

THE 'SYN 20' COLLECTION



MARK
LITTLER

VALUE | ADVISE | SELL

Unique History

In the summer of 1992, a group of like-minded whisky loving friends came together to do something unique. They decided to form a 'whisky syndicate' and together they purchased 20 sister hogshead casks of Springbank.

The casks, ranging from number #135 to #154, contained nearly 5,000 litres of Springbank distillate and at the time of purchasing was just 5 days old. Most surprisingly this huge volume of whisky cost just £400 per cask.

The bottles we have for sale are owned by a widow who sadly lost her husband (one of the original syndicate members). While her husband, family and friends have greatly enjoyed the whisky over the decades, our client is not able to enjoy or appreciate 57 more bottles of cask strength Springbank.

This is a unique opportunity to see how identical distillate has matured in similar wood over a differing period of time.

The age of the whiskies we have available range from 16 to 25 years old and are priced between £371 to £563 and are very limited in their numbers.



ABOUT

Provenance

The casks were purchased by the syndicate directly from J&A Mitchell on the 14th July 1992. The casks were matured in Campbeltown and were all eventually bottled by J & A Mitchell & Co. The bottles were then distributed directly to the members of the Syndicate to enjoy.

ESTABLISHED 1828

J. & A. MITCHELL & CO. LTD

REGISTERED No. 3582 SCOTLAND
REGISTERED OFFICE
SPRINGBANK DISTILLERY
CAMPBELTOWN, ARGYLL.
PA28 6ET

TELEPHONE 0586-552065
FAX 0586-553215

14th July 1992

[REDACTED]

V.A.T. Reg No 2263-6228-58
Tax Point 14 07 92
INVOICE NO [REDACTED]

<u>Date of Bonding</u>	<u>Cask No</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Str</u>	<u>Litres</u>
Wood - Refill				<u>Alcohol</u>
<u>09 07 92</u>	135	251	63.4	159.1
	136	247		156.5
	137	258		163.5
	138	248		157.2
	139	252		159.7
	140	220		139.4
	141	247		156.5
	142	245		155.3
	143	252		159.7
	144	253		160.4
	145	247		156.5
	146	251		159.1
	147	256		162.3
	148	262		166.1
	149	247		156.5
	X 150	245		155.3
	151	257		162.9
	152	258		163.5
	X 153	256		162.3
	154	249		157.8
				3169.6
				<u>£8,000.00</u>

20 casks @ £400.00 per cask

Provenance

The ‘SYN’ Syndicate

In July 1992, as the Summer Olympics took place in Barcelona and Georgia joined the United Nations, a group of friends in the United Kingdom came together to form a whisky syndicate and prepared to purchase a number of casks. Their decision was to purchase twenty sister hogsheads, from cask number #135 to #154, directly from the Springbank distillery at a cost of £400 per cask. The casks had been distilled just five days before the syndicate’s purchase and contained almost 5,000 litres of Springbank distillate.

While it might seem strange in 2021 that a distillery like Springbank would offer casks to the public at such low prices, this simply reflects the state of the market in the early 1990s. It must be remembered that Springbank ceased production between 1979 and 1987 owing to the problems caused by the whisky loch, and only began full production again in 1989.

At this stage the single malt market was still very much in its infancy with blended whiskies still dominating the market. In fact, it was not until 1998 that Springbank released its core 12 year old.

Arguably as a way to generate further revenue, Springbank ran a private cask ownership programme through the 1990s. This was widely promoted and Springbank even included sign up forms in with many of their bottles in the 1990s.

The syndicate left the casks to mature at the Springbank distillery’s bonded warehouse to begin the metamorphosis into whisky (see later chapter). Several years later they had their first whisky drawn from the casks. From then on the syndicate would bottle a cask and distribute bottles amongst themselves, creating a unique sampling line of this same Springbank distillate matured to various age statements.

The syndicate’s aim was to enjoy their Springbank whisky each year and, as you can see by the very limited number of bottles left in this collection, they certainly were doing so. The original syndicate member who owned these bottles was very keen at sharing their whisky and gave many bottles to friends and family to enjoy. However, as you can imagine, there are only

so many bottles of cask strength Springbank a widow can appreciate or give to friends. As a result we are proud to be able to offer these incredible whiskies to our customers who will hopefully be able to share in the enjoyment and keep the syndicate’s aim of enjoying great whisky alive.



The Label

The unique labels for these bottles were designed by an artist related to one of the syndicate members and applied by J & A Mitchell at the time of bottling. The artist was inspired after reading the tasting notes for a different whisky which included the rather bizarre line “soggy sheep and tiger claws”. Along with this featured design is a very classic and understated label on a cream background, with the exception of the 25 year olds which are silver and black for the two different cask numbers.

The whisky was bottled and labelled at the Springbank distillery, according to the regulations of the distillery and the SWA. All the bottles feature UK pink duty stamp stickers.

The Bottles



Distilled: 1992
Age: 16
Bottled: 2009
Cask Number: 138
ABV: 52.4%
No. Bottles: 4
Label: Cream
£371



Distilled: 1992
Age: 19
Bottled: 2012
Cask Number: 140
ABV: 53.0%
No. Bottles: 6
Label: Cream
£435



Distilled: 1992
Age: 21
Bottled: 2013
Cask Number: 144
ABV: 52.6%
No. Bottles: 2
Label: Cream
£477



Distilled: 1992
Age: 23
Bottled: 2015
Cask Number: 147
ABV: 51.9%
No. Bottles: 11
Label: Cream
£520



Distilled: 1992
Age: 24
Bottled: 2016
Cask Number: 149
ABV: 51.2%
No. Bottles: 12
Label: Cream
£541



Distilled: 1992
Age: 25
Bottled: 2017
Cask Number: 154
ABV: 52.3%
No. Bottles: 11
Label: Silver
£563



Distilled: 1992
Age: 25
Bottled: 2017
Cask Number: 150
ABV: 51.4
No. Bottles: 11
Label: Black
£563

Tasting Notes

These tasting notes have been provided by Phil Dwyer - manager of the Whisky Shop, Manchester, and host of the popular [Whisky Wednesday](#) YouTube channel. Phil's channel has almost 10,000 subscribers where he has reviewed and rated almost 500 whiskies

Springbank #147, 1992, 23YO

Colour: Perfect gold

Nose: Cream coconut, pineapple, mango, barley sugar, salt, limestone, fresh minerals, gentle smoke, tropical Bourbon influences, freshly sliced apple, lemon zest, and vanilla.

Palate: Oily smoke like a tar fire, more salt, fruit syrups (apple and passionfruit) with the salt contrasting this to reveal a creamy barley texture.

Finish: Gentle smoke coats your mouth and tongue, soft wood spices and a swelling of 'Springbank Funk' - The oak isn't dominant and allows the unique spirit of Springbank to follow up on all of these big flavours promises.

Verdict: The best Springbank I've tried upto this point in my life. Seriously. You can keep your sherry bombs. Refil American oak with spirit still playing an equal role in the flavour profile. I'm sold.

95/100



Springbank #150, 1992, 25YO

Colour: Manzanilla Sherry

Nose: Lemon. Much less tropical than it's younger brother bottling. Cut grass, citrus peels, hay bails, farmyard funkiness, mint, toffee, and cherry. The toffee note takes a while to show itself.

Palate: Spicier! Heavier oak and freshly sawn wood, liquorice. No fruit notes. Not as overwhelming as it may sound. Minted toffee, coriander, sea salt and drying smoke.

Finish: Buttery pastry, butter cream, more salt, green tea, 'Springbank Funk' and an overall creaminess.

Verdict: We've traded tropical fruit for a bigger texture with the 25YO. Oak and drier flavours lead the way, but it's still quite creamy and decadent.

90/100



CASK MATURATION

- How wood effects whisky -

The nature of this collection of bottles gives a perfect walk through of the journey of the whisky inside the cask and the effect that the wood has on the maturation process. The same distillate that ran through the stills in 1992 has been left to mature in refill hogshead casks for 16, 19, 21, 23, 24, and 25 years, exploring how the whisky changes as it matures.

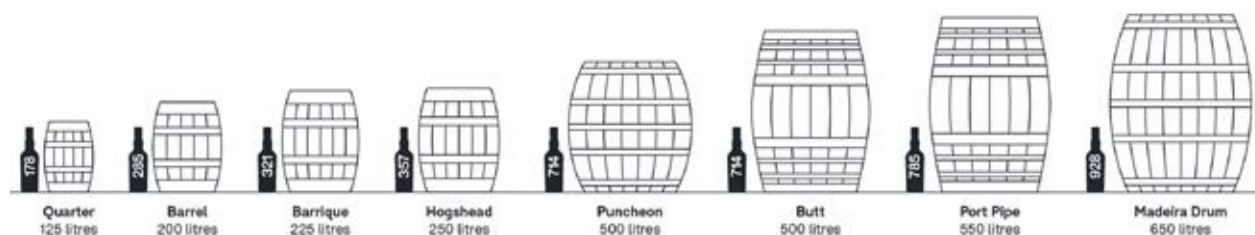
Hogshead casks are typically 250 litres and are made by re-assembling barrels with a few additional staves to increase the capacity from 200 to 250 litres. The smaller a cask, the higher the spirit to wood ratio. This imparts a strong flavour into the whisky more quickly, and results in a whisky that can change dramatically over just a few years. With the syndicate bottles, therefore, the 25 year old compared to the 16 year old is vastly different in colour, nose, and palette. This is because the wood itself imparts compounds into the whisky through contact that are taken on by the spirit.

The oak contains 4 main compounds that will have a part to play in the flavour of our whisky; hemicellulose, lignin, tannins, and lactones. When subjected to heat, hemicellulose starts to break down into wood sugars which caramelise on the inside of the cask, giving sweet flavours such as toffee or caramel. Lignin is responsible for vanilla flavours within the spirit, and is responsible for more woody and spicy notes as the char is increased. Oak lactones are commonly associated with woody and coconut flavours but their effect is lessened as the char increases.

Lastly, the compound that most people will be familiar with is tannins. Present in everything from tea to red wine, they are also present in whisky. The amount of tannin in the oak is reduced when the wood is being seasoned prior to being made into a cask. Tannins are important to the whisky maturation process. They add that dryness to a whisky and a certain amount of astringency.

They also remove some of the sulphur compounds which aren't always wanted in the spirit. Most importantly, tannins assist in the breakdown of lignin which will increase the flavour of the whisky.

We must remember that distilleries produce ethanol, but it is the wood that creates the whisky.



SYN 20 Collection

This range of syndicate bottles are fantastically rare and an amazing opportunity to experience a range of sister casks through their journey of maturation from 16 to 25 years. The quality of Springbank whisky is legendary and these bottles are no exception.

Working directly with a widow of one of the founding members of the syndicate, we are not only proud to be offering this unique range of distillery bottled Springbank whisky, but can provide fascinating provenance of Springbank whisky from its distillation in 1992 through to the present day.

The syndicate was set up to enjoy incredible whisky and experience something that not many whisky lovers are able to witness; how the distillate transforms from ethanol to whisky over the course of 25 years.

From a collectors perspective the labels are entirely unique and are not found on any other Springbank bottles. The bottles are very rare and have only ever appeared three times at auction according to our records.

These bottles which range from £371 to £563 are being held in our storage and are ready to be dispatched worldwide.

[PURCHASE ON OUR WEBSITE](#)

MARK@MARKLITTLER.COM
01260 218718



**MARK
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VALUE | ADVISE | SELL

Mark Littler Limited
Riverside Mill
Mountbatten Way
Congleton
Cheshire
CW12 1DY

Ltd Company Number - 11174184
VAT Number - 289367148

01260 218718
mark@marklittler.com
www.marklittler.com