

Canadian Whisky

The season is changing and the leaves will soon turn from vibrant greens to magnificent shades of gold, orange and red.

Our choice in beverage alcohol also tends to change right along with the seasons. The gin and tonic that was so refreshing during the heat of summer may be replaced with a spirit that offers a little more warmth.

Although Canadian whisky is enjoyed all year round, it seems to be a natural choice for a fall perhaps due to the colors and spicy flavours.

Canadian whisky is very often referred to as “rye”. In the past, rye was the major ingredient in Canadian whisky; however today rye is used much less.

Most Canadian whiskies are blends made from different grains at various ages. Primarily whiskies are made from corn or wheat with small amounts of rye, barley or barley malt. When Canadian whiskies are blended, a light base whisky is generally used along with a heavier flavouring portion made with rye which contributes to the spicy; bitter-sweet character Canadian whiskies are famous for.

Unlike American whiskey, the Canadian government does not regulate the percentage of grain used. Canadian whisky however, is required to be aged for a minimum of three years, with most brands aged for four to six years. Much of this ageing is done in oak barrels which impart vanilla flavours to the product.

Canadian whiskies are lighter in style, smooth and some even delicate. There are also versions that are more robust in nature.

Canadian whiskies are recognized the world over as quality whisky. Our whiskies are indeed quality products and are receiving plenty of awards and accolades. At the 2011 International Review of Spirits in Chicago, the Forty Creek Barrel Select (750 ml \$25.99) earned a gold medal, as did the Forty Creek Double Barrel (750 ml \$59.99)

Gibsons Finest 12 Year Old (750 ml \$29.49) received a gold award at the 2011 International Wine and Spirit Competition. Gibsons 18 Year Old (750ml \$54.99) won best in class silver and Gibsons Sterling (750ml \$25.79) took a silver award.

Glen Breton Rare 10 Year Old (750 ml \$75.99) won gold at the 2011 International Review of Spirits. Glen Breton is the only single malt whisky produced in Canada and the Glenora Distillery located in Inverness County, Nova Scotia is the only single malt distillery in North America.

At the end of the day, Canadian whiskies are proven winners and make for a winning drink or cocktail. All of the products mentioned are available at most of our NB Liquor locations. Come in and pick up a new fall favourite!

If you would like to try an array of whiskies, and other spirits and liquers, be sure to check out the New Brunswick Spirits Festival, held at the Delta Fredericton November 17th and 18th. Visit www.whiskynb.ca for more details. See you there!

In the Spirits was written by Liz Durant, Product Advisor, NB Liquor, Parkway Mall, Saint John