

Wes Marshall's Top 10 Libations x3

MY FAVORITE BLANCO TEQUILAS OF 2012

If you really love the taste and aroma of the *agave tequilana*, always go straight to the *blancos*, aka *platas*. The next two levels, *reposado* and *añejo*, both spend time in charred oak barrels. In fact, old Jack Daniel's barrels are quite popular, so you can imagine that some of the whiskey flavors will transfer to the tequila. If you really care, stick with the far more multifaceted and varietally correct blanco. In alphabetical order:

- AVIÓN
- BRACERO
- CAMARENA
- CAZADORES
- CORZO
- DON JULIO
- DULCE VIDA
- EL TESORO
- HERRADURA
- MILAGRO

TOP SCOTCH SINGLE MALT WHISKIES OF 2012

The world of Scotch has gone crazy over the last decade, with prices reaching sky-high levels. These are all under \$100, but I should warn you that real Scotch fanatics don't flinch at spending much, much more. Scotland produces all sorts of flavors, from the huge peat monsters from Islay to the mild, sherried versions from Speyside. These are in alphabetical order and include the region and flavor profile.

- ARBEG 10 YEAR OLD** Islay; smoky.
- BALVENIE 12 YEAR OLD 'DOUBLEWOOD'** Speyside; aromatic but low smoke.
- BOWMORE 15 YEAR OLD 'DARKEST'** Islay; smoke, smoke, smoke. Plus a little grapy sweetness.
- GLENDRONACH 31 YEAR OLD** Speyside; sherry and chocolate aromas.
- GLENFIDDICH MALT MASTER'S EDITION** Speyside; smooth, low smoke.
- GLENMORANGIE LASANTA** Highlands; honeyed nose with mild smokiness.
- HIGHLAND PARK 12 YEAR OLD** Orkney Islands; sweet nose and slightly peaty.
- LAGAVULIN 1995 PEDRO XIMÉNEZ FINISH - DISTILLERS EDITION** Islay; very fruity and smoky.
- LAPHROAIG 16 YEAR OLD** Islay; a monster.
- MACALLAN SHERRY OAK 10 YEAR OLD CASK STRENGTH** Speyside; sweet aromas, mild smoke.



TOP ITALIAN WINERIES OF 2012

These aren't necessarily the very highest echelon of Italy, mostly because I can't afford to drink the very highest echelon. These are wineries that I'm always happy to run into on a wine list or store shelf because I know I'll be getting a good to great wine at a fair price. In alphabetical order, followed by location.

- ALOIS LAGEDER** - Alto Adige
- BANFI** - Tuscany and much of Italy
- BRUNO GIACOSA** - Piemonte
- FEUDI DI SAN GREGORIO** - Campania
- MARCO FELLUGIA** - Friuli
- MASI AGRICOLA** - Venezia
- MASO POLI** - Trentino
- PLANETA** - Sicily
- TERREDORA DI PAOLO** - Campania
- VIETTI** - Piemonte

