

Littlemill Distillery



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Name:	Littlemill (Pronounced: just like it's written)
Region:	Lowlands (some say Southern Highlands)
Neighbors:	Loch Lomond, Inverleven, Auchentoshan
Founded:	1772 (allegedly)
Status:	Closed – dismantled (in 1996)
Water source:	Kilpatrick Springs
Equipment:	1 Wash still, 1 Spirit still
Production capacity:	Unknown
Ownership:	Glen Catrine Bonded Warehouse Ltd.

Littlemill was one of those distilleries that was located in the area near Glasgow that's on the border between the Highlands and the Lowlands. Littlemill is usually classified as a Lowland distillery – possibly because the distillery used the technique of triple distillation that's traditionally used in the Lowlands – as opposed to the double distillation that is customary in the rest of Scotland.

The Littlemill distillery is quite possibly the oldest malt whisky distillery in Scotland, with roots going as far back as ca. 1750. Some Irish distilleries claim even older roots (Bushmills says it was founded in 1608), but the foundations beneath claims like these are fairly weak. Littlemill saw many different owners in its long history. Until the 1930's the traditional triple distillation technique from the Lowlands was used at Littlemill; afterwards the proprietors switched to the method of double distillation.

Littlemill was closed in 1984, but the distillery was re-opened again in 1989 by new owners Gibson International. Closed again in 1994, it was then sold to the Loch Lomond Distillery Co. Ltd. – who were practically neighbors of Littlemill. "Dumbuck" (heavily peated) and "Dunglass" (unpeated) were the names of two malt whiskies that were produced by experimental set-ups at Littlemill that didn't operate for very long. As a result, bottlings under these names are extremely rare.

Littlemill's claim that it's Scotland's oldest distillery – or at least Scotland's oldest surviving distillery until recently – could be based on historical fact, but it's difficult to be certain because documentation from so long ago is often vague. And anyway, since Littlemill distillery was closed and demolished a few years ago (and the last remnants destroyed by a fire in September 2004), the honor now goes to a distillery that was founded in 1779; the Bowmore distillery on Islay.

Trivia about Littlemill

- 1) Littlemill distillery was located between the river Clyde and the railway, close to the train station of the town of Bowling. Or rather, the station was located near the distillery, which was founded much earlier than the railway.
- 2) Gibson International were the owners of the Littlemill distillery until 1984. These days the remains of the distillery are owned by Glen Catrine Bonded Warehouse Ltd. – who also own the Loch Lomond and Glen Scotia distilleries.
- 3) The Littlemill malt whisky distillery used triple distillation until the 1930's.
- 4) The last remains of Littlemill distillery (largely dismantled in 1997) were destroyed by fire in 2004