

Malt Maniacs E-pistle #2014-Apr-02 **By Keith Wood, Germany**

This article is brought to you by 'Malt Maniacs'; an international collective of more than two dozen fiercely independent malt whisky aficionados. Since 1997 we have been enjoying and discussing the pleasures of single malt whisky with like-minded whisky lovers from all over the world. In 2010 our community had members from 16 countries; The United Kingdom, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Italy, Greece, The U.S.A., Canada, India, Japan, Taiwan, Australia & South Africa. More information on: www.maltmaniacs.org.



Malt Maniacs' Awards

A fresh approach

I would like to apologise on behalf of the Malt Maniacs Collective that the E-Pistle published yesterday was actually a "Maniacs' internal discussion" document which appears to have been *Whisky-Leaked* into the public domain.

May I categorically say, on 2nd April 2014 that the "MMA Fresh Approach" E-Pistle of 1st April (as copied below) will **not** be implemented.

Sweet Drams,
Keith Wood

The Malt Maniacs' Awards (MMA) has now been running annually for more than 10 years and is one of the foremost whisky competitions in the world. In fact we believe it is the best and most influential whisky competition on the annual calendar with the results eagerly awaited by public and trade alike.

Having said this, the competition format hasn't changed since its inception and we feel that in the face of growing competition amongst competitions it's time to look at our format and make a few subtle changes to meet the ever-increasing expectation of our audience.

To this end, MMA will have the following format from now on:

Medals – any entries scoring within the following ranges will receive these medals

96 or more points - Triple Gold Medal

90-95 points - Double Gold Medal

85-90 points - Gold Medal

80-84 points – Silver Medal

75-80 points – Bronze Medal

Categories

Our existing categories of Daily Drams, Premium and Ultra-Premium whiskies will not change and nor will their price ranges as we feel these are still valid, even in the face of rising prices and an industry move towards premiumisation. We will, however, introduce a new category for presentation which will include all aspects of bottle, label and packaging design. So, to recap we will now offer our Awards for:

Daily Drams – up to €50

Premium Whiskies - €51 to €150

Ultra-Premium Whiskies – over €150

Presentation

Awards

By definition the main focus of MMA is our Awards and we will continue to award these within the four categories, but in addition to our traditional five Awards we will introduce a sixth within the three whisky categories:

Supreme Winner	Awarded to the overall best in class
Best Sherried Whisky	Best whisky matured in sherry cask(s)
Best Peated Whisky	Best peated whisky
Best Natural Cask whisky	Best unpeated, non-sherried whisky
Thumbs-Up	
Wooden Spoon	Lowest scoring "could do better" award

The new Presentation category will have two Awards available:

Supreme Winner	Best or most innovative presentation
Wooden Spoon	Lowest scoring "could do better" award

We hope you agree with us that these changes will give MMA a truly fresh approach and keep it at the helm of annual whisky competitions. We would also like to stress that our philosophy of "no entry fee" will continue as before.

Sweet drams,
Keith Wood, Bayern



Keith Wood is a relic of the late, very late 50's and a self-proclaimed "Old Luddite" He currently lives in Bavaria and is married to the delightful Sabine who doesn't quite share all his passion for whisky. He has been one of the Malt Maniac collective since the beginning of 2011 and has also been organising the Malt Maniacs' Awards for the last three years. He was employed for some years as a business analyst helping to recommend changes and improvements in working practices and processes in order to help a customer-focused department better meet the demands of their customers. It is this expertise and experience which gave him the desire to help take MMA to the next awesome level.
Slàinte Mhath,
Keith Wood