



WHISK(E)Y TASTING GUIDE

Table Of Contents

Intro... 2

Whiskey vs Whisky.... 3

Different tasting methods...3

Murray method.... 4

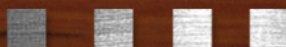
“The Nose”.... 5

Basic Lingo...6

Tasting Guide... 7-9

Cheat Sheet... 10

More note space... 11-12



Intro

With more and more distilleries popping up and bars becoming catered toward high-end drinks and conversation, whiskey is becoming quite popular. Like a nice glass of wine, whiskey should be sipped and slowly enjoyed instead of shot back, but with whiskey drinking comes confusion.

At first whiskey tasting might seem intimidating due to the vast amounts of knowledge and snobbery that can be associated with it, but a few simple guidelines can help ease tensions and make it fun. This whiskey-tasting guide is designed to do just that. It will break down the whiskey basics; the difference in the spellings, whiskey lingo you might need to know, and a few basic methods for tasting whiskeys. Then the guide will give a basic lay out on how to go about tasting a whiskey with room to record your own reactions.

You can print out and use this guide when heading to your local whiskey bar, or to throw a whiskey tasting party with a few friends. For whiskey suggestions visit A Dram for your Thoughts at <http://worldandwhiskey.wordpress.com> and click on the Whisk(e)y link.

Whiskey vs. Whisky

The spelling of whiskey or whisky is a part of whiskey etiquette. A general rule of thumb for remembering which whisk(e)y's have an 'e' is if the country is spelled with an 'e' than they spell whisk(e)y with an 'e'. So for example Ireland spells it whiskey, while Scotland spells it whisky. While there are always few exceptions, this will usually be the case. For the purpose of convince, this whiskey guide will always spell it with and 'e'.

Different tasting Methods

As long as you're drinking it, there is really no wrong way to taste whiskey. However, there are many different ways to go about it, and many people will claim some ways are better than others. The whiskey guide at the end of this booklet goes through one of the more simple ways to taste whiskey. If you want to move onto something more specific, the next pages briefly go over two more famous whiskey, and more particular tasting methods; The Murray Method and The Nose. If you prefer to try one of these methods there is extra room at the end of the booklet for tasting notes.

Murray Method

Jim Murray, the author of the Whiskey Bible is the creator of this first method.

Start with unsweetened black coffee or chew on a 90% minimum cocoa chocolate to cleanse the palate. Find a place free of noise and distracting smells. Use a tulip shaped glass. Don't use water or ice (especially if it will cause the drink to go below 40% ABV... because it will no longer be whiskey). Warm the glass to body temperature by placing one hand on the bottom of the glass and the other hand on the top of the glass (hand on top must be non-perfumed).

To smell, move the glass from nostril to nostril never sticking your nose inside the glass. Never breath deeply.

To taste, take a drink, but make no notice of it. This serves as a marker for your palate. On your second taste close your eyes and chew the whiskey. Keep your mouth slightly open to let air in and alcohol out. Look at the balance, assess the shape, and drink a few more sips. Be honest with your assessment; don't just like a whiskey because someone tells you it is good.

“The Nose”

Richard Patterson is a 3rd generation whiskey man famous for his pallet and nicknamed “The Nose”, this is his method.

Use a glass with a stem or tulip shape. Pour a tiny amount of whiskey into the glass, swirl it around and then toss it out. This prepares the glass and removes all impurities (bartenders will not do this for you, don't ask).

Now pour the whiskey and “Nose” it by doing the following; stick your nose in the glass, once you get a hit of the alcohol pull your nose out, wait a few seconds and go back for a second smell... then go back for a third. On your last time put your nose to the lip of the glass and roll it from one nostril to the next.

Add water, enough to get the whiskey down to about 35% ABV. This opens up the whiskey and makes it more palatable. Don't use ice, it will mask the flavors. Taste a small amount, just a sip and move it around your entire mouth. Give it 20-30 seconds before you swallow it. After 2-3 small sips go ahead and finish it.

Basic Lingo

You are so close to actually tasting the whiskey, but first you should make sure you have the lingo down so you don't make a fool of yourself at the bar or in front of your friends. First things first, whiskey is generally served in half, one or two ounce (oz) portions. This is odd considering a standard industry mixed drink is 1.5 oz. For tasting, or taster trays a half oz pour is typical, but when you got to the bar you will need to decide how much you want to drink.

Next, whiskey can be served many different ways; in a mixed drink, on the rocks, neat, up, ect. When tasting whiskeys you will want to order your whiskey neat, which means they haven't done anything to it. Often people get 'up' confused with 'neat', but they are very different. When you order your drink 'up' you are asking for it shaken over ice and then strained into a glass, this leaves it chilled and watery from the ice melt, you don't want this for tasting. Fortunately, most bartenders will assume you are confused when you said 'up' and realize you meant to say 'neat' and serve it 'neat' instead. Another typical way you might order a whiskey is on the rocks, this just means with ice.

Last, if you plan on tasting a few different whiskeys at a bar ask if they do flights. These are the same idea as beer flights and vary from place to place, but will usually be the most affordable way of tasting a variety of different things.

For the tasting guide I will be using the recommended method from William Oliver's Public house.

This guide is designed for a typical whiskey tasting flight. A typical flight consists of four different whiskeys. Please write the whiskeys in the space provided, in the order you plan to taste them in so as not to get confused.

Whiskey One: _____

Whiskey Two: _____

Whiskey Three: _____

Whiskey Four: _____

If at all you're having trouble putting words to smells or tastes there is a cheat sheet of key phrases in at the end of the tasting guide, but we strongly encourage that you try to pin your own smells and tastes before referencing the list.

Use a glass you feel comfortable with. Make sure it is a clean glass. Open up the whiskey by heating the glass with your hands.

Next, put one hand on the bottom of your glass and the other hand covering the top, this keeps the volatiles in and release aromatics.

Give the whiskey a smell. Move the whiskey from one side of your nose to the other taking small normal sniffs. If all you can smell is alcohol pull it away from your face and then try again in a couple of seconds.

What do you smell? Think outside the box, vanilla, leather, fruits? Below record what you smell.

Whiskey One:

Whiskey Two:

Whiskey Three:

Whiskey Four:

Give it a taste. Hold it in your mouth a little bit.

Add some water with a dropper or a straw and give it another taste. (Note: not all whiskeys need water. Generally the better the whiskey the less water it will need.) Keep adding water till you are happy and have found all the nuances in the whiskey.

What do you taste? Similar to how it smelled or different? Does it bring up any memories?

Whiskey One:

Whiskey Two:

Whiskey Three:

Whiskey Four:



Cheat Sheet

Smokiness

This includes peatiness, as malted barley is often thrown over a peat fire in order to smoke it.

Saltiness

there may be a saline vapor, Many whiskies have a distinctly oceanic smell.

Fruitiness

Can you pick out dried currants, apricot, or cherry from your whisky?

Sweetness

Many whiskies have a caramel, toffee, vanilla or honey.

Woodiness

Since oak is such an integral companion in the whisky-aging process, wood smell is

Other Tasting Notes

The Smell

Whiskey One:

Whiskey Two:

Whiskey Three:

Whiskey Four:

On the Pallet

Whiskey One:

Whiskey Two:

Whiskey Three:

Whiskey Four:

Other Notes: