



80 overseeing everything from bottling to warehouse operations, Bruichladdich also works closely with Islay farmers to produce a significant chunk of the barley that is used in its whiskies.

As a result, in 2020 the brand gained prestigious B Corp certification, which is awarded to businesses that meet high standards of social and environmental practices, and use “business as a force for good.” It was the first whisky distillery in Europe to achieve this. To retain the accolade, Bruichladdich will be re-evaluated every three years, meaning the distiller will continually improve its positive impact.

Transparency is another integral aspect of the Bruichladdich business. Remarkably for a heritage Scotch brand, it has made the exact recipes to its aged whiskies publicly available; the recently launched “Know What’s in Your Whisky” campaign sheds light on exactly what is in its signature unpeated single malt, The Classic Laddie.

Like much of what Bruichladdich does, The Classic Laddie does not conform to convention. Its bright, aqua-coloured bottle — which is reminiscent of the seas surrounding Islay — certainly catches the eye, while its unique blend subtly changes year by year due to the evolving use of different casks and barley varieties. Each bottle comes with a dedicated batch code that, when entered on the Bruichladdich website, reveals in-depth information on that specific whisky, from the provenance of the barley and the pedigree of the casks to the youngest vintage used in the blend.

An ideal dram for warm summer months, The Classic Laddie is a sterling all-rounder that can be enjoyed day or night. While its elegant legs (the trails left in a glass left after you swirl the whisky) and pale golden hue suggest a light, delicate spirit, it has a pleasingly punchy bouquet of barley sugar and green apple on the nose. The barley notes are intensified on the palate, creating a complex flavour with aspects of stone fruit and the salty tang that comes with an unhurried maturation by the sea.

Enjoy neat, with ice, or as a refreshing iced “tea” with a citrus slice. Alternatively, it more than holds its own in cocktails, which come out perfectly seasoned with that subtle mineral undertone.

The Classic Laddie retails for £44 and is available from Master of Malt, The Whisky Exchange and Waitrose, [brulichladdich.com](http://brulichladdich.com)

# Good thinking

Bruichladdich whisky combines high ethics with great flavours

WORDS CHARLOTTE MCMANUS

With closely guarded recipes, clandestine crafting methods and venerable histories that go back centuries, Scotch whisky makers are often regarded as being set in their ways. Yet while Bruichladdich certainly has the pedigree — it was founded in 1881 — these days the Islay-based distiller is anything but conventional.

Following closure in 1994, Bruichladdich officially reopened its doors in 2001 and has spent the subsequent two decades working to defy staid industry standards. Sustainable practices are key, from recycling waste water to using 100% renewable energy, as well as making concerted efforts to support the Islay community rather than outsourcing from the mainland. As the island’s largest private employer, with a dedicated team of

## NUCLEUS FOOD AND DRINK



### RUM WITH A PUNCH

Mount Gay’s annual small-batch release is aged for 14 years in ex-bourbon casks and finished in Andean oak casks — an unconventional choice of wood — for added aromatic complexity. The Master Blender Collection: Andean Oak Cask, limited to 2,760 bottles, offers delicate flavours of spice, vanilla and toasted coconut. £165, [fortnumandmason.com](http://fortnumandmason.com)



### STATESIDE SPIRIT

Seattle-based distillery Westland has added a new whiskey to its Outpost Range, which celebrates the “unknown possibilities” yet to be explored in single malts. The Edition 6 Garryana expression is made in a combination of Garry oak, brandy and sherry casks, resulting in a spirit that balances notes of darker fruits and savoury spices with a bright filter. Aromas of raspberry and maple come to the fore on the nose, while cedar, cinnamon, caramel and dried apricot make for a lively flavour on the palate. £165, [masterofmalt.com](http://masterofmalt.com)



### DEEP PEAT

The Octomore collection of super-heavily peated single malts bottled at cask strength is now in its 12th series. Acting as the base of the non-traditional, experimentally minded new range (which features a troika of expressions), the 12.1 is a pleasantly playful dram. Crafted in Islay using 100% Scottish barley, the spirit has been matured in first-fill ex-American oak whiskey casks for five vibrant years. It offers a delicate yet potent flavour with notes of heavy smoke, cereal, vanilla, citrus and fudge. For the full taste experience, invest in the 12.2 and 12.3 expressions too. Octomore 12.1 retails at £125, [masterofmalt.com](http://masterofmalt.com)



**From left:** The complexity of Rémy Martin XO required an equally bold food pairing; the rhubarb-glazed miso madeleines created by the talented Tommy Banks

# Sweet success

**Chef Tommy Banks turns to Yorkshire ingredients for an innovative, umami-laden partner to Rémy Martin XO**

WORDS CHARLOTTE MCMANUS

**A** proud Yorkshireman, third-generation farmer's son and two-time *Great British Menu* winner, chef Tommy Banks started his career in food at the tender age of 17. Entirely self-taught, he took over his family-owned pub The Black Swan as head chef in 2012. The following year, the restaurant retained its star, making Banks Britain's youngest Michelin-starred chef – and in 2021 it scooped a coveted Michelin Green Star for its commitment to

sustainable practices (that same year, *Roots*, a sister restaurant in York opened by Banks, was also awarded a star).

Rémy Martin's collaboration with this talented chef was sparked by its two-year global partnership with the Michelin Guide, sponsoring the Green Star category, a connection sparked by shared values and a mutual interest in sustainability. Banks also shares that passion. "Growing up on a small farm, sustainability is at the forefront of what I'm doing, from having as few food miles as possible to keeping everything super-local – also, utilising everything to its full potential."

As part of his authentic, ingredient-led practice, the chef continues to use produce grown on the Banks family farm. Traditional methods are also essential, from foraging to preserving. "I care deeply about the land that we grow on as it gives a really unique flavour to everything we cook. Yorkshire is an incredible foodie county. We've got some of the best produce in the world."

Rémy Martin has enlisted the chef to create a bespoke, sustainable recipe to pair

with Rémy Martin XO – no mean feat, given the opulent, many-layered nature of the spirit, which combines a plethora of aromatic notes as far-ranging as plum, candied orange and spice to cocoa bean, honey and ginger.

"The Cognac is incredibly complex. After tasting it, I realised that it needed really big, full flavours to match – one-dimensional cooking wouldn't work," Banks explains. "So I started with fermented barley, which we made miso out of. Acidity was needed, so I chose Yorkshire rhubarb, a phenomenal ingredient that's only available for a few months. It's really fresh and vibrant."

Banks combined his ingredients into an innovative, umami-inspired dish that pairs perfectly with the XO. "You don't often get umami in a dessert – it's full, salty and rich in flavour – but it makes the madeleines pair perfectly with Rémy Martin XO," he explains. "In three words, the recipe can be described as umami, sweetness and acidity – a real flavour bomb."

*Rémy Martin XO, £180 at Selfridges, selfridges.com*

**“The opulent, many-layered nature of the spirit combines a plethora of aromatic notes”**



## Miso Madeleines with Yorkshire Rhubarb Glaze

### Ingredients:

**Madeleines**  
200g unsalted butter  
3 large eggs (plus an additional egg white)  
275g sugar  
220g flour  
100g barley miso

**Rhubarb glaze**  
450ml fermented rhubarb juice  
4tbsp sugar  
4tbsp glucose  
1tsp water

### Method:

- 1 Pre-heat oven to 180°C (160°C fan). Prepare a madeleine tray by brushing it with melted butter and add a little flour to coat.
- 2 Make beurre noisette by melting the butter over medium heat. Stir for about four minutes until it boils and becomes opaque.
- 3 Turn the heat down and allow the butter to foam and the colour to turn darker, until you've reached a light-to-medium consistency and the butter solids start to caramelize. Remove from heat.
- 4 Whisk the eggs and sugar together until light and fluffy.
- 5 Fold in 150g flour slowly, a bit at a time. Mix in the barley miso and cooled beurre noisette and continue to fold for about three minutes. Add remaining flour.
- 6 Leave to chill for at least an hour.
- 7 For the glaze, put glucose sugar and water in a pan over high heat until the mixture begins to foam. Add fermented rhubarb juice and reduce the mixture until it covers the back of a spoon, which will take about 10-15 minutes.
- 8 Add a large tablespoon of batter into your prepared madeleine tray and cook in the centre of the pre-heated oven for six minutes. While warm, brush over your glaze and serve.