

#### **Clynelish Distillers Edition with Mons' Brie de Meaux**

The whisky tasted of fennel seed and cloves; Joshi confirmed a spicy sting. The lingering taste was long and complicated. Marcin started getting fruit... where on earth was the brininess typically associated with Clynelish, a Highland whisky from the Sutherland coast? We asked to see the bottle and discovered it wasn't the 14 Year Old as we thought, but the Clynelish Distillers Edition, given a secondary finish in a cask conditioned with Oloroso sherry. The artisanal brie was well aged and well kept, and submitted to the will of the spirit. 'Unripe fruit,' said Grimond of the pairing. 'Apple seeds,' said Joshi. We tried reducing the whisky's strength from 46% – some preferred it, some didn't. (Adding water should be done in drops, and only after you have tried it at bottle strength.) At the end of the tasting, we tried the cheese with the 14 Year Old. It worked better.

#### **Lagavulin 16 Year Old with Persille du Malzieu**

This Roquefort-style cheese was set to make a wonderful finale to our tasting. Lagavulin and Roquefort is a genuine match and Humphrey Errington's Lanark Blue – often dubbed Scotland's Roquefort – works beautifully too, as does his Dunsyre Blue. Sadly, this cheese was another victim of dodgy affinage. So, when paired with the whisky, the effect was of artificial cream and fruit flavouring. Joshi got it in one: Tutti Frutti sweets. Grimond thought the combination worked if you only ate the blue veins in the cheese. It was a disappointing finish, but don't let this put you off bringing out a Lagavulin with the Colston Bassett Stilton this Christmas – generally it's a truly magical combination!