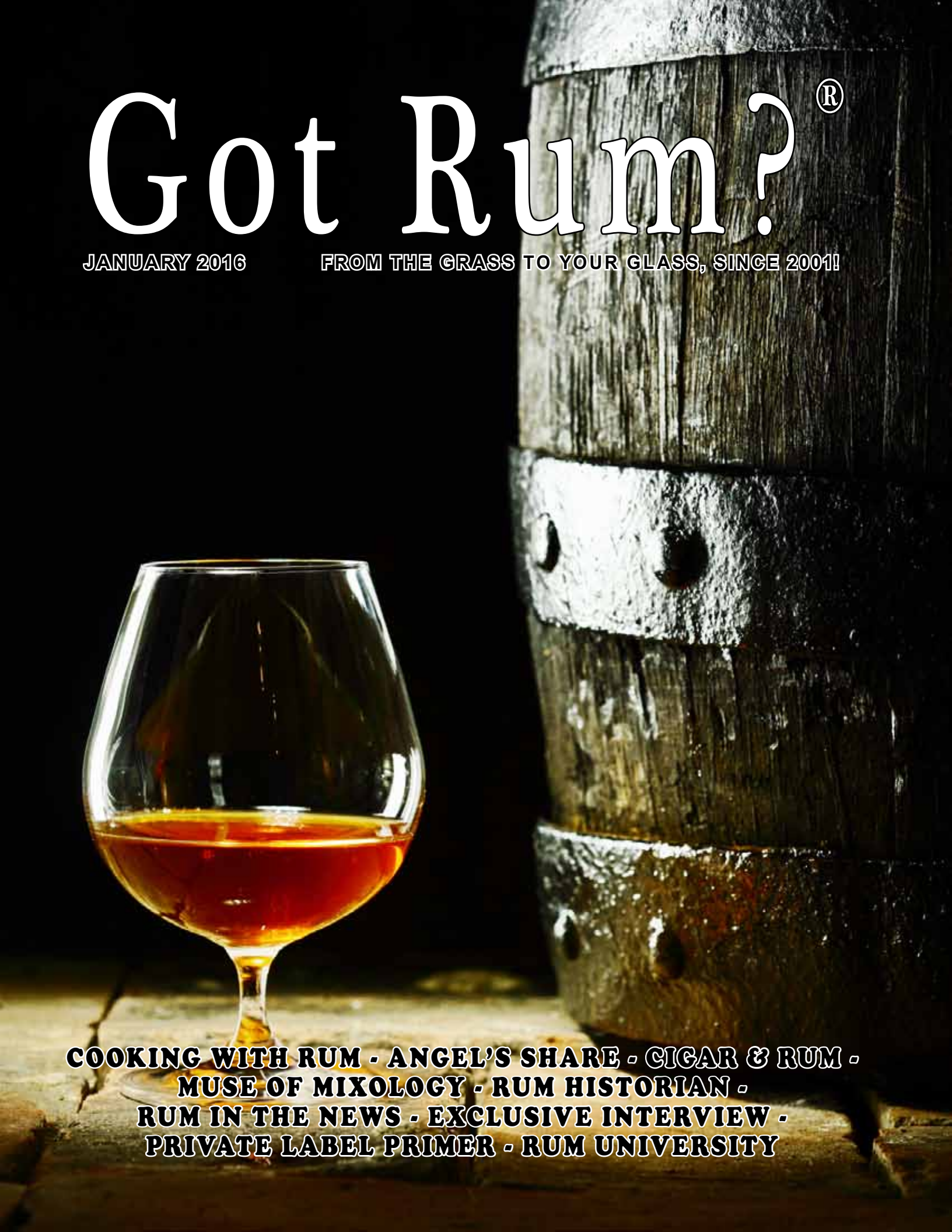
Got Rum?®

JANUARY 2016

FROM THE GRASS TO YOUR GLASS, SINCE 2001!



COOKING WITH RUM - ANGEL'S SHARE - CIGAR & RUM -
MUSE OF MIXOLOGY - RUM HISTORIAN -
RUM IN THE NEWS - EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW -
PRIVATE LABEL PRIMER - RUM UNIVERSITY

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8

28

14

32

CONTENTS

JANUARY 2016

7	FROM THE EDITOR
8-11	THE ANGEL'S SHARE - RUM REVIEWS
12-13	THE RUM UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
14-15	COOKING WITH RUM
16-17	THE RUM UNIVERSITY LABORATORY
18-21	MEASURING ALCOHOL - PART I
22-25	PRIVATE LABEL PRIMER - PART I
26-27	THE RUM UNIVERSITY - Agricultural Focus
28-31	THE MUSE OF MIXOLOGY
32-34	THE RUM HISTORIAN
36-38	RUM IN THE NEWS
40-45	EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
52-55	CIGAR AND RUM PAIRING

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ON THE COVER: Snifter and Barrel.

INSIDE COVER: Rum for Two.

FROM THE EDITOR

Stubbling

In the world of sugarcane cultivation, "stubbling" is the term employed to describe the ability of a particular cane variety to regrow new stalks after the existing ones have been harvested.

There are varieties that produce a high concentration of sugar by weight of stalk, but this fact alone is not enough to select those varieties, if their stubbling ability is poor or fair. This ability to overcome mutilating adversity, is one of the reasons sugarcane can be so inspirational.

Life, it seems to me, can present us with challenges that are very similar to a sugarcane harvest, removing much of what we take for granted, leaving behind only roots and stubs. Overcoming adversity for humans, just like for sugarcane, comes down to matching our own stubbling ability against our environmental conditions, in a battle of wits, determination and patience.

In 2015 we witnessed small craft distilleries struggling to survive, sometimes due to workplace accidents, others due to cash flow problems, others due to lack of focus on brand identification and differentiation.

Neophyte distillers sometimes see these misfortunes as career-ending and, sometimes they are right. But if the drive to start a distillery is engrained in their DNA, then the "stubbling effect" emerges and they return to face their old enemies, but this time they are wiser and better prepared.

There are definitely some people in the craft industry who do not have a passion for what they do, people who only got in the business because it seemed like an easy and fun way to make a profit.

There are others who will never quit the craft, even if their legs are chopped down from underneath them, they will simply figure out a way to persevere. It is to this last group that I raise my glass and toast, for they represent the true spirit of craft distillation.

Cheers!

Luis Ayala, *Editor and Publisher*

LinkedIn http://www.linkedin.com/in/rumconsultant

Do you want to learn more about rum but don't want to wait until the next issue of "Got Rum?"? Then join the "Rum Lovers Unite!" group on LinkedIn for updates, previews, Q&A and exclusive material.

THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft

My name is Paul Senft - Rum Reviewer, Tasting host, Judge and Writer. My exploration of Rums began by learning to craft Tiki cocktails for friends. I quickly learned that not all rums are created equally and that the uniqueness of the spirit can be as varied as the locales they are from. This inspired me to travel with my wife around the Caribbean, Central America, and United States visiting distilleries and learning about how each one creates their rums. I have also had the pleasure of learning from bartenders, brand ambassadors, and other enthusiasts from around the world; each one providing their own unique point of view, adding another chapter to the modern story of rum.

The desire to share this information led me to create **www.RumJourney.com** where I share my experiences and reviews in the hopes that I would inspire others in their own explorations. It is my wish in the pages of "Got Rum?" to be your host and provide you with my impressions of rums available in the world market. Hopefully my tasting notes will inspire you to try the rums and make your own opinions. The world is full of good rums and the journey is always best experienced with others. Cheers!

Puerto Angel Rum Blanco

Puerto Angel Rum Blanco is produced in a distillery located in the Oaxaca mountain region of Mexico. To make the product, they distill the juice of locally grown sugar cane with wild yeast in a copper pot still. Hand made in small batches they age the blanco for six months in used American oak bourbon barrels. Due to their production methods they are one of the few rums that has earned the USDA Organic Certification.

Appearance/Presentation

The rum is packed in a tall frosted wine bottle. The plastic cork is secured to the bottle with a wooden cap. A security strip wraps the top and anchors it to the neck of the bottle. The screen printed portion of the front label shares the basic product detail. The yellow sticker at the base has the signature of the master distiller, that the cane used for the rum was harvested in 2011, and that the barrel number was 15-03.

The liquid in the glass has a slight yellow tint and creates a thick band with fast moving legs when it is agitated.

Nose

When I poured the rum in the glass I picked up a swirl of cane and mineral notes. As the aroma settled I discovered notes of fresh hay, dried apricots, black pepper and capped off with a hint of dill.

Palate

On the palate the bite of the alcohol is balanced by the flavors of sweet sugar cane grass, a pop of tangy citrus, grounded by a lightly bitter limestone mineral foundation.

The longer I sipped it hints of oak weave in and out of the other flavors consistently settling with the mineral notes in a bittersweet finish.

Review

I really enjoyed the dynamics of this product. The oak notes popped in and out sharing different aspects of the woods flavor. The mineral foundation counterbalanced by the grass notes created levels of flavor that made this an enjoyable sipper.

Not a recommendation I usually make with a six month old rum. The citrus note provides an interesting twist that is fun to play with in cocktails that use white rum as its primary ingredient.

www.puertoangelrum.com

THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft

St. Lucian Pot Still Aged Rum

A few years ago I was attending a Wine and Spirits trade show in Atlanta. While there I chatted with Edward Hamilton, the grandfather of rum in the U.S. about the lines of rums he was representing and he mentioned the idea of the yet to be released Ministry of Rum line. Since that time he has released rums from several islands and provides a batch number on every bottle.

Using the batch number the consumer can go online and receive detailed information about the island, distillery, as well as the barrels used during the particular batch. He also share information about the filtered water used during the blending process when the rums were blended and bottled in New York. Mr. Hamilton does not use any caramel coloring or other additives in his rum line.

As the title indicates the rum is created on the island of St. Lucia at St. Lucia Distillers LTD. The molasses based rum is distilled using a Vendome copper pot still then aged for seven years. Edward Hamilton then personally selected the casks for this blend and shipped them to New York where they were blended to 97 proof at Five and 20 distillery in Mayville, New York. The barrels used in the blend were numbers: 443-12-03, 449-12-03, 597-11-06, 451-12-03 and 151-10-04. On the label of each bottle is a batch number, for this review my bottle is from batch #813-793.

Appearance/Presentation

The tall dark bottle is capped with a gold security wrap concealing a plastic capped synthetic cork. On the neck of the wrap is the signature of Edward Hamilton in black. The front and back labels provide the basic information about the rum along with the batch number and year: 2006 as well as the online references mentioned above.

The rum in the glass is a nice solid copper color with gold highlights. Swirling the liquid produced a nice thick band with long slow moving legs that cling to the glass and take quite a while before they evaporate.

Nose

As I poured the rum in the glass the air was filled with the heavy dunder aroma I associate with a pot still rum with the tang of alcohol that goes along with the high proof. I let the glass breathe for a few minutes and discovered notes of earthy vanilla, sweet banana, lemongrass, a touch of anise, with oak tannins dancing with the other flavors.

Palate

The first sip provides a rush of oak laden spices of cinnamon, tobacco, and nutmeg with a nice black pepper pop of alcohol. Additional sips reveal notes of baked apple and lightly acidic orange in the midline, with sugary pear across the tip of the tongue. As the rum begins to fade I discovered an earthy base of astringent leather, anise, with light mineral notes at the finish.

Review

I have to admit I was a bit wary and excited to finally experience this rum. Over the past few years I had heard mixed reviews about

www.caribbean-spirits.com

the expressions in the line and was literally braced for anything. Knowing Edward Hamilton wanted to create something that the rum connoisseur could experience while learning the details about the product with a level of transparency rarely seen in the spirits industry.

I found this rum to be enjoyable from beginning to end right down to the lingering finish. Adding a touch of water really opens up the fruit notes and mellows out the oak. Enjoy it neat, with an ice cube, or dash of water. At this time the Ministry of Rum line is in limited distribution across the U.S. and can be found at some online retailers.

Would you like to see your rum reviewed here?

We don't charge fees to review rums, you don't even have to advertise, so what are you waiting for???

For more information, please send an email to:

margaret@gotrum.com

THE RUM UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

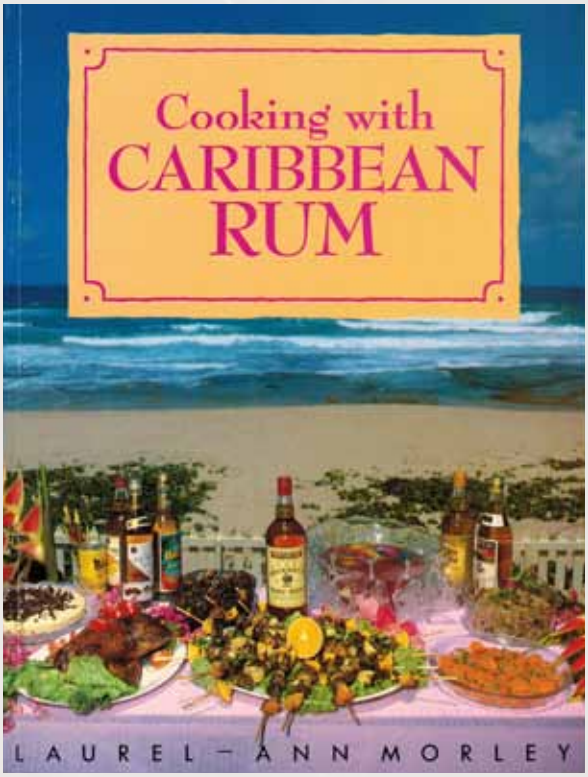
www.RumUniversity.com

THE Rum® UNIVERSITY

Welcome to The Rum University Library. In addition to the material found on our official website, we also periodically publish on "Got Rum?" reviews of books on topics including fermentation, distillation, aging, mixology and many more. You can also find additional valuable material at

www.RumBook.com

What happens when we combine two cultures known for celebrating life and nature through their rum-inspired cuisines? If we are referring to Caribbean and South American cultures, the answer is "pure bliss"!



Laurel-Ann Morley was born in Venezuela, but has lived in Barbados since she was 10 years old. She describes herself simply as a "housewife who likes to cook" but her demand as a specialty chef in Barbados tells a better story about her culinary skills.

Beyond simply preparing meals, Mrs. Morley also enjoys "creating atmospheres" within which to enjoy the meals. It is this all-encompassing view of gastronomy that led her to the writing of this great book.

Cooking with Caribbean Rum opens up with a section devoted to rum drinks, both hot and cold. Among our favorites are *Ponche Crema* and *Orange Egg Nog*.

The book then moves on to Soups and Starters, where we are delighted with recipes such as *Cheddar Rum-Raisin Spread* and *Rum Nut Brie*. It is then off to the land of poultry, a very extensive section featuring the likes of *Turkey Breast with Rum Curry Glaze* and *Rum Punch Chicken*.

The Beef and Lamb section does not disappoint either, with a plethora of recipes that have survived the test of time. Among our favorites are *Oxtail Stew* and *Lamb Kebabs*.

There are two additional sections, devoted to Pork and Fish respectively, which are sure to delight those with a predilection for either one. But just like most celebrations, the book must end with a sweet note, or section devoted to them. In this case, the Dessert section entices our senses, feasting our eyes and imagination with recipes such as *Pineapple Rum Log*, *Rummy Oranges* and *Macaroon Torte*.

The book is a delightful source of inspiration, wether it is a single recipe or a 5 course meal, there are plenty of rum-centric offerings to create the perfect atmosphere.

Cheers!

Margaret E. Ayala, Publisher

COOKING WITH RUM

by Chef Susan Whitley

Hello, my name is Susan Whitley, I am passionate about great foods and beverages. I love finding recipes that incorporate my favorite ingredients and sharing the results with my friends and family.

Through this monthly column I will do my best to inspire you to incorporate the ***spirit of the tropics*** into your everyday cooking.

Sue@gotrum.com

Welcome to 2016! Are you looking for something special to ring in the new year? Well, I have two great recipes to share with you, they are sure to impress your friends, family and business associates. The recipes are simple but very scrumptious. Bon apetit!

Rum Marinated Mushroom

Ingredients:

½ lb. Fresh Champignon Mushrooms
½ tsp. Crushed Oregano
¼ C. Olive Oil
1 Garlic Clove, crushed
2 Tbsp. Dark Rum
2 Tbsp. Red Wine Vinegar
Salt & Pepper to taste and a pinch of Dill

"I cook with wine,
sometimes I even add it to the food."

— W.C. Fields

Photo credit: arprice.com

Directions:

Wash the mushrooms thoroughly, dry and cut in half. Mix all of the ingredients together in a bowl and add the mushrooms. Toss until mushrooms are thoroughly coated with the marinade. Let stand at room temperature for about an hour. Serve with toothpicks. Serves 6-8.

Pork Loin with Spiced Rum Soaked Prunes

Ingredients:

One 4-5 lb. Pork Tenderloin
20 Pitted Prunes
¾ C. Spiced Rum
Salt & Pepper to taste

Directions:

Cut a pocket in the center (lengthwise) of the pork tenderloin. Soak the prunes in the Spiced Rum until soft- about 3 hours. Drain and reserve the rum. Insert the prunes in the pocket of the pork tenderloin. Season the meat with salt and pepper, then tie the loin into a round shape using string. In a small Dutch oven, brown the meat on all sides, basting every ten minutes with the rum marinade. Cook for 3 ½ hours over low heat (325ºF), covered, adding liquid as needed (can use beef or chicken stock). Serve the loin sliced with the pan juices and drippings in a gravy dish. Serves 6.

making your own

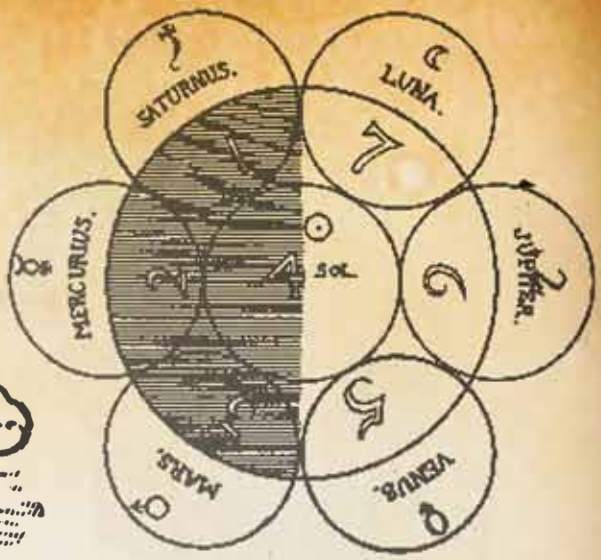
Pomegranate Rum Liqueur

Ingredients:

- 3 Large, Fresh, Pomegranates
- 2 Cups Sugar
- 1 teaspoon Orange Zest
- 1 Tablespoon freshly squeezed Lemon Juice
- 1 Cup White Overproof Rum
- ½ Cup Water
- 1 Cup White Zinfandel Wine

Directions:

Peel the pomegranates and remove the seeds, making sure to discard all the pith attached to them. Place all the seeds in a large bowl, sprinkle the sugar on top of the seeds and crush them using a wooden spoon. Allow to rest for 30 minutes, then add the orange zest and lemon juice and allow to rest for an additional 30 minutes.



Strain and discard the solids, measure the strained liquid and add water if needed in order to end up with 1 cup.

Transfer the juice to a clean, 1 quart jar, add the rum and the wine and let it rest in a cool, dark place for at least 4 weeks. Rack or filter prior to serving.

Pomegranate Curative Powers

Many people believe that consuming pomegranates regularly brings them benefits such as: relief from stomach disorders, natural blood thinner, high source of flavonoids, antibacterial and antiviral properties.

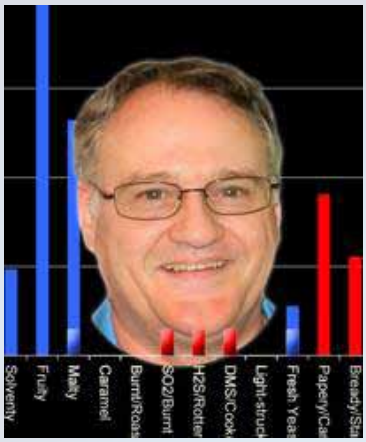
In many cultures, the fruit and its juice are regarded for their power to reduce or eliminate ostheoarthritis, anemia and diabetes problems.

MEASURING ALCOHOL - PART I

by Gary Spedding, Ph.D., Alcohol Beverage Chemist

THE Rum® UNIVERSITY

The Rum University is very pleased to share this compendium on alcohol measurements with "Got Rum?" readers around the world. We would like to thank Mr. Gary Spedding for the passion and accuracy with which he approaches his work.



On Alcohol, Alcoholic Strength and Measurements

Alcoholic strength is the term used to denote the measure of the amount of ethyl alcohol (ethanol) in solutions such as beer, cider, kombucha, malt-beverages, RTD cocktail mixes, wines and spirits/ liqueurs. It may be reported as percent by mass of solution (% weight/weight – w/w or mass/mass - m/m) or as percent by volume (% volume/volume – v/v). These values are expressed at either 60 °F (15.56 °C) or at 20 °C (68 °F) depending on country, regulatory authority or other local requirements.

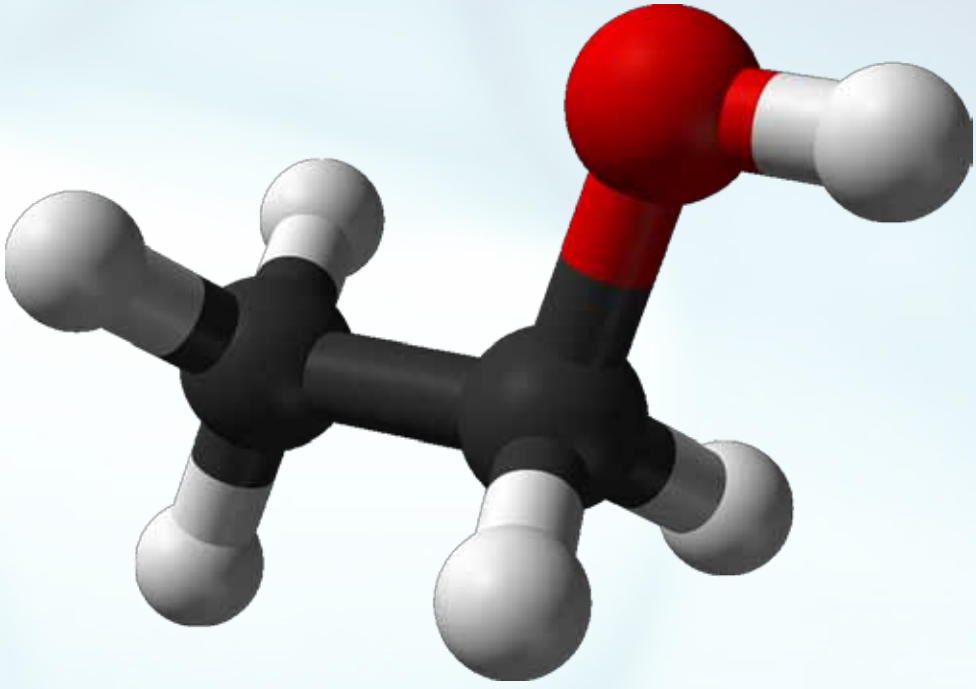
Over 180 years of research, laboratory practice, and a number of established verified tables of data and extensive algorithms help the alcohol beverage chemist best determine alcohol content in their samples. Many of the methods used to determine alcohol (once only available

in well-equipped laboratories) have evolved through new technological developments, with modern instrumentation now simplifying the measurement of alcohol by beverage producers in their own facilities. That said, the grounding principles and theories behind alcohol determinations remain largely unmodified since their discovery, as will be demonstrated.

The Properties of Alcohol and Its Measurement

Ethanol is miscible with water in all proportions, with ethanol molecules fitting within the "spaces" in the three-dimensional structure of water. This "space filling" property means that the final volume of any mixture of water and alcohol is less than the sum of their individual volumes, i.e. there is a volume contraction upon mixing. The volume contraction has to be accounted for when determining alcohol by volume in aqueous mixtures. Solution volumes are temperature dependent and so temperature compensation also has to be allowed for in measurements. More sophisticated instrumentation compensates for temperatures of measurement and can deliver reportable data at specified temperatures. In the US, alcohol by volume is sometimes still reported at 60 °F (15.56 °C) though more frequently 20 °C (68 °F) is the required temperature. The temperature volume change is, however, effectively so small between these two temperatures that the difference in values is a little redundant for the tolerances allowed for most alcoholic beverages. Most modern instruments and methods are in fact now measuring and reporting values at 20 °C (68 °F) and this will be the value largely discussed here.

Ethanol (CH_3CH_2OH: C_2H_5OH) has, at 1 standard atmosphere pressure, a boiling point of 78.29 °C (172.92 °F), an ignition or flash point of between 9-11 °C (48.2-51.8 °F), a freezing (or melting) point of -114. 14 °C (-173.45 °F), a density (d^{20}_4) of 0.78934 g/ml (or 789.34 kg/L at 20 °C), a density (d20/20) of 0.78927g/mL at 20 °C and a refractive index (n20/D: 20 °C measured at a wavelength of 589 nm using the Sodium D-line) of 1.3611.



Ethanol Molecule 3-D Model

These properties may be used to determine the concentration of ethanol as outlined below. Density values may be expressed as relative density or specific gravity values as defined elsewhere and will be important numbers expressed throughout this note. Specific gravity values are unit-less numbers as they are defined relative to a standard substance, usually water, and so the unit terms of density g/mL (or kg/L) cancel. For equations expressed herein it is noted that 0.7907 as a unit-less number, or the rounded values of 0.790 or 0.791 are the specific gravity values most commonly used in brewing circles for pure alcohol. The number is derived from the density value of alcohol at 20°C (68 °F) and the density of water also at 20°C (68 °F): 0.998203. [These listed properties of ethanol will be employed in methods for its quantitation as noted throughout this article series.]

Outline of Methods to Measure Alcohol

Over the years many physical and chemical methods have been used to determine the amount of alcohol present in solution. These methods relied on measuring some physical or chemical property of ethanol and they evolved in sophistication along with micro-chip technology and micro-scale developments. In general, for the purposes of this article, only the more modern and sophisticated (officially accepted or approved) methods of alcohol determination are covered. As such alcohol may be accurately determined via:

- Chromatography – Gas (GC) and Liquid Methods (Including High Performance or High Pressure Liquid Chromatography (HPLC))
- Density and or Specific Gravity Measurement
- Enzymatically - [Highly specific biochemical tests for analytes]
- Spectroscopy – Near-infrared (NIR) & Nuclear Magnetic Spectroscopy (NMR)

Before detailing the methods listed above, it is to be noted that alcohol was traditionally measured following its separation from samples by distillation. During distillation alcohol is boiled out of the aqueous solution and collected by condensation. Along with alcohol and water some other volatile components of the beverage will be distilled over, sometimes impinging upon the specificity of detection. Such issues if known can be compensated for with careful design of test protocols or by separate measurement of the suspected co-distilling compounds causing such interferences. While often dealt with in the past these issues are largely ignored today or are of only very minor impact on final results. Ultimately the concentration of alcohol in the distillate is estimated and then converted by calculation into alcohol content of the beverage.

Stay tuned for Part II of this informative series, to be continued next month.

Early *pycnometer*, used to determine the density of a liquid

THE PRIVATE LABEL PRIMER - PART I

by Luis Ayala

Guiding you From Dream to Reality!

THE PRIVATE LABEL PRIMER - PART I

by Luis Ayala

Lesson I - Introduction

Q: What is a "Private Label"?

A: A Private Label is the name typically given to a brand that is not owned by the company that manufactures it. There are many examples of Private Labels in everyday life, from clothing companies that outsource the production of their apparel, to cosmetics that are decorated with different brand names but that are all coming from the same production plant.

In the world of distilled alcoholic beverages specifically, Private Labels have been around for a very long time. In some cases these are brands from countries without distilleries, in other cases they are brands owned by businesses not interested in producing, only in serving their own products, which generate them a higher profit margin than serving brands owned by other companies (hospitality industry).

Q: So how many different types of Private Labels are there in the rum world?

A: Based on our experience and observations, we tend to classify the Private Label world into the following categories:

1. **Rums bottled by the brand owner, at the brand owner's facility**. Some wineries or breweries, for example, may purchase rum in bulk and then use their existing bottling equipment to bottle it, under their own company name and with one of their existing brands on the label.

2. **Rums bottled for the brand owner, at an independent bottling facility**. This is the world of "Co-Packing". A Co-Packer is a company that specializes in producing Private Labels for third parties. Sometimes they have access to their own bulk rum supplies, other times they receive the bulk rum from their clients. Co-Packers typically do not have their own brands, their business models revolve exclusively around bottling for others. Some Co-Packers offer formulation services, others simply ask for ingredients and instructions to be provided prior to each production.

3. **Rums bottled for the brand owner by a rum distillery**. This category is not as common as the previous two, because rum distilleries have their own brand(s) that they need to protect and promote. For this reason, the distilleries rarely want to sell "good" inventory to third parties (bottled or in bulk), because they fear that doing so could put in risk their own brands, either through direct competition or by canibalizing inventories they may need later on. Nevertheless,

from time to time, distilleries agree to create Private Labels for third parties, either because of potential synergies, because they don't fear competition or because they need an injection of cash.

Q: What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of each category?

A: I will answer this question below, using the same category numbers as in the previous answer:

1. The biggest advantage is flexibility. The client can purchase one or more rums from different suppliers, blending or combining them using a recipe that never has to leave the company, which can be of importance to some brand owners. The biggest disadvantage is the lack of consistent supply of rum (if suppliers run out of a particular type of rum or if the price goes up too much) and the fact that the client assumes all the responsibility for quality control (alcohol proofing, filtering, etc.).

2. The biggest advantage is expertise, as the Co-Packer should be familiar with a wide-range of product types and presentations. Another advantage is that Co-Packers are also well-versed in the subject of compliance, and can advise their clients if the products don't meet some government requirements. The biggest disadvantage is minimum order quantities, which tend to be very large.

3. The biggest advantage is that the brand owner may be able to infer some degree of "pedigree" simply by mentioning on the label where the rum was bottled. The disadvantages here are multiple and have been listed already, but this doesn't mean it is impossible to find win-win scenarios. Distilleries that have, for example, a successful business exporting aged rum under their own labels can, if they want to, produce inexpensive white rum brands for their domestic on-premise market.

Q: Where should someone start, once that person has arrived at the decision of wanting to develop a Private Label?

A: There are many factors to consider, such as availability of glass bottles, distribution centers, frequency of shipping vessels, etc.

Perhaps the best advise is to stay tuned and read all the future installments of this Label Primer series, each one to be published in a subsequent issue of "Got Rum?".

Until next time!

Luis Ayala
Rum Consultant

Glossary of Terms

Cultivar Name: The first two letters in the cultivar name represent the source of the cultivar. The next two numbers represent the year the first clonal crop of a given cross was planted. The numbers after the hyphen represent the accession number of that cultivar in the year it was named.

Soil Preference: Describes soils where the best performance of this cultivar can be expected. Under Florida conditions, this refers to either sand, organic (muck), both, or transitional soils. Transitional soils are organic soils that contain a large percentage of sand, or sand soils that contain a percentage of organic matter.

Sugar Content: This is an estimate based on comparisons with other commercial cultivars made at the UF/IFAS Everglades Research and Education Center. Because a range of values makes up a rating category, cultivars with the same rating are not necessarily equal. Ratings change as the harvest season progresses and are one of the determining factors of preferred harvest season. Rated as low, medium, or high.

Tonnage: Based on harvesting experiences over several years. This is a relative term and is influenced by soil type, location, harvest season, and ratoon being harvested. Rated as low, medium, or high.

Leaf Width: Measuring the widest part of the leaf at the fourth node from the top. Expressed as wide, medium, or narrow.

Sheath Pubescence: Using young sheaths at the top of the plant, rated as none, sparse, or dense.

Leaf Retention: Dead leaves may be tightly retained giving a trashy appearance, may be held on but easily shaken off, or may be self-stripping. Rated as attached, loosely attached, or self-stripping.

Canopy Characteristics: Canopy characteristics vary from compact to open, which influence sunlight penetration and sucker growth. Canopy growth habit can be classified as erect, erect with drooping tips, high arch, medium arch, or wide arch.

Canopy Closure: Speed of canopy closure influences weed and sucker growth. Rated as slow, intermediate, or fast.

Tillering: The number of shoots from a stool strongly influences potential yield. Number of tillers rated as low, medium, or heavy.

Stalk Size: Diameter relates to cane weight and susceptibility to lodging or bending. Rated as small, medium, or large.

Exposed Stalk Color: Rated as yellow, green, wine, red, purple, brown, or a described color.

Stubbling Ability: This is the ability of a cultivar to regrow after harvest. It may be strongly influenced by the height of the cutter blade above the soil line. Rated as poor, fair, or good.

Harvest Season: In the USA, harvest begins in late October and concludes in late March to early April. Rated as early (10/15–12/1), mid (12/1–1/25), or late (1/25–3/15).

Harvestability: Some cultivars grow very erect while others are prone to fall over (lodge). The erectness and degree of lodging influences the ability of mechanical harvesters to cleanly harvest a field in a timely manner. Rated as easy, moderate, or difficult.

Cold Tolerance: This has to do with the length of time a variety is able to maintain economic quality after a freeze. Rated as poor, medium, or good.

Frost Tolerance: This has to do with the ability of young cane to withstand or regrow after exposure to one or more frosts. Rated as poor, medium, or good.

Mechanically Cut Seed: Ease with which a cultivar can be harvested with a whole stalk harvester. Rated as poor, medium, or good.

Disease Concerns: After release, cultivars are considered to have adequate disease resistance to all of the important diseases recognized by the industry at that time. Therefore, disease concerns listed are the result of new strains of common diseases, or new diseases that have become important.

There are numerous varieties of sugarcane available for cultivation. Most people are familiar with the soft-fiber varieties that are usually sold at super markets, intended for human consumption, mainly through direct chewing, although some people also press their own juice with these canes.

These varieties, however, are not the ones planted for or by mills who intend to use the canes for sugar production. They chose, instead, other varieties whose fiber content may not make them appetizing to humans, but that can be processed nicely and efficiently by heavy machinery, to squeeze their sweet juice. In many cases, varieties are also selected based on their pest resistance or the number of days it takes them to mature, so they are ready in stages, allowing for the harvest to progress from one field to the next, always finding ripe cane that is perfect for harvesting.

The purpose of this section, is to showcase specific varietals, allowing craft distillers to be better educated about their options, while at the same time allowing consumers to have a brief peek into the world of sugarcane agriculture.

Featured Cultivar: CP 78-1628

This cultivar is widely adapted to most soil conditions encountered in south Florida. CP 78-1628 is grown on 5.3% of the EAA sugarcane acreage (Rice et al. 2014) and ranked eighth overall in the area under different sugarcane cultivars in Florida. This clone continues to be the most widely grown "CP" cultivar on mineral (sandy) soils in southern Florida, occupying 13.8% of the total acreage on mineral soils. However, acreage under this cultivar is declining in the last few years because of grower strategies to diversify into newer rust resistant cultivars.

Soil Preference	All soil types
Sugar Content	Medium
Tonnage	Medium to high
Leaf Width	Narrow
Sheath Pubescence	Sparse
Leaf Retention	Loosely attached
Canopy Characteristics	Medium arch
Canopy Closure	Fast
Tillering	Heavy
Stalk Size	Small to medium
Exposed Stalk Color	Green
Stubbling Ability	Good
Harvest Season	Mid
Harvestability	Difficult to moderate
Cold Tolerance	Poor to good (see Advantages)
Frost Tolerance	Good
Mechanically Cut Seed	Fair to good
Disease Concerns	Orange and brown rust and, on sand, smut. Smut has also been observed on organic soils.
Advantages	Does well on transitional soils and wet-organic sites. Intact canopy gives freeze protection, poor canopy cover does not.
Disadvantages	Susceptibility to both brown and orange rust, gaps due to smut in ratoon cane on sand.

Special thanks to the Florida Agronomy Department, UF/IFAS Extension.

THE MUSE OF MIXOLOGY

by Cris Dehlavi

My name is Cris Dehlavi and I am a native of Arizona, but have lived in Columbus, Ohio for the past 13 years with my daughter, Desi. I have been running the bar program at “M”, of the Cameron Mitchell Restaurant group since 2005. I am currently the President of Columbus USBG as well as a consultant for bars and restaurants nationally.

In 2013, I attended the rigorous B.A.R. 5 Day Spirits Certification and have been recognized as one of the top mixologists in the U.S.A. I am one of the senior managers of the prestigious apprentice program at Tales of the Cocktail and work as a mentor to many bartenders around Ohio.

My contribution to Got Rum ? magazine will include everything from reviews of national cocktail events, articles on mixology, garnish trends, recipes and techniques, to interviews with some of the leading bartenders in the industry.

Show Me Some PROOF!!!

It seems that the "Overproof" and "High Proof" rums are becoming more sought after in the mixology world. I remember when the only high octane rum you could find behind bars was Bacardi 151, and it was only used to light cocktails or shots on fire. Now I am seeing bartenders use them as the base spirit in cocktails, and they add complexity and depth of flavor that you don't get in lower proof rums. Yes, a delicate hand is necessary—you'll want to add other ingredients so your cocktail is not too spirituous, but I am finding that these rums can be so much fun to mix with.

The concept of “Proof” started with the British Royal Navy, whose sailors were given daily rations (or “tots”) of rum after the invasion of Jamaica in 1655. These rations measured to about a half pint, and was given to them around midday. The sailors believed that the person distributing the rum was keeping extra for himself and therefore watering down the remainder of the barrels, so they developed their very own test.

They would take a bit of gunpowder, sprinkle it on the rum, and light it. If it did indeed catch on fire, they knew the rum was at least 57% abv and not diluted. Hence the term, “Navy Strength”. Pusser’s rum makes a “Gunpowder Proof” which sits at 54% abv (109 proof) and is arguably close to that original style. I’m not sure if you want to try to drink half a pint in the middle of the afternoon though!

There is definitely a correlation between the proof of a spirit and it’s flavor. Most spirits come out of the still at a higher proof than they are bottled at. The way the distiller lowers that proof is by adding water, and the more you dilute that spirit, the less flavor remains. That being said, the high proof rums of today are extremely flavorful.

I recently enjoyed a few high proof rum cocktails made by local bartenders, which were fantastic and became the inspiration for this article.

The first was made with Appleton Estate and Wray & Nephew Overproof rum. Bottled at 63% abv, (126 proof) the Wray & Nephew is a very intense rum that really packs a punch. (no pun intended) What I found most fascinating about this drink is that the predominant flavor was BANANA, yet there was no banana used in the recipe. It was so prominent that I asked the bartender twice

where the flavor was coming from. “The banana notes come predominantly from the Wray and Nephew. Bolster that with a little cardamom and the banana really stands out”, says Michael Theg of Sidebar in Columbus, Ohio.

He was kind enough to share his recipe for this delicious punch, which is a stronger version of the Tiki classic “Jungle Bird”. It is simple to make but has very complex flavors.

JUNGLE GYM

Ingredients:

- 0.75 oz. Campari (One Bottle or 25.4 oz.)
- 0.5 oz. Lime Juice (Approx. 13 oz.)
- 0.5 oz. Cardamom Simple Syrup* (Approx. 13 oz.)
- 1.5 oz. Unsweetened Pineapple Juice (Approx. 38 oz.)
- 1 oz. Appleton Estate Rum (One Bottle or 25.4 oz.)
- 0.5 oz. Wray & Nephew (Approx. 13 oz.)

Directions:

Combine all ingredients, stir heavily. Punch can be batched and combined a day ahead.

Garnish bowl with thin sliced lime wheels, pineapple wedges, add Ice block or mold.

This next recipe is an example of a more difficult and labor intensive punch but the result is fragrant, tropical, and again, with hints of banana! It showcases Hamilton Overproof 151 Demerara Rum which is distilled from molasses and has rich flavors of winter spices, dark stone fruits, and brown sugar

HAMILTON PUNCH
created by Nicole Hollerman

Ingredients:

- 1 Bottle Hamilton Overproof 151 infused with Pineapple Bark (immersion circulator @50 degrees Celsius for two hours)
- 2 Liters Coconut Water infused with fresh Kafir Lime Leaf (cold-steeped)
- 1 Cup Clément Mahina Coco
- 1 Cup Spiced Oleo Saccharum (rock sugar ground with anise, clove, cinnamon, and allspice--oiled with orange and lemon peel)

Directions:

Combine all ingredients in a punch bowl, stir well and enjoy with an ice wheel with pineapple and orange slices.

THE RUM HISTORIAN

by Marco Pierini

My name is Marco Pierini, I was born in 1954 in a little town in Tuscany (Italy) where a still live. I got a degree in Philosophy in Florence and I studied Political Science in Madrid, but my real passion has always been History. And through History I have always tried to know the world, and men. Life brought me to work in tourism, event organization and vocational training. Then I discovered rum. With Francesco Rufini, I founded *La Casa del Rum* (The House of Rum), that runs a beach bar and selects and distributes Premium Rums in Italy, **www.lacasadelrum.it**.

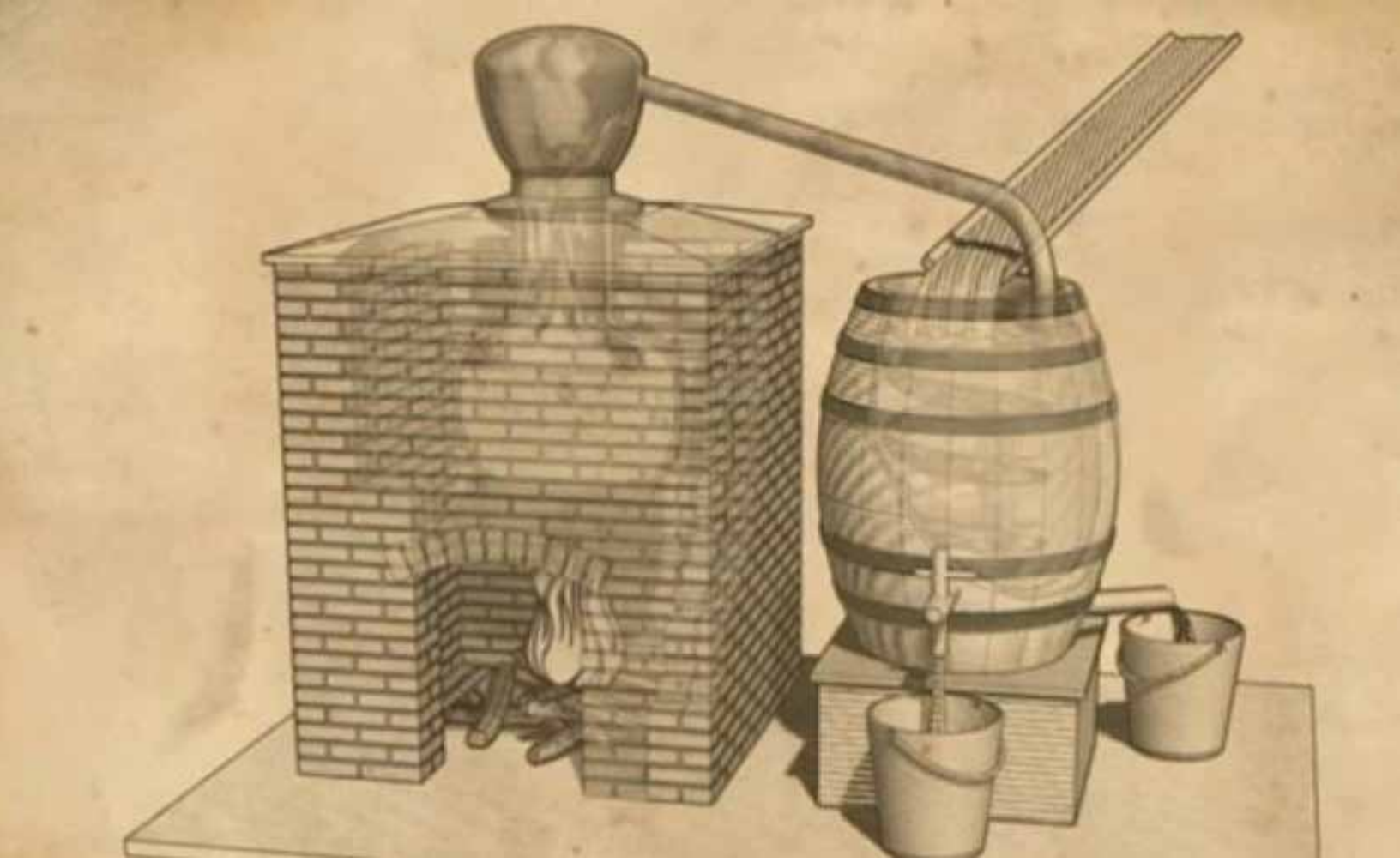
And finally I have returned back to my initial passion: History. But now it is the History of Rum. Because Rum is not only a great distillate, it's a world. Produced in scores of countries, by thousands of companies, with an extraordinary variety of aromas and flavors; it has a terrible and fascinating history, made of slaves and pirates, imperial fleets and revolutions.

All this I try to cover in this column, in my FB profile, **www.facebook/marco.pierini.3** and in my articles on the Italian webpage **www.bartender.it.**

AMERICAN RUM 4. TO KERN RYE OUT OF THE SEA WATTER

It is not easy for us to understand the significance of alcoholic beverages in XVII Century's New England. Today, we drink for our pleasure, not because we need to. We drink spirits for the sake of the taste, of feeling exhilarated, of being in good company, etc. But we do not actually need spirits. They are an extra, a little luxury that we treat ourselves to. But back then, things were very different and alcoholic beverages actually fulfilled a far more important task.

First of all, we have to remember that water was something to be wary of. It was not advisable to wash oneself too much or to drink water on a regular basis. Many, both doctors and public, considered it dangerous for the health. There was certainly a grain of truth in this conviction: water-pipes and sewers were non-existent, and water was badly stored in wooden casks, therefore it was often polluted, and always of poor quality. Why would a grown man in a civilized society drink water? It was something odd, noteworthy: "It was not accounted a strange thing in those days to drink

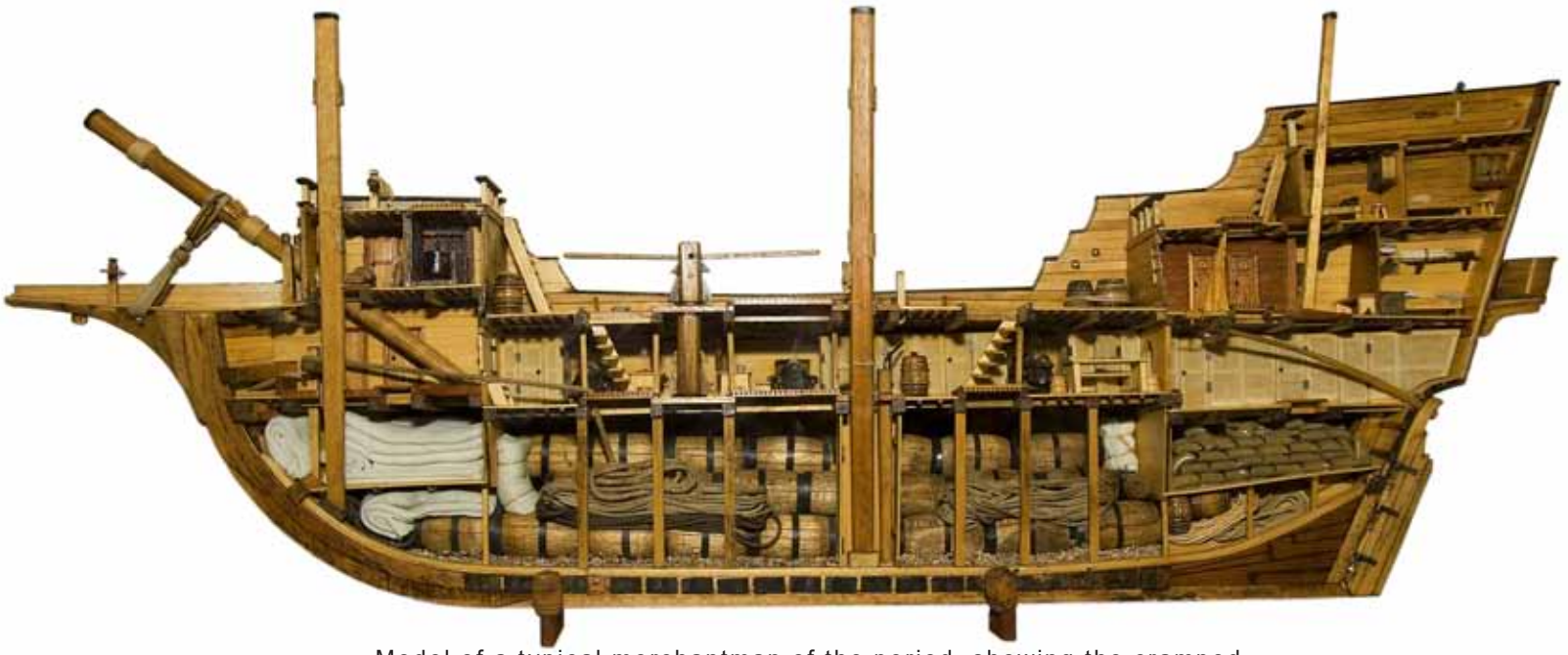


water"; thus, in a book published in London in 1654, a colonist recounts the hardships of the first days. Then, after recalling the shortage of food and the bitter cold too, he adds "... and most began to repent when their strong Beer and full cups ran as small as water in a large Land ..."

To drink, to quench one's thirst, one had to resort to beer and, for those who could afford it, to the more expensive wine. Beer and wine were considered the most suitable drinks for everyday life, and probably they really were, since the alcohol in them clearly had an antiseptic function. They were also nutritious. In a world perpetually on the brink of starvation, beer was an important addition to the everyday diet of the lower classes. For some time, also distilled beverages had come into common use, since they were considered as wholesome and nourishing as wine and beer. Moreover, to distilled beverages were attributed healing, medicinal properties, useful to treat many diseases. Besides, they provided warmth in the long, chilly winters. And then, of course, people drank for the feeling of intoxication, in order to experience a moment of joy and oblivion in an otherwise hard, drab and dangerous life. In short, for the colonists, alcoholic beverages were an absolute necessity. And at the beginning it was necessary to take them all the way from England, or get hold of malt to make them. Let's see some examples.

Reverend Francis Higginson, the first Minister at Salem in 1629, wrote: "Therefore be sure to furnish yourself with things fitting to be had before you come: as meale for breads, malt for drinke, woolen and linnen cloath ..." His ship, the *Talbot*, carried a cargo of 300 tons, among which 9 tons of water, 45 tons of beer, 20 gallons of brandy and 20 gallons of Spanish wine.

In the same year, the Massachusetts Bay Company sent Rev Samuel Skelton there too, whom they supplied with food, clothes and the wherewithal to live, including "one gall. Aquavite" and "five qu. of stronge water". Incidentally, I thought that aquavite, strong water, hot water and similar at the time were the same thing, but I was wrong



Model of a typical merchantman of the period, showing the cramped conditions that had to be endured.

because two different words in the same list must have meant two different things.

John Josselyn, about whom we wrote in November, also advised to take with you some claret wine for “burning”, that is, to distill on board.

However, the stocks were bound to run out sooner or later, and it was extremely expensive to have beer, wine etc. brought over from Europe; therefore, from the very beginning the colonists tried to produce alcoholic beverages themselves. In one case they were immediately successful: apples grew well in New England and soon apple juice was fermented to make cider. Cider was made on almost all the farms, especially for household consumption and it was drunk in great quantities, both during the meals and at work.

But the colonists were accustomed to drinking much better stuff in England, and they were not prepared to give it up. With part of the grain of the first harvests they soon started to brew beer and to distill grain-spirit, the whisky, even though at the time the word had not come into common use.

The *Mayflower* arrived in 1620 and as early as 1648 Emmanuel Downing, Governor John Winthrop’s brother-in-law, claimed that his spirit was better than the imported one. But he had a big problem: shortage of raw material. The local production of grain was scarce, and it constituted the staple diet of the majority of the population. Giving up eating part of the grain crops to distill it was costly, dangerous and, in any case, there wasn’t enough. His wife Lucy gets to the heart of the problem in a letter to her brother, written on 17th December 1648:

“Our stillings might be pritty strong but that all the rye was eaten up allmost before the Indian [corn] was gathered. Could you but teach us to kern [i.e. To make] rye out of the sea watter, that invention, I question not, would quicklye make the still vapor as far as pecoite [i.e. Pequot], and the Indians I beleev would like that smoake very well for the English here have but 2 objections against it, one it’s too dear, 2 not enough to it. Cure those, and we might all have implayment enought at Salem to make liquors, and as it is we could have custome ten time more than pay.”

Of course Lucy Winthrop couldn’t know it, but before long the solution to the shortage of grain to distill would come right from the sea. It wasn’t rye, wheat or another kind of grain. It was instead a dark, thick liquid, sticky and cloying. It had an exotic name: molasses.

See you in the next issue. I wish you all a Happy New Year.

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RUM IN THE NEWS

by Mike Kunetka

BUNDABERG RUM

Bundaberg Rum is investing AU$7.5 million on building a new visitors' center at its Australian distillery. The upgrade will feature an interactive and self-guided tour, as well as a dining area and special-event facilities. Bundaberg hopes that the new center, which is to be completed by July 2016, will increase the number of tourists who visit the Queensland-based site. Currently, the distillery attracts around 60,000 domestic and international visitors every year. "We've modelled the new visitor center off our state-of-the-art Barrel House, as it offers visitors the chance to get a first-hand view of how our premium rums are crafted," said Duncan Littler, senior brand manager of Bundaberg Rum. The new center will house the world's largest display of historical Bundaberg Rum bottles, as well as an expanded retail experience where consumers will be able to purchase the full range of Bundaberg Rum products, including products that are exclusively sold at the distillery. In addition, visitors will have the opportunity to blend their own bottle of rum to take home.

RUM, THE CONCEPT

Rum, the Concept is an innovated travel series that will provide an insight into the history, culture and future of rum in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as throughout the West Indies. The series is the brainchild of rum connoisseur, producer and director André Chrichlow and Spectrum One's Colin Blaze. They said the show will detail the history of rum, and will visit distilleries in Trinidad and throughout the Caribbean. The television series will be officially launched at the upcoming IT McLeod All Inclusive Carnival Fete, which takes place on January 10th, 2016.

DISTILLER 2.0

Back in 2010 Mikael Mossberg had the idea for an app that would help make decisions about which spirits to buy when we were at the store or the bar. He had read so many whiskey blogs, books, magazines, but unless he made a point of writing something down in his phone to look for, he was always at a loss when it came time to buy. He saw some amazing beer apps that people were using, as well as dozens of high quality wine apps that iTunes featured regularly, but couldn't find any great apps for spirits discovery. So he got to work. In February of 2014 he launched Distiller 1.0. It had a few hundred original whiskey reviews, a very early version of a recommendation engine, and that was pretty much it. Just in time for the 2015 holiday season, he introduced Distiller 2.0, the next stage of the app, complete with three brand new spirit categories: Rum, Tequila/Mezcal, and Brandy. You can easily switch between spirit types, add them to your lists, check out their flavor profiles, get recommendations in our updated recommendation engine, and learn all about everything these new spirits have to offer. There's even a handy color code so you know what kind

These are the most recent and noteworthy headlines in the rum industry. If you want us to share your news with our readers, please send an email to Mike@gotrum.com. Mike Kunetka is a land-locked rum enthusiast, he is based in Colorado, USA.

of spirit you're looking at without having to think about it. Think "Booze Google."

RHUM CLEMENT

Rhum Clément will be launching its Canne Bleue Agricole Rhum in select bars across Europe in January 2016. First released in the US, Canne Bleue became popular among mixologist for its flavor and finish. It could be the first mono-varietal rum in the world. Resulting from the juice of one single variety of sugar cane called "canne bleue" (blue cane), this rum is selected for its fine aromatic qualities and rich sugar content.

RUM ROK

Midtown Sacramento's nightlife is getting a new tropical twist with a tiki-themed bar called Rum Rok. Bob Simpson, who also operates Republic, Vanguard and Pour House, among others, said the Rum Rok is the first full-fledged tiki bar Sacramento has seen in many years. The bulk of the cocktail menu is rum-based, the drinks served in Polynesian-styled mugs decorated with paper umbrellas and wedges of pineapple – just like a trip to Trader Vic's or TV's Fantasy Island.

COVER OVER FUNDS EXTENDED

The Virgin Islands Daily News recently reported that the U.S. Congress extended a temporary tax measure that will keep rum tax revenues coming to the territory at its current rate throughout 2016. The package of tax extenders, which keeps the territory's rum cover-over revenue coming in at a $13.25 per proof gallon rate instead of $10.50, is now on its way to President Obama for a signature to become law. Whenever rum produced in the territory is sold in the United States, the V.I. government receives rum cover-over revenues. The cover-over monies are gleaned from the $13.50 excise tax that the U.S. government collects on every proof gallon of Virgin Islands-produced rum sold in the United States. A portion of that excise tax is returned - or covered-over - to the territory. The cover-over rate is set by law at $10.50 per proof gallon, but in 1999, it was temporarily increased by Congress to $13.25 per proof gallon. Since that time, Congress has extended the higher rate of return for the territory multiple times, typically every year or two in a package of tax measures called the extenders.

HAMILTON PRINCESS SINGLE BARREL RESERVE RUM

Bermuda's Hamilton Princess has partnered with the island's world-renowned Goslings Rum to launch its own exclusive blend, Princess Single Barrel Reserve. Offering a "smooth, dark, traditional Bermuda rum with hints of earth tones and spice," the signature reserve promises to give the hotel's patrons a unique taste of the island as they enjoy its sights and sounds. With many new facilities opening as part of its $100 million renovation, Hamilton Princess saw an increase in its rum sales; as a result, it asked Goslings to bottle a Single Barrel Reserve especially for the hotel. After many tastings, the hotel now has its Princess Rum. Allan Federer, general manager of the Hamilton Princess, said, "Princess Rum

continued on page 38

RUM IN THE NEWS (continued)

by Mike Kunetka

continued from page 37

can be ordered as part of a Dark & Stormy cocktail, or neat, after dinner, in a snifter. "The Single Barrel Reserve is a smooth drink, without bark or bite. Rum is a quintessential Bermudian drink and we are excited to offer our very own Goslings rum."

BAR TOSSES FLOR DE CAÑA

The foodie website Eater reported that Bobby Heugel, owner of Anvil Bar & Refuge in Houston, dumped more than 20 bottles of his bar's Flor de Caña rum down the drain after reading a Munchies article that detailed the punishing, and ultimately fatal work conditions of its sugarcane cutters, and how the brand has long been indifferent to the alarming death rate. The provocative piece called out the "silent epidemic" behind Flor de Caña, Nicaragua's most popular export, that its sugarcane mill workers in the municipality of Chichigalpa and surrounding communities have been dying from (and are continuing to die from) chronic kidney disease of unknown origin (CKDu). However, the Munchies piece states the disease isn't a result of exposure to pesticides, as many workers had believed, but rather from not receiving enough, if any, water, shade and rest.

BEENLEIGH RUM

Australia's oldest rum distillery has opened its doors to visitors for the first time since the 1980s. Beenleigh Rum, owned by beverage company Bickford's Group, is Australia's oldest rum and its distillery in Eagleby was opened in the late 1800s after being built by convicts. Bickford's Group spokesman Chris Illman said "visitor reactions to tours of the distillery have been nothing but positive. It's been something I think the local community and tourism industry has been crying out for, for a long, long time. Consumers are looking to understand how to make great spirits. This provides the opportunity to change how people view rum in this country. It's the oldest and continuous distillery in the country, and its story continues to be told for future generations." The Beenleigh distillery initially opened in the late 1800s and produces its rum from Australian molasses and using copper pot distillation. Its products are aged for up to five years and include Beenleigh Copper Pot Distilled Rum, Beenleigh Double Barrel, Beenleigh Honey and Beenleigh White. The distillery has faced many challenges in its time, including being completely swept away in the 1887 Albert River flood, with the now iconic red building being built in the 1890's.

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Featured Brands

January's Featured item: Unisex V-Neck Lightweight Sweater, Constructed of 5.3 oz; 65% polyester, 35% viscose. This soft to touch sweater has raglan sleeves and a relaxed fit. Athletic heather is 52% polyester, 48% viscose.

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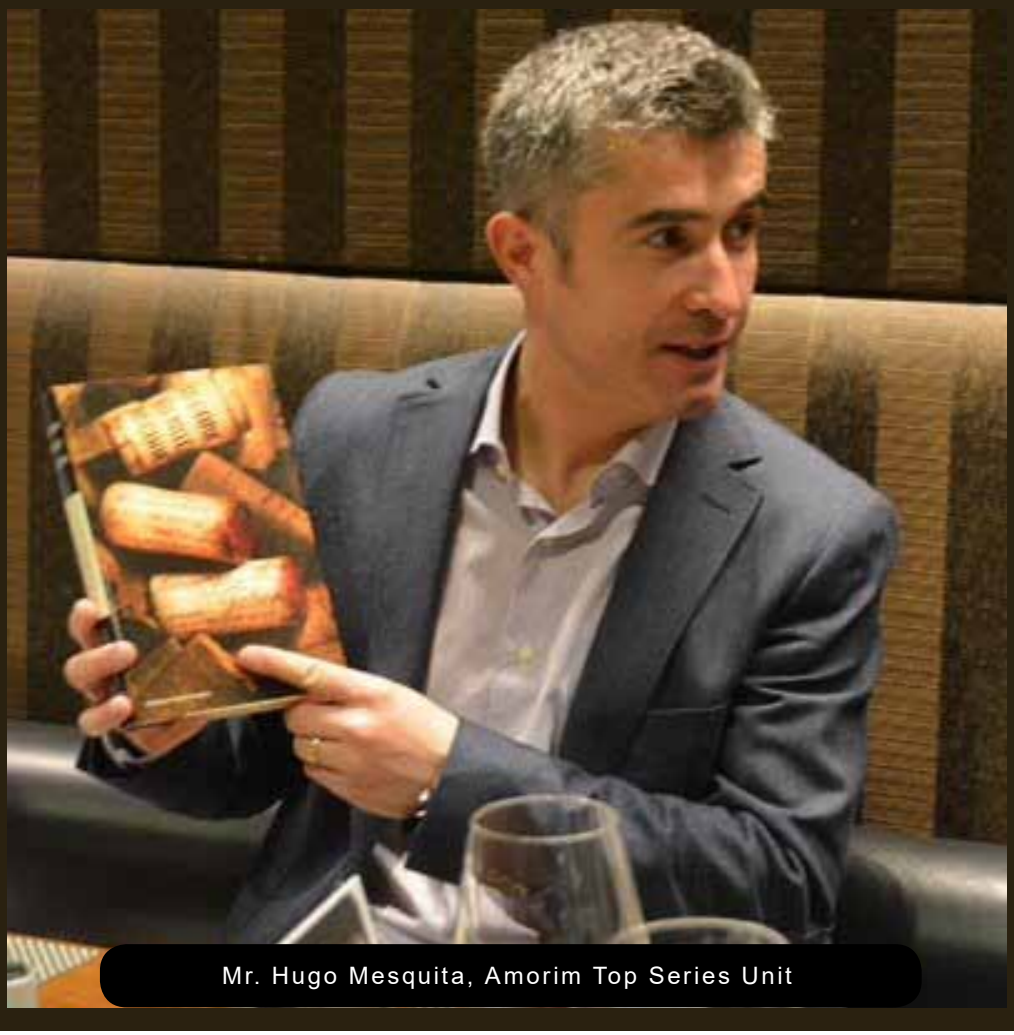
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

by Margaret Ayala



Mr. Hugo Mesquita, Amorim Top Series Unit

Luis and I had the pleasure of visiting Amorim's facility in June of 2015. This was our very first time at a cork factory and we were absolutely amazed by the entire process. Walking through their facility really made me stop and think of all the times I opened a rum bottle with a natural cork and never really had a true appreciation for it and the people behind the production. Thanks to the visit to Amorim, my view has completely changed: now, when I open a bottle and see the natural cork, I can't help but smile and say a silent "thank you" to all the people and the care and attention needed for its creation.

Anyone interested in learning more about how cork can add to the prestige of their rum should stop by Amorim's facility in Oporto.

Cheers!

Margaret Ayala, Publisher

Q: What is your full name, title, company name and location?

My name is Hugo Mesquita, Sales & Marketing Director at Amorim, TopSeries Unit, Santa Maria de Lamas, Portugal

Q: Can you tell me how your company got started?

Corticeira Amorim (Amorim) is the largest world producer of cork products. It leads the whole sector, contributing to the sustainability and innovation of the cork industry, unlike any other.

With its origins dating back to 1870, the company soon became aware of the endless potential of this 100% natural raw material, transforming it into a choice item in the context of a informed society, aware of the environmental problems that result from their consumption-related choices.

Over the last 15 years, Amorim made unparalleled investments in research & development and innovation, developing a portfolio of high added value products and solutions, which anticipate market trends and surpass the expectations of some of the most demanding industries in the world.

Its signature is on the most unlikely everyday objects, Olympic sports equipment, organic solvents, high profile global works, state-of-the-art road and railway projects, spacecraft... Within the panorama of contemporary creation, it challenges designers, scientists and architects to explore the endless potential of cork.

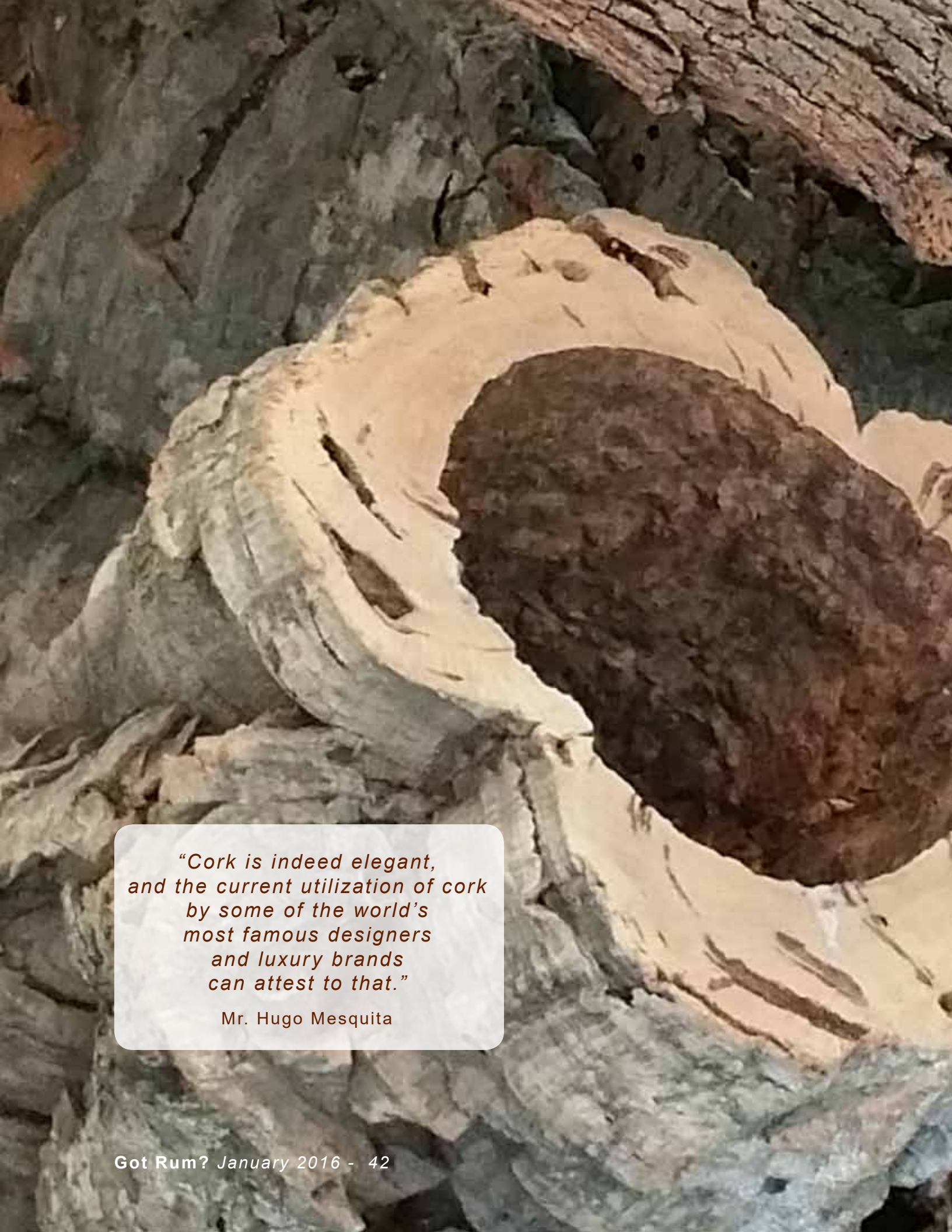
Amorim's activity makes the cork viable in a unique manner, and as a result, the preservation of the cork oak forest, a unique example of green economy, which is based on a balance between economic, social and environmental issues. The constant concern to adopt and reinforce sustainable development practices makes Amorim one of the most sustainable companies in the world.

Q: Of all the merchant powers in Europe, why is it that Portugal was the first to legislate the protection of the oak forests (through the agrarian laws of 1209)?

This was 500 years before the beginning of the Port Wine trade, so clearly the importance of these oak trees goes far beyond sealing bottles.

As a matter of fact Portugal has been a pioneer in environmental legislation, the first agrarian laws protecting cork forests having been enacted in the early 13th century, in 1209. Later, during the Age of Discoveries, the builders of the Portuguese ships and caravels that set sail in search of new worlds used cork oak wood for the parts that were most exposed to inclement weather. They claimed that the "sôvaro", as it was called then, was the best wood for masts and yards: besides being exceptionally strong, it never rotted (source: corkforest.org).

Q: Many people don't know that corks are made from the bark of oak trees. One of the most fascinating things about these trees is that they are able to re-generate the bark, which keeps getting thicker and better with each renewal. What is the botanical explanation for this? Why don't all trees behave in the same way?



“Cork is indeed elegant, and the current utilization of cork by some of the world’s most famous designers and luxury brands can attest to that.”

Mr. Hugo Mesquita

Cork is from the cork oak (Quercus Suber L.) and is one of nature's most extraordinary products that is harvested. It's raw material which is so perfect that no industrial or technological processes have yet been able to replicate. Only such a material could give rise to the demanding and sophisticated device that is the cork stopper.

Cork is the bark of the cork oak tree which is stripped every nine years, always between May and August, when the tree is at its most active phase of growth and it is easier to strip without damaging the trunk. Specialized professionals, who, with absolute precision, are able to handle the only tool used in this delicate process, to do the work: an axe.

Other trees in Nature do not show this capability of re-growing the outer bark, making then the Cork Oak Tree so special.

Q: Can corks affect the pH of the rum stored inside the bottle? Can it affect its taste or aroma in any way?

One of corks main characteristics is its neutrality and role in preserving well liquids inside, protecting them from outside possible contaminations.

Q: Is it possible for corks to cause cloudiness or sedimentation in the rum inside the bottles?

There are several types (natural, technical) and grades of natural cork, each one of them with several abilities and fit for every segment in the market. Cork is a wonderful material that we were gifted from Nature to which Amorim adds today's most modern technology to make it capable to answer every technical need.

Therefore, if the demand towards the product is not to cause cloudiness or sedimentation, our technical Team has the ability to propose you solutions that answer those needs.

Q: It seems fitting to me that bottles of aged rum should be capped with a natural cork, since both the barrels used in the aging and the cork come from oak trees. But corks tend to lend an air of elegance or prestige,

regardless if the rum is aged or not. Why is this?

Cork is indeed elegant and the current utilization of cork by some of the world's most famous designers and luxury brands can attest to that. But cork is all that while being a natural product and people have a tremendous connection with nature. In fact, more and more, nature and luxury are interconnected. A bottle of fine spirits sealed with a good natural cork provides consumer a whole sense of trust, high quality, intuitive packaging, familiarity and quality. It's a luxury made by Nature!

Q: What are some of the most common mistakes companies make when sourcing cork stoppers for their products?

I would tend to say that many people do not know the details of how to choose and use the right topper for the right drink. That's why having a specialist is extremely important, one that has the expertise regarding cork's application, technical features, storage and all the marketing features around the development. These would be main areas that one should bear in mind when choosing their partner.

Q: What is the proper way to store a rum bottle with a cork? Should it be stored upright or horizontally?

Ideally a bottle of spirits is designed and conceived to be kept vertically at all times.

Q: Have corks themselves changed much over the last couple of centuries or are all improvements in this industry related to how the corks are manufactured?

Corks have changed and evolved considerably. The material is still the same, but the technology used to treat it, clean it and transform it into final product provides a much greater quality guarantee, complying with all international quality and food safety

standards. Today's research has also enabled to develop other kinds of corks, like technical corks for specific quality segments.

Q: Do you think that corks will still be used 100 or 200 years from now? If so, will their use be limited to only the most expensive/exclusive products only, due to availability or will supply be able to keep up with demand?

We have no doubt that corks will be used in the future. In fact we believe cork's future will be brighter than its storied past. Cork has been around for millennia and its potential is far from being fully reached. Cork oak trees are a slow growing tree with an average lifespan of 220 years, so we are using today cork which comes from trees planted in the last couple of centuries and we see today' mankind with enough wisdom to continue planting more trees. Dozens of thousands of high density plantations have been done recently and technology allows us to make a much more efficient use of the available raw material. Additional demand is motivating strong research, development and innovation which, in turn, will strengthen the whole supply chain. Our clients and the environment will benefit from that growth.

Q: If people want to contact you, how may they reach you?

They can reach us by our website www.topseriesamorim.com, from there you can find all our contacts. We are also available in all major social networks. My e-mail is hmesquita.tsunit@amorim.com. Do come and challenge us with innovative solutions. Challenges is what we love!

Q: Do you offer any tours of your facility? If so, how long is the tour and what can one expect during the tour?

Our doors are open for professional visits from the industry, but we'd be glad to show around to cork lovers how one can make great cork! Depending on the level of depth, from half a day up to a couple of days would be ideal to get the right insight.

Q: Is there anything else that you would like to share with our readers?

Amorim and TopSeries in particular will proudly continue making history by having consumers around the world entangled with the magic of such a noble material to preserve the world's best spirits. We count on all of your preference to continue this magic!

"Always carry a flagon of whiskey in case of snakebite and furthermore always carry a small snake..."

W.C. Fields

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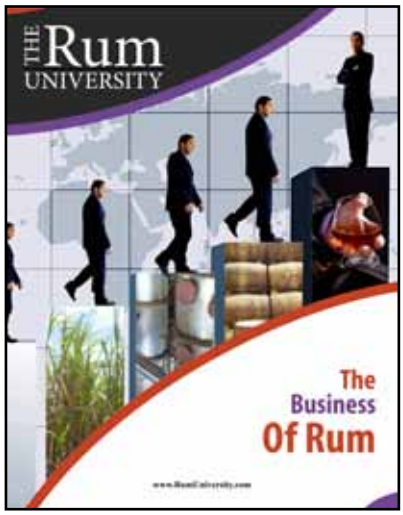

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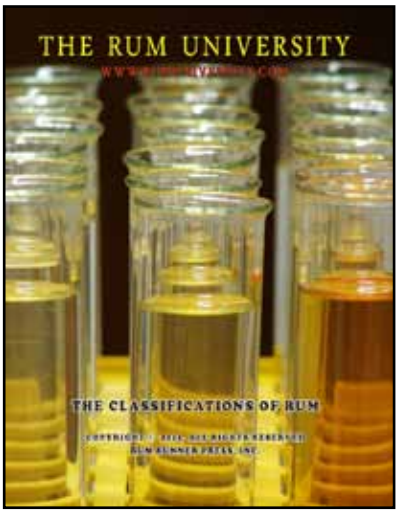
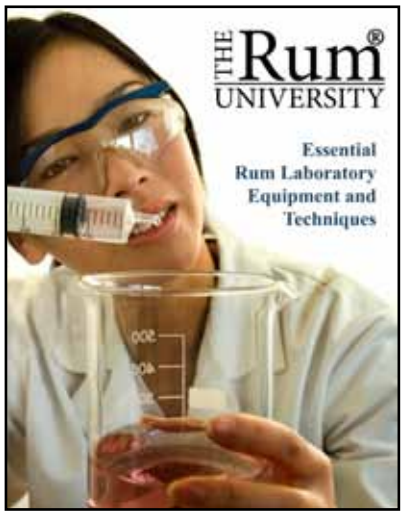
Day 5: Essential Rum Laboratory and Techniques & Introduction to Rum Blending. On the last day of the course, you will devote time to understanding and using laboratory techniques, culminating in your blending of three different rums.

Note: This 5-Day Rum Course fulfills all the academic pre-requisites for our Advanced Rum Distillation and Advanced Rum Blending courses.





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CIGAR & RUM PAIRING

by Philip Ili Barake

My name is Philip Ili Barake, Sommelier by trade. As a result of working with selected restaurants and wine producers in Chile, I started developing a passion for distilled spirits and cigars. As part of my most recent job, I had the opportunity to visit many Central American countries, as well as, rum distilleries and tobacco growers.

But my passion for spirits and cigars did not end there; in 2010 I had the honor of representing Chile at the International Cigar Sommelier Competition, where I won first place, becoming the first South American to ever achieve that feat.

Now I face the challenge of impressing the readers of "Got Rum?" with what is perhaps the toughest task for a Sommelier: discussing pairings while being well aware that there are as many individual preferences as there are rums and cigars in the world.

I believe a pairing is an experience that should not be limited to only two products; it is something that can be incorporated into our lives. I hope to help our readers discover and appreciate the pleasure of trying new things (or experiencing known things in new ways).

Cocktail Tasting

I wanted to start 2016 with the right foot, so I opted for a pairing that is becoming increasingly popular among cigar smokers: cocktails. I decided to conduct the pairing at Room N°09 at Hotel Vino Tinto ("Red Wine Hotel") in the Bellavista neighborhood, in Santiago, Chile. This neighborhood is very touristy, specially due to Pablo Neruda's "Chascona" (one of his three houses in Chile), this bar in particular is slowly becoming one of the best ones in Santiago. This neighborhood is also the home of Red Luxury Bar, which I visited for a previous pairing. Both of these bars have, of course, excellent terraces where one can enjoy smoking a cigar.

For this occasion I was joined by Diego Harris, head bartender at Room N°09. I brought along two rums for the pairing:

- Smith & Cross from Jamaica, 100% Pot Still, "Navy Strength" (bottled at 57% ABV). The aroma of this rum is very typical of pot stilled rum, but at 3 years old, it lacks some of the oxidation associated with older specimens. This may complicate its use in a classic cocktail, as it is a very unique rum.

- El Dorado 15 Year Old from Guyana, a rum that is very close to my heart, due to its very defined character, even when compared with other 15 year olds available in the market. Harris, upon trying it, refused to mix it, opting to sip it neat, but at the end relented and produced great cocktails with it. But I'm getting ahead of myself.

Time to examine our cigars. I decided on a "Toro" (6" x 52) from H. Upmann, called "The Banker". Made in the Dominican Republic, it is a blend of Dominican and Nicaraguan leaves, with a wrapper from Ecuador.

Sounds delicious, let's see how it works out!

Photo credit: Room N°09

"The Banker" is a line of cigars that draws its inspiration from brothers Carl and Hernan Upmann, of German origin, who were bankers and in 1844 immigrated to Cuba, not only to put into practice their banking skills, but also to develop the tobacco industry, which at that time was in its infancy. One little known fact about them is that decades later they had vested interests in a shipyard and that during World War I they lost it due to a fire, along with a ship docked in it. Not a very motivational story, but one that in the tobacco world is synonymous with greatness.

The rules for the pairing were as follows: Harris would taste both rums neat and would then have total control over how to prepare the cocktails. He could develop new creations or rely on tried and true recipes, but one thing became clearly evident right away: we would end the pairing with a Rum Manhattan, also known as a "Presidente".

I proceeded with the lighting of my cigar, which showed fine patterns on the wrapper, which looked to be of excellent quality for a Maduro. The aromas emanating from the "boquilla" (the end of the cigar that you light up) hinted at something more than Dominican tobacco, meaning that the Nicaraguan tobacco was definitely there.

For the first third, Harris surprised me with his version of a "Rusty Nail", using Smith & Cross. I say that he surprised me, because this cocktail is not usually one of my favorites, because it tends to be very overwhelming, but this time it was quite the opposite, very approachable and enjoyable. It was a great way to start the pairing. The cocktail was served with an additional small glass, where one could dip the cigar, to enhance the pairing and, even though I am not a fan of doing so, I must say it wasn't bad.

For the second third of the cigar, Harris prepared a cocktail using Amaretto, Vermouth Rosso and Smith & Cross, but it was not a good match, since the intensity of the cigar was such that

Photo credit: @CigarIli

it overpowered the cocktail. The cocktail was very good, just not a good match.

Next came a Rum Old Fashioned, where El Dorado 15 made its debut. To my surprise, I was not able to detect the touch of Kahlua, cleverly folded in by Harris. The blend of all the ingredients showcased warm cocoa notes. This cocktail was the perfect match for the cigar, allowing me to clearly enjoy both of them.

Finally, for the last third of the cigar, it was time for the Presidente, which was to be created using both rums. Despite my high expectations, I was pleasantly surprised. The cigar, with its earthy notes and its cocoa flavors combined perfectly with the cocktail. To be honest, I was wishing the last third of the cigar would last a bit longer but, since this was not possible, I ended up enjoying two more Presidentes by themselves!

I highly recommend this pairing, especially if you are able to recreate the last cocktail using both of these rums.

Cheers!
#GRCigarPairing
Philip Ili Barake

Photo credit: @CigarIli

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