

THE BEST SCOTCH UNDER \$100

Contributed by Liquor.com

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(illustration: Elizabeth Reyes)

You know who knows best which bottles to buy? The people who pour and sell drinks—that’s who. We asked dozens of top bartending and spirits industry professionals to tell us which bottles they love and why.

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Heads up: The numerical order below is not organized by importance or quality; it’s an alphabetical list, not a ranking. Prices are averages and can vary from state to state.



1: ABERLOUR A'BUNADH (\$99)

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“It has a unique cask strength and strong sherry flavor. I had the opportunity to try it at the distillery when it was only available there.”—

Sam Willy, restaurant manager at New York City's [Gabriel Kreuther](#)



2: ABERLOUR DOUBLE CASK MATURED 12 YEAR (\$51)

“For me, it's a beautiful nonpeaty alternative to a Christmastime [scotch](#). Cinnamon, spice, toffee and vanilla—a fantastic value!”—Ann-Marie Verdi, co-owner and beverage director at Los Angeles' [Bellwether](#)



3: [ABERLOUR 16 YEAR](#) (\$75)

“It's aged in a combination of [bourbon](#) and [sherry](#) casks, which gives it complexity.”—Tomas van den Boomgaard, beverage manager at [The Langham, Chicago](#)



4: [THE ARRAN SAUTERNES CASK FINISH](#) (\$75)

“This bottle comes from a lesser-known part of Scotland, which is fun in and of itself. Though this distillery might not be as popular as others, it produces a great scotch with notes of sugar cookies, honeyed bananas and almost a bit of custard.”—Gil Izaguirre, beverage director at Chicago's [Honey's](#)



5: [AUCHENTOSHAN 12 YEAR](#) (\$55)

“This is an underappreciated single-malt scotch. It's a Lowland scotch that's amazing for the price point. It has caramel and toasted almonds and is great in cocktails or just for sipping.”—Jennifer K. Knott, head bartender at [312 Chicago](#)



6: [THE BALVENIE CARIBBEAN CASK 14 YEAR](#) (\$80)

“I always want a bottle of The Balvenie Caribbean Cask. It may be my favorite single malt. It’s everything you want out of a [rum](#) and everything you want out of a scotch in one delicious bottle.”—St. John Frizell, owner and bartender at New York City’s [Fort Defiance](#)



7: [THE BALVENIE SINGLE BARREL 12 YEAR](#) (\$74)

“As a single-barrel, it’s a great example of the brand and Speyside scotch—the pure expression of honey and oak.”—Max Green, senior bartender at New York City’s [Amor y Amargo](#)



8: [THE BENRIACH 10 YEAR](#) (\$60)

“I love finding a scotch that is reasonably priced and that I thoroughly enjoy drinking and feel comfortable enough giving as a gift to a fellow scotch fan. Ex-bourbon and ex-sherry casks deliver flavors of raisins, peaches and apples and oak notes. This is just a nice easy-drinking scotch at a very affordable price.”—Tommy Tardie, owner and operator at New York City’s [Fine & Rare](#) and [The Flatiron Room](#)



9: [THE BENRIACH CURIOSITAS AGED 10 YEAR](#) (\$75)

“It’s the perfect intersection of tangy peat and rich sherry—a great value for its age and price.”—David Y. Dong, bartender at New York City’s [North End Grill](#)



10: [BENRINNES FLORA AND FAUNA 15 YEAR](#) (\$58)

“It’s a little spendy but totally worth it—the perfect sipper after a special meal with family or friends. It’s a rare triple-distilled scotch, with characteristics of an [Irish whiskey](#) but with all of the quality you want in a Speysider.”—Camille Cavan, bar manager at Portland, Ore.'s

[Quaintrelle](#)



11: [BOWMORE DARKEST 15 YEAR](#) (\$99)

“A whisper of peat—OK, it's more than a whisper! It's a very well-balanced whisky between peat, fruit and spice. It's liquid dessert if you ask me.”—Sabrine Dhaliwal, bar manager at Vancouver's [UVA Wine & Cocktail Bar](#)



12: [BRUICHLADDICH THE CLASSIC LADDIE](#) (\$65)

“This is an unpeated Bruichladdich and is a perfect scotch for easy drinking on the rocks or neat. It’s wonderful as an introductory scotch for someone just learning about it.”—Knott



13: [CAOL ILA 12 YEAR](#) (\$55)

“It’s one of the best peated scotches for your money—really well-balanced with just the right amount of peat on the heavy side.”—Juyoung Kang, lead bartender at Las Vegas' [Dorsey](#)



14: [CLYNELISH 14 YEAR](#) (\$70)

“It’s one of the most distinctive malts out there with its characteristic waxy mouthfeel—light and dry with a soft maritime presence. It makes for a great apéritif.”—Kellie Thorn, bar manager at Atlanta’s [Empire State South](#)



15: [EDRADOUR 10 YEAR](#) (\$60)

“This malt hails from one of the smallest distilleries in Scotland, but the flavor is anything but small. It’s rich and round with prominent baking spice and dark fruit notes.”—Thorn



16: [GLENFIDDICH 15 YEAR](#) (\$60)

“This whisky is very mineral-driven—subtle peat and clean slate.”—Jamie Jennings, general manager and sommelier at Tulsa’s [Hodges Bend](#)



17: [THE GLENLIVET 12 YEAR](#) (\$65)

“This awesome unpeated scotch is very accessible, easy to drink and a great gift for beginning scotch drinkers.”—Van den Boomgaard



18: [THE GLENLIVET 18 YEAR](#) (\$95)

“The combination of cask types, including both first- and second-fill American oak, adds a delicious tropical fruitiness to it, and the ex-sherry oak provides some woody spicy notes!”—Mcson Salicetti, head bartender at New York City’s [Crimson & Rye](#)



19: GLENMORANGIE LASANTA 12 YEAR (\$52)

“Double maturation is all the craze, and [Glenmorangie](#) does it well. This scotch is finished for two years in olorosso casks after spending 10 years in ex-bourbon barrels, picking up lots of dried fruits and nuttiness.”—Izaguirre



20: HIGHLAND PARK 12 YEAR (\$65)

“It’s a great Highland scotch with depth, flavor and perfection—a step up for a 12-year-old that’s not simply a smooth whisky.”—Kang



21: KILCHOMAN MACHIR BAY (\$58)

“It’s an elegant, understated Islay scotch from one of the newer distillers in the region. Sixty percent of the malt is aged in sherry barrels, so it’s a lovely peated malt for the Speyside fans.”—Peder Schweigert, general manager at Minneapolis' [Marvel Bar](#)



22: LAGAVULIN 200TH ANNIVERSARY 8 YEAR (\$66)

“It’s a total shocker of complexity in an eight-year-old—salty, sweet and sultry.”—H. Joseph Ehrmann, owner of San Francisco's [Elixir](#)



23: LAPHROAIG QUARTER CASK (\$64)

“It’s a classic Islay malt with great complexity and a big peat finish—one of my everyday drams.”— Ehrmann



24: LAPHROAIG 10 YEAR (\$61)

“This bold Islay has salty, rich peat, black pepper and cardamom spice.”—Matthew Voss, head bartender at Minneapolis' [Marvel Bar](#)



25: TALISKER 10 YEAR (\$55)

“It’s a great Isle of Skye scotch with a bit of peat expressing the best of its terroir. It has an umami thing going on, with sweet, salty, peaty and spice.”—Kang



26: TALISKER 57° NORTH (\$57)

“Talisker is the only distiller on the Isle of Skye. If you want to get geeky, it has a sea-spray, peaty nose, honey and buttered pepper with an oak spice palate.”—Chris Hannah, head bartender at New Orleans' [French 75](#)



27: WOLFBURN (\$62)

“This lightly aged spirit emphasizes the character of the malt and quality of the distillate.”—Dong

Locations: Atlanta British Columbia California Canada Chicago Georgia Illinois Las Vegas Los Angeles Louisiana Minneapolis Minnesota Nevada New Orleans New York Oklahoma Oregon Portland San Francisco Scotland Tulsa Vancouver

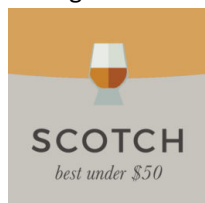
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