



Frequently Asked Questions

Vintage Saga Group acquires The Dormant Distillery Company

What does this announcement mean?

Vintage Saga Ltd has agreed to purchase The Dormant Distillery Company Ltd.

Founded by Keir Sword, The Dormant Distillery Company Ltd includes Royal Mile Whiskies, Drinkmonger and The Cigar Box.

Founded by Iain McClune, Vintage Saga Ltd is the holding company for Whisky Auctioneer Ltd, Wine Auctioneer Ltd, Rum Auctioneer Ltd and Bright Spirits Ltd.

All Dormant Distillery Company brands will be retained, owned, and operated independently in Scotland as part of the deal.

What is the cost of the acquisition?

Vintage Saga Ltd is acquiring The Dormant Distillery Company for an undisclosed sum.

Why is Vintage Saga Ltd acquiring Dormant Distillery Company?

After 25 years at the business, Keir Sword decided to exit the business, and is pleased to pass the company over to Iain, a former Royal Mile Whiskies employee who shares in his affection for the business.

Vintage Saga and DDC are both independent Scottish companies with the same knowledge-centric approach and people-first culture, with committed and passionate employees who contribute hugely to the success of the businesses.

With the support of Vintage Saga, DDC will benefit from a huge amount of industry expertise and knowledge to drive the business forward whilst retaining its independent status.

What will change for the Dormant Distillery Company brands?

As part of Vintage Saga, the Dormant Distillery Company will continue to operate independently as its own entity, and also independently from other businesses within the group.

As Keir Sword leaves his role as Managing Director, fellow Director Arthur Motley will become Managing Director of Royal Mile Whiskies after over 20 years in the business. Stuart Smith will become Operations Director, and all other staff will remain in post. Arthur and Stuart will manage the business as usual.

In time, DDC will benefit from Vintage Saga's knowledge, expertise, relationships and reputation which will support its continued growth.

What does this transaction mean for customers and partners?

Royal Mile Whiskies will continue to support their loyal trade and retail customers with access to their favourite whiskies, wines and spirits at fair prices with a knowledgeable and respectful service. Policies and incentives, such as our [Fair Selling Policy](#) and [Drammer's Reward](#), will continue as normal.

They will also continue to provide suppliers with unique and fair channels of distribution - getting their liquid to those who will enjoy it most.

Most importantly, the Dormant Distillery Company brands will continue to deliver the service, support and dedication that customers and suppliers have come to expect, while using the wider support from Vintage Saga to further develop to become the leading independent whisky, wine and spirits retailers in Scotland and the UK.

What's next?

Customers and partners can continue to look forward to planned tastings and events on the run up to Christmas, including the Chairman's Reserve and 'Peat from the Past' tastings at Drinkmonger, Edinburgh in October. More tastings will be announced soon, so do make sure to keep an eye on Royal Mile Whiskies and Drinkmonger social media channels and website.

Royal Mile Whiskies will also be exhibiting at the Glasgow Whisky Festival as Official Retailer on 12 November 2022.



Who is Iain McClune?

Iain McClune is a Scottish whisky and spirits entrepreneur, enthusiast and former Royal Mile Whiskies employee. He is the Founder and Managing Director of Vintage Saga Ltd.

Prior to establishing Whisky Auctioneer in 2013, Iain was Manager at Royal Mile Whiskies Edinburgh, a leading independent traditional whisky specialist.

Iain studied MSc Brewing & Distilling at Heriot Watt university, and this coupled by his long history working within the spirits industry and a passion for old and rare whiskies ignited his enthusiasm to create a platform for global whisky lovers to access bottles that are nearly impossible to find through traditional retail routes. Headquartered in Perth, Scotland, Whisky Auctioneer now also has offices in London and Raitheim, Germany.

In 2017, Iain established Wine Auctioneer offering the same services for mature and rare fine wines and in August 2019 launched Rum Auctioneer, the first dedicated online auction of its kind.

Iain was listed as One to Watch in The Telegraph's Most Ambitious Business Leaders programme in 2020.



Who is Keir Sword?

Keir Sword started the independent bottling business DDC Ltd in 1997 but his focus for the business soon changed when he had the opportunity to buy his former employer, Royal Mile Whiskies.

Royal Mile Whiskies was established in 1991, however, it was in 1997 when Keir Sword, a returning former employee, purchased the shop that it developed into one of the world's most respected specialist whisky retailers.

Keir added The Cigar Box to the portfolio in 1999, followed by rmw.com in 2000, which made the company one of the very first to retail whisky online. As sales of 'other' spirits had grown steadily, the Drinkmonger brand was added in 2011 with the opening of a retail shop in Pitlochry, Highland Perthshire and then Bruntsfield, Edinburgh later the same year.

The Royal Mile Whiskies Trade department is seen as the pre-eminent wholesaler of specialist spirits into the Scottish bar trade, with an accounts list of some of the very best hospitality venues in Scotland and beyond. Royal Mile Whiskies' worldwide reputation is largely due to its knowledgeable team of whisky enthusiasts.

Keir is a Master of the Quaich and is soon to become a Liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Distillers.