

Learn English with Photos 3

The Whisky Distillery Transcript



Hello and welcome to episode three of Learn English with Photos. My name is Jeffrey Hill and this lesson is based on photos I took during a visit to the Glengoyne whisky distillery in Scotland.

In the first part of the lesson, I'll tell you about my visit, then we'll look at some of the vocabulary in more detail, and finally you'll get the chance to answer some questions.

Glengoyne, which is about 15 miles north of Glasgow, has been called "Scotland's Most Beautiful Distillery". It was founded in 1833 and has produced single malt Scotch whisky for nearly 200 years.

The distillery is situated in a wooded valley in the southern Highlands of Scotland close to a small river that flows into the famous Loch Lomond.

Glengoyne is one of the few distilleries producing whisky in this part of Scotland today. However, at the beginning of the nineteenth century it is recorded that at least eighteen whisky stills were in operation in this area.

But these, like many others at that time, were illegal. Whisky producers were forced to produce whisky illicitly as they were unable to pay the heavy taxes imposed by the government on spirit production to fund wars against France. Smuggling became rife and the hills and glens around Glengoyne formed a perfect cover for this lawless activity.

It was not until the 1820's that an Act of Parliament was passed reducing the duty on spirit and the cost of a licence to distill which put an end to illegal production. This gave rise to a rush of stills being legalised including those at Glengoyne in 1833. It's reputed that Glengoyne was one of only a few stills to be licensed in the southern Highlands due to the high quality of whisky it produced.

Today, in addition to producing whisky, Glengoyne offers a range of guided tours that take you behind the scenes at the distillery and give you an insight into the production process.

We chose the cheapest tour, which cost £7 and included a 'wee dram', or small glass, of Glengoyne 10-year-old Highland Single Malt Whisky. Sláinte, as they say in Scotland!

Our guide explained that the same traditional distillation methods and basic ingredients, barley, water and yeast, have been used to make Scotch whisky for over 500 years.

The water used to come from this waterfall behind the distillery, but now it's piped in from a reservoir a few miles away.

Here we can see one of the giant copper stills which are used to distill the whisky.

The final character of the whisky is affected by the wood of the cask in which it matures. Glengoyne uses carefully selected Spanish and American oak casks (some of which will have been seasoned with

Sherry in Spain before shipping to Scotland). Glengoyne's malts are left to mature in the distillery's warehouses for a minimum of ten years.

If you're interested in finding out more about the whisky making process, you should visit the Glengoyne Distillery website.

At the end of the tour, we visited the shop, which is located inside the oldest warehouse on the site. The 'Whisky Wall' features a wide range of whiskies of different ages—and prices.

This 40-year-old malt costs £3750. Unfortunately, I knew that I wouldn't be able to take it on the flight back to France, otherwise I would have been tempted ...

The shop also sells a selection of Glengoyne-branded merchandise including glassware, clothing, foods, confectionery, preserves, books and a range of whisky collectables, which you can also buy online.

So, I hope you enjoyed the tour. Now let's go over some of the vocabulary we've seen. I'll say each word and you can repeat it after me. I'll also make a few comments along the way.

Vocabulary

- ❑ **barley** — a grain that is used to make food, beer, and whisky
- ❑ **cask** — a wooden barrel that is used for storing things, especially alcoholic drink
- ❑ **clothing (U)** — clothing is the things that people wear
- ❑ **collectable** — an object which someone might want to collect
- ❑ **confectionery (U)** — a collective term for sweets and chocolates
- ❑ **copper (U)** — a reddish-brown metal
- ❑ **distillery** — a place where whisky or a similar strong alcoholic drink is made by a process of distilling
- ❑ **dram** — a small measure of whisky, usually 30 ml.
- ❑ **found** — to start a company or business
- ❑ **glassware (U)** — objects made of glass, such as bowls, drinking containers, and ornaments
- ❑ **glen** — a deep, narrow valley, especially in the mountains of Scotland or Ireland
- ❑ **guided tour** — if someone takes you on a guided tour of a place, they show you the place and tell you about it
- ❑ **Highlands** — a mountainous region of central and northern Scotland
- ❑ **illegal** — not allowed by the law
- ❑ **ingredient** — ingredients are the things to make something, especially food dishes
- ❑ **located** — situated or positioned
- ❑ **malt** — a substance that is made from grain which is soaked in water and then dried in a hot oven, or an abbreviation for single malt whisky
- ❑ **mature** — to leave for a time to allow the full flavour or strength to develop
- ❑ **merchandise (U)** — articles which carry the name and/or logo of a particular company
- ❑ **oak (U)** — a strong, hard wood
- ❑ **preserves** — preserves are food such as jam that are made by cooking fruit with sugar
- ❑ **production process** — the series of actions which are carried out in order to make something
- ❑ **produce** — to grow, make or manufacture something
- ❑ **producer** — a person, company, or country that makes or grows something
- ❑ **range** — a number of different things of the same general kind
- ❑ **Scotch** — whisky made in Scotland
- ❑ **Scotland** — country occupying the northern third of the island of Great Britain
- ❑ **Scottish** — belonging or relating to Scotland
- ❑ **single malt** — a whisky made at one particular distillery from a mash that uses one particular malted grain, which is ordinarily barley
- ❑ **smuggling** — taking things illegally or secretly into a place or out of it
- ❑ **spirit** — strong alcoholic drink such as whisky or gin
- ❑ **still** — a piece of equipment used to make strong alcoholic drinks by a process called distilling
- ❑ **warehouse** — a large building where goods are stored before they are distributed or sold
- ❑ **wee** — Scottish word for small
- ❑ **whisky** — a strong alcoholic drink made, especially in Scotland, from grain such as barley or rye
- ❑ **yeast** — a kind of fungus which is used to make bread rise, and in making alcoholic drinks such as beer and whisky

Questions

1. Have you ever drunk whisky?
2. How do you like to drink your whisky?
3. Why do you think Scottish whisky is so popular?
4. Have you ever been to Scotland?
5. What do you know about Scotland?
6. Can you name any famous Scots?
7. What is Scotland known for, apart from whisky?
8. What would you have bought in the Glengoyne shop as a souvenir or present?