

# Got Rum?™

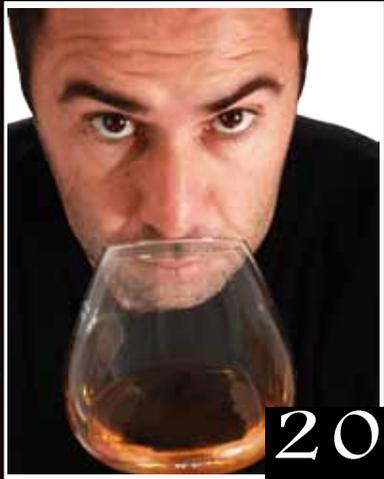
MAY 2015

FROM THE GRASS TO YOUR GLASS!

**MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION - CINCO DE MAYO  
COOKING WITH RUM - ANGEL'S SHARE - CIGAR & RUM -  
BARTENDER'S CORNER - RUM HISTORIAN -  
RUM IN THE NEWS - EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW -  
RUM UNIVERSITY - RUM LIBRARY**



6



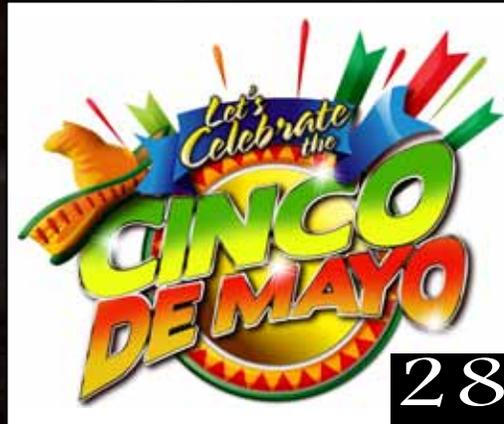
20



22



24



28



18

# CONTENTS

MAY 2015

5	FROM THE EDITOR
6-9	THE ANGEL'S SHARE - <i>Rum Reviews</i>
10-11	THE RUM UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
12-13	UPCOMING RUM UNIVERSITY 5-DAY COURSE
16-17	THE RUM UNIVERSITY LABORATORY
18-19	MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION
20-21	BARTENDER'S CORNER
22-23	COOKING WITH RUM
24-25	THE RUM HISTORIAN
28-31	CINCO DE MAYO
32-33	RUM IN THE NEWS
34-39	EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW - <i>Licorera Cihuatán</i>
40-43	CIGAR AND RUM PAIRING



40



34

# Got Rum?™

Printed in the U.S.A.  
A publication of Rum Runner Press, Inc.  
Round Rock, Texas 78664

Tel/Fax +1 (855) RUM-TIPS  
© 2015 by Rum Runner Press, Inc.  
All rights reserved.

## May 2015

Editor and Publisher:	<a href="mailto:luis@gotrum.com">luis@gotrum.com</a>
Executive Editor:	<a href="mailto:margaret@gotrum.com">margaret@gotrum.com</a>
Tobacco and Rum:	<a href="mailto:philip@gotrum.com">philip@gotrum.com</a>
Angel's Share:	<a href="mailto:paul@gotrum.com">paul@gotrum.com</a>
Rum Historian:	<a href="mailto:marco@gotrum.com">marco@gotrum.com</a>
Rum in the News:	<a href="mailto:mike@gotrum.com">mike@gotrum.com</a>
Cooking with Rum:	<a href="mailto:sue@gotrum.com">sue@gotrum.com</a>
Advertising Services:	<a href="mailto:dan@gotrum.com">dan@gotrum.com</a>
Webmaster:	<a href="mailto:web@gotrum.com">web@gotrum.com</a>
Director of Photography:	<a href="mailto:art@gotrum.com">art@gotrum.com</a>

If you would like to submit news or press releases, please forward them to:

[news@gotrum.com](mailto:news@gotrum.com)

You can download the free electronic version of this magazine, or purchase the printed version at:

**WWW.GOTRUM.COM**



The printed version of "Got Rum?" is produced with FSC-certified paper, which means it is from responsibly managed forests and verified recycled sources.



[facebook.com/GotRum](https://facebook.com/GotRum)

follow us on  
**twitter**

**@Got\_Rum**

ON THE COVER: A LIQUID BOUQUET

INSIDE COVER: A Captive Flower

Got Rum?™

## FROM THE EDITOR

### The Congener Conundrum

One of the biggest misconceptions about congeners in rum is that quantity is a synonym of diversity. Thus, all “heavy” rums (rums with high congener contents) are or should be considered the same. The reality is that in the rum industry congeners are usually measured as the sum of *heads*, *tails* and acidity. Following this approach, a *heads*-strong and a *tails*-strong rum could have the same total congener content, but that does not mean both are equally good.

*Heads*-strong rums will have more aldehydes and esters, usually providing for sweeter, fruity complexity, while *tails*-strong rums usually have oilier, fuel-like attributes. I used the word “usually” twice in the prior sentence as a launching pad to help me with my next point: many alcohol distilleries catering to both fuel-grade and food-grade markets have been changing their fermentation methods to use only one yeast strain for both purposes. The strain is typically one selected for its ability to produce ethanol and very little else (under proper fermentation conditions).

While these distilleries are able to produce “heavy” rums by congener quantity alone, the *heads* congeners in these rums are mostly limited to acetaldehyde and ethyl acetate. There is nothing wrong with these two components, they are recognized throughout the world as common congeners found in rum. The only problem –and the *raison d’etre* of this article– is that once-common yeast strains, some that were not as efficient in producing ethanol alone, are falling in disuse for their fermentation “inefficiencies,” and by abandoning them we are also abandoning a diversity of other alcohol congeners and their derived aldehydes and esters.

Through our Rum University courses, we regularly show craft and large distillers the



differences one can obtain using alternate yeasts acting on the same molasses. One of my favorite comparisons is pitting a yeast marketed by its producer as being specially designed to make light rum (with very low congener diversity) against a traditional *Eau-de-vie* yeast (brandy-like, high congener diversity). In both cases the distiller could adjust the *heads* and *tails* cuts to have a distillate with the same congener content, but in terms of congener diversity (particularly in the *heads*), there is no comparison at all.

I hope that as rum consumers become more educated about congeners they will encourage producers to return to heavier – and more complex– profiles.

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

by Paul Senft



My name is Paul Senft - Rum Reviewer, Tasting host, Judge and Writer. My exploration of Rums began by learning to craft Tiki cocktails for friends. I quickly learned that not all rums are created equally and that the uniqueness of the spirit can be as varied as the locales they are from. This inspired me to travel with my wife around the Caribbean, Central America, and United States visiting distilleries and learning about how each one creates their rums. I have also had the pleasure of learning from bartenders, brand ambassadors, and other enthusiasts from around the world; each one providing their own unique point of view, adding another chapter to the modern story of rum.

The desire to share this information led me to create [www.RumJourney.com](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!

## Afrohead Premium Aged Dark Rum

One of the things I love to discuss when I am introducing a new rum at a tasting or event is the story behind it. Afrohead was a rum I had heard rumors about as a highly limited rum from the Bahamas. The creation of Toby Tyler in 2008, the rum was served as the house rum at the Landing Guest House and Restaurant by proprietor Joe Farrell. They hand bottled it and used the logo that appeared on their house wine. The logo was an homage to the island's history and culture and the first Miss Bahamas from 1963. Referred to as the "Afrohead," the name stuck and a brand was born.

Now fast forward to 2015, the Harbour Island Rum Company launches its Afrohead line as a seven years old dark aged rum and fifteen year old XO rum. The logo has evolved as well with iconography inspired by the West Indies rich rum history woven into it. If you look closely you will find a Crown, a Seashell, Junkanoo, Creation, Mind's Eye, and Rising Sun symbols in the design.

The rum itself is made from molasses sourced in the Dominican Republic, fermented and distilled in Trinidad at the House of Angostura using a proprietary yeast. The rum is then aged using American Oak Bourbon Barrels. After the required aging time period, the Aged Dark rum is transported to Barbados where it is blended and bottled to 80 proof. At the time of this review the rum is available in the Bahamas, Tennessee, and Florida.

### Appearance/Presentation

The medium sized 750 ml bottle is sealed with a black security wrap and wax seal



holding a black plastic cork in the bottle. The security strip on the neck descends down the bottle pointing to the black and gold Afrohead logo centered on the bottle. The rest of the bottle follows this color scheme which works surprisingly well with the dark amber color of the rum.

The color lightens to a honey amber in the glass. Swirling the liquid created a thin ring with legs that speed down the side of the glass as fast as they are created. The ring settles into a substantial bead pattern.

### **Nose**

The liquid revealed notes of caramel, honey, vanilla, molasses, a bite of alcohol vapor and char.

### **Palate**

My first sip reveals a swirl of caramel wrapped around a core of smoky oak, subtle banana with a light bite of alcohol. Subsequent sips amplifies the sweetness of the rum balanced by the lightly acidic oak tannins and hint of baking spices. The acidity and alcohol transition to a bitter oak orange peel finish that I find intriguing.

### **Review**

I enjoy the fact that the company is transparent with the pedigree of the rum instead of using smoke and mirrors concerning the origin of the spirit. The important part is that the character of the spirit comes through creating a rum that can be sipped or used in a cocktail. The note of orange that came out in the finish led me to trying it in a Rum Old Fashioned cocktail confirming the versatility of the spirit. This versatility is what I always want to see in a rum in this age range. At 35 dollars a bottle, it tips toward the upper end of the 7-8 year price range but the versatile range it provides makes it worth adding to the bar selection.



www.afroheadrums.com

# THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft

## Siesta Key Toasted Coconut Rum

Drum Circle Distilling Company is based in Sarasota, Florida and has been making a positive impact in the rum world for the past several years. Troy Roberts, Master Distiller, and his team started out with a trio of Gold, Silver, and Spiced rums. They have since released limited edition Beer Barrel Finished and Distiller's Reserved Spice rums. Their latest release, Siesta Key Toasted Coconut Rum, is something the rum industry has not seen before.

This is the first hand crafted Coconut rum that uses shredded coconut as part of the maturation process with no added liquid flavoring. Blended to 70 proof, the product is available in limited supply in the Florida market.

### Appearance/Presentation

The bottle is the same tall, heavy based design used in the rest of the line. It is sealed with a synthetic cork and protected with gold security wrap. The front label has the batch number written on it in black magic marker while the back label provides a detailed product description. This bottle is from batch number one.

The rum has a dark straw color in the bottle that brightens slightly in the glass. I noticed a bit of particulate suspended in the liquid. Swirling the liquid created a medium ring that reluctantly releases

thick legs that slide down the barrel of the glass. It took a few minutes for the ring to evaporate.

### Nose

Oh, the aroma! When I poured it in the glass, the smell of the coconut immediately caught my attention. There was nothing sweet or artificial about it. This is the smell when you are served a fresh slice of coconut cream pie with roasted coconut sprinkled on top. I capped the glass and let the liquid settle. When I removed the cap, the coconut wafted from the glass, followed by honey and earthy spices.

### Palate

Sipping the rum reveals coconut, vanilla, light baking spices and a touch of sweet honey balancing out the heat of the rum. After the heat subsides, a honey coconut flavor lingers to the finish.

### Review

When Troy Roberts contacted me about this rum, he promised a coconut rum experience that would not remind me of suntan lotion. This product keeps that promise and raises the bar for every coconut rum in the U.S. market place.

Drum Circle Distilling has created a well balanced product that is the right balance of flavors and heat without being overly sweet. I know traditionally we should want to mix the rum but all I want to do right now is savor it neat and enjoy the experience.



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

Would you like  
to see your rum  
reviewed here?

We don't charge  
fees to review  
rums, you don't  
even have to  
advertise, so what  
are you waiting  
for???

For more  
information, please  
send an email to:  
[margaret@gotrums.com](mailto:margaret@gotrums.com)

# THE RUM UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

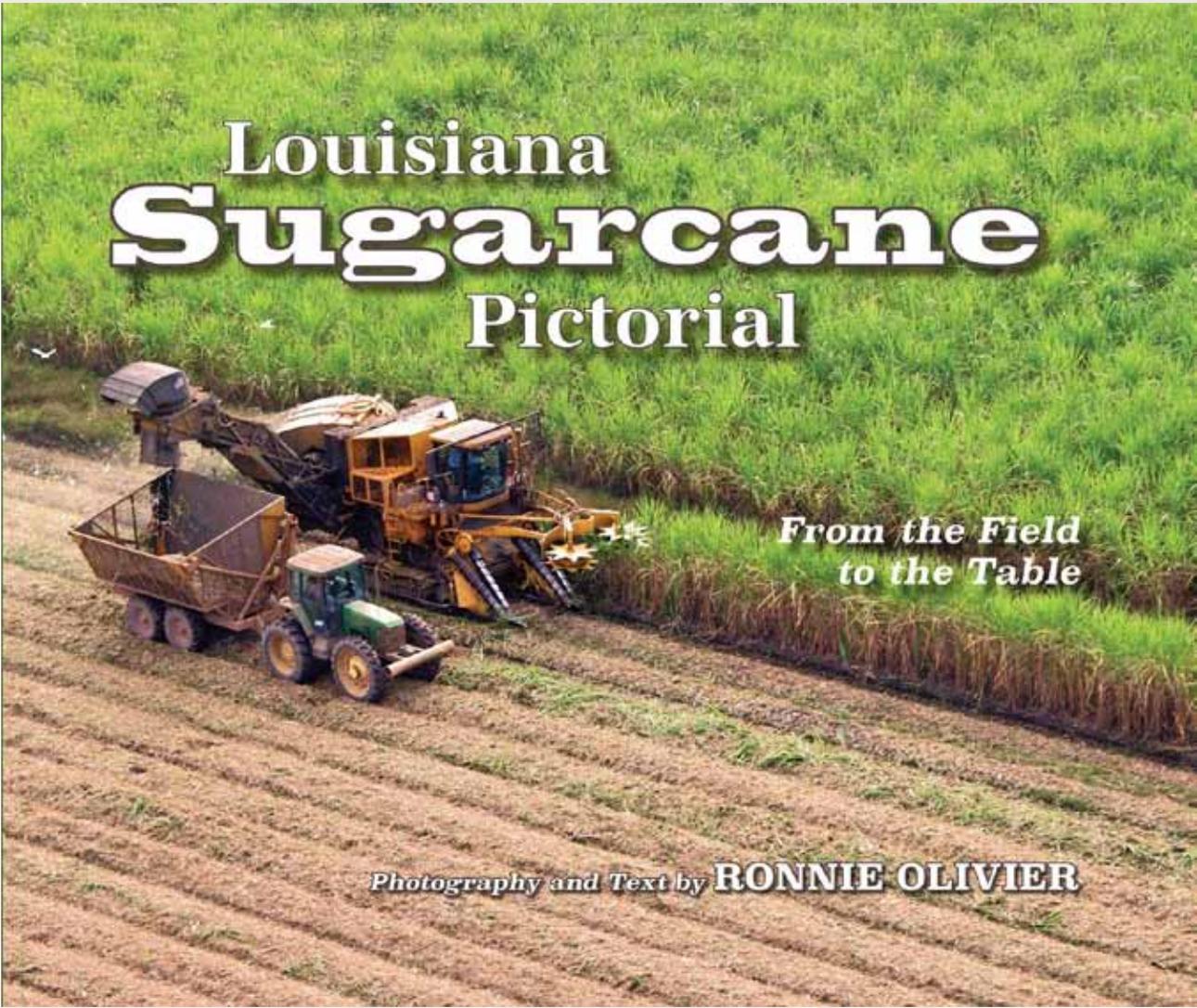
[www.RumUniversity.com](http://www.RumUniversity.com)



## THE RUM UNIVERSITY<sup>TM</sup>

Welcome to The Rum University Library. In addition to the material found on our official website, we also periodically publish on "Got Rum?" reviews of books on topics including fermentation, distillation, aging, mixology and many more. You can also find additional valuable material at

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



# Louisiana Sugarcane Pictorial

*From the Field  
to the Table*

*Photography and Text by* **RONNIE OLIVIER**

**T**hroughout my travels I have come to appreciate one simple fact about the rum industry: that sugarcane producing countries (or regions) exist because of proud, hard-working people who are extremely proud of their ability to arduously work with nature to transform dirt, sun and water into the sweet nectar that gives us the sugar we need and love. Some countries have crop over festivals to celebrate the end of the sugarcane season, others have ceremonies to summon the rains needed to help the cane grow. In this book, author Ronnie Olivier shares an outstanding collection of photographs and anecdotes depicting the sugarcane industry in Louisiana.

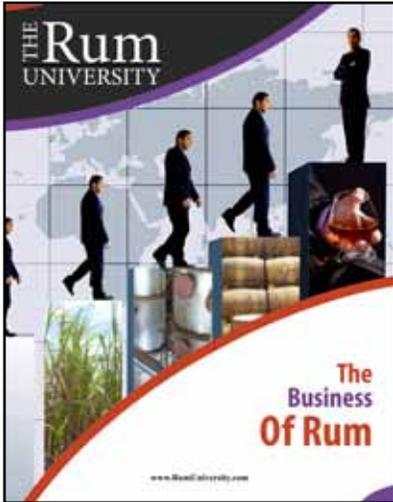
Every country that depends on sugarcane agriculture and every distillery that grows its own sugarcane should go through the effort to put together a book such as this one, to remind readers of the level of organization, investment, effort –and luck- required to put on our table such a basic necessity as sugar.

I applaud the author for the dedication that went into making this book a reality. Sugarcane has played such an important role in the world's economy and very little has been written about it.

*Margaret Ayala, Publisher  
Margaret@GotRum.com*



**Upcoming 5-Day Rum Course: Oct. 5-9 2015, Kentucky, USA**



**Arm Yourself with Rum Expertise and Propel your Rums to the Next Level!**

Successful rum brands start with the end in mind. Our curriculum is designed to take you “from the grass to the glass!”

**Day 1: The Business of Rum.** We will guide you through the economic and political landscape of the industry, so you understand your competitors’ advantages and disadvantages.

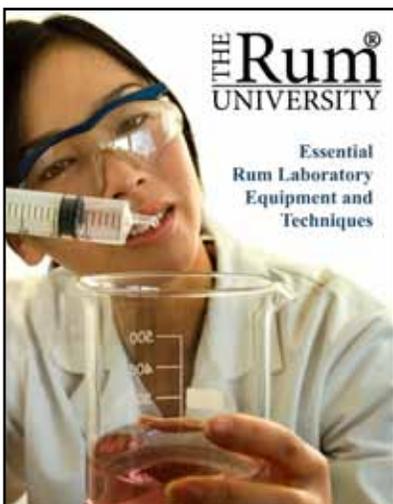
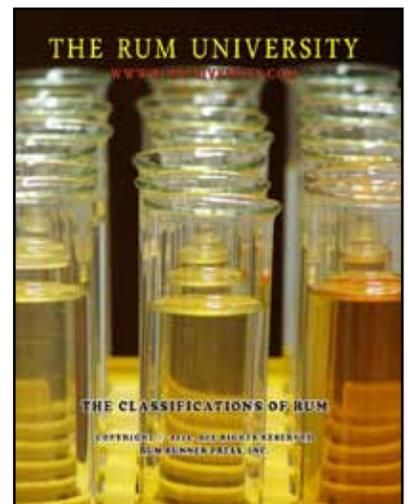
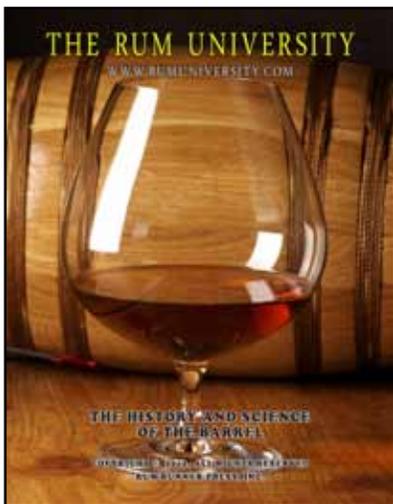
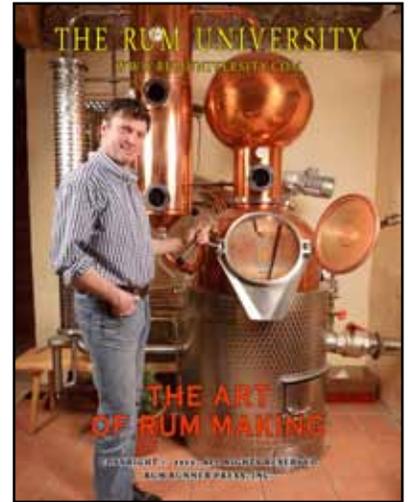
**Day 2: The Classifications of Rum.** We analyze commercially available rums to identify their organoleptical characteristics and associated production costs.

**Day 3: The Art of Rum Making.** You will spend an entire day exploring the distillation of rum, understanding cuts and derived styles, using laboratory and production stills.

**Day 4: History and Science of the Barrel.** You will spend a full day exploring and understanding rum’s transformation inside the barrel.

**Day 5: Essential Rum Laboratory and Techniques & Introduction to Rum Blending.** On the last day of the course, you will devote time to understanding and using laboratory techniques, culminating in your blending of three different rums.

**Note:** This 5-Day Rum Course fulfills all the academic pre-requisites for our Advanced Rum Distillation and Advanced Rum Blending courses.



**REGISTRATION**

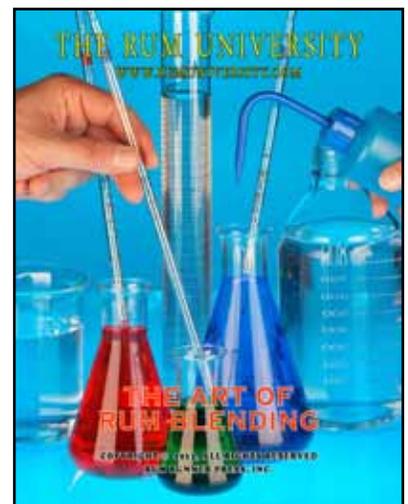
Online at [www.moonshineuniversity.com](http://www.moonshineuniversity.com)

Via Telephone at +1 502-301-8126

**USD \$5,495. It includes:**

- All class related materials
- Breakfast, lunch and refreshments daily
- Networking Dinner/Reception
- Transportation between The Brown Hotel and Moonshine University

**Special:** Register before September 7th and receive 4 nights free at The Brown Hotel!





**A few comments from our recent graduates:**

*"Changed how I move forward, in a great way."*  
(T. Chase, South Carolina)

*"Excellent!"*  
(B. Caffery, Louisiana)

*"Excellent experience. Would like to have this type of training for my distillery personnel."*  
(L. Cordero, Puerto Rico)

*"Very good."*  
(C. Boggess, Indiana)

*"Well worth it!"*  
(B. Tierce, Texas)

*"It was excellent. I commend your group and team for this fine course. I'm honored to have been here."*  
(F. Stipes, Puerto Rico)

*"Congratulations! Keep up the great work. Tremendous learning experience (and humble). The course brought so much confidence about the topic."*  
(F. LaFranconi, Nevada)

*"Very beneficial for me."*  
(D. Boullé, Seychelles)

**Learn more about The Rum University at:**

**www.rumuniversity.com**

+1 855 RUM-TIPS ext. 3  
(+1-855-786-8477)

The Rum University is a Registered Trademark of Rum Runner Press Inc. in both the U.S.A. and in the entire European Union. The use of the "Rum University" name without the approval of the trademark holder will be legally prosecuted.

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


# IV INTERNATIONAL RUM CONFERENCE

AND RUM COMPETITION

May 25th-28th, 2015



Sponsored By:



MADRID, SPAIN 2015

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



Got Rum?™

"My doctor told me to watch my drinking. Now I drink in front of a mirror."

~Rodney Dangerfield

⊖ *Sal in genere*

## THE RUM UNIVERSITY LABORATORY

www.RumUniversity.com

⊖ *Acidum minerale*  
⊕ *Acidum Vitrioli*  
⊕ *c. concentratum, d. dilutum*  
⊕ *Acidum Nitri, Ⓞ a n. phlogisticatum*  
⊖ *Aqua fortis*  
⊕ *Acidum Salis Ⓞ a s. dephlogisticatum*  
⊖ *Aqua Regis*  
⊕ *Acidum fluoris mineralis*  
⊕ *Acidum Arsenici*  
⊕ *v. Acidum Vegetabile*  
⊕ *Acidum tartari*  
⊕ *Acidum Sacchari*  
⊕ *Acetum*  
⊕ *a. Acidum animale*  
⊕ *Acidum urinae; phosphori*  
⊕ *Acidum formicarum*  
⊕ *Acidum aereum; atmosphaericum*  
⊕ *Sal alcalinus*  
⊕ *p. Sal alc. purus (Causticus)*  
⊕ *v. Alkali fixum vegetabile*  
⊕ *m. Alkali fixum minerale*  
⊕ *Alkali volatile*  
⊖ *Terra*  
⊖ *Lapis*  
⊖ *Arena*  
⊖ *Calx, p. pura (ustulata)*  
⊖ *Calx vitriolata (Selenites, gipsum)*  
⊖ *Terra ponderosa*  
⊖ *Magnesia*

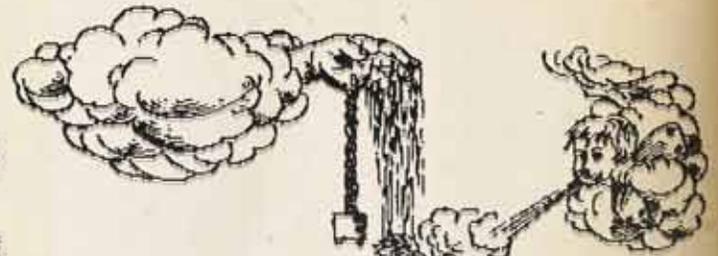
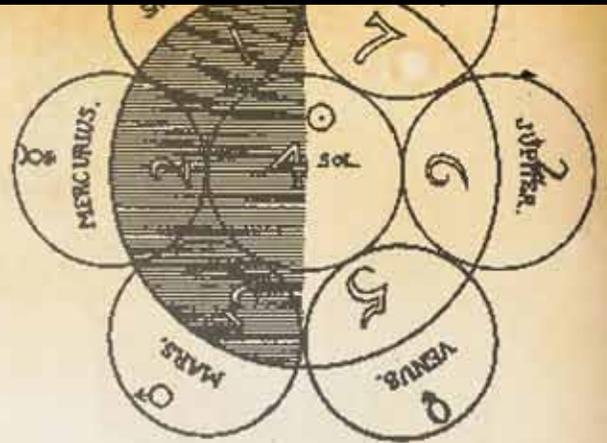
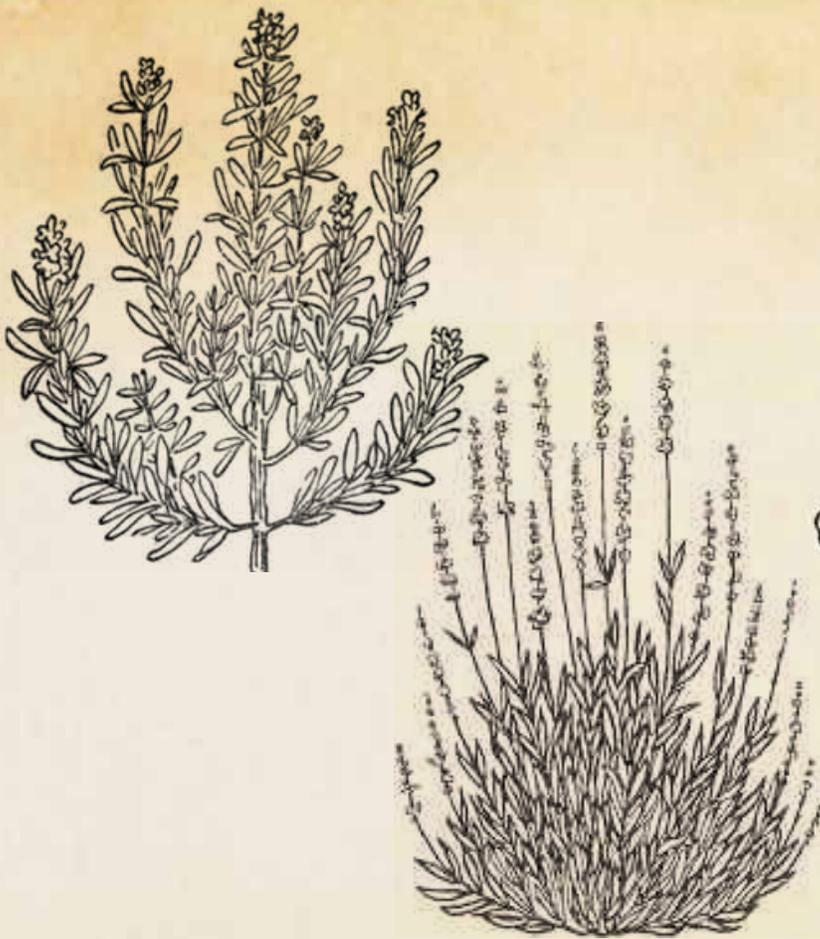
# making your own ROSEMARY & LAVANDER

## Rum Liqueur

Rosemary and Lavander are two of the most aromatic plants known to men. They are great in the kitchen, seasoning meats and salads, but they are even greater in digestifs, where their aromatic properties can be enjoyed to the fullest.

### Ingredients

- 1 cup Honey
- 1 1/2 cups Water
- 1 cup fresh Rosemary Leaves, loosely packed
- 1/2 cup fresh Lavander Flowers
- 1/8 tsp ground Cardamom (or 2 cracked Cardamom seeds)
- 1 tsp dried Hibiscus Flowers
- 2 tsp Lemon zest
- 2 tbsp fresh-squeezed Lime Juice
- 1 cup light (Puerto Rican or Cuban) white rum
- 1/2 cup Spanish-style rum



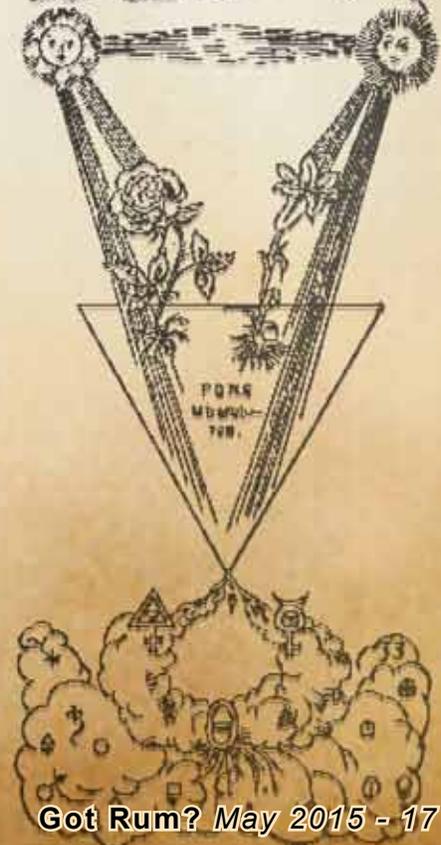
PRIMA MATERIA

### Procedure

Combine the honey and the water and bring the mixture to a boil, keep it boiling for 3 minutes, removing any foam that forms on the surface. Lower the heat and add the rosemary, lavender, cardamom and hibiscus, simmer for 5 minutes.

Strain the liqueur through a fine mesh and place it into a 1-liter jar. Add the lemon zest and juice and allow it to cool down. Once at room temperature, add the light and the Spanish-style rums.

Store the container in a cool, dark place and let it sit there for at least 4 weeks. Rack or filter if you want to remove sediments.





### 1-Pirate Purse Charms

<https://www.etsy.com/listing/186580220/pirate-purse-charms-bag-accessory>

### 2-Hot Buttered Rum Shower Gel

<http://www.musingsofamuse.com/2010/10/philosophy-hot-buttered-rum-shower-gel.html>

### 3-Coffee or Rum Mug

[http://www.zazzle.com/coffee\\_or\\_rum\\_mug\\_extra\\_large\\_mugs-183254519904579845](http://www.zazzle.com/coffee_or_rum_mug_extra_large_mugs-183254519904579845)

### 4-Flower Bouquet with a Special Note

Visit your nearest florist for more details



# 4 Ways to Pamper Mom On Her Day

by Margaret Ayala

## **Mother's Day Celebrations Throughout The World**

### **Countries that celebrate the second Sunday in May:**

Australia, Belgium,  
Canada, Denmark,  
Finland, Italy, Japan,  
Turkey and The United  
States.

### **Countries that celebrate on May 10th:**

Bahrain, Hong Kong,  
India, Malaysia, Mexico,  
Oman, Pakistan, Qatar,  
Saudi Arabia, Singapore  
and United Arab  
Emirates.

**Other countries that  
celebrate Mother's  
Day in May:** France and  
Sweden-last Sunday in  
May, South Africa-first  
Sunday in May.

# Bartender's Corner

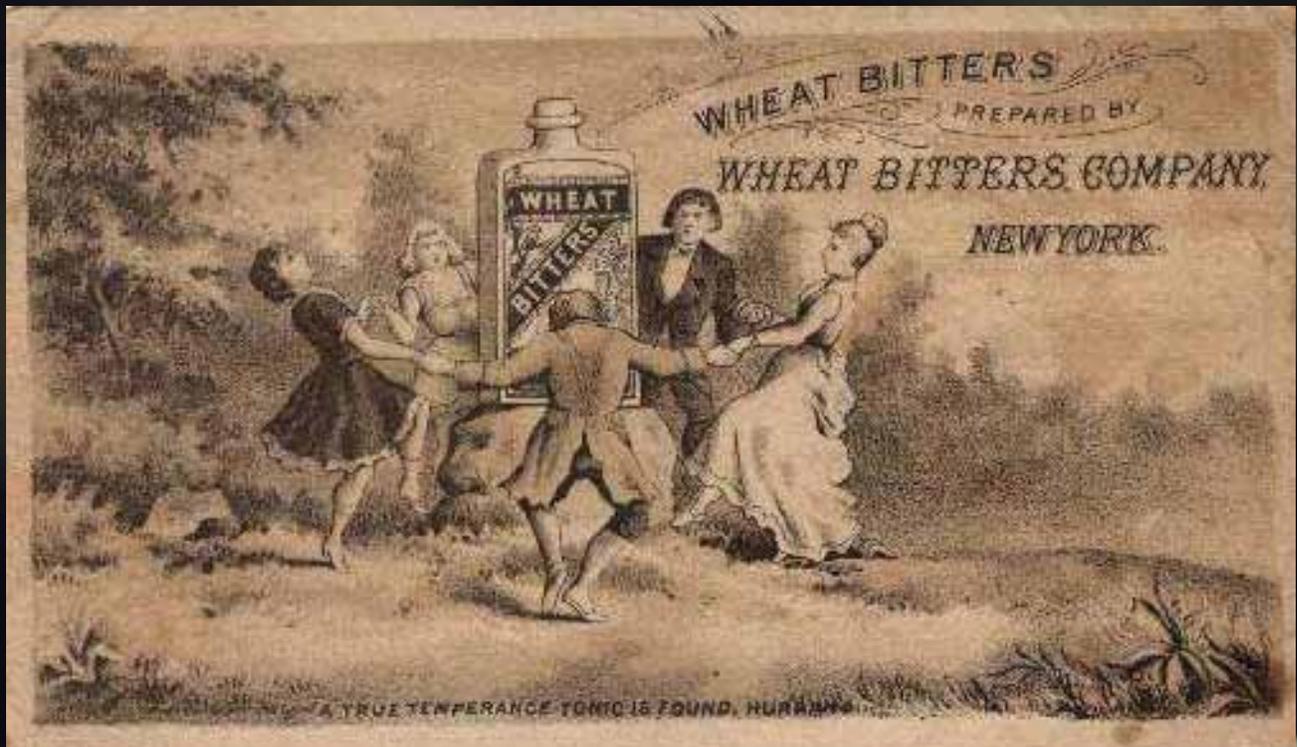
by Dr. Ron A. Ñejo

**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*



# The Wonderful World of Bitters, Part I

## Introduction

It is almost impossible to walk into a bar and not find at least one brand of aromatic, flavorfull bitters. Their virtues as an additive in cocktails are well known and are a topic we'll explore in future issues of "Got Rum?".

For now, however, I would like for you to experiment making your very own bitters using this time-tested recipe from Jerry Thomas.

## "Jerry Thomas" own Decanter Bitters

### Ingredients:

¼ lb. Raisins  
2 oz. Cinnamon  
1 oz. Snake-root  
1 Lemon, cut in slices  
1 Orange, cut in slices  
1 oz. Cloves  
1 oz. Allspice

### Directions:

Fill the decanter with (light) rum. Bottle and serve out in pony glasses. As fast as the bitters is used fill up again with rum.



THE Rum<sup>®</sup>  
UNIVERSITY

# COOKING WITH RUM

by Chef Susan Whitley



Hello, my name is Susan Whitley, I am passionate about great foods and beverages. I love finding recipes that incorporate my favorite ingredients and sharing the results with my friends and family.

Through this monthly column I will do my best to inspire you to incorporate the **spirit of the tropics** into your everyday cooking.

Sue@gotrum.com

## Flaming Tropical Sweet & Sour Ham

Ingredients:

- 2 lb. Cooked Ham
- 2 C. Canned Pineapple, chunks
- ¼ C. Brown Sugar
- 1 ½ Tbsp. Cornstarch
- ¾ C. Pineapple Juice, from the canned pineapple chunks
- 1 Tbsp. Soy Sauce
- 1/3 C. White Vinegar
- 1/2 C. Dark Rum, warmed slightly
- ½ C. Spiced Rum, warmed slightly

“De gustibus et coloribus non est disputandum.”

(Of tastes and colors, there is nothing to be disputed)

— Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

Directions:

Cut ham into bite-size cubes. Drain pineapple, reserving the juice. Combine the sugar and cornstarch in a saucepan and stir in ¼ cup of the reserved pineapple juice. Stir until sugar is completely dissolved. Lower the heat and gradually begin to add the remaining pineapple juice, soy sauce and vinegar, stirring as you add each ingredient. Continue cooking over low heat, stirring constantly, until sauce becomes translucent and slightly thick. Just before serving, add ham cubes and pineapple chunks and heat through. Add the warm dark rum and spiced rum and ignite! Spoon the sauce through and around the ham and fruit chunks while flaming. Serve this appetizer with cocktail picks. If you really want to impress your guests, prepare in a chafing dish as the table so they can watch.

## Tropical Pineapple Flambé

Ingredients:

- 1 Fresh Pineapple
- 1 ½ C. Brown Sugar
- ½ C. Spiced Rum
- 1 tsp. Cinnamon
- 1 C. Chopped Kumquats
- ½ C. Dark Rum, slightly warmed
- Ice Cream



Photo credit: [www.coconutandlime.com](http://www.coconutandlime.com)

Directions:

Cut off top of pineapple (about 2 inches down) and reserve. Remove meat without piercing through the outer shell. Dice fruit, discarding hard core, and sprinkle with brown sugar. Return fruit to pineapple shell. Sprinkle cinnamon and then pour the spiced rum over it. Cover the pineapple (except the leafy top) with aluminum foil. Bake in oven at 350F for 30 minutes. Remove foil and place pineapple on a serving platter. Place the leafy top back on the pineapple and take platter to the table. At serving time, remove the leafy top, add kumquats and pour warmed dark rum and ignite! Ladle out flaming fruit onto individual servings with ice cream. Serves 4 to 6.

Cheers!

# THE RUM HISTORIAN

by Marco Pierini



**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)

## A TOXIC BEVERAGE

John Bell served as a military surgeon in Jamaica. Back to England, in 1791 he published *An Inquiry into the causes which produce, and the means of preventing diseases among British Officers, Soldiers, and others in the West Indies. Containing observations on the action of spirituous liquors on the Human body*. As many, Bell was shocked by the mortality rate “in some of those regiments, two thirds, and in others upward of an half, died, or were rendered unfit for service before they had been a year, or at most a year and a half, in the island of Jamaica.”

Like many doctors of the time, Bell underestimated the role of infectious diseases and thought about climate, diet and behavior. In his opinion, the excessive daily consumption of rum was the primary cause of illness and death among the soldiers. The daily allowance was half a pint and was usually diluted with water, we do not know in what ratio. But soldiers bought much more undiluted rum, “large quantities of which of the most execrable quality” from private sellers at a cheap price.



British soldiers relaxing at a sutler's booth, 1808.  
(Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection, Brown University Library)

Bell didn't approve of the addition of water to rum. *"In this mode of using it, rum is perhaps more injurious to the body than any other, because it makes only a simple uncompounded impression, which becomes weaker by a frequent repetition of its cause; and therefore, after some time, an increase of the quantity of spirit becomes necessary."* In other words, the daily allowance of Army diluted rum paved the way to alcoholism.

But this is not all. Distillation is an art, but a dangerous one, even today. Two centuries ago, in the West Indies, planters and distillers produced for the soldiers a kind of rum that only needed to be strong and cheap. It was fermented and distilled very quickly, saving on costs, without any regard for quality. As far as we know, the heads and the tails were not removed and -in all likelihood- there was methanol in the rum, fusel oils and other bad congeners. And lead powder too. Yes, because at the time lead and pewter were largely used in sugar and rum-making machinery.

We know, from Bell and other sources, of soldiers who died immediately after they had drunk. Or who fell to the ground in a state of torpor. Of hardy young men who declined rapidly. Of excruciating pains, ulcerated organs, illnesses ... . The reports of the military surgeons of the time, and the first scientific post-mortems, tell us a terrifying story.

To sum up, soldiers' rum was actually a toxic beverage.

Only after 1815, and Napoleon's final defeat, did things start to improve. But this is a different story.

# 5th Caribbean Rum and Beer Festival

6 -7 November 2015

The Best Rum & Beer from the  
Caribbean & Beyond to Sample  
and Buy

The 2015 CAB Taste Contest

Rum & Beer Master Classes with  
Industry Experts

A Rum Cocktail Bartender Competition

Cooking with Rum & Beer Demos

Live Caribbean Music (Steel Pan &  
Guest Artistes)

Authentic Caribbean Food

Rum Cakes & much more

Tel: [246] 262 0314

[info@rumandbeerfestival.com](mailto:info@rumandbeerfestival.com)

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

**St. Maarten**  
The Sonesta Maho Beach Resort & Casino

**Advance Tickets  
only \$25**



# Master Piece *In a* Bottle

For Zafra we hand selected American Oak casks, to ensure their optimal condition in preparation for aging this extraordinary rum. These casks are carefully cellared under the watchful eye of our Master Ronero, where the rum interacts with the oak casks and is masterfully blended, into this fine 21 year old "Master Reserve".



---

Discover This Authentic Rum Treasure.

---

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

The holiday of Cinco De Mayo, The Fifth of May, commemorates the victory of the Mexicans over the French army at The Battle of Puebla in 1862. It is primarily a regional holiday celebrated in the Mexican state capital city of Puebla and throughout the state of Puebla, but is also celebrated in other parts of the country and in U.S. cities with a significant Mexican population. It is not, as many people think, Mexico's Independence Day, which is actually September 16th.



The battle at Puebla in 1862 happened at a violent and chaotic time in Mexico's history. Mexico had finally gained independence from Spain in 1821, and a number of internal political takeovers and wars, including the Mexican-American War (1846-1848) and the Mexican Civil War of 1858, had mostly wiped out the national economy.

During this period Mexico had accumulated heavy debts to several nations, including Spain, England and France, who were demanding payment. Similar debt to the U.S. was previously cleared after the Mexican-American War. France was eager to add to its empire at that time, and used the debt issue to move forward with goals of establishing its own leadership in Mexico. Realizing France's intent, Spain and England withdrew their support. When Mexico finally stopped making any loan payments, France took action on its own to install Napoleon's relative, Archduke Maximilian of Austria, as ruler of Mexico.

France invaded at the gulf coast of Mexico along the state of Veracruz and began to march toward Mexico City. Although American President Abraham Lincoln was sympathetic to Mexico's cause, and for which he is honored in Mexico, the U.S. was involved in its own Civil War at the time and was unable to provide any direct assistance.

Marching on toward Mexico City, the French army encountered strong resistance at the Mexican forts of Loreto and Guadalupe. Led by Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza Seguin, a small, poorly armed militia estimated at 4,500 men were able to stop and defeat a well outfitted French army of 6,500 soldiers, which stopped the invasion of the country. The victory was a glorious moment for Mexican patriots and is the cause for the historical date's celebration.

Unfortunately, the victory was short lived. Upon hearing the bad news, Napoleon had found an excuse to send more troops overseas to try and invade Mexico again, even against the wishes of the French populace. 30,000 more troops and a full year later, the French were eventually able to depose the Mexican army, take over Mexico City and install Maximilian as the ruler of Mexico.

Maximilian's rule of Mexico was also short lived, from 1864 to 1867. With the American Civil War now over, the U.S. began to provide more political and military assistance to Mexico to expel the French, after which Maximilian was executed by the Mexicans - his bullet riddled vest is on display in the museum at Chapultepec Castle in Mexico City. So despite the eventual French invasion of Mexico City, Cinco de Mayo honors the bravery and victory of General Zaragoza's small, outnumbered militia at the Battle of Puebla in 1862.

For the most part, the holiday of Cinco de Mayo is more of a regional holiday in Mexico, celebrated most vigorously in the state of Puebla. Though there is recognition of the holiday throughout the country with different levels of enthusiasm, it's nothing like that found in Puebla.

Celebrating Cinco de Mayo has become increasingly popular along the U.S.-Mexico border and in parts of the U.S. that have a high population of people with a Mexican heritage. In these areas the holiday is a celebration of Mexican culture, food, music, beverage and customs unique to Mexico.

Commercial interests in the United States and Mexico have also been successful in promoting the holiday, with products and services focused on Mexican food, beverage and festive items. Increasingly more cities in the U.S. and Mexico catering to a festive consumer are also more than happy to provide a venue to celebrate, so that Cinco de Mayo is becoming adopted into the holiday calendar of more and more people every year.

## Mexican Rums: The “Piloncillo” Connection

“Piloncillo” is as common in Mexican households as white sugar is in American homes. It is an unrefined sugar that is sold in solid form, shaped like cones. Its name is derived after the “pilón,” which is a conical weight typically used on scales in the old days.

In addition to “piloncillo,” these sugar cones are also known as “panela”. There are actually two varieties of piloncillo produced: one is lighter, almost honey-colored (piloncillo blanco) and the other one is darker, deep brown in color (piloncillo oscuro). The cone size can vary from as small as 3/4 ounce to as much as 9 ounces per cone.

Outside of México, piloncillo is available at most Hispanic supermarkets.

Piloncillo is a staple in many Mexican households. As such it finds its way into numerous recipes and applications. As a rich source of easily-fermentable sugars, piloncillo has been used frequently to assist in the production of certain Tequilas. Some manufacturers use cane juice or piloncillo to speed fermentation to be able to use younger and fewer agave plants. The resulting tequila can then be sold in bulk for shipping out of the country, and can be bottled anywhere, including other countries where the regulations regarding agave content are not necessarily maintained. These tequilas are called “mixto,” and will not be labelled “100% Agave,” which purists demand.

In Mexico rum is made today using sugarcane juice, molasses and piloncillo. Because piloncillo is very close to unrefined raw sugar, when fermented it retains many of the floral and herbal characteristics typically associated with 100% cane juice rums. So next time you try a rum from Mexico, ask what it is made from. The answer will then help you identify and understand the style.



# Alcoholic Beverages In Ancient and Modern Mexico

## Tepache

This is one of the most popular fermented beverages in Mexico. The word is derived from the Nahuatl “Tepiatl,” which means “corn beverage,” since it was originally produced using corn, even though today it is primarily produced using pineapple and sugar/piloncillo.

## Pulque

The word “Pulque” also has its roots in Nahuatl, as it is derived from “Poliuhqui,” which means decomposed. It is an alcoholic beverage obtained from the fermentation of the “aguamiel,” which is the nectar from the agave and other cacti. When distilled, pulque yields either Tequila, Mezcal or Sotol, depending on which plant is used.

## Tesguino

Also known as “Tecuín” or “Tecuino” or “Tejuino.” This word is derived from the Nahuatl “Tecuín” which means “to palpitate.” It is a fermented beverage made from corn, water and piloncillo. The result is very similar to beer and is consumed mainly by ethnic groups in the North and Northwest of Mexico.

## Tibicos

Tibicos, also known as “búlgaros,” are compact, gelatinous masses, with a white or yellowish color. The form and size varies. Tibicos are made up of water, bacteria and yeasts. Tibicos are consumed in many households as a refreshing beverage of low alcoholic content. In recent years, its consumption has increased dramatically, due to the popularity of Tepache made from Tibicos, a beverage frequently attributed with weight-losing properties.

## Pozol

(Not to be confused with the soup “Pozole”). Its name is derived from the Nahuatl “Pozolli,” which means “with foam.” It is a food product of Mayan origin, prepared from a base of fermented corn. It is an essential part of the diet of many ethnic groups who consume it both as a beverage and as a meal. Pozol balls keep for long periods of times, which makes them an excellent choice of food for large journeys through jungles.

## Tuba

Tuba is a wine made from several varieties of palms, primarily that which produces coconuts. The freshly extracted sap from the palm has a pale color, which changes to white as soon as fermentation begins. Once ready to be consumed, this beverage is sweet, slightly carbonated, has some viscosity and has a low alcohol level. It is consumed mainly in the states of Guerrero and Colima. After being fermented it can be distilled into “Aguardiente” or can be used to produce vinegar.

## Colonche

The origin of the name remains uncertain. It is a beverage obtained from the fermentation of the juice of “tunas” or prickly pears (fruits from cacti). Shortly after fermentation begins, the Colonche is sweet, foamy (slightly carbonated) and has a low alcohol level. This beverage is traditionally produced by women, it is based on the spontaneous fermentation of the prickly pear juice, although it is sometimes initiated by adding a small amount of finished Colonche from a previous batch.

# Cooking With Piloncillo and Rum

## Spicy Piloncillo Syrup

- 1 C. Granulated Sugar
- 8 oz. Cone Piloncillo (crushed with a heavy mallet)
- 1 C. Water
- 6 Cloves (whole)
- 1 Stick Cinnamon (3 inch)

Place water, sugar and spices in heavy one-quart nonreactive saucepan and let sit for 1 hour or longer, until sugar is fully dissolved. Slowly bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer 4-5 minutes. Allow to cool, then discard spices and pour remaining mixture into a glass bottle. Keeps indefinitely in the refrigerator. This dark syrup dissolves easily in hot coffee drinks.

## Chicken in Green Sauce with Piloncillo

- 1/2 C. Vegetable Oil
- 1 Whole Chicken (cut into serving pieces)
- 1 Onion (sliced)
- 1 1/2 lb. Tomatillos
- 5 Jalapeño Chiles
- 2 1/2 oz. Piloncillo, shredded
- 3 Plantains (or bananas), sliced and fried, for garnish

Heat the oil in a large saucepan and cook the chicken until lightly browned. Add the onion and cook until translucent, stirring constantly.

Roast the tomatillos and chiles on a comal or cast-iron griddle, then puree them in a blender with a little water. Add the tomatillo mixture and piloncillo to the pan and simmer until the piloncillo melts. Add salt and pepper to taste and simmer for 30 minutes. Serve hot, garnished with the plantains.

## Rompo (Mexican Eggnog)

- 1 quart Whole Milk
- 1 C. Sugar

- 2 tsp. Vanilla Extract
- 1 Cinnamon Stick
- 12 Egg Yolks
- 2 C. Rum (light or dark)
- 1/2 C. Ground, Blanched Almonds

Combine the milk, sugar and vanilla in a large saucepan. Over medium heat, bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring constantly, for 15 minutes. Remove from heat, and cool to room temperature.

Beat the egg yolks until thick and lemony. Remove the cinnamon stick from the milk mixture, and gradually beat in the egg yolks. Return to low heat and, stirring constantly, cook until mixture coats a spoon. Remove from heat and allow to cool completely.

Add the rum to the mixture, stir well. Transfer to a container and cover tightly. Refrigerate for 1 or 2 days before serving. Makes 1-1/2 quarts.

Rompo is strong, sweet and meant to be sipped, so small glasses are in order. Refrigerated, it will keep indefinitely.

## Café de Olla

- 3 Tbsp. Ground Coffee\*
- 3 C. Water
- 1 Lrg. Cinnamon Stick (4" long)
- 4 tsp. Piloncillo

Place the coffee grounds in a saucepan with the water, and bring to a boil. Add cinnamon and piloncillo, and continue to boil for 5 min. The coffee is now ready to be served. Please note that the flavor will be richer the longer you allow it to simmer. Stir well before serving. Serves 2.

\*Can use instant coffee if desired.

# RUM IN THE NEWS

by Mike Kunetka



NEWS

## PLANTATION RUMS

The name is a mouthful – Plantation Multi-Island Sweet Smoke Rum. The rum is even a bigger mouthful, with flavors and aromas that go on and on. Back to the name, the first part, Multi-Island, refers to the two islands that contributed the base rums: St Lucia and Jamaica. There is pot still rum from St. Lucia, aged 10 years in Bourbon Barrels is St. Lucia and the 18 months in Cognac barrels in France. Then pot still rum from Jamaica, aged 10 years in Bourbon barrels in Jamaica and 2 years in Cognac barrels in France. And then throw in some pot still rum from Guyana, aged 6 years in Bourbon barrels in its home country and 2 more years in Cognac barrels in France. The master blenders at Cognac-Ferrand mix just the right proportions of each and stash it away for another 8 months in, you guess it, more Cognac barrels. The Sweet Smoke refers to the final 2 month rest in special barrels. The wood in these casks is specially chosen for its ability to impart a vanilla note. Then a special toasting gives the barrels their smoky flavors. Very Limited distribution.

## MOUNT GAY

Effective June 1st, Glazer's of Canada will have countrywide rights to the Remy Cointreau brands in Canada. This will include Mount Gay Rum. Glazier is the fourth largest wine and spirits distributor in the United States and opened it's Canadian branch in 2013.

## APPLETON

Appleton will be changing the labels and packaging of their three top selling rums. While making no changes to the award winning rums themselves, Appleton Estate announced a new naming classification for

their core range of rums. Appleton Estate VX will be known as Appleton Estate Signature Blend, Appleton Estate Reserve will be known as Appleton Estate Reserve Blend, and Appleton Estate Extra 12 Year Old will be known as Appleton Estate Rare Blend 12 Year Old. Richard Black, Global Integration Director for Rums at Gruppo Campari, said: "We decided to bring a consistent and coherent naming structure to help consumers appreciate the differences among our three core variants as well as the hierarchy between the new variants. We feel that the new naming classification is unique to the rum category and to Appleton Estate and, more importantly, celebrates the art of blending which is so integral to the rum industry and is what makes our Appleton Estate rums so rich, complex and flavorful."

The new label of the bottle now features the landscape of the Appleton Estate in Jamaica's Cockpit Country where it is located, and the logo has been updated, with the words "crafted in the heart of Jamaica" placed underneath. Appleton Estate has been producing premium, quality Jamaican Rum for more than 265 years.

## ELEMENTS 8

The brand has created new bottle designs for all four of its variants – Gold, Platinum, Barrel Infused Spiced and Barrel Infused Criollo Cacao. Designed to "make handling easier", the new bottles are now shorter, lighter and have curved edges, while the metal plate logo has been replaced with the [e]8 logo in red for greater shelf stand-out. "The new bottle is the result of consultation with a number of bartenders who wanted something with better ergonomic design," said Carl Stephenson, owner of Elements 8 Rum.

## **DARK MATTERS DISTILLERS**

Jim and John Ewen have started the first rum distillery in Scotland, and plan to launch their first product by the beginning of May, a spiced rum called Dark Matter. The Ewen brothers have spent the last two years experimenting with different yeast strains during the fermentation to perfect the spiced rum recipe. Dark Matter offers flavors of fresh ginger and allspice and is bottled at 40% ABV. Dark Matter Distillers is also working on several other rum products that are described as “a bit different” and will be unveiled in due course.

## **BACARDI**

Family-owned Bacardi Limited, the largest privately held spirits company in the world, announced the internal appointment of Mauricio Vergara, 43, as Global Category Vice President of Rums. In this role, Mr. Vergara will be responsible for the Bacardi portfolio of rums including the iconic BACARDÍ® rum brand and the super-premium rums within the portfolio of the FACUNDO™ Rum Collection.

Mr. Vergara will be in charge of developing the global marketing strategy of the rum category and leading the creation of global promotional, creative and packaging assets, as well as directing the development of brand innovation and line extensions. He will remain based in the Bacardi Global Brands headquarters in London and report into Dima Ivanov, Chief Marketing Officer of Bacardi and President of Bacardi Global Brands.

## **BLACKWATER DISTILLING**

Blackwater Distilling has won several awards for their craft spirits and will soon turn their attention to rum. The Stevensville, Maryland distillery has introduced Picaroon Maryland Rum. Picaroon is an old word for rogue or scoundrel. Blackwater Distiller Jon Blair credits Picaroon’s unique flavor to two key ingredients: First is the sugar, which is a single-source cane syrup from Brazil. Second is the yeast, which is isolated from a strain that grows naturally on sugar cane in tropical regions. “So what you taste in

Picaroon is both an expression of the place where the sugar was grown and a yeast that has evolved naturally to ferment that sugar. In the white rum, you get a clean nose of tropical fruit and vanilla, followed by flavors of vanilla and cream and a sweet, lingering finish. For the gold rum, we make an in-house caramel from sugar cane grown entirely in the U.S. and blend that with the white rum at a higher proof for an added sweetness and a toasted marshmallow flavor.”

## **FAR NORTH SPIRITS**

Far North Spirits, the northernmost distillery in the contiguous United States, is located on the fourth-generation Swanson family farm 400 miles northwest of the Twin Cities. Far North Spirits is a field-to-glass distillery, meaning the owners also farm the grains used in their gin and whiskey, and hand select everything else – from the grains to the botanicals and spices. Its spirits are distilled in small batches using custom-made Vendome copper pot stills from Kentucky. To make Minnesota’s first rum, Alender Spiced Rum, distillery owner Michael Swanson took an uncompromising approach and selected the highest quality ingredients he could find.

The rum is distilled in small batches using a combination of turbinado and demerara sugars sourced from Louisiana and Florida. The resulting base spirit is an exceptionally clear and delicious Puerto Rican-style rum. Unlike most spiced rums, which are made using artificial flavors, Alender is infused by hand with whole bean spices: Madagascar and Tahitian vanilla beans, Korintje cinnamon from Indonesia and cinnamon from Sri Lanka, clove and nutmeg from India and allspice from Guatemala. Spice infusion times vary; some are a matter of hours, others take up to three weeks. The rum is finished with a very brief infusion of organic coffee beans, espresso-roasted by Minneapolis-based Peace Coffee, to provide additional depth and roundness. Alender is bottled at 43% ABV. In a nod to Minnesota’s lake country culture, the bold black bottle features a map of Oak Island at Lake of the Woods where the distiller’s family has enjoyed summers at their cabin since 1985.

# EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

by Margaret Ayala



When people think about “Rum,” most are immediately transported to the Caribbean, where they imagine themselves relaxing on the beach with a rum cocktail. Not many people think about Central America, but as you learned last month (we introduced you to the first ever rum made in El Salvador, Ron Cihuatán) Central America has a legitimate place among the rum-producing countries in the continent.

It gives me great pleasure to share with you this exclusive interview with Mr. Luis Alvarez, Master Blender of Licorera Cihuatán, producers of Ron Cihuatán. Mr. Alvarez will share with us the ideas and dedication that inspired them on this rum journey.

I've had the pleasure of visiting El Salvador and it was very easy to fall in love with this beautiful country, its people, their cuisine and now their rum! I wish all the best for Mr. Alvarez and his team.

*Margaret Ayala,  
Publisher*



**Please state your name, title, company name and location.**

Luis R. Alvarez

Master Blender and Chairman of the Board of Directors

Licorera Cihuatán, S.A. de C.V.  
El Paisnal, El Salvador

**Q: When was the distillery established? And when was the brand officially launched into the market?**

Licorera Cihuatán is a subsidiary of Ingenio La Cabaña, one of six Salvadoran sugar mills. Ingenio La Cabaña was established in the 1920s and has almost a century of experience crushing sugarcane, producing sugar and developing the community that surrounds it. In 1999, Ingenio La Cabaña invested in a distillery and we have been distilling



and aging since 2004. We are proud to be the only distillers in El Salvador. Ron Cihuatán Solera 8, our first product, was launched into the Salvadoran market in February 2015, over ten years after we started aging!

**Q: Your company name has a fascinating story behind it. Can you tell us more where the name comes from and what it means?**

When naming our company (and our rum) we were inspired by a Maya-Pipil civilization called Cihuatán. Its remains are in an archeological site that is five minutes away from our facilities. Cihuatán was a Maya-Pipil civilization that developed in the region between 900 and 1200 A.D. and whose people inhabited the land where we now grow our sugarcane, process it and produce Ron Cihuatán. Cihuatán means “next to the woman” and refers to the nearby Guazapa Mountain whose silhouette resembles that of a sleeping woman. We believe that she protects Cihuatán, the sugar fields and the aging of our rum.

**Q: I understand that there is a sugar mill next to your distillery. Was this proximity one of the main reasons you turned your focus to developing a rum, or was that the plan from the beginning?**

Ron Cihuatán began as the dream of the people working at the sugar mill 16 years ago. The opportunity to invest in the distillery located right beside the mill sparked the project to develop a rum that would represent El Salvador around the world; a premium product that would share our culture with the world. Having the distillery next to the mill (just a few



RON de EL SALVADOR  
**CIHUATÁN**

IMPORTED FROM EL SALVADOR

MESOAMERICAN  
NATIVE SPIRITS

MAESTRO RUMERO  
LICORERIA CIHUATÁN  
DON LUIS R. ADAME

40% ALC/VOL **SOLERA 8 SOLERA** 750ML

**GRAN RESERVA**  
RUM AGED IN BOURBON CASKS  
FOR UP TO 8 YEARS



meters away) allows us to use fresh high test molasses (above Grade A) for fermentation. Also, we are able to control the entire process: from the seed of the sugarcane to the bottling of Ron Cihuatán, all in the same site, under the watchful eye of the sleeping woman.

**Q: When is the sugarcane harvest in El Salvador? How much of the land growing cane belongs to the company and how much belongs to individual owners?**

The harvest season in El Salvador starts in November and ends in May. About 5% of the land growing cane belongs to our parent company, Ingenio La Cabaña. Over 700 sugarcane producers, who we consider our partners, cultivate 95% of the land. Ingenio La Cabaña works together with each producer supplying them with varieties, financing and technical support to guarantee the quality of the sugarcane.

**Q: You must be very proud to be the first company to produce a rum 100% from El Salvador. What are some of the obstacles you faced and how did you overcome them?**

We are proud, but above all, we know that producing El Salvador's first rum entails a huge responsibility: we have created a rum that will be the ambassador of our country around the world! Knowing this, we couldn't produce just anything; Ron Cihuatán has to be superb, and I think it really is. In terms of the challenges we have faced, I think they are the same challenges any entrepreneur faces: learning about a new industry, doing things for the first time ever; these are the type of challenges we have faced, and they are the fuel that has kept us going.

**Q: Can you list all the rums in your portfolio (present and near future), along with a description of each one?**

Our first product is Ron Cihuatán Solera 8, a rum that truly represents the spirit of Salvadorans. It is a complex rum that balances the sweetness of sugarcane with the tannic astringency provided by the used American oak barrels in which it is aged. Ron Cihuatán is amazing both neat, as well as, mixed. I'm sure people will love it because it lends itself to experimentation in terms of mixology.

We are currently in the process of unveiling Ron Cihuatán Solera 4, which will be available in the near future.

**Q: How is your rum being received by the local community?**

With great excitement. Salvadorans are happy to have an ambassador that will share our culture with the world. They are excited to let the world know we have a Premium rum that tells its story and inspires people to tell theirs.

**Q: Where in El Salvador is your rum currently available for purchase?**

Ron Cihuatán is available at Super Selectos, a local supermarket chain, in its 93 stores around the country. Also we are available in several bars and restaurants in El Salvador. We have joined forces with Diprisa, one of the strongest local distributors to promote and position Ron Cihuatán locally.

**Q: Do you have any plans for exporting your rums? If so, what countries will be your primary focus and when do you plan on exporting to these countries?**

Ron Cihuatán was developed with export markets in mind. We are currently in negotiations to export to Europe and the United States. Our team is very excited to share the product of so much patience and hard work; a rum resulting from the volcanic soil of El Salvador and the great care of the Salvadoran people, destined to travel the world.

**Q: How important is it to you for Ron Cihuatán to become a symbol of national pride for people from El Salvador?**

I'm sure Ron Cihuatán will become the ambassador of El Salvador around the world. It will tell the story of our country and the great things we do here! We hope Ron Cihuatán, through its heritage, will inspire people around the world to explore their own heritage, their own story.

**Q: What has been the reaction from your government agencies, relating to the approvals needed for you to produce and commercialize a domestically-produced rum?**

The government agencies have been supportive and have shown appreciation since we are developing a new industry in El Salvador. Licorera Cihuatán will be a job creator in the northern region on El Salvador and will certainly bring development to the communities that surround it.

**Q: If our readers would like to learn more about Ron Cihuatán and/or they would like to contact your facility, how may they reach you?**

The most direct way is to email us at [info@ron.sv](mailto:info@ron.sv) with any questions or comments. We are also on Facebook as Ron Cihuatán, Instagram and Twitter as @roncihuatan.

**Q: Are there any plans to have a visitor center and tasting room/store at the distillery?**

We are in the process of building the permanent home for Ron Cihuatán within our sugar



mill complex. We certainly have plans to accommodate visitors in order to share our story with them!

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

Mainly our excitement to share with the world the first rum made in El Salvador; the product of the hard work of a community, from the cane producers who till the soil in the sugarcane fields to the women who, with great care and pride, bottle and label Ron Cihuatán to share with the world. We are eager to share our story and inspire others to share theirs.

Mr. Alvarez, thank you again for taking the time to grant me this interview, I am very excited for you and your team. I congratulate you all for producing the first ever Salvadorian rum and wish you much, much success!

Sincerely,

Margaret Ayala,  
Publisher of "Got Rum?" magazine

# CIGAR & RUM PAIRING

by Philip Ili Barake



**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).

## Arturo Fuente Lunch

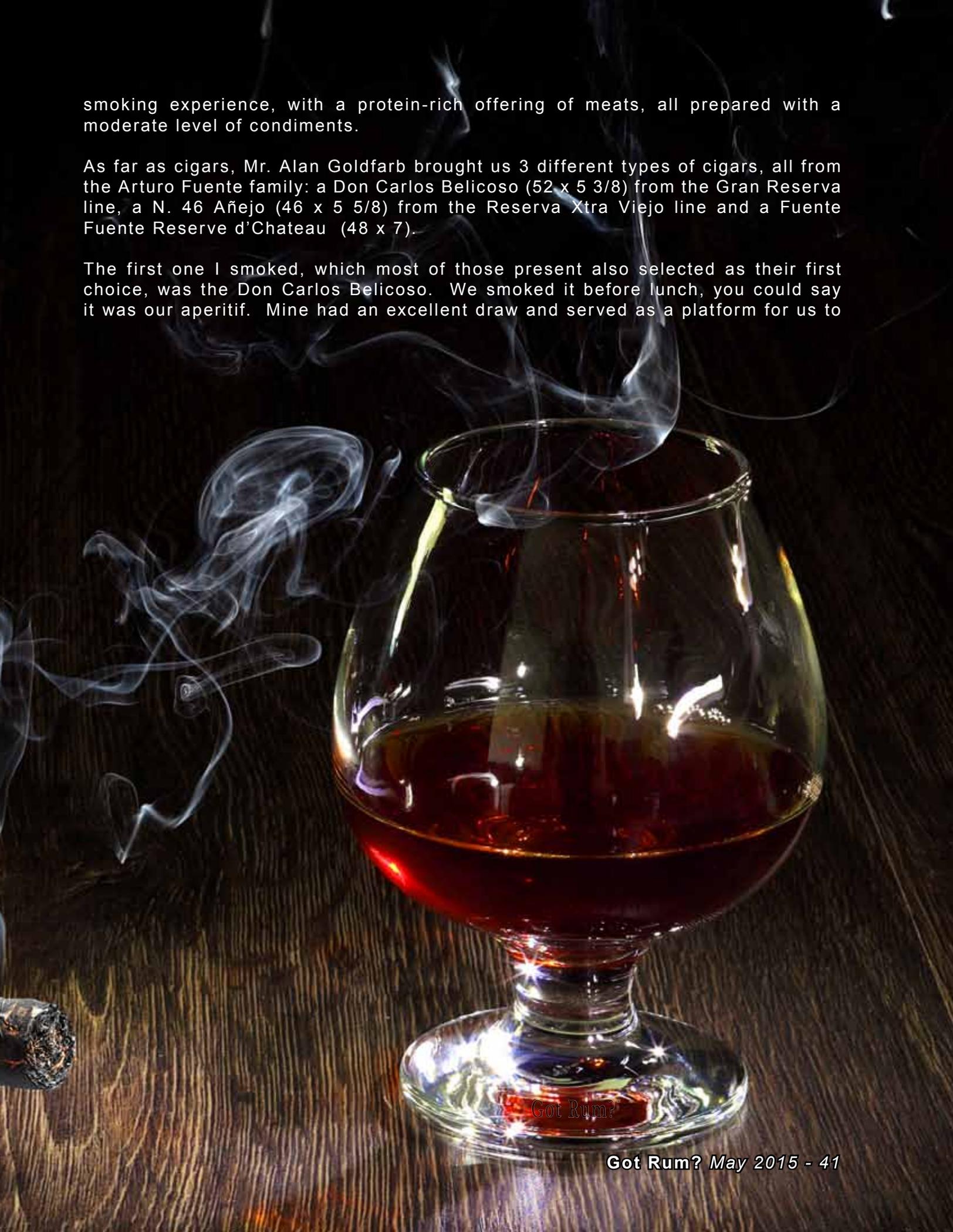
**F**or my rum and cigar pairings I often try to invite friends and colleagues, since the pairings are a very unique and pleasant experience that is best shared with others. This time, however, I was the one being invited by José Nuñez-Caballero to share my experiences and opinions with members of the "Club Amantes del Buen Puro" (a club comprised of people who are passionate about great cigars) from San Juan, Puerto Rico. Even though I live in a different country, thousands of miles away from Puerto Rico, I was pleased to accept the invitation, to have a great time surrounded by like-minded people, excellent cigars and a good rum.

For starters, the chosen venue was very unique, they had reserved the top floor of the Popular Center (formerly the Banker Club, where the cigar club was originally founded), at the Ruth Chris Restaurant, which was an excellent starting point. Members of the club gather here regularly to have lunch, enjoying a fixed menu while also enjoying their cigars. Yes, you are allowed to smoke while you eat, something that is often frowned upon but, in this case, the menu was specially designed to allow for a great

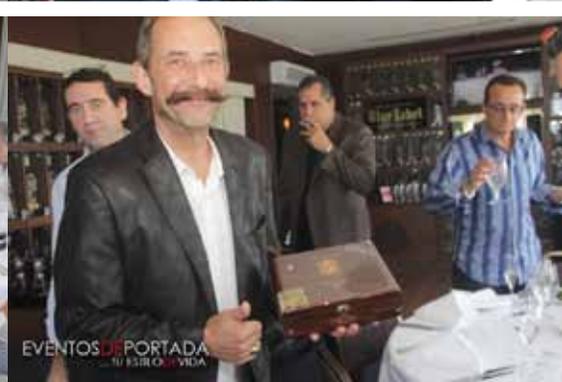
smoking experience, with a protein-rich offering of meats, all prepared with a moderate level of condiments.

As far as cigars, Mr. Alan Goldfarb brought us 3 different types of cigars, all from the Arturo Fuente family: a Don Carlos Belicoso (52 x 5 3/8) from the Gran Reserva line, a N. 46 Añejo (46 x 5 5/8) from the Reserva Xtra Viejo line and a Fuente Fuente Reserve d'Chateau (48 x 7).

The first one I smoked, which most of those present also selected as their first choice, was the Don Carlos Belicoso. We smoked it before lunch, you could say it was our aperitif. Mine had an excellent draw and served as a platform for us to



Got Rum?



break the ice and get to know each other a bit more. This cigar format is an ideal “figurado” for short smoking sessions, of approximately 40 minutes.

As we began our meal, Alan explained to us the characteristics of the Añejo line and its history. He explained how originally the wrapper was destined for the Opus X line, but Hurricane Georges destroyed inventories and made it impossible to achieve that goal. Several years later, Carlos Fuentes Jr. ordered the use of a Connecticut wrapper and thus gave birth to a very unique line of very well aged cigars.

Even though we were enjoying our meal while drinking Spanish wines, I was craving a rum to pair with this great cigar. Fortunately for me, I was able to find Ron Zacapa 23 and XO. It was my turn then to talk to the group about rums in general and about the specific blending process behind Zacapa rums. I was able to talk about the differences between the two rums so that each person could select the best one to pair with their cigar.

There was a consensus regarding rum being the ideal spirit to pair up with a cigar. There is a consistent topic of discussion among cigar aficionados regarding which rum to enjoy and where to buy it. So I was right at home, giving advice about rums and, of course, enjoying one of the best in its class.

The cigar had a draw that was beyond fantastic, this Añejo from Arturo Fuente has spicy notes mingled with dry fruit, also features freshly-ground coffee and high strength cocoa. The coffee notes, in particular, reminded me of one of the stops I made on my way to Puerto Rico, in Colombia, where they have a very rich coffee culture. At one of the cafes, I tasted several of the offerings and, upon selecting my favorite, they ground a bag for me and I was able to pack it in my suitcase, so I had the coffee notes very present in my mind.



Given how much I was enjoying the draw on my Añejo, I opted to stick with Ron Zacapa 23, which is sweeter and lingers longer on the palate, reminding me of the Spanish rum style that was a perfect match for the tobacco.

I must admit that I decided to leave the Opus X for another occasion. It is a very special cigar, that can only be rolled by very few people, with production numbers below the 20 cigars per roller per day. It is a work of art for those who know and appreciate Arturo Fuente.

More than being a club of cigar aficionados, this is a club of people who enjoy the best things life has to offer. I could see a common thread uniting all present, the bond of those who know the true pleasure derived from pairing a good rum with a good cigar. As their guest I could not have been more pleased to be part of the group, even though only for one day, but what a day! After leaving the restaurant we went to the Cigar House in the Old San Juan, to finish what we had started. I highly recommend this place to anyone visiting the area, it is one of the few inviting places where one can comfortably enjoy a cigar.

Regardless of where you live, look for or start your own cigar smoking club. Trust me when I tell you that it'll provide for a setting where you can have a very special time. It doesn't have to have weekly gatherings, even a monthly gathering can provide you with an excellent rum and a cigar that will remind you how special life can be.

Cheers,

Philip Ili Barake  
Philip@gotrum.com

# RON de EL SALVADOR CIHUATÁN



*A tribute to our ancestors...*

[info@ron.sv](mailto:info@ron.sv)