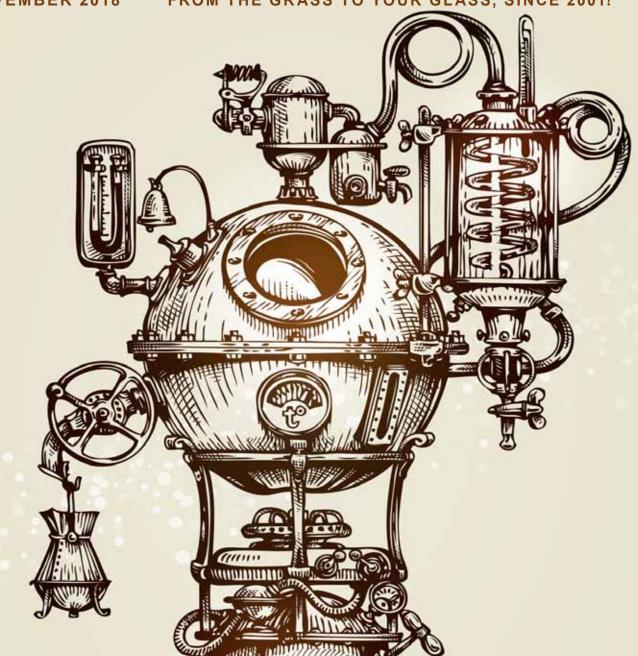
# Got Rum?

NOVEMBER 2018 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 - RHUM AGRICOLE - RUM UNIVERSITY









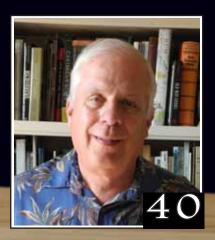


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# Got Rum?®

Printed in the U.S.A.
A publication of Rum Runner Press, Inc.
Hutto, Texas 78634 - U.S.A.

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# November 2018

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FRONT COVER: Batch Distillation Apparatus #1

INSIDE SPREAD: Tempestuous Rum

### FROM THE EDITOR

# Is Rhum Agricole Under Siege?

It is our tradition each year to dedicate the November issue of "Got Rum?" to Rhum Agricole. I believe that these rhums represent a critical aspect of the industry, a form of time capsule that preserves traditions and flavors that would almost certainly have disappeared if it had not been for the creation of the *Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée* (A.O.C.).

The "Rhum Agricole" denomination, however, is facing its toughest challenge yet: defending its essence against dilution by similarly-named products distilled in countries or by standards other than those clearly specified by the norm.

We are happy to interview Mr. Marc Sassier from Saint James once again, to better understand his views on the matter. Defining standards is relatively easy, compared to the challenges of enforcing them. Please read his interview, which starts on page 46.

Will the European Union and the World Trade Organization step in to enforce the "Agricole" A.O.C. standard? Will producers in the USA, Haiti, Brazil and many other countries be allowed to use (often very loosely) the "Agricole" denomination on their labels?

The threat to "Agricole" is not an issue just for producers, but also for consumers who should know what the name means from a production perspective and how this controlled denomination can guarantee a



consistent level of quality, now and in the future.

In this issue Marco Pierini also starts us on a new journey of historical research, based on the notion that the origins of rum may be French indeed! You can read Part I of this new series starting on page 34.

Cheers.

Vivi

Luis Ayala, Editor and Publisher

Linked in

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!

### Pixie Spiced Rum

Walking the aisles at a local shop I had not been to in a while I discovered this dusty bottle of rum sitting on the shelf. Having never seen or heard of it before deciding to pick it up and see what this new to me spiced rum was about.

Pixie Spiced rum is part of the product line offered by Local Choice Spirits of North Charleston, SC. This company has a robust portfolio of Local Choice products across several core spirit categories including whiskey, vodka, and tequila. Looking at the business model it appears they source spirits and create private brands for their customers.

#### **Appearance**

The squat 750 ml short handled bottle is sealed with a synthetic cork. The black labels provide very little quality information about the product and is overloaded with marketing jargon. In the tiny script on the front of the bottle it appears the statement "Rum with a blend of natural flavors".

The rum has a dark amber color in the bottle and glass. Swirling the liquid creates a razor thin line that quickly thickens and drops waves of fast moving legs before finally evaporating, leaving behind a ring of residue around the glass.

#### Nose

The aroma of the rum provides notes of vanilla, cinnamon, allspice, cream soda lollipop, with hints of clove and ginger.



Sipping the rum reveals a spirit with a very thin mouth feel. The spices swirl with the vanilla forming the midnotes, while orange peel, cinnamon, and cloves form the foundation. Sweet honey augments the spices and as they begin to fade there is a brief eucalyptus oil note. The allspice and ginger notes linger as the rum fades in a soft finish.

#### Review

The flavors of the rum are well balanced with no one flavor dominating for very long. The vanilla note is the heart of the spirit in which all the other flavors ebb and flow around in the profile. With a lot of spiced rum products on the market, it is nice to find something at 40% ABV that does not have a heavy chemical bite. This is a common problem due to all of the chemical additives that a lot of the brands use. Due to the lack of chemical notes, I would be inclined to experiment with it in a Spiced Rum cake recipe and see how it holds up.

Overall, I wish we had a bit more information about how the spirit was produced, but was pleased with the spiced rum.



# THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft

# Single Cane Estate - Consuelo

In 2015 Bacardi partnered with distilleries in the Dominican Republic and Jamaica to create the "Single Cane Estate Rums" line for the Duty Free market. Recently, while cruising the Caribbean we came across the Consuelo expression and had to pick it up and give it a try. The sugar cane for this rum is harvested by hand from the southeast region of the Dominican Republic.

There is no information about how the product is distilled; only that it is a blend of rums aged between one and five years and blended to 40% ABV.

#### **Appearance**

The rum comes in a brown and gold box with a red band detailing the country of origin. The front label provides the basic detail and that the rum is made from a single source of sugar cane.

In the bottle and glass the rum holds a gold color. Swirling the liquid creates a razor thin line that thickens slightly and drops fast moving legs. The liquid evaporates quickly, leaving behind a ring of residue around the glass.

#### Nose

The aroma of the rum delivers a mix of vanilla, ethyl alcohol, brown sugar, roasted nuts, and char notes.

#### **Palate**

Sipping the rum provides an immediate rush of vanilla, followed by slightly acidic wood tannins, char, and an overly sweet finish. As the rum fades a chemical residue coats the teeth and tongue. It took a few sips of water to clear the unpleasant aftertaste and residue from my palate.

#### Review

I am always intrigued with Duty Free exclusive products and the curiosity certainly got me this time. lacks complexity and is certainly fine for mixing in a drink, but does not provide much in the way of additional flavors to a cocktail other than a sweetness that can knock it out of balance. I made a couple of daiquiris with it, the first was overly sweet. I halved the simple syrup in the second one and it was closer to a regular daiguiri, but still on the sweet side. If I see the Single Cane Estate Jamaican product, I will pick it up to see what experience it provides. far as Consuelo rum is concerned; I was disappointed with the product, and would not recommend purchasing it.

This is a ten-dollar rum in a 35-dollar package. You can easily find something much better than it while traveling.





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www.bacardi.com

# **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

Here is a Martinique inspired popular dish called "Colombo" which I enhanced with a touch of Rhum Agricole. This is a recipe that is sure to get your friends and family coming back for more. Bon appetite!!

### Chicken Colombo with Rhum

Ingredients for the Spice Mix:

- ½ tsp Coriander Seeds
- ½ tsp Mustard Seeds
- ½ tsp Cumin Seeds
- ½ tsp Aniseeds

"A bottle of wine contains more philosophy than all the books in the world."

- Louis Pasteur

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# Ingredients for the Colombo Powder:

- 4 tsp Curry Powder
- 1 tsp Ground Mustard
- 1 tsp Dried Oregano
- ½ tsp Ground Aniseeds (or fennel seeds)
- ½ tsp Allspice

#### Colombo:

- 8 skinless, bone-in chicken thighs
- 3 Tbsp Olive Oil
- · 1 Red Onion, thinly sliced
- 6 Garlic Cloves, peeled and halved
- 1 tsp Crushed Red Pepper Flakes (or to taste)
- 1 tsp Chopped Chili Pepper (or to taste)
- 2 Tbsp ground Colombo Powder (see recipe above)
- 3 Gold Potatoes, peeled and cut into quarters
- 1 Sweet Potato, peeled and cubed
- 1 zucchini, cubed
- 2 green onions, chopped
- 1 can (14 oz/398 ml) coconut milk
- Juice of 1 lime
- 2 oz White Rhum Agricole (Blanc)
- · Salt and pepper

#### **Directions:**

Spice Mixture: With a mortar and pestle, coarsely grind the seeds.

**Colombo:** Coat the chicken in the spice mixture. In a Dutch oven or large pot, brown the chicken in the oil. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside on a plate.

In the same pot, soften the onion and garlic with the pepper and Colombo powder. Add oil, if needed. Return the chicken to the pot and add the vegetables, coconut milk, rhum blanc and lime juice. Season with salt and pepper.

Cover and simmer for about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Remove the lid and cook for about 15 minutes longer or until the meat pulls away from the bone. Adjust the seasoning.

Serve over steamed rice.



# THE RUM UNIVERSITY LABORATORY

www.RumUniversity.com

+ C acidum Vitrioli

+ C. concentratum, d.dilutum

+Oacidum Nitri, Obanphlogistkalum

V Aqua fortis

10 acidum Salis Oto | dephlogificatum

R Aqua Regis

# Acidum fluoris mineralis

odo acidum arfenici

+v. acidum Vegetabile

+ acidum tartari

+ acidum Sacchart

A acetum

+a. acidum animale

+ acidum urinæ phosphori

45 Acidum formicarum

A acidum aereum; almosphæricum

O Sal alcalinus

Op. Sal alc. purus (Causticus)

Ov. Alcali fixum vegetabile

Om Alcali fixum minerale

A alcali volalile

₹ Jerra

₩ Lapis

: arena

\* Calx, p. pura (uflulata)

YA Calz vitriolata (Jelénites, gipfum)

Y Jerra ponderoja
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making your own

# Martinican Punch Coco

#### Ingredients

For the homemade coconut milk:

- 3-4 coconuts (including their water)
- 200 ml of water per coconut (so 600-800 ml)

#### For the punch coco:

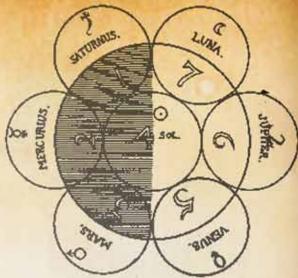
- 800 ml of coconut milk
- 300 ml sweetened condensed milk
- 100 g cane sugar
- 1 tbsp cinnamon powder (or 2 sticks cinnamon)
- 1 tbsp nutmeg powder
- 1 tbsp ginger powder
- 2 tbsp vanilla extract or 2 vanilla pods
- 300 ml white rhum agricole
- 200 ml rhum vieux (dark rhum agricole)

#### Preparation

For the coconut milk:

Clean your coconuts and break them into smaller pieces before putting them into a food processor. You can also shred them by hand but it's a lot of work. Heat up the water and coconut water but don't bring it to a boil.





Pour the warm water on top of the shredded coconut into a large bowl and start mixing together with your hands. Massage well for about 5 minutes.

Drain the soaking coconut through a kitchen towel in 3 parts. Try to squeeze out as much milk as possible.

#### For the Punch Coco:

Use 800 ml of the just prepared milk and slowly heat it up in a large pot together with the sweetened condensed milk. Add all the condiments, sugar and vanilla (if using vanilla pods halve them before). Keep stirring for 45 minutes to about an hour on a low flame so that it reduces and thickens slowly.

Use a wooden spoon and swipe with one finger on the back of the spoon. When the liquid stays in place it's the perfect consistency.

Cool completely at room temperature and mix together with the two types of rum (this will make about 1.3 l). Fill in a bottle or drink right away with some ice.

Source: eileenskitchenstories.com



# 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.







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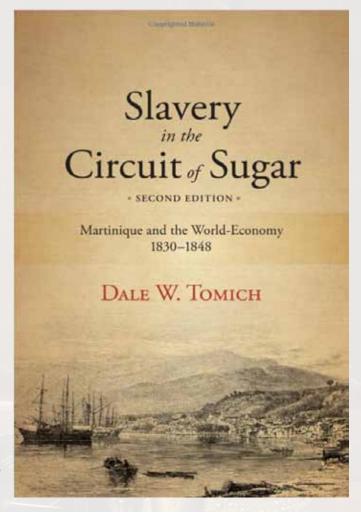
## Slavery in the Circuit of Sugar - 2nd Edition

We must explore and study the past in order to fully understand the present. The sugar industry has not always relied on automation and machinery to perform the ardous tasks inherent in sugar production.

In this book, author Dale W. Tomich takes us on a journey through the economic conditions surrounding the establishment of sugar production in Martinique.

Here is a look at the topics covered:

- Preface to the Second Edition
- Acknowledgements
- Introduction to the First Edition: Sugar, Slavery, and Capitalism
- Introduction to the Second Edition: The Capitalist World-Economy as a Small Island
- Chapter 1 Sugar and Slavery in an Age of Global Transformation 1791-1848
- Chapter 2 The Contradictions of Protectionism: Colony Policy and the French Sugar Market, 1804-1848
- Chapter 3 The Local Face of World Process
- Chapter 4 Sugar and Slavery: Forces and relations of Production
- Chapter 5 The *Habitation Sucrière*: Cell Unit of Colonial Production
- Chapter 6 Obstacles to Innovation
- Chapter 7 A Calculated and Calculating System: The Dialectic of Slave Labor
- Chapter 8 The Other Face of Slave Labor: Provision Grounds and Internal Marketing
- Conclusion The Global in the Local: World-Economy, Sugar, and the Crisis of Plantation Slavery in Martinique
- · Appendix 1 Estimated Volume of the



Slave Trade to Martinique, 1814-1831

- Appendix 2 Slave Prices by Age and Occupation, 1825-1839
- Notes
- Bibliography
- Index

Series: SUNY Series, Fernand Braudel Center Studies in Historical Social Science Hardcover: 526 pages, Publisher: SUNY

Press; 2 edition (April 1, 2016) ISBN-13: 978-1438459172







Prowse through the rum aisle of a well-stocked liquor store and you are likely to find bottles labeled as "rhum." To the untrained drinker, these may be just an indication of a foreign-made product and nothing more, but those in the know recognize them as full-flavor relatives of the light rums most people are familiar with. Until recently, however, "rhum" and "rhum agricole" offerings were limited to products distilled and bottled in Martinique, in the French West Indies. But the proliferation of craft-distilling and the dessire by producers to differentiate themselves from competitors has resulted in a plethora of "rhums" or "Agricole Rums" being released from just about every country where there is a craft distillery.

Craft distillers, in some cases, use the "rhum" denomination loosely, not knowing (or deliberately ignoring) the fact that it is a protected denomination of origin. In other cases, they claim they use *the same* methods as the distilleries in Martinique and, thus, they should be able to say their products are "agricole-style."

There is also a lot of misinformation being posted on social media, claiming that continuous distillation columns are "industrial" and are only capable of producing neutral alcohol. How then, can the famous Agricole rhums from Martinique be made using **exclusively** column stills? The answer is that it is possible to produce heavy and light alcohols using continuous distillation, it all depends from which column the alcohol is taken out and how many plates are in the columns!

Please read our interview with Marc Sassier (pg. 46) from St. James for additional information on the challenges faced by true Agricole rum producers. You will also want to read Marco Pierini's new research series, starting on Pg. 34. Let's start our journey by reviewing the one and only definition of Rhum Agricole (pg. 24).



# Rhum Agricole - Official 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.

Visit the following link to download the original document in French: <a href="http://www.gotrum.com/downloads/2365/download/Rhum%20Agricole%20Regulation.pdf">http://www.gotrum.com/downloads/2365/download/Rhum%20Agricole%20Regulation.pdf</a>

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 rhum 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. The maximum yield allowed is 120 tons per hectare.

#### **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 rhum that has been "resting" for no more than 3 months since its distillation.
- "Elevé sous bois" means "oak aged" and refers to rhum 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 anhydruous alcohol (pure alcohol).
- "Vieux" or "old" refers to rhum 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 anhydruous alcohol.

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

# Here are a few questions to ask distilleries offering "Agricole-Style" or "Rhum Agricole" products distilled outside of Martinique:

[] Was the sugarcane grown in Martinique? The answer will, of course, be NO. Ask then if the yield of their sugarcane is lower than 120 tons per hectare (it should be).
[] Was the cane juice fermented in open containers? If the craft distillery has in-door fermentation tanks, more than likely they are capturing the CO2 and venting it outside (for safety reasons), so the answer is likely a NO.
[] Was the fermentation time shorter than 72 hours? Most craft rum distillers are fermenting for 4, 5 and more days, so the answer is likely a NO.
[] Was it distilled in Martinique? The answer will, of course, be NO.
[] Was it distilled using continuous distillation columns? Most craft distillers own and operate discontinuous pot stills, so the answer is almost guaranteed to be a NO.
[] Is the congener content compliant with the definition? Most craft distillers do not have access to the GC/MS equipment needed to determine these levels. Very few of them send their products to third-party labs. The likely answer is DON'T KNOW.

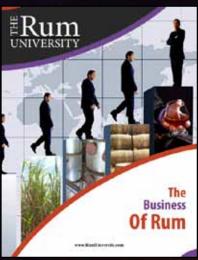
Evaluate the responses to the above questions and make a determination about how much the producer really is adhering to the official definition (count the number of "Yes" answers). Share the facts and your opinion with the producer and -if possible- help educate other consumers as well!



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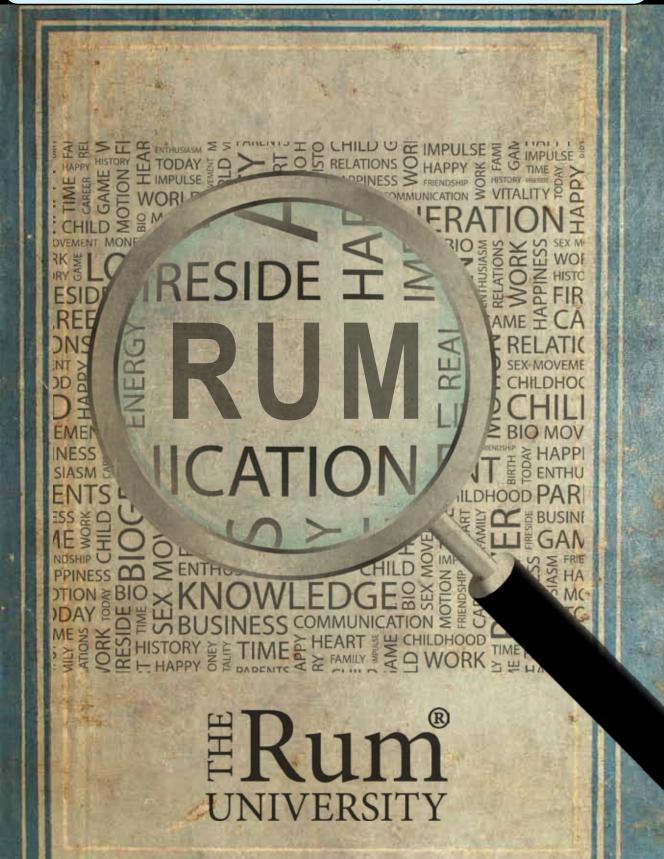


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## THE RUM BIOGRAPHY

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he rum industry owes its present success to many people who, through their vision, wisdom, ingenuity and/or dedication, were able to innovate or improve existing processes. In this new series we will explore these individuals, to honor their memories and to -hopefully- inspire a new generation of game-changers.

#### Featured Biography: Antonie van Leeuwenhoek

Antonie van Leeuwenhoek was born October 24, 1632 in Delft, Netherlands and died on August 26, 1723. He was the first microscopist ever to observe bacteria and protozoa. His researches on lower animals refuted the doctrine of spontaneous generation and his observations helped lay the foundations for the sciences of bacteriology and protozoology.

#### Early Life and Career

At a young age, Leeuwenhoek lost his biological father. His mother later married painter Jacob Jansz Molijn. When his stepfather died in 1648, Leeuwenhoek was sent to Amsterdam to become an apprentice to a linen draper. Returning to Delft when he was 20, he established himself as a draper and haberdasher. He was married in 1654 to a draper's daughter. By the time of her death, in 1666, the couple had five children, only one of whom survived childhood. Leeuwenhoek remarried in 1671; his second wife died in 1694. In 1660 Leeuwenhoek obtained a position

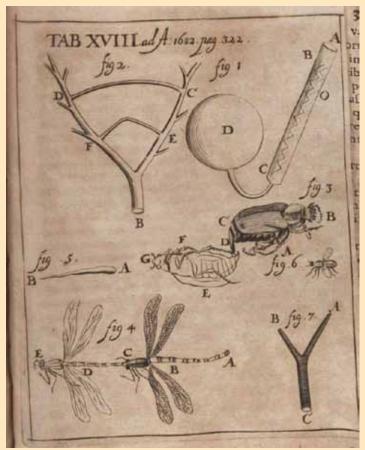


A portrait of Antonie van Leeuwenhoek (1632-1723) by Jan Verkolje.

as chamberlain to the sheriffs of Delft. His income was thus secure, and it was thereafter that he began to devote much of his time to his hobby of grinding lenses and using them to study tiny objects.

#### Discovery of Microscopic Life

Leeuwenhoek made microscopes consisting of a single high-quality lens of very short focal length; at the time, such simple microscopes were preferable to the compound microscope, which increased the problem of chromatic aberration. Although Leeuwenhoek's studies lacked the organization of formal scientific research, his powers of careful observation enabled him to make discoveries of fundamental importance. In 1674 he likely observed protozoa for the first time and several years later bacteria. Those "very little animalcules" he was able to isolate from different sources, such as rainwater, pond and well water, and the human mouth and intestine. He also calculated their sizes. In 1677 he described for the first time the spermatozoa from insects, dogs, and man, though Stephen Hamm probably was a codiscoverer. Leeuwenhoek studied the structure

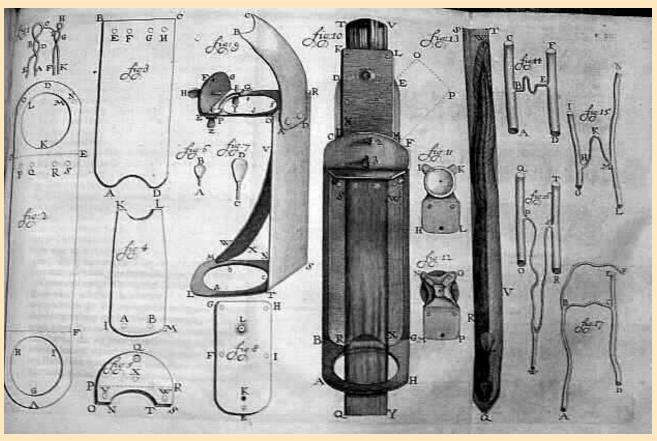




Above: replica of of a microscope by van Leeuwenhoek

Left: Illustration of critique of Observationes microscopicae Antonii Levvenhoeck... published in Acta Eruditorum, 1682.

Below: "Antonie van Leeuwenhoek's microscopes" by Henry Baker



of the optic lens, striations in muscles, the mouthparts of insects, and the fine structure of plants and discovered parthenogenesis in aphids. In 1680 he noticed that yeasts consist of minute globular particles. He extended Marcello Malpighi's demonstration in 1660 of the blood capillaries by giving the first accurate description of red blood cells. In his observations on rotifers in 1702, Leeuwenhoek remarked that in all falling rain, carried from gutters into water-butts, animalcules are to be found; and that in all kinds of water, standing in the open air, animalcules can turn up. For these animalcules can be carried over by the wind, along with the bits of dust floating in the air.

#### The Royal Society and Later Discoveries

A friend of Leeuwenhoek put him in touch with the Royal Society of England, to which he communicated most of his discoveries by means of informal letters from 1673 until 1723 and to which he was elected a fellow in 1680. His discoveries were for the most part made public in the society's Philosophical Transactions. The first representation of bacteria is to be found in a drawing by Leeuwenhoek in that publication in 1683. His researches on the life histories of various low forms of animal life were in opposition to the doctrine that they could be produced spontaneously or bred from corruption. Thus, he showed that the weevils of granaries (in his time commonly supposed to be bred from wheat as well as in it) are really grubs hatched from eggs deposited by winged insects. His letter on the flea, in which he not only described its structure but traced out the whole history of its metamorphosis, is of great interest, not so much for the exactness of his observations as for an illustration of his opposition to the spontaneous generation of many lower organisms, such as "this minute and despised creature." Some theorists asserted that the flea was produced from sand, others from dust or the like, but Leeuwenhoek proved that it bred in the regular way of winged insects.

#### **Methods of Microscopy**

Leeuwenhoek's methods of microscopy, which he kept secret, remain something of a mystery. During his lifetime, he ground more than 500 lenses, most of which were very small—some no larger than a pinhead—and usually mounted them between two thin brass plates, riveted together. A large sample of those lenses, bequeathed to the Royal Society, were found to have magnifying powers in the range of 50 to, at the most, 300 times. In order to observe phenomena as small as bacteria, Leeuwenhoek must have employed some form of oblique illumination, or other technique, for enhancing the effectiveness of the lens, but this method he would not reveal. Leeuwenhoek continued his work almost to the end of his long life of 90 years.

#### Did you know that...

- ... by the 1850s, microscopes were both standard scientific equipment in labs and a pedagogical-entertainment standby in middle class Victorian homes, where the animalcules took on a life of their own.
- ... the German scientist Carl Zeiss (1816-1888) developed the compound microscope "Stand I"; Zeiss's firm still makes microscopes to this day.
- ... modern day distillers at large plants often use fluorescent microscopy or polarized filters to identify bacteria in raw materials or in fermentation tanks. This would not be possible without the ground work carried out by Leeuwenhoek.





y 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. Through History I have always tried to know the world. 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 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 new Blog: www.therumhistorian.com

I have published a book on Amazon: "AMERICAN RUM - A Short History of Rum in Early America".

AND IF IT WERE THE FRENCH CARIBBEAN THE FIRST CRADLE OF RUM?

#### 1. SAINT CHRISTOPHE, MARTINICA AND EAU-DE-VIE

The first clear evidence of rum production – that is, a strong alcoholic beverage made from the fermentation and then by the distillation of the products of sugar cane - in the West, can be found in Brazil at the beginning of the 1600s.

However, it is common knowledge in the rum world that if not the very birthplace, the cradle of rum was the English colony of Barbados around 1650. There, it is claimed, a real commercial production of rum started. This common knowledge relies mainly on the book of Richard Ligon "A True and Exact History of the Island of Barbados" published in 1657. Ligon visited Barbados from 1647 to 1650 and described the new distilled beverage as "the drink of the island, which is made of the skimmings of the Coppers, that boil the Sugar, which they call Kill-Devil".



Map of Saint Christophe (now St. Kitts)

But, after thorough research on the Early French Caribbean, a subject little studied by scholars and well-nigh unknown to the public at large, I have come to the conclusion that things may have gone otherwise. According to some documents, a commercial production of rum may have started in Saint-Christophe, Martinique and other French islands, a few years before it did in Barbados.

It would seem that everything started in Saint-Christophe, present-day Saint Kitts. The English settled there in 1623, whereas the exact beginning of the French colonization is uncertain, around 1625. What is certain, albeit forgotten, is that the French had been sailing in the Caribbean, had fought against the Spanish and had temporarily inhabited some islands right from the beginning of 1500s. For the sake

of simplicity, let's say that they had arrived immediately after Columbus and before the English.

They partitioned the island, with the English in the middle and the French on either end. At the beginning, relations between the French and the English were good, and together, a little while later, they exterminated the Carib who lived on the island. Then their relations worsened and the island was disputed for years between the two powers, until the final victory of the British in 1783.

In 1626, at the instigation of Cardinal Richelieu, the Company of Saint-Christophe was founded in France to promote the colonization of Saint-Christophe and other islands. More French settlers arrived and they started to develop



Map of Martinique

a society in many ways similar to the one, much better known, that was developing in Barbados in the same years. In 1635, the Company was re-founded under the new name Company of the Islands of America and it started the colonization of Martinique and Guadalupe. The Company got from the French Government a monopoly over trade, land ownership and various rights over the settlers. Like the English, the French too were looking out for land where to grow the tropical products so in demand all over Europe. At the beginning they grew tobacco, then they tried with other staples, among which sugarcane.

Also the French settlers drank a lot and wine and brandy were among the most sought-after goods. The Company endeavored to get sufficient quantities through, but they failed, so the wine and brandy imported from France were not enough and they were costly. The settlers resorted to contraband, buying from the omnipresent Dutch, but the prices stayed high. So, they tried their hand at producing in loco something to drink which was strong, plentiful and cheap.

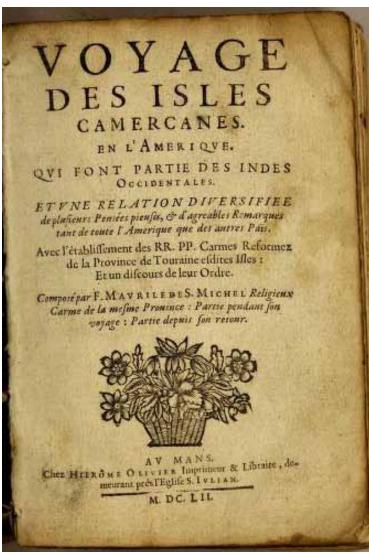
The French called *vin*, wine, the grape wine itself and also other fermented beverages, so *vin de canne*, cane wine, is a fermented beverage made from sugarcane. On the other hand, they called *eau-de-vie*, water of life, every distilled beverage. So *eau-de-vie de canne* is water of life from sugarcane, that is, rum. For the sake of correctness, I believe it is fairer to show the original French documents first, then their English translation.

Minutes of the "Assembly of the Company's Stakeholders", 13 August 1639: "Sur la demande faite par Jean Faguet à ce qu'il plût à la Compagnie lui permettre à

l'esclusion de tous autres pendant six ans de faire faire dans l'île de la Martinique et de Saint-Christophe de l'eau-de-vie soit de vin ou de tous autres fruits ou légumes qu'il pourra faire ou recouvrer par son soin et industrie dans lesdites îles, offrant de payer XX livres de pétun pour chacune barrique d'eau-de-vie qu'il fera, à la charge que nul autre ne pourra faire pendant lesdites six années sous peine qui seront ordonnées.

A été accordé audit Faguet de pouvoir faire pendant six années à l'exclusion de tout autre dans lesdites îles de l'eau-de-vie de ce qui croîtra en icelle, a la charge de payer à la Compagnie le XX° de l'eau-de-vie qu'il fera, avec defense à tous autres d'en faire dans lesdites deux îles pendant ledit temps à peine de confiscation de celle qu'ils feront et de mille livres de pétun d'amende."

"Regarding the request made by Jean Faguet in order that the Company grant him for six years an exclusive license to make water of life on the islands of Martinique and Saint-Christophe, both from wine and any other fruit or legumes that he will be able to grow or find through his ingenuity and industriousness on the above-mentioned islands, offering to pay XX pounds of tobacco for each cask of water of life that he will produce, on condition that during the aforementioned six years, nobody else is allowed to make it under the penalties which will be determined, the aforementioned Faguet is granted exclusive licence to make water of life on the aforementioned islands, using what grows on them, for six years, on condition that he pays to the Company the XXth part of the water of life he will produce, with everybody else being banned from producing it on the two islands during said period under penalty of confiscation of the water of life they have produced and a fine of a thousand pounds of tobacco."



S. L. Mims in his "Colbert's West India Policy" published in 1912 writes:" It is possible and even almost certain that it is a question of the manufacture of brandy from sugar cane" that is, rum. We cannot be completely sure, though. It is clear from the text that they meant to use local plants. Even before the Europeans arrived, the natives made various fermented beverages and the settlers drank them for want of anything better; the most widespread ones were Masbi, made from sweet potatoes and Oüicou, made from cassava. Perhaps Faguet meant to distill these beverages but, given the traditional production systems, the quantities were probably meagre. In any case, I have found no clear evidence. On the contrary, cane wine was relatively plentiful and cheap. It makes

sense to think that M. Faguet wanted to produce also a spirit from sugar cane, that is, rum.

From "Relation de l'establissement des Francois depuis l'ann 1635" (more or less: "Report on the settlement of the French after the year 1635") published in 1640 by Jacques Bouton:

"Ils aiment fort l'eau de vie, qu'ils appellent du brusle ventre" "they [the slaves] are fond of a strong water of life that they call stomach burner".

Later, the Company decided to start making sugar in their own right in Guadeloupe, where a few settlers had already been growing sugar cane for years. Here we can read what the Assembly of the stakeholders deliberated on 7 January 1643.

"Sur les requêtes présentèes par le capitaine Flament, serà écrit en sa faveur au sieur Aubert en l'île de Guadeloupe et au sieur de Leumont, intendant génèral des affaires de la Compagnie pour Saint Christophe. Lui serà expédié permission de faire de l'eau-du-vie durant trois ans, sans préjudicier à la liberté publique d'en faire à l'ordinaire, et d'en porter de France aux îles"

"Regarding the requests submitted by Captain Flament, letters in his favour will be written to Mr Aubert on the island of Guadeloupe and to Mr de Leumont, intendant general of the affairs of the Company on Saint Christophe. He will be granted permission to make water of life for a period of three years without prejudice to the public freedom to produce it as it is common, and to ship it from France to the islands."

In other words, the Company grants Captain Flament permission to produce spirits, but not exclusively. Other colonists are specifically allowed the right to continue producing them, as evidently they had been doing for some time.

It appears clear from these documents that in the French Caribbean producing spirit drinks was common practice. But there is an even more interesting document.

From "Voyage des Isles Camercanes en l'Amérique" by Maurile de Saint-Michel, published in 1652: "Je n'ay jamais veu pays où ils se trouvent quelquefois plus de diverses sortes de boissons, qu'à S. Christophe: plus antée & francisée de mon témps eque la Martinique; Car les Hollandois y aportent de sa Biere: les Normans du Cider, mais il ne s'y conserve pas long temps; les Maloüins s' s'arrestent a Madere, & en retirent du Vin qu'ils y apportent, & le vendemt bien cher; les Rochelois du Vin de Gascogne, que i' ay veu y aigrir bien-tost; mais le vin-aigre s'en debite bien; tout le monde met peine d'y apporter de l'eau de vie, & c'est la vie de ce pays. Les uns du Rosossol; d'autres y font du vin de cannes de sucre, ie diray tantost comme il est fact; d'autres du Oüicou: d'autres du Masbi."

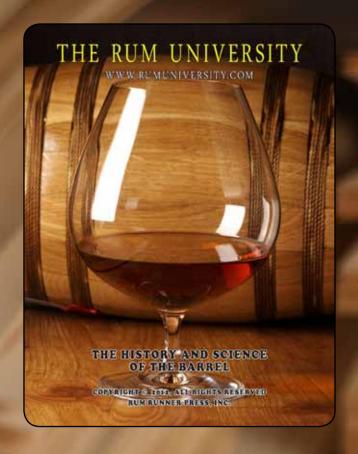
"Never before have I seen a country where sometimes more diverse kinds of beverages can be found than on S. Christophe: more ancient and longer Frenchified than Martinique; as the Dutch bring their beer there; the Normans their cider, but it does not keep for long; those from S. Malo stop in Madeira and collect the wine which they carry and sell at a hefty price; those from La Rochelle the wine from Gascony which ages and becomes sour very soon; but vinegar sells well; everybody works hard to get water of life to the island, and that is the lifeblood of this country. Some send there [water of life] from rosolio; others produce it from sugarcane wine, and I will soon tell you how it is produced; others from Oüicou; others from Masbi."

Here there can be no doubt whatsoever: Maurile de Saint Michel tells us clearly that on Saint- Christophe several types of spirits were produced regularly, among which one made from sugarcane: RUM. And his book was published 5 years before Ligon's.

This is all for now, see you again in the next issue.

Marco Pierini





# Do you want to learn more about rum?

Visit
www.GotRum.com
and click on

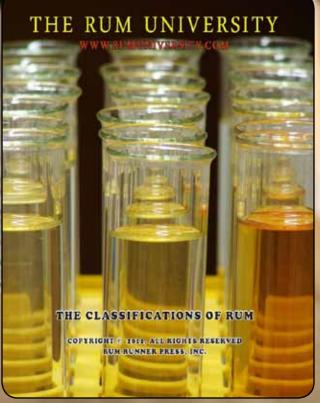
The Rum University and then on

**Printed Material** 

to purchase these short courses!



BETE



### **RUM IN THE NEWS**

by Mike Kunetka

# NEWS

#### **GOSLINGS**

This Fall, Golslings will release Papa Seal Single Barrel Bermuda Rum, a blend of column and pot still rums distilled from molasses. This single barrel rum is aged for 15 years in once used bourbon barrels with a medium char. Papa Seal will come from twelve selected barrels which yielded 2592 bottles. Each bottle will display both, the barrel and bottle number as well as the bottling date. Due to the nature of single barrel releases, slight variances in flavor are to be expected. "Our obsession has always been with crafting the finest rums possible, not the most rums," explains E. Malcolm Gosling, seventhgeneration patriarch and CEO of Goslings International Limited. "With that mantra in mind, we proudly offer Papa Seal Single Barrel Bermuda Rum, 'the father of all rums', to our celebrated product line. We hope that dedicated Goslings drinkers and newcomers to super premium rum will have the opportunity to enjoy this special spirit." Papa Seal will be bottled at 41.5% ABV www.goslings.com

#### NAKED IN JAMAICA RUM

Kemit Weeks, who owns the Fantasy of Flight Air Museum/Event Center in Polk City, Florida, has created his own planter's style dark rum called Naked in Jamaica. Over the years Kermit has sampled different Rums, mixing them together, trying to come up with what he thought best mixed with orange juice. And while some rums tasted great by themselves, he felt that something can happen when you mix them with other flavors and the blends do not always taste so great. As fate would have it, located just five miles from his house is Florida Caribbean Distillers in Auburndale, FL. Working in the lab with Director Stacy Woodward, Kermit quickly learned that mixology is an art, not a science. After many attempts, he came up with what he felt was just the right Rum to mix with orange juice. Naked in Jamaica recently won a Gold Award for Favorite

Boutique Dark Rum at the 2018 RumXP Awards. www.nakedinjamaica.com

#### **MOUNT GAY**

Mount Gay Rum Distilleries unveiled the first edition of the Master Blender Collection with the launch of XO - The Peat Smoke Expression. a unique and unconventional limited edition. Crafted by Mount Gay Master Blender Allen Smith, the expression is a complex blend, marrying the aromas of ripe bananas and toasted notes of Mount Gay XO, with the salty and smoky notes coming from peated whisky casks. To produce this unique batch of only 6,120 bottles, Allen Smith carefully selected and combined column and pot still rums, matured for 8 to 15 years in American oak barrels. The blend is then finished in peated whisky casks from the Isle of Islay, Scotland, for an additional 6 months resulting in a complex array of salty and smoky notes. "For this limited edition blend, I have worked to capture the perfect balance of elegant rum overtones and mellow, peated whisky undertones," says Mount Gay Master Blender, Allen Smith. "This one-of-a-kind blend is sure to please the most discerning of palates with its unconventional character, freshness and aromatic complexity," he explains. Each bottle features vintage-style labels and is individually numbered, adding to the rarity of this valuable collection. This edition is bottled at cask strength, 57% ABV, to reveal its true intensity. Offered in 750 ml, 1,200 bottles XO Peat Smoke Expression will be available in the United States from select premium retailers and e-commerce merchants. A legal deed dated from February 20, 1703 confirms the existence of a "pot still house" on Mount Gay's sugar cane Estate in Barbados, establishing Mount Gay as the world's oldest rum producer. Perpetuating a long-standing Barbadian tradition for more than 315 years, Mount Gay rums are handcrafted from a blend of single column and double copper pot distillates and matured in toasted oak barrels, delivering aromatic, flavorful taste, body and

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.

refined character. www.mountgayrum.com

## BEST RUM DISTILLERIES IN THE CARIBBEAN TO VISIT

If you are thinking of leaving the cold weather behind and visiting rum distilleries this winter, travel website, TripsToDiscover and the Chicago Tribune have created lists just for you. TripsToDiscover has list for everything, including the Eight Best Rum Distilleries in the Caribbean. Their list includes:

- Cayman Spirits Company Distillery, Georgetown, Cayman Islands, www. caymanspirits.com. Their Seven Fathoms Rum is aged in fine white oak barrels that are anchored 42 feet below the ocean surface.
- River Antoine Rum Distillery, Grenada. It is the oldest water powered distillery in the Caribbean that is still in operation.
- Casa Bacardi, Puerto Rico https://www3. bacardi.com/casa-bacardi/ Massive facility offers four tours: Historical, Tasting, Mixology and Bottle Your Own Rum.
- John Watling's, Bahamas http://www. johnwatlings.com/ Caribbean sugar cane, fermented into two distinct spirits, Firewater and Kill-Devil, then purified via coconut charcoal.
- Habitation Clement, Martinique www. http://habitation.fondation-clement.org/ Habitation Clement's old school stone structure could not be positioned more beautifully on this tropical dreamland.
- Callwood Distillery, Tortola. In a 400 year old facility, age-old methods are used to create a downright amazing cane syrup spirit
- St. Nicholas Abbey, Barbados http://www.stnicholasabbey.com/. Stories behind this elegant plantation distillery makes it the very best place in the Caribbean to taste rum.
- Appleton Estate, Jamaica http://www. appletonestate.com. Welcome cocktails and a generous tastings of a list of rums will definitely take you to your happy place!

The Chicago Tribune list offers two more distilleries:

- Rhum J.M Distillery, Martinique http:// www.rhum-jm.com. The Rhum J.M estate is one of the oldest and most beautiful, dating back to 1790.
- Le Galion, Martinique http://www.legalion. eu/. Martinique's only brown-sugar factory uses a decades-old process to make its fruity, funky Grand Arôme rum.

#### **HAVANA CLUB**

Developed in partnership with bartending legends, Havana Club Professional Editions is a new range of premium rums created for professional bartenders.

Edition A - To celebrate the 200th birthday of the famous El Floridita bar in Havana, the Cuban Bartenders Association sent Havana Club a challenge. Create a richly expressive white rum for the Floridita's legendary Daiquiri. Edition A was developed by Cesar Marti, Havana Club Master of Cuban Rum and Alejandro Bolivar, El Floridita's Head Bartender. Three different bases, each aged up to 4 years, and one aged aquardiente go into this rum. The blend is then matured again in very large, very old barrels. An innovative rapid filtration process, used only for this rum, carefully preserves the different aromas in the rum.

Edition B - By a twist-of-fate, a shipment of Islay whisky casks arrived in Cuba by mistake. Maestro Asbel Moroles decided to experiment, finishing small quantities of rum bases in the barrels. After promising results, renowned bartender Nick Strangeway was brought on board to consult on the perfect dark rum for making cocktails, one achieving a delicate balance between dry whisky notes and rich rum flavors. Edition B starts with a blend of 3 rum bases aged a minimum of 7 years each, plus an entirely new base finished in smoky Islay barrels. While the starting point is similar to Havana 7, the blending proportions are different. With the unusual addition of a whisky barrel aged component, the resulting blend is a super-premium dark rum, dry and richly smoky. https://www.havana-club.com

## **RUM IN THE NEWS (continued)**

by Mike Kunetka

# NEWS

#### **MATUGGA DISTILLERS**

Paul and Jacine Rutasikwa are preparing to start production at their new facility in Livingstone, which they say is "the first rum distillery in central Scotland". Up to this point, Matugga Golden Rum and Spiced Rum has been small batch distilled in London. The Rutasikwas began exploring central Scotland when Paul, a chartered civil engineer by trade, started a master's degree in brewing and distilling at Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh. The £100,000 distillery is equipped with two 200 liter copper pot stills, capable of producing 50,000 liters of artisanal rum in its first year. Over the next year, the firm is forecasting a 400% increase in turnover and is hoping to create five new full-time roles, including positions in distilling and business development. The Rutasikwas say their rums have "a uniquely East African flavor profile", achieved using sugar cane molasses from the region and a masala chai blend of black tea, ginger, cloves, vanilla, cardamom and cinnamon. https://www.matuggarum.com

#### 8th GERMAN RUM FESTIVAL

The 8th German Rum festival was held last month in Berlin. Rum-Bar White Overproof Rum won Best of Show. Rum Bar Gold, along with Koloa Kauai Gold and Gold of Mauritius Dark won awards in the Gold & Dark Category. Bougainville White, Enghaven Rum Distillery 100% Pot Still and Nine Leaves Clear 2017 won awards in the White Rum Category. Rum Artesenal Spiced Byer's Island, Koloa Kauai Coconut Rum and Black Palm Vanilla won awards in the Spiced Rum Category. Rum Bar Rum Cream, Koloa Kauai Coffee and Ti Arranges de Ced 'Mirabelle won awards in the Rum Liqueur Category. Hampden Estate Pure Single Jamaican Rum, Worthy Park Single Estate Reserve and Rum Nation Jamaica 7 Year won awards in the Up to 8

Year Old Category. Alta Gama Brut Nature, The Real McCoy 12 Year and Alta Gama Sec won awards in the 9 – 14 Year Old Category. Autentico Nativo 15 Year and 20 Year and Ron 1914 Edicion Gatun won awards in the 15 to 25 Year Old Category.

#### **WYLAND RUM**

After years of diving the most renowned areas of the world's "sugar cane" belt, internationally renowned marine life artist Wyland developed a taste for the fine rums in those regions. Now, he has created his own blend of rum, carefully sourced from the finest Caribbean distilleries for unique flavor and smoothness. Hand-crafted in small batches, Wyland Ultra-Premium Rum is aged eight years for the rum connoisseur who appreciates careful craftsmanship. The limited release product features Wyland's iconic art on Bruni Italian premium glass bottles. "Art and spirits go together perfectly," Wyland says. "I've always tried to create the greatest marine life art in the world, so I thought why not create the ultimate rum to go with it." Wyland Ultra-Premium Rum will be sold through select retailers in California, Florida, and Hawaii, and online at www.hitimewine.net. The rum is also featured on-premise on Norwegian Cruise Lines' fleet of sixteen cruise ships, including the new \$1 billion Breakaway-Plus class ship, Norwegian Bliss, with custom hull art work designed by the artist. "It's a pleasure to collaborate with Wyland once again, as he has not only been a great partner to our brand, but he is truly a member of the Norwegian family. We are pleased to support his new venture as he embarks on this journey. We look forward to featuring his new rum across our fleet" said Andy Stuart, President and CEO of Norwegian Cruise line. The silky smooth, 80 proof dark rum can be enjoyed by itself or slightly chilled. For Wyland, the art of rum is another way to connect with the more than

500,000 collectors who enjoy his art and for the millions of others who simply appreciate a premium drinking experience. It's also about making connections to something even closer to his heart. "The success I've had as an artist not only gives me the opportunity to share my art, but to support the work of my non-profit Wyland Foundation, which is having a global impact in the effort to protect our oceans and waterways." www.wyland.com.

#### **ANGOSTURA**

The House of Angostura has won six medals in the prestigious annual SIP Awards. The company won Platinum for its ANGOSTURA® Bitters, Angostura® 1919 and Orange Angostura® 7 Year Old, Double Gold medal for Amaro di ANGOSTURA® and Gold Medals for Angostura® 1824 and Angostura® 5 Year Old. All its Rums and Amaro were awarded the Consumer's Choice Award as well. The SIP Awards is a unique event on the global spirits calendar, as it is the only blind tasting competition that enlists consumers as judges. The results are therefore unaffected by industry bias and truly reflect the consumer's opinion. This was the 10th annual hosting of the event and saw a new record of 783 spirit brand entries, a dramatic increase in engagement with the spirit industry and consumers. SIP enlisted 122 consumer judges for the competition this year, strategically chosen from all demographics with the goal of bringing the people who regularly consume the competing spirits together to decide which brands deserved the award. "With more entries than ever before, this year's edition of the SIP Awards was even more competitive," Angostura's says Executive Manager-Marketing, Natasha Mustapha-Scott, "so the House of Angostura's achievements really demonstrate our brands' premium quality and their appeal to the people who really matter, the consumers!"

#### **MHOBA RUM**

One of the many interesting rums shown at The UK RumFest this year was Mhoba rum from South Africa. MHOBA Rum is made directly from fresh unprocessed sugarcane juice squeezed from sticks of Nkomazi sugarcane. The sugarcane is grown on the farm surrounding the distillery on the outskirts of the small town of Malalane in the heart of the cane-growing area in the Crocodile River Valley of Mpumalanga, South Africa.

The small team of MHOBA Rum employees handle the planning, growing, harvesting and pressing of the sugar cane and the creation and fermentation of the wash. Custom built small batch stills produce extremely pure and concentrated cane rum batches of between 20 and 25 liters. Each individual concentrated rum batch is then checked for taste and aroma before being blended with other suitable batches and local rock fissure water to achieve an ideal ageing concentration. After the distilling and blending process has been completed, the rum is aged in American white oak staves which are cut and charred on wood fire coals at the distillery. They showed several rums at RumFest: a French Cask Aged rum, a glass cask aged rum, an overproof 101 rum, a pineapple rum, two white rums and a high ester rum. http://www.mhoba.com/

## IMPORTANT: Clairin Casimir Recall by Paul Senft

In the June 2018 issue of "Got Rum?" Magazine, the Clairin Casimir review was published. On October 10, 2018, the U.S. Federal Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) issued a recall related to this product. During testing, elevated levels of lead were found (138 parts per billion) which is deemed unsafe for consumption in the United States. This recall is isolated to the U.S. as other countries and the European Union permit a slightly higher level of lead in their consumables.

La Maison & Velier has released a statement that they are working with the outlets to recover the recalled product. They are also working with the distillery to address the source of the lead and its removal from the distillation equipment. It was also noted that the rest of the Clairin line has been tested and found to be safe for consumption. LMV will continue to analyze and test their products to prevent this problem from occurring in the future.

RUM and the Environment





It gives me great pleasure to -once again- interview Mr. Marc Sassier. The first interview appeared in the November 2017 issue of "Got Rum?" and was so well-received by all our readers that we decided to bring him back for an encore.

Authentic Rhum
Agricole should
be protected at all
cost, especially now
that "craft" distillers a

that "craft" distillers around the world are attempting to benefit from its fame.

Margaret Ayala, Publisher

Welcome back to "Got Rum?" magazine Marc! I can't believe a year has come and gone since our last interview in 2017. You are now on your sixth year with Saint James, congratulations!

Q: Have your professional responsibilities/activities changed since our last interview? Also, last year you mentioned that one of the biggest challenges the A.O.C. faced was protecting the denomination of "Agricole". Is this still the case?

Yes because in the meantime rums have appeared (from Brazil, Mauritius and other countries) with our denomination. Requests by third countries have been made to the European Union, which has recently given us precedence for use and protection, the term being protected by the WTO in the



coming days. I hope this will happen and be applied!

We want to avoid confusion, it is not because you have a pure cane juice rum, that you have an "Agricole". Agricole Rhums must meet strict specifications and be able to justify the intrinsic quality of its product (see pg 23).

Haiti has the Clairin, Brazil the Cachaça ... and we have Rhum Agricole. If other countries have a historical particularism they should have a particular name and a dedicated history. The intrinsic quality, conveyed by the 'Agricole' term, cannot be misled by opportunism. Products madefrom cane juice (instead of molasses) can use the term "(pure) cane juice rum".

Q: Have any new challenges been

#### identified over the last year?

Currently we are redefining more precisely our geographical area, because all of Martinique Island cannot provide A.O.C. canes, only the selected lands. This work is long-term, and the experts will shortly release their report.

Our specifications were presented in Brussels, and have been approved by the DG Agri (=Directorate-General of the European Commission). Now we are awaiting the response of the other committees for the coming months. Then we will start a process to implement some changes, especially with the will of some producers to launch specific finishes. We are looking to register it at the European level, but we must define it to protect all the essence of our designation.





Q: There are different initiatives to force producers to disclose and/or limit the use of ingredients in their distillates. Common examples are sugar and caramel, but there are others. What are your thoughts on this subject?

The definition of rum is so broad, it is sometimes difficult to understand. With Rhum Agricole we announce the color with the strict specifications and our communication on the elaboration (no sugar, no flavoring ..., age counts ...), but the confusion can reign when one finds at the same time flavored rums sold under the term Rum and "spicy rums" ... So Europe has one of the most strict definitions of Rum, but that's not all, we must also make

sure it's applied as we see the sale of products that do not comply with this rule, or even modify it.

For example the sugar level: if we look at the European Union text, it should be zero, but it is actually going to be aligned to 20g / liter of final product. That's rather curious when we see the sugar hunt in the food sector. Of course the traditional French rums will remain without sugar. We had asked for example that this sugar must be from the cane, in order to correspond to the nature of the rum.

Should we force producers to label everything and so see that rums which are not sweetened and without flavouring



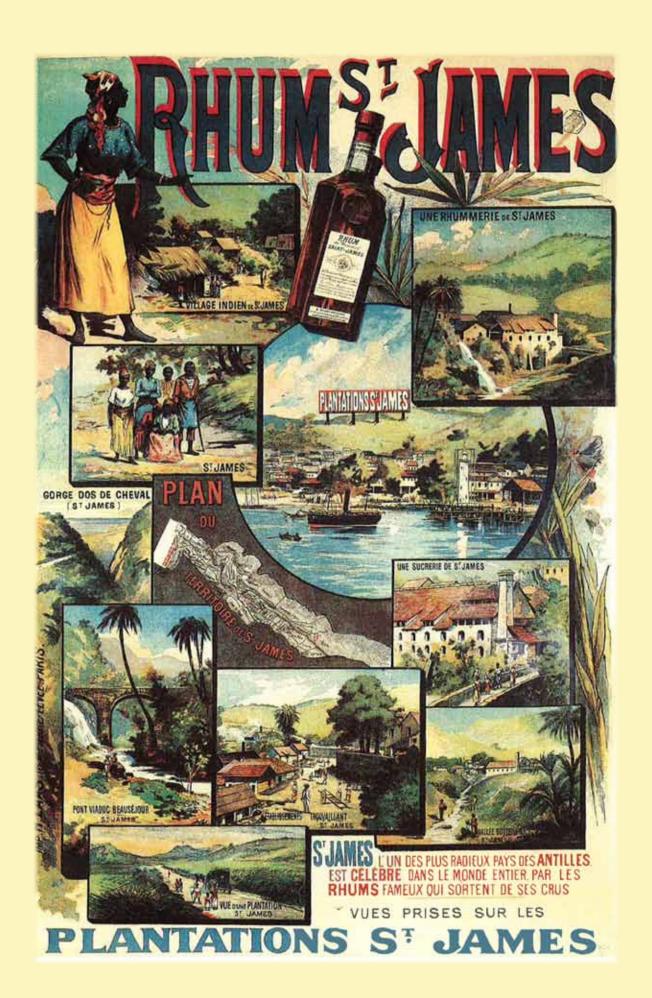
put a list of "0"? This can be a commercial argument, "sugar free" seems to be more and more used. I believe that by transparency, we must make it necessary to write any addition in the product (sugar, herbs ...). By the way this is actually the case in Europe, when one flavors or sweetens a Rum, one must name it "liqueur" or "punch" ... but unfortunately it's not at all applied.

Forcing labeling is one thing, but its control is all the more important because otherwise it is useless, we must ensure the veracity of

the mentions and ensure transparency.

## Q: What about *boisé*, do you think it is something that should also be disclosed by companies that use it?

Most spirit producers use boisé (oak extracts) for their products, it would be simpler if those who do not use it indicate it on their labels as a differentiator. The use of boisé in France is allowed, but only if made by aqueous infusion, it may be different in other countries.





Q: With the advent of "craft distilling," many small companies outside Martinique are releasing "Agricole-Style" rum/rhum into the market, produced using pot stills. By calling them "rhum" or "Agricole-style" do you feel they are paying tribute to the Martinique-made rhums or hurting them? Do you think the A.O.C. will or should intervene?

The wording "craft" meets the artisanal part of A.O.C. Agricole Rhum. We see "craft production" developing on all continents: this of course pays tribute to the quality of our product, but sometimes it is also used in a purely commercial way. We are now seeing rum made from virgin syrup wanting to be named Rhum Agricole! Or cachaças becoming Agricole as well...

It is not enough to put "Agricole" on the label, we have a certain image associated to our products, and if everyone gets hold of the "Agricole" denomination what will remain of this rum which so natural...? Of what made its fame? As I said here above, "pure cane juice" is more appropriate for these rums in terms of definition. That's why we prefer to keep the "agricole" wording for ourselves and that each production area finds its own appropriate qualifier. Shouldn't they, as visionaries, find their own differentiators in order to stand out in this yast world of rums?

# Q: The weather is changing quite a bit around the world, has it affected sugarcane cultivation and/or rhum aging in Martinique?

Concerning the ageing, this doesn't yet have actual repercussions on the process, but it joins in the list of climatic hazards which are more numerous recently. So we have more contrast during seasons, rainy periods that have shifted etc...

If rums from molasses can buy their raw materials in several places, we must be right next to our sugar cane plantations and the cultivation of our raw material directly affects us. The planted cane will be harvested for more than 5 years, so the effect of a climatic hazard at a given

moment can have consequences for several years. A drought or an important root asphyxia, lead to a deterioration of fields, a recourage (local replanting) or a necessary complete replanting. These are what I called "legacy effects", that only fade in a long time.

Nevertheless, sugarcane remains a beneficial plant for our climate, being a C4 plant it fixes more carbon than others. For example, the 3800 hectares of canes planted in Martinique set the equivalent of 20% of our atmospheric pollution by gas exhaust cars. Did you also know that a study to show that the cover crop of sugarcane evaporated more water than other forms and cooled the ambient air up to 1.5 ° C!

Q: Craft distillers often ask us about technical/historical resources that can help them better understand Rhum Agricole. We often suggest they read "Le Rhum, sa Fabrication et sa Chimie" by J. G. A. Guillaume. Are there other books or manuals that you would recommend?

Before Guillaume you have the first descriptions by Pairraut (1903) and after him the book from Kervégant, very complete, the one from 1949 in particular. I wrote a book with Jean-Louis Donnadieu, for the 250th anniversary of SAINT JAMES plantations, where we have summarized the history of rum in several dozen pages. I often present these elements abroad (Japan, China, Madrid, Canada, Jamaica ...) or on various websites on the subject.

Margaret: Marc, thank you again for this follow-up interview and all of your great insight into the Rhum Agricole world!

Cheers! Margaret E. Ayala Bringing you rum since 2001, from the grass to your glass!

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## CIGAR & RUM PAIRING by Philip III Barake



My name is Philip IIi 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).



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year old. Mine is one of the remaining few bottles available, last released before the launch of the 12 year old, an iconic Cuban rum that I love for its simplicity. This time I'm only going to chill it and add a few dashes of Orange Bitters from Bitter Truth.

The technique is very simple: add three dashes of the bitters into a cocktail shaker filled with ice, add 3 Oz of the rum, stir gently (with a long bar spoon or similar utensil) while trying to keep dilution to a minimum. Pour contents into a chilled Martini glass (to keep the temperature low for a longer time).

The tobacco notes are very well-defined during the first third, but not due to the intensity of the cigar (which is also strong), but due instead to the low temperature of the cocktail. As the cocktail's temperature starts to increase, the balance between it and the cigar reaches perfection! Those who really enjoy the orange touch may opt to increase by one or two the number of dashes.

Since the cigar is a "Reserva de Habanos" it showcases more complexity and subtlety than the traditional line, since the years of aging round up the flavors, which is excellent for brands with medium to strong intensities.

This pairing is exceedingly simple, yet has complex nuances hidden inside, ideal for those seeking pairings that are "pure" and almost devoid of mixers. It is so easy to prepare and certain to please!

Philip IIi Barake #GR CigarPairing



