

Got Rum?®

NOVEMBER 2016

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**SPECIAL FEATURE: RHUM AGRICOLE -
COOKING WITH RUM - ANGEL'S SHARE - CIGAR & RUM -
MUSE OF MIXOLOGY - RUM HISTORIAN -
RUM IN THE NEWS - EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW -
RUM UNIVERSITY**



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FRONT COVER: The Sweetest Grass

INSIDE SPREAD: Fresh Cane Nectar

Got Rum?™

FROM THE EDITOR

Strength in Diversity

I've often talked about how rum's versatility and appeal are derived from its diversity, both in terms of geographical origins and styles. This issue of "Got Rum?" scratches the surface of one such style: Rhum Agricole, and although some hardcore aficionados of this type of rum would insist that ALL rum in the world should be made the same way, I prefer to maintain the aforementioned stance.

From a market competitiveness perspective:

In the USA, whiskey and vodka lead all distilled spirits in terms of overall volume (all price ranges) and also in quantity of premium and super-premium offerings. If we want rum to grow as a category, it needs to attract and retain whiskey and vodka consumers. Rhum Agricole, with its "Vieux" and "Tres Vieux" categories is poised to lure and enamor Whiskey and Bourbon drinkers. Light rum (low congener) is equally positioned to do the same with vodka drinkers. Once those drinkers are properly introduced into the rum category, via products with organoleptic and congener levels that already appeal to them, many of them will explore the range of rum offerings, settling on whatever style(s) resonate better with them.

From a cultural identity perspective:

There are many economic and cultural reasons that either led to, or that were derived from, each country's approach to cane cultivation, sugar and rum production. To suggest that these reasons should be set aside and new procedures implemented is to shift into high gear a process that is already



slowly-eroding at the base of the sugarcane agriculture business. Due to environmental impact, decreasing farming subsidies and tougher international competition, many sugar mills and distilleries are already facing closure. This is something that should send chills down the spines of true rum lovers around the world.

Strength comes in many shapes and, in the case of rum, it comes with many congener levels and foreign accents. This, I've always believed, is rum's true advantage over whiskey and vodka.

Cheers,

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Luis".

Luis Ayala, *Editor and Publisher*



<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!

Rhum Saint James Vieux Réserve Privée 12 Year

A couple of years ago we visited the island of Martinique as part of a cruise my wife and I hosted. My group arrived in Fort-de-France, boarded our bus and left the bustling city behind to discover sweeping fields of bananas and sugar cane. Our first stop on the island was the Rhum Saint James Distillery and a museum.

As we walked through the tour, our guide shared the basic information related to Rhum Agricole production displaying artifacts from the companies past. Sugar Cane presses, fermentation tanks, stills and old bottles gave us a taste of the history of French Caribbean rum production. At the end of the tour we were led to the gift shop and tasting room.

Knowing that the 8-12 year rum/rhums tend to be the range I enjoy I could not pass up on Rhum Saint James Vieux Réserve Privée 12 Year product. One of the things we learned on our tour was that all of the rhums are made using locally grown sugar cane. The cane is pressed so that the juice can be fermented and distilled before being aged in oak barrels.

The Vieux Réserve Privée is comprised of a blend of rhums that are aged a minimum of 12 years.

Appearance/Presentation

The bottle is presented in a wooden case with a plastic front case to help hold it in place. Dark copper in the bottle the

copper color lightens with amber hues in the glass. Agitating the liquid creates a thick band with fast moving legs that descend quickly down the side of the glass.

Nose

The rum's aroma delivers a front and center oak notes with additional notes of dried fruit, vanilla and nutmeg.

Palate

On the palate the rum has a strong vanilla entry taking the high notes as nutmeg and allspice notes form the midline. The oak tannins form the foundation sharing wood, char, and mineral notes. Additional sips deliver the flavors consistently with the oak and mineral notes providing a long complex finish.

Review

I found this to be an enjoyable sipper. Bottled at 43% abv the rum delivers a depth that we do not often experience in the U.S. rum agricole market outside of Rhum Clement and Damoiseau. I also enjoy this rum in old fashions and other classic prohibition era cocktails.



www.saintjames-rum.com

THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft

Trois Rivières VSOP

French Plantation Rhum has a legacy of rum/rhum production dating back to the early 1900's. Based in the Northern region of Martinique the distillery has undergone several changes of ownership and one relocation over the years.

This rum received the prestigious Appellation Martinique Contrôlée label in 1994 demonstrating the high level of care taken in producing their rum agricole line.

Trois Rivières VSOP is a blend of different rhums that are aged a minimum of five years old in used oak barrels.

Appearance/Presentation

In the bottle and glass the rum has a golden straw color. Swirling the liquid creates a thick band around the glass that slowly releases thicker legs that creep down the side.

Nose

The rum delivers an aroma of spiced honey, cantaloupe, banana, with a little tweak of char and oak.

Palate

The first sip enters with the spiced honey note from the aroma. The fruit notes pop and are immediately buried by a strong combination of tobacco leaf, ginger, and oak tannins.

Additional sips reveal dried fruit notes of banana and apricot along with cinnamon, allspice, and baking spice notes.

This rum transitions into a lovely balance of oak and vanilla flavors as it settles into a nice, long finish.

Review

Trois Rivières VSOP delivers a well balanced flavor profile that is enjoyable as a sipper or in a classic Ti punch. The rum is currently available in the Caribbean and Europe.



www.plantationtroisrivieres.com

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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

Baba au Rhum

Baba au Rhum is a popular French dessert. They are sweet breads (small yeast cakes) that are soaked in rum syrup and are sometimes filled with whipped cream or pastry cream.

Ingredients - For the Dough:

- 1 tsp granulated sugar
- 1/4 cup warm water
- 1 pkg (2 1/4 tsp) active dry yeast
- 2 cups unbleached white flour
- 4 large eggs, lightly beaten

For the Dough add-ins:

- 1 tbsp granulated sugar
- 2/3 cup Butter, room temperature
- 2 tbsp Dried Currants

For the Rum Syrup:

- 1 cup Granulated Cane Sugar
- 1 1/2 Cups Water
- 1 cup Rhum Agricole

"Cake is happiness! If you know the way of the cake, you know the way of happiness! If you have a cake in front of you, you should not look any further for joy!"

— C. JoyBell C



Directions

To make the rum syrup: Place the sugar and water in a small heavy saucepan. Bring to a boil. Cook until you have a light syrup, about 5 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat. Cool completely before adding the rum. Stir well and transfer the rum syrup to a large bowl.

To make the babas: In a small bowl, whisk the 1 teaspoon of sugar into the warm water until it is dissolved. Stir in the yeast and set aside for 12 minutes.

In a large bowl, sift the 2 cups of flour and make a well in the middle. In the well, pour in the 4 large eggs and the yeast mixture. Using your fingers, gradually work the flour into the liquid ingredients until the dough is soft. Knead in the bowl for about 2 minutes. Cover with a towel and allow the dough to rise in a warm place until it doubles in size, approximately 2 hours.

Punch down the dough. Add the dough add-ins: 1 tablespoon of sugar, the butter and currants. Work until combined well. Knead for 3 to 4 minutes. Fill greased baba molds (or use Savarin molds) half full with the dough. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled in bulk. Bake at 450° F for 10 minutes and then reduce the oven temperature to 350° F. Bake until the babas are golden, approximately 20 to 30 additional minutes.

Reserve and put aside about 1/2 cup of the rum syrup to drizzle over the babas at serving time. Remove the babas from the pan while still hot, and immediately immerse them in a bowl filled with cooled rum syrup. Roll the babas around so they soak up the syrup on all sides. Using a ladle helps. Alternately, place the babas in a single layer in a baking dish and pour the rum syrup evenly over them. If possible, allow the babas to absorb the rum syrup overnight, covering them to prevent them from drying out. The syrup should soak right through to the center of the babas.

Serve warm or cold with a drizzle of fresh rum syrup from the 1/2 cup that you put aside. Serve alone or with freshly whipped cream.

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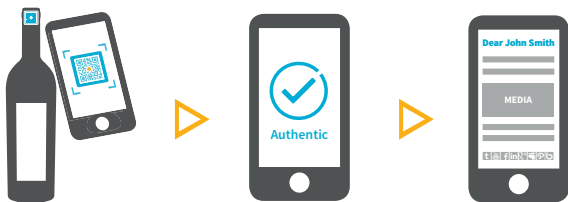


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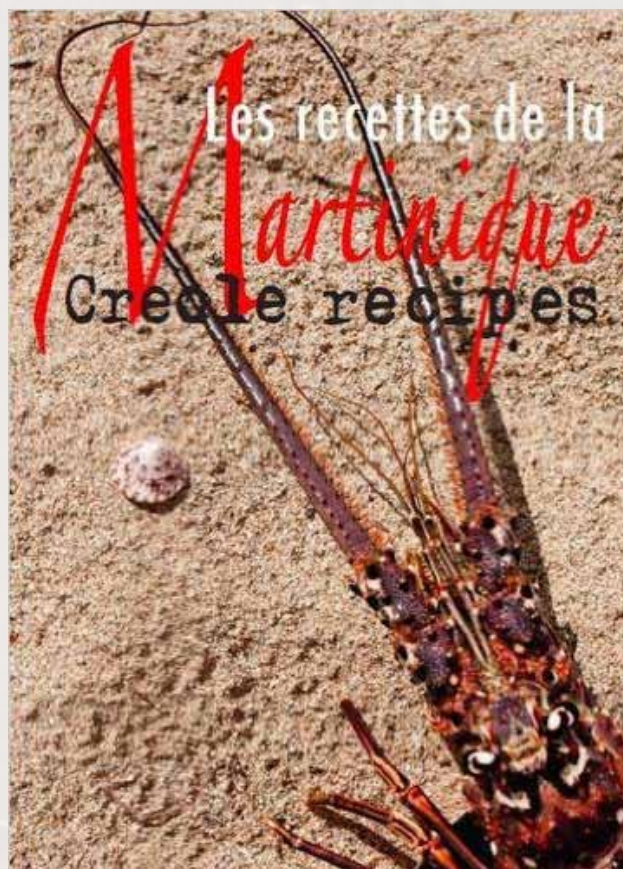
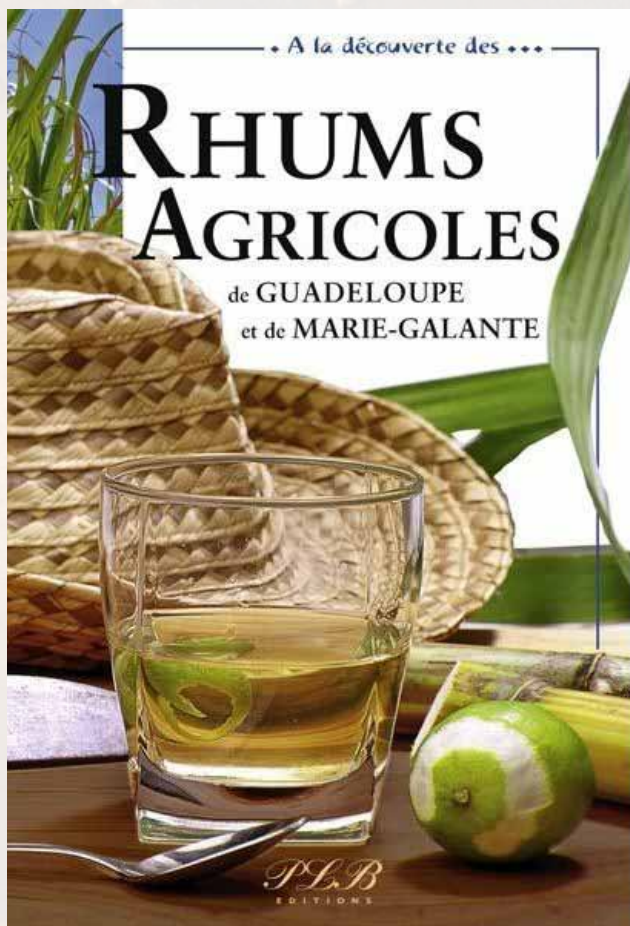
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THE Rum[®] UNIVERSITY

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



Rhum Agricole, Recommended Reading

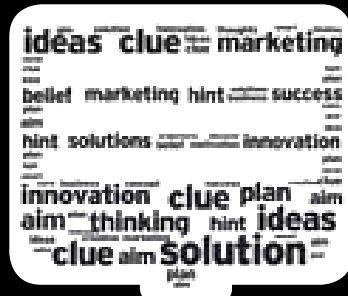
To understand and appreciate a country's or a region's cuisine, one must first understand its culture. In this issue of "Got Rum?" dedicated to Rhum Agricole, I thought it appropriate to share these book recommendations with all those thirsty for more knowledge about the world of Rhum Agricole, including the people and traditions behind the brands. I hope you enjoy them and, better yet, I hope you get to visit and experience this world first-hand.

Another excellent book on the topic is "Atlas du Rhum", written by Mr. Luca Gargano, which we reviewed in the July 2015 issue of "Got Rum?". You can find all our prior issues in the "Archives" section of the website.

Cheers!

Margaret Ayala, Publisher

www.RumUniversity.com



THE Rum[®]
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A warm, dimly lit rum cellar with wooden barrels and a stone wall. The scene is illuminated by a soft, golden light, creating a cozy and aged atmosphere. The text is overlaid on the image, with 'IDEAS' and 'RUM' in large, bold, black letters, and 'THAT CHANGED THE' and 'WORLD' in smaller, outlined letters.

IDEAS

THAT

CHANGED

THE

RUM

WORLD



IDEAS THAT CHANGED THE RUM WORLD

Category: Sugarcane Processing, Pressing

Pressing the sugarcane juice out of the cane was laborious, time-intensive and inefficient. The work involved passing small quantities of cane (usually only a few stalks at a time) through a set of rollers put in motion by humans (often slaves) or animals.

The process was so inefficient that, after the first pass, the pressed cane had to be folded in half or twisted on itself, then ran a second time.



Idea: Steam Engine

A steam engine is a heat engine that performs mechanical work using steam as its working fluid.

In 1781 James Watt patented a steam engine that produced continuous rotary motion. Watt's ten-horsepower engines enabled a wide range of manufacturing machinery to be powered. The engines could be sited anywhere that water and coal or wood fuel could be obtained. By 1883, engines that could provide 10,000 hp had become feasible. The stationary steam engine was a key component of the Industrial Revolution, allowing factories to locate where water power was unavailable.



Boulton & Watt beam blowing engine re-erected on the Dartmouth Circus roundabout, in Birmingham, UK.

The steam engine replaced humans and beasts in the pressing of the sugarcane, and it did so with a previously unseen amount of force and speed, increasing the yields almost overnight, resulting in lower sugar and molasses costs.

"The steam engine has done much more for science than science has done for the steam engine."

— William Thomson, 1st Baron Kelvin

⊖ *Sal in genere*

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www.RumUniversity.com

⊕ *m. Acidum minerale*

⊕⊖ *Acidum Vitrioli*

⊕⊖ *c. concentratum, d. dilutum*

⊕⊖ *Acidum Nitri, ⊕⊖ a n. phlogisticatum*

⊖ *Aqua fortis*

⊕⊖ *Acidum Salis ⊕⊖ a n. dephlogisticatum*

⊖ *Aqua Regis*

⊕⊖ *Acidum fluoris mineralis*

⊕⊖ *Acidum Arsenici*

⊕⊖ *Acidum Vegetabile*

⊕⊖ *Acidum tartari*

⊕⊖ *Acidum Sacchari*

⊕ *Acetum*

⊕⊖ *Acidum animale*

⊕⊖ *Acidum urinae; phosphori*

⊕⊖ *Acidum formicarum*

⊕ *Acidum aereum; atmosphaericum*

⊕ *Sal alcalinus*

⊕⊖ *p. Sal alc. purus (Causticus)*

⊕⊖ *v. Alkali fixum vegetabile*

⊕⊖ *m. Alkali fixum minerale*

⊕⊖ *Alkali volatile*

⊖ *Terra*

⊖ *Lapis*

⊖ *Arena*

⊖ *Calx, p. pura (ustulata)*

⊖⊖ *Calx vitriolata (Selenites, gipsum)*

⊖ *Terra ponderosa*

⊖ *Magnesia*

making your own

Sassafras Rhum Liqueur

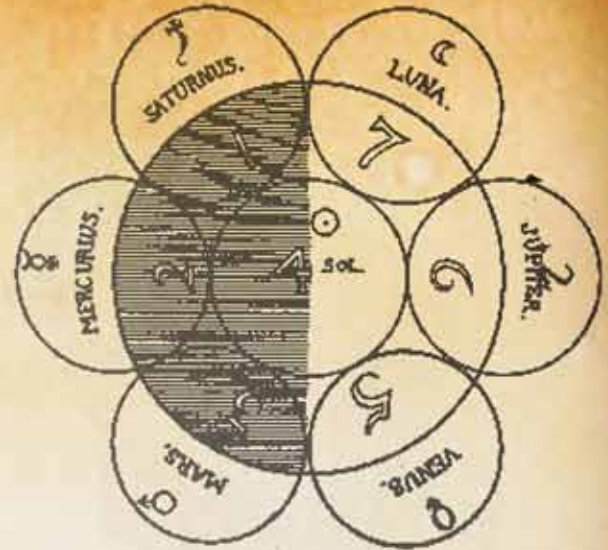
Ingredients:

- 1 Cup Sugar
- 1 1/2 Cups Water
- 1/2 Cup Strong-brewed Sassafras Tea (or commercially-available concentrate)
- 1 Cup Rhum Vieux Agricole
- 1/2 Cup Overproof White Rum

Directions:

Bring water and sugar to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Let the liquid stand until it reaches room temperature, then add the aged Rhum Agricole, Overproof White Rum and the Sassafras tea.

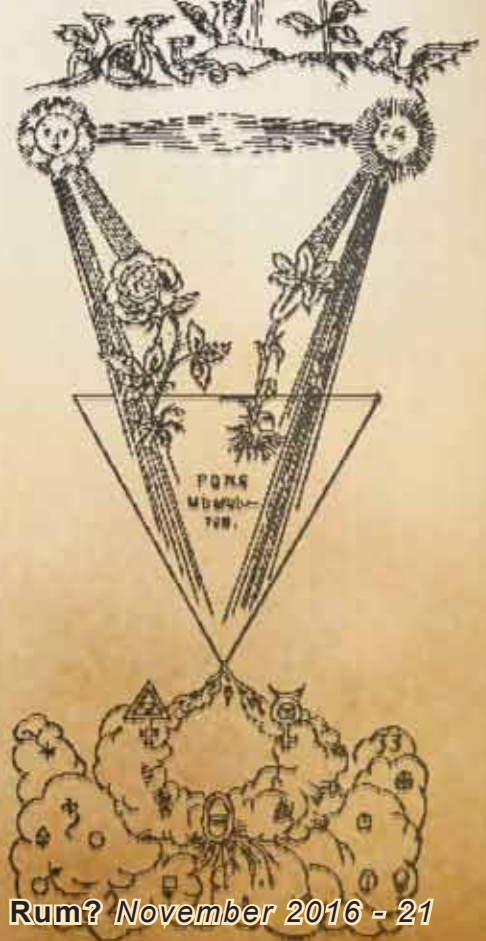
Allow the blend to rest in a cool, dark area for 1 to 2 months.



Did you know that...

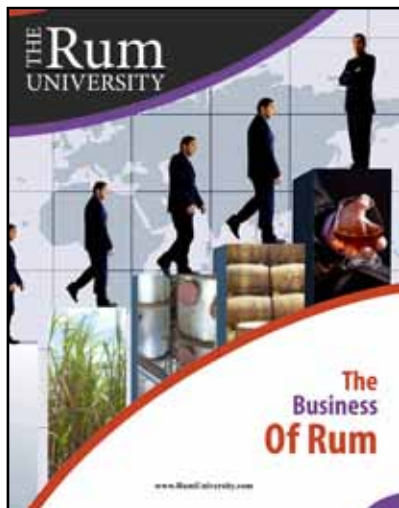
All parts of sassafras plants, including roots, stems, twig leaves, bark, flowers, and fruit, have been used for culinary, medicinal, and aromatic purposes, both in areas where they are endemic and in areas where they were imported, such as Europe.

The wood of sassafras trees has been used as a material for building ships and furniture in China, Europe, and the United States, and sassafras played an important role in the history of the European colonization of the American continent in the 16th and 17th centuries. Sassafras twigs have even been used as toothbrushes or fire starters.





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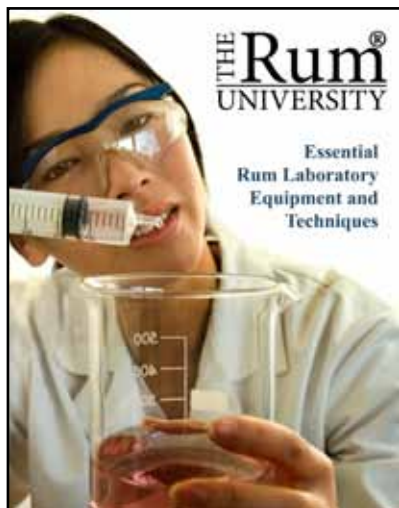
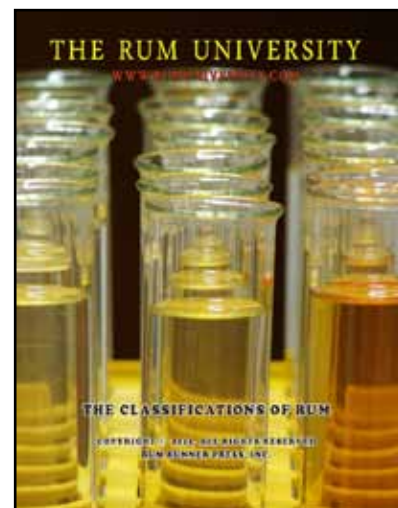
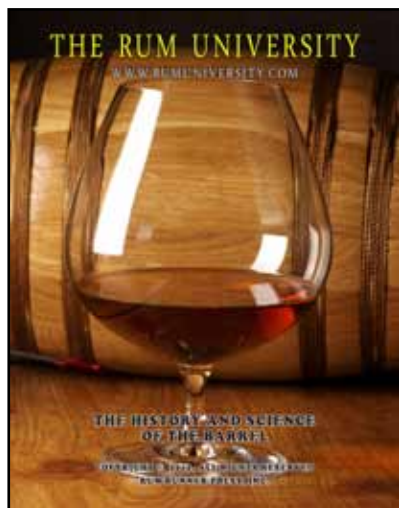
Day 2: The Classifications of Rum. We analyze commercially available rums to identify their organoleptical characteristics and associated production costs.

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I'm honored to have been here."

(F. Stipes, Puerto Rico)

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(F. LaFranconi, Nevada)

"Very beneficial for me."

(D. Boullé, Seychelles)



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Rum University courses are available in Spanish and in English, depending on the official language of the host nation.

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.



The Unique Flavors of Rhum

Rhum? No, this is not a typo! RHUM, or Rhum Agricole, is in its own unique category.

By definition, Rhum is a French term for “cane juice rum”, and Agricole literally translates to agriculture. The main difference between RUM and RHUM is that the latter is distilled from freshly pressed sugarcane juice, which results in a very pure spirit. This allows the natural flavors to be retained, as well as the vegetal, and sometimes “funky” flavors to exist in the end product.

Most Rhum Agricoles are made in the French West Indies on islands like Martinique and Guadeloupe but there are even small distilleries here in the U.S. who have started making agricole style rums. So how does this relate to cocktails? For me, I like to think of Rhum as a completely different spirit from traditional RUM.

Rhum has a flavor profile that can be described as grassy and earthy, but some of the aged rhums also exhibit flavors of banana, caramel, oak and citrus.

A few of my favorite brands are Rhum J.M and Rhum Clément. Rhum Clément has a large portfolio, including some wonderful bartender favorites. Clément Creole Shrub is an orange liqueur that I LOVE, it is a rum base macerated with creole spices and bitter orange peels. It can be used in place of Cointreau in your favorite recipe and will add flavors of wild herbs, fragrant orange blossom, and hints of botanicals similar to Amaro.

Another really fun spirit in the Clément family is the Clément Mahina Coco. It is a coconut liqueur with the base of white rum agricole but what I love about it is the rich and natural flavors.

I have always thought of coconut rums as tasting “fake”, and smelling like suntan oil, but this one doesn’t. It also has the creole spices which elevates it and makes it the perfect addition to your favorite coconut/Tiki cocktail.

I came across this fantastic recipe which incorporates both the Mahina coco AND Clément Premiere Canne. The Premiere Canne is a rum agricole blanc, distilled from fresh pressed sugarcane juice and unaged.

What I love about the Premiere Canne is that yes, you can use it in place of your favorite white RUM, but it is going to totally change the cocktail because of its grassy, black tea, and bittersweet chocolate notes.

If you have yet to experience RHUM in a cocktail, please go buy some and start playing and getting creative!





Rendezvous at Le Marin
crafted by Nigal Vann of M at Miranova

- 1.25 oz Mahina Coco
- .75 oz Clément Première Canne
- .75 oz fresh lemon juice
- .5 oz pineapple juice
- .5 oz sweet potato simple syrup
- 5 dashes of The Bitter Truth's Creole bitters

Combine all ingredients except bitters and shake with ice. Strain into a rocks glass. Add 5 dashes of Bitter Truth's Creole bitters on top and garnish with one pineapple leaf and exotic flower.



THE RUM HISTORIAN

by Marco Pierini



My name is Marco Pierini, I was born in 1954 in a little town in Tuscany (Italy) where I 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.com/marco.pierini.3 and in my articles on the Italian webpage www.bartender.it.

AMERICAN RUM 14: GUINEA RUM

Between rum and the slavery of black Africans there has been a close connection from the beginnings of both. As we know, rum was born as a by-product of sugar processing, and the labor force of the great sugarcane plantations in the Americas was mainly made up of black slaves bought in Africa and their descendants. Moreover, the slaves themselves were among the first consumers of rum. It was customary in nearly all the plantations to make regular distributions of rum to the slaves. They were limited distributions, not enough to make them drunk, but slaves enjoyed them greatly, and they contributed to maintaining order and respect for hierarchies. Often, when the work was particularly hard or difficult, they were given an extra ration as a reward. Planters lived in a perpetual contradiction. On the one hand, rum made the slaves happier and more docile, it made them work harder and



better accept their bondage. On the other, too much rum made them drunk, therefore unable to work and at times even rebellious and dangerous.

And yet, the drunkenness of the slaves was never a real moment of liberation, on the contrary it reasserted their condition of inferiority. As early as 1684, Thomas Tenison, later Archbishop of Canterbury, was well aware of that: *"I am loath to be particular with you, Sir, in respect to Negro Men, and your plying of them with this destructive Liquor [Rum]; and that upon Sunday too, to very bad purpose: And tho' your Intention herein be to perpetuate their Servitude, etc. the very Methods you take to do it, by such indulging of them in this excess of Drinking"*.

There was something profound in the relationship between slavery and rum, or better, between the brutalization of slavery and the brutalization of drunkenness: both deprived the individual of his rational faculties, his freedom of choice, his being fully a man, so they reinforce each other in a tragic vicious circle. The awareness of this relationship was, I believe, at the heart of the strong bond which historically existed between abolitionist movements, whose objective was to abolish slavery, and temperance movements, which in their turn wanted to limit, and often eliminate altogether, the consumption of Demon Rum.

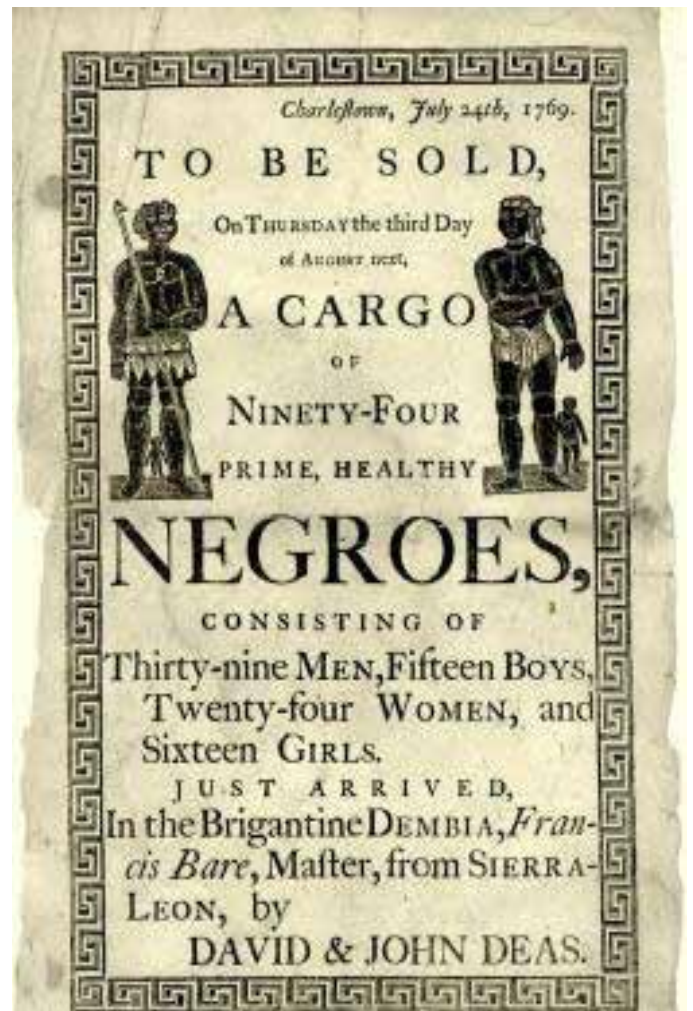
As early as the end of XVII Century, even Boston merchants signed a Petition to

Parliament to put an end to the monopoly of the slave trade, allowing them to enter in it. Then, as time went by, the role of New England's ships and merchants in the slave trade grew and their biggest item of trade was the New England Rum, often euphemized into 'Guinea Rum'.

As we know, it was cheap and very strong. You could save space in the hold and hence transport costs, and then dilute it with local water. Let's see the order received by the captain of King George in 1764: "Make Yr Chief Trade with the Blacks and Little or none with the white people if possible to be avoided. Worter yr rum as much as possible and sell as much by short measure as you can"

Some years later, in 1773, the sloop *Adventure*, from Newport, Rhode Island, made a voyage to Africa with most of its cargo consisting of rum, Newport distilled rum. According to our much quoted Taussig, the chief purchase was slaves, though a little pepper and some palm oil were obtained, and some gold-dust. Rum was the principal medium of payment. If the reader will compare the amount of rum expended as shown in the Trade Book with the amount which appears in the invoice already referred to, he will note an excess of rum sold over that shipped – about 500 gallons – which indicates that they were inclined to 'worter' their rum. And let's see a letter written by a slaver capt. to his owners: "I have repented a hundred times buying of them dry goods. Had we laid out two thousand pound in rum, bread and flour, it would have purchased more in value than all our dry goods."

But how much did a slave cost? It is difficult today, at least for us non-specialists, to realize the real value of the currency of the time. It becomes easier, and more terrible in its brutal simplicity, when the price of a human



being is given in rum. Hugh Thomas in his book *"The Slave Trade"* writes:

"In 1755 Caleb Godfrey, a slave captain from Newport, Rhode Island, bought four men, three women, three girls, and one boy for 799 gallons of rum, two barrels of beef and one barrel of pork, together with some smaller items; and in 1767 Captain William Taylor, acting for Richard Brew of Cape Coast, bought male slaves at 130 gallons each, women at 110, and young girls at 80. By 1773 the price was higher: 210 to 220 gallons per slave was paid by the captain of Aaron Lopez' *Cleopatra*."

Marco Pierini

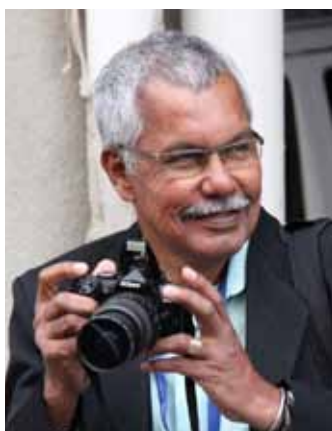
AROUND THE RUM WORLD

by Carl Kanto

Talk about Mexico and immediately one thinks about Mexican culture – food, music, drink – tequila of course and excitement and indeed August was exciting.

On August 23, 2016, 74 of the world finest judges – spirit tasters – from 23 different countries descended on the spirited town of Tequila. Over the next three days, August 24 – 26, they created history not by visiting the breath taking agave fields nor mingling with the stills in the many tequila distilleries visited nor sampling all the tequila that can be served. This team of unique men and women sampled over 1,200 different spirits – rum, tequila, baijiu, cachaca and whisky to name a few – from 48 producer countries participating in the Spirits Selection Competition by Concours Mondial de Bruxelles. This was truly a United Nations of Fine Spirits.

At the end of a grilling, tiring three days period 24 spirits evolved as unique spirits and were awarded Grand Gold Medals with



two top quality, innovative and modern spirits that underscore current market trends being identified as Revelation Spirits – Monna & Filles Crème de Cassis, a fruit cream from Canada by Cassis Monna & Filles and Three Ships Premium Select, a whisky from South Africa by Distell. Another 343 were awarded Gold and Silver Medals.

For rum producers in the Caribbean it should be noted that Caribbean rums won 2 Grand Gold Medals, 16 Gold Medals and 17 Silver Medals including first time entries Clifton Estate Spiced Rum from Clifton Estate Rum in Saint Kitts and Nevis and Borgoe Grand Reserve Rum 8 Years Old from Suriname alcoholic Beverages N. V. – both being awarded Gold Medals. The Grand Gold Medals were won by two rums (Agricultural) from Martinique – Rhum Vieux Agricole Fleur Canne Saint – James by Rhums Martiniquais Saint – James SAS and Rhum Vieux JM Finish Armagnac 2004 by Heritiers Crassous de Medeuil SAS. Great going Caribbean rums.

For the adventurous and strong in spirit, the next Spirits Selection by Concours Mondial de Bruxelles will take place at the end of August 2017 in the region of Coquimbo, Chile. Book your space, gold might be awaiting you.



Rhum Agricole, Agricole-Style Rhum & Cane Juice Rum

An introduction to the
world of full-bodied
(high congener) rums/
rums made from
sugarcane juice



Introduction to Rhum Agricole

If you walk into an average bar in North America or in Europe and ask a dozen patrons what is a “Rhum Agricole,” you are likely to receive just as many different answers. Some of them are likely to be among the following (I have heard all of these):

- I don't know
- It is just another fancy name for rum
- It refers to any rum made in the French West Indies
- It refers to any rum made in Martinique
- It is rum made anywhere, but only from sugarcane juice (no molasses or crystalized sugar)
- It is rum made exclusively from hand-cut sugarcane
- It is rum distilled using only small pot stills
- It is rum that is naturally fermented (no yeast is added to the cane juice by the producer)
- It is a form of rum or *aguardiente* like the Brazilian Cachaca, but made in the French West Indies
- It is rum that tastes more like whisky than traditional rum

The diversity in answers is due, in great part, to the particular focus that each Rhum Agricole producer gives to its brand, focusing more on one differentiating factor than on others.

We have devoted this special issue of “Got Rum?” to this fascinating topic of Rhum Agricole. We hope to shed some light on the subject, but only enough to encourage you, the reader, to do further research on your own, and to spread the results of that research with your friends.



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Rhum Agricole - A Definition

Source: Journal Officiel de la République Française (page 16360), Décret du 5 novembre 1996 relatif à l'appellation d'origine contrôlée "Martinique".
NOR: FCEC9600198D

When talking about Rhum Agricole, it is important to differentiate between HOW it is made and WHERE it is made. Some distillates have protected or restricted denominations (Cognac, Tequila, Cachaca, etc.), meaning that they must be produced and/or aged in certain countries or regions in order to use the particular name/denomination. This is also the case with Rhum Agricole: there is a Protected Designation of Origin (*Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* or AOC in French) for Rhum Agricole made in Martinique (Martinique is in the Caribbean and is considered a French overseas region).

In order to be recognized as **AOC Martinique Rhum Agricole**, the rum must meet the following criteria:

Geography

It must be made from sugarcane cultivated in one of the 23 approved municipalities in Martinique.

Agriculture

The cultivation methods are also clearly defined to keep yields low, by discouraging aggressive fertilization practices that would increase yields but that are seen as unsustainable.

Sugarcane Processing

The cane juice must have a Brix level above 14 and a pH above 4.7 and must be extracted from the cane using cold-pressing methods only.



Fermentation

Can be spontaneous or achieved through pitching a concentrated yeast solution. The fermentation must be in batches (discontinuous) and must be carried out in open containers (no CO₂ capture) with a capacity no larger than 50,000 liters (13,208 gallons). The fermentation time cannot exceed 72 hours.

Distillation

The distillation of AOC Martinique Rhum Agricole must be done using continuous distillation columns, with a diameter of between 0.7 and 2 meters (between 27 and 78 inches). The column must have:

- no fewer than 15 stripping plates (copper or stainless steel)
- between 5 and 9 rectifying copper plates
- at least one water-cooled condenser for reflux

Classifications

Rhum Agricole produced according to the above definition is then given a different classification based on its aging:

- “Blanc” or white, refers to rum that has been “resting” for no more than 3 months since its distillation.
- “Elevé sous bois” means “oak aged” and refers to rum aged in oak barrels in the same production area where it was distilled, for at least 12 uninterrupted months. The congener level must be higher than 250 mg per 100 mL of anhydrous alcohol (pure alcohol).
- “Vieux” or “old” refers to rum aged in oak barrels in the same production area where it was distilled, for at least 36 uninterrupted months. The congener level must be higher than 325 mg per 100 mL of anhydrous alcohol.

Note: For the last two classifications, the congener level refers to the volatile components in the rum, excluding ethanol and methanol.

(Rhum Agricole continues on page 42)

RUM IN THE NEWS

by Mike Kunetka



NEWS

BACARDÍ

OAKHEART Genuine Spiced Rum now has new signature packaging, following another win for Best Tasting Spiced Rum. OAKHEART Genuine Spiced Rum has “benched the Captain” again as a result of a U.S. national blind taste test that found it to be the best tasting spiced rum compared to Captain Morgan Original Spiced Rum among consumers ages 21-34. The test was administered by the independent, third party research company, Radius Global Market Research LLC. This news follows the launch of last year’s “All in, All Heart” campaign which took aim at Captain Morgan. The bold campaign will continue, expanding targeted media efforts and promotions in the coming months, and mobilizing a program of consumer experiences across twelve key U.S. markets in tandem with top sporting events throughout the fall and winter seasons. Among the many exciting developments for the favored spiced rum, OAKHEART is also announcing that the brand will be packaged and positioned to stand alone from BACARDÍ.

HEE JOY RUM

Last year, the French brand Hee Joy launched their spiced rum. Now they are releasing Origins, a blend of 40% aged rum from Jamaica, 40% aged rum from Trinidad and 20% aged rum from Guyana. Jean-Marc Larhantec chose Jamaica rum aged in bourbon barrels for the powerful and structural side of the blend; rum from Trinidad, aged in American Oak-barrels for its aromatic intensity and rum from Guyana for its minerality and complexity. After ageing in their respective countries, the rums are sent to the Grande Champagne District in France, where they are blended and further aged in French Oak barrels that once held cognac. Origins was first shown at the Rum Fest Marseille in October.

EVON BROWN, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL RUMS OF JAMAICA, RETIRES

After 55 years in the spirits industry, National Rums of Jamaica Managing Director, Evon Brown has retired. Over his career, Brown held the role of director of the National Rums of Jamaica Group of Companies for 36 years, chairman of the Caribbean Molasses Company for 39 years, and chairman of the Spirits Pool Association for 20 years. One of Brown’s many career highlights was the development of a plan to inject capital in the National Rum Group from Caribbean distillers including the West Indies Rum Distillery of Barbados, Demerara Distillers Ltd from Guyana, and Diageo. As a result, the Group now operates one of the most modern rum distilleries in the region and is now poised to become a more significant player in the international rum market. In a statement, National Rums of Jamaica said: “The Directors of National Rums expressed their deepest gratitude to Evon for his unswerving dedication to the rum industry for over half a century and his hard work and deep insights in overcoming the numerous challenges the Industry faced over those years. “The Board proposes to suitably convey to Evon its tremendous appreciation for the magnificent job which Evon has carried out both for the rum and spirits industry in general and the company in particular over the many years.”

National Rums of Jamaica comprises Clarendon Distillery Limited, Long Pond Distillery Limited and Innswood Distillery Limited.

OAK & CANE

Oak & Cane is the creation of Fred Greene and Cameron Grace, two Fort Lauderdale locals and marketing executives. The development

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 Oak & Cane comes as a response to rum's increasing popularity, along with a desire to make a craft rum that captures the spirit of Florida. "It's long been said that rum has been overdue for its time in the spotlight, and what we wanted to do was to create a Craft Rum that captured the spirit of Florida in a bottle," said Fred Greene. "We wanted a spirit that was sophisticated yet relaxed, Oak & Cane is great for sipping neat or on the rocks, or enjoyed in one of our unique concoctions. We were extremely excited to debut Oak & Cane at the 2016 Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America Convention in Las Vegas this April." Classically aged in white American oak and uniquely infused with a hint of freshly cut orange peels, Oak & Cane offers a subtle orange aroma and a complexity of flavors that gives it a relaxed Floridian vibe. Along with local Florida sugar cane and spring water, Oak & Cane are all the flavors one craves bottled up in a mid-century modern lifestyle package that mirrors the sophisticated and unique nature of the craft spirits market. With rum beginning an upward trend as consumers try the spirit over others, quality craft rums such as Oak & Cane are filling a void in a market that is growing rapidly and the uniqueness of an all-Florida craft rum made with the finest of ingredients is already proving a pull for lovers of the drink and its many subtleties based on local market testing that began in early March 2016.

REAL MCCOY

The Real McCoy Rum announced the release of its new 2016 Limited Edition, which is a blend of rum that has been aged for 12 years in American oak bourbon casks, with rum that has been aged for 12 years in Portuguese Madeira casks and bottled at 92 proof. With only 3,000 bottles produced for worldwide distribution, this Limited Edition is an extremely rare production by renowned master distiller, Richard Seale, of Foursquare Distillery in Barbados. The Real McCoy 2016 Limited Edition rum premiered at the German

Rum Festival on October 15 and 16. Bailey Pryor, 6-time Emmy Award winning filmmaker, and founder of Real McCoy Rum, will be attending the event. Master Distiller, Richard Seale, will also be in attendance and will be delivering his Master Class. "This is a true expression of a Single Blended Rum from Foursquare and the Madeira cask 12 Year aged rum really shines through," commented Pryor. "We were excited about bringing this unique and limited expression to the market and sharing it with the attendees of the German Rum Festival."

RHUM ST JAMES

To celebrate the UK Rum Fest, launched a decade ago by Global Rum Ambassador Ian Burrell, SAINT JAMES

submitted a special Agricole Rum bottle for the convention's Auction. Marc Sassier, SAINT JAMES Plantations oenologist, went exploring through the ageing cellars in Martinique in order to find the perfect 10 year old Rum, as a symbol for the event's 10th edition. From a 2006 harvest, the pure cane Rum was aged all these years in oak casks before being revealed at the event. This unique SAINT JAMES Rum bottle was a Single Cask and also a Cask Strength at 69.6% ABV, resulting in a pure and concentrated SAINT JAMES Agricole. The bottle was sold for 3100£.

BUNDABERG RUM

Bundaberg Rum is shaping up for summer with the launch of a packaging refresh across its core product range.

The new design aims to modernize the packaging and drive consistency across the Bundaberg Rum trademark.

Jodi McLeod, Marketing Manager, Bundaberg Rum said, "Packaging is the number one touchpoint for consumers across both the on and off premise. Initial research has shown

RUM IN THE NEWS (continued)

by Mike Kunetka

A stack of US dollar bills is visible on the left side of the image. To its right, four white wooden blocks are arranged in a row, each with a black letter on its top face, spelling out the word "NEWS". The background is a textured, light-colored surface.

that the new packs are more recognizable and easier to navigate in store. Added to this is the use of consistent language to drive better understanding of the different liquids and variants in both our glass bottle and premix range.” Many of the rum’s existing brand icons will remain, including the square bottle, gold stripe and the Bundy bear, but they will now be complemented with more contemporary elements, which the company hopes will help drive authenticity, craft and confidence. While the bear remains, it has been refreshed and will now be larger on pack, in what Bundaberg describes as “a new design that is a modern interpretation of the original”. The new design also sees the addition of a yellow cap emblazoned with ‘The Famous’ as well as clear descriptors on the labels to make the different products in the range clearer to consumers. The new packaging will feature in Bundaberg Rum’s core spirit range including Bundaberg Rum UP, Bundaberg Rum OP, Bundaberg Spiced, Bundaberg Red, Bundaberg Tropics and Select VAT. The Bundaberg Rum premix range will also be refreshed. The evolution of the brand will continue into next year with Bundaberg Rum’s premium spirit range also undergoing a packaging refresh. New designs for Bundaberg Rum Small Batch, the Master Distillers Collection and Royal Liqueur will launch in the second half of 2017.

CAPTAIN MORGAN’S JACK O’BLAST

Following the 2015 launch of Cannon Blast, a mix of Caribbean rum, natural flavors and a “bold spice blend” of citrus, chipotle and jalapeño pepper described as an “intensely delicious shot”, Captain Morgan has recently released Jack-O’Blast. It is a blend of Caribbean rum, fresh pumpkin, cinnamon and other autumnal spices. “As much as we enjoyed tropical cocktails over

the summer, it’s time to make room for the bold flavors of fall everyone enjoys,” said Linda Bethea, vice president of Captain Morgan. “Captain Morgan Jack-O’Blast is a must-have for responsible adult consumers during their favorite seasonal activities, whether it’s at football tailgates, Halloween parties or backyard bonfires with friends.” Like the cannonball bottle before, the 750mL pumpkin bottle leverages the round bottle shape, but adds a few distinct and clever touches starting with a striking, full-wrap, skin-tight and wrinkle-free pumpkin-mimicking shrink-sleeve label.

CLIFTON ESTATE NEVIS SPICED RUM

The folks at Clifton Estate refer to their spiced rum as a ‘real spiced rum’ in that only natural ingredients are used to infuse flavor into the rum; no artificial flavorings or oils are used. Clifton Estate is a handmade, small-batch rum that is a blend of two-year old dark rum with natural flavors; what distinguishes it from most spiced rums is the infusion of orange, which is joined with some honey and what the company says are secret island spices. The rum is presented in a unique barrel-shaped bottle.

ABUELO XV RUMS

From Panama, the Abuelo XV Finish Collection features a trio of luxurious double barreled aged spirits aimed at the serious rum enthusiast. These limited edition 15 year old expressions are rested in casks of Tawny Port, Oloroso Sherry and Napoleon Cognac respectively. Each delivers a well-aged, complex Central American spirit created from molasses, enhanced with a delightful bouquet of European wines during the second stage of maturity. Abuelo Añejo XV Años Tawny Port Cask Finish has aromas of cocoa and tart berry over ripe

dark fruit, butter cookie and mild wood. On the palate, sweet dark fruit leads to bitter chocolate Bon Bon and raspberry with bread pudding, fading into earthy wood and hints of cocoa in the long finish. Abuelo Añejo XV Años Oloroso Sherry Cask Finish features aromas of cacao and stone fruit with suggestion of herbaceous cane, vanilla custard and a hint of pear. On the palate, rich dark fruit builds to vanilla custard over musty wood and cola before aromatic eucalyptus and butter croissant precede a hint of cane and molasses in the long finish. Finally, Abuelo Añejo XV Años Napoleon Cognac Cask Finish has aromas of vanilla and musty bourbon oak lead to sweet fruit and pound cake with hints of green and black peppercorns over bitter wood. On the palate, a sweet caramel entry leads to bold cognac wood in the complex mid-palate, with a balance between sweet fruit and dry vanilla. The finish is wonderfully viscous, fading into echoes of honey, green banana and flowers. These 750ml bottles of the Abuelo XV Finish Collection, at 40% abv, retail for about \$75 in the United States. The Abuelo brand offers a range of award-winning rums from Panama including the Añejo, 7 Años, 12 Años and the luxury expression Centuria.

The history of Varela Hermanos S.A. goes back to 1908, when Don José Varela Blanco, a young Spanish immigrant, founded first sugar cane plantation in the newly formed Republic of Panama in the fertile green valley Pese. "From the early days, the Varela family is known for their absolute dedication to exceptional quality" said Luis J. Varela Jr. "This category of matured rums puts us in the best position to express our craftsmanship. More and more people are trying Ron Abuelo and recognize our superior taste, softness and complexity. That's the best compliment we could ever receive." Meanwhile, the family business has grown into the market leader in Panama. Besides Ron Abuelo, they produce also Ron Cortez and Secco Herrano.


MASTERS OF MALT RUM ADVENT CALENDAR

I wrote about these Advent Calendars last year, but I think they are so cool, they need a second mention. Wikipedia described traditional Advent Calendars as "a special calendar used to count or celebrate the days in anticipation of Christmas. Since the date of the first Sunday of Advent varies, falling between November 27 and December 3 inclusive, the Advent calendar usually begins on December 1, although many include the previous few days that are part of the season. The Advent calendar was first used by German Lutherans in the 19th and 20th centuries but is now ubiquitous among adherents of many Christian denominations. Advent calendars range in theme, from sports to technology. They come in a multitude of forms, from a simple paper calendar with flaps covering each of the days to fabric pockets on a background scene to painted wooden boxes with cubby holes for small items." In the case of the Masters of Malt calendar, each cubby hole contains a small 3cl bottle of rum. The 2016 calendar contains the following rums: Pusser's 15 Year Old; Trois Rivières VSOP; Rumbullion! XO 15 Years Old; Flor de Caña 25 Year Old; Clément Rhum Agricole - 125th Anniversary Edition by JonOne; Gosling's Family Reserve; Don Q Gran Añejo; Plantation Pineapple Stiggins' Fancy; Diplomático Reserva Exclusiva; Ron Zacapa Centenario Sistema Solera 23; Santa Teresa 1796 Ron Antiguo de Solera; Elements 8 Gold Rum; Rhum J.M. 1999; Pusser's 'Gunpowder Proof' Black Label; Rumbullion!; Blackwell Black Gold Fine Jamaican Rum; Pyrat XO Rum; Cana Brava 7 Year Old; St Lucia Distillers 1931 Fourth Edition; Diplomático Ambassador;

Rhum J.M XO; El Dorado 12 Year Old; Ron Barceló Imperial Premium Blend and Clément XO Rhum Agricole. Masters of Malt also offer 3cl tasting bottles of over 120 different rums, including the likes of 10 Year Old English Harbor, Ron Abuelo Centuria, Appleton Estate 21 Year Old, Monymusk 15 Year Old, Rum Nation Panama 21 Year Old, Santa Teresa Bicentenario A.J. Vollmer and Banks The Endeavor – Limited Edition No. 1.

Rhum Agricole - Ti' Punch





Ti' Punch

Ti' Punch, an abbreviation for *Petit Ponch* or "small punch" is a very popular cocktail in the French West Indies, where it is made using the locally-produced Rhum Agricole.

Here is a basic recipe, but many variations exist, including the addition of other fresh fruit or syrups. Start with the simple recipe, then let your imagination run wild. Cheers!

Ingredients:

- 2 oz. Rhum Agricole, Blanc (white) or Vieux (aged)
- 1 Splash of Sugarcane Syrup
- 1 Lime Wedge
- Lime Peel (about a fourth of the outer skin of the lime)

Directions:

Place the sugarcane syrup in a rocks glass and add a splash of the cane syrup. Add the Rhum Agricole and a few ice cubes. Stir gently and garnish the drink with the lime peel.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

by Margaret Ayala



Mr. Jerry Gitany, Co-Founder of La Confrerie du Rhum, Rum Gazette and The Rum Embassy

Within the distilled spirits family, the entire rum category continues to be in the dark, both in terms of consumer education and industry regulation. But there is always hope, especially when we look at the quality standards and the effort maintained by Rhum Agricole producers. I am very pleased to share this informative interview with all readers, especially those seeking additional knowledge about these rums.

Margaret Ayala, Publisher



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

A: My name is Jerry Gitany. I am co-founder of: La Confrerie du Rhum, Rum Gazette and The Rum Embassy. I am also Rum ambassador at Christian de Montaguere, the largest rum store in France. I live in Paris, France.

Q: Your grandfather lived in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, right? Was this the beginning of your relationship with rum? If not, what was your inspiration or reason to get involved with rum/rhum?

A: Yes my grandfather Pedro Gitany was living in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico.



Mr. Jerry Gitany at Distillerie La Mauny

But my relationship with rum came from my other grandfather, my mom's father Hypolite Durieu, who was the director of THE SAINT-JAMES distillery at St. Pierre in Martinique where I was born. I also had an uncle who was the accountant of the DEPAZ distillery at St. Pierre where I spent most of my holidays with my cousins in the 60's.

Therefore I started to be interested in rum very soon. I remember when I was a teen, preparing Ti-punch for my grandfather and his friends while they were playing cards or dominos. Later on I was sometimes allowed to taste it.

Q: When average rum consumers hear the terms "French Rhum" or "Agricole Rhum", some of them think that the

terms refer to ANY rhum distilled in a French territory, but this is not the case. Authentic "Rhum Agricole" has very strict requirements, involving minimum distillation column diameter, for example, which leaves many small "craft" distillers out of consideration. Could you elaborate on this topic?

A: We have to be precise. "French Rhum" is not necessarily an "Agricole Rhum".

Agricole Rhum is rum made from fresh cane juice as opposed to rum made from molasses. Both can be found on the French territory even though Agricole Rhum is the most important.

As a matter of fact, Agricole Rhum is a specificity of the French departments:



Guadeloupe, Guyane, Martinique and Reunion Island. Even rum made from pure fresh cane juice in other French territories like Tahiti, for example, cannot be labelled “Rhum Agricole”. And you can find rum made from molasses in Guadeloupe and Reunion Island.

The requirements you mentioned above are related to the AOC (Appellation d’Origine Contrôlée) regulation that exists only in Martinique. To obtain the AOC you have to respect many rules such as : the land of your field has to be agreed, a number of plates of your column still have to be in copper, you

can’t distil over 75 °, pot still is not authorized.... Etc.

Therefore craft distillers can produce Agricole Rhum but won’t have the AOC label.

Q: In the British West Indies, some of the island nations are having a hard time justifying the agricultural use of the land, when compared to the potential additional income of devoting that land to tourism (hotels, golf courses, etc.). This situation has -sadly- resulted in a partial or total reliance on imported molasses for rum

production. Do the French territories face the same threat?

A: The French territories do not face the same threat, as the situation was different since the mid 19th Century. At that time, due to the worldwide sugar crisis, in most of the Caribbean Islands the sugar cane factories disappeared, and they started to import molasses. Meanwhile in the French colonies, you had a restructuration of the economic model. Central sugar factories replaced the small bankrupt factories. The planters continued to grow their fields in order to sell their sugar canes to the central factories. But some of them, instead of selling their sugar canes, kept them to produce rum from the sugar cane juice. That was the birth of "Rhum Agricole".

Nowadays with the uprising demand for Agricole Rum, the trend is to have more land for growing sugar cane.

Q: A couple of the driving forces behind the rise in consumption of rum are the growing popularity of speakeasy and Tiki establishments and themes, both of which use rum quite extensively. Have these same trends helped increase awareness and sales of Rhum Agricole?

A: Of course the growing popularity and the increase of speakeasy, tiki and rum bars have an impact on the increase awareness and sales of "Rhum Agricole". But also the popularity and the multiplication of Rum Festivals in many big cities all over the world, along with the dissemination of information on the net through many websites dedicated to rum.

Q: Some craft distillers in the USA, especially those using traditional pot (whisky) stills are trying to make rum, using the same approach they know for whiskey/bourbon. The result is a heavy distillate more akin to a cachaça or rhum agricole, which is

not always well-received by American consumers when it is un-aged. Do you see a parallel with rhum agricole?

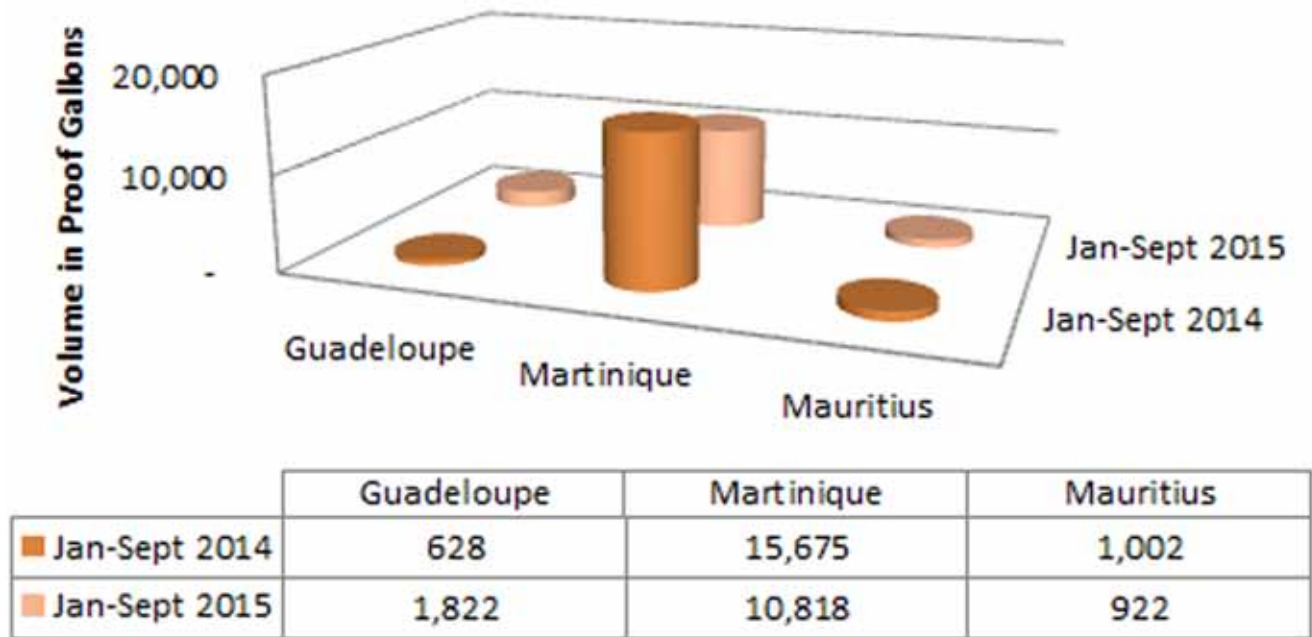
A: Yes it is almost the same. The un-aged Rhum Agricole that we call white rum, represents the biggest part of rum consumed in the French West Indies, principally through our "national cocktail" the Ti-punch. In Europe and even in France, the consumer drinks principally aged rum. Nevertheless with the emergence of premium white Agricole Rhums, more and more consumers are discovering and start to appreciate white Agricole Rum.

Q: Can you describe to our readers the concept of an "habitation" and what makes it unique in terms of sugarcane varieties and micro climates?

A: One could write a book on the concept of "Habitation", so I'll try to describe it in a few words. It is



US Rhum Imports (Bulk and Bottled)



Source: Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS)

an economic and social model that appeared in the French colonies at the 17th Century. They are altogether production, transformation and export units for sugar. The owners were named “habitants” whilst in the British Colonies they were names planters. By the way that’s why Agricole Rhum was called “rhum z’habitant” at that time. Nowadays the term “Habitation” is still devoted to the old Master House even though there is no distillery anymore.

Nevertheless it is true that each distillery, depending on its geographical situation, has its own sugar cane variety, micro climate and soil called “terroir”, which make it unique.

Q: You have done an excellent job educating consumers and increasing awareness of rhum agricole, but there is still a lot of work to be done. What are the biggest obstacles you face?

A: Yes, but a lot has still to be done. Few years ago rum was not well known and had a bad reputation. Poor quality rums were used principally for cooking and pastries. Now with the growing interest of consumers toward rum, we have to explain, inform and educate the consumers as well as the professionals (bartenders, liquor store owners...) about the differences between Agricole Rhum and molasses rum. Then the consumer can choose easily according to his taste. The biggest obstacle remains ignorance, but as soon as you explain and make taste, it becomes so easier!

Q: When it comes to drinking rhum agricole, I particularly prefer sipping the “Vieux” and “Trés Vieux” offerings, but I also enjoy the “Rhum Blanc” in a Ti-Punch. What about you, how do you prefer to enjoy your rhum?

A: As a Martinican, I love my ti-punch -a small drop of sugar or cane syrup,

white "Rhum Agricole" and a peel of green lemon- as an aperitif, and the "vieux" for sipping very late at night in a quiet moment!

Q: There have been distilleries (large and small) outside of the French West Indies who have attempted to sell their rums labeled as "Rhum Agricole". What are your thoughts regarding this, should they be allowed, as long as they are adhering to the same criteria outlined in the DOC?

A: It doesn't bother me as long as they are produced from fresh cane juice, and respect certain criteria. As I said earlier, it is a matter of French law. You have for example a good agricole rum in the U.S as the St. Georges, but if they want to sell it in France they would have to change the label to pure cane juice rum. Even in a French territory like Tahiti, which is not a French Department, they cannot use the label Rhum Agricole. It's the same with foreign countries which produce pure cane juice rum like, for example, Thailand, Mauritius, the US, etc. In my opinion, they should be allowed to use the term Rhum Agricole.

Q: Saint James Rhums (from Martinique) recently recruited you to help promote Agricole Rhums in Europe. Why did you choose this task with Saint James and can you tell us a little about who Saint James is and their role in the Rhum world? Last month you attended some rum shows/ festivals in Austria, Italy, Belgium and Germany (just to name a few). What was your experience like in promoting/ education consumers about Agricole Rhums?

A: In fact, I haven't been recruited by Saint-James. With my partner of The Rum Embassy, Benoit Bail, we are representing 12 brands (7 from Martinique and 5 from Guadeloupe) to promote "Rhum Agricole" in

Europe. Here is the list of brands we are representing:

- **From Martinique:** Saint-James, HSE, La MAUNY, Trois-Rivieres, La Favorite, Clément and JM
- **From Guadeloupe:** Damoiseau, Bologne, Longuetreau, Reimonenq and Bielle.

Of course Saint-James represents something special for me since my grandfather was one of the directors for many years and I was born on the Plantation. Saint-James role is very important, it's one of the oldest world's distillery still operating and it's the world's number one producer of "Rhum Agricole".

Q: Luis and I have been teaching rum classes through our Rum University. We offer 5-day Rum Courses where we teach the students about the business of rum, fermentation/distillation of molasses based rums, barrel aging and blending. Do you offer anything similar in the Rhum world?

A: We don't offer such rum courses, even if we do many master classes about rum.

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

A: Of course and with pleasure, people can contact me at: jy.gitany@orange.fr

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

A: Nothing special except that it was a real pleasure to meet you and Luis for the first time three years ago at the International Rum Conference in Madrid. Thank you for your interest in Rhum Agricole. Cheers to you and all your readers!

Margaret: Again, Jerry, thank you for this opportunity and I wish you all the best as you continue your Rhum journey.



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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).

The Rum Martini

This month's challenge was to create a cigar and rum pairing that is not typically conceived by the average smoker: one involving a very young distillate, in this case a rum that is crystal clear.

Despite my predisposition, I am always eager to learn new lessons, so I decided to mix the rum in a cocktail that would respect the base rum by not covering it too much. I opted for a Rum Martini and, with this cocktail in mind, I searched through my rum collection. The first product to grab my attention was the 10 Cane from Trinidad and Tobago, which belonged to Moët Henessy. This rum was introduced in 2005 and discontinued last year.

The switch to Vermouth Bianco in the recipe is designed for a Kina Lillet, a wine-based aperitif traditional from the Vesper Martini. But since I didn't want to push the citric aspect of the pairing with the garnish, I opted instead for the Gibson Martini option, but the closest thing I had to a Cambray onion was a Pearl Onion, which fills the purpose of adding some complexity and counter-balance to the sweet notes that could be contributed by the rum.

Once I knew which cocktail I was going to prepare, it was time to select a Puro or Habano, one up to the challenge, a tough challenge to be honest. Since this pairing involved a cocktail, I wanted a cigar with a short smoking time, so I selected a Series D Number 6 from Partagas (50 x 90mm). This is the only cigar from Partagas with these dimensions, the "Vitola de Galera" (the company's internal name for the cigar) goes by the same name.

Got Rum?





Photo credit: @Cigarili

Something in common between the rum and the cigar is that both had very limited commercial distribution. In the case of the cigar, it was released a couple of years ago, as part of a wave of small format cigars, designed for consumers wishing to pair them with 3 oz. cocktails.

There are many Martini recipes out there and I am sure mixology enthusiasts know the differences between them better than James Bond. For our pairing, these are the proportions:

- 2.5 oz 10 Cane Rum
- 0.5 Kina Lillet
- Small Pearl Onion (Garnish)

Shake the Rum and Kina Lillet with ice, pour into serving glass and garnish with the small Pearl Onion.

The first thing that surprised me about this cocktail was how well it turned out! The flavors combined together so well, that it was easy to forget it was made with rum: it had a well-rounded and smooth body (from the Kina Lillet). The cocktail was definitely up to the challenge.

When I lit the cigar, it was apparent that it had a full-body, just as I had expected. Despite its ring size (50), the flavor was very concentrated and remained true to its Cuban origin. Both the cigar and the cocktail had well-defined personalities that remained so throughout the pairing. The Martini was refreshing and palate-cleansing, it made it very enjoyable to smoke the cigar after each sip of the cocktail.

I started this pairing with very low expectations, but it turned out to be exceptionally and surprisingly good. I would list this one among the highly-recommended pairings, primarily because of the atypical ingredients. For those not able to find a Cuban or full-bodied/aggressive cigar, I would strongly recommend a Nicaraguan cigar, something that I will definitely be exploring first-hand in the future.

I hope everyone can replicate this pairing at home. Those who are unable to find Kina Lillet may be able to replace it with Cocci Americano. Those not able to find 10 Cane should be able to use any young/unaged rum that is well fermented and distilled, with strong aromas of fresh sugarcane juice, there are many good options available from Jamaica and from the French West Indies.

I hope you enjoy this pairing as much as I did. Until the next issue of "Got Rum?"!

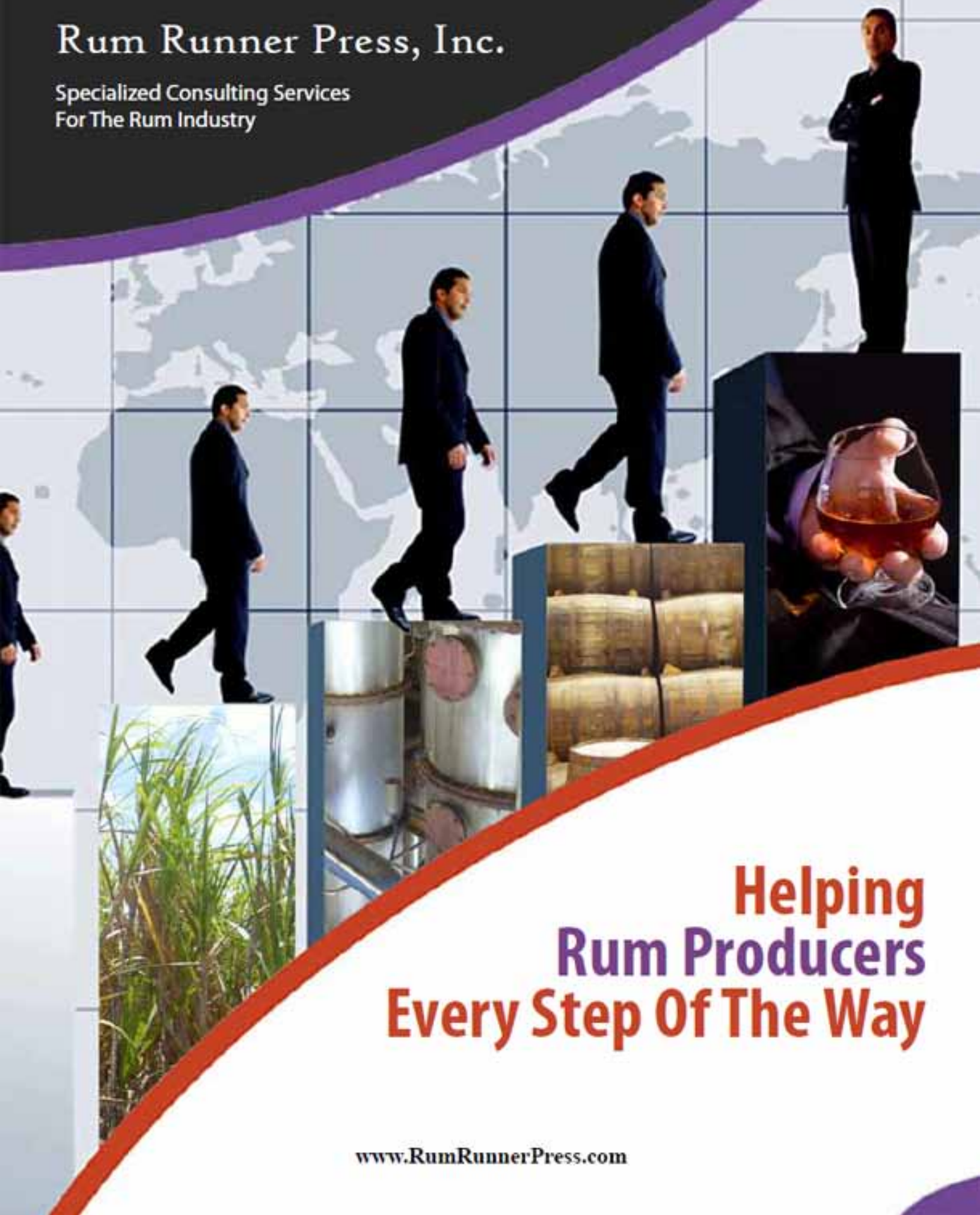
Philip Ili Barake
#GRCigarPairing



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