

South Africa beats Japan as Distiller of the Year

Distell was declared Distiller of the Year by Whisky Magazine in its 2015 Icons of Whisky competition, winning in the category that the organisers call 'Rest of the World'. This region encompasses all producers from outside Scotland and the US. Nominations for the title were submitted for distillers operating as far afield as Ireland, England, France, Belgium, Australia, Japan and Taiwan.



Distell, which produces Bain's Mountain Whisky and the Three Ships range of whiskies, both internationally awarded brands, will now go up against the top-ranked Scottish and American distillers of the year to decide on this year's global Icons of Whisky winner, to be announced in March in London. The South African company is competing for the final honour against the BenRiach Distillery Company of Speyside, Scotland, and the Four Roses Distillery of Kentucky in the US.

Last year, Jim Murray, author of the World Whisky Bible, ranked Suntory's Yamazaki Single Malt Sherry Cask the world's best whisky. It was the first time a Japanese whisky won and was yet another signal to observers that world-class whiskies do not always have to originate in Scotland.

In 2013 Bain's was judged the world's best grain whisky at the 2013 World's Whisky Awards, while Three Ships 5 Year Old won the title for world's best blended whisky in 2012 at the same event.

Speaking on behalf of Distell, Caroline Snyman, director of the company's luxury brands with a portfolio that includes South African and Scotch whiskies, said, "Global interest in whisky continues to soar and there is a fast-growing appreciation for those offerings originating beyond the traditional producing countries of Scotland and Ireland. We are very proud to have

been voted the best distiller outside Scotland and America."

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