

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Johnnie Walker blends house history with 50-year-old scotch

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The John Walker Masters' Edition. Image courtesy of Johnnie Walker

By STAFF REPORTS

Scotch whisky maker Johnnie Walker is looking back into its own timeline for a special edition that dates back half a century.

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The John Walker Masters' Edition is composed of whiskies created in distilleries that date back to John Walker's time in the 19th century, all of which were aged for at least 50 years. This is the brand's first 50-year-old scotch, allowing it to highlight its craftsmanship and history at the same time.

"Fifty year old whiskies are very rare," said Johnnie Walker global brand director John Williams, in a statement. "Whiskies of this age have incredible character but it takes great skill to reveal their flavor and then balance them so people can appreciate the end result.

"That's where our master blender Jim Beveridge one of only six in the history of Johnnie Walker and his small team of exceptional whisky-makers come into their own as masters of their craft," he said.

Bottling up history

John Walker, the namesake founder of what would become the Johnnie Walker brand, lived from 1805 to 1857.

For this limited-edition creation, Johnnie Walker used whiskies from the stocks of distilleries that were active during his lifetime. This includes single malt whiskies from the now closed Glen Albyn and Glenury Royal plants, as well as Blair Athol.

John Walker Masters' Edition also features grain whiskies from Caledonian, Cambus and Port Dundas, all of which have ceased operations.

The whiskies for this edition were triple-matured and finished in an oak barrel. Notes include blackcurrants, citrus and dark chocolate.



John Walker Masters' Edition. Image courtesy of Diageo

"Each drop of this whisky has been hand-selected from some of the most valuable and precious casks of malt and grain whiskies to be found in our reserves," said Mr. Beveridge in a statement.

"About 20 years ago, Johnnie Walker blenders recognized that these individual whiskies were very special and the decision was made to put them aside for special use, allowing each of them to continue to mature in their casks, knowing that, in time, something even more remarkable would emerge," he said. "Our goal was to pay tribute to the whisky masters who worked with these whiskies such a long time ago and, with the creation of The Masters' Edition, I believe we've done that."

Priced at \$25,000, the whisky is limited to a series of 100. Each of the editions is housed in a numbered black crystal bottle by Baccarat.

Johnnie Walker also tapped British royal warrant holder N.E.J. Stevenson to build a wooden cabinet for the bottle.

Along with being sold in select markets, one of the limited-edition bottles will be auctioned by Bonhams in Hong Kong next year.

Johnnie Walker previously created a retrospective on more than a century of its brand history through the medium of bottles.

The brand's Blue Label Striding Man Edition is a four-bottle collector's set that features illustrations of its logo at various points between 1908 and 2015. Through this initiative, Johnnie Walker is using product to educate its audience of enthusiasts about its brand heritage ([see story](#)).

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