

MACKMYRA

THE ORIGINAL
SWEDISH WHISKY
SINCE 1999

EXPERIENCE A PIECE OF SWEDEN



THE STORY

THE SWEDISH PIONEER

The idea to produce a Swedish whisky was conceived by eight friends in a mountain cabin back in 1998. To ensure they stayed in touch after studying engineering together, the group had a tradition of meeting up in Sälen once a year. This time, purely by chance, everyone had brought along a bottle of whisky.

During dinner, one of them wondered why there was no Swedish malt whisky, and, if it was possible, why hadn't anyone already done it? The question remained unanswered but, before long, the vision to become pioneers and produce the first Swedish malt whisky took shape. One year later, in year 1999, Mackmyra Svensk Whisky was established.

From the outset Mackmyra was fully focused on creating a whisky which was quintessentially Swedish. The journey began with local barley, spring water and Swedish oak. Then, thanks to a lucky coincidence, Mackmyra developed the 30-litre cask which, in its smaller format allows the whisky to mature more intensively.

Even the smokey recipe has a Swedish signature and is malted and smoked by hand using locally cut peat together with juniper twigs. A short distance from the distillery, the whisky is then aged in a unique location, the old Bodås Mine, 50 meters underground.

Today, Mackmyra continue to produce whisky with the same curiosity and experimental zeal as in 1999, now in the ground-breaking Gravity Distillery, which harnesses the force of gravity to aid production and is designed to substantially reduce the carbon footprint.

Guided by the historical knowledge of whisky production, Mackmyra employs its own methods to create innovative products using Swedish ingredients.

MACKMYRA GRAVITY CRAFT AND INNOVATION

The Eco-friendly Gravity Distillery in Mackmyra Whisky Village, completed in 2011, became the company's second full-scale distillery. At the back of the distillery are two large silos, each filled with around 40 tonnes of malt- one holding Mackmyra's smoked malt and one containing unsmoked malt.

The first phase of production sees the malt raise to the top of the 35-metre tall distillery. Harnessing the force of gravity between the different phases of production, the ingredients are then transported downwards, undergoing a new phase on each level. During five stages, malted barley, yeast and water are processed into a finished new make spirit.

Although the distillery simplifies large parts of the production process, separating the heart of the new make spirit - the usable portion - is a craft which requires experience and intuition. With a well-honed sense of smell, the distiller seeks aromas that indicate when the time is right to cut the head, heart and tail.

The first distillate to appear is known as the head and displays an intensely coarse aroma. After one hour and twenty minutes when the scent becomes purer and loses its aggression it's time to cut the heart. This mild, soft fragrance begins to change character - evoking hay or grass - and then it's time to cut the tail from the heart.

Mackmyra's wash still holds 10.000 litres, and the spirit still has a capacity of 8.000. Once the distillate has passed through both stills and the heart has been separated, the final product comprises around 800 liters of 70% ABV raw spirit. The new make spirit is then diluted to 63%, at which point it is ready to be matured in casks.

The control room receives data about the production of each batch, tracking everything from production times and temperatures to volumes of ingredients. The journey from unmilled malt to finished distillate takes around eight days.



MACKMYRA GRAVITY

THINKING GREEN FROM THE OUTSET

The Gravity Distillery was designed with the environment in mind right from its conception, with the ambition to become one of the world's most energy-efficient distilleries. Through a vertically designed production process, the ingredients are transported between phases of production using the force of gravity.

The building's automation and processes are coordinated in an integrated way from the distillery's control room to ensure that energy consumption remains as low as possible. The stable prevailing temperature in the distillery provides a consistent quality of product and saves energy, by ensuring the distillery does not heat up intermittently prior to production phases.

The heat generated during the production process is recovered and stored as hot water in two thermally insulated tanks, and subsequently used to heat up the distillery as well as channelled back into production.

The distillery's energy consumption is gauged and reported in relation to production, enabling Mackmyra to calculate the volume of energy required for each bottle of whisky.

A modern biomass plant is located beside the distillery and provides carbon-neutral heat from the residual products of Swedish forestry. Moreover, the electricity used comes from a power station located around one kilometre away.

In addition to these energy-saving measures, the distillery is fully emission-free. Known as stillage, the residue from the distillation process is collected and transferred to a biogas plant, where it is microbially digested and used to make biogas and biofertiliser.



SMOKE SWEDISH BARLEY, JUNIPER TWIGS & PEAT

Mackmyra is one of the few distilleries in the world which malts its own smoky barley. Both malting and smoking take place in a facility situated next to the distillery using Swedish-grown barley and peat cut from the nearby Karinmossen (Karin Bog). To add a further Swedish dimension to the smokey flavour, the glowing peat is seasoned with freshly cut juniper twigs.

The smoking process takes place over 36 hours. The smouldering peat and juniper slowly release their flavours and infuse the bed of malt. Every four hours, the stove is refilled with fresh peat and juniper twigs. The process of malting and smoking barley takes around 12 days and requires constant maintenance and supervision. When the smoking is completed, the concentration of phenols in the malt reaches around 60 PPM (Parts per Million)





SWEDISH OAK SPICES, TOFFEE AND ALMONDS

A key component in Mackmyra's mission to create whisky with a Swedish identity is the use of Swedish oak. During the 1800s, the Swedish government planted large numbers of oak trees for the supply of wood to the naval dockyards of the future. When, in year 1975, the trees had finished growing and were ready to be used, ship building had advanced considerably, and the oak was no longer a viable material for this purpose. As a result, some of these old oaks can now be found in Mackmyra's whisky casks.

When compared to its American counterpart, Swedish oak contains less xylose and lignin, substances which are also known as wood sugar. These elements imbue the whisky with less of the sweet vanilla notes that are found in American oak. Instead Swedish oak is revered for its spicy notes of black pepper, cardamom and nutmeg, as well as its toffee-like sweetness and almond notes.

The unique attributes of the Swedish oak combined with those of American oak have become widely appreciated when featured in Mackmyra's whiskies over the years.



SMALL CASKS WHY 30 LITRES?

There's a logical explanation as to why Mackmyra's much loved 30-litre casks are the size they are. During the distillation process, the distiller carefully separates the heart of the distillate, the portion that will become whisky, from the head and the tail. Mackmyra's first, self-produced copper pot-stills could hold 100 litres of low wines, which produced a heart of pretty much exactly 30 litres following distillation.

As a result of the volume of spirit produced, the first 30-litre cask was created in the year 2000. This enabled a distillation run to be matured straight away, with no additional batches needed, unlike a larger cask. It was just as well, because Mackmyra evaluated no fewer than 170 distillation runs before keeping its two key recipes.

Another major benefit associated with the small casks is that the contact area of the oak in relation to volume of spirit is greater than is traditionally the case which allows the whisky to mature more quickly and intensively. Mackmyra has since made regular use of this insight, with small casks in sizes ranging from 30 up to 128 litres featuring regularly in limited editions.

THE MAIN WAREHOUSE: THE BODÅS MINE 50 METRES UNDER THE GROUND

Located 45 minutes from the distillery, Bodås Mine was used for iron-ore extraction from 1857-1973. It has been Mackmyra's main warehouse since 2004. Beginning at the surface, a road leads 50 metres down to 10 vast chambers filled from floor to ceiling with casks of maturing whisky. There are thousands of casks maturing here, large and small, containing both smoky and elegant whisky.

The temperature in the mine remains within a range of 7°C to 9°C ensuring a consistent maturation and a low volume of whisky evaporation, known as the mythical angel's share. The site is also home to a facility where privately owned Mackmyra Reserve casks are bottled by hand - including those not stored in the mine.

Mackmyra has satellite warehouses in Hällsnäs near Gothenburg and in Smögen in the Swedish west coast.



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CONTACT

E-mail: allan.marcimak@no1.se

Phone: +49 171 380 5023

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