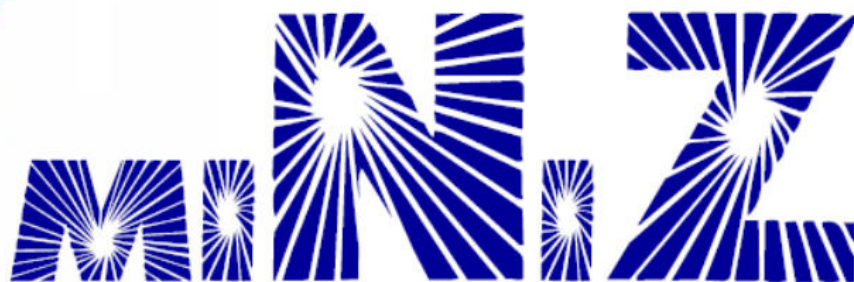


Issue 120 - Spring 2018



WWW.MINISNZ.COM

THE NEWSLETTER OF NEW ZEALAND MINIATURE BOTTLE CLUB



Australasia's International Miniature Bottle Club



NEW NEW ZEALAND, THIS & THAT

Thanks to Ken Chin we have the cover bottle photos, Gin Martini & Manhattan, together with the two bottles on the right, Negroni & Old Fashioned. This set of four are from a new Wellington based company, J.M.R. Cocktail Company. Unfortunately nowhere on these bottles does it say they are from Wellington or New Zealand. Nice bottles though but, at \$16 each, rather expensive.

Last year we saw the first Indian whisky, in miniature, being sold on the NZ market. This is John Paul Edited and bears an import label from Malts of Distinction in Taupo. Ken found another last month and bought me one. I thought that I may have it but, as you can see, this is John Paul Bold.

Whilst on the subject of Indian Whisky I brought you an article in miNiZ112 (Autumn 2016) in which I showed that two Indian brands are the largest selling whiskies in the world, with Johnnie Walker as number 3. The table below shows that the three largest whisky brands are all Indian now and I would bet money on (I'm not a betting man usually!) most of you have never even heard of the largest selling spirit brand overall, or the company that makes it. Note that it is three times



IWSR Real 100 – Largest spirits brands 1-10

Rank	2017	2016	Brand	Category	Owner	Volume	% Chg Volumes
						2017	2016 to 2017
1	1		Jinro	Soju	Hite-Jinro	75,910.0	0.8%
2	3		Ruang Khao	Other Spirits	Thai Beverage	31,750.0	1.8%
3	2		Officer's Choice	Indian Whisky	ABD	31,510.1	-2.5%
4	4		Emperador	Brandy	Emperador	28,756.8	-3.0%
5	6		McDowell's	Indian Whisky	Diageo	26,338.2	2.7%
6	7		Smirnoff	Vodka	Diageo	25,635.0	0.7%
7	5		Chum Churum	Soju	Lotte	25,551.0	2.2%
8	8		Hong Tong	Other Spirits	Thai Beverage	21,200.0	2.4%
9	10		Imperial Blue	Indian Whisky	Pernod Ricard	18,847.7	5.2%
10	9		Good Day Soju	Soju	Muhak	18,550.0	-1.3%
Volume Units: Thousands of nine-litre cases						Source: IWSR 2018	

the size by volume of Smirnoff Vodka, the only true International brand on the list.



New member Dave Smithson from Paraparaumu, NZ does not collect miniature bottles but, as you can see, he does collect mini syphons. He is always looking for more if you have any for sale.

Bert Thomson from the UK sent MBL photos of the first two miniatures from the new Wolfburn distillery in Scotland. Both are 50ml. Northland is described



as their 'Flagship Release. It was matured in American oak quarter casks. Morven is lightly peated and has been matured in a mixture of ex-Bourbon barrels and quarter casks.

We have all heard about the nerve agent Novichok. For some reason Bristol Dry Gin decided to capitalise on the name and bring out a limited edition Novichok vodka, including a miniature version. They waited until the Skripal's had recovered before doing so but unfortunately their timing was in the worst possible taste as, just after the launch, two other people came down with the nerve agent poisoning and one of them died! The distillery has apologised and stated that the vodka has sold out and they

have no plans to produce anymore. I suspect this will be one of the hardest ever mini vodkas to obtain.

Frank Wynn wrote: *"I was in a bottle shop the other day and the assistant told me that Lion are no longer distributing miniatures of Johnny Walker Red and Black labels as there is no profit in it for them. Could be the end of an era."* No surprise really, miniature sales have been slowly dying here for years. The exorbitant pricing of locally produced minis is not helping either.

David Smith

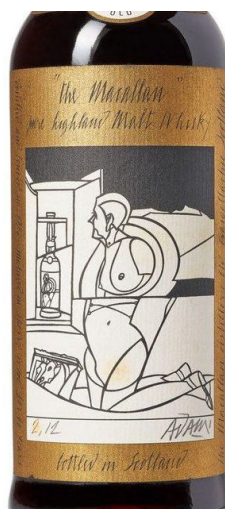


AUCTION REPORT



This 1937 Macallan was sold by Glasgow auctioneers, McTears for £3,300. The auctioneer reported that as bidding started on the miniature it became clear there were collectors from around the world keen to get their hands on it. Graeme Maxwell, whisky expert for McTear's, said: "We are delighted with price achieved for the bottle. The Macallan 1937 Fine & Rare, which was rebottled in 2002, has never come to auction before so we knew it would attract a lot of interest. It was an extremely lively auction and after some fierce bidding the lot was eventually sold online to a collector in Italy."

Yes, I know it's not a mini, but this 1926 Macallan sold for the equivalent of over US\$73,000 for 50ml, which makes the above look really cheap! This 1926 bottle sold on 3rd October for £848,750 (US\$1,100,000), making it the most expensive standard Scotch bottle to ever sell at auction. It was bottled, as a 60 year old, in 1986. The label was designed and signed by Italian artist, Valerio Adami. It is number 2 out of a run of only 12. There is more info here:



<https://www.forbes.com/sites/georgekoutsakis/2018/10/03/60-year-old-whisky-sells-for-over-1-million-dollars-at-auction/#43986ae05883>

All the remaining results I have to show you in this edition are from Whisky Auction, UK. For a change we will start off with some Japanese whiskies. All three Suntory Old 10cl Whiskies sold well. Fish £180, Sea Bream £75 & Shrimp £250.



Starting the next page we have Nikka G&G Train Label bottle (both sides shown) from 1985. £320 makes this the most I have seen a Japanese whisky mini sell for.



The Karuizawa 8 year old 3cl sample sold for £160.

Join The Movement, #LoveScotch is a set of five Diageo miniature bottles released for International Scotch Day on 10 February 2017. £170 bought it.



The two Taplows sold for, wait for it, £2.50!

No that is not each. The Gordon & Smith Royal Standard Blend is a lovely old cork cap bottle in great condition but, in line with most blends, the price was poor at £12.



The two Ardbeg single malts are 10cl Press Samples and come complete with boxes. £360 & £400 bought these. Whiteley's Grand Liqueur Scotch sold for £35. Finally we have a 7.1cl Hewitt's Irish Whiskey. Old Irish always sell well and this was no exception at £180

David Smith

AUCHENTOSHAN



Auchentoshan was founded in 1825 and is situated just outside Glasgow in Dumbartonshire. The name is Gaelic for Corner of the Field and is pronounced "Och n tosh n." The distillery is just south of the imaginary line that separates the Highland distilleries from the Lowland ones.

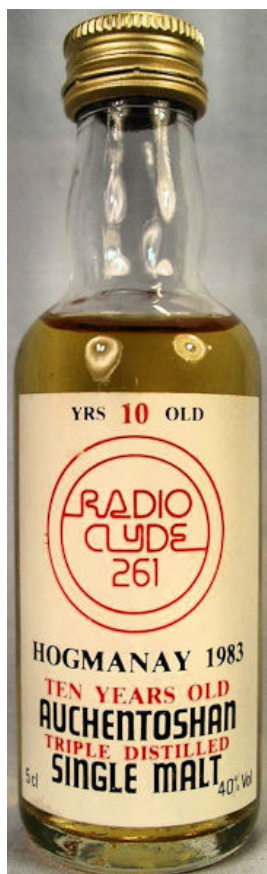
Although it takes peat from the Highlands it definitely tastes like a Lowland malt whisky. This is due to the fact that the spirit is triple distilled. This is very rare in Scotland but popular in Ireland. It results in a light whisky but flavoursome.

The region was heavily bombed during World War Two and the distillery received damage. This was repaired after the war and the distillery got back into full production. One benefit from the bombing was a large bomb crater. This was turned into a pond and some of the distillery water comes from this.

In 1984 the distillery was bought by Stanley Morrison who also owned Bowmore and Glen Garioch. A few years later Suntory (now Beam Suntory) bought a share of the renamed Morrison Bowmore and now fully control the business.

The company makes a large range of whiskies and most of them come out in miniature. One is a number crunchers delight as it is triple distilled and aged in three different woods. The range runs from whiskies with no age stated up to at least 31 years of age.

They were also well known for corporate labels, such as the Radio Clyde one on the left, but do not seem to have made many of these since being owned by Beam Suntory. Apart from that, thank you Auchentoshan for making so many miniatures.



Frank Wynn

SEVA, LUIS & DAVID'S BOTTLES

David's name might be last this time, but only because I am showing these bottles in the order received. As usual, I will let them mainly speak for themselves.

SEVA



Sampling Eau de Vie Potato Vodka produced here in NZ by Distillerie Deinlein & distributed by Triple Rock Ltd — at The Carpenters Daughter.



Seva wrote to me: "Distillerie Deinlein vodka minis are samples not for sale. Maybe you can find a way to get a hold of a sample for me?" So I wrote to Erica Mulder "I know you have been in touch with Deinlein in the past. You might like to follow up on this one." Unfortunately Erica wrote right back "I already did a few weeks ago. The reply was: I know you want it – but this is just a taster; nothing else. Sorry, can't help!" And of course we are sorry too as there are not many new NZ bottles around at the moment.

Next is Burning Barn Spiced Rum from the UK. According to their web site they were inspired by the craft beer and gin movement, and motivated by a massive fire on their farm. The three vodkas are obviously from Russia and obviously for the World Cup. Great set!



The two gin/vodka sets are both from the UK. Starting the next page we have Admiral's

Old J Tiki Fire Spiced Rum from the British Virgin Islands (did nobody tell them they are in the wrong ocean for the Tiki name?) British bottled Mezan rum. They do a range of these



from at least four Caribbean countries. Three new gins from Reginerate of Germany follow.



The final two bottles are One With Life, a Mexican Tequila bottled in Saratoga Springs NY and Royal Vodka from La Mare of Jersey (Channel Islands not New). The latter is sold bundled with chocolates.

Seva tells me that there is another vodka & gin producer on Jersey and that he would love to get the vodkas from both.

LUIS

All these bottles were produced in Spain, although many with spirits from elsewhere. I actually have information that says the Old Virginia Bourbon is bottled in Germany for the supermarket chain, Aldi. Can you confirm or refute this Luis?

I like the Martes Santo set of four gins, these are bottles that stand out in a crowd. The next Martes Santo set of 6 bottles is good but not as good as the first four.





Lots of times on the internet I have been bottles that say Malta identified as Maltese. For the few of you who may not know, Malta is Spanish for Malt. Similarly, the London Gin will not be imported unless it says imported. London Gin refers to a type of gin, not the geographic location.

There is something about skulls that seem to lend

themselves to mini bottles. These bottles would be nice without them but are spectacular with them. You will not find these in Mexico.

DAVID

I acknowledge that several of the photos that David sent to me are not being shown. No this is not censorship, it's just that both Luis and David sent photos of the same bottles.

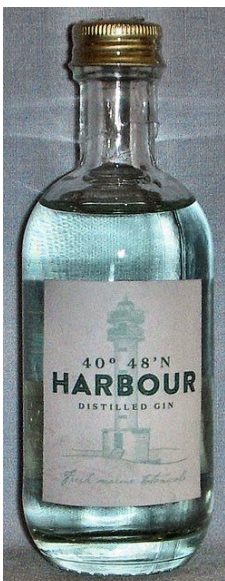


The very nice set of four Tequilas is by Tierra and the other Talisco.

The set of five Glen Moray single malt Scotches was bottled by WIT of France for the Hong Kong MBC. The Irish Whiskey is called Irish American as it is matured in American oak casks. Limousin Rye is, I assume, matured in French oak casks. It is from the Dancing Goat Distillery in LA (see embossing on bottle).



Next we have lots of Gins, the 'in' spirit at present. The first 5 are from Spain, then two from the UK and Elephant from Germany.



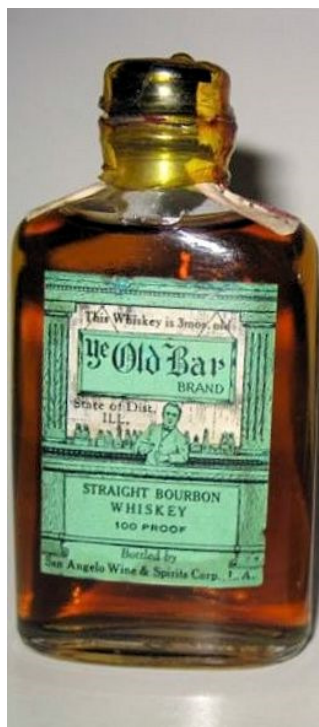
Seva Trakhtman, Luis Campos & David Spaid

THE OLD DAYS

Back in 2011 John Sullivan wrote a blog about his experiences 40 years ago. As most of you will not have read this I am reproducing it in full here – it is well worth a read.

The Biggest Collection I Ever Bought

This collection was one of the greatest collections in the history of mini bottle collecting. It started in 1978 when I received a letter from a woman telling me about her collection. Her letter was in response to a magazine article she saw that contained an article about my collection. She stated that she was getting older and was thinking about selling her collection. I had never heard of her as a mini bottle collector so I asked her for the names of some of her favourite bottles. When she replied with names like Old Camel and Buccaneer I got excited. I asked her how many bottles she had and she replied about 8,000 or 9,000. I told her I would like to come and visit her and she said that would be fine. She lived in Rockport, IL and I lived in Los Angeles. My Dad lived in Milwaukee. So shortly after that conversation, I flew back to Milwaukee and picked up my Dad and off we went to Rockport. When we got there, she took me upstairs to her bottle room and the first thing I saw were whiskies I never heard of. Then I saw rums I never heard of, and gins and beers and figurals I had never seen. I was so excited I couldn't stand it. When we finally



went back downstairs, she served us coffee and cookies and we began discussing her collection. When I finally told her that I wanted to buy it, she said "Oh, I don't think I want to sell it. I would really miss my little babies." I was shocked. That was the whole reason I made the trip. I was really disappointed when we left her home.



Four months later, she called me and told me she was ready to sell her collection and she was asking \$25,000. I countered with an offer of \$20,000 and she declined. Four months later she called and said she was willing to accept the \$20,000 offer. I declined her offer and came back with a \$15,000 counter offer. She declined. About a year later I received a phone call from an attorney who handling her estate and had been advised that before her death, the woman had told the attorney that she had received a \$20,000

offer on her collection from me. The attorney was calling to tell me that the estate was willing to accept the \$20,000 offer. I explained to the attorney that the original \$20,000 offer had been declined by her and that the most recent offer was \$15,000. The attorney blustered on about the value of the collection and the \$15,000 offer was ridiculous. When I

asked him if he knew anything about minibottle collecting he replied that "no" he did not but that he knew about the value of things. I then proceeded to start to explain to him that the boxes of bottles that were now in the basement of the old building where the law offices were located were probably starting to mildew and that the silverfish were probably starting to eat the glue on the back of labels and that once labels were destroyed the bottles would be worth nothing. I could tell that he was a little concerned when I told him those things. He then began to negotiate. He said \$19,000 and I said \$16,000. He then said \$18,000 and I said \$17,000. He then said "Deal" and we had a deal. I would come to his offices in Rockport and bring a cashier's check for \$17,000 and take possession of the collection.



That is when the fun started. Where in the heck was I going to come up with \$17,000? I was a young guy with a wife and 5 children and a mortgage. I went home and called my bank and asked them what kind of second mortgage I could get on my home and they gave me a number larger than what I needed. Then came the hard part. I had to discuss it with my wife before I could make a decision like that. My wife had never been interested in my mini bottle collecting. But like to good sport and bookkeeper that she is, after I explained that I thought this a once in a million opportunity and that I thought I could make a profit if I sold most of the collection, she agreed.

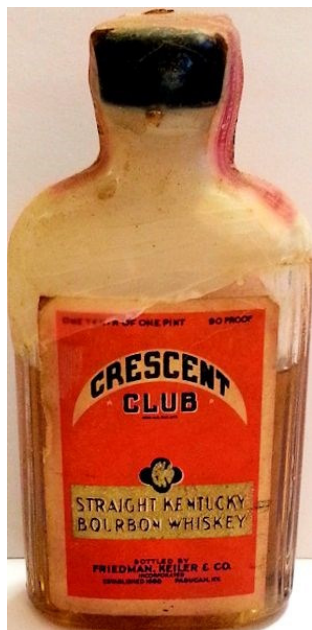
At about the same time, I heard about a new bottle club that was putting on a mini bottle show in Illinois. The timing was perfect. I flew back to Rockport the week of the bottle show in Hinsdale, Ill. and picked up the bottles. I brought my good friend Linus Earl and

his son Cliff because Linus asked if he could have first crack at the whiskeys. I said yes and off we went. It took us two days to unpack the almost 100 boxes that the bottles were packed in. Just to give you an idea of how good this collection was, Linus Earl was one of the top mini whiskey collectors in the world at that time. He found 500 bottles of whiskey that he needed for his collection and half of those were bottles that he never heard of nor knew existed. He was ecstatic. He paid me \$5 each and all of a sudden, I had \$2500 of my investment back. It actually turned out that she had 11,000 bottles in her collection and 8,000 or 9,000 as she thought. I picked out 1,100 bottles for myself. We had rented a U Haul truck and loaded up all the boxes and drove to Hinsdale.



When we got to the Ramada Inn, I decided to set up in my room rather than get a table in the show room because I was scared to death that someone might steal some of the bottles overnight and I would lose money, which I could not afford to do. My good friend David Spaid was a big help to me by bringing in the top collectors of each type of spirit or figural type, one at a time, to see what they wanted to buy. That led to a lot sales on Friday night and Saturday. By the end of Saturday, I had sold \$12,000 worth of bottles all together and still have one day to go. I only needed to sell \$5,000 more of the bottles and I would at

least break even. By 1:00PM on Sunday, I had not sold many of the remaining bottles and many of the collectors had already left for home. I was getting nervous. Then my old friend from New York approached me and asked me what I would take for the rest of the bottles. I said \$10,000



and he countered with \$8,000. He and two of his friends from New York were interested in the collection because they all collected different spirits and there were plenty of what each of them wanted. I countered with an offer of \$8,000 and they take possession of the bottles right there at the show or \$9,000 and I would cover the shipping to New York. They chose the \$8,000 and it was the wrong decision. They each gave me a check for one third of the \$8,000 but before I consummated the deal, I called my good friend Tony Natelli in New York to ask him if he knew the other two guys and if their checks were good. Tony gave them the "thumbs up" and I consummated the deal.



Then the trouble began. The fellows loaded up the bottles in our U-Haul and we took them to the airport and they had sky caps unload the bottles at the airline they were flying. There were about 70 boxes left. I am guessing that they bought about 8,000 bottles that day. We then went to return the U-Haul truck and took a taxi back to the airport. It took us about two hours to do all of this. By the time we got back to the airport. Lo and Behold, there were the guys still trying to find an airline that would take the boxes of bottles as freight. As it turned, none of them would. One of the guys owned a business in New York that had a truck and he ended up sending his truck and one of his employees on a round trip from New York to Chicago and back to bring the bottles home. It cost them more than \$1,000 to do this.



The final result.....

\$17,000 loan paid back in 10 days. No interest paid.

\$3,000 profit

1,100 great bottles added to my collection.

Many other collectors found bottles for their collections that were extremely hard to find.

All in all, a real success story.

I am not encouraging anyone else to do something this crazy but sometimes you just get lucky. And have a great wife! (but Mary is long suffering! – Ed.)

FOUND ON-LINE

I, and others, constantly find photos of bottles that may be of more general interest but that do not fit into articles such as Auction Report or New New Zealand. I am going to show you some of those here and hope to make it a regular feature. These may be newly released minis but not necessarily so. In most cases I will let them speak for themselves.



The above is 10cl. I don't think the two ceramic Cognac bottles are official issues – can anyone confirm this?



The Ink Dry Gin is a great bottle from Australia. It is used as the banner for Facebook page "What's New – All Liquor Minis." <https://www.facebook.com/groups/355094831503811/> I don't know what countries the next two minis are from. I am guessing Poland for the first and one of the former Yugoslav republics for the second. Does anyone know for sure?

On the subject of Facebook you might also like to check out these other mini bottle groups:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/460975980746299/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MinibottlesAG/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/64672417134/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/682155211878137/>

Some are closed groups but you only have to ask to gain access.

We start the next page with a number of interesting straights. Putin X...O Ukrainian Cognac dates from 2014 but I have only come across this this year. I suggest that the name is





Satirical. Ever seen a mini from Namibia? No, neither had I until I came across NamGin. This is actually the second version, the first was in the same shaped clear bottle. On the subject of bottles from Africa (you did know Namibia was in Africa didn't you?) have you seen Malawi Gin? Sticking with the theme, the ISP that hosts Miniature Bottle Library recently got a complaint that one of the bottles was wrongly attributed to a competitor and driving traffic to a rival's site – I wish the site had

that much traffic that such a mistake would make a difference! What puzzled me is that they could have emailed the site with the complaint, there are email links everywhere. Finding the ISP would have been much more difficult. For all our members from Ghana, and just to be sure, Takai Liqueur is from Gilhoc Distilleries in Accra.



Now for some bottles that, I think, are all new out this year. The five Laodi liqueurs and two Loadi spirits are from a Laos company and these are their publicity shots. So why use the Sydney Harbour Bridge as a backdrop?



Starting the next page we have a very attractive bottle from Armenia that got carried away with the number of names on the bottle. Proshyan Brandy Factory Diamond Opera Special Blend XO Armenian Brandy! This is followed by Amber Vodka from Poland with a piece of amber in the bottle. Stoli is, of course, a very well known brand but these bottles are new.

Even the bottle shape and capping is new, although I don't like the capping as it is too big in proportion to the rest of the bottle. Market Alley Gin is one of dozens released this year. This one is from the US, the next, Scout & Sage, is English. Vasco are two new rums from



the Seychelles. There is not much Port in WIT tubes so these Feuerheerd's should be popular.

Starting on the next page we have a series of sets, all of which are new or fairly new. The J.H. Malts are from Waldviertler of Austria. The Moonshine Vodkas are from the Seychelles. Arlanda wine liqueurs are Moldovan. Tundra, is, at it says, from Russia. Stride Gin is from Spain. Dulce Vita is Mexican. Faber is from the USA. Le Caucade is Georgian. Stoneyard, Dragon Moon, Last Mountain and Moto are all from the USA. Torus is a great new Tequila set. Icelandic Mountain Vodka is self explanatory. Poetic Licence is yet another gin set from the UK. Winding River Liqueurs come from there too. Blackfish and Bubba's Secret Stills are both from the USA.











The three 'Chinese' Kaoliang Liquor bottles are from Taiwan. The Here's Looking at You set comes from Australia. The two Chacha minis in coffins come from Georgia. Legendary Dracula Immortal Palinka de Prune comes, of course, from Romania. I have no idea who made the two ceramic Chinese bottles. Gilors is a set of 3+1 single malt Whiskies from Germany.

David Smith

ESTONIAN COSTUMES

In miNiZ118 I showed you some new shrink wrapped 'people' bottles from Greece. I don't know whether these Estonian ones were made by the same company or are merely a copy. Nice bottles though.



David Smith

Date - Time - Place

Sunday 28th October, 12.30pm, Pot Luck Lunch @ Errol & Karen's, 39 Pembroke Street, Tawa

December lunch - TBA

Sunday 20th January 2019, 6.00pm, Annual Barbeque @ David & Rosie Smith's, 11 Trevor Terrace, Paremata

Currently only Wellington meetings are being scheduled, our members elsewhere are invited to organise a meeting. Let us know where and when well in advance and we will be happy the publicise it.

The 2019 AGM will be on the 17th February. There will be a barbecue lunch starting at 12.30 with the AGM about 2.30 @ Colin & Di Ryder's, 20 Prospect Terrace, Johnsonville, Wellington.