

Got Rum?™

MAY 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: A field of sugarcane in bloom.

INSIDE COVER: Sugarcane Harvest, from the Ayala Collection.

FROM THE EDITOR

The Fight for Rum

By now everyone in the industry knows (or should know) about the rum war over the subsidies offered by the US government to producers in Puerto Rico and the USVI, but there is another rum war brewing that can also have a long-lasting impact on the landscape.

One of the unpredicted side effects of a world that is going “green” (that is, a world seeking ever more environmentally-friendly choices), is that some rum producing countries are giving incentives to their distilleries to produce fuel-grade ethanol, instead of food-grade rum from their sugarcane (or its derivatives). As a result of this tendency, there is a growing need for rum in many countries, one that is threatening to increase the price of aged rums in the very near future.

The underlying dark cloud behind these already gloomy threats is the fact that in recent years the international price of sugar has been inching back towards its record highs. What will happen when sugar gains back its lost margin? The cost of producing rum from juice or molasses will go up as well, coupled with an ever larger increase in demand for fuel grade ethanol. If the demand for electricity also rises (and there is plenty of evidence to suggest this will



be the case), the excess steam from the sugarcane factories will have a better ROI when applied to generating electricity rather than to operating the distilleries.

Rum has faced its share of obstacles before, and today’s version of rum is the result of the adaptations it needed to overcome them. These new challenges are unlikely to kill the resilient spirit of rum, but are very likely to force it into adapting even further in order to survive.

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!

Captain Bligh XO Special Reserve Rum

The first time I found Captain Bligh XO Special Reserve rum was at the 2013 Caribbean Beer and Rum festival in Grenada. At the end of the festival a friend gave me a bottle and I have been looking forward to sitting down and seeing what it is about.

The rum is produced by the St. Vincent Distillers Ltd. They import molasses and use a double column still to produce their products. Captain Bligh is aged for roughly 10 years in once used oak barrels then blended to 80 proof and bottled.

Appearance/Presentation

The 750 ml bottle is secured with a metal screw cap with cream front and back labels. The name and script are black with gold highlights. The rum holds a light amber color in the bottle and in the glass. Swirling the tasting glass creates a sturdy band with thick legs that descended quickly back down the glass.

Nose

I found the aroma fairly simple - sweet and sugary on top, grounded by oak, with caramel and vanilla in the midline with light bits of alcohol nipping around the edges.

Palate

Sipping the rum reveals a nice solid oak note with a comfortably smooth vanilla note that balances the acridness of the oak. As I continued to sip, I found the flavors blended and a caramel note came into play. As the experience turns towards the finish there is a bite of alcohol that transitions into a dry finish.

Review

I found this rum interesting in its simplicity. This simplicity is not a negative, instead it made it a versatile utility rum. You can sip it neat or mix it in punches or cocktails and it will hold up quite nicely.

Due to the sweetness of the rum I would be careful in using it in sweet cocktails. If you choose to sip it neat, I would recommend it as an after dinner dessert rum. Currently the product is found at St. Vincent and the Grenadine islands and is a fun addition to any bar or rum collection.



www.sunsetrum.com/captainblighxo.htm

THE ANGEL'S SHARE

High Wire Silver Rum

The Highwire Distilling company opened in Charleston, South Carolina in September of 2013. Using a 530 gallon copper pot still from Germany, this small batch distiller produces silver and gold rums, vodka, whisky and botanical gin. Their early batches of 80 proof silver rum were distilled using molasses sourced from Barbados, charcoal filtered, and bottled on site.

When we visited in October and purchased this bottle, their products were being distributed and sold at liquor stores around the Charleston area. They had begun barreling what will become their aged rum and were almost finished developing their botanical gin.

Recently I learned that they are now producing a South Carolina Agricole rum using locally grown sugar cane. To my knowledge, this is the first distillery on the east coast to produce this style of rum.

Appearance/Presentation

Crystal clear in the bottle and glass, this long handled 750 ml bottle has white labels on the front and back. The top of the bottle is covered with paper with the name of the company and year that the product was produced.

Underneath the paper I discovered the cork secured to the bottle with a clear

tamper proof seal. Swirling the rum creates a thin ring around the glass. The legs descend quickly down the glass leaving a ring of tiny beads behind.

Nose

The aroma is an interesting combination of minerals, caramel, vanilla, and light banana notes.

Palate

The immaturity of the rum is immediately present with a nice level of burn that carries the base line of the liquid. The vanilla and caramel swirl in the center with a slight hint of butterscotch. As the sting of the rum starts to fade I detect a faint mineral note which lingers into the finish.

Review

This un-aged spirit has a surprising crispness to it. By no means a sipping rum, it is a good multi-use cocktail ingredient. As this company hones its craft we look forward to revisiting their facility, trying their aged rum, and seeing what new products they are creating.



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Bartender's Corner

by Dr. Ron A. Ñejo



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

Early American Rum Cocktails - Part 5

Early American Rum Cocktails #5: Punch á la Ford

(An excerpt from *The Epicure's Almanac*, by Benson E. Hill, Esq.)

The late General Ford, who for many years was the commanding engineer at Dover, kept a most hospitable board, and used to make punch on a large scale, after the following method:

He would select three dozen of lemons, the coats of which were smooth, and whose rinds were not too thin ; these he would peel with a sharp knife into a large earthen vessel, taking care that none of the rind should be detached but that portion in which the cells are placed, containing the essential oil; when he had completed the first part of the process, he added two pounds of lump-sugar, and stirred the peel and sugar together with an oar-shaped piece of wood, for nearly half an hour, thereby extracting a greater quantity of the essential oil. Boiling water was next poured into the vessel, and the whole well stirred, until the sugar was completely dissolved.



The lemons were then cut and squeezed, the juice strained from the kernels; these were placed in a separate jug, and boiling water poured upon them, the general being aware that the pips were enveloped in a thick mucilage, full of flavor; half the lemon juice was now thrown in; and as soon as the kernels were free from their transparent coating, their liquor was strained and added.

The sherbet was now tasted; more acid or more sugar applied as required, and care taken not to render the lemonade too watery. "Rich of the fruit, and plenty of sweetness," was the general's maxim. The sherbet was then measured, and to every three quarts a pint of Cognac brandy and a pint of old Jamaica rum were allotted, the spirit being well stirred as poured in; bottling immediately followed, and, when completed, the beverage was kept in a cold cellar, or tank, till required. At the general's table I have frequently drunk punch thus made, more than six months old; and found it much improved by time and a cool atmosphere.

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 3 – WHY RUM?

As we know, “The Five Ws” are questions whose answers are considered basic in information-gathering. They are often mentioned in journalism, research etc. and they constitute a formula for getting the complete story on a subject. According to the principle of the Five Ws, a report can only be considered complete if it answers these questions: **Who** is it about? ; **What** happened?; **Where** did it take place?; **When** did it take place?; **Why** did it happen?

To the first 4 questions we have already given an answer: the Dutch started the commercial production of rum on a large scale, in the North East of Brazil, at the beginning of the XVII century.

But still there is no answer to the fifth question, why?

Precisely, why? Why did they go to great pains to produce the new beverage? To find the answer, we have to take a step back and, in order to simplify such a complex point, we have to narrow our scope and focus on English colonists in the Americas.

In the England they came from, the consumption of wine and beer was widespread and extremely large. The medical culture of the time saw water with suspicion. It was considered a hostile element from which to keep away as much as possible. Even washing oneself was advised against. Especially in the cities, drinking water was often filthy and polluted, so it was really dangerous.



To drink, to quench one's thirst, it was better to turn to wine. And wine had always been imported in great quantities from France and Spain. More recently, they had started to import brandy too.

The first colonists sailed to the Americas full of dreams and hopes, but what they found was very different from what they had expected. Life conditions were appalling. The environment was alien and hostile. New, terrible diseases scourged the settlements. Hurricanes battered men and their possessions. There was a permanent state of war against the Spanish and the French, and pirates were a constant threat. Poor white people had to work very hard, while the élite, the plantation owners, feared their rebellion. There were few white women.

Finally, all white people lived in fear of a slave rebellion.

In order to soldier on, in order not to go crazy, the colonists wanted to drink: drink hard, get intoxicated, escape from reality for a while. In alcoholic beverages they didn't look for the pleasure of taste, but for the inebriation that only alcohol can give.

From the very beginning they started to import wine and then brandy. But transport costs were high, so the imported beverages were expensive, only the rich planters could afford them.

Therefore, they also applied themselves to producing alcoholic beverages from the fermentation of local plants, such as cassava, potatoes, agave and others; they even tried to grow grapevine, with mixed success. But local production was low-alcohol and, anyway, insufficient.

When someone had the idea, and the know-how, of distilling the beverage which for a long time had been obtained from the fermentation of the by-products of sugar processing, it was an immediate boom. The new drink could be produced in great quantity, it was cheap and very strong. It had everything the colonists wanted. Sure, it did not taste very good, indeed at the beginning it was really bad, but it guaranteed inebriation cheaply and that was all that mattered. All the documents of the period and the few data we have tell us that the consumption of alcohol, and of rum in particular, was enormous. Many colonists must have lived in a state of permanent inebriation.

Then, when sugar made the planters rich, they imported the best wines and the best brandies, but they were a minority. The vast majority of the plantation workers, the sailors, the soldiers and the slaves certainly could not afford imported beverages. Rum, on the contrary, was affordable, and in great quantity. Rum, therefore, became their drink, their cheap Stairway to Heaven.

RUM IN THE NEWS

by Mike Kunetka



NEWS

CHAI RUM

SMAKS Luxury Group has introduced the world's first Chai rum. Among Kiran Shiya Akal's many talents and passions, he is a tea maker. He says he has found the perfect partnering between the leaves of tea from the East Indies and rum from the West Indies, a pairing that goes back to the 17th Century. Chai Rum is currently available in Barbados, Trinidad and St. Thomas.

SELVAREY WHITE & CACAO RUMS

Don 'Pancho' Francisco Fernandez is famous for his award winning aged dark runs. Now he is producing a white and a flavored rum for Selvarey. Selva = jungle; rey = king. For Selvarey Rums, Don Pancho ferments Grade A molasses and distills the nectar in four copper column stills built in 1922 by the American Copper & Brass Works. The distillate is aged in American white oak barrels that previously aged fine bourbon.

For the White, Don Pancho chooses a 3 year old rum for its youth and vibrancy, and combines it with a rich, full bodied 5 year old mark.

For the Cacao, he selects a 5 year old rum whose inherent flavor is enhanced with the infusion of the finest locally sourced chocolate. His goal is to produce a white and flavored rum fine enough to sip on the rocks.

SAMMY'S BEACH BAR RUM

Imperial Brands has announced that it has signed an agreement with Sammy Hagar's newest spirit, Sammy Beach Bar Rum. Imperial Brands will assume all sales responsibility in the United States and Canada for the rock star's award-winning silver rum.

PENNY BLUE XO RUM

Printed in Mauritius in 1847, the Penny Blue stamp is considered one of the rarest stamps in the world. From the oldest distillery in Mauritius now comes Penny Blue XO Rum. Named after the famous stamp, Penny Blue is made at the Medine Distillery.

Master Distiller Jean Francois Koenig selects individual casks at the peak of their maturity, having been aged in Cognac, Whisky and Bourbon barrels. Penny Blue is natural in color and is not cold-filtered in order to preserve the heart of the rum. It is bottled on the Medine estate and distributed by Anchor Distilling.

ST. GEORGE AGRICOLE RUM

The folks St. George did not want to make a 'normal' rum; they wanted a true agricole. They wanted to use true cane juice, not molasses. Small-diameter California sugar cane is grown outside Brawley in the Imperial Valley. Immediately after harvest, the stalks are

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@gotrums.com. Mike Kunetka is a landlocked rum enthusiast, he is based in Colorado, USA and is our newest contributor.

shipped to the distillery where fresh cane juice is extracted by running the stalks by hand through a sugar cane mill. The freshly pressed, uncooked cane juice is then fermented and distilled in small batches in a 500 liter copper pot still.

LOST SPIRITS POLYNESIAN INSPIRED RUM

Last month I wrote about Bryan Davis's Navy Style Rum. Since then, I have had the great pleasure of tasting both the 55% and 68% ABV versions. I had to bribe my brother-in-law to hand deliver them to Colorado. Well worth every cent, the rums are potent, flavorful and unique. Look for a Polynesian Inspired Rum to follow shortly. I don't know much about it yet, but I am definitely sending the brother-in-law more money.

SAN FRANCISCO WORLD SPIRITS COMPETITION

This year, 39 spirits experts judged 1,474 spirits from 41 states and 63 countries. Wray & Nephew, Inner Circle and Bounty won Double Gold Medals in the Overproof Category. Tanduay Silver won a Double Gold in the White Rum Category. Havana Club Selección de Maestros and Real McCoy won Double Gold in the Dark/Gold Category and Zaya, Fecundo Rum Exquisito and Appleton Estate won Double Gold in the Extra Aged Category. Caribbean Treasure Rumby Vanilla Rum won Double Gold in the Flavored Rum Category.

DESTILERIA SERRALLES

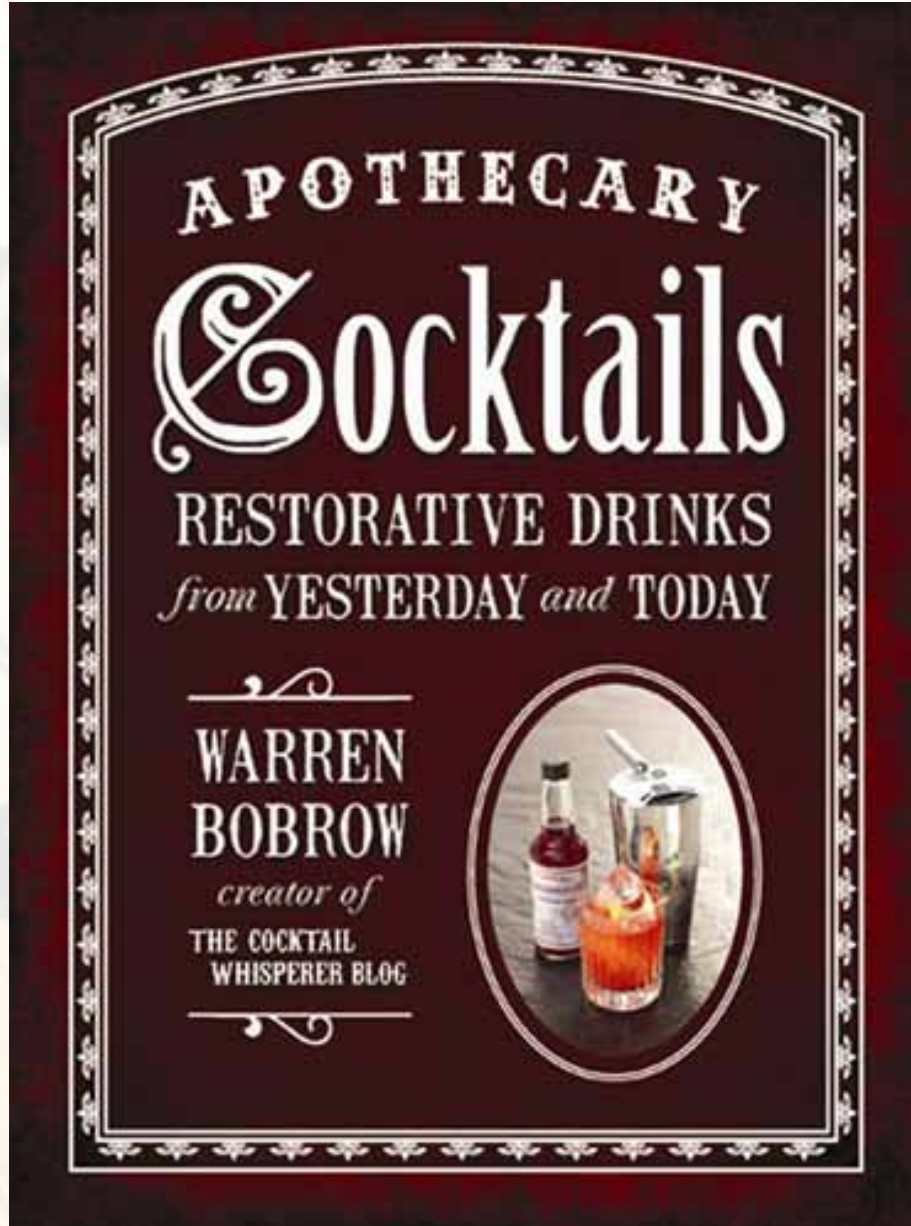
Puerto Rico's largest distillery says it plans to roughly triple its production of rum within a few years. Alejandro Garcia Padilla said that Destileria Serralles Inc. had signed several deals with private investors. He said the increase in production will start this month.

The company confirmed that the expansion would push output up by 8 million gallons a year from the current 4 million to 5 million. Its best-known brand is Don Q.

BACARDI

The latest addition to the brand's flavored rum family, BACARDÍ® Mango Fusion™, is a one-of-a-kind product that fuses the ripe flavor of mango with a recognizable hint of orange, creating an unforgettable taste experience. "Mango is one of the most popular flavors on the market today, with its light, crisp profile," said Toby Whitmoyer, vice president and brand managing director, rum category, at Bacardi U.S.A., Inc. "As leaders in the rum category, we're committed to innovating to meet our consumers' needs -- and BACARDÍ Mango Fusion delivers on that promise," he added

RUM LIBRARY



This 160 page spiral bound collection was easy to read and follow. In its pages Bobrow features 75 recipes for medicinally-themed cocktails. Each one accompanied by a gorgeous photograph of how the final drink should appear. These cocktails use a variety of spirits, herbs, spices, and flowers that were used over the years to help ward off ills and revitalize the body and mind.

Several of these cocktails feature spiced rums, rum agricoles, and aged rums from specific islands. The fact that all of the plant ingredients are easily accessible, either from your home garden or at the local farmers market is truly appealing to me.

I particularly enjoyed the strong lead in with the history of how a lot of these cocktails were created over the years

When I was growing up my family introduced me to the idea of tonics and toddy's. Over the years I gathered a few basic ones to help through seasonal changes, colds, and whatever ills came my way. Warren Bobrow, creator of the Cocktail Whisperer Blog, has released a new book called Apothecary Cocktails.

as well as their place in country to court medicine before pharmaceuticals rose to prominence.

At USD \$21.99, this book is a worthy edition to any cocktail or spirit enthusiast's library as well as anyone interested in natural cures.

Paul Senft
Paul@GotRum.com



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- Tim Shavers, Oct. 2013 Graduate

"Blown away, quite honestly."

- Bill Garrett, Mar. 2014 Graduate



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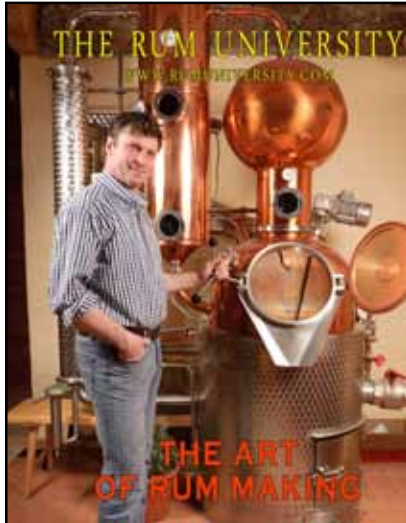
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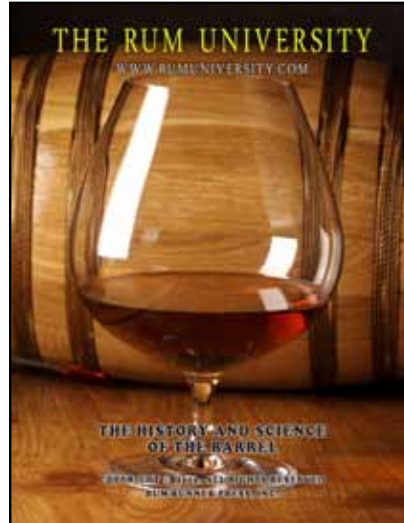
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Upcoming Courses



- **Spain - May: Sold Out**
- **USA - The Rum University will be responsible for the Rum section of the 5-Day Distiller Course at the Moonshine University, July 28th to August 1.**
- **USA - August: Available for Private Training**
- **USA - September: Available for Private Training**

For more information, please visit:

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All in-person Rum University courses are available in Spanish and in English.

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



Mr. Dave Otis, Founder of Taboo Tiki Brands, LLC.
Photographer: Mike Graham mpg@grahamimages.com
Floor display by Motr Grafx, Niles, IL

I want to thank Mr. Dave Otis for his time, which made this interview possible. I first corresponded with him back in April of 2013. He sent us his products for review and was very open to our comments and feedback.

I was intrigued by his concept of bringing back the Tiki culture with some great cocktail recipes. It gives me great pleasure to bring you this story almost a year later.

Margaret Ayala, Publisher

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

Dave Otis (Tiki Dave), Founder, Taboo Tiki Brands, LLC. Carson City, Nevada

Q: What inspired you to get started in the rum industry?

It was not my first time developing a brand, but a first in the rum industry. Previously I was the Founder of DiVine Vodka, one of the first and only "estate" vodka's made from grapes. Unlike vodka, which has reached its saturation point in every category, rum is making resurgence into a younger demographic in the United States.

More importantly I saw not only "gaps" in the rum market, but also "over used" category marketing concepts. Gaps, meaning spiced rum but no "flavored" spiced rums. Over used,

meaning either a fabricated “nautical” theme or imitation of a “pirate” concept. How many more Captains, Lieutenants, Admirals and Sailors can we have already making the same product? Consumers are intelligent these days and appreciate “originality” more than imitation or copy cat brands.

Hence, the creation of Authentic “KAHAKAI TIKI” Polynesian Style Rum! A commitment to not only flavored spiced rum, but to an original concept which truly defines the free spirit nostalgia of rum! KAHAKAI (Hawaiian for beach) TIKI..... Rum with a “personality of its own”.

Q: What rums do you currently have? (List each one along with a description).

There are four rums in the portfolio and we have produced three so far.

Kahakai Tiki Spiced Original With a dark amber hue this 70 proof rum leads with hints of cinnamon, nutmeg and other exotic spices perfect for re-creating the fun classic Polynesian drinks or for New cocktails –

Kahakai Tiki Spiced Banana A dark cinnamon hue 70 proof American rum made in A Polynesian style blended with fresh bananas giving it a creamy banana wash with hints of vanilla. Perfect for adding zip to the Banana daiquiri

Kahakai Tiki Spiced Coconut A dark golden hue 70 proof rum using only the finest American Molasses and a pure coconut flavor, perfect for any cocktail

Kahakai Tiki Spiced (Kahiki) Fruit – due later in 2014 - made using the finest cane molasses and the rare salak fruit from central Bali. Explore your senses and see if you can taste the pineapple hints from this unique fruit. Ideal in a Rum Punch.

You can't imagine the number of fun, tropical, Polynesian and exotic drink recipes that are available on our web site www.tikirum.net also featuring recipes from the world famous Mai-Kai Restaurant in Ft. Lauderdale, FL., as well as our Kahakai Zurra Sangria. Kahakai Tiki Rum is perfect for the classic rum cocktails and is also great in the current rum drinks.

Q: Your rums have some kind of Polynesian history behind it. Can you tell us a little bit more about it?

The history. The history is more the relationship of the Polynesian South Seas and its Tiki Culture and how it became such a pop culture phenomenon in the 50's and 60's here in the U.S. Polynesia became a metaphor for “Paradise on Earth”, yet the remote Islands of the South Pacific were not accessible for most Americans. So what did the American population do? They brought the “Tiki/Paradise on Earth” dream to their own homes. They transformed their basements bars, recreation rooms, backyards, and even wardrobes in order to symbolize and embrace the mystical Eden on earth experience.

What was to follow next was a pop culture phenomenon explosion never before seen in the United State. Over the next two decades (50's and 60") the American demand for an escape from reality and everyday life was transformed into the landscape of every US city. From Los Angeles to Miami and even exotic cities like Fairbanks, Alaska Columbus Ohio, had restaurants, bowling alleys, hair salons, apartment complex's hotels and amusement parks, even Walt Disney's Enchanted Tiki Room took on the “Tiki/Polynesian” concept.

You are probably familiar with the famous restaurants like Trader Vic's and Don the Beachcomber's. But it was actually the smaller independent establishments with names like The Islander, Zombie Hut, Kon Tiki, Outrigger, Mai-Kai and yes the Kahiki in Columbus, Ohio just to mention a few of the thousands that transformed a Polynesian Pop culture in the 50's and 60's.

Of course at the forefront of this cultural movement is RUM! This pop revolution is driven by exotic drinks from the South Seas and the main ingredient is RUM! This is our connection to Polynesian history.

Q: Is there something unique about your rums? The way they are made, ingredients, water, etc?

Yes, first of all, Polynesian style rums are generally a bit spicier and drier than traditional spiced rums. Secondly, we use Black Strap Molasses from sugar cane grown exclusively in Louisiana and Florida. Black strap molasses is considered to be an anti-oxidant, high in manganese, copper, calcium and potassium. Thirdly, the product is GLUTEN FREE!

Lastly, besides using robust natural flavors like coconut and banana our Kahiki Fruit is very rare. We gave it the name Kahiki Fruit (not to be confused with our brand name KAHAKAI) because it was a better fit for our Polynesian theme. Its real name is the SALAK fruit, which is only grown and found in central Bali. It is a distinctively agreeable flavor unlike any other fruit. For the sake of giving you a reference point, it is sort of a pineapple/passion fruit combination.

What truly separates us within the spiced rum category is our development of "spiced flavors" We are the only rum brand dedicated to "spiced flavored" rums and committed to a full line of flavors with more exotic flavors to come in the future.....I promise!

Q: What can you tell us about the figure depicted on the labels of your rums? Is it a "Lono"?

Well for those of you who don't know, there are four great tiki gods. KU, Ancient Tiki God of War. KANE, Ancient Tiki God of Light and Life. KANALOA, Ancient Tiki God of the Sea. LONO, Ancient Tiki God of Fertility and Peace. In Hawaiian mythology, Lono is a fertility and music god who descended to earth on a rainbow.

The tiki god on our label is none of the above. We did not feel worthy of being identified with any of these iconic Hawaiian tiki gods. Instead we commissioned an independent artist to develop a tiki god with a style and identity we could call our own. Once we had our tiki god developed we turned him over to renowned spirit and brand designer John Gleason in Irvine California. As you can see for yourself from the pictures in this article, John and his team created the ultimate tiki concept for KAHAKAI TIKI RUM!

Although we have not officially named our tiki god, there are plans to unveil a "name our tiki guy contest" in which the winner will get an all expense paid trip for two to Hawaii....of course! Until then we are just going to refer to our tiki god as the "god of flavored spiced rum and good times".....no explanation needed!

Q: I understand that part of the mission of your rums was to bring back the Tiki culture. Why did you feel this was important and do you feel you have accomplished your mission?

We don't feel that we can single handedly bring back one of the most powerful, legendary Polynesian pop culture movements that was experienced in the US during the 50's and 60's. The Polynesian pop culture movement was a life style change. In more ways than one the average American's desire to "escape" was a regression to a simpler life. The mission to bring back the "TIKI" culture will best be served by today's generation X er's feeling a need to escape their day to day pressure of a very busy and demanding world.

What we did feel at Kahakai Tiki Rum was at the very core of the Polynesian/Tiki pop culture movement in terms of the truly fun and free spirit experience was its "COCKTAIL CULTURE"! Yes the cocktails and exotic drinks in ceramic sculpted glasses that fueled the wheels of not only Polynesian commerce in restaurants but back yard luau parties, bars and basements. The leading ingredient in all of these cocktail's was RUM!

Anytime a product or even a service can bring people together and make them forget the pressures of their everyday life for even an hour or so is truly important to our society as a whole. You can experience the ultimate mini vacation and never leave your neighborhood. Whether it's a throwback retro tiki bar like Hala Kahiki in River Grove, Ill., or an ultra sleek urban tiki oasis like Three Dots and a Dash in Chicago. Continuing this Polynesian/Tiki pop culture is important to us at Kahakai Tiki Rum.

Its way to early to tell if we are or are not accomplishing our mission. All I can tell you is that our product and theme are well received by our growing customer base.



Certainly any time you can get an opportunity to be interviewed by a leading industry magazine like Got Rum is an enormous boost!

Q: Do you think the resurgence of Tiki culture is in its infancy or has it reached its full force?

I think the way the modern day tiki culture will develop differently than in the 50's and 60's. We obviously live in a different world with different needs. Today the average person has the ability to travel much easier and affordable than in the 50's and 60's. People who want to experience paradise at an exotic location, Tropical Island and even a warmer climate have greater accessibility to the Polynesian South Seas experience.

I don't believe the tiki culture will consume the landscape like it did in the 50' and 60's that was a phenomenon that will never be experienced again! However today's resurgence is will be more of a retro resurgence of the tiki pop culture. People will recreate the experience that the generations before them created. Tiki pop culture will be a slower yet longer lasting part of our society and culture. One of the main reasons is that consumers have so many entertainment opportunities competing for their hard earned dollars, which means that their tiki related purchases may be less frequent.

It's hard to pin point where we are in the cycle of the tiki/Polynesian pop culture resurgence. One thing for sure is that segments of the tiki/Polynesian resurgence are in our face in many forms of marketing. For instance have you been to a Home Depot, Loews or any home building store lately? The backyard accessories and furniture related to the tiki concept are ever growing items such as torches, lanterns, lights and portable tiki bars. New tiki bars, lounges, clubs and restaurants are opening every month in large markets like New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, L.A. and Miami. They are taking on a look of their own, an interpretation of what today's consumers want with a balance of the traditional tiki look. These new establishments have a certain sleek hip feel about them, yet they still deliver the retro tiki feel of escapism experience to a simpler time.

Q: Do you have any plans for developing additional rums in the near future?

We have produced three – Spiced Original, Spiced Banana and Spiced Coconut of the four types with the Kahiki Fruit to introduce later this year. More importantly what we at Kahakai Tiki Rum are going to do is over the next year or two is focus on unique marketing concepts and displays to bring awareness to not only our product but the tiki experience! We feel very strongly that our four core flavors will provide consumers with enough variety and drink options to satisfy their taste pallets without overwhelming them with too many flavor choices. We have seen too many other brands from flavored rums to flavored vodkas develop flavors not for the consumers taste, but so they can dominate retail shelf space. Our four flavor portfolio was designed to give customers a “simple choice mix”. We offer an “original” (spiced), “tropical flavors” (coconut & banana), and an “exotic flavor” (Kahiki fruit). Just like the four TIKI GODS we have four flavors to dominate the world!

Instead of bringing more rum to the market we are going to bring new marketing concepts to the market to enhance our visibility. For starters, we have developed a state of the art floor display for retail locations (see photograph). This totally functional display only takes one square foot of floor space yet holds a full case and multiple flavors! It's safe, sturdy, brilliant graphics, and says KAHAKAI TIKI is here! This was developed to get Kahakai Tiki prime floor space while not having the retailer tie up large amounts of dollars in inventory for the typical floor space display which usually takes about 10-12 cases. Our other significant investment is in reinforcing the tiki hut bar concept with our Kahakai Tiki Rum. We have contracted with three outdoor bar restaurant venues in a naming right agreement in which their outdoor bars are named “Kahakai Tiki Rum Bar”. The Bars are building or converted to Tiki Hut concepts. It's a total transformation to grass roofs, torches, tiki glass ware, frozen drink machines, palm trees and exclusive signage using our brands name. We incorporate special events with hula dancers and drink specials to fully deliver the Tiki/Polynesian experience. The locations are all different and extremely busy. The first on will be at Potter's in Naperville, Ill. Potters has a well established outdoor bar crowd in the center of downtown Naperville, and should be ready by Memorial Day of 2014. The second is the Piggery in Chicago, IL. This is a new construction rooftop bar that will be a total transformation to a tiki bar, great location near Wrigley Field. The third will be at Joe's Bar and Grill in South Haven, MI. This is a new construction expansion to a river boat barge on the Black River. We will have a complete outdoor Tiki bar on the water.

Q: Are you currently selling only in the USA or are you also selling outside of the USA? If outside the USA, which countries?

We are a small company and are focusing on the US for now. We have a lot of work to do to get the brand growing in the US.

Q: How well have your rums been received by consumers?

We are very excited about how the consumers have loved the brand. We continue to push sampling where we can. We know once we get them to taste the brand we have them hooked. Flavors are very robust, yet they are all 70 proof so they have a bit of a kick. The spiciness tends to really balance the sweetness so as not to be too sweet.

Consumers also like the \$4.00 rebate on every bottle. Especially when they get a hand written note from me and two \$2.00 dollar bills, it's sort of our way to build loyalty! Plus who doesn't like a couple of \$2.00 bills?

Q: What have been some of the greatest challenges/obstacles you have encountered thus far?

Finding distribution! It's difficult being small. Distributors are different today; very few take pride in building small brands from scratch. I think due to pressure on delivering a return on their investment along with high fuel cost they are less patient. Often the first question a distributor asks is; how much are you going to spend on marketing?

Distributors are shifting some of the financial risk to the brand. I understand if a brand is established, but when you are small all your resources have been dedicated to producing the brand and getting it to market there is not much left for marketing. Then when you get a distributor there are pluses and minuses. If you get a larger distributor you worry about getting lost. If you have a real small distributor you worry about their ability to have marketing dollars for your brand. In some markets we go to the customer first, such as a large liquor store chain. Once they commit than the distributor is more likely to take you on. We have a mix of large national distributors and small distributors. The truth is, we have a lot of requests from consumers wanting the brand and having a hard time finding Kahakai Tiki Rum. In particular we need good distribution in California, New York, New Jersey and Florida.

Q: You have developed some amazing Tiki cocktail recipes with your rums. Who helped you come up with the recipes and why did you chose that person's assistance?

Well you guys a Got Rum are responsible for three of our favorites thanks to Paul Senft. Today, it is bartenders that create new drink crazes. We have some bartenders that have jumped at the chance to help us create the recipes. In particular the bartenders from the Mai Kai in Ft. Lauderdale have created three proprietary drinks for us that can be found on our web site. The bartenders at the Hala Kahiki in River Grove, IL., have create a complete menu for our Kahakai Tiki nights on the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month great balance of martini's, exotic tropical drinks and shots.

Q: Is there a cocktail in particular that is your favorite? Why?

Easiest question so far, the two your team and Paul Senft have created. The RAFT October Issue, and the Sangria using our Original Spiced. The three drinks the Mai-Kai in Ft. Lauderdale created are also great, Tiki Swizzle, Tiki Banana, and Tiki Coconut. Last but not least, the Haka Kahiki's "Suns Up", coconut spiced, strawberry liqueur and 7 up. These can all be found on our web site www.tikirum.net.

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

We pride ourselves on being accessible, so you call me direct at 630-400-1284 or email at otis@kahakai-tiki-rum.com. We are also on face book and twitter. If you really want a treat check out our music video written and performed by Nicole Atkins. It's on You Tube under Kahakai Tiki Rum or its accessible from our web site, www.tikirum.net.

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

Join us in expanding the Tiki phenomenon - contact us to tell us about your Tiki experience and tell your local retailers and bars and restaurants to carry Kakakai Tiki rums. Life is too short not to take an hour or two to escape to paradise, or at least paradise in a bottle! TIKI IS ALIVE AND WELL.....IN ALL OF US!



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).

A Gastronomic Experience

During the past couple of days I discarded a couple of potential pairings because I did not find them interesting enough. Yesterday, I was hungry and realized that hunger can sometimes intensify our thought process, and this is how I came up with this pairing.

A couple of days ago, I had prepared a Bolognese sauce, but instead of preparing it with beef bouillon, I used a black beer to give it a richer, more caramelized flavor, aided additionally by carrots. The resulting sauce was rich and had very nice hints of barley. Since I already had the sauce, I proceeded to cook some spaghetti al dente and, when I mixed them with the Bolognese sauce, I also added 1 ounce of the rum I had reserved for the pairing. I was pleasantly surprised with the result, exceedingly better than what I had anticipated.

The rum I used was Plantation Grenada 2003, a rum whose sugarcane was harvested and distilled on the aforementioned year. This concept



is very well-received in today's market, since consumers are eager to try and own different versions of the same brand, each coming from a different country or year.

A problem with some of these countries of origin from where Plantation gets its rums is that in many cases, consumers have associated a style with them, which –in my opinion- is not always the best style the countries have to offer. Having said this, the Plantation rum from Grenada has very nice notes of caramel and hints of tannins from American oak barrels (even though it spent some time in France). This particular bottle was a gift from my friend Lisette Davis, she gave it to me during my last visit to Grenada. That trip was a unique experience from a culinary perspective since the island, despite its small size, is a large producer of spices and cacao. I am keeping my fingers crossed, hoping I'll be able to visit it again.

The cigar I selected for this occasion was the Camacho from Honduras in a Tubo Corojo format, the shape is dictated by the blend of tobaccos used in all its components (wrapper, binder and filler). Strictly speaking, this is a "puro," since all the components come from the same country. I selected a Robusto (5 x 50), ideal for a very good smoking session of approximately 40 minutes.

When I lit up the cigar, I still had the aftertaste of the spaghetti with its incredible sauce (I am not saying it was incredible because I made it, it simply was!). During its first third, the cigar was very delicate, with a medium intensity and a spectacular draw. I was impressed by its quality, without a doubt it was one of the best Robustos I have smoked, it showcased a note of freshly-toasted American oak that combined with the rum incredibly. Meanwhile, the rum was contributing with its warm spicy notes, matching the cigar perfectly (a cigar with a different intensity would not have worked).





Photos: @Cigarili

The cigar behaved exceptionally well and consistently throughout the smoking session. There were some notes of bitter chocolate that appeared towards the end of the second third, which matched the profile of the rum perfectly.

Without a doubt, this is a pairing that I will recommend unconditionally in the future. I hope you are able to replicate or approximate the sauce so you can enjoy it as well.

Cheers,

Philip Ili Barake
Philip@gotrum.com





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