floral woody notes which were certainly not overwhelming. In fact this was a very energetic whisky which I thoroughly enjoyed and was equally astonished when I discovered it to be a blended offering. A truly "Greaat" one!"*

Krishna Nukala, India: (on Glen Grant 59yo 1952, 49.2%, Gordon & MacPhail, Book of Kells, C#1134)
"Excessive wood but not obnoxious, you get some Indian woody spices like cinnamon, fennel and star anise. Lovely mild peat, smoke and sweet honeyed notes, with some water you get smoke from bonfire or is it some old tobacco pouch? Luscious mouth feel More peat and bitter sweets, long, hot and asafetida finish."

Keith Wood, Germany: *"That Strathisla 1965 for LMdW should be called 'The one that very nearly wasn't'. I remember that one bottle arrived and the delivery person demanded €122 in "Business turnover tax"? Well, you know that we NEVER pay for our awards samples, so I didn't. After much telephoning back and forth with them asking "do you really want to send this back?" and my lovely lady Sabine convincing them that a silly Englishman and his 'club' were not a business, the bottle finally arrived with nothing to pay. Well, thanks very much Sabine, that was indeed a gold medalist, Strathisla 1965 :-0 "*

Malt Maniacs Awards Statistics

Figures:	2011	2010	2009
Total number of bottles submitted	171	262	206
Gold Medals	8	12	7
Silver Medals	78	86	64
Bronze Medals	78	120	103
Oldest Vintage	1952	1964	1957
Youngest Gold Medal Winner	1982	1982	1991
Highest ABV	63.5%	68.0%	65.8%

Malt Maniacs Awards 2011 - Jury Report

Approach, Rules & Regulations

Ah, yes, ...
Well, ...
You see ...

We had hoped to have a neat little page with all our rules and regulations ready by now - but we don't. As usual, the last day of November means a wild race to meet the **deadline**. Well, I guess that most of the people that are reading this are familiar with the gist of our set-up, but I'd like to point those of you who are not familiar with the rules & regulations of our awards to the points below and the page on: <http://www.maltmaniacs.org/whisky-competition-rules.html>

Here are just a few extra points that came up while we made this jury report;

- **Hyperlinks** may not work in this PDF file - if so, our apologies...
- A **red box with an 'x'** on the score card means that the sample bottle broke during transport.
- The MM Awards is still an '**amateur**' effort, so we have to do the handling, re-shipping, sampling and scoring in our spare time. That's why we were forced to limit the number of bottles per participant.
- As pointed out before, we limited the number of entries that each bottler/distiller could send even more strictly in 2011 and participants that had benefited from '**loopholes**' in the past could no longer do so. In the past, each distillery/brand/bottler could submit up to five bottles per brand for the Malt Maniacs Awards. This number has now been reduced to three.
- Almost every year, we had to use a '**magic formula**' to calculate the averages - if only to compensate for the harsh tasting conditions and the fact that the composition of the jury changes every year. In the past, our master alchemist Serge Valentin usually devised the formula, but this year the sorcerer's apprentice Luca Chichizola came up with a very effective recipe: simply ignore the lowest score. That formula gave us a percentage of 4,7% gold medals - exactly the same number as last year!!!
- So, each entry's score is the **mathematical average** of the scores from all jurors, minus the lowest.
- When it comes to selecting the awards winners, **availability** (or batch size) becomes increasingly important part in lower price ranges. It's hard for a single cask bottling to win a Daily Dram award.
- **Monitor rules and descriptions** may be different from awards rules and descriptions.
- Entries that are **not whiskies** (like the Pitaud cognac) can win medals, but not awards.
- Serge Valentin made **images** of all medals and awards available on: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/71097595@N02/sets/>

Disclaimer: Please keep in mind that this jury report & the score card were assembled in a rush - like in most years, really... So, we can't completely exclude the possibility that errors sneaked into our data.



Since 1997, the **malt maniacs** (an international collective of whisky enthusiasts) have been enjoying and discussing the pleasures of (single malt) whisky with like-minded whisky lovers from all over the world. We initially gathered around the 'Malt Madness' website on www.maltmadness.com, but later we developed our very own **collective website** on www.maltmaniacs.org.

We have been organising our very own annual 'amateur' **whisky competition** since 2003. Furthermore, we have built up a **database** with scores and tasting notes on **more than 15,000 different whiskies** - www.whisky-monitor.com. The malt maniacs collective keeps evolving, very much like the world wide web. Simply **follow** us on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) if you want to evolve with us...