

New Balblair age-statement collection revealed

Multi-award-winning Highland distillery, Balblair, has today (28 March 2019) unveiled its plans to release a new collection of age-statement single malt Scotch whiskies, which will be available in the UK this month and rolled out globally from April 2019.

The new series features four whiskies, each meticulously hand selected, all of which retain the distillery's unmistakable true Highland character and will replace all existing Balblair expressions.

The core collection includes:

- **12-Year-Old** - matured in American oak ex-bourbon and double-fired American oak casks, with notes of dried orange, ground spices and sweet vanilla.
- **15-Year-Old** - matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks, followed by first-fill Spanish oak butts, with notes of dark chocolate, tropical fruit and creamy vanilla.
- **18-Year-Old** - matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks, followed by first-fill Spanish oak butts, with notes of juicy apricots, vanilla custard and raisins.
- **25-Year-Old** - matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks then reshaped in Oloroso Spanish oak, with notes of oily citrus, chocolate praline, fresh tobacco leaf and blood oranges.

In a move away from the distillery's current 'vintage-only' approach, the launch of this collection signals a new era for Balblair. While each expression offers its own unique appeal, the series as a whole stays true to Balblair's house style, following a gentle and considered approach with its focus firmly on quality over quantity – an attribute Balblair has become renowned for.

John MacDonald, Distillery Manager at Balblair, said: "As one of the oldest working distilleries in the Scottish Highlands, Balblair has a long and rich history of crafting premium single malt Scotch whisky.

"We are proud of our heritage and we will continue to honour our centuries-old traditions, but we also look forward in a quiet pursuit of perfection.

"Our new collection is intrinsically linked to our heritage and is testament to the place and the people behind our whisky, while being emblematic of our 'True Highland Spirit'."

Inspired by Balblair's rich past, the packaging for the new collection is reflective of the distillery's unique and idyllic location. It takes subtle cues from the surrounding landscape: its pure Highland water source and the Pictish 'Z-rod' carvings etched on the ancient Clach

Biorach standing stone located on the distillery's doorstep. A larger logo area and new label font has also been incorporated into the design to create greater on-shelf brand visibility.

Matthew Jamieson, Brand Manager for Balblair, added: "Our whisky isn't changing: Balblair will always be a single malt Scotch whisky of premium quality, with a true Highland strength of character.

"We're immensely proud of our new collection and confident that the flavour profiles, along with super-premium packaging, will reinvigorate Balblair and excite consumers. We look forward to sharing it with our growing, global community."

The core collection - priced between £45 and £500 – launches in the UK on 28 March 2019, followed by other global markets including Russia, France, Germany and China from April 2019. It will be available online, and distributed exclusively through independent and specialist retail outlets.

For more information visit: www.balblair.com

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Balblair age-stated core collection

Balblair 12-Year-Old (RRP £45)

- 46% abv, matured in American oak ex-bourbon and double-fired American oak casks
- Colour: Polished gold
- Aroma: Elegant bright lemon peel layered with creamy vanilla and crisp green apples
- Palate: Ground spices and dried orange slices enveloped in intense set honey sweetness
- Finish: Creamy and leathery with notes of sweet vanilla

Balblair 15-Year-Old (RRP £75)

- 46% abv, matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks, followed by first-fill Spanish oak butts
- Colour: Bright amber
- Aroma: Leatherwood honey and spicy gingerbread followed by juicy prunes and fresh lemon peel
- Palate: Velvety in texture, bursting with dark chocolate, tropical fruit and spices
- Finish: Long and mellow with notes of creamy vanilla and citrus

Balblair 18-Year-Old (RRP £120)

- 46% abv, matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks, followed by first-fill Spanish oak butts

- Colour: Oiled cedar
- Aroma: Rich toffee and baked pears shine bright against an elegant backdrop of new leather
- Palate: A masterful balance of juicy apricots, seasoned oak and vanilla custard
- Finish: Long and warming with chords of fresh spices and raisins

Balblair 25-Year-Old (RRP £500)

- 46% abv, matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks then reshaped in Oloroso Spanish oak
- Colour: Hot copper
- Aroma: Indulgent overripe apricots and dark liquorice stand out against polished oak and a touch of saddle wax
- Palate: Full-bodied with oily citrus, chocolate praline and a faint note of fresh tobacco leaf
- Finish: Warming with smooth chocolate and blood oranges

About the new packaging

The packaging for Balblair's new collection was developed by drawing inspiration from the distillery's rich heritage.

The new primary packaging retains Balblair's iconic bottle shape, smooth like the pebbles in the Allt Dearg Burn, which supplies Balblair's pure Highland water.

Influenced by the shape of previous Balblair label designs, the new brand logo takes the form of Struie Hill reflected in the water. The larger logo area is designed to provide greater visibility in the on and off trade.

The new label font is a contemporary adaption of the typeface used on the old sign at the distillery entrance, while the new brand symbol is inspired by the Pictish Z-rod etched on to the ancient Clach Biorach standing stone located right on the distillery's doorstep.

On the back of the new bottle, there is an embossing of the Balblair Z-rod symbol and the year the distillery was established, 1790.

About Balblair

Established in 1790, Balblair distillery is one of the oldest working distilleries in the Scottish Highlands.

Its location on the Dornoch Firth is intrinsically linked to the whisky its self, with its water source coming from the nearby Allt Dearg burn. The distillery also sits close to the site of an ancient gathering place for the Picts. On the distillery's doorstep stands a standing stone and stone circle, erected some 4,000 years ago in the Bronze Age. Known locally as the 'Clach Biorach' the standing stone was used to observe the change of seasons by the Picts. They added their own unique markings to the stone and for thousands of years used it as a gathering place.

Today, Balblair prides itself on its true highland spirit, where quality comes before all else.

The distillery, which sits just off the popular North Coast 500 route, welcomed over 9,300 visitors through its doors in CYE18 (+37% on CYE17).

About International Beverage Holdings

[International Beverage Holdings](#) was established in 2005 as the international arm of ThaiBev, one of South East Asia's leading alcohol beverage companies. With a network of regional offices in Asia, Europe and North America, the company is responsible for the production, sales, marketing and distribution of a portfolio of premium global brands in over 80 countries and territories.