

# 'OCTOMORE of OCTOMORE' FUTURES

ISLAY SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY

## The World's Most Heavily Peated Whisky

For the first time in 169 years, Octomore whisky is once again made from Octomore barley. To celebrate, 400 cases of 2008 futures are available from this historic distillation.

**1 case (12 x 700ml) 'Octomore of Octomore' Futures @ 46%  
£ 450 In Bond**

Upon receipt of a completed order form, a receipted invoice will be despatched, along with a certificate of ownership, confirming the phenolic content. When Jim McEwan has decided that the Octomore futures are ready to be bottled, all customers will be informed in writing requesting details of delivery and payment of all charges where appropriate. No cases will be released until all charges have been settled in full. See Terms & Conditions.

**I would like to purchase one case (12 x 700ml) of 'OCTOMORE 2008' @ 46% Alc./Vol.**

Name					
Address					
E-mail					
Tel (Home)		Tel (Work)		Fax No.	

**Name & Address for Title** *(if being purchased as a gift).*

Name					
Address					
E-mail					
Tel (Home)		Tel (Work)		Fax No.	

### Payment Details

Credit/Debit Card Number					
Card Expiry Date		Or, I enclose a cheque for £450 <i>(please tick box)</i>			

*I agree to the terms and conditions as set out in this offer:-*

Signature of Purchaser				Date	
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Please return this completed form to:-

**The Bruichladdich Distillery, Bruichladdich, Isle of Islay, Argyll, PA49 7UN**

Tel: 01496 850221 Fax: 01496 850477

## TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

The offer price is for 12 bottles (700ml) from the 2008 distillation of Octomore lying at the Distillery UNDER BOND. It includes bottling and labelling, but does not include delivery, excise duty or VAT. Duty and VAT will be charged at the rate prevailing at the time of bottling and will be held duty paid at the distillery for collection. Delivery can be arranged within the UK at the rates prevailing at the time.

Exports can be arranged to existing Bruichladdich markets, at cost after payment of the relevant duties and taxes.

Storage and insurance are included in the purchase price up to and including a period six months from the date of bottling.

Upon receipt of a completed order form, a receipted invoice will be despatched, along with a certificate of ownership, confirming the phenolic content.

When Jim McEwan has decided that the first release of 'Octomore of Octomore' futures is ready to be bottled, all 'futures' customers will be informed in writing, requesting details of delivery and payment of all charges where appropriate. No cases can be released until all charges have been settled in full.

# OCTOMORE of OCTOMORE

In a wood in Bridgend, tucked away off the road, there is a damp, verdant, forgotten graveyard. The gravestones covered in ivy and stone slabs overgrown with moss and grass. Near a stone monument encrusted in vibrant orange lichen there is a grave. Scrape away the slab's grass covering, and there is the engraved name: George Montgomery, Distiller at Octomore.

Octomore farm sits on a commanding position on a hill overlooking the village of Port Charlotte near Bruichladdich. There are dramatic views over the whole island, away to the Northern Irish coast twenty-five miles away, around to the Paps of Jura. A peaceful place with a tragic story.

The name originates around 1300, from the division of the medieval *davoch* - or common ground - into eight workable, self-sustaining units. In this case the 'Large Eighth'. The large eight was divided into three tenancies lower, middle and upper.

It is here that Dirty Dotty's Well, James Brown's invigorating spring is found, producing the crystal clear water emerging from 1.8 billion year old Gneiss rock that we use at bottling to reduce from cask strength to 46%. Once there was also a distillery here.

John Montgomery took over the middle Octomore tenancy around 1815. He had three sons – George, William, and Alexander. The younger brothers, William and Alexander, farmed their father's previous farm tenancy near by.

In 1816 John's eldest son, George, built a small distillery on the farm along with John MacVorrán, a fifteen year old lad (probably George's brother-in-law) from the neighbouring lower Octomore tenancy, whose father had just died. John Montgomery, his son George and young John MacVorrán became co-partners in Octomore Distillery. It was to be a short-lived, tragic story of sibling rivalry, stubbornness, hunger and death.

The distillery was a small scale set up, probably only a single still operation, which had a capacity of a mere 270 litres, not much more than a hogshead. It appears to have been scaled to use the two Octomore tenancies - fifty acres - of Octomore barley. In its second year, 1817- 1818, it produced just 4,491 litres or eighteen hogsheads.

A decade later, by 1826-1827, the distillery produced about 65 hogsheads which was clearly not going to make them rich. About then, 1830 or so, John Montgomery died and it all started to go pear-shaped – big time.

The distillery business was now in George's name. Then three years later in 1833, he too dropped dead at the age of only 44. His 12 year old son Donald was his heir – but heir of what?

George's younger brother, William, claimed the tenancy of his father's farm, and so the distillery. But the distilling business was in George's name, and now belonged to the adolescent Donald. Or did it? William and Alexander believed their father had a third share and they were entitled to it and muscled their way in.

By 1839 matters had got out of hand. There was 'a misunderstanding' between William, Alexander, Donald and John MacVorrán about the running of the business as well as 'several other transactions relating to our accounts'. Finally, on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1839, it was agreed that arbitration should be sought.

Consequently, eight months later on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1840, in order to 'effect a complete settlement of all matters of a doubtful nature amongst us and to prevent litigation', the three Montgomeries – the two brothers and their young cousin - again sought arbitration, but this time over John's will.

Donald clearly had the right to his father George's share of the business. William and Alexander claimed their father John's third share. But in the days of *prima genitor*, had John already given it to George, who after all had put in all the hard work?

We don't know the result of this adjudication. Clearly no satisfactory resolution was reached. A stalemate – 'it may be your distilling business, but it's my land' – Intransigence, envy, bloody mindedness meant the distillery shutdown in the autumn of 1840, just twenty four years after started.

Within a few months, twenty year old Donald married an older Octomore girl, Ann Campbell, and with his young siblings in tow he seems to have taken the money and run, emigrating to Simcoe County, Ontario. There was nothing left for him at Octomore.

At this time there were twenty-seven Montgomerys living at Octomore out of 175 souls in 30 houses. Small pox had been contained, and together with the mild climate and the relative land fertility (compared to other Hebridean islands) the Island's population had exploded from 5,000 in 1800 to 15,600 in 1841. Clearly this was unsustainable; the people were living on a knife edge. For the remaining Montgomerys things were about to go from bad to worse.

Farming had always been tough in the Hebrides. With such rapid population growth and the lack of good quality farming land, a monoculture soon developed based on the potato. It yielded the highest amount of sustenance per square yard in the impoverished, sandy soils. And then the potato blight struck in 1846, lasting a decade.

Alexander, with nothing to keep him, emigrated to Ontario in 1848.

In 1849, the island's benevolent landlord Sir Walter Campbell, with greatly reduced farm rental income, went bankrupt. Islay was in administration for four years as no buyer could be found. Eventually Charles Morisson bought the island at a reduced price.

Morisson was keen to regain control of Octomore, now derelict and in 'great disrepair' fourteen years after the distillery had closed. Octomore was now home to a 'mere' 51 people in 12 houses, a third of population from just a decade earlier. William, now 61, a widower, was 'starving'. With his three sons and a daughter, they were the only Montgomerys left out of twenty-seven. William refused to relinquish the tenancy claiming he was owed money from Donald and compensation for the distillery. John MacVorrán, now a forty year old 'labourer', supported the claim. But there was to be one final twist to the tale.

Upon examining the Octomore lease it became clear that after all this time, bitterness and sorrow, the distillery had been illegally built. No permission was sought or given, and according to the terms of the tenancy any buildings erected belonged the landlord any way. There had never been anything to bequeath, nothing to inherit.

Despite this, in 1854 Morrison agreed to a pay off, the sum the equivalent of £9,782 in today's money, just if William would agree to relinquish the tenancy. He promptly emigrated to Ontario. The Montgomerys had left Islay for good.

Today there are just 5 souls in one house at Octomore. You can even stay in the old distillery buildings where this sad story played out: [www.octomore.co.uk](http://www.octomore.co.uk). Octomore the whisky, was no more.

We had the idea of distilling the most heavily peated whisky the world has ever seen in 2002. It started out as a philosophical discussion: would the spirit from Bruichladdich's tall-necked stills be as elegant, fruity and floral if we used an exceptionally heavy peated barley – like the most heavily peated ever? Now we know.

Bruichladdich's tall, narrow-necked stills produced a remarkably unique spirit: those stills, run so slowly the condensers weren't even needed, have produced an exceptional Islay hybrid: extraordinarily pure peat aroma on top of an incredibly refined spirit, devoid of the medicinal flavours associated with heavily peated whiskies. A totally new Islay experience.

Now in 2008 we know the full story of Octomore. We know the distillery was built to use the barley grown on Octomore farm, both John Montgomery's middle tenancy and the teenager John MacVorrán's lower tenancy. In these fields west of the Port Charlotte to Bruichladdich road, barley was grown for distillation again for the first time since 1839. The barley was peated to 80 ppm and distilled in 2008 as Octomore, the heaviest peated whisky in the world.

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