

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Scottish landscapes color The Macallan Home Collection

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The distiller protects the mile and a half of the River Spey that falls within the land it owns. Image courtesy of The Macallan

By ZACH JAMES

Scottish whiskey maker The Macallan is bringing together landscape, creativity and spirits for a limited-edition release.

The “River Spey,” the latest drop in the Home Collection, odes the waterway that runs through northeast Scotland and The Macallan Estate. Adorning the boxes of the distilled beverages is the work of British artist Michelle Lucking, whose pastel depictions further the brand’s longstanding emphasis on national pride.

“Water, for me, is a constant source of inspiration,” said Ms. Lucking, in a statement.

“I love exploring it, painting it,” she said. “There’s nothing quite as beautiful as water, and it’s my profound source of artistic inspiration.”

“When The Macallan asked me to capture the majestic River Spey and its importance to them, their whisky and the estate as part of the Home Collection, it just felt like a really brilliant fit.”

Nature’s embrace

The Home Collection was originally launched in 2022 with a focus on The Macallan’s distillery.

Artwork for the project was always created by those within the company. However, it appears that the whiskey maker has ventured outside its headquarters and staff for inspiration.



Ms. Lucking brings the winter landscapes to life through pastels. Image courtesy of The Macallan

Ms. Lucking was brought in to capture the majesty and natural beauty of the River Spey, a vital resource for the brand and the surrounding environment.

Having spent the majority of her life shoreside, Ms. Lucking explores water frequently in her work. The element appears in most of her publicly released paintings.

Bodies of water once again have inspired her artwork in her collaboration with The Macallan.

For the partnership, she made a series of pastel paintings that capture the river running through the distillery. The project tapped into her love for the natural world.

She speaks to this in a nearly two-minute-long campaign video, now live on The Macallan's YouTube channel.

The slot shows her interacting with the Scottish house's land, detailing what catches her attention for viewers. She also speaks with brand figures, their conversations demonstrating that this was a collaborative effort.

The Macallan presents "The Home Collection, River Spey"

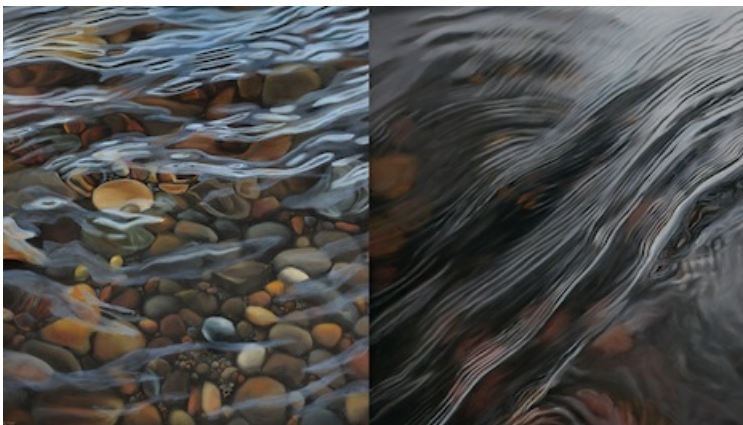
"I don't think there's anything quite so beautiful as water," says Ms. Lucking, in the video.

"It's my source of inspiration," she said. "It's what drives my art."

Producing multiple photo-real paintings for the company, each representing the region in the winter. Snow coats the trees, rocks and grass bordering the River Spey in the images.

Ms. Lucking utilizes a palette of natural pigment pastels to bring the environment to life, stating that the medium allows her to get as close to the natural tones of the earth as possible.

Capturing the nuances of the space was paramount for the artist. The tones also tie into the whiskey's subtle flavors of butterscotch, oak and raisin, among several others.



The artist's hyper-realistic art offers customers an up-close view of the maison's homeland. Image courtesy of The Macallan

As of now, the Home Collection, River Spey is only available for pre-sale on The Macallan website, retailing for \$487 per bottle. Alongside appearing on the box, three prints of Ms. Lucking's landscape paintings are included alongside the bottle with purchase.

Through Feb. 26, members of The Macallan Society will be able to stake their claim for the limited-edition liquor.

Individual bottles will go on sale in sparse quantities at The Macallan Global travel retail boutiques around the globe beginning next month.

"The Macallan Home Collection, River Spey is all about a deep connection to nature," said Ms. Lucking, in a statement.

"I wanted to convey the importance not just of the river itself, but all its elements, the pebbles, the amazing autumnal colors in the surrounding landscape from the soft yellows and ambers to the burnt umbers and deep treacle tones that I had seen reflected in the natural color of the whiskies," she said. "Layering and layering, creating all the different blends of color, getting finer and finer so you end up with this incredible fine detail and that's something you can never rush.

"A lot like creating whiskies here at The Macallan it takes time."

Homeland homage

As The Macallan celebrates its 200th anniversary ([see story](#)), the company is uplifting its local community and the people within it.



Scotland colors in The Macallan's marketing machine. Image courtesy of The Macallan

Last year, the brand partnered with Celtic band Simple Minds to create a soundtrack for a promotional short film that told the story of The Macallan's founding ([see story](#)). Tapping well-known regional talent only added to the campaign, which was hyper-focused on the distillery's homeland.

Around the luxury segment, other maisons have been tapping into national pride as a form of advertising.

French luxury conglomerate LVMH and jeweler Chaumet recently unveiled the medals for the upcoming 2024 Paris Olympics and Paralympics ([see story](#)). The awards spotlight various historic aspects of the city's history, from landmarks to important global figures.

In December 2023, as a part of Art Basel Miami Beach, Tequila Don Julio, a subsidiary of spirits distributor Diageo, showcased art from Argentine-Spanish contemporary artist Felipe Pantone. Other creatives from Mexico were also included in an effort to uplift the culture of the country the brand calls home ([see story](#)).



The brand joins others in bringing national pride to the forefront of advertising. Image courtesy of The Macallan

Local pride is a sticking point within the luxury segment. As consumers continue to demand more meaningful, heritage-focused

interactions with brands, the motif will most likely continue to prove fruitful.

“Crafted from a combination of European oak sherry seasoned casks, American oak sherry seasoned casks and refill casks, The Macallan Home Collection, River Spey embodies the dedication to incomparable craftsmanship and creativity, which The Macallan is renowned for,” said Steven Bremner, whisky maker at The Macallan, in a statement.

“The Macallan Home Collection, River Spey brings together our time-honored traditions and our continual inspiration from the nature that runs through The Macallan Estate and offers our community at home and around the world a unique insight into what makes our whiskies so exceptional through different aspects of our home.”

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