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Karuizawa 48 yo 1964 for Wealth Solutions Poland

by OLIVER KLIMEK on FEBRUARY 14, 2013

Sherry cask 3603 – 57.7%

My Tasting Notes:

Colour: Dark copper

Nose: Massive with cherries and berries, candied orange zest, hints of eucalyptus, a good whiff of a well-stocked cigar

humidor, densely interwoven mild spices and a hard to describe 'earthy freshness'.

Palate: The fruitiness feels fresher than on the nose, with lime, kumquats, and hints of red currant with a minimal bitterness that is weak enough not to be disturbing, then hints of perfumed tea and those lovely spices again.

Finish: Very long with fruits and spices playing together and giving way to a little smoke at the very end.

Overall: This is a truly great whisky and not really what you would expect from a heavily sherried malt. Over the decades, wood spice and sherry fruit have blended into something unique here. My tasting notes just scratch the surface.

Rating: 94/100 – **Price Tag** \$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$\$ – **Value for your Money** \$\$\$\$\$

Only one bottle of the Karuizawa 48 yo was available at [Master of Malt](#)

Review sample provided by Master of Malt

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Nonjatta



Wednesday, February 13, 2013

Karuizawa 1964 for Poland

Post by Stefan of Tokyo Whisky Hub.



Today, we're delighted to be able to finally share one of the best-kept whisky secrets: the release of an extraordinary 1964 Karuizawa. Drawn from cask #3603 after more than 48 years of maturation, this is the oldest Karuizawa released to date. Michal Kowalski of the Polish investment company Wealth Solutions wanted a worthy follow-up to his Glenfarclas 1953 and he knew, right from the start, this was going to be a Karuizawa. It was a long process from wish to reality – we were there when the whole project was conceived and were honoured to be able to help in small ways along the road – and the loving care and attention to detail Michal surrounded this exceptional whisky with is simply beyond words.

Most whisky enthusiasts will remember the Glenfarclas 1953, bottled on 13 February 2012. The 1964 Karuizawa will be launched in Warsaw exactly one year later. If Michal keeps doing this annually, Poland will probably be the best place on earth to be for the whisky enthusiast on Valentine's Day. Just to get the facts out of the way: cask #3603 was filled on 1 September 1964 and bottled at cask-strength (57.7% abv) on Christmas Eve 2012. It yielded a mere 143 bottles – all of which have been presold to Wealth Solutions clients. One lone bottle will be available from Master of Malt, but not for very long, I suspect.



The presentation is absolutely top-notch: a bespoke, heavyweight version of the traditional Karuizawa bottle is housed in a beautiful wooden box with a front made of Polish black fossil oak with the characters for "Karuizawa" engraved in it. The wood is hundreds of years old and has been recovered from ancient Polish swamps – this is a reference to the last character in the name "Karuizawa", which means "swamp". Each bottle comes with a full-colour, 35-page book, containing a fascinating appreciation of Karuizawa distillery written by Dave Broom as well as tasting notes by 6 writers/bloggers (Broom, Dominic Roskrow, Marcin Miller, Neil and Joel of Cask Strength & Carry On, Serge Valentin and yours truly).



So what's the whisky like? Well, I last tasted it half a year ago and, at the time, I wrote the following notes (they appear in edited form in the book):

"Nose: starts off with a prelude of *annin dofu* (almond tofu) and maraschino cherries, which soon gives way to a triple fugue of forest notes, tree fruit notes and waxed wood notes. The initial interplay is between the forest notes: suggestive of a forest in spring after rain, incredibly fresh, with hints of pine trees, boulder fern, sandalwood and a faint eucalyptus note. Soon after, seemingly out of nowhere, fruit notes start to appear: overripe apricots, *Yubari* melon (a Hokkaido cantaloupe variety), *nashi* (Japanese pears), some dates in the background. Underneath these are subtle hints of blood oranges and ruby grapefruits. On the back of these fruit notes, something reminiscent of a recently polished chapel starts to develop, with some freshly-baled hay, heather honey and a hint of freshly-crushed pink pepper thrown in the mix. Water tends to foreground the fruit notes, pushing green apples and underripe peach notes to the fore; it also brings some wet grass drying in the sun to the party.

Palate: the nose sets up certain expectations, but the palate gracefully sidesteps these expectations, only to reveal a whole new dimension – such is the complexity of this whisky. Neat, the initial impressions are acerola, brambles, gooseberries and orange liqueur. There's also a distinct *kashiwa mochi* (rice cake wrapped in oak leaf) note. The sour – pleasantly sour, that is – flavours soon give way to an equally pleasant and seductive bitterness: goya, walnut skins, kale-and-green-apple juice, and an ever so slight liquorice note. As if that's not beguiling enough, water brings out a prominent *sudachi* (a Japanese citrus fruit) note – something I never thought I'd find in a whisky but there it is! How a whisky this old can be this refreshing is just one of the great mysteries of the universe.

The finish is medium-long with hints of kiwi jam, also lingonberry jam, sweet-and-sour sauce, goya again, and an incredibly delicate sweetness at the centre of it all.



It's fairly common for commentators to compliment mature whiskies on how young and vibrant they are despite their old age. This 1964 Karuizawa is far beyond such platitudes. Let's not pretend: only time - and a large dose of luck - could have conspired to make it what it is. And what it is, is one of those rare whiskies that creates a world of its own and holds it together so beautifully it's almost like an image of nature at its best. *

Posted at 12:07 AM

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Labels: Karuizawa, Poland

Introduction

This site is probably the most comprehensive source on the Japanese whisky scene in English. It is also independent. No one who writes for Nonjatta is employed or paid by Japanese distillers and/or retailers.

The current regular contributors are Stefan Van Eycken (chief editor), Niko Neefs (webmaster & photography), Ruben of WhiskyNotes (European whisky scene), Chris of WhiskyWall (US whisky scene) and the site's founder Chris Bunting.

We have tasting notes on a wide range of Japanese whiskies, reviews, bar and shop reports, crib sheets, and loads of in-depth articles.

Just take a trip down the side bars to get yourself acquainted. Kampai!

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- 2nd 'Ghost Series' Bottling: Karuizawa 1995/2013
- 3rd 'Ghost Series' Bottling: Hanyu 2000/2014 Grappa Finish
- 4th 'Ghost Series' Bottling: Kawasaki 1980/2014
- 5th 'Ghost Series' Bottling: Karuizawa '4 Decades' Charity Bottling

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Nine Leaves Distillery



Chris Bunting's prize-winning book on Japanese alcohol.



Charity Event - July 6th, BrewDog Roppongi

Maps & Factual Info



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Japanese Whisky History:

- 1854-1918: The Jurassic period
- 1918-1919: Unlocking Scotland, Part I
- 1919-1920: Unlocking Scotland, Part II
- 1930s-1940s: Whisky and war I
- 1945+: Whisky and war II
- 1960s-1990s: Keizo Saji, single malt pioneer
- 1980s: The Kumaso scandal

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Japanese whisky info: Japanese language blog

Japan Whisky Reviews by Michio Hayashi

Playing Card Whisky Series site by Ulf Buxrud

Karuizawa 1964 48 year old Japanese Whisky (57.7%)

ON FEB 12 IN EDITORIAL, JAPANESE, SINGLE MALT WHISKY BY DAN



Here is some breaking news from the world of high end Whiskies, and I am sure that this will be music to the ears of whisky investors. Wealth solutions, in conjunction with One Drinks Co is releasing an Old rare Whisky the likes of which you rarely see. Read on to find out more:

Cask #3603 from Karuizawa, filled on 1st September 1964 and bottled on Christmas Eve 2012, is one of the oldest Japanese single malt whiskies in history. At the time of bottling it was the oldest expression of the now-closed Karuizawa. Only 143 individually-numbered bottles will be available.

Number One Drinks Company acquired the last casks of Karuizawa in August 2011 and this is one of the legendary distillery's most ancient casks. *Matured for over 48 years* in a 400 litre sherry oak cask, the whisky lay undisturbed in a traditional dunnage warehouse at Karuizawa before being transferred to Chichibu where it was bottled at cask strength (57.7% abv). It is naturally coloured and non-chill filtered to retain maximum flavour, mouth feel and integrity. Cask #3603 is one of the very few Karuizawa casks left from the 1960s.

Karuizawa matures magnificently over an extended period, as shown by this bottling.

- "Absolutely top drawer whisky and a treat from start to finish. 94/100," observed prolific whisky author Dominic Roskrow.
- "First, it's brilliant whisky, and second, it's 'different' whisky. Respect. 95/100," added Serge Valentin, a whisky expert and Malt Maniac, who recently named Karuizawa as one of only six Grand Cru Classé single malts in his personal ranking.
- It's fairly common to compliment mature whiskies on how young and vibrant they are despite their old age. This 1964 Karuizawa is far beyond such platitudes. Only time and a large dose of luck could have conspired to make this; a rare whisky that creates a world of its own and holds it together so beautifully, like an image of nature at its best," commented Stefan van Eycken, blogger and editor of Nonjatta, the leading Japanese whisky website.

Polish black fossil oak

As befits this extraordinary whisky, the presentation is exceptional. A bespoke, heavyweight version of the traditional Karuizawa bottle is housed in a dark wooden box with a front made of Polish black fossil oak.

"The fossil oak is symbolic: the last part of the name 'Karuizawa' means swamp. This oak is hundreds of years old and has been recovered from ancient Polish swamps,"

said Marcin Miller, Managing Director of Number One Drinks Company.

Each bottle is presented with a specially commissioned book by Dave Broom, the leading authority on Japanese whisky, who states:

"Karuizawa is Japanese whisky unlike any other. It is big, it is bold, it has solidity and weight, it is richly fruited, it revels in its oiliness, it has smoke, but has retained the very Japanese qualities of heightened aroma and precision of flavor."

This limited edition of Karuizawa whisky was bottled exclusively for clients of Wealth Solutions, so you will be lucky to get a bottle, but its always worth keeping a look out, as you never know...



UPDATE: Word on Facebook is:

"Apparently (after 'Googling' a bit) all bottles have been pre-sold, apart from one that will be available to buy from Master of malts. I wonder how much that'll be????"

I hope Dave doesn't mind me quoting him on that comment he left on Facebook.

UPDATE 2:

Further probing via twitter and Facebook has revealed that the bottles were all pre-sold at just shy of five figures at a reputed £8,995. Wow!

UPDATE 3:

Master of malt page a page on their website for the one bottle they had to sell. Whisky Collector Andy Simpson made a good point saying "Expensive. £321.25 per 25ml measure. Why am I not a millionaire!".

Regardless its all but over and done with for the moment. All the bottles have been sold, and if you want some now, you are looking at an auction or buying it via a private deal.

Got Any thoughts?

Don't be shy, drop a comment below and let us know your opinions.



About Daniel Cave

WhiskyTimes Founder, Petrol head, Digital Marketing Man and lover of life.





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"Because you can't buy happiness... but you can buy whisky and that's pretty much the same thing"

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Karuizawa 1964, Oldest Karuizawa ever bottled

By Miguel at 2013 Feb.26 in [Tasting](#), [Featured](#), [Karuizawa](#)

A few days ago I received a miniature of this **Karuizawa 1964**. This is the second special release done by *Wealth Solutions*, whose mission is to provide unique (and expensive!) products to Polish collectors and investors, after an [incredible 58 years old Glenfarclas](#).

This **Karuizawa** is bottled from the left stock of the distillery that closed it doors just after turning into the new millennia. *Number One Drinks* acquired all the existing casks of Karuizawa in August 2011 and they have provided this sensational cask for Wealth Solutions.



This special Japanese whisky has been bottled by **Wealth Solutions** from one of the oldest and few remaining 1960s cask of Karuizawa. This cask #3603 was a 400 litres Oloroso sherry Oak Butt. It has been bottled at 57.7% ABV.

It was filled on 1st September 1964 and bottled on Christmas Eve 2012 which makes it one of the oldest Japanese whisky ever bottled with *48 years old*. Barely 143 bottles of this whisky will be available (*greedy angels!*).

There are several things that make Karuizawa quite unique and a tragic lost: they used only Golden Promise barley for their whiskies that although produces less alcohol on distillation create better whiskies when aged for a long time, they used peated malt from Scotland until they decided to start using in 1990s unpeated malt in a last try to catch with japanese consumers and to be my surprise most of the whisky was sold for blending. So in fact it is a real miracle to have this whisky in my hands.

Let's taste it (haha! Sorry, I am going to taste, you keep reading) and then I share my thoughts.

"Gorgeous! This Karuizawa has one of the best sherried noses that I have ever seen. Not a whisky for newcomers, it needs time and lots of attention to disclose its greatness. The more it is on the glass the more I like it"

Bottled at a whopping 48 years old this Karuizawa is a stunning whisky bottled by Wealth Solutions from one of the oldest casks ever released.

94

Aged for 48years on Oloroso Butt number 3603 and bottled at an incredible 57.7% ABV.
Only 143 bottles worldwide.

This dram has a mahogany-like color.

Nose (95): more than average. nuts, citrus, wood, spices, chocolate, citrus, pine. One of the best Oloroso noses that I have ever tasted. Just grant it a good amount of time to open.

Palate (94): dry, powerful. honey, citrus, wood, spices, pepper, some smoke, nuts, cocoa.

Finish (93): longer than average. wood, spices, smoke, citrus.



So based on other whiskies I have already tasted I rate this Karuizawa 48 Year Old 1964 Cask 3603 with **94** points over 100.

Buy this bottle at

Save money when you buy Single Malt Whisky online. Check for the **best prices** from best online shops below:

Buy on *Master of Malt* for **£9,999.95**

Miguel says

Mother of God! Oh my! The first sniff is very promising, showing a whisky very old, very complex. Just wait, give it ten or twenty minutes, let it breath and you will be rewarded with **one of the best sherried noses that I have ever tasted**.

Then taste it and you will have a marvellous. long forgotten experience of sherry, nuts, smoke, wood and spices. I don't add water to whisky and this has been no exception. Its finish is so long that five hours after tasting it, this Karuizawa was still reverberating in my mouth.

When I saw the bottle I even consider buying the only one that it is for sale at Master of Malt... but then I decided that it wasn't worth the physical pain my wife would inflict me for expending years of saving into a bottled jewel. Psss... Women...

UPDATE: Holy shit! I have found some money and I am going to buy it!



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"The best whisky prices, great delivery and a fast and friendly support."
- The Whisky Exchange**
"A huge selection of old and collectible whiskies along with the latest releases."
- The Whisky Barrel**
"Nice selection of collector's bottles as well as the latest entries. One of the coolest Web I have ever seen."
- Abbey Whisky**
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KARUIZAWA 1964 [NUMBER ONE DRINKS]



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KARUIZAWA 1964 [NUMBER ONE DRINKS]

The Karuizawa 1964 is the oldest Karuizawa released to date. It hails from cask #3603 and has spent over 48 years maturing in Japan in a 400 litre sherry oak cask following its filling on 1 September 1964 and bottling 24 December 2012. The vast majority of its life was spent in a dunnage warehouse at the now sadly closed Karuizawa distillery before it was moved to Chichibu for bottling. After 48 years the whisky is still an incredibly high 57.7% ABV; this is down to a variety of factors – high filling strength and a maturation in a microclimate in which the temperature and humidity combine to force the water to evaporate before the alcohol does. This also ensures that the aromas and flavours in the whisky are concentrated giving us this fantastic spirit almost half a century later.



Karuizawa 1964 bottled by Number One Drinks

This expression has been bottled by Number One Drinks exclusively for Poland, for clients of Wealth Solutions, and is presented exquisitely in a crafted wooden box (the front of which is made from Polish black fossil oak), with an accompanying signed book edited by Dave Broom. The label is a masterpiece in simplicity and understatement featuring only the strokes of Japanese calligraphy merely telling you what the whisky is – the presentation is a joy. Master of Malt did have one bottle for sale; sadly it is no longer available.



The Presentation

The whisky was sold for £9000 a bottle which leads to the sample we were sent to be worth an almighty £640 for 50ml. How do you even prepare to drink something like this? Do you sit in a sterile environment? Do you ensure your palate is at its cleanest? What do you do? In the end we did little differently. We decided to enjoy two whiskies prior to the 1964. We had a delicate Bunnahabhain and then to set the scene enjoyed a Karuizawa (Spirit of Asama 55%) to help introduce the following whisky. This really helped relax and awaken the nose and palate, and the fact that we treated this like a normal tasting allowed us to enjoy and savour the whisky. It was natural, with friends and the spirit shone.



Simplicity

Karuizawa 1964 57.7% [Number One Drinks for Wealth Solutions]

The notes below are only a glimpse into this whisky; you really need to taste it to appreciate how good this dram is. It is safe to say that this is a once in a lifetime moment. Stunning.

Nose: Beautiful, **deep** and **complex**, there are a myriad of layers to unravel from this incredibly concentrated scent. We detected notes of **marzipan**, rich **stollen**, **cherry** and **dark chocolate liqueur chocolates**. This was wrapped in a **menthol wave** that become stronger as we smelt it. Following that came worn out leather, **kiwi black boot polish**, and some lovely deep smelling **plums** and **dates**. Finally **fizzy cola cube sweets** were discovered.

Palate: **Incredibly hot**, almost painfully so as you swirl it around the mouth for an elongated period of time. The whisky offered more **cherry**, **marzipan** and **mint** before throwing in **bay leaves**, **orange oils**, **white pepper** and **saffron**. This intensified into some **chewy liquorice** with hints of **pecan nuts** before dissolving into a **homemade orange soufflé**.

Finish: Huge. **Cloying**, **floral**, **hot**, **fruity** and **long**.



The Pour

This is a massive whisky, mouth filling and mouth coating with depth that we have not experienced before. **Epic is a word that is often banded around and overused. Not in this case – this spirit is epic.** Is it worth £9000 a bottle? Impossible for us to say, although we can appreciate the value due to the scarcity and brilliance of the liquid. What we can tell you is that this whisky is worth the hype it has generated; every facet of it is sublime and it is almost certainly the best whisky we have ever tasted. Few whiskies make me smile fondly as I write about them. This one sees me practically grinning. It is a seminal moment in our tasting history, brought about by a **fantastic whisky that has aged beautifully and gracefully**. It is utterly superb.



It was majestic

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Karuizawa Cask #3603 from 1964 – a massive 48yo bottled at 57.7% ABV

FEB 18 2013 WRITTEN BY JEW MALT



Japan — 57.7% ABV — 70cl — £895 | \$13929

I spent about a week in Mexico City. You know, work stuff as per usual.

Boy, was it hot down there! About 85 degrees; a nice dry heat. Quite a change from the mid 20 something degrees Fahrenheit and the 30+ inches of snow I had waiting for me at home.



While I was sad to say good-bye to Mexico, I was happy to come home again to the wife and chillins. Also waiting for me at home were three samples. One was a Bruichladdich from a Mr. LZ. Another sample was the new Balvenie 12yo Single Barrel from Mr. AW and, finally, a sample of this here Karuizawa from 1964 (cask 3603).



While I was excited to receive all three, Holy frijoles, was I a happy boy to have received this historical Karuizawa sample! Very much an unexpected package!

At the time of bottling, this was the oldest Karuizawa to ever have been bottled and now I was going to get to taste and review it!

Before I go further, I must thank everyone from Master of Malt for thinking of me (again — remember the sample of 1953 Glenfarclas they sent to me? [I do!](#)). Also, a big thanks to Michal Kowalski of [Wealth Solutions!](#)

So last night I had made a Facebook status update telling people: "I'm going to have a 48 year old in my mouth tonight. Get your minds out of the gutter, I'm talking about whisky!"

The snark factor on Facebook seemed unusually high as an old school mate of mine (known as "the other Josh") returned with this image:



After a few comments, David Hartogs (friend, member of [Single Cask Nation](#) and occasional guest poster. Note [here](#) and [here](#)) chimed in with: "What's the verdict?"

That same old school mate, the other Josh, came back with:



Ah, the Facebook...

Funny schtuff aside, let's taste some history (not Frank, the Karuizawa):



On the nose — Initially hot to the nostrils but from the go (after the heat) is bitter Mexican chocolate and clementines.

Heated butter, not burnt but heated with bits of dill weed swirling in the near butter boil.

[Cracklin' Oat Bran](#) cereal and burnt sugar. Rotting stone fruits (peach juice turned bad... but in a good way).

Rubber soles on sneakers. Black Pu'er tea (like with the Glenmorangie Ealanta).

Apple sauce (slight note) and boiling berries. Noticeably fragrant mahogany furniture. Cherry cola.



With water the heat is nearly gone. Chocolate covered Werther's and good, old-fashioned belt leather. Loose leaf paper (like a 5 subject notebook, not copy paper).

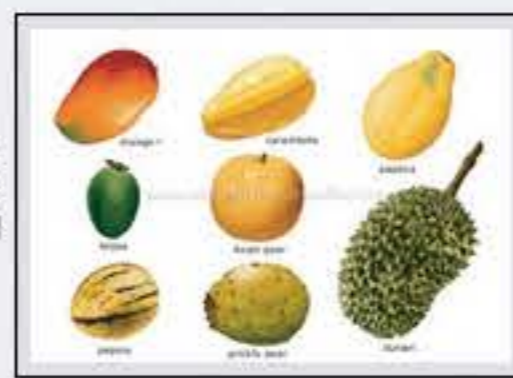
More mahogany and apple fritter grizzle. This has become a joy to nose.



On the mouth — Intensely hot on first sip. Almost absurdly hot; like a \$2 pistol. Burning rubber, wooden window sills (with fresh, hot lacquer).

I better add a drop of water before my head catches fire.

With water she's still hot, but fresh with mangoes and mango skin, tinned



fruits, window sills (again) lacquer (again), lots of tropical fruits popping about — sort of crazy and not what I expected at all.

Sweet papaya (not the earthy/footy papaya), hints of guanabana and guava paste (?). Aerosol paint and paint caps. Beeswax across the front of the palate, too.

Not oily or viscous in any way.

Finish — Like the fast decay at the end of a song, bitter chocolates leave their echo upon the tongue. Slight touch of dill as well.

WW — Very waxy finish, flat cola, drying and lasting longer now with the water.



In sum — An intensely hot whisky that loves water more than I love whisky. Once given the water she desires, she simmers right down and opens up to tell you her life story.

A whisky experience unlike any other I've had to buy a bottle, open said bottle and try it without the water. Then, add 3 drops or so to your dram.

The transformation from The Hulk into Dr. Robert Bruce Banner is astonishing.

You might also enjoy Oli's review on [dramming.com](#)

Also, check out the review at [guidscotchdrink.com](#)

Serge's reviews are always [a joy to read](#), too!

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- > Best Shot Whisky Reviews
- > Billy's Booze Blog
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- > Bozzy's Blog: tire-bouchon
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- > Danish Whisky Blog
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- > Malt Impostor
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- > Master of Malt Blog
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- > NYCWhisky - tastings in NYC
- > Ralfy's Reviews
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- > Whisky Guild
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- > Whisky Notes
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LEARN TO LOVE WHISKY!

- > NYCWhisky - tastings in NYC
- > Whisky Tasting Club

NOTEWORTHY RETAILERS

- > Abbey Whisky
- > Best Whisky Deals!
- > Edencroft Fine Wines
- > For Whiskey Lovers
- > Hudson Wine Market (USA)
- > Julio's Liquors
- > Master of Malt (UK)
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February 14, 2013

LINK
TO THISTasting Karuizawa twenty years apart
(1984 – 1964)

Yes, Karuizawa again. But I wouldn't like you to think that I'm neglecting my Yamazakis or Yoichis (or other fine Japanese), I promise I'll organise some ultra long verticales pretty soon. As for the dreadful St Valentin(e) - yup that's today -, don't get me started...



Karuizawa 1984/2012 (61.6%, Number One Drinks Company, sherry butt, cask #3692, 359 bottles) ★★★★★

Colour: dark red amber. Nose: a gun that just fired, reminds me of my days in the army (conscription). So yeah, a lot of gunpowder and struck matches, and even truffles at first nosing, but no hard boiled eggs, asparagus or cooked cabbage in there. So no mercaptan/thiols, luckily. What's more, as often those notes tend to go away, leaving room for quite some chocolate and raspberry jelly. Now, it's very strong, so... With water: goes toward dried porcinis, cigars, soy sauce, balsamic vinegar and, maybe, even old Parmesan cheese. Also bags and bags of roast chestnuts - I don't think I ever got that that loudly. All that is quite lovely. Mouth (neat): rich and powerful, it's more some kind of ultra-heavy jam at this point. Prunes, Armagnac, black pipe tobacco and a tarry/smoky side that may come from the high strength. Let's see... With water: this time it became a little gamy and very dry, with this gunpowder that came back. Bitter chocolate, some ginger, heavy herbal liqueur (starting with a J., dear) or even this weird thing called Schinken häger. Ever tried that? Finish: long, dry, very chocolaty. Quite some white pepper. Smokier and ashier aftertaste. Comments: I think you have to like gunpowder to enjoy this baby, which doesn't necessarily mean you need be a belligerent person (S., you're tired). Not utterly stellar in my opinion but quality's very high, no doubt. SGP:463 - 89 points.



Karuizawa 1964/2012 (57.7%, Number One Drinks for Wealth Solutions, Poland, cask #3603, 143 bottles) ★★★★★

This magnifico bottle was just launched on Feb 13 in Warsaw. Colour: rich amber. Nose: rather than smoky and chocolaty like some other old Karuizawas could be, this one is full of overripe fruits and the jams made thereof, with many spices and sappy 'things' in the background. In fact, it's quite extraordinary. Strawberries with menthol? Figs and marzipan? Dates and liquorice? Quinces with some putty? There's even something coastal that's growing and growing, but the whole rather makes me think of some glorious very old but terrifyingly vibrant sherried Speysider that would have sucked a little extra-menthol out of a magnificent cask. And maybe a little beef stock at the same time... With water: Karuizawa really loves water, the whisky became even more fabulous and incredibly complex. Some fruitcake especially made for a very wealthy and completely mad dictator? Mouth (neat): what the hell is this? I've never found this is any malt whisky... Some kind of overripe tropical fruits, maybe longans? There's also this curious cheesy side, absolutely wonderful (in this context!) New Comté or other fruity Jurassian cheese? There's also a lot of oak, which is normal, but what's important, I think, is that it's all perfectly integrated. Add to that some tangerine liqueur, black pepper, cumin, cloves, grape pips (ha, resveratrol!)... All that is very big, it's almost a monster of a whisky. With water: these wonderfully strange notes grew even bigger. Swiss cheese with mango jam. Finish: endless, with the spices singing many songs. No I won't list them all, do not worry. Bitter chocolate in the aftertaste (tannins, but no worries). Comments: first it's brilliant whisky, and second, it's 'different' whisky. Respect. I'm sorry, but that'll be SGP:571 - 95 points.

MORE NOTES> Check the index of [all Karuizawa](#) I've tasted so far