

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SAMPLING FINE AND RARE WHISKIES (OR STORING YOUR OWN COLLECTION), ARE INCREASINGLY POPULAR. BUT THEY DON'T ALWAYS COME CHEAP.

# BESPOKE BOOZE

Single malt fans have more options than ever to customize their drinking. By Robert Haynes-Peterson

It's an excellent time for connoisseurs of single malt Scotch whisky. Distilleries are expanding, production is up, with more iterations of fine and rare releases than ever before. For those seeking even more unusual drinking options, a cottage industry of whisky clubs and concierge services has arisen to assist in customizing your whisky experience like never before.



**1494 Club:** A New York-based whisky club directly targeting high earners, 1494 honors the private social clubs of the 19th century. Founder David Clelland has secured an undisclosed townhouse in Manhattan where members can convene for tastings and curate their personal collections. Founding Members (\$175,000) gain access to Scotland distillery and golf course trips via private jet, while Collector memberships (\$25,000 and up) also boast many perks. "I wanted to offer an experience, and a lifetime commitment for collectors," says Clelland.

**TWD**  
THE WHISKY DOG

### The Whisky Dog:

Founder Nicholas Pollacchi is an affable, stylish young Scotsman who has worked all angles of the whisky trade. What he felt was missing were private tasting events customized to meet a company's or individual's needs. Meet The Whisky Dog. "We're all about sitting down with the client and creating the kind of experience they want to create. Is it focused on high-end, rare product, or is it a one-to-one Scotch 101 seminar with younger executives?" asks Pollacchi. In addition to offering a large range of specialty whiskies, Pollacchi can customize events to include extras like fine cigars, a bespoke tailor, food pairings and musical entertainment.

### Branded Whisky Clubs:

Groups like the Glenlivet Guardians, 1801 Chivas Brotherhood and the Custodians of The Dalmore provide extra perks for your favorite brands. Sign up online and gain access to early releases of new expressions, private tasting events and more. The Glenlivet Guardians, for example, have sole access to the Guardian Single Cask Edition (about \$300), and to a three-day "Whisky School" at the Speyside distillery, including the opportunity to bottle your own whisky.



### The Scotch Malt Whisky Society of America:

This branch of the popular Edinburgh-based Society allows members the opportunity to sample and buy rare single-cask expressions, custom-made for SMWS. Bottles are identified by number (i.e. Cask No 106.18) rather than distillery, to allow the whisky to speak for itself. The date of distillation, number of bottles and tasting notes are printed on each bottle. Membership is \$229 (which includes a kit with four sample whiskies), and an annual renewal fee of \$60. Members also get discounted admission to tasting events.

