

A glass of rum is the central focus, filled with a dark liquid. It is adorned with a purple and gold masquerade mask, a purple feather, and a gold ribbon. The glass is surrounded by purple and gold beaded garlands. The background is white.

Got Rum? TM

MARCH 2014

FROM THE GRASS TO YOUR GLASS!

**EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW - ANGEL'S SHARE
- BARTENDER'S CORNER - RUM HISTORIAN -
RUM IN THE NEWS - TOBACCO & RUM**



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ON THE COVER: The Spirit of Mardi Gras.

INSIDE COVER: Dreaming of Mardi Gras.

FROM THE EDITOR

Speakeasies

The name “speakeasy” refers to drinking establishments that resemble those from the US prohibition era. The name is the only thing today’s joints have in common with their predecessors, since the diversity and quality of the liquors available has changed drastically over the past century. The name is thought to be derived from the quiet, murmur-like tone of voice in which people referred to them, in an attempt to avoid drawing unwanted attention from the authorities.

Over the past few years I have visited my share of speakeasies, some of them take the clandestine theme a bit too far, focusing more on it than on the quality of the drinks they serve. Others masterfully recreate prohibition era cocktails but fail to visually transport you to that era. A few of them are able to do both gracefully and at a price that is likely to develop repeat clientele.

Despite the fact that I don’t frequent them as often as I could, I believe speakeasies play a very important role in today’s mixology scene. They are a constant reminder of a dark passage of American history (the “noble experiment”) and of the indomitable spirit of consumers who would not be denied of their libations regardless of the illegality of their consumption.

This month we celebrate Mardi Gras, a quintessential feast for all our senses. New Orleans, a city indelibly tied to Mardi Gras, was and continues to be home to noteworthy speakeasies. Some, like the city itself, have willingly evolved with the years, others have struggled to hold on to a past that is harder and harder to keep intact.

Wherever you happen to be, I invite you to find and visit a couple of speakeasies this month. While there, engage the bar staff,



find out why they’ve selected the drinks on the menu and ask how many of these drinks were invented during prohibition. You will be surprised to learn that many of them were. Lucky for you, however, the quality of the ingredients today will make the drink a hundred times better than it would have been back then!

As you sip your cocktail, imagine having the constant fear of policeman busting through the door at any time, taking all present to jail for having committed the crime of consuming a mixed drink. You will experience prohibition, illegality, fear and finally joy once you realize it is all in the past.

Cheers!

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

Luis Ayala, *Editor and Publisher*

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

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

THE ANGEL'S SHARE



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!





Brugal Especial Extra Dry

Brugal Especial Extra Dry is the newest entry into the marketplace, replacing Brugal Blanco on the shelves. This white rum is produced from 100% Dominican Republican sugar cane molasses. After fermentation the rum is distilled twice using Brugal's proprietary methods to remove the sweeter alcohols, which helps create the signature dryness in their portfolio. They then age the rum for two to five years using American white oak barrels. Finally, when the time is right, the Brugal Rum maestros select the rum casks that they wish to use for blending. The rum is then charcoal filtered three times, removing all color from the rum. Once the rums are blended they are brought to 80 proof during a resting period using local Puerto Plata spring water. The Rum Maestros then do one final check and only after it meets their approval is it bottled.

Appearance/Presentation

This is the second Brugal expression I have seen with the new bottle design. The cut and feel of the 750 ml bottle reminds me of Brugal 1888 but lacks the heft and is really easy to handle. The blue metal screw cap is secured to the bottle via the neck wrap. While the bottle is new it was good to see they kept the netting. Like the Blanco it is replacing, the bottle is wrapped in a slick silver netting that contrasts nicely with the crystal clear rum.

Nose

Pouring the rum in the glass releases a crisp ethyl alcohol aroma that settles quickly. I let the glass sit for a few minutes and discovered an aroma of caramel, vanilla-coconut, light butterscotch, and a tiny hint of smoky oak.

THE ANGEL'S SHARE

Palate

The crispness of the alcohol pops up front with a nice spicy heat that forms the base line. Additional sips reveal the light coconut-vanilla notes from the aroma, hints of butterscotch pop through and smoky caramel comes in and lingers in a not surprising, considering the name, dry finish. The spicy heat of the rum counters any strong sweetness of the flavor profile and instead provides a pleasant robustness that demonstrates the age range of the blend.

Review

Brugal Especial Extra Dry has a nice robust flavor profile that plays well in all sorts of cocktails-Classic, Tiki, etc. If you prefer really sweet rums, this rum may not be for you. By design the flavors the Rum Masters blend together and make sure are present in every bottle, mute the sweetness and instead provides a versatile dry rum for your drinking pleasure.

With rare exceptions I do not sip white rums neat; however, I could see where Especial would be enjoyable with a single ice cube. I wanted to see how it worked with fruit juices. After writing up the tasting notes, I mixed up one of my favorite midday cocktails called a Rum Sunrise. 4 ounces of orange juice, 2 ounces of Especial, stirred in a rock glass with three or four ice cubes. I then drizzled one tablespoon of grenadine over the top and when the grenadine touches the bottom of the glass it is ready to drink. The rum augmented the fruit flavors and provided enough of its own that I enjoyed the drink more than usual. Mojitos and Daiquiris are easy to recommend for this rum; however, I challenge you to experiment with it with some of your favorite cocktails and see how it adapts. It is my understanding as Blanco sells through we will see Especial replace it on the shelves, so if you do not see it in your store that sell Brugal, it is only a matter of time.

Blue Chair Bay Coconut Spiced Rum

Blue Chair Bay is Country stars Kenny Chesney rum line. He worked closely with master blender Mike Booth of the West Indies Rum Distillery to create the flavor profiles of the three rums in the line.

Each 750 ml bottle has the same shape, but has a different wrap that distinguishes its look from anything else in the marketplace.

Appearance/Presentation

The smoky pewter bottle with its blue and white script stands out on the shelf. Sealed with a wooden capped plastic cork topped with a black and silver safety seal.

A skull and cross bones is centered in the middle of the neck. Coming in at 53 proof this rum is clear in the bottle and glass. I observed a bit of white distillate in the bottom of the bottle. Shaking it reveals quite a bit suspended in the rum.

Nose

Pouring the rum into the glass releases strong notes of sweet vanilla and coconut countered by an earthy combination of baking spices. I let the glass sit for a few minutes and when I revisited it I discovered the spices and coconut have blended into an aroma that reminds me of eggnog.

Palate

First sip presented a swirl of strong vanillin, cinnamon and roasted coconut, which was immediately followed by the grounding notes of nutmeg and clove. As the rum starts to fade I detected the feint presence of glycerol around the edge of the tongue along with the light sting of the alcohol. The sweet coconut slowly fades in a smooth finish.

Review

This earthy spiciness balanced the sweetness of the rum and coconut creating a flavor experience that for me was easy to drink neat. The use of glycerol definitely smoothed out the edges of the low congener rum. Overall I felt this rum was a fine example of creativity and the art of blending. The trick with so many flavors going on was figuring out how to apply it to a cocktail. The Blue Chair Bay Rum website has a few ideas, and I encourage to go where inspiration takes you with this fun and flavorful rum.



www.bluechairbayrum.com

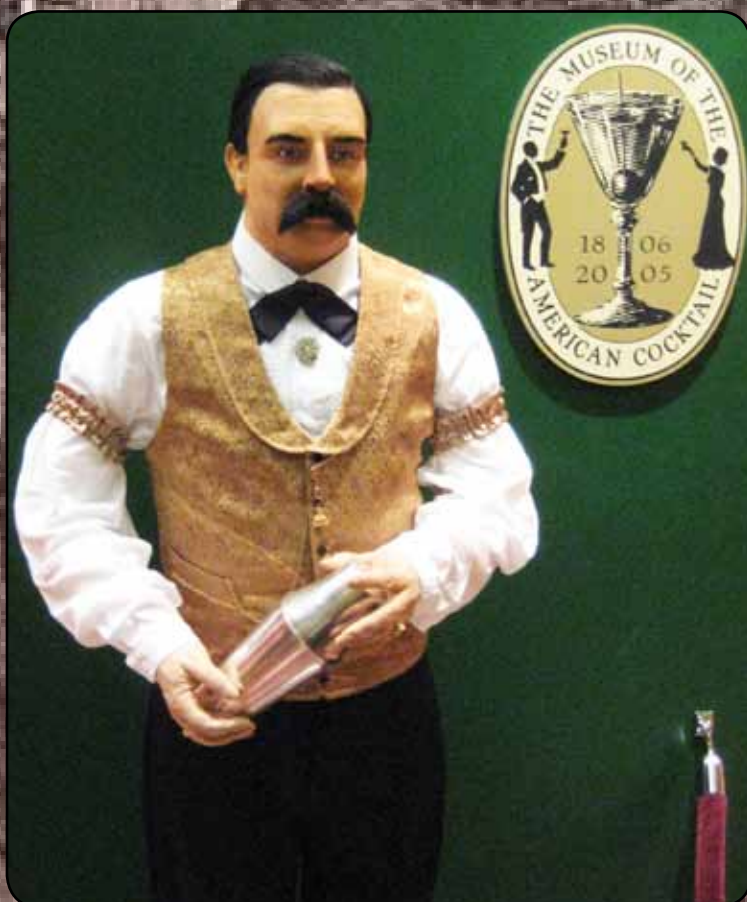
Bartender's Corner

When studying the history of a country, some scholars undoubtedly head to the libraries, to read and re-read manuscripts of yesteryear. I, on the other hand, prefer to start by exploring the culinary and mixological legacy of the bygone eras: I head to the bars and pubs!

Early colonial America was a constantly changing landscape. The recipes for their contemporary cookery and drinkery are a window into that time.

Join me as I journey through the best of what has survived, as I explore the drinks that forged and survived the growth of the American nation.

-Dr. Ron A. Ñejo



Left: Jeremiah "Jerry" P. Thomas (1830-1885) was an American bartender, pioneer in popularizing cocktails across the United States. He is considered "the father of American mixology" and nicknamed "Professor". His creativity and showmanship established the image of the bartender as a creative professional.

Mr. Thomas was also the proprietor of one of the most *récherché* saloons in New Orleans in the late 1800's. He was also formerly principal bartender at the Metropolitan Hotel, New York and the Planter's House, St. Louis.

Published Books:

The Bar-Tender's Guide (alternately titled How to Mix Drinks or The Bon-Vivant's Companion)

Early American Rum Cocktails - Part 3



photo: pleaseyourmaninthekitchen.blogspot.com

Early American Rum Cocktails #3: Tom and Jerry

Ingredients:

5 lbs. Sugar
12 Eggs
½ Small Glass of Jamaican Rum
1 ½ tsp. Ground Cinnamon
½ tsp. Cloves
½ tsp. Allspice

Directions:

Beat the whites of the eggs to a stiff froth and beat the yolks until they are thin as water, then mix together. Add spices and rum, thicken with sugar until the mixture attains the consistency of a light batter. In a small bar glass or mug add a table-spoonful of the mixture. Add a wine-glass of brandy and fill the remaining glass with boiling water. Grate a little nutmeg on top.

THE RUM HISTORIAN



My name is Marco Pierini, I own and run a small tourist business in my seaside town in Tuscany, Italy. A long time ago I got a degree in Philosophy in Florence, Italy, and I studied Political Science in Madrid, Spain. But my real passion has always been History. Through History I have always tried to know the world, and men. Life brought me to work in tourism, event organization and vocational training. A few years ago I discovered rum and it was love at first sight. Now, with my young business partner Francesco Rufini I run a bar on the beach, La Casa del Rum (The House of Rum), and we distribute Premium Rums across Tuscany.

And most of all, finally I have returned back to my initial passion: History. Only, 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 flavours; it has a terrible and fascinating history, made of slaves and pirates, imperial fleets and revolutions. And it has a complicated, interesting present too, made of political and commercial wars, of big multinationals, but also of many small and medium-sized enterprises that resist trivialization.

I try to cover all of this in my Italian blog on Rum, www.ilsecolodelrum.it

A JOURNEY TO BARBADOS

PART 1: DRAX HALL

Between the end of January and the beginning of February I spent two weeks in Barbados.

I was full of expectations. After reading and writing so much about Barbados, at last I would be able to see the cradle of rum directly.

I can now say with pleasure that Barbados has lived up to (almost) all my expectations. The two weeks were full of meetings and experiences. It's impossible to tell everything. If you want to have an idea, you can visit my Blog www.ilsecolodelrum.it

It's in Italian, but at least the photographs speak a universal language, luckily.

But there are some things which I'd really like to tell. I'll start from the most exciting.

One morning I asked a taxi driver to take me to Drax Hall.

It wasn't easy. The beautiful Jacobean house that James Drax built in the early 1650's to celebrate his wealth and power is now a private residence and it is outside the tourist itineraries. The taxi driver had never been there. The map helped us, but we had to ask for directions several times to the few human beings we came across.



At the beginning of the colonisation of the island, most colonists obviously settled on the coast, but James Drax pushed into the interior and even now the area is almost uninhabited. Eventually we got there. There wasn't anybody. The house seemed empty, with a few low outbuildings around. All in all, it looked like a farm. A few trees around, and gently sloping hills covered with sugarcane swaying in the wind, as far as the eye can see.

It is right here, perhaps, that everything started.

Here, on a distant day of the early 1640's far from prying eyes, James Drax started to grow a new, strange plant imported from Brazil: sugarcane.

It wasn't easy. At the beginning he made mistakes. The first crops were bad, the first sugar he produced was of very low quality. But, as well as capable and clever, James Drax was strong and determined and at last success crowned his endeavors. The crop went well, the refining process too and his sugar was sold at very good prices in Europe.

It was the beginning of that Sugar Revolution that would change forever the face of Barbados and of all the West Indies. And the destiny of millions of human beings.

In the complex factory for the extraction and refining of sugar that Drax built, with the help of the Dutch and perhaps also of Sephardic Jews, in what Ligon calls ingenio, did they already have a pot still? Did they already distil that "hott hellish and terrible liquor" that later would be called rum? In the plan that Ligon would draw only a few years later, yes, there was already a pot still (actually there were two). But in Drax's factory? We cannot know, but we like to think that there was.

I was moved. I got out of the car and I enjoyed the solitude, the silence and the wind. Then I took some photos. I don't know how much time passed, not much, anyway. Then a car arrived, some dogs barked and I saw someone moving.

The magic moment had passed. I got back into the taxi and we went away.

RUM IN THE NEWS

by Mike Kunetka

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 and is our newest contributor.

CRUZAN

After a five year absence, Cruzan has re-introduced their Estate Diamond Rum. However, this time there are two Diamonds, a Dark and a Light. They join the Single Barrel as part of the new Cruzan Distiller's Collection. The Estate Diamond rums were originally created by Hardy Neltropp, who served as Master Distiller at Cruzan from 1959-2007. These rums are aged between five and twelve years in American Oak barrels. Cruzan Estate Diamond Light Rum is then charcoal filtered to remove most of the color, but still retains the smooth and mature characteristics of the blend.

BRUGAL

The Edrington Group has seen some solid success with their ultra high-end releases for The Macallan, so they're bringing a very similar strategy and sensibility to Brugal, their rum brand. Brugal Papá Andrés Rum has all the elements for a ultra high-end release: it's a limited edition series with only 500 bottles produced a year, presented in a stunning crystal decanter, with rare rum hand selected by Brugal's Maestros Roneros. The Papa Andres blend varies from year to year but it consistently draws rum from three different kinds of casks: first filled Sherry, Ex-Pedro Ximenez, and first filled American Oak barrels. Brugal Papá Andrés was originally blended by the family to be served at family celebrations. Until now, the only bottles that ever became available were sold through charity auctions.

TANDUAY

Tanduay is one of the top selling, if not THE top selling rum in the world. Most of their business comes from their home country, the Philippines. They are now entering the competitive US light rum market with their Tanduay Silver Asian Rum. It is a blend of rums aged up to five years, but is not filtered, resulting in a light straw colored product.

WICKED DOLPHIN

Wicked Dolphin has taken their time in developing their Spiced Rum. They wanted a rum that truly represented Florida, with hints of oranges, honey, vanilla and subtle spices. These flavors are rounded out with the addition of some of their aged rum. The Spiced Rum joins Wicked Dolphin's award winning Silver Rum.

CAPTAIN MORGAN

Diageo, owner of the Captain Morgan brand, is also entering the highly competitive light rum market with their newly released Captain Morgan White Rum. Diageo hopes to appeal to both the light rum drinker, as well as the adventurous vodka drinker.

BATISTE AGRICOLE

Habitation Bellvue, on Marie-Galante, touts itself as a 'Carbon Negative' distillery that creates five times more energy than it uses by using the waste bio mass from the operation and a 4.5 mega-watt solar farm. It is the creation of an unusual collection of unique individuals: a Parisienne Socialite-Journalist, a Caribbean Eco-Agriculturist, a German Product Developmentalist and a Californian Big Idea Evangelist.

Batiste Rhum Agricole Blanc is made in small batches with the freshly pressed juice of locally grown, sugar cane. The cane is crushed, and the fresh cane juice, or 'vesou', is sent to the fermenters within hours. Batiste is currently available in California.

TIBURON RUM

Tiburon Rum is a hand crafted, double-aged, premium rum, from an old family owned distillery near the shores of the Caribbean Sea in Belize. Basil DeStefano, a Belize resident and rum lover, has joined with Belize-based Travellers Liquors, to create Tiburon Rum. Small-batch rums of various ages are re-casked by Master Blenders into Kentucky Oak Bourbon Barrels for the 'second maturation'. Tiburon Rum is currently available in Illinois, New Hampshire, Georgia and Florida.

RICHLAND RUM

Eric Vonk creates Vennebroeck Estate Private Reserve from locally grown fresh sugar cane juice or syrup, not molasses. He has spent the last fifteen years perfecting his proprietary fermentation process. Distillation is done in gas-fired potstills and the rum is aged in American white oak, medium-charred barrels for at least eighteen months. A portion of the production is earmarked for aging 5 years and beyond. Eric expects to release 8,000 cases in 2014. Richland Rum is currently available in Georgia and Tennessee.

A bottle of rum is the central focus, partially buried in a rocky, dark landscape. A light-colored ribbon is wrapped around the bottle, with the text 'Witness the birth of a legend' written on it in a serif font. The background shows dark, silhouetted mountains and trees under a dim sky.

Witness

the birth

of a legend

El Salvador's First Rum

MADRID RUM CAPITAL

A CLOSER LOOK



Mr. Javier Herrera, Director,
International Rum Conference

We see that you are celebrating the International Rum Conference yet again, this is turning into a must-attend show for all rum lovers, isn't it?

Yes, that's true. This is now an internationally-acclaimed event, one which has achieved very high prestige thanks to the seriousness with which we approach it and the utmost quality that we demand of all aspects. All members of the International Rum Conference are rum lovers at heart, and this is why we pour our devotion into everything we do for the event. Everyone attending this year's event in June will be able to witness this passion firsthand.

What exactly is the International Rum Conference?

On June 3rd and 4th we hold the conferences in a room with a maximum occupancy of 120 people, limited to brand owners, distillery owners, master blenders and a host of industry professionals, all ready to share and absorb insightful information about the rum industry.

On June 3rd, at 20:00, after the first full day of conferences, we will be presenting the International Rum Conference (IRC) awards, a total of 9 awards designed to highlight exceptional achievement in the industry. Last year's awards were given to:

- Best Rum Distillery: Industrias Licoreras de Guatemala, for its Botrán Rum (with IRC Quality Audit Certificate)
- Best Rum Producing Company: Complejo Licorero del Centro (Venezuela), for its Ocumare Rum (with IRC Quality Audit Certificate)
- Best Master Blender: Mr. Nestor Ortega, from Ron Santa Teresa
- Best Rum Expert: Mr. Roberto Serrallés de Destilería Serrallés (DonQ Rums)
- Best Rum Education Program: The Rum University
- Best Rum Mixologist: Mr. Pablo Mosquera from Ron Santa Teresa
- Best Rum of 2012: Cubaney Centenario Rum
- Best Agricole Rhum of 2012: Rhum Clément VSOP
- Best Packaging of 2012: Legendario 15 Year Old Rum

What is this IRC Quality Certification about?

Once we narrow down the candidate for the best distillery or rum company, a member of the International Rum Conference visits the facilities to conduct an in-situ audit, going meticulously over the standards of quality defined as part of our certification program. If the inspection is deemed satisfactory, the award is presented to representatives of the company. We currently offer three levels of certification, the first level (the one mentioned above) is included as part of our award program. Levels 2 and 3 go above and beyond



MADRID, SPAIN 2014
www.CongresoDelRon.com

III INTERNATIONAL RUM CONFERENCE & RUM TASTING COMPETITION June 2nd - 6th, 2014

the first level and require a markedly higher commitment to quality and an additional fee.

And what about the Rum Festival?



The Rum Festival takes place on the 5th and 6th, exclusively for professional members of the alcohol beverage industry. Attendees are able to sample rums from around the world. Last year the festival was possible thanks to the support from the following companies (in alphabetical order):

Bacardi, Botran, BPS, Caribe, Centenario, Chariman Reserve, Clément, Dictador, Diplomático, Don Papas, Don Q, Flor de Caña, Lampreo, Legendario, Medellin, Number 0, Ocumare, Oliver and Oliver, Pink Cow, Roble Viejo, Santa Teresa and Veroes.

Every year, the Rum Competition seems to gain more prestige and relevance in the industry. How have you achieved this?

Yes, you are right, we are very happy with the response we've had from the competing brands. Participation in the Rum Competition is completely FREE of charge. We only request that companies send three bottles of each rum to us, we've made arrangements with an importer who can handle the importation (for those companies who do not have a distributor in the E.U.) for a nominal fee. All expenses for the shipments are the responsibility of the company submitting the rums.

The judging panel is comprised by the best sensory experts in the spirits industry, all with proven track records in the production and/or aging of alcoholic beverages. The panel selection and validation process is supervised by Mr. Luis Ayala. All tastings are performed in a double-blind setting that is supervised by a certified public notary.

For more information about the competition or the festival, please write to: info@congresodelron.com.

www.CongresoDelRon.com



FREE COMPETITION REGISTRATION! VIP PARTIES RUM CONFERENCES

RUM IN HISTORY

Ever wondered what happened in the month of **MARCH** throughout history?

March Through The Years

1484 - Columbus asks João II of Portugal to back him in a westward voyage to the Indies, but João rejects the request.

1484

1534

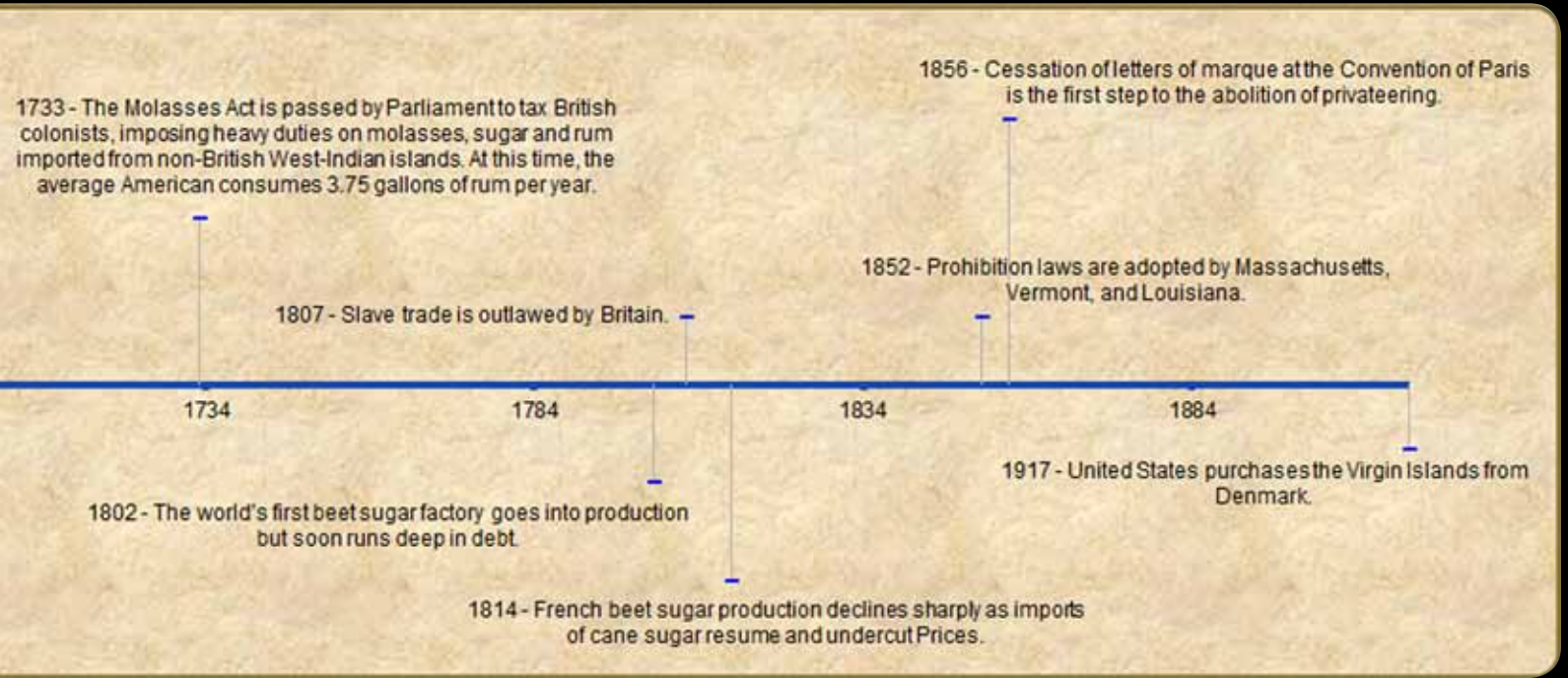
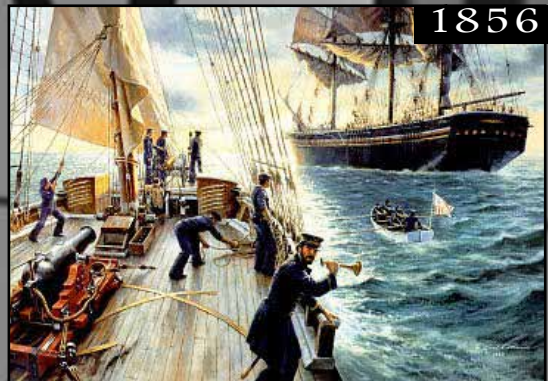
1584

1634

1684

1675 - Grain crop failure in England leads to a shortage of grain, limiting gin production. As a consequence, rum gains popularity in the English market.





EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



I first heard of Louisiana Spirits through a news article online. I reached out to the person who wrote the article and asked how I could reach out to Mr. Trey Litel. That same day I received a response with his email and phone number. I reached out to Trey and a few months later Luis and I had the pleasure of meeting Trey and the rest of the team in Louisville, Kentucky during the American Distilling Institute's convention. This was about two years ago.

Last year Luis and I took a drive down to Louisiana and had a marvelous time touring their distillery, checking out all of their merchandise in the gift store and enjoying a few drinks with the group at their beautiful tasting bar. Today, I have the honor of conducting this exclusive interview with Trey and look forward to sharing his story with all of you.

I want to congratulate Trey and his team for their grand opening last year and the launch of their Bayou rums. I wish Trey and his team much success and I look forward to visiting their distillery again very soon.

Margaret Ayala, Publisher



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

Trey Litel, President, Louisiana Spirits LLC, home of BAYOU® Rum. Our distillery and visitor center is located in Lacassine, Louisiana conveniently on the Interstate 10 corridor at Exit 48 on 22 acres facing I-10 at 20909 South I-10 Frontage Road. The beautiful facility offers tours, tastings, and an incomparable gift shop experience.

Can you tell us a little bit about Louisiana Spirits, what inspired you to start the company, who are your partners, etc.?

I have long been a fan of rum since my days at Bacardi USA in sales and marketing. I often wondered why Louisiana didn't have a world class rum given that our state produces

more sugarcane than any Caribbean island! I wanted to do something to celebrate our state and its illustrious culture.

My partners are Tim Litel and Skip Cortese. We enjoy hunting and fishing together and we discussed and enjoyed rum on many occasions together. We got serious about this about 4 years ago when we learned that craft distilling is capturing the public's attention with 400+ distilleries in the USA up from 60 a decade prior. Tim and Skip come at this business from the environmental services industry perspective. They have built tank cleaning facilities and water treatment plants and they know a thing or two about tanks, pipes, and pumps not to mention growing successful companies. We are smart enough to know that we need help and we have consulted with many industry experts and recruited a few to join us.

You are not the first distillery in Louisiana, but you are certainly the one making the biggest waves. Was this the plan from the beginning?

Absolutely! We believe in doing things right and that Louisiana deserves world class rum and a first class tourist destination experience. The funny thing is that our story struck a chord in Louisiana from the very start, when Channel 7 evening news interviewed and reported our first zoning meeting. We have been very open with everyone on our goals. The Louisiana sugar industry has my ultimate respect when you consider that they compete effectively against a world of imports. The sugar folks said that Bayou Rum is fulfilling a 50 year dream of theirs. This changed our perspective and made us realize that it is not about us, but for the citizens of Louisiana and the USA. If we do this right, Bayou Rum can be America's Rum from the heart of sugarcane country.

We understand your Master Blender is perhaps the most experienced in the US craft rum industry, can you tell us more about him?

Yes, he is Reiniel Vicente who was born in Cuba. Reiniel is a second generation master blender who learned the craft of rum making from his father while working at a rum company in the Dominican Republic for many years. Reiniel's father was a master blender in Cuba for 25 years. I don't need to tell you that many believe that Cuba produces the finest light rum in the world. Reiniel has contributed to our taste profile working with Jeff Murphy our head distiller from Privateer and Rebecca Creek to perfect our distilling processes. He runs our QA lab running a Gas Chromatograph daily to check out standards. It helps that he is only a semester short of a chemical engineering degree. Reiniel is a passionate talent and we are very fortunate to have him on the team and enjoying his role in Louisiana.

What types of obstacles did you encounter in Louisiana when you tried to get all the licensing needed to start a distillery? Do you think your state is easier or tougher than others in the country?

The first obstacle was Louisiana alcohol laws did not allow tastings or product sales at manufacturing facilities. Our local Louisiana economic development representative is Marion Fox and I will never forget when she said "I love a challenge!" Marion proceeded to introduce us to Senator Blade Morrish from Jeff Davis Parish and Troy Hebert, Louisiana's Commission of Alcohol and Tobacco Control. We met them and shared our vision. The two saw the opportunity for Louisiana and did not want yet another exception in the law and worked on passing LA senate bill #64 into a new law which enabled any distillery to provide small tastings and sell a bottle to visitors. This leveled the playing field for us with wineries and breweries in the state and has resulted

in 5 distilleries up and running now with 3 or 4 others in the planning stages. It was a beautiful thing to watch.

I will just say that Louisiana has a pro-business initiative and they proved it to us in very real terms.

Why rum? Is it because of the historical role sugarcane played in the early days of Louisiana? Are you planning to produce sugarcane vodka, gin or other spirits?

Rum is the answer! We are focused on producing world class rum from Louisiana sugarcane.

Historically, Louisiana had been making rum dating back to 1764 and up thru prohibition. The first settlers in colonial Louisiana were striving to survive and growing cane proved to be their answer. The French Chevalier in charge of the settlement shipped sugar, molasses, and 18 hogsheads of tafia (the French name for rum before the British named it!) to the King of France as proof of their success with the crop in 1764. A monumental "sugar rush" was kicked off a couple decades later after the 1795 growing season when Etienne de Bore crystallized sugar commercially and sold his sugar crystals for \$12,000! Word travelled fast and people arrived in Louisiana to buy land up and down the Mississippi river, up and down the bayous, to establish sugarcane farms and plantations. It was fascinating and inspirational to learn that knowledge transfer from the Caribbean assisted Louisiana to become the sugar capital of the USA in the mid 1800s providing up to 90% of sugar consumed then.

We celebrate this history with our "sugarhouse" recipe for Bayou Rum, and in our visitor center viewing room which chronicles the important Louisiana rum making milestones.

Please tell us a little bit about each of your rums.

We have two expressions of Bayou Rum on the market today. Each of them is quite flavorful and easy to drink.

Silver Bayou Rum:

Handcrafted in a traditional copper still utilizing our "sugarhouse" recipe which includes fresh Louisiana molasses and raw unrefined sugar straight from the mill, Silver Bayou Rum is smooth and full of flavor. It starts with a very floral nose that you would swear is sugarcane. I drink it on ice. It is incredibly smooth for a young rum.

Bayou Spiced Rum:

Our rum is rested with a "gumbo" of spices which infuses a traditional taste palate in a perfect balance. This product is great for sipping on ice and tastes amazing in traditional rum drinks and ginger ale for a Spanish Moss. Spiced rum is a vibrant category and Bayou Spiced Rum was blind tested against the major players, picked first overall for and the comments were that of balance, great taste and drinkability.

New products:

We filled up barrels early on and we expect to have our first aged rum, Select Bayou Rum available later this year. We have also been experimenting with another Louisiana agriculture favorite at harvest time, the Satsuma. Bayou Satsuma Rum is in development for summer release and it is infused with fresh Satsuma juice which is similar to mandarin orange for a unique and refreshing taste experience. Delicious!




Left to Right: Trey Litel, Skip Cortese, Troy Landry (Star of TV show "Swamp People") and Tim Litel during the global launch of Bayou Rum at Tales of the Cocktail 2013

What influence does Louisiana have on the flavor of your rum and do you think consumers outside the state will appreciate this influence?

Louisiana food and beverage is world renowned, and so is our celebrated culture. As we speak today, Mardi Gras season is in full bloom. Louisiana has influenced us deeply in our taste profile, packaging, and how we communicate in our marketing of Bayou Rum. We are proud of our heritage and proud to represent such an important cultural phenomenon, and we feel privileged to contribute to this wonderful culture with Bayou Rum. It is our hope that Louisiana fans distributed all over the world will recognize this and enjoy Bayou Rum with the same passion they exude for Louisiana. If our Facebook friends are any indication, we think they will.

Despite your production capacity, many would consider you a "craft" distillery because of your attention to detail. How do you feel?

We are definitely a craft distillery when you consider our use of local agriculture raw materials, our handmade batch distilling process and bottling line. Distilled and Bottled By Louisiana Spirits LLC, DPS LA-20001. What makes us different than most craft distilleries we have seen are our attention to detail and process excellence. We have temperature controls which measure to the tenth of a degree on our fermentation tanks and Vendome copper pot stills which enable us to dial in unmatched consistency. Our artisan distiller, Jeff and Reiniel collaborate to make precision cuts by hand during each distilling run. Our semi-automated bottling line is operated by 5 people who touch and inspect each bottle.



What is different about how we have approached the distilling business is our scale. We have worked over the last 3 years to construct a purpose-built distillery from the ground up and to employ state of the art process technology to perfect our craft distilling process. As far as we have seen, we operate on a grander scale than most craft distilleries.

What are some of your signature cocktails and which one is your favorite?

Bayou Daiquiri is tough to beat. The classic daiquiri is one of my favorites and fun to make because you get to shake it. Equal parts of fresh lime juice, freshly made simple syrup, and an ounce and a half of Silver Bayou Rum mixed up in a cocktail shaker – add ice, shake and serve up in a martini glass with sugar rim. When the balance is perfect, watch out, it is hard to stop!

Our most popular summer cocktail was the Bayou Breeze, followed closely by the Gator Bite - an awesome rum punch. When you have some good mint to work with, make a mojito with Bayou Rum, but we call that a Bayou Mosquito!

Check out www.bayourum.com/recipes for the details and some other great Bayou Rum cocktail ideas.

Do you offer tours of your distillery?

Yes, and tours are free. We offer 3 tours Tuesday thru Friday at 10am, 2PM, and 3PM, and 6 tours hourly every Saturday. Tourism is important to us because positive brand experiences result in future sales! We hope that everyone has a good time and remembers that when they are in the gift shop and at their local bar or liquor store. Visit www.bayourum.com/distillery for details and to make tour reservations.

The “Hurricane” has always been a Louisiana favorite cocktail. Do you have plans on helping revive this cocktail?

Tough question because the Hurricane cocktail was invented by the bartender at Pat O’Brien’s in New Orleans to get rid of a glut of poor quality rum! A good Hurricane is

supposed to mask the taste of rum for the drinker. That said, there is a lot of energy around this iconic cocktail lately. My favorite is a variation called a Blonde Hurricane which includes our great tasting Silver Bayou Rum. The bartender at the Ritz Hotel bar in New Orleans tried and tried to create a refreshing taste cycling thru a not to be named Puerto Rican light rum and a couple of other local choices before reaching out for Silver Bayou Rum. Skip and his wife Lisa consumed a couple of Blonde Hurricanes last weekend, and then a couple more and they are quite happy he did. By the way, we are participating in the 2014 Tales of the Cocktail bartender contest to recreate the Hurricane. To the talented bartenders, reach for Bayou Rum...get you some for great taste!

If people want to contact you or want to know how to get a hold of your rums, how may they reach you?

Check out www.bayourum.com for updates from us. If you want to contact me, I am most responsive on email, so drop me a line directly at trey@laspirits.net. Also, keep tabs on what we are doing via Facebook at www.facebook.com/bayourum or Twitter at www.twitter.com/bayourum. I am told we have a following on Instagram too.

Is there a particular message or comment you would like to share with our readers?

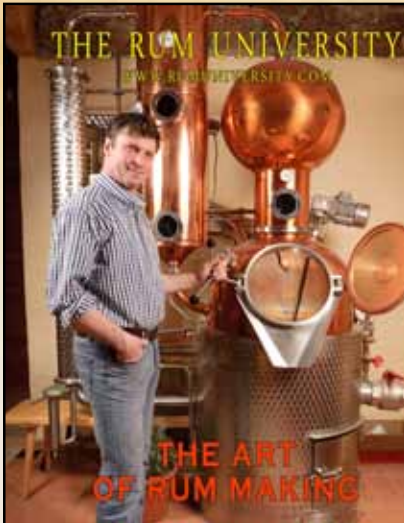
Ask for Bayou Rum and you will be supporting American sugarcane farmers!

Do you have any advice for someone who wants to build a distillery in the USA?

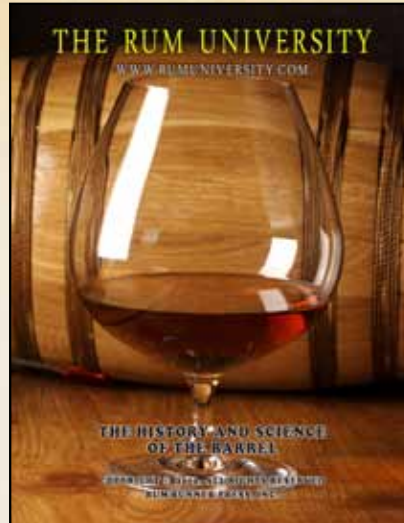
If you want to be authentic, use local agriculture, distill it, and bottle it yourself. Someone said that just because it is craft, doesn't mean it is good. Be prepared financially, because milestones take longer than you expect in building a distillery.



Our Most Popular Courses



The Art of Rum Making
(2 Day)



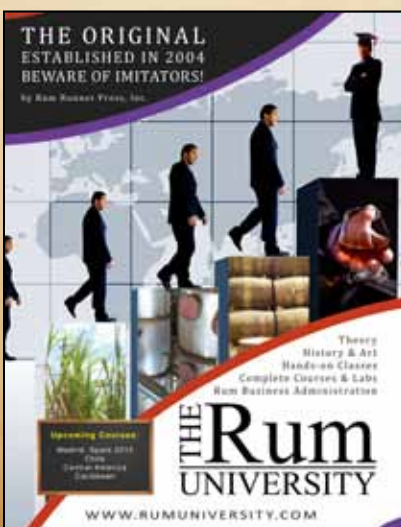
History and Science
of the Barrel (1 Day)



The Art of Rum Blending
(2 Day)

Additional Courses

- The Classifications of Rum (1 Day, for Brand Ambassadors, Journalists, Bloggers and Rum Afficionados).
- Advanced Rum Making for Craft Distillers (1 Day, only for current distillers).
- Advanced Rum Tasting Techniques (1 Day, for Brand Ambassadors, Journalists, Bloggers and Rum Afficionados).
- The Business of Rum (5 Days, for current or future Craft Distillery Owners).
- Developing a Private Label Rum (2 Days, for current or future Brand Owners).
- Custom Training Programs for Master Blenders, Aging Warehouse Managers, Laboratory Technicians and other Industry Members.



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PAIRING TOBACCO & RUM



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).

Illegality

For this pairing I have recurred to the realm of the illegal, just like in times of dry laws, smugglers and speakeasies. I conducted the pairing at *La Casa del Habano*, in Santiago (Chile), with a "puro" cigar from Nicaragua, something that should not be done (only Cuban cigars are allowed in *La Casa del Habano*). This alone makes the pairing illegal, but on top of this, *La Casa del Habano* does not allow patrons to smoke on their premises until March, due to municipal regulations, so we had to conduct this pairing with the curtains drawn in order not to attract attention.

To match the nature of the pairing, I decided to bring with me a rum that is not available for sale in the country, one without any tax stamps on it. As if this were not enough, while doing the pairing we were also enjoying a soccer game from the Copa Libertadores, connected to a neighboring store's Wifi signal! Since we were going with an "illegal" theme we decided to take it as far as we could, but all of this for a very serious cause: gastronomical pleasure. My special guest was Nicolás Rojas, manager of *La Casa del Habano*.

The puro I selected was Padrón Serie 6000, 52 ring gauge and 5 1/2" in length, this is from the basic product line, with an aging ranging



between 2 and 3 years. Visually this is a “figurado”, very similar to a classic “pyramid”, but a bit shorter. The wrapper could be classified as a Maduro.

The rum was Don Pancho 18 from Panamá, aged for a minimum of 18 years in traditional American oak barrels, private reserves from Don Pancho, set aside by him throughout his illustrious career. The rum is very well balanced, due in great part to the slow oxidation of all the congeners, with aromas reminiscent of dried fruits, freshly roasted coffee and burnt peanut husks.

As I lit up the cigar, I was immediately able to enjoy its great draw, similar to that of cigars with short filler or “*Tripa Corta*” (those not made with full leaves). Even though this is not the case with the Padrón, the draw is outstanding. We both noticed some spicy notes with touches of burnt straw that dried up our mouths, which made us want to start sipping the rum.

As we sipped the rum, the initial combination with the tobacco notes highlighted the alcohol flavors, something that caught me by surprise, but the palate quickly got used to the intensity. I could not say that this was the best pairing, since the tobacco kept gaining in strength and body, very dry and peppery, especially as we got closer to the last third of the cigar.

Meanwhile the rum kept on evolving in complexity, independently from the tobacco. What starts as a good pairing idea does not always end up as one. To remedy the situation, we reached out for a H Upmann Habano, a Coronas Major packed in a tube, with a 42 ring size and 132 mm in length and a band from Galera Eminentes.

We took a brief breath as we were back in the realm of tobacco legality...

As we lit up the Habanos, perhaps because our palates had been enjoying the rum for quite a while by then, the notes from the cigar were very reminiscent of an Espresso, with a lot of creaminess, which in turn made the perception of the rum much sweeter, but not overwhelming.

The H Upmann is less bold and strong than the Padrón, it shows many more notes of Mocca and Caramel Macchiato, it perhaps has a more traditional





profile. The aromas are very consistent throughout the smoking experience, which lasts about 30 minutes. The pairing between Don Pancho 18 and the Upmann is one that would be enjoyed by more consumers than the one with the Padrón.

I know some of our USA-based readers keep asking “how can I get my hands on some Habanos?”. I strongly believe that the door for Cuban cigars to enter the USA will soon be opened (talk about the extent of what is illegal in the USA in this day and age!).

In conclusion, if a tobacco and rum pairing does not work out at first, do not give up, you can always change the players. The problem is neither the tobacco nor the rum, but the fact that not every combination works for everybody. Perhaps a younger version of Don Pancho (like 8 year old) would have worked out better with the first cigar. The beauty of these pairings is the quest for the impossible, the search for perfection. Perhaps you will never find it, but searching for it is a great way to spend your life!

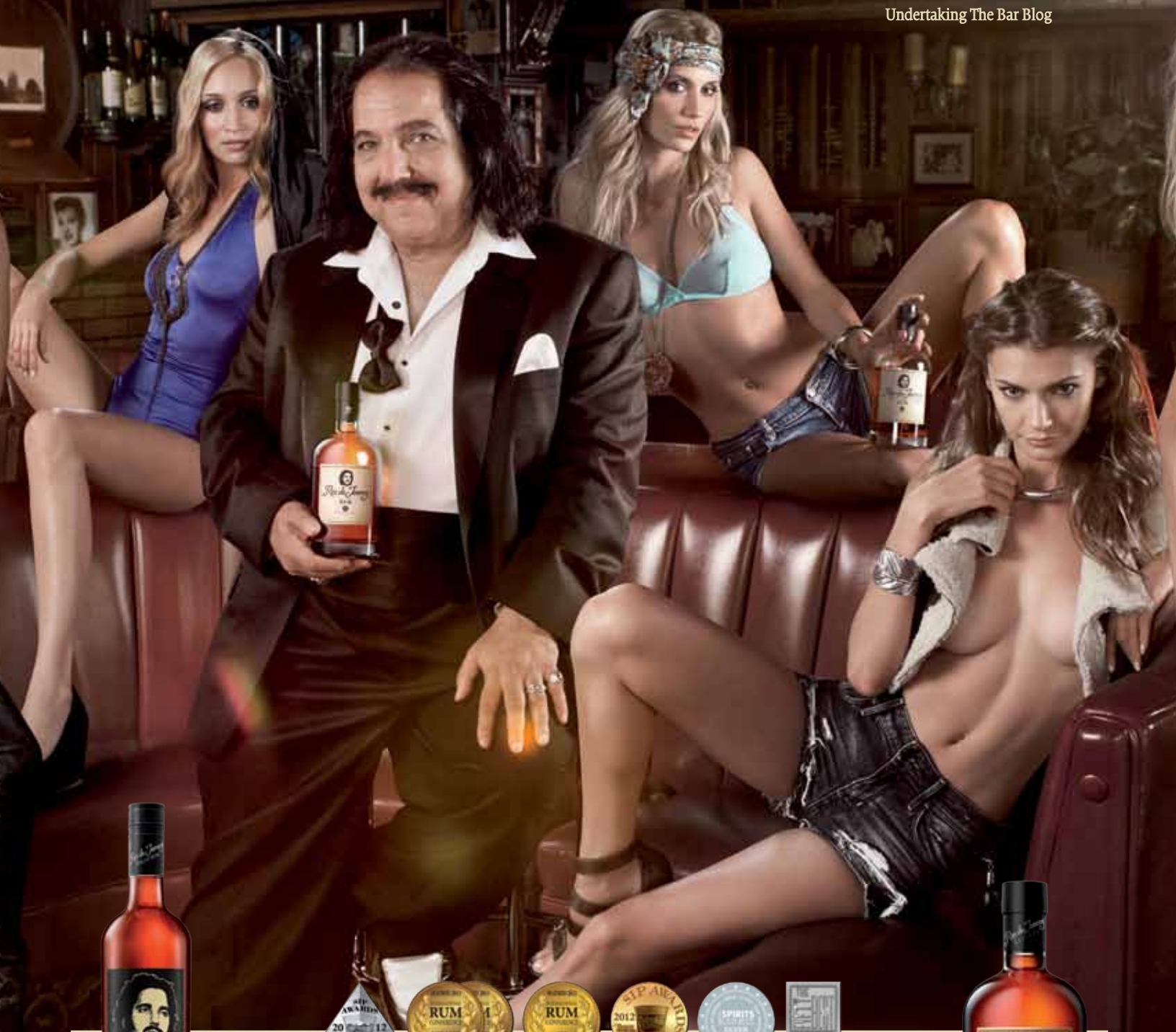
Cheers,

Philip Ili Barake
Philip@gotrum.com



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Undertaking The Bar Blog



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