



In conversation with Graeme Macaloney | Macaloney's Island Distillery

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In conversation with Graeme Macaloney, Founder-Director, Master Whiskymaker & Global Ambassador, Macaloney's Island Distillery

I posed a few questions to Graeme Macaloney just ahead of the [Victoria Whisky Festival](#) which runs through Thursday the 15th, Friday the 16th, Saturday the 17th and Sunday the 18th of January 2026 at the 5-star Hotel Grand Pacific located on Victoria's beautiful Inner Harbour. *Note: A limited number of tickets still available*



Graeme Macaloney, Founder-Director, Master Whiskymaker & Global Ambassador Macaloney's Island Distillery

Do you ferment and distill all of the alcohol on-site?

Yes.

Where do your grains and water come from?

All of our barley for whiskymaking is local BC – some from Peace River via Gambrinus for our single malt whisky and some from a local farmer for our triple potstill whisky

What is the percentage of different grains for your whiskies?

Single malt – 100% malted barley

Peated single malt – 100% malted barley

Triple distilled potstill – 60% raw barley, 40% malted barley

What type of stills do you use and why?

Forsyth's 5,500L wash still and 3,650L spirit still. They make the best single malt whisky and are used by 1/2 the Scotch single malt industry (the other 1/2 is DIAGO who own their own copperworks)

What is the 'wood story' for your casks?

We are in international leader with our wood program. Dr. Jim Swam, a fellow Scot and called the 'Einstein of Whisky' introduced me as our Scottish Master Whiskymaker to the top cooperages who supply Macallan and other great Scotch whisky distillers. In particular I love, and have pioneered the use of Jim's S.T.R. casks. Happy to elaborate via a tour of our distillery or Zoom call 😊

Do you add any colorings, flavourings, or other additives to your finished products?

No caramel – all natural colour and flavours 😊

What is the amount of spirit lost to evaporation during aging at your facility?

Our angels share is high – 7-8% annually but as a PhD whiskymaker I see this as a good thing! Happy to discuss further 😊

What are the typical aroma and flavour profiles I can expect from your whisky?

Our house style is creamy, velvety mouthfeel from use of a 2nd yeast, super smooth (not hot) from trickle distillation and super fruity from 'the narrowest cut in the entire Scotch industry' according to Dr. Swan. Palate starts off fruity with a delicate sweetness, develops through layers of complex but balanced flavours (depending on the cask type) and finished dry with a hint of salt / maritime influence (because we're an island distillery and the angels share gets replaced with fresh ocean air. We also do a sugarkelp smoked peated expression for even more merroir!

Which of your expressions would you recommend for someone who enjoys peaty/smoky, sweet/caramel, or spicy?

sweet/caramel: our Na Braiche red wine, our Cath-nah-aven Sherry bomb

spicy: our moscatel cask or virgin cask expressions

peaty: there is the Siol Dugall 25ppm with ex-bourbon & virgin cask notes and we have a whole range of terroir and merroir peated whiskies called, The Peat Project which are uniquely and unusually smoked here at the distillery including Washington peat, Islay peat, sugarkelp infused peat and Van Isle peat!

How does adding a few drops of water affect this specific whisky?

opens it up

How many bottles/cases do you produce per year?

variable depending on market conditions. We supply BC, AB, SK, MB, ON, QC and several foreign jurisdictions. We have lots of inventory and happy to sell more 😊

Do you have any new or experimental releases in the pipeline?

Yes, for sure. The Van Isle peat is maturing. Several new cask types coming (madeira, recioto, Port, Sauternes, etc)

What makes your spirit different or unique from others?

Great Canadian barley, best potstills, best Scottish practices brought in from Scotland, best available casks and a lot of care and patience with an emphasis on quality over cost.



WHISKY, PERFECTED. PROUDLY CRAFTED ON VANCOUVER ISLAND

Macaloney's Distillery is one of a rare breed of 'island' distilleries. Located in Victoria on Vancouver Island, our pristine and naturally beautiful island instills in our whiskies a unique infusion of island sea air and pure, fresh water.

Our award-winning single malt whiskies combo the finest Canadian barley together with the traditional craft of Scotland's finest whisky makers, distilled to perfection in our hand-hammered Forsyth's copper pot skills.

Canada's most awarded craft distillery, whisky made the traditional way.

📁 Drinks

🔖 'Einstein of Whisky', caramel, Dr. Jim Swam, Founder-Director, Graeme Macaloney, Macaloney's Island Distillery, malted barley, Master Whiskymaker & Global Ambassador, peaty, raw barley, Scotch industry, single malt whisky, Spicy, Spirit, sweet, triple potstill whisky, unique, Victoria Whisky Festival

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