

# Got Rum?™

JULY 2014

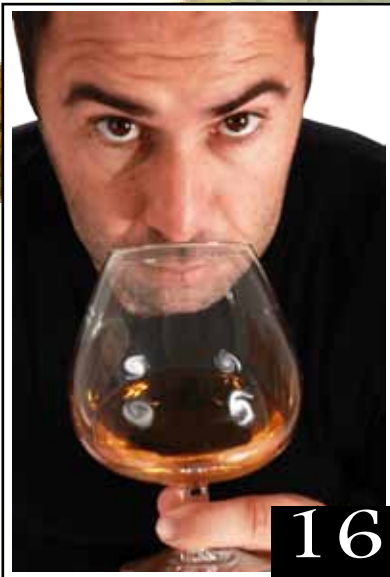
FROM THE GRASS TO YOUR GLASS!



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



6



16



18

# CONTENTS

JULY 2014

5	FROM THE EDITOR - <i>Rum's Coming of Age</i>
6-9	THE ANGEL'S SHARE - <i>Rum Reviews</i>
10-15	<b>EVENT:</b> International Rum Conference
16-17	BARTENDER'S CORNER
18-19	THE RUM HISTORIAN
20-21	RUM IN THE NEWS
22-28	EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW - <i>Mr. Bradley Tuyn, Founder, Libre Rum &amp; Cola</i>
32-35	PAIRING TOBACCO AND RUM



# Got Rum?™

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ON THE COVER: Lonesome Cocktail Umbrella.

INSIDE COVER: Barrel Coffee Table, by  
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## FROM THE EDITOR

### Rum's Coming of Age

**M**aturity and age are terms often interchanged while describing a rum's perceived transformations inside a barrel: companies aging in hot, tropical weather tout their climates aggressive heat and evaporation as a way to achieve maturity faster than those aging in cooler climates. This latter group, however, claims a more controlled, albeit slower, aging, which requires patience and which rewards cellars masters with lower yearly evaporation rates. Regardless of which school of thought you belong to, one clear fact should stand out: when rum is aged properly, the result is blissfully elegant.

Last month I oversaw the largest tasting competition to-date of the Congreso Internacional del Ron, and one thing stood out very clearly: there are some rum producers who are achieving their aging goals only in their imagination! As Commissioner General of the tasting competition, on many occasions I had to reassure judges during the blind tasting sessions, that indeed a given rum was submitted by its producer as having the age required for the category being tasted.

Misleading age statements may have a short-term advantage when presenting rums to un-educated consumers in a vacuum, when comparisons with matured rums of the portrayed age are not possible. The great disadvantage, however, comes in competitions where well educated, properly trained judges, know what to expect from rums in different age groups (tannic content, roundness, complexity, among many other elements). It is in this setting that rums authentically aged start to separate themselves from those who do not represent their age or maturity truthfully.



I am pleased to see some of the serious members of the rum industry starting to come together in attempts to define and implement watchdog policies to prevent willful or accidental age misrepresentations by small producers and/or private label brand owners. They are also starting to combine their purchasing power to negotiate barrel acquisitions to ensure the continuity of their aging practices.

It is an exciting time to be in the rum industry, as companies, nations and multi-national regions come together to discuss the future of rum, whether it may be subsidies, barrel supply or quality standards. Cheers!

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

Luis Ayala, *Editor and Publisher*



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

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

# THE ANGEL'S SHARE



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](http://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!

## Don Pancho Orígenes 8

**M**y first encounter with this rum was during the blind tasting competition at the Miami Rum Festival. We later met with the company and its representatives where they formally introduced the judges to their rebranding of the Origenes line. They announced that the product line will be known as Don Pancho Origenes.

This 8 year old rum is produced at the Las Cabres Distillery in Panama. It is aged in used Bourbon barrels, blended to 40% abv and bottled. Origenes has been available in Europe and during the festival Michael Lindell, Terlato Wines International East Region Manager of Artist Spirits announced that the entire line would be available in the United States this year.

### Appearance/Presentation

The entire Origenes product line shares the same distinguished bottle design. The 750 ml bottle has a long handle with a cut design that reminds me of a sharp looking award plaque. It is easy to spot on the shelf as they are no other bottle designs like it. The plastic cork is secured with a black security wrap that descends down the neck of the bottle.

The dark amber liquid maintains its color in the bottle and glass. Swirling the liquid produces a thin ring with matching legs that slide slowly down the side of the glass.

### Nose

When I poured the rum in the glass I was surprised by the sugar sweet aroma that filled the air. As the rum settled I picked up notes of molasses, brown sugar, and oak.

### Palate

The sweetness from the aroma is front and center when I sipped the rum. While the entry is smooth, the smoky oak notes form the foundation of the rum with the sweet caramel, touch of banana, and light vanilla notes forming the body. As the flavor fades toward the finish there is a subtle pepper pop and tickle of alcohol on the tongue. This transitions to a light dry finish.

### Review

I have experienced quite a few of Don Pancho's rums over the years and what surprises me the most about this product is the simplicity of the flavor profile.

While I enjoyed it, I could not help comparing it to other eight year old products on my shelves and wished that it had been a bit more dynamic. It's sweet smoothness makes it a comfortable sipper and the flavor profile provides a core cocktail ingredient for mixologists to create with.

As mentioned previously, this rum should be in the U.S. market later this year and will be priced around 40 dollars a bottle. I look forward to sharing my reviews of the other Origenes products with you in future issues of **Got Rum?** magazine.



www.pilsarums.com

# THE ANGEL'S SHARE

## Tiburón Rum

A couple of years ago my wife and I had the opportunity to visit Belize and the Travellers Distillery which is best known for its One Barrel Rum. Belize is a beautiful country and has some of the most gorgeous sea and landscapes that we have encountered in Central America. Another thing they are known for is great dive sights and a healthy shark population. So when I heard that the Shark Bait company had collaborated with the Travellers Distillery to produce a rum called *Tiburón*, the Spanish word for shark, it completely made sense to me.

The rum is a molasses based blend that is blended from a diverse selection of barrels then re-casked and finished in Kentucky Oak Bourbon Barrels. The company claims this allows the tannins to give the rum its color and enhances its flavor profile. The youngest rum in the blend is four years old, giving the Master Blender the opportunity to hand craft a small batch product unique among the other rums produced in Belize.

### Appearance/Presentation

Out of the gate there is a lot about the packaging of this rum I like. The short necked 750 ml bottle is secured with a black wrap that encloses a wood cap and plastic cork. A plastic shark tooth hangs from it, drawing the eyes to the Tiburón logo. Through the body of the bottle a shark glows through

the rum. Brief information about the rum is provided on the front and some background information on the back.

The rum has a pale golden amber color in the bottle and glass. Swirling the liquid I see the light green glimmer around the edges providing a hint at some of the age of the rum in the bottle. The swirling left behind a thin band around the perimeter of the glass that formed surprisingly thick legs that raced down the glass.

### Nose

When I swirled the liquid I picked up an initial hit of higher alcohol and oak laden cinnamon. After the rum settled I quickly picked up dark chocolate, vanilla, caramel and a light grass note.

### Palate

First sip provided an upfront swirl of caramel and vanilla followed by a nice oaky pepper pop. The alcohol of the rum tingled pleasantly around the mouth. The next and subsequent sips provided the same caramel-vanilla notes upfront, but I also picked up notes of light honey, cinnamon and nutty marzipan married with the oak. The honey-cinnamon note lingers creating a nice spicy finish.

### Review

Tiburón rum is a fine example of what happens when the Master Blender gets the freedom to play and create something new. The blend and balance of the flavor notes are what I have come



to attribute with Belizean rums, but they are expressed in such a way that the exploration is a lot of fun. While the bottle clearly states that the youngest rum is four years old, the character and balance of the blend could be attributed to a more mature spirit.

I think the quality of the rum lends itself to be a solid ingredient in any recipe that calls for a gold rum. At 80 proof it provides a nice punch for your cocktail but I am also quite comfortable recommending sipping it neat. Just pour, give it a few minutes to breathe, and enjoy; no ice cube needed. At this time Tiburón rum is slowly expanding its distribution across the U.S. and has placement in five states with pricing around \$34.99 a bottle.

While reviewing the rum I was inspired to create a new cocktail:

### **Swimming with Sharks**

Ingredients:

- 1 oz Tiburón Rum
- 1/2 oz Orgeat
- 1/2oz Dry Orange Curacao
- 1/2 oz Lime Juice
- 1 oz Blue Curacao

Directions:

Shake in ice filled shaker and strain into Old Fashioned glass filled with crushed ice.



[www.tiburonerum.com](http://www.tiburonerum.com)

# III INTERNATIONAL RUM CONFERENCE

## & RUM TASTING COMPETITION - MADRID

The third installment of the International Rum Conference in Madrid, Spain, proved once again that the rum industry worldwide is poised for growth, both in volume and in quantity. Qualified Rum Judges from around the world, all with veritable professional experience in the world of distilled beverages, were summoned once again by the organizers to taste and rank the best rums from around the world.

The tasting competition was conducted blindly, supervised by Mr. Luis Ayala, Commissioner General, in collaboration with an independent Notary Public, guaranteeing the accuracy and transparency of the competition at every level.



**Statistics of medals awarded for the 191 rums entered:** Double Gold = 10%, Gold = 17%, Silver = 22%, Bronze = 23% and no medal = 28%.

**Important Notice:** The organizers and directors of the Congreso Internacional del Ron do not guarantee that the following rums have the ages represented by the respective categories. Every rum producer was instructed to submit in writing the category for each of the rums entered into the competition. The organizers and directors reserve the right to withdraw any medals assigned if inaccuracies or misrepresentations are discovered.

### Rhum Agricole

Category	Gold and Double Gold	Silver	Bronze
Fruit Flavored	Clement Creole Shrub (DOUBLE GOLD) Ti arrangés de Ced Mango Passion	NPK Melon	NPK Pineapple
Spiced		Longueteau Rhum Agricole Original Spicy	
White Rum	Clement Rhum Blanc Agricole (DOUBLE GOLD) Fighting Spirit Blue	Old Nick Rhum Blanc Traditionnele Dillon Rhum Blanc 50%	Heritiers Madkaud Rhum Agricole Blanc
Rum 0-5 Years	Rhum JM VSOP (DOUBLE GOLD) Clement Rhum Vieux Agricole Select Barrel		J. Bally Rhum Vieux Agricole Saint James Rhum Vieux Agricole
Rum 6-10 Years	Clement Tres Vieux Rhum Agricole 10 (DOUBLE GOLD) Clement Tres Viuex Rhum Agricole 6 Years	Reimonenq Rhum Vieux 6 Years Depaz Rhum Vieux Agricole XO	
Rhum Millésimés		Rhum JM Rhum Vieux Agricole Millesime 2002	



# III INTERNATIONAL RUM CONFERENCE

## & RUM TASTING COMPETITION - MADRID

### Rum from Molasses & Cane Syrup

Category	Gold and Double Gold	Silver	Bronze
White Rum	Plantation 3 Estrellas (DOUBLE GOLD) Flor de Caña Extra Seco (DOUBLE GOLD) Legendario Añejo Blanco (DOUBLE GOLD) Wicked Dolphin Silver Rum Ron Caribe Silver Premium Carta Vieja Ron Extra Claro	New Grove Plantation Rum 1498 Ron Blanco Ocumare Blanco Especial Ron Caney Carta Blanca Superior	Vizcaya Cask 12 Banks Rum Handcrafted Rum I
Rum 0-5 Years	1498 Ron Golden Age (DOUBLE GOLD) Ron Cubaney 5 Años Solera (DOUBLE GOLD) Ron Carta Oro Arecha Ron Ocumare Añejo Especial Ron El Mondero Ron Añejo Estelar DeLuxe Legendario Ron Dorado	Diplomático Ron Añejo Flor de Caña Añejo Clásico Appleton Estate V/X Ron Añejo Ocumare Gold Santa Teresa Añejo Gran Reserva Ron Añejo Veroes 1498 Ron Añejo Golden Age Mezan Extra Old Rum X.O. Jamaica	Contra-bando Ron 5 Años Plantation Original Dark Dzama Rhum Ambré Cuveé Noire Prestige Dzama Rhum Cuveé Noire Ron Santa Teresa Gran Reserva Linaje Ron Medellín Añejo 3 Años Nine Leaves Angel's Half American Oak Cask Chairman's Reserve Ron Caribe Añejo Superior 5 Años Ron Yacuro Añejo Ron Añejo Arecha
Rum 6-10 Years	1498 Ron Añejo (DOUBLE GOLD) Centenario 9 Años Conmemorativo (DOUBLE GOLD) R. L. Seale's Finest Aged Barbados Rum 10 Years Playa Bavaro Gran Brut Ultra Premium Roble Viejo Ron Ultra Añejo English Harbour Reserve 10 Years Angostura Gran Añejo Doorly's XO Fine Old Barbados Rum	Centenario Ron 7 Años Añejo Especial Ron 100 Fuegos Caribbean Aged Rum Ron Negrita Top Series Flor de Caña Gran Reserva 7 Angostura 1919 Premium Rum Lambreo Ron Añejo 7 Años Banks Golden 7 Age Rum Ron Caney Añejo Centuria Roble Viejo Ron Extra Añejo	Diplomático Reserva Relicario Ron Dominicano Ron Maja 8 Años Ron Ocumare Edición Reservada
Rum 11-15 Years	Ron Quorum 15 Años Solera (DOUBLE GOLD) Ron Centenario 12 Años (DOUBLE GOLD) Club Puntacana Espléndido Ron Medellín Gran Reserva Ron Quorum 12 Años Solera XM Millenium Rum 12 Year Old Ophimus Oporto 15 Años Solera Botran Ron Añejo Reserva	Ron Yacuro Viejo Flor de Caña Centenario 12 Años Appleton Estate Extra 12 Years Angostura 1824 Aged 12 Years Summum 12 Solera Reserva Especial	Diplomático Ron Antiguo Reserva Exclusiva Lambreo Ron 12 Años Legendario 15 Años Club Puntacana Black Rum 15 Años Solera
Rum 16-20 Years	Botrán Solera 1893 (DOUBLE GOLD) Centenario 20 Años Selección Premium	Rum Nation Limited Edition 18 Years Old Flor de Caña Centenario 18 Single Estate Rum	Ophimus 18 Años Solera Carta Vieja Rum Golden Cask Solera 18 Ron Vigia Gran Reserva 18 Años
Rum 21 Years or more	Carúpano Legendario Ron Añejo (DOUBLE GOLD) Centenario 25 Años Gran Reserva (DOUBLE GOLD) Carúpano Ron Añejo XO Antiguas Reservas Ron Quorum 30 Aniversario	Club Puntacana XO 50 Aniversario Oporto Ron Vizcaya Cask 21 Centenario 30 Años Edición Limitada Ophimus 21 Años Solera	Zafra Master Reserve Añejo 21 Años Ron Lambreo 21 Años Santa Teresa 1796 Ron Antiguo de Solera Carúpano Ron Añejo Solera Centenaria
Fruit Flavored Rum			Kalani Rum and Coconut Punch Au Rhum Arecha
Spiced Rum	Playa Bavaro Grand Brulée (DOUBLE GOLD) Cubaney Elixir Ribera Caribeña Elixir	Cubaney Spiced Guayabita del Pinar Ron Ligero Añejo Dulce	Legendario Elixir de Cuba Vanilla Dzama Vieux Rhum De Pirathas Black Spiced & Rum
Spiced Rum - Coffee	Arakú Ron y Café	Juan Valdez Licor de Ron y Café 8 Años	
Spiced Rum - Honey			Ron Miel Ribera Caribeña D'Aristi Liqueur of Honey, Anisette and Rum
Rum Cream		Guantanamo Original Caribbean Rum Cream	
Overproof Rum	Rum Fire Velvet Jamaican White Overproof		
Selected Barrel Rum	Guyana Single Cask Port Morant (DOUBLE GOLD) Demerara Distilled 1993 50% Caroni Distilled 1997 46%		
Special Harvest Rum			Rhum Vieux Dzama 1998

# III INTERNATIONAL RUM CONFERENCE & RUM TASTING COMPETITION - MADRID



Rum industry members gathered in Madrid once again to discuss the past, present and future of rum. Attendees and presenters travelled from all corners of the world to share ideas and evaluate threats to the industry and opportunities for growth.





*continued on page 14*

# III INTERNATIONAL RUM CONFERENCE & RUM TASTING COMPETITION - MADRID



*continued from page 13*

# III INTERNATIONAL RUM CONFERENCE & RUM TASTING COMPETITION - MADRID



The two-day festival showcased rum in a high-class, professional and elegant environment. Exhibitors served rum (neat or mixed) in proper glassware provided by the organizers. Master Blenders and Distillers were present to share their views and experience with attendees.



# Bartender's Corner

by Dr. Ron A. Ñejo

**W**hen 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 7

## Early American Rum Cocktails #7: Black Stripe

(From Jerry Thomas' Bartenders Guide: How To Mix Drinks, 1862)

### Black Stripe

1 Wine-glass of Santa Cruz Rum  
1 Table-spoonful of Grade A  
Molasses (do NOT use blackstrap  
or a grade other than A)

### Directions

This drink can either be made in summer or winter: if in the former season, mix in 1 table-spoonful of water and cool with shaved ice; if in the latter, fill up the tumbler with boiling water. Grate a little nutmeg on top.



Cocktail photo from [www.12bottlebar.com](http://www.12bottlebar.com)



# THE RUM HISTORIAN



**M**y 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](http://www.ilsecolodelrum.it)

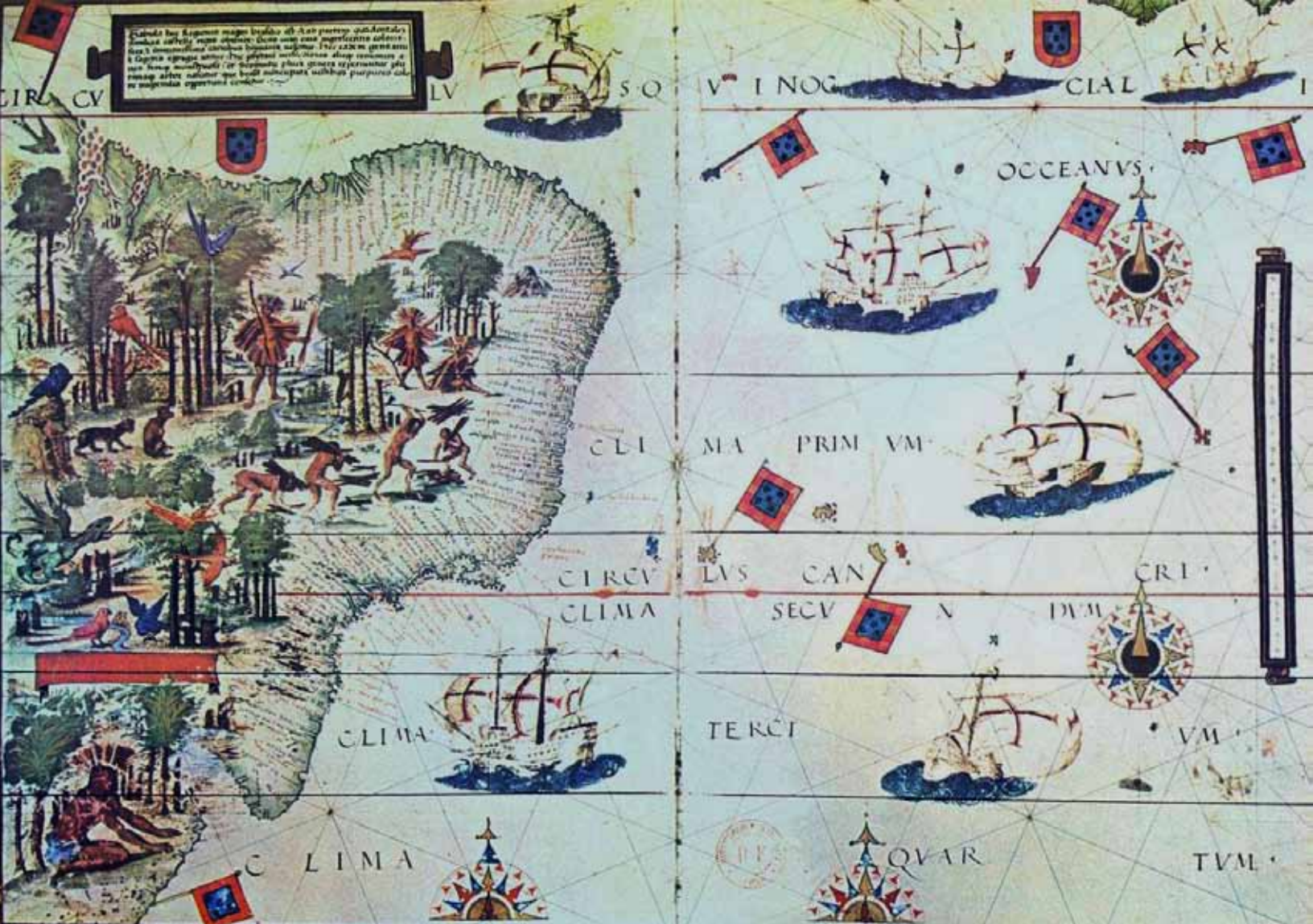
## WILLS, PROVISIONS AND STILLS

I came to the hypothesis of the Dutch / Brazilian origins of rum by thinking over what Richard Ligon wrote. Then I read extensively about the West Indies, sugar and rum and I also went on a study trip in Barbados looking for evidence. I have found many clues which corroborate my hypothesis, but not the final proof, what in crime stories they call the "smoking gun". As I have already written, in order to find it it would be necessary to look at inventories, wills, purchasing deeds, account books, etc... of sugarcane plantations in Brazil under Dutch rule. But this is historical research for experts, beyond my possibilities.

Well, maybe I have found the first undisputed evidence.

Soon after the publication of the last article on my quest, I read "Liquid Fire. Alcohol, Identity and Social Hierarchy in Colonial Brazil" by Prof. Joao Azevedo Fernandez. An interesting essay, well documented and well written, full of extremely useful information. I will quote just two excerpts:

*"Although sugarcane had been established in Brazil in the early 1530s ..., it is unlikely that the production of aguardiente began in this era, because sources do not mention stills or any distilled beverages throughout the sixteenth century. The first concrete reference to the existence of stills comes from a 1611 Sao Paulo inventory and Will."*



*"In 1636, the governor-general of Brazil, Pedro da Silva, released a provision prohibiting sugarcane aguardiente. This is a very interesting document because, among other reasons, it shows that the production of aguardiente was already commonplace, because 'many stills' existed..."*

I was flabbergasted. At long last undisputed historical sources, facts, evidence, smoking guns.

The essay was mentioned to me by Prof. Frederick H. Smith, the author of "Caribbean Rum" which I reviewed a few months ago. I looked it up on the Internet. I found that Prof. Azevedo Fernandez is a well-known Brazilian historian and anthropologist, he studied at the University of Pernambuco and he teaches at the University of Paraiba. I couldn't believe it! Full of expectations, I sent him an invitation on Facebook, he accepted it immediately. I found out more about him, his research projects, his intellectual curiosity. Delighted, I asked him to give me his email address so that we could share information properly. He sent it to me immediately. Right then I was in Miami for the Rum Festival, I intended to write to him as soon as I got back home.

A few days later, on connecting to Facebook I found a lot of messages concerning him. I don't speak Portuguese, but it is a neo-Latin language, so with some effort I manage to read it, more or less. At first I thought it was a joke in bad taste, then, unfortunately, I had to resign myself: Joao Azevedo Fernandez had died. In his early 50s, he had been struck down by a heart attack, early in the morning, at home. He is survived by his wife and, I believe, two children.

Two months have passed. Only now am I able to write about it. In front of the grief of his family and the people who knew him, my own feelings are of course of no importance. But I have a feeling of emptiness inside, a regret for a meeting that hasn't happened and will never happen.

# RUM IN THE NEWS

by Mike Kunetka



The image shows a stack of newspapers on the left, with four white dice arranged in a row to the right. Each die has a black letter on its top face, spelling out the word 'NEWS' from left to right.

As we celebrate the 4th of July here in America, here are some small artisan distilleries you might have missed.

## **LYONS DISTILLING**

Ben Lyon and partner Jaime Windon have opened the second new distillery in Maryland in the last 40 years. They craft their White Rum from a combination of cane sugar, molasses and water. The White is the basis for a seasonal caramel-flavored rum and an aged rum that matures in American-oak, Bourbon barrels. Lyon and Windon chose rum as their first offering because of they consider it to be the 'original' American liquor. In the 1700's, there were five working rum distilleries in Maryland. This may be repeated soon, as the State Comptroller's Office shows that a total of five distilleries now have their licenses in Maryland.

## **JERSEY ARTISAN DISTILLING**

Another new startup, this one the first new distillery in New Jersey, is Jersey Artisan Distilling. Brant Braue, a former electrical engineer, and Krista Haley, a former lawyer, have joined forces to produce Busted Barrel Rum. It is made from Louisiana molasses, distilled in their custom copper still and aged in American White Oak barrels. Both their Silver and Dark rums were awarded Silver Medals at the New York World Wine and Spirits Competition.

## **BERKSHIRE MOUNTAIN DISTILLERS**

Now to Massachusetts, where the first legal distillery in the Bershires is making Ragged Mountain Rum. Chris Weld, a former emergency room Physician Assistant, has had great success in various spirits before he attempted rum. Using a high-grade blackstrap molasses, he triple-distills the wash and ages it for two to three years in used Woodford Bourbon barrels. Chris's goal was to create a sipping rum that falls somewhere between a heavier Jamaican rum and mellower Spanish rum.

## **RICHLAND RUM**

In the March issue of "Got Rum?", I mentioned that Richland was one of the few American Distillers making rum from fresh cane juice. Sourcing and processing of the cane syrup, fermentation, distilling, aging and ultimately bottling are all handled in house, or Field To Glass, creating a magnificent 86-proof Single Estate Rum. The rum has not only impressed the spirits critics, but has won several gold medals. To help expand distribution, Richland has now teamed up with TAG USA to pursue additional East Coast Markets.

## **KOLOA RUM**

Koloa Rum is expanding their rum selection and their facilities. The latest offering from Koloa is a Coconut Rum that offers a taste of Hawaii in a glass

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](mailto:Mike@gotrums.com). Mike Kunetka is a land-locked rum enthusiast, he is based in Colorado, USA and is our newest contributor.

with hints of young coconut, toasted coconut and cocoa flavors with a smooth, natural tasting finish. Koloa Rum is in the planning stage of a new facility in the town of Koloa that will include 45,000 square feet production area, a 3,000 square-foot office space, a 4,500 square-foot tasting room, a 30,000 square-foot interactive garden and a 4,500 square-foot café. Just another good reason to start planning that trip to Kaua'i.

And now, to the rest of the world...

### **PAPA'S PILAR RUM**

Named after Ernest Hemingway's favorite boat, Papa's Pilar Dark and Blonde rums are crafted to reflect Hemingway's passions on both land and sea. They are a blend of multiple rums, hand-selected from the Caribbean, Central America and Florida. The rums are then brought to the U.S.A. and married together in a unique Solera aging and blending process. The special bottles have the form factor of an iconic WWII canteen. Check out the special bottles at their website: [www.papaspilar.com](http://www.papaspilar.com).

### **VISCAYA RUM**

Viscaya has added two new expressions to their line of rums. Viscaya Cask 12, a dark rum that possesses the same rich character and high quality as VXOP Cask 21, but with a slightly lighter body that makes it great for mixing. Viscaya Cristal is made with the same dedication

to detail as their other award winning rums. It is distilled from the juice of freshly pressed sugar cane, using time-honored methods. It is rested in carefully selected oak barrels, to give it the signature complexity that characterizes all Vizcaya rums.

### **BUNDABERG RUM LIQUEUR**

Bundaberg now has a rum liqueur that combines their favorite passions/vices: rum, coffee and chocolate. The next time you are down under, stop by the Bundaberg distillery and look for the brown Bundy bottle that claims to have the perfect balance of rich coffee, dark chocolate and, of course, Bundy.

### **BACARDI**

If you have visited the impressive Casa Bacardi Visitor Center in Catano, Puerto Rico recently, you have noticed the two large wind turbines. These industrial sized turbines generate 250 KW of power, enough energy to run the Visitor Center. They are part of Bacardi's Good Spirited: Building a Sustainable Future Initiative. Since the program started in 2006, they have reduced their packaging weight by 7%, cut energy use by 25%, and cut water use by 54%. They have set a goal to obtain 40% of their sugarcane ingredients used to make rum from certified, sustainable sources by 2017, and 100% by 2022.

## EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



I first met Mr. Brad Tuyn about 2 years ago and we discussed “Libre’s” plan for an RTD Rum & Cola using aged rum. I was super excited! Now, jumping into present time, I am very happy to introduce to you “Libre Rum & Cola®”. Finally for the first time ever, consumers will be able to enjoy a rum & cola with aged rum instead of white rum or even malt! I want to thank Mr. Tuyn for taking the time out of his very busy schedule to share with us Libre’s story from inception to its final production. I wish Mr. Tuyn and his team much success. I look forward to enjoying a can of Libre on the beach or by the pool!

*Margaret Ayala, Publisher*

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

Bradley Tuyn, Founder & Managing Member of Tico Libre Holdings, LLC dba “Libre Rum & Cola®” (“Libre”) based out of Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

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

The story of Libre began in Costa Rica – this is where my rum journey began. I was managing a real estate hedge fund set up to finance small, niche real estate developments. By the time we were ready

to break ground on our first oceanfront project in Costa Rica in fall of 2008, Lehman Brothers filed Chapter 11 and the financial crisis ensued. We were already out of business.

During that time we served a very popular rum & cola cocktail at our events nicknamed, “Tico Libre” – the Costa Rican version of the famous “Cuba Libre” or Rum & Coke as we know and love. Condo buyers and investors from the U.S. and Canada raved about our Tico Libre. Why? We used a specific, high quality, amber aged rum, Coke Zero and a twist of lemon (vs lime). It was a higher quality, lower calorie, better tasting (so we were told) rum & cola experience.

For events where we didn’t have time to mix cocktails (like golf or horseback riding) we would throw “Bamboo”, a Costa Rican canned rum & cola ready-to-drink (RTD) into coolers with Costa Rica’s famous Imperial Beer. Well, to our surprise, a majority of the time our beer drinker guests would pick up a can of rum & cola out of curiosity, enjoy the beer alternative, and actually reach for a second. Every time they asked the same question – “How cool – canned rum & coke, so refreshing versus a beer – why don’t they sell these in the U.S. (or Canada)?”. And so, as a former Research Analyst, my exploration began.

One sunny afternoon in Costa Rica, on the Pacific shore, were out of business due to the financial crisis, sitting poolside with my real estate attorney Leonardo Salazar (the Tico in Libre) and drinking our sorrows away with a Tico Libre. Tired of having to get up and mix another cocktail, and unwilling to drink Bamboo (a high calorie, low rum quality RTD), I turned to Leonardo and said, “Imagine if we could produce Tico Libre in a can, market and distribute worldwide, so anyone living anywhere could enjoy a high quality, low calorie real aged rum & cola?”. He looked at me, laughed and said, “that’s actually the best idea you’ve had since I’ve known you.” The next day he contacted the rum producer in Central America and the rest is history. I closed my investment management business of 10+ years, and proudly put on my Libre jersey.

From that point on, I was greatly inspired by the inventor of SKYY Vodka, Maurice Kanbar, and I carefully used his well-written book, “Secrets from an Inventor’s Notebook”, as framework for our business plan which took a lot of Mr Kanbar’s grass roots advice into account. Last Fall, I had the great pleasure of Meeting him at person at his office in San Francisco – a career highlight for sure. And out of respect for the great inventor, I won’t disclose his secrets unless you read his book!

**Q: What product(s) are you currently producing?**

Libre is structured as a quasi-Red Bull single product business model leveraging and specializing in one SKU out of the gate. Most people don’t realize that the company only sold “one” product successfully for over 15 years before launching their second SKU. We don’t plan to wait that long as we have 2 follow-on products in R&D currently. We do have 2 follow-on products in the pipeline, but our primary focus the first 12 months is to get Libre into a few key markets starting with South Florida. The next product is another unique 1st mover RTD – you’ll love it!

**Q: Why did you choose to produce a “Ready to Drink” (RTD) and what is unique about “Libre”?**

Libre was inspired by the convenience of an aluminum can and absence of heavy glass – a pool deck or boat’s worst enemy. We wanted to take the world’s most popular mixed drink in the history of drinks, the Cuba Libre, and turn it up a notch or two via single-serve RTD form.

We chose the 12 oz. Ball 207.5 sleek can (same as Heineken Light) as the taller, more slender body personified our low-calorie positioning. Our largest consumer profile, as we know it thus far, is about 60% female ages 25-35. However, men and women of all ages seem to like the shape can, which happens to be less tall and less skinny as the 12 oz. Rexam sleek can used by Red Bull.

Libre's unique "trade dress", the legal term of art for the can design, is an image of a Collins glass of rum & cola. No other company in the world has ever done this before and our lawyers tell us that we're protected by the Lantham Act in the U.S. It was very difficult for Ball to print the high level of detail in only 5-colors, but they did a great job for us leveraging their Eyeris® printing technology.

**Q: Why did you decide to call your RTD "Libre"?**

Rum & Coke®, as the readers may or may not know, is by definition a "Cuba Libre" according to the legend of Bacardi® – white rum, cola & wedge of lime. We simply invented the "Tico Libre™", a high quality, low-calorie Costa Rican version of the Cuba Libre – we use dark (or amber) aged rum, zero calorie cola with a wedge of lemon vs. lime. But for marketing purposes, and with all due respect to Ticos (a Costa Rican native) who just had an amazing World Cup soccer win, we dropped Tico to create Libre Rum & Cola®.

Libre means "freedom" in Spanish and French – think freedom from having to mix your rum & cola cocktail or freedom from unwanted calories (by using zero calorie cola). Our goal with this first mover product is to have rum & cola fans make the bar call one day – "I'll have a Libre!" Not a Cuba Libre, not rum & Coke, not a rum & cola.

**Q: Why was it important to you to develop a low-calorie RTD? Is there a high demand from consumers for low-calorie drinks?**

Having traded and researched Consumer Products companies for many years, I did a lot of bedtime reading and discovered that rum was one of the fastest growing spirits and low-calorie RTDs were also trending very strong as evidenced from the wildly successful Skinnygirl brand sale to Beam in 2011.

I also discovered that single-serve RTDs (vs large 750ML bottles) were a new, emerging category – just walk inside any liquor store and count the number of single-serve RTDs on one hand. I actually walked into a Winn-Dixie liquor store in South Florida today and guess how many single-serve distilled spirits RTDs I counted? 0 – I'm not kidding. Many of those RTDs I did see on shelves really weren't low-calorie.... Many brands cheat by having small, partial, 4 oz. serving sizes. And many use corn syrup vs, real cane sugar. Libre's Mission Statement, by comparison, is to artfully craft the world's 1st low-calorie aged rum & cola in a 12 oz can. No added sugar, no artificial sweeteners – leveraging our current co-branding relationship with the amazing and talented team at Cargill's Truvia® - made from Stevia leaf extract.

We wanted 100% of Libre's calories to be derived from a shot of high quality, 3-year aged rum. At 6.5% ABV that equates to only 130 calories per can – about 1/3 the calories of other so-called "skinny" cocktails. Libre very refreshing with great mouth feel – no lingering sugar on the tongue and no funky artificial sweetener taste on the back-end.

**Q: Why did you decide to go with an aged rum?**





We wanted to be the 1st rum & cola RTD in the world to use a more mature 2+yr aged rum for a better tasting, smoother finish – we didn't want to sacrifice quality and become another cheap tasting, flavored malt cocktail seeking one thing only – high profit margins. We took Maurice Kanbar's advice, the founder of SKYY, and settled on making a much better product for consumers at an honest profit margin.

The rum quality, as you and Luis can testify better than anyone, makes all the difference in the world when making a traditional rum & cola (Cuba Libre) cocktail. Most young, white rums tend to have a bitter taste – and we won't mention famous brand names.

During the financial crisis we had too much free time on our hands so we drank our sorrows away and tested every available bottle of rum sold in Costa Rica, or Duty Free, mixed with Coke Zero (vs Diet Coke). We discovered that added sugar only interfered with the taste and quality of the rum, which, as you and Luis know best, is a spirit derived from sugarcane or molasses. Of these dozens of excellent rums, we found a winner – a specific Central American aged, amber rum that seemed to be a crowd favorite when mixed with cola. And so that specific rum flavor profile became



Left to Right: Bradley Tuyn, show girl, Dr. Luyen Nguyen and Leonardo Salazar

the pilot for the final 3-year aged rum blend used in every can of Libre Rum & Cola.

**Q: What were some of the challenges you faced when trying to produce “Libre”?**

When we debuted at the 2012 Miami Rum Festival for Beta testing, we thought we'd be ready to produce our first run within 12 months. Savvy industry execs warned us to expect about 24 months before Libre is ready for sale. They were spot on and we were dead wrong. I'd be a liar if I told you that we didn't have any challenges...

Delay #1: Libre's first misconception was – our consumers will want only 99 calories per can, a very light cocktail. Well, we discovered 6 months into Beta testing that they actually wanted more rum for a better buzz (as they told us) and didn't care about an extra 30-50 calories “as long its under 200 calories per can”. That threw off formulation efforts and our timeline.

Delay #2: Packaging design – after surveying consumers, we found they liked Libre's unique 'cola collins glass' image but didn't care for the original logo. So, we launched a contest on [www.99designs.com](http://www.99designs.com) and had our Facebook fans choose the final, winning logo. More delay.

Delay #3: We started with a 12 oz. sleek Rexam can and were unexpectedly forced to change can makers (for reasons we'd rather not print) to Ball. Well, that can size

change created a big problem for Libre – we had to change co-packers since the original co-packer equipment didn't work with the new can diameter. This required Libre to amend its www.ttb.gov paperwork. More delay.

Delay #4: Formula modification – Libre was ready to bottle when it received an unexpected letter from TTB demanding that Libre modify its previously approved formula (for reasons we'd rather not print). Luckily we were able to continue using the 200,000 cans that were patiently sitting at Ball's warehouse, waiting to get filled. However, the communication and settlement with TTB set us back another quarter. More delay.

Finally, any start-up company can attest to Libre's last challenge – capital raising efforts. We learned that it's crucial to have many lines in the water at all times. When you think you have a capital source lined up, pretend you never met them and have Plan B & C in the works. Like an episode of "Shark Tank" (yes, we auditioned in Orlando, FL, had our photos taken, but didn't make the cut) - every investor wants to see sales and proof of concept. Securing Angel capital is not an easy task, but we obviously succeeded in raising the most difficult tranche of capital: Product Development. After 2+ years, and after 21+ formulas, we went onto commercialization and produced Libre Run #1 on June 7, 2014.

**Q: What kind of shelf life does "Libre" have?**

Libre is a first mover product – we're the first in the world to create a naturally sweetened low-calorie, (we don't like the word diet) aged rum & cola RTD. Unlike a rum & diet made with artificial sweeteners like Sucralose and Aspartame with low shelf life of about 6 months, our formula has been tested at 18 months and was stable in flavor.

We got very lucky with the help of our co-branding partner - America's largest privately held company, Cargill, and a few of the largest flavor houses in the world. Our all-star food science team cracked the code leveraging Truvia® - they created a long shelf life, which is unheard of for a rum & diet RTD and, more importantly, we added a secret ingredient in every can of Libre Rum & Cola® to create a refreshing, sugar-like, creamy mouthfeel. As a major hotel chain told us at tasting meeting – "Libre can't be replicated. Why? Every diet cola we have at the bar will contain artificial sweeteners, and yours doesn't". How cool is that, we thought.

**Q: Where are you currently selling "Libre" and how is it being sold to consumers, as a single can, pack of 4 cans, 6-pack, etc...?**

Since Libre is a distilled spirits product, we can only sell in liquor stores in Florida, along with 'on-premise' locations that have a liquor license (vs beer & wine only). Other states, like California and Illinois, permit liquor to be sold in grocery and convenience stores. Those should be our higher volume selling states.

Libre will retail as singles at around \$2.99 and in 4-packs targeted at \$9.99. Instead of buying a 2-liter of cola, a heavy bottle of rum housed in unfriendly glass, a lemon or lime (did you bring the knife to the beach?) – why not pick up a 4-pack of Libre and throw it in the cooler with your beers, water bottles or soda? It's the perfect RTD to bring along to a party and fairly priced for an ultra-premium RTD cocktail (vs a malt or flavored beer product). We're exploring the keg as a future delivery method – for (21+) off-campus parties and events, and for those pubs looking to serve a low-cal, beer alternative to customers.

**Q: I know your RTD is meant to be consumed straight out of the can, but have you also come up with some fun and exciting cocktails that consumers can enjoy with "Libre"?**

Libre is not just the world's most popular mixed drink in can, but it's a few notches above a traditional 'Cuba Libre' cocktail - using 3-year aged rum and only the finest natural flavors and ingredients. That being said, we certainly don't want Libre diluted in a cup of ice! Its mean to be slowly sipped right out of the can. Unlike a flavored beer (malt) with high sweet acid, its light and refreshing. Some fans even point out the satisfying aroma of an empty can of Libre – citrus and aged rum notes attest to the high quality ingredients.

So, take your can out of the fridge or cooler, throw on a Koozie so your hands don't warm up the aluminum can, pop the top and insert in a cool yellow, bendy straw. Sip and enjoy! The product is great "as-is" – no need for a rum topper as she contains no added sugar and some natural caffeine in the cola base. The Libre buzz factor (we're told) is pretty darn good vs, a heavy craft beer, and we want our fans drinking responsible and not driving while enjoying their Libre. In fact, that new controversial website Uber comes to mind!

**Q: Do you have any future plans of producing other rum-based RTD's?**

We have 2 follow-on products in the pipeline, but our primary focus the first 12 months of sales is to get Libre into a few key markets starting in South Florida. The next product is another unique 1st mover RTD – you'll love it! Light, refreshing, nothing artificial about it made with the same 3-year aged rum blend. As long as our stock of secretly stored aged rum is available, we'll never compromise rum quality even if it means lower gross margins to our company. But all of Libre's follow-ons will be rum-based products only.

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

Best way to reach us, just visit the contact page at [www.librerumcola.com](http://www.librerumcola.com) and shoot us a message, or email us at [info@librerumcola.com](mailto:info@librerumcola.com) or dial 786.563.3522. We encourage smaller, state distributors to work with us and would love to have rum & cola fans contact their local liquor stores and request Libre! Let's create a buzz. Our initial distribution in South Florida will be with [www.parkstreet.com](http://www.parkstreet.com), an awesome importer, distributor, advisor and back-office services company based in Miami, Florida.

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

Thanks, Margaret. I appreciate you giving me the opportunity to tell our story. Libre's Product Development phase has been amazing journey and we embrace the commercialization process – from a pipe dream in Costa Rica, to importing the rum barrels from Central America and recently producing our first run here in the USA. It's still a blur to me.

We'd also like to thank our Facebook fans and tradeshow consumers for their invaluable feedback – all of you, not a controlled focus group used by most large corporations, made Libre what it is today! We're grateful for your survey time and we exist, in final form, because of you – from the logo contest, to the final level of rum, sweetener and citrus in each can. We didn't hire 'industry experts' to do this for us; it was the rum & cola consumer (like you).

And to those entrepreneurs contemplating a new product launch, rum-based or not, and those currently enduring growing pains with their new brand, as we have the past 2+ years, I'd like to share a great Thomas Edison quote that inspired me to get out of bed, stay focused and move the ball forward: "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."



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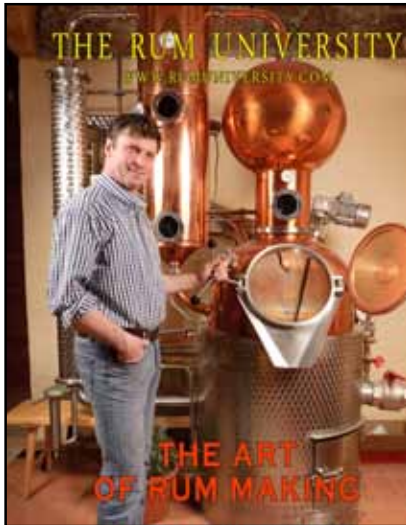
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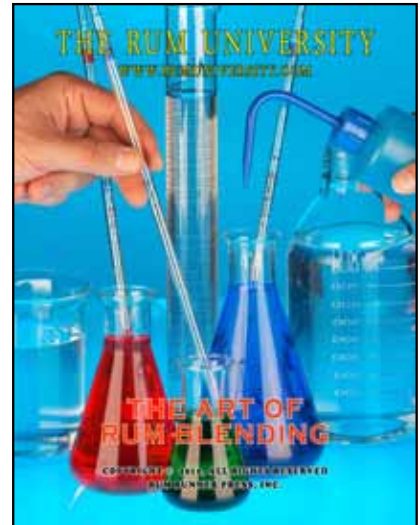
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## PAIRING TOBACCO & RUM



**M**y 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).

### Limited 2013 Cigar Pairing

It took almost six months from the inception of this idea until I was able to execute it. The plan was to pair a special edition rum, released in 2013, with a limited edition "Habano" (100% Cuban cigar) released in the same year.

Let's start by explaining what we mean by "a special edition rum" which, in the case of Zacapa, is represented by the 30,000 bottles released in 2013 only for the European market. Since the market for these bottles was a completely different continent, we knew we would not see any of them here in Chile. To make it a different rum from the traditional Zacapa, it was also given one more year of aging, a second aging in charred barrels and in sherry barrels. It features burnt caramel notes and a marked sweetness that reminds us of dry fruits and a caramel reminiscent of a freshly-made crême brûlée. To cap it all, it comes in a bottle with a more classic "look and feel", similar to the presentation of the "Straight from the Cask" edition.





In the case of the Habano, since we are dealing with a protected Denomination of Origin, the Special Editions have to abide by certain rules. For example, for a brand to produce a “Special Edition”, that cigar (blend, shape and size) cannot already exist within the brand’s classic lineup. Since all the tobacco comes from different harvests, these cigars quickly become jewels praised by collectors. The format, however, can be repeated later on by the producer. A clear example of this is the “Pirámide” from Cohiba, initially released in 2001 and then released again in 2006. Another thing that can happen is for a Habano to first be released as a Special Edition and some time later it becomes a permanent addition to the company’s classic lineup (an example of this is Magnum 50 from H. Upmann in 2005). One last requirement is for the wrapper leaf to be aged a minimum of 2 years, which contributes to making each limited edition even more special.



It is not time to make ourselves comfortable, to start the pairing. While in Chile, there is no better place to smoke a cigar than at La Casa del Habano at the W Hotel. For this occasion I invited a group of very special friends: Cristian Benko, Manager and Editor of Polo Magazine, Ricardo Grellet, a friend and distilled spirits colleague at Diageo and José Miguel Salvador, Manager of La Casa del Habano in Chile, along with the store manager Nicolás Rojas.

The Limited Edition 2013 cigar I selected was a Romeo y Julieta, with its “Romeo de Luxe”, also known as Vitola de Galera “Capuleto” (52 ring size by 162 mm in length). At first look it reminds us of a classic pyramid, but with a regular shape. These dimensions mean we can be looking at around one hour of smoking enjoyment, with very marked transitions.

I started the pairing with Ricardo, since us Chileans are not known for our timeliness and we did not want to wait for the rest of the group to





Photo: Danna Bordalf

show up (the Habano was screaming to be smoked and we wanted to answer its call!). Right away and from the very beginning, we both noticed an excellent draw and the craftsmanship that went into its production.

Just as we started to pour the rum, the rest of the guests showed up, just like the genie Aladdin would do upon rubbing the bottle (or, in the case of Aladdin, lamp). Everybody grabbed their cigar and quickly joined our group. Everybody's comments were that the Habano was at its peak of flavor, with very intense notes, all giving the cigar a medium body with refined notes of burnt wood. All in all, it was an excellent start to the smoking end of the pairing.

As we started to pair the cigar with the rum, both products were at their peak, but we could say that the rum was overpowering the cigar, it was above the tobacco notes. One of the points of a pairing is to find a balance, something that eluded us at first, but I had complete faith in the evolution of the pairing so we pushed through.

As we combined more and more the notes from the tobacco and those from the cigar, the rum kept dominating with its botanical and fruit notes, including juniper berries, dry figs and licorice, all these elements combined to remind us of a Spanish sommelier friend of ours, a landmark in the industry here in Chile.



Photos: Danna Bordalf

(Above, from Left to Right): Cristian Benko, Ricardo Grellet, Philip Ili and José Miguel Salvador.

As we reached the second third of the cigar, the conversation among all present was taking us in many different and pleasant directions, almost making us forget the task at hand. This means the balance between the cigar and the rum was closer and more harmonious, making it a pleasure to allow the senses to explore both products at their fullest. The Habano showed an even stronger profile and the rum, as if fighting back, was showcasing a more prolonged and lingering aftertaste.



As I've mentioned in previous occasions, a pairing is not only about witnessing the interaction between a drink and its counterpart. A pairing is also about the atmosphere created by the people involved and, taking all these factors into consideration, this pairing was absolutely perfect!

Cheers,

Philip Ili Barake  
Philip@gotrum.com

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