

By Chuck Branch

## Triple Islay Cask Finished Chattanooga Whiskey



Courtesy Chattanooga Whiskey

When I started my journey into whiskey 13 years ago, I focused primarily on American whiskey and Scottish single-malt whisky. I never considered combining the two, particularly with peated single malt; my apologies to our friends from Islay.

[Chattanooga Whiskey Islay Cask](#) is a fascinating expression that offers a unique twist to the whiskey scene. This 111-proof release has been aged for over five years. It blends traditional American whiskey-making methods with finishing casks sourced from the Islay region of Scotland, which is renowned for its peaty whiskies.

The deep amber color presents a beautiful introduction to the expression upon pouring this whiskey into a Glencairn nosing glass. After letting it rest for a moment, I began my evaluation. Honestly, I wasn't sure what to expect from this whiskey, especially since I typically don't enjoy smoky whiskies.

However, I was pleasantly surprised. The nose offered a complex bouquet of subtle smoky peat intertwined with rich vanilla, dark chocolate, and dried fruits. The smoky peat was noticeable but not overpowering. Additional hints of brine, iodine, and toasted oak—characteristic of Islay whiskies—were well-balanced by a sweet caramel

undertone.

The whiskey is full-bodied and smooth on the palate. Initially, I taste the sweetness of brown sugar and honey, followed by layers of citrus zest and malt. The peat smoke adds a savory note, complemented by hints of roasted nuts, espresso, and a touch of sea salt, creating a beautifully balanced experience.

For my second tasting, I added an ice cube. This had two distinct effects: the aroma became more subtle, and the mouthfeel improved noticeably. While no new flavors emerged, the ice enhanced the profiles I experienced during the first sip.

On my third attempt, I added chocolate to the mix. The dark chocolate with a hint of orange brightened the pour; the orange zest was enhanced as the smoke mellowed.

The finish is surprisingly long and warming, with lingering notes of smoke, subtle iodine, and spice, all complemented by a delightful sweetness. Interestingly, the presence of chocolate shortened the finish significantly, which I found thoroughly enjoyable.

This whiskey embodies the blend of southern craftsmanship and traditional Scottish influences, making it an excellent choice for whiskey and whisky lovers.

We gave this expression a score of 90 out of 100.

*Chattanooga Whiskey provided this sample at no cost for review purposes and did not influence the review's outcome.*