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Bushmills Redesigns Black Bush Bottle After Nearly 20 Years

The taller, slimmer package leaves the sherry-led 40% blend unchanged, linking the label more closely to Bushmills' single malts.

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Bushmills Irish Whiskey has introduced a redesigned bottle for Black Bush, marking the first major packaging change for the blended whiskey in nearly 20 years as the Northern Ireland distiller looks to give one of its best-known labels a stronger and more consistent global identity.

The change was announced this week by Old Bushmills Distillery in County Antrim, where the whiskey is made. The company said the new bottle is meant to align Black Bush with the visual direction it adopted for its single malt range in 2021 and to bring the wider Bushmills portfolio under a more unified design.

The whiskey itself has not changed. Bushmills said Black Bush will continue to be made to the same recipe, with a high proportion of single malt whiskey matured in former Oloroso sherry casks and blended with batch-distilled grain whiskey. It remains bottled at 40% alcohol by volume.

The redesign focuses on the bottle’s shape and surface details. Bushmills said the new Black Bush bottle is taller and slimmer than the previous version, with broader shoulders, sharper angles, and a visible wooden stopper covered by a clear cap. The company said the goal was to create a package that is easier to recognize both on retail shelves and at bars.

Several elements draw on the landscape around the distillery. Bushmills said a hexagonal indentation in the base was inspired by the basalt columns of the Giant’s Causeway, a coastal landmark near the distillery. The labels follow the more angular form of the bottle, and the shoulder includes an engraving of the Bushmills still.

The redesign comes as Irish whiskey producers continue to push more aggressively into premium and super-premium categories in export markets. Bushmills said Irish whiskey has posted a compound annual growth rate of 9% in value and 7% in volume over the past five years, while the Bushmills brand has grown by about 8% annually over the same period. Those figures were provided by the company and were not independently verified in the announcement.

Colum Egan, master distiller at Old Bushmills Distillery, said the decision was about updating the presentation rather than altering the liquid. He described Black Bush as a whiskey defined by the smooth character associated with triple distillation and by the sweeter, dried-fruit notes that come from sherry cask influence. He said the glass manufacturer Encirc played an important role in turning that heritage into what he called a more striking premium bottle.

Muiris Ó Riada, international marketing director at Proximo Spirits, Bushmills’ parent company, said Black Bush has shown steady growth over several years and that the redesign is intended to give distributors and retailers a clearer story to tell in stores and in bars. Proximo Spirits is a U.S.-based drinks company headquartered in Jersey City, New Jersey.

The new packaging also reflects a broader effort by Bushmills to sharpen the distinction between its blends and single malts while keeping them visually connected. The company has increasingly emphasized its long history and place of origin in branding materials as competition in Irish whiskey has intensified. Old Bushmills traces its licensed distilling history to 1608 and describes itself as the world’s oldest licensed whiskey distillery.

Black Bush has long occupied a key place in the Bushmills lineup because it sits between the company’s entry-level blended expressions and its age-stated single malts. Bushmills describes it as a richer, more malt-forward blend than standard Irish blends, with sherry sweetness on the nose, dried fruit notes, a silky texture, and flavors of nuts and spice on the palate. The company said those sensory characteristics remain unchanged under the new release.

To support the relaunch, Bushmills is also promoting a simple highball serve built around Black Bush, ginger beer, lemon juice, and ice. The company presented the drink as a fresh and balanced option that keeps the whiskey at the center of the serve. That approach fits with a broader industry trend in which premium whiskey brands are trying to appeal both to traditional drinkers and to consumers who increasingly order long drinks and classic cocktails.

The company also pointed to a recent award as part of its case for Black Bush’s position in the market. Bushmills said the whiskey won a gold medal at the 2025 Irish Whiskey Awards, adding that the recognition, combined with the blend’s high malt content and the distillery’s longstanding reputation, places it in a strong position within the premium Irish blend segment.

Bushmills currently sells a portfolio that includes original and premium blends as well as single malts aged 10, 16, and 21 years. In recent years, much of the brand’s public attention has centered on its older single malts and on the luxury end of the category. The Black Bush redesign signals that the company also sees room for further growth in blends, especially as premiumization continues to shape buying habits in the global spirits market.

The updated Black Bush bottle is being introduced as Bushmills expands its international ambitions and seeks a more modern shelf presence without changing a whiskey that has long been one of the brand’s signature products.