WHISKY QUIZ · DISTILLERY TRIVIA

Do You Know Your Distilleries?

Test your trivia on pagoda roofs, Mortlach's 2.81 distillation, Campbeltown survivors, unpeated Islay rebels, and Scotland's greatest stillhouses.

HOST GUIDE & COMPLETE ANSWER KEY: Designed for pub quiz masters, whisky tastings, and society trivia nights. Questions include full multiple-choice options, marked correct answers, and 'Behind the Glass' factual explanations.

Q1. Who designed the iconic Scottish pagoda roof (Doig Ventilator), and at which distillery was it first installed in 1889?

[A] Thomas Telford at Glenlivet

[B] Charles Chree Doig at Dailuaine

[C] Aeneas Coffey at Kilbeggan

[D] Alexander Walker at Cardhu

CORRECT ANSWER: [B] Charles Chree Doig at Dailuaine

Behind the Glass: In 1889, Elgin architect Charles Chree Doig was summoned to Dailuaine to improve ventilation. He designed a cupola with upturned eaves that harnessed wind to create a steady upward suction for kiln smoke while keeping out rain and birds.

Q2. Mortlach distillery is famous for its intricate distillation system. Exactly how many times is Mortlach spirit distilled on average?

[A] Exactly 2.0 times

[B] Exactly 3.0 times

[C] Exactly 2.81 times

[D] Exactly 4.0 times

CORRECT ANSWER: [C] Exactly 2.81 times

Behind the Glass: Mortlach runs a split distillation across six mismatching stills. A portion of the intermediate feints is run repeatedly through a small spirit still called the 'Wee Witchie' (#3), producing an average calculation of 2.81 distillations and creating Mortlach's famously meaty character.

Q3. Campbeltown was once the Victorian whisky capital of the world with over 30 distilleries. How many survived into the 21st century?

[A] Only 1 (Springbank)

[B] Exactly 3 (Springbank, Glen Scotia, and Glengyle)

[C] Exactly 6

[D] None (it lost regional recognition)

CORRECT ANSWER: [B] Exactly 3 (Springbank, Glen Scotia, and Glengyle)

Behind the Glass: After the collapse of the Campbeltown boom, only Springbank and Glen Scotia survived. Glengyle was reopened in 2004 by the Mitchell family (owners of Springbank) specifically to bring the town's count to three, ensuring Campbeltown remained an official whisky region.

Q4. Which Islay distillery is famous for rebelling against the island's peaty reputation by producing its core single malt completely unpeated?

[A] Ardbeg

[B] Laphroaig

[C] Bruichladdich (The Classic Laddie)

[D] Lagavulin

CORRECT ANSWER: [C] Bruichladdich (The Classic Laddie)

Behind the Glass: While Islay is known for peat fire, Bruichladdich's flagship 'Classic Laddie' is completely unpeated, floral, and maritime. In a twist of contradiction, the exact same distillery also produces Octomore, the most heavily peated single malt in the world. (Bunnahabhain is also predominantly unpeated).

Q5. Which Scottish Lowland distillery is renowned for triple-distilling 100% of its single malt production?

[A] Glenkinchie

[B] Auchentoshan

[C] Bladnoch

[D] Daftmill

CORRECT ANSWER: [B] Auchentoshan

Behind the Glass: While double distillation is standard in Scotland, Auchentoshan outside Glasgow insists on complete triple distillation across wash, intermediate, and spirit stills, producing an exceptionally light, citrus-forward spirit. (Hazelburn at Springbank is another unpeated triple-distilled Scotch).

Q6. How many dedicated grain distilleries produce the vast volume of grain whisky required for all blended Scotch worldwide?

[A] Around 50

[B] Exactly 7

[C] Exactly 24

[D] Only 2

CORRECT ANSWER: [B] Exactly 7

Behind the Glass: While Scotland has over 140 malt distilleries, only 7 industrial grain plants produce around 90% of Scotland's total output: Cameronbridge, Girvan, North British, Strathclyde, Invergordon, Starlaw (Glen Turner), and Loch Lomond.

Q7. Which member of the 'Illustrious 1700s Club' claims the mantle of Scotland's oldest working distillery (founded 1775)?

[A] Bowmore (1779)

[B] Strathisla (1786)

[C] Glenturret (1775)

[D] Ardbeg (1798)

CORRECT ANSWER: [C] Glenturret (1775)

Behind the Glass: Glenturret claims 1775 as its founding date (originally the Hosh). Like many historic survivors, it has been shuttered, rebuilt, moved, and changed owners multiple times, embodying the philosophical 'Distillery of Theseus'.

Q8. Why is the modern Wolfburn distillery near Thurso an ironic example of heritage marketing?

[A] It was built inside a disused submarine.

[B] It was built in 2013 near the ruins of an 1821 distillery that vanished in the mid-19th century, sharing zero physical equipment or lineage with the original.

[C] It imports all its wash from Kentucky.

[D] It was banned from using Scottish water.

CORRECT ANSWER: [B] It was built in 2013 near the ruins of an 1821 distillery that vanished in the mid-19th century, sharing zero physical equipment or lineage with the original.

Behind the Glass: The original 1821 Wolfburn distillery vanished into rubble by the mid-1800s. In 2013, an entirely new modern facility was constructed nearby, reviving the historic brand despite having no physical or operational continuity with the original.

Q9. Which Speyside distillery is famously nicknamed the 'Beast of Dufftown' due to its savory, muscular character?

[A] Glenfiddich

[B] Mortlach

[C] Balvenie

[D] The Macallan

CORRECT ANSWER: [B] Mortlach

Behind the Glass: While Speyside is marketed as delicate, floral, and honeyed, Mortlach uses rapid mashing, minimal copper contact on specific runs, worm tub condensers, and its 2.81 distillation to produce a thick, meaty, sulphury single malt.

Q10. Edradour long promoted itself as 'Scotland's Smallest Distillery'. What did it do when new craft distilleries opened that were even smaller?

[A] Sued the Scotch Whisky Association.

[B] Rebranded itself as 'Scotland's Little Gem'.

[C] Tripled its still size overnight.

[D] Switched to continuous column distillation.

CORRECT ANSWER: [B] Rebranded itself as 'Scotland's Little Gem'.

Behind the Glass: When new farm and micro operations began producing whisky in spaces smaller than garden sheds, Edradour gracefully adapted its marketing slogan from 'Scotland's Smallest' to 'Scotland's Little Gem'.