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For immediate release

Inver House Distillers: 'International Distiller of the Year' Airdrie-based Company Named Global Icon of Whisky

Inver House Distillers, proud producer of some of Scotland's most exciting and fastest growing malts, was named as 'International Distiller of the Year' at a glittering ceremony in London last night (Thursday 28th February). The Airdrie-based company beat off impressive competition from exceptional companies throughout the world, including Japan, Ireland, Canada, India and Sweden and the USA.

Inver House, who in the last year have globally re-launched their Balblair Single Malt as a super-premium 'vintage', reached the final of the 'Icons of Whisky' event by first beating off competition in Scotland from Glenmorangie, Bowmore and William Grant & Sons, before claiming whisky's highest accolade over seven other global finalists. The industry-voted award is designed to highlight the company who has 'shown the most commitment to the development of whisky at all levels' and is highly sought after.

Announced on the eve of Whisky Live! London, the Icons of Whisky dinner was created to celebrate the people and places behind the greatest whiskies in the world. The event's international judging panel recognised Inver House for bringing 'dynamic, inspirational and dedicated passion' to the world of whisky.

"It has to be said that given the extremely global nature of the awards, to make it to the shortlists, never mind win our International Final is a tremendous honour. In all categories there was some serious competition," said one of the judges, Rob Allanson, Editor of Paragraph Publishing. *"Inver House pioneer a creative approach to whisky and we believe that their team brings genuine passion and fresh thinking to all they do. They've made a very bold statement in recent times and every person on our panel strongly backed their win."*

Karen Walker, Marketing Manager of Inver House collected the award alongside her team: *"We are utterly thrilled. Previously, when we won Best Scottish Distiller we were amazed but to be named as 'International Distiller of the Year' is absolutely mind-blowing. We are very proud of the work that we have achieved over the last year and are devoted to the success of whisky world-wide. Winning the award that every distiller covets is a dream."*

A key reason for Inver House's win was their commitment to 'shaking off the old fashioned Scottish image of whisky and replacing it with a modern contemporary approach without losing the heritage at its core'. Highlights include:

- **Balblair Single Malt** Whisky was relaunched at the turn of the year as a super premium, contemporary whisky brand, focused on international modern luxury markets, including France and Japan. Distinguished by its use of vintages (it is chosen by optimum 'year', in a similar way to wine), Balblair has been building a network of other outward-looking, likeminded brands including Canongate Books, Mackintosh Rainwear, Timorous Beasties and the artist, JoLoMo in an effort to shift traditional stereotypes of Scotland both in the UK and abroad.

- **Old Pulteney Single Malt**, also known as 'The Genuine Maritime Malt', embarked on its first international sponsorship by supporting renowned sailing sportsman 68-year old, Sir Robin Knox Johnston during his participation in the 'ultimate solo challenge' – the Velux 5 Oceans Round the World yacht race.
- **Hanky Bannister**, one the company's bestselling blend brands, also received recognition by winning 'Best Scotch Blended Whisky' for its super-premium, limited edition 40 year-old blend. Hankey Bannister is currently exported to around 47 countries worldwide, being particularly well established in travel retail, mainland Europe, the Middle East, Australasia, and Eastern Europe.
- Other Inver House brands performing well both in the UK and internationally include: **anCnoc Single Malt Whisky**, **Heather Cream liqueur** and **Speyburn Single Malt** amongst many others.

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