



New Balblair age-statement Travel Collection revealed with exclusive expression for GTR

International Beverage Group has unveiled a new Travel Collection of age-statement single malt Scotch whiskies from its multi-award-winning Highland distillery, Balblair on March 28, 2019. The new suite of expressions will be available in global travel retail from April 1 and features an exciting and striking new look, specifically designed to catch the eye of passengers in the highly-competitive travel retail environment.

The new collection complements a new range being launched to the UK domestic market at the same time, which will replace all existing Balblair expressions.

The new Travel Collection series features four whiskies, including one that is exclusive to Global Travel Retail. Each is meticulously hand selected, while all retain the distillery's unmistakable true Highland character.

The Travel Collection includes:

- **12-Year-Old** - matured in American oak ex-bourbon and double-fired American oak casks, with notes of dried orange, ground spices and sweet vanilla. The one litre size distinguishes this from the domestic collection.
- **15-Year-Old** - matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks, followed by first-fill Spanish oak butts, with notes of honey and spicy vanilla, followed by a wave of warm sweet tart. The one litre size distinguishes this from the domestic collection.
- **17-Year-Old (GTR EXCLUSIVE)** - matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks, followed by first-fill Spanish oak butts for exceptional depth and charisma, this traveller-exclusive Balblair shows great complexity with mature notes of bitter chocolate and cooked sultanas, root spices and thick honey. This is a celebratory, confident expression of this elegant spirit,

masterfully crafted through impeccable cask selection and slow, patient ageing. Available as a 75cl.

- **25-Year-Old** - matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks then reshaped in Oloroso Spanish oak, with notes of oily citrus, chocolate praline, fresh tobacco leaf and blood oranges. Available as a 75cl.

In a move away from the distillery's current 'vintage-only' approach, the launch of this collection signals a new era for Balblair. While each expression offers its own unique appeal, the series as a whole stays true to Balblair's house style, following a gentle and considered approach with its focus firmly on quality over quantity – an attribute Balblair has become renowned for.

John MacDonald, Distillery Manager at Balblair, said: "As one of the oldest working distilleries in the Scottish Highlands, Balblair has a long and rich history of crafting premium single malt Scotch whisky. These new expressions are true to the unique characteristics that have made Balblair such a popular brand amongst whisky aficionados.

"We are proud of our heritage and we will continue to honour our centuries-old traditions, but we also look forward in our quiet pursuit of perfection."

Commenting on the reveal, International Beverage Sales Director for Global Travel Retail James Bateman said: "These new Balblair expressions are another example of our commitment to building distinctive and desirable premium brands in travel retail.

"This range sets a new standard to personify the distinctive house style and unmistakable quality and provenance of Balblair. Each expression has its own unique characteristics; all of them exude Balblair's True Highland Spirit."

Inspired by Balblair's rich past, the packaging for the new collection is reflective of the distillery's unique and idyllic location. It takes subtle cues from the surrounding landscape: its pure Highland water source and the Pictish 'Z-rod' carvings etched on the ancient Clach Biorach standing stone located on the distillery's doorstep. A larger logo area and new label font has also been incorporated into the design to create greater on-shelf brand visibility.

The Travel Collection launches initially with Dufry through its UK airports, listing three of the four expressions (12, 15, 17 year olds), before rolling out globally.

For more information visit: www.balblair.com

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NOTES TO EDITORS

Balblair age-stated Travel Collection

Balblair 12-Year-Old

- 46% abv, matured in American oak ex-bourbon and double-fired American oak casks
- Colour: Polished gold
- Aroma: Elegant bright lemon peel layered with creamy vanilla and crisp green apples
- Palate: Ground spices and dried orange slices enveloped in intense set honey sweetness
- Finish: Creamy and leathery with notes of sweet vanilla

Balblair 15-Year-Old

- 46% abv, Matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks, followed by the indulgent influence of first-fill Spanish oak butts.
- Colour: Sparkling gold
- Aroma: Sumptuous runny honey and spicy vanilla, followed by a wave of a warm pear tart
- Palate: Vibrant with stewed apples, pineapples in syrup and ground ginger
- Finish: Long and mellow with notes of lemon zest and bitter chocolate

Balblair 17 Year-Old

- 46% abv, matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks, followed by first-fill Spanish oak butts
- Colour: Autumn leaf
- Aroma: Matures notes of bitter chocolate and cooked sultanas with a hint of antique polished wood.
- Palate: Root spices and thick honey complemented by bonfire night toffee apples
- Finish: Vibrant with orange zest, candied fruit and just a hint of wood smoke

Balblair 25-Year-Old

- 46% abv, matured initially in American oak ex-bourbon casks then reshaped in Oloroso Spanish oak
- Colour: Hot copper
- Aroma: Indulgent overripe apricots and dark liquorice stand out against polished oak and a touch of saddle wax
- Palate: Full-bodied with oily citrus, chocolate praline and a faint note of fresh tobacco leaf
- Finish: Warming with smooth chocolate and blood oranges

About the new packaging

The packaging for Balblair's new collection was developed by drawing inspiration from the distillery's rich heritage.

The new primary packaging retains Balblair's iconic bottle shape, smooth like the pebbles in the Allt Dearg Burn, which supplies Balblair's pure Highland water.

Influenced by the shape of previous Balblair label designs, the new brand logo takes the form of Struie Hill reflected in the water. The larger logo area is designed to provide greater visibility in the on and off trade.

The new label font is a contemporary adaption of the typeface used on the old sign at the distillery entrance, while the new brand symbol is inspired by the Pictish Z-rod etched on to the ancient Clach Biorach standing stone located right on the distillery's doorstep.

On the back of the new bottle, there is an embossing of the Balblair Z-rod symbol and the year the distillery was established, 1790.

About Balblair

Established in 1790, Balblair distillery is one of the oldest working distilleries in the Scottish Highlands.

Its location on the Dornoch Firth is intrinsically linked to the whisky its self, with its water source coming from the nearby Allt Dearg burn. The distillery also sits close to the site of an ancient gathering place for the Picts. On the distillery's doorstep stands a standing stone and stone circle, erected some 4,000 years ago in the Bronze Age. Known locally as the 'Clach Biorach' the standing stone was used to observe the change of seasons by the Picts. They added their own unique markings to the stone and for thousands of years used it as a gathering place.

Today, Balblair prides itself on its true highland spirit, where quality comes before all else.

The distillery, which sits just off the popular North Coast 500 route, welcomed over 9,300 visitors through its doors in CYE18 (+37% on CYE17).

About International Beverage Holdings

[International Beverage Holdings](#) was established in 2005 as the international arm of ThaiBev, one of South East Asia's leading alcohol beverage companies. With a network of regional offices in Asia, Europe and North America, the company is responsible for the production, sales, marketing and distribution of a portfolio of premium global brands in over 80 countries and territories.

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