

Usquaebach Scotch Whisky Makes a Vibrant Return to the US Market

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Usquaebach (pronounced "oos-ke-bah"), the small, artisanally crafted, blended Scotch whisky, has been quietly making a comeback in the US market since its purchase by Cobalt Brands in 2009. Thanks to the hard work of its current owners and the reliance on a fiercely dedicated customer base longing for its return, the brand can now be found in over 20 states and in all major US markets.

Usquaebach's blend dates back to the 1700's and its name was trademarked in 1877, making it one of the most enduring brands in the Scotch whisky market. One reason for this is the loyal customer base that continues to seek out the whisky due to the quality of the product – a testament to the reputation of the Laing family in Glasgow, Scotland, who has been blending **Usquaebach** for nearly 100 years.

"Stewart Laing, our long time blender, relies on his close relationships with historic single malt distilleries throughout the Highlands," says Ryan Judson, **Usquaebach's** national brand ambassador. "Laing only selects perfectly aged casks to blend with premium barley grain."

It is this focus that Laing puts on quality single malt casks for **Usquaebach's** blends that has garnered the brand the international respect it continues to receive. Laing describes how the selection of superior single malt casks can determine the greatness of a blend:

"In the case of **Usquaebach** [Old Rare Stone Flagon], we operate on a high malt-to-grain ratio in the blend. Other blended Scotch whisky is a higher grain-to-malt ratio," says Stewart Laing, the distinguished blender of **Usquaebach** for over four decades, "There are over 40 different malts mixed together in Usquaebach. Malt is the body. Grain does not have the character, and that is what makes the recipe unique. As a blender I am always looking for balance and taste."

Laing goes on to explain that patience and experience are keys to creating masterful blends.

"The skill of the blender is paramount...because it is he who knows which whiskies go with which whisky," says Laing. "Each whisky has to marry with the whole."

Oftentimes in the Scotch whisky market, the draw of single malts tends to obscure the craft among blends. Changing this perception has been tantamount to resurrecting **Usquaebach's** prominence in the national market.

"We find time and time again single malt drinkers find Usquaebach just as alluring, smoother and more complex," says Judson. "People try it because the flagon looks amazing, but they always come back because the whisky inside is just that good."

There was a time in recent history that **Usquaebach** occupied a very significant place among the elite names in Scotch blends – in particular, it was famously poured at the Presidential Inaugural dinners of Richard Nixon and George Bush, Sr.

Today, **Usquaebach's** resurgence is a welcome return to a blended Scotch market dominated by large, corporate-owned brands. The iconic packaging of its signature Old Rare Stone Flagon is often a reason for customers to wax nostalgic.

According to the Whisky Advocate's online blog: "Ever since the late 1980s, when I started getting into Scotch, I always remembered the **Usquaebach** blended Scotch in the really cool flagon."

"Our key retailers across the country remain enthusiastic about the brands come back," explains brand ambassador Judson, "They tell me, Thank G-d **Usquaebach's** back! We missed you."

The Brand features three incarnations, each having a different price point and consumer palate. While the name may be hard to spell and to pronounce, this historic brand, with a name that translates from Gaelic to mean "the water of life," is providing Scotch whisky lovers across America with a reason to raise their glasses with **Usquaebach** once again.



~**Usquaebach "Old Rare" ~ Blended Scotch Whisky porcelain flagon** is a vestige of Scotch whisky's history - a reminder of a time, preceding bottled whiskey, when travelling merchants combined spirits of the highest caliber single distilleries creating ethereal blends embodying sophistication. With 41 specially selected single malts up to 20 years of age from the Highlands and only 15% high-quality grain whisky in the blend, this classic Scotch whisky offers multi-layered opulence. Its quality and finesse has been recognized by connoisseurs and aficionados the world over - notably, Usquaebach "Old Rare" Blended Scotch was served at the 1969 and 1989 Presidential Inaugural Dinners. (MSRP \$120)



~**Usquaebach 15-Year Blended Malt** ~ is a marriage of the finest Highland single malts, aged carefully for at least 15 years - and some as old as 20 - in oak and sherry casks. When purity and strength is desired, this beautiful yet masculine Scotch whisky delivers robust aromas and intense richness. Recognized throughout the whisky-drinking world for its quality, the 15-Year Blended Malt has won numerous accolades, including Gold Medal at the 2010 International Whisky Competition. The nose features sun-dried fruits, pineapple, and espresso bean, while the palate entertains with stout baking spices and a luxurious sweetness. (MSRP \$75)



~**Usquaebach Reserve Premium Blended Scotch** ~ is a whisky for those seeking elegance and structure. This rare blend features over 50% quality single malts each aged between 16 to 18 years and blended with the finest grain whisky - resulting in a handcrafted spirit that is both timeless and unique. The nose features honeyed sherry, smooth vanilla, baked apples and quince, while sweet spices and an endearing zest linger on the palate. The Usquaebach Reserve finishes long and smooth, with a detailed edge and a crisp mouth-feel - ideal as an aperitif or with a rich meal. (MSRP \$40)

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