

## Auchroisk 20 year old

58.1%

Poor old Auchroisk. Not only couldn't anyone pronounce it correctly (it's "Oth Rusk," in case you're interested), but in recent years it's seen its Singleton prefix hijacked by other larger distilleries — Glendullan, Dufftown, Glen Ord — leaving it somewhat forgotten by malt mavens. Part of the old J&B stable, it continues to make a malty/nutty spirit, a style which is also somewhat out of favor in the world of single malts. Maybe this bottling (in a rather spiffing retro pack) will redress the balance. The color is full gold, and though initially the nose shows the high bottling strength to the max, beneath the prickly heat is eucalyptus oil alongside those signature nutty/cereal notes. But here's the difference; there's sweetness, too: toffee and thick clover honey, even a touch of sawdust and pencil shavings before a drop of water brings out malted milk and powdered hazelnut. In other words, there's plenty of distillery character, but good cask development. In the mouth, when neat, the needling alcohol slightly numbs the tongue and the effect from start to finish is a bit fragmented. Add water, however (not too much), and there's a soft, creamy effect across the tongue with praline, almond, and a dark chocolate note as well. Be careful with the water though, as you need to retain the zesty acidity on the finish.

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