Getting Into the Spirit of Adventure…Whisky Month Events Create an Appetite for Exploring Scotland

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It's known as the 'water of life', it's a cultural icon, has David Beckham as a fan, and sometimes only a wee dram will do - whisky is as much a part of the Scottish landscape as golf, Shetland ponies and tartan bagpipes.

As Scotland continues to celebrate the Year of Food and Drink 2015, this May sees the return of Whisky Month, a unique programme of events celebrating Scotland's national drink and the people and landscapes behind it.

One of the best-loved whisky festivals in the country, the **Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival** kicks off the Whisky Month festivities from 30 April to 4 May. With a packed schedule with everything from comedy to ceilidhs, masterclasses to music, its events attract thousands of visitors per year.

As well as the Spirit of Speyside Festival, Whisky Month will see events taking place right across the country, presenting the perfect opportunity to get a taste for the Scottish landscape. Events include:

- **Spirit of Speyside Whisky Festival, Highlands - 30 April – 4 May**

The festival is one of Scotland's most popular whisky events, inviting visitors to celebrate Scotland's national drink through an inventive and wide-ranging choice of whisky-inspired events. From the chance to attend 'Whisky School' to see just how it's made, to enjoying music with a 'wee dram'.
www.spiritofspeyside.com

- **Spirit of Stirling Whisky Festival, Stirling - 9 May**

Returning for the second time to the iconic Stirling Highland Hotel, the festival celebrates the very best in Scotch whisky. Each year, the organisers invite the great and the good from the whisky industry in Scotland to Stirling, in the heart of Scotland, to exhibit and share their whiskies for whisky lovers to enjoy.

www.spiritofstirlingwhiskyfestival.co.uk

- **Create:Eat:Whisky, Edinburgh - 14-17 May**

Create:Eat:Whisky is back. Jelly & Gin has teamed with Haig Club (launched in 2014 by David Beckham) to create an immersive experience that puts whisky cocktails centre stage. Guests will take a journey through different multi-sensory settings and drink cocktails, each designed to match its environment. Using sound, light, small edible items, aroma and other environmental factors, guests will be transported from mountain top to roaring fire, with an unexpected final destination.

www.jellyandgin.com

- **The Hive and the Still at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh - 15 May**

A unique event that pairs botany and whisky, visitors can taste some of Scotland's best produce with whisky and honey tastings as well as a choice of street food, learn the science behind whisky, as well as enjoy entertainment including live music, a silent disco and craft activities.

www.rbge.org.uk

- **World Whisky Day, worldwide - 16 May**

World Whisky Day invites everyone to try a dram and celebrate the water of life. Events are taking place all over the globe. Join the party on Twitter using the hashtag #worldwhiskyday or visit www.worldwhiskyday.com to register an event.

- **Whisky Stramash, Edinburgh - 23-24 May**

Described as 'an event of mystery, entertainment, comicality and madcap pioneering', visitors can certainly expect the unexpected at this event in Scotland's Capital and a huge array of whiskies to

sample from Scotland and abroad is almost guaranteed.

www.thewhiskystramash.com

- **Mhor Festival, Perthshire - 23-24 May**

Mhor Festival presents food, drink, music and theatre and will bring together producers including Glengoyne, Deanston and Auchentoshan distilleries in the grounds of Monachyle Mhor Hotel. Spread over two days the festival will encompass foraging walks along the Rob Roy Way, lunch in Mhor Barn with whisky sampling and a whisky pairing evening at the Great Scottish Feast with food prepared by star Scottish chefs. The festival also offers family activities, live music, a ceilidh, a bake-off competition, a raft race and a market.

http://mhor.net/

- **Islay Malt and Music Festival**, **Islay - 22-30 May**

Each year the Islay Malt and Music Festival offers a diverse programme featuring traditional music, ceilidhs, Gaelic lessons, golf, bowling and whisky tasting. All of the Islay distilleries have open days throughout the week of the festival offering the ideal opportunity for visitors to indulge in a taste of whisky.

www.islayfestival.com

To help encourage even more visitors to sample Scotland's whisky offering during this dedicated month, VisitScotland has also launched a new series of eBooks* hosted on www.visitscotland.com. Each book will focus on one of the country's five distinctive whisky-producing regions in Scotland - **Campbeltown, Islay, Speyside, Lowland and Highland** - and the specially created guides explain the reasons why Scotch whisky is so different from distillery to distillery. Alongside information on each venue, the eBooks provide useful information for visitors including opening times, address and contact details.

The distilleries eBooks can be downloaded atwww.visitscotland.com/distilleries-guides

For more information on the Year of Food & Drink 2015 and Whisky Month, please go to: www.visitscotland.com/tastescotland

Notes to Editors

The Year of Food & Drink 2015

In 2015, Scotland will be celebrating The Year of Food and Drink, showcasing the wonderful local produce and gastronomy the country has to offer. A visit to Scotland isn't quite complete without a taste of the natural Scottish larder. Scotland boasts a fantastic range of high quality produce and has world-class restaurants to satisfy the appetite of even the most seasoned foodie. From delicious meals served in bars and inns, to stylish cafes and charming tearooms, appetite-whetting fish and chip shops, to farm shops and delis stocking fresh, tasty delights and sweet and savoury preserves, a taste of quality Scottish produce is around every corner…

*The 'VisitScotland's The Land of Whisky' series is the latest in a series of online brochures produced by VisitScotland. The others include: 'A Taste of Scotland's Foodie Trails', 'Hold Your Own Burns Supper', 'A-Z of Winter in Scotland', 'Your guide to Scotland's epic Highland games' and 'The Edinburgh Festivals Survival Guide'.

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