

Ichiro's Malt

Hanyu 23 year old "sherry casks," 58%

This oldie (from a distillery which closed in 2000) seems pretty straightforward compared to the Mizunara [see following review], but has less dried fruit than the sherry note on the label might suggest. Think dried peels rather than raisin, then stir in some freshly-polished floor. The aromas are saturated and heavy — almost as if they are drifting towards you on humid air. The palate shows light smoke and then a pleasant quinine bitterness mid-palate. This has the Japanese quality of laying flavors out very precisely on the tongue while also heightening their intensity. Water reduces the quinine effect, allowing the richness of the spirit to come through. Hanyu was a pretty big and firm (even rigid) whisky. Here that shell has cracked, allowing anise and blueberry to come through. £450. Price in US dollars was converted at time of review.

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