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## Craft Distillers support Japan



A group of independent Scottish Distilleries have agreed to collaborate to produce a unique whisky and donate all proceeds to the disaster relief effort in Japan.

Each of the seven distilleries, representing the best craft producers in the Scotch whisky business, will donate a cask of their single malt that will be expertly blended to create a limited edition whisky, appropriately called the ***Spirit of Unity***, which will never be produced again.

The connections between the malt whisky industry and Japan are strong as few consumers are as passionate about malt whisky as the Japanese and it has been a major export market for many years.

The idea came from Euan Mitchell, managing director of Isle of Arran Distillers. Mitchell explained: "Many in our industry, like me, travel regularly to Japan and have made friends and contacts with Japanese whisky enthusiasts. "On seeing the scale and horror of the problems they are facing we were moved to help and other craft distillers immediately came onboard."

The distillers are **Arran, BenRiach, Bladnoch, GlenDronach, Mitchell's Glengyle, Kilchoman and Springbank**. Each of them is a multiple award-winning independent business. They have never collaborated in this way and are never likely to again.

The combined contribution will produce approximately **2,000 bottles** with 1,200 available in the UK. The remainder will be shipped to Japan with some being donated for sale in New Zealand to assist with relief in the aftermath of the Christchurch earthquake. It is expected that the release will be oversubscribed as soon as it is made available.

With the support of suppliers and partners, including retailers, a conservative estimate is that at least £50,000 will be donated to the relief effort.

Independent whisky expert **David Broom** comments "This is a marvellous and compassionate response to the dreadful tragedy which has befallen Japan and is a beautifully symbolic gesture of how the craft distillers of Scotland are working together to help their friends in that country.

"What's more, with the pedigree of the distilleries involved I know that this will be a superb whisky. Nothing like this has been produced before and whisky lovers around the world will be clamouring to own and taste this one-off bottling. In doing so, they will be helping aid the Japanese people."

For whisky fans the leading producers each represent acclaimed malt whisky regions in Islands, Speyside, Highland, Islay, Campbeltown and Lowland.

The producers will offer the limited bottling available through two leading online whisky retailers; Royal Mile Whiskies and Loch Fyne Whiskies, and in their respective shops in Edinburgh & London and Inveraray. Not a penny of profit will be taken from the project by any of the parties involved with the packaging being donated free of charge by Chesapeake Branded Packaging. The Spirit of Unity will be available in store and for despatch by the end of April with details being posted on the websites of the distillers.

Pre-orders at £59 per bottle (+p&p) are now being taken at [www.royalmilewhiskies.com](http://www.royalmilewhiskies.com) and [www.LFW.co.uk](http://www.LFW.co.uk)