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JULY 2023

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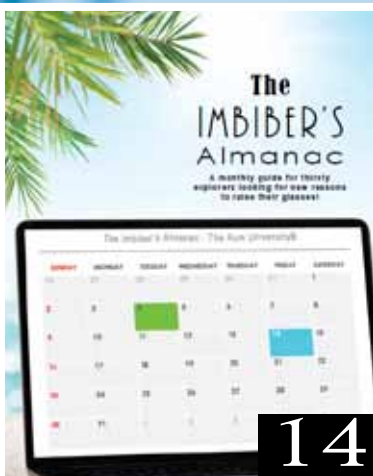
**COOKING WITH RUM - ANGEL'S SHARE - CIGAR & RUM
RUM HISTORIAN - UNTIL THE BITTER END - RUM IN THE NEWS
THE IMBIBER'S ALMANAC - THE RUM UNIVERSITY®
THE SWEET BUSINESS OF SUGAR**



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FRONT COVER: Triple Rum Delight
INSIDE SPREAD: An Ode to Summer

FROM THE EDITOR

Sugarcane: The Sweet And The Bitter

If you ask anyone who lives in sugarcane-producing areas about the inconveniences resulting from cane-harvesting operations, they will likely point out a few areas of irritation, including:

- If the cane fields are burned prior to harvesting, the ashes are carried by the wind and *fall on everything and everyone*. All around the Caribbean, Central and South America, I've heard the complaints by angry housewives, griping about the clean laundry that was put outside to dry, only to find it covered in ash later in the day!
- To keep dust levels down during the harvest/dry season, dirt roads in and around the communities near the sugar mills and the distilleries are often sprayed with spent wash (vinasse). While this approach does help reduce *some* of the dust, the smell is less than appealing, and it attracts A LOT of flies!
- The number of trucks hauling harvested sugarcane from the fields to the mills compound traffic congestion and are often involved in accidents.

What most citizens don't usually consider, is that the same crop responsible for all those problems is also behind the employment of many individuals who rely on the sugarcane income to support their families. Sugarcane is also responsible for a large volume of sugar exports, which help subsidize the price of the sugar sold domestically.

The focus of this month's "Sweet Business of Sugar" is on Nicaragua (pg. 44). As you will see when you read the report, some sugar mills have lost up to 30% of their workforce, including experienced truck drivers, due to the mass exodus of professionals leaving the country to escape



the current political and economic crisis. This exodus is bad news but is even worse when you think about all the electric energy that countries like Nicaragua produce using the bagasse after the cane is crushed at the mills. Electricity prices invariably go up when supply falls short of demand, so it is easy to see the domino effect that worker migration can have on the cost of living in sugarcane-producing regions.

As with all things in life, welcoming the sweet side of things means that we must also accept their bitter side.

Cheers!

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 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!

Ron Izalco Rum Aged 10 Years

Created by Karthik Sudhir, founder of Phenomenal Spirits, Ron Izalco is a blend of three molasses-based rums from Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Panama that have been aged for 10 years in used American white oak bourbon barrels. Part of the molasses used to create this blend is from sugarcane grown on the side of the Izalco stratovolcano. The rum is blended and bottled in Virginia Beach, Virginia, at 43% ABV in 700 ml bottles. For more information about the history of this rum company and its products, check out this interview with Mr. Sudhir by Margaret Ayala from the January 2019 issue of Got Rum? Magazine.

Appearance

The bottle has an interesting, short, tapered neck design that is easy to hold and pour. The front label clearly establishes the identity of the brand for consumers, and the back of the bottle provides tasting notes about the rum. The liquid in the bottle is a dark amber color in the bottle and lightens slightly in the glass. Swirling the rum created a thin band that quickly thickened and released a couple of waves of legs that became thicker as they dropped, before beading up and evaporating.

Nose

The aroma is caramel forward, with notes of dried apricot, milk chocolate, raisins, and toasted oak tannins.

Palate

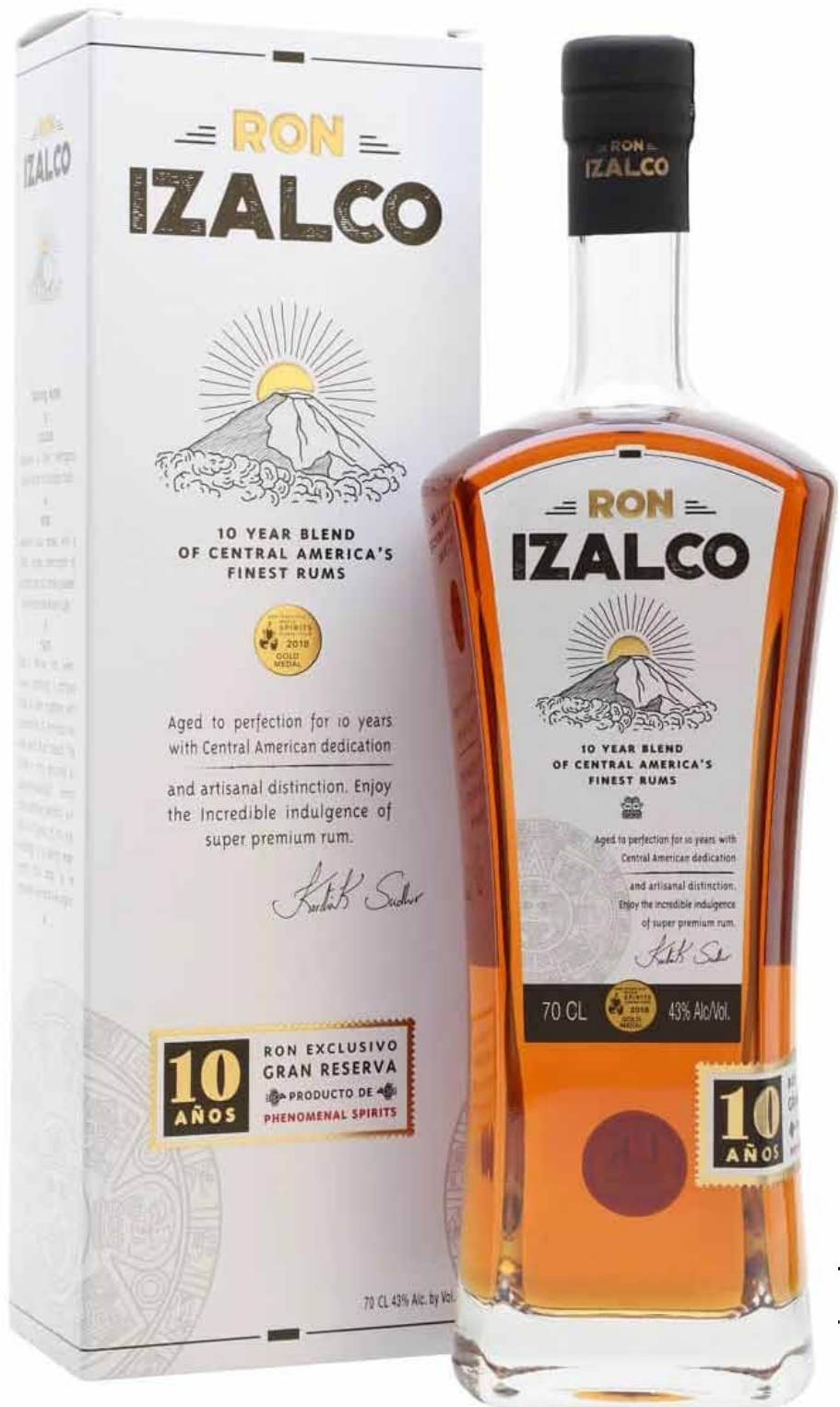
The toasted oak and caramel lead the way as the alcohol covers the tongue. With additional sips, I found notes of sweet cocoa, dried fruit-apricots, raisins, and cranberries; roasted almonds, and

cashews, rounded out by a bit of sweet tobacco leaf. The flavors merge, dance, and linger in a long, dry finish.

Review

When I spotted the bottle in the store, the shape of it was the first thing I noticed, as it easily distinguished itself from the others on the shelves. I was intrigued by the idea of a rum blend that was comprised of three rums from Central America and wanted to learn more. Overall, I found it hit some of the flavor notes I expected to find with a Spanish-style rum, but may not have had some of the complexity I look for in a ten year old rum blend.

I particularly enjoyed how the toasted oak notes balanced the caramel notes with the initial sip and remained consistent throughout the experience. That said, I think the blender did a good job of delivering a sweet and savory experience that can be sipped and enjoyed with a meal or as an ingredient in a classic drink like a Manhattan or Old Fashioned cocktail.



www.izalcorum.com

THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft

Plantation Rum Under the Sea Collection No.2 Panama 2008

During the spring of 2023, Plantation announced the release of their second collection of rums for their "Under the Sea" vintages. The series features six limited edition bottlings from the rum making world, including Barbados, Fiji, Guyana, Jamaica, Panama, and Venezuela, with artwork showcasing sea life common to the region where the rums are produced. For the Panama release, a humpback whale is featured on the box and bottle labels for the product. The rum was produced in 2008 at Panama's Alcoholes del Istmo distillery using molasses made from local sugarcane and distilled in a column still. Aged for 12 years in used bourbon barrels in Panama, and one additional year in Ferrand casks in Cognac, France, where it was blended and bottled at 45.7% ABV. Limited to 19 casks, it was noted that no dosage was used in the creation of this product, which will only be sold in the United States in select markets.

Appearance

As noted, the 750 ml bottle is sold in a box with matching artwork. There is some basic information about the product on the bottle and box, but the focus is on the artwork showcasing humpback whales breaching the surface and swimming under the ocean with fish and over reefs. The bottle is embossed with the Plantation logo and has raffia weave around it, reminding me visually of the glass float lights you see in some bars.

The liquid is a pale golden amber in the bottle and glass. I noticed a small amount of distillate in the bottle, but nothing in the glass. Swirling the rum in the glass generated a medium band that quickly thickened and released a series of fast moving tears down the side. Within a few minutes, the ring and tears had evaporated, leaving residue in their wake.

Nose

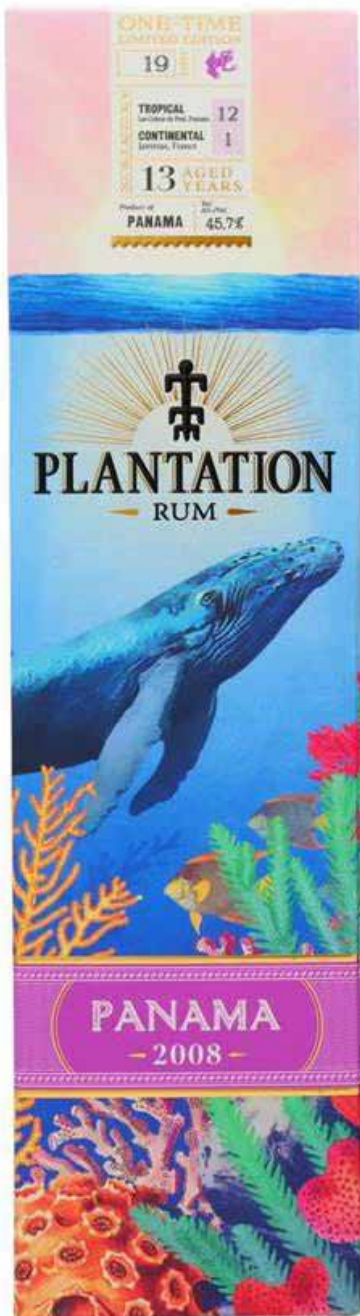
The aroma leads to a rush of fruit like strawberries, raspberries, ripe peaches, orange zest, and lemongrass. As the liquid sat and the fruit notes settled, I noted a confectionary sweetness reminiscent of a tart, light tweak of nutmeg and allspice at the end.

Palate

Like the aroma, the first sip is a fruity burst of flavors and alcohol with the introduction of a strong honey sweet apple note. At the halfway mark, a toffee laden spiciness comes into play along with toasted nuts, nutmeg, and allspice, balancing the fruit notes. As the other flavors fade, strong notes of dark cacao, anise, and dried tobacco leaf enter the profile, lingering in a long, dry finish.

Review

When I heard about the first Under the Sea Collection release, I found the idea interesting and some of the artwork gorgeous. The second collection is equally interesting, and I dare say that some of the artwork is even better than that found in the first series. It had been a while since I had reviewed a rum produced by Plantation as well as something that was produced in the country of Panama, so this seemed like an opportune moment to evaluate both in this new release. By design, a product to be sipped and savored, the fruit notes were interesting and unique compared to other Panamanian rums I have experienced. I found the midpalate notes and dry finish to be very much in line with other products I have had that were made by Alcoholes del Istmo. My only guess is some of the fruit notes were produced during the year of continental aging in Ferrand Casks in France. I enjoyed the unique exploration of a rum from Panama and will be curious to sample some of the other rums in this collection.



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COOKING WITH RUM

**Bringing the Spirit of the Cane
Into the Heart of the Kitchen!**

by Chef Susan Whitley



Coconut Rum Braised Chicken

I was looking through books and website for inspiration for my next rum-based dish and I came across this amazing recipe. I have to share it "as is" because it is delicious! Hope you get inspired to try it too.

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons coconut oil for browning
- 12 whole chicken drumsticks bone-in, skin-on
- salt for seasoning the chicken
- 1 1/2 cups dark spiced rum
- 1/2 cup coconut balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 cup shredded coconut
- 3 tablespoons worcestershire sauce
- 4 tablespoons dark brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon all-spice
- 3 cups chicken stock
- Additional salt, to taste

Instructions:

1. Pre-heat the oven to 350. Get a large dutch oven or pot on the stove and heat the coconut oil over medium high heat. Season the chicken legs with salt. Brown the chicken pieces in two batches until they are golden on the outside. Remove them from the pot and set them aside.
2. Deglaze the pot with the rum, scraping up the brown bits from the bottom. Add in the coconut balsamic and let the mixture reduce for 2-3 minutes.



3. Add in the shredded coconut, Worcestershire sauce, brown sugar, all spice and chicken stock. Give the braising liquid a big stir to combine it. Add the chicken back into the pot and bring it to a low boil. Cover the pot with its lid and transfer it to the oven.
4. Let the coconut rum braised chicken cook for an hour and a half, until it is fall-off-the-bone tender and full of flavor. Then just plate and serve! You can serve it on a platter on a bed of rice or pineapple chunks.



Recipe Credit: <https://jeanieandluluskitchen.com/coconut-rum-braised-chicken/>

The IMBIBER'S Almanac

A monthly guide for thirsty
explorers looking for new reasons
to raise their glasses!

The Imbiber's Almanac - The Rum University®

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

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UNIVERSITY





The IMBIBER'S Almanac

JULY

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

Are you looking for festive reasons
to raise your glass this month?

Here are a few of them!

Write to us at info@gotrum.com
if we missed any!

JUL 2 National Anisette Day

JUL 8 World Rum Day

JUL 10 National Piña Colada Day

JUL 11 National Mojito Day

JUL 12 Michelada Day

JUL 14 National Grand Marnier Day

JUL 19 National Daiquiri Day

JUL 24 National Tequila Day

JUL 27 National Scotch Day





The IMBIBER'S Almanac

Featured Cocktail:
Classic Daiquiri
(July 19th)

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 oz. Low-congener, Un-aged (white) Rum
- 3/4 oz. Freshly Squeezed Lime Juice
- 1/2 to 3/4 oz. Simple Syrup, to taste

Directions:

1. Add the ingredients to a cocktail shaker with ice cubes. Shake well.
2. Strain into a chilled cocktail glass. Serve and enjoy.

Tips (www.thespruceeats.com):

- If your drink is a bit too tart, add more syrup. If it is too sweet, add more lime. Additionally, the simple syrup you use will play a role; with a rich (2:1) simple syrup, you won't need as much as a daiquiri made with a 1:1 syrup.
- Though a daiquiri isn't usually garnished, a lime wedge or twisted lime peel is a good option.
- Like many classic cocktails, the daiquiri is designed to be a short, neat drink, which is why the final volume is only 3 ounces. Considering its strength, this is not a bad thing. You can certainly double the recipe or serve it on the rocks if you like.

A glass of rum sits on a stack of books. The glass is filled with a golden-brown liquid and has a textured, faceted base. The books are stacked in the background, with some pages visible in the foreground. The lighting is warm and focused on the glass.

THE Rum[®] UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Reviews of books related to sugarcane, milling, fermentation, distillation, aging, blending and other topics related to the production or history of rum.

www.RumUniversity.com

Tissue Culture Based Sugarcane Farming by R. S. Sengar, M. Lal and Shalini Gupta

(Publisher's Review) Modern commercial sugarcane varieties are obtained through a multi-stage selection scheme requiring over a period of approximately 10 years through identification of a few elite clones from a very large population of hybrid seedlings. Lack of suitable multiplication procedure and perpetuation of systemic diseases are the serious problems in multiplying an elite genotype of sugarcane conventionally in the open field. Due to limited availability of seed cane of a new variety at the time of its release and slow multiplication rate by conventional means, it takes a further period of about 10-12 years to cover the desired area for commercial cultivation. By the time the variety starts deteriorating due to biotic and abiotic stresses. It has also been realized that the growing demand of seed cane of newly released varieties cannot be fulfilled timely by the conventional methods of plant multiplication. Therefore, the use and exploitation of new biotechniques are quite essential for faster multiplication of newly released varieties. Micropropagation is currently the only realistic means of achieving rapid and large scale production of disease free planting material of newly developed varieties in order to speed up the commercialization process in sugarcane. Thus, plant tissue culture has now become the major component of biotechnology. Genetic engineering and molecular biology can be used for crop improvement through the application of various techniques developed in the field of biotechnology. Several exciting developments have taken place in sugarcane biotechnology during the last 5 decades. The first edition of this book entitled "Tissue culture based sugarcane farming" is being brought out as an introductory text covering plant regeneration in vitro using cell, tissue and organ culture. Basic aspects such as large scale micropropagation, cell culture, cellular totipotency, somatic embryogenesis and various aspects of sugarcane cultivation have also been included. In this book, comprising 29 chapters, various protocols have been described in a very simple manner. The language of the text is simple and the subject matter is fully illustrated. No other book is available with such an approach covering basic to applied aspects of plant



Tissue Culture Based Sugarcane Farming



R S Sengar
M Lal
Shalini Gupta

tissue culture. I hope this book will prove to be of a great use within the classroom as teaching/learning material and in the laboratory for practical and research purposes for the scientist as well as professionals in the fields of sugar industry.

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THE RUM HISTORIAN

by Marco Pierini

I was born in 1954 in a little town in Tuscany (Italy) where I still live. In my youth, I got a degree in Philosophy in Florence and I studied Political Science in Madrid, but my real passion has always been History and through History I have always tried to understand the world, and men. Life brought me to work in tourism, event organization and vocational training, then, already in my fifties I discovered rum and I fell in love with it.

I have visited distilleries, met rum people, attended rum Festivals and joined the Rum Family. I have studied too, because Rum is not only a great distillate, it's a world. Produced in scores of countries, by thousands of companies, with an extraordinary variety of aromas and flavors, it is a fascinating field of studies. I began to understand something about sugarcane, fermentation, distillation, ageing and so on.

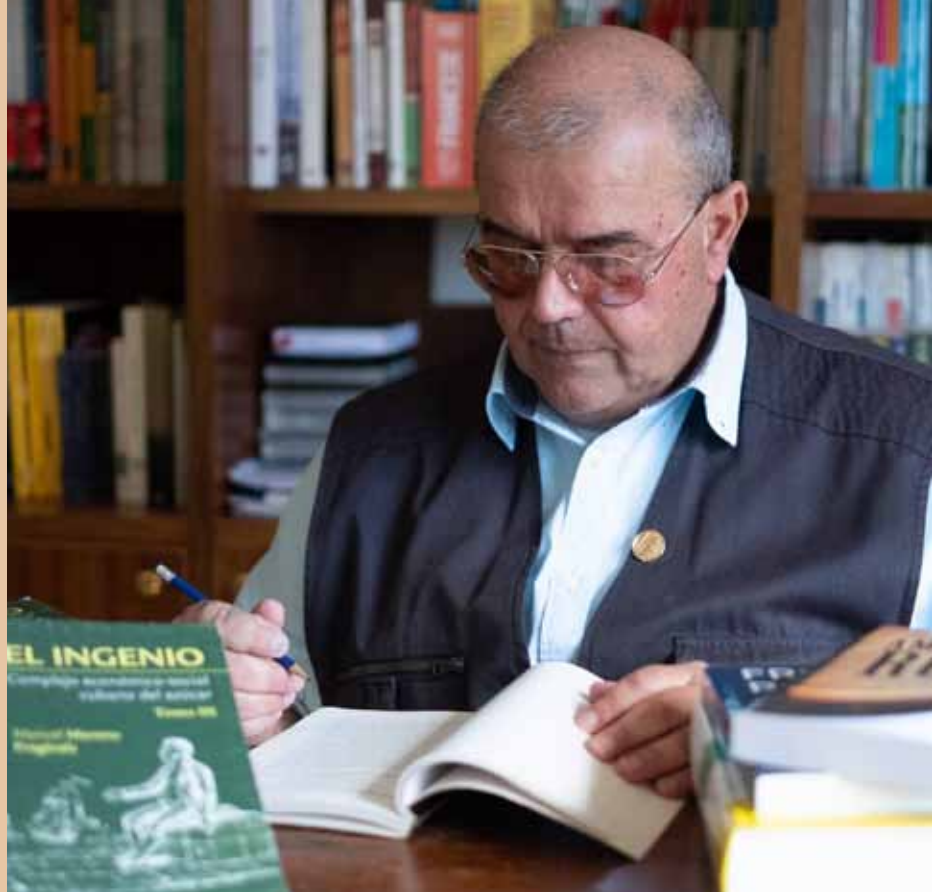
Soon, I discovered that rum has also a terrible and rich History, made of voyages and conquests, blood and sweat, imperial fleets and revolutions. I soon realized that this History deserved to be researched properly and I decided to devote myself to it with all my passion and with the help of the basic scholarly tools I had learnt during my old university years.

In 2017 I published the book "AMERICAN RUM – A Short History of Rum in Early America"

In 2019 I began to run a Blog: www.therumhistorian.com

In 2020, with my son Claudio, I have published a new book "FRENCH RUM – A History 1639-1902".

I am currently doing new research on the History of Cuban Rum.



HISTORY OF CUBAN RUM

12. BACARDI

Bacardi is perhaps the most famous rum brand in the world. The Company was founded in 1862 in Santiago (Cuba) and for many years presented its rum and itself as a product authentically, typically, Cuban. Then things changed and today Bacardi is a large multinational company with no concrete ties to Cuba. But we will come back to this in the future. In this article I just want to tell about the birth and the first steps of Bacardi and of a new type of rum, the *Ron ligero cubano*, that is, the Cuban light rum, trying to understand the reasons for its great and lasting success.

It's not an easy task. Over time, the Company itself has produced its own literature, and its own mythology, to which have been added numerous works written about it by many authors. Besides, Bacardi has always aroused strong mixed passions, not so much for its rum as for its political role.

Moreover, I could only do little first hand research. That is, I read only a few primary sources such as archives, documents and books of the time, while I relied mainly on

works written by other authors, that is, on secondary literature. So, I tried to tell the facts using widely spread information, placing them in their historical context to understand them better. And as you will see, many questions remain without a satisfactory answer.

Let's start with the French. Yes, because one of the most important, and today almost forgotten facts in the history of Cuba in the 1800s, is the strong French influence. After 1791, with the slave revolution in the French sugar colony of Saint-Domingue (present-day Haiti) "An estimated 30,000 exiles from St. Domingue settled in Cuba and played a major role in the development of commercial agriculture, as Cuba moved to fill the vacuum in sugar and coffee production resulting from the revolution in St. Domingue." (Luis Martínez-Fernández in Alexander von Humboldt's *The Island of Cuba: a Political Essay*, 2001).

Significant immigration from France continued even in the first decades of the 19th century: "French sugar technicians were soon to be found in all the bigger Cuban sugar mills and indeed the biggest mills of all were built by them. ... in the twelve months 1 December 1818 to 30 November 1819, 1,332 immigrants came to Cuba, of whom 416 were Spaniards, 389 Frenchmen, 65 Englishmen, 126 Anglo-Americans" Also the famous "Jamaican train" in spite of its name, "was a French Saint Domingue innovation" ((Hugh Thomas *Cuba. A History*, 1970).

The American writer Samuel Hazard travelled to Havana in the middle of 1860s and he later wrote a book (*Cuba with pen and pencil*, 1870) illustrating it with numerous drawings. It's a fascinating work, a kind of tourist guide, written by an intelligent, cultured man, describing the life of colonial Cuba, just before the beginning of the first War of Independence. Here are some quotes "Many of the people speak English, a great many French - which, in fact, is the household language in some parts of the island ... One of the owners of a line of these carriages had made over \$100,000,

and was desirous of selling out and going back to his *belle France*, from whence he originally came ... Of the small trades, there seem to be an innumerable quantity of tailors, milliners or mantua makers, hatters, perfumers, artificial flowers makers, and furnishing stores; many of this class of people are French women, and I am told they have the business of the *modistes* entirely in their own hands."

Facundo Bacardí Massó was a young Catalan immigrant that arrived in Santiago in 1828, where some brothers of his already lived. Catalan immigrants dominated much of the trade in Santiago and throughout Cuba and were known for their hard work and professionalism. And *Don Facundo* also started as a trader. Only many years later did he decide to dedicate himself to rum making. Those were the years when the production and export of Cuban rum were growing, and many were trying to improve the quality of the product. (See THE QUEST FOR QUALITY in the April 2023 issue)

"Between 1851 and 1856, at least half a dozen handbooks on rum making were published in Cuba, summarizing all the available technical information. It was only a matter of time before someone came up with a high-quality product. At least Facundo was in the right place. Though sugar production was not as advanced in the east of Cuba as in the west, Santiago was Cuba's closest connection to the British and French islands where the best-known rums were made. The French colonists who had come to the Santiago area from Haiti brought with them an appreciation for fine liquors." (Tom Gjelten *Bacardi and the Long Fight for Cuba*, 2008)

An important French connection can be found at the very beginning of his enterprise. The family of Amalia – Don Facundo Bacardí's wife – came from France and his first partner and master in the art of rum making was a French immigrant, José León Bouteiller, "who had a pot still that he used for making cognac and candies. Bouteiller rent a house on Marina Baja Street from Clara

Astié, Facundo's sometime benefactor and the godmother of his wife Amalia. ... as part of his rental agreement he agreed to share his pot still with Facundo and assist him in rum distillation trials." (Gjelten)

After months of experimentations, the two partners had improved their rum to the point they were ready to begin a commercial production, "In May 1862, the firm was incorporated under the name 'Bacardi, Bouteiller, & Compañía. To maximize revenue, the company made and sold various sweets ... along with Boueiller's cognac and wine made from oranges. But it was the new style of rum that attracted the most attention" (Gjelten). "It was a light product, almost transparent ... and free of the foul odors that in preceding versions had produced so many headaches. The lines of people waiting to purchase this rum were longer every morning, especially after the early months when Don Facundo so cleverly gave away free samples. In the beginning, distribution was limited to the immediate Santiago area, because there were no bottles for the rum – meaning customers had to bring their own containers" (Gjelten, quoting Miguel Bonera Miranda *Oro blanco: una historia empresarial del ron cubano*, 2.000)

"The distillery was just a short distance from the waterfront and the business quickly became well known as a quality operation among the ship captains who put into Santiago port. The sailors would buy their rum by the barrel, and on the next stop in Santiago they would return for a refill. Slowly, the reputation of 'Bacardi' rum spread across Cuba, and by 1868 it was being sold in Havana." (Gjelten)

Did they invent a secret formula? This is an important part of Bacardi's own narrative, but I am not so sure. We already know that choice of the raw material, attention to the production process and cleaning of the equipment were scarce in Cuban rum making. The new Company was different. "The new rum that was soon to appear on the market was not the result of any spectacular breakthrough. Rather it was the end-product of patient trial and

error, better filtering here, more ageing there, total attention to the details; temperature, ventilation, light and shade, the degree of cane's ripeness and the quality of the molasses, the right choice of the wood for the making of the ageing vats and, above all, the ability to balance all these factors; or rather, more than ability, the art of using them correctly. And so, the new and different rum was born, a refined (in both senses of the word) product, a quality product: Cuban rum." (Hugh Barty-King and Anton Massel *Rum yesterday and today*, 1983).

"And then there was perhaps the most innovative element of all: Facundo Bacardi was a brilliant marketer. Coming to the rum business from a background in retail sales rather than sugar production, he knew the importance of promotion and publicity. He carefully monitored the rum production, and as evidence of his approval of each batch he personally signed the label on every bottle that came off the production line. His bold signature 'Bacardi M.' ... became instantly recognizable. He had taken a cue from the customers who asked for 'Bacardi's rum' even before it was bottled under that name" (Gjelten)

Anyway, in 1874, Bouteiller retired and the firm was reorganized changing its name into "*Bacardi & Compañía*", the Brand under which it would gain great and lasting fame.

To put things into their context, and to relativize a little, it's important to remember that in those same years many new brands of Cuban rum were born and were greatly successful. "New styles appeared: dry, straw-colored *Carta Blanca*; *Carta Oro*, golden in hue; *Ron Palmas*, amber, sweet and aromatic; rich, dark Añejo. As these styles developed, so did the world's first real rum brands. Between 1860 and 1890, numerous brands emerged. Camps Hermanos introduced Ron Matusalem; Fandiño Pérez launched Ron Superior; Crossi Mestre y Cia distilled Ron Crossi y Mestre; Bacardi y Bouteiller SC produced Ron Carta Blanca; JM Parejo introduced

Ron Carta Parejo; Trueba Hermanos launched Ron de las Tres Negritas; Rovira y Guillaume distilled Ron Añejo Vencedor.” (A. Miller and J. Brown with D. Broom and N. Strangeway *Cuba. The Legend of Rum*, 2017)

Now let's skip a century and read two authoritative Cuban sources. Leonardo Padura is one of the most famous Cuban writers. He began as a journalist and in 1988 he wrote a long article for the Cuban magazine *Juventud Rebelde: La larga vida secreta de una fórmula secreta* (The long secret life of a secret formula), then republished in the book *El viaje más largo*, 2014. In the article he interviewed two great names of Cuban rum making, here are some quotes:

Arturo García, production manager of the Caney rum factory in Santiago de Cuba (the old Bacardi factory): “Don Facundo ... was investing every penny he obtained in the creation of those reserves that would one day turn his cheap rums into quality liqueurs. ... a unique operation in the history of rum, an operation that, moreover, would later prove unrepeatable: the unaffordable creation of a stock of rums aged five, ten, fifteen years, that so many losses provoked to him, but that were building the basis of a real empire.”

José Navarro, the first Cuban *maestro ronero*: “The mystery? Repeats, without ceasing to smile. There is no mystery here, but a secret: the secret of working well. That was the great secret of Bacardi ... Then comes the ageing of the *aguardiente*. ... This is a historic practice that Bacardi established and that we have managed to preserve. Then follows a careful filtration, what we call the *destupe del aguardiente* to remove the usual rum stink.”

“And now it is possible to make rum. But our rum is produced with high quality alcohol and spirits, purified and filtered. From its mixture comes basic rum, which is subjected to a period of ageing ranging from six months to nine years, according to what kind of rum we want to make. If it is *Carta Blanca* old rums are not used, if

it is Gold ‘half aged rums’ are used and for the *Añejo* we use the ‘veterans’. And therein lies the secret: maintain discipline in this cycle, which can last up to nine years, to work now for what will be made in the sometimes distant future.

But in modern industry all this depends on aged rums stored for years. No modern factory can begin to age rums to be put on the market only after nine years. That is unaffordable, quite simply ... As you see, there is no such mystery, only discipline, tradition, professional zeal and reserves to make a good rum come true.”

Marco Pierini

POST SCRIPTUM

And yet ... Did Bacardi rum have a distinctive taste from the very beginning, different from the usual rums? Obviously, we will never know, but from its immediate success it would seem so. And this new taste, did it only derive from the greater care of the entire production process? Or was it from something new? Not from some radical innovation of distillation though, because for years they used a traditional pot still. Not even from aging because, being at the beginning, they could not have stocks of aged rum.

So? Maybe from the fermentation? The scientific knowledge regarding fermentation was rudimentary and in Cuba they normally used long fermentation, even 7 days. While *ron ligero* comes from short fermentation. This fundamental step could not have happened by chance and perhaps it was not even a slow and gradual change. At some point someone must have decided - consciously and deliberately - to experience short fermentation. But who? And when? I would love to know.

Until The BITTER END

Join us as we explore
the fascinating world of
bitter flavors and their role
in gastronomy, mixology and
health.

Presented by

THE **Rum**[®]
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Until The BITTER END

Science has classified flavors into five main groups, as perceived by our tongues. These groups are: Sweet, Sour, Salty, Bitter and -most recently- Umami.

Most foods and beverages have a combination of flavoring compounds that give them their particular “footprint,” that can encompass several of these flavor groups. This new series is devoted to the Bitter flavor, and to its impact on our everyday life.

Evolutionary scientists suggest that the ability to detect bitterness evolved as a way to protect

us from toxic plants and other substances, which often taste bitter. Although it gets a bad rap, bitterness can be used to create well-rounded and desirable flavor palates. You may not be aware of it, but bitterness is present in many of our favorite foods including chocolate, coffee, wine and barrel-aged spirits.

What does the word “Bitter” mean?

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines the word bitter (when used as an adjective) as: *being, inducing, or marked by the one of the five basic taste sensations that is peculiarly acrid, astringent, and often disagreeable and characteristic of citrus peels, unsweetened cocoa, black coffee, mature leafy greens (such as kale or mustard), or ale.* The origin of the word goes back to Middle English, from Old English *biter*, going back to Germanic **bitra-* (whence Old Saxon & Old High German *bittar* “acrid-tasting,” Old Norse *bitr* “biting, sharp”) and **baitra-* (whence Gothic *baitrs* “sharp-tasting”), derivatives from the base of **bitan-* “to bite.”

How Does “Bitter” Actually Taste?

Bitterness is neither salty nor sour, but may at times accompany these flavor sensations.

Many people are innately opposed to bitter flavors, but a liking for it can be acquired. Compounds that have an alkaline pH, such as baking soda, often have a bitter flavor.

Scientific research has found that some humans are more sensitive to bitter flavors than others.¹ These individuals are referred to as “supertasters” and are often of Asian, African, or South American descent. Being a supertaster may explain why some individuals find the flavor of vegetables highly disagreeable. Most vegetables contain at least some bitterness, especially when raw.

Bitter Foods

Dark, leafy greens are well known for their bitter flavor. Green leafy vegetables often increase in bitterness as they mature. For this reason, many people prefer tender young greens to their more mature -and bitter- counterparts. Bitter green vegetables include kale, dandelion greens and broccoli.

Cocoa is another food that is enjoyed for its bitter flavor. Pure cocoa has a distinct bitterness, which can be used to balance flavors like sweet or spicy in other foods.

Adding sugar and cream to cocoa significantly reduces its bitterness, making it more palatable.

Likewise, black coffee can be quite bitter. Although sugar and cream can be added to reduce the bitterness, many grow to enjoy the sharp flavor of black coffee. The type of bean and the unique roasting method will also impact coffee’s level of bitterness.

Citrus peels are well known for its bitterness, most of which resides in the white pith. As with most bitter flavors, it can be undesirable on its own, but when combined with other flavor elements, it can provide dimension and balance. Other fruits and vegetables that may provide bitter flavors may include grapefruit, bitter melon, mustard greens, and olives. Beverages such as tonic water, bitters, and mate tea are all also considered bitter. Before shying away from bitter ingredients in the future, explore how they can be combined with complimentary tastes to build a complex and enjoyable flavor profile.

Join us, as we explore the wonderful world of Bitter and Bitterness!



Until The BITTER END

Featured Ingredient: Rhubarb

Scientific Genus: *Rheum*

Rhubarb refers to the fleshy, edible stalks (petioles) of species and hybrids (culinary rhubarb) of *Rheum* in the family *Polygonaceae*, which are cooked and used for food. The plant is a herbaceous perennial that grows from short, thick rhizomes. Historically, different plants have been called “rhubarb” in English.

Traditional Chinese medicine

In traditional Chinese medicine, rhubarb roots of several species were used as a laxative for several millennia, although there is no clinical evidence to indicate such use is effective.

(Source: <https://www.wikipedia.com>)

Did You Know That . . .

- It's only quite recently that rhubarb has been used as an edible plant. Until the 18th century, it was considered strictly a medicinal plant. However, as sugar became more widely available in that century (and sugar is required to diminish the tartness of the petiole), it began to be used as a source of food in England, then elsewhere in Europe.
- The name “rhubarb” means barbarian root. It comes from the Greek *rha barbaron*. The Greeks knew the plant we call rhubarb as an import, its roots having been brought from China at great expense. The new plant was considered foreign and of course, to the ancient Greeks, anything from outside



their civilization would have been seen as barbarian.

- Rhubarb is long-lived. It's one of the most perennial of all vegetables. Plants can live for 60 years or more. However, it commonly begins to decline after 20 years or so, sometimes sooner. If so, try dividing it, then replanting in a new spot in compost-enriched, well-drained soil in full sun. That will give it a new lease on life.
- Rhubarb leaves are not as poisonous as often thought. It's well known among gardeners that you should consume only the leaf stalk (petiole), not the leaf blade itself, as the latter is poisonous. However, they're only moderately poisonous. A 145 lb (65 kg) adult would need to eat 9 to 18 lb (4 to 8 kg) of rhubarb blades to reach a lethal dose. Its toxicity largely comes from oxalic acid, a product which humans readily ingest in small quantities (it's found in many tart-tasting foods, including spinach, sorrel and beets, as well as tea, chocolate, nuts, parsley and poppy seeds).

(Source: <https://laidbackgardener.blog>)



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Until The BITTER END

Featured Bitters Recipe: Rhubarb Bitters

Ingredients:

- 1 1/4 C. of 100-Proof Vodka or any other Neutral Alcohol
- 1/2 C. Low Congener Rum (Flor de Caña, Brugal or similar)
- 1/2 C. Water
- 2 C. Fresh, Chopped Rhubarb
- 1 Tbsp. Zest of Lime
- 1 tsp. Zest of Lemon
- 1/4 tsp. Whole Coriander Seeds
- 1 tsp. Fennel Seeds
- 1/2 tsp. Chopped Cinchona Bark
- 1/2 tsp. Dried Lavender
- 1 tsp. Dried Chamomile
- 3 Juniper Berries

Directions:

Take care to place larger and denser items towards the bottom of a jar, like roots, tree bark, pods, and dried berries. Add softer and smaller items on top, then pour liquor in. Seal the jar and shake it once daily for a few seconds.

Test your ingredients' smell once daily to ensure successful infusion. When it's ready, strain the solid ingredients out. Check your bitters by adding them to a drink or consuming a few small drops. Add simple syrup if you want it sweeter and use water to dilute if necessary.





RUM IN THE NEWS

by Mike Kunetka



DON Q

Destilería Serrallés announced the release of Don Q Naranja, an exceptional flavored rum, aged in American White Oak barrels for up to 18 months with natural orange essence and flavor. Made with the finest aged rums and all-natural flavors, Don Q Naranja is the fifth expression of the brand's flavor portfolio, joining Don Q Coco, Don Q Piña, Don Q Limón and Don Q Pasión. The flavor portfolio is inspired by the fresh, tropical fruits from Puerto Rico. Naranja's bright citrus notes and alluring sweetness make it ideal for virtually any cocktail requiring a hint of orange with the tropical, premium taste of Don Q Rum. Mix Naranja with fresh juices or other citrus-focused liqueurs for a refreshing highball or low-ABV cocktail, including a Don Q Orange Spritz or the Don Q Mule. "We've been creating exceptional, dynamic rums for nearly 160 years, and Don Q Naranja is a vibrant example of how we craft our aged rums and infuse with all natural ingredients to create an unparalleled flavored expression," says Silvia Santiago, Maestra Ronera. "Flavored spirits and low-ABV drink options are on the rise and Don Q Naranja is the perfect embodiment of both, providing more options to those that want to imbibe responsibly," added Destilería Serrallés Chief Marketing Officer, Gabriella Ripepi. Destilería Serrallés is one of America's oldest

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 me an email to: Mike@gotrum.com.

family-owned businesses with a rum making tradition that spans six generations and 158 years. <https://donq.com/>

WEST INDIES RUM AND SPIRITS PRODUCERS' ASSOCIATION

The West Indies Rum and Spirits Producers Association (WIRSPA) has elected Margaret Monplaisir as the new Chairperson of The Board, the first time a woman has held that role in the body's 50-year history. Ms. Monplaisir is a 37-year veteran of the rum industry and the current head of St. Lucia Distillers. She has been a member of the WIRSPA Board of Directors for a number of years. In pledging to maintain the high standards of governance and cohesiveness which have underpinned the successful growth of the organization and of Caribbean brands, Ms. Monplaisir said, "We have many challenges to face, both in our supply chains and in the international market, but our products speak for themselves, and we see a bright future for Caribbean Rum". WIRSPA members, who comprise all the countries of CARICOM and the Dominican Republic, met under the chairmanship of outgoing Chair Komal Samaroo, head of Guyana conglomerate Demerara Distillers, to discuss a range of issues of importance to producers. "This is our first physical meeting since the Covid pandemic", stated Samaroo, "We are pleased to host it in Guyana, in the year of the 50th anniversary of CARICOM, and to celebrate 50 years of WIRSPA". As the global rum market, especially in the premium sector, is growing fast, Caribbean brands are also keen to explore new markets. One of the highlights of the meeting was an exchange with the CARICOM Assistant Secretary General (ASG) for Single Market and Trade, Ambassador Wayne McCook, in which producers called on CARICOM to facilitate openings in new markets for premium rum exports. On this matter the new Chair added "The region is poised to realize the opportunities presented by new non-traditional markets, and has the quality products, packaging and production capacity to take advantage of the rapid growth in premium spirits demand in these emerging markets." A key agenda item for producers was the effort to strengthen action to reduce excessive alcohol use by consumers, mindful of the negative effects of over-consumption. "We have already made great progress over the past few years to improve labelling and most of our products now carry advice against drinking under the legal age, drinking while pregnant, and drinking while driving, as well as information on servings and calories" stated the incoming Chair Ms. Monplaisir. "But we need to go further", she added. "We also agreed to ramp up our efforts to implement practical measures to reduce access by underage persons to alcohol and to support government efforts around reducing drinking and driving. We have the resources and the commitment to make a difference and we intend to do so." Also elected at the meeting, was Clement "Jimmy" Lawrence, head of the Jamaica rum producers. He will serve as Vice-Chair of WIRSPA, and will join St. Lucia, Guyana, Barbados and the Dominican Republic, the other members of the Executive Committee of WIRSPA. Directors also

welcomed three new directors into the fold, Antoine Couvreur of Mount Gay Distilleries in Barbados, Graham Williams of Renegade Rum in Grenada, and Perla Perdomo of Travelers' Liquors of Belize. A warm welcome was also extended to Laurent Shun, new head of Angostura, to his first WIRSPA meeting upon assuming the leadership role at the Trinidad company. <https://www.wirspa.com/>

BACARDI SURVEY SHOWS 29% OF BRITISH DRINKERS PREFER RUM OVER BEER

New research from BACARDÍ Rum has revealed over a quarter (29%) of Brits asked are opting for rum-based drinks this Summer, over cold pints of lager (15%). In fact, the Piña Colada ranks top as Brits' favorite summer cocktail (9%), followed by Sex on the Beach (7%) and a Mojito (5%). Londoners are particularly partial to a Piña Colada, with 1 in 3 (35%) Londoners revealing Rum is their spirit of choice in Summer months. With warmer months on the horizon, the research has also seen Brits rank their top summer scents and flavors, with coconuts (31%) topping the chart along with freshly mown grass (74%) and chip shop chips (22%). In fact, over half of Brits asked (59%) confirmed to choosing the flavor of coconut as soon as the Summer sets in, with coconut (59%), pineapple (52%) and mango (43%) being the top tastes of the summer that transport them to warmer climes. The research follows the launch of the new BACARDÍ Caribbean Spiced which features pineapple and coconut as core flavors, alongside vanilla and cinnamon, it's sure to set the nation's tastebuds tingling, transporting them to the tropics every single sip. Marie Peyto, UK Brand Director of BACARDÍ Rum said "With a combination of aged rum, pineapple, coconut, and spices, I'm delighted that our new BACARDÍ Caribbean Spiced includes the UK's favorite summer flavors. It's made for mixing, perfect for the nation's favorite tropical serves or adding the taste of the Caribbean to simple drinks. We're opening the Caribbean Flavor Rooms to give Brits the chance to experience their favorite flavors and our new rum in a truly immersive way. With the weather warming up, it'll be a great way to kick off BACARDÍ Rum's series of events across the country this Summer". To celebrate the UK's favorite summer flavors, Londoners will be able to visit the BACARDÍ Caribbean Flavor Rooms, devised with sensory expert Natalie Alibrandi to bring the flavors to life. The unique sip-along experience will take cocktail lovers on a sensory journey designed to engage with the sensory system through sight, sound, smell, and taste. Highlighting the pineapple, coconut, vanilla, and cinnamon tasting notes of the new BACARDÍ Caribbean Spiced. <https://www.bacardi.com/>

PICCADILY DISTILLERS

Piccadily Distilleries is proud to announce the U.S. launch of India's first pure cane juice rum, Camikara Rum. Through the gift of land and time, Camikara, India's first pure cane juice rum, is an exquisite spirit that has taken form through centuries of learning and teachings, processes, and ingredients. Casked and bottled in the extreme climate of the northern plains of

India, each bottle of Camikara Rum 12 YO, has been rested for 12 long years in American oak barrels. Camikara Rum dates back to 2009 in a quaint village in India, where the sweetest stalks of sugarcane were pickled, the juice distilled and placed in 956 American oak casks. The spirit then sat patiently for 12 years, interacting with the wood, thereby gaining color, flavor, and character. When the spirit was finally drawn from the barrels, the liquid was immediately named 'Camikara,' meaning liquid gold, a name of Sanskrit derivation, keeping true to the Indian heritage at Piccadily Distilleries. When the barrels were finally emptied, it was discovered that only 6.6% of the original cane juice spirit remained, with the rest having been usurped by the angels as their share. The leftover spirit was unique to India, with a taste and texture comparable only to the finest rums globally. "We never imagined we would inadvertently create such a rum. Our inspiration came from the history of the local households of the area where they have been distilling cane juice to make a local brew called Laahan," said Siddhartha Sharma, Promoter at Piccadily Distilleries. "It has been part of the culture and customs of the Punjab region for thousands of years. Our goal was to revive this age-old tradition and we even went a step further by maturing it in oak casks, to bring it up to international standard. It is a testament to our land's history, culture, and people." Piccadily Distilleries produced 3,600 numbered bottles for worldwide distribution, with 1,200 available in the US to be imported and distributed by their exclusive partner, ImpEx Beverage. Earlier this year, Camikara 12 yr brought home a Gold Medal win and 95 points from the prestigious 2023 International Wine & Spirits Competition. Since its arrival in the US, it has received recognition from both the 2023 San Francisco World Spirits Competition and the 2023 Ultimate Spirits Challenge. <https://www.piccadily.com/>

ROBB'S RED RUMM

Robb and Cindy Willard's obsession with rum began 25 years ago when they would take sailing trips throughout the Caribbean. They visited large distilleries in Venezuela and Grenada, smaller operations on other islands and backwoods moonshine operations. After two years of collecting rums from wherever they went, they decided to try their hand at creating their own blend. However, their construction and real estate businesses got in the way. In 2020, Robb left the construction industry and focused full time of creating a premium sipping rum. Cindy would come home from selling homes to find their kitchen full of open bottles, tasting jars and wonderful aromas. They finalized the formula they wanted last year and filed for TTB label approval. This Spring, with the help of the folks at Black Hat Distillery in Colorado Springs, they were able to blend and bottle their first offering, Robb's Red Rumm, a cacao flavored rum. Their launch event was in April at the Public House at the Alexander in Colorado Springs, followed by a well-received appearance at the Southern Colorado StillFest distillery festival. Although busy with sales and marketing, Robb is already working on his next rum, Southern Cross.

HAPPY RAPTOR DISTILLING

Happy Raptor Distilling announced the expansion of its signature line of 504Syrups. The expansion includes the addition of two new varieties of 504Syrups, cucumber mint and lavender lemon peppercorn, as well as the increased availability of continental shipping throughout the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. The expansion marks the first significant step forward in the award-winning distillery's production since Hurricane Ida in 2021. "When Hurricane Ida hit Louisiana in August 2021, this project and many others went on hold so that we could focus on keeping our doors open," said Co-Founder & Chief Brand Officer Meagen Moreland-Taliancich, "Thanks to our community, we are here to tell the tale and we're growing. While we can't legally ship craft spirits in Louisiana, having the bandwidth to expand shipment of our non-alcoholic 504Syrups means sharing a piece of New Orleans and of our story with the world." As with all Happy Raptor Distilling products, the complete line of 504Syrups is locally handcrafted in the Crescent City from 100% Louisiana cane sugar and only whole, real ingredients. 504Syrups Cucumber Mint marks the company's first fundraising product in partnership with Sprout NOLA, a New Orleans-based nonprofit organization that provides established and developing farmers in Louisiana with technical and social support. Inspired by the abundance of Sprout's community gardens, 100% of the profits of 504Syrups Cucumber Mint will benefit Sprout through the end of 2023. "Building an equitable food system is joyful community building," said Sprout Community Food Manager Mina Seck, "The fact that too many families lack access to basic necessities and fresh food is heartbreaking, but the community building and joy we experience in urban agriculture is immeasurable. In New Orleans, food is the heartbeat of our city and growing food is special part of it." Happy Raptor's mission is to create premium rum inspired by New Orleans' culture, community, and the moments that bring us joy. Since 2020, it has donated over \$40,000 in direct funds and in-kind goods and services to the New Orleans community, and now partners with over 100 nonprofit organizations every year. For more information on 504Syrups and online ordering, visit 504rum.com or follow [@504rum](https://www.instagram.com/504rum) on Facebook and Instagram. www.happyraptor.com

DOWN ISLAND SPIRITS

Down Island Spirits is set to launch two new additions to their line of single cask rums. The latest expressions hail from Brazil and Martinique, and bring a wild array of fresh aromas and flavors. "We were thrilled by the reception of our first four rum bottlings late last year," said Mike Streeter, the founder and owner of Down Island Spirits. "Our brand aims to truly add to the availability of top-quality cane spirits in the US and we feel that our latest casks from Martinique and Brazil will do just that. They are both exceptionally flavorful rums made by distilleries who have a long history of excellence in the industry." Down Island's 100% cane juice bottling from Martinique was column distilled on a 19-plate column still in 2017 at a well-established distillery in Sainte-Marie, a rural community on the French-Caribbean island. It was aged for 6 years in

once-used Bourbon casks, 2 more years in Europe and bottled in Florida without the use of additives, coloring or filtration. Like the rest of the Down Island Spirits collection, this expression is bottled at cask strength, 58% abv. The Brazil Rum bottling from Down Island Spirits was column distilled in Sao Roque at Epris Distillery in 2011. It is an 80/20 blend of cane juice and molasses rum that was aged for 6 years in Amburana wood barrels and an additional 6 years in American Oak. It is free of additives, coloring and filtration, and was bottled at cask strength, 55.1% abv. The new Down Island Spirits expressions have garnered early buzz from collectors and enthusiasts due to their origin and overall unique nature of the distillate. "We have been fortunate to draw a loyal group of fans and friends from these very early days of our brand," said Streeter. "We think that our Brazil and Martinique rums will meet and hopefully exceed the high expectations of our customer base. Early feedback has been incredible." Distribution for Down Island Spirits currently focuses on Florida and Massachusetts with New York, Texas and California expansion in the works for late 2023/24. Online retail orders with shipping to 40+ states are available at their website, <https://www.downislandspirits.com/>

BHAKTA SPIRITS

BHAKTA Spirits announced its entry into the ultra-premium rum category with the launch of its BHAKTA 1990 Rum. Hailing from two singular distilleries, BHAKTA 1990 Rum couples 1985 25 Year Jamaican column still rum from Clarendon/Monymusk with 1990 23 Year Jamaican pot still rum from Appleton Estates. Unearthed by Raj Peter Bhakta, these rare rums were first blended in 2014. After enjoying a further three years aging in second-fill MGP bourbon and rye barrels, BHAKTA 1990 Rum's aging journey culminated in The BHAKTA Method, through which this spirit earned its signature finish in casks of ultra-rare Single Vintage BHAKTA 1976 and 1980 Armagnac. "Discovering this rum was an absolute breakthrough. It's one of the most astoundingly complex spirits I've ever encountered and I couldn't be more excited to share it with connoisseurs, collectors, and all consumers who appreciate deeply-aged rum as much as I do," says Founder Raj Peter Bhakta. "Since I exited WhistlePig, I've traveled the globe in pursuit of the oldest, rarest, and most exquisite spirits known to man. BHAKTA 1990 Rum is so sublime it stopped me in my tracks. It's absolutely won its place in our oldest-in-the-world collection of Vintage Spirits." "Ultra-premium, barrel-aged rum is becoming one of the most sought-after categories in America today," adds Co-Founder Leo Gibson. "This expression is rich, deep, and opulent, bearing an extraordinary age statement backed up by craft pedigree. As a Jamaican rum showing a fruit-laden and whiskey-forward flavor profile elevated by the complexity of its unique finish in old Armagnac casks, BHAKTA 1990 Rum connects the best of the New World with the ancient artisanship of the Old World. It's the perfect bridge for aged whiskey- and rum-lovers to discover Vintage Spirits in general, and their pinnacle, Armagnac, in specific." This limited release of BHAKTA 1990 Rum, consisting of only 1,500 bottles, is now available in twelve states: New

York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Illinois, Wisconsin, Colorado, Texas, Georgia, Florida, Vermont, Tennessee, and Michigan. BHAKTA 1990 Rum is also now available for purchase through partners linked at their website, <https://www.bhaktaspirits.com/>

RENEGADE RUM

Renegade Rum announced that their Single Farm Origin: Hope (Pre-Cask) was awarded the Best In Show Medal for the category of Unaged White Spirit, Best In Class Medal within the Overall Rum and Rhum Agricole categories and Double Gold Medal at the 2023 San Francisco World Spirits Competition. These results were officially announced at the Top Shelf Gala event that took place in Las Vegas on Saturday, June 17th. The Pre-Cask Collection for Renegade Rum was previously launched in the U.S. last summer and has also won additional awards/scores with Ultimate Spirits Challenge and Wine Enthusiast to name a few. On Grenada's south-eastern flank, sheltered from the Atlantic Trade Winds by a narrow mangrove belt, stands Renegade's distinctive terroir. Bright, iron-red clay, pyroclastic boulders, rich, alluvial soil and a cool, high water table ensures a humid microclimate with lush cane in the driest season. For this rum, Renegade harvested the oldest of their varieties, Cain, from Mamo Field, which stands on the terroir known as Boulders. Single Farm Origin: Hope (Pre-Cask) is a 100% pot-still rum, bottled at 50% ABV. Renegade Rum is located in Grenada, using fresh sugar cane juice rather than generic molasses (a by-product of sugar production), grown on the diverse terroirs of Grenada in the Caribbean. <https://renegaderum.com/>

BUSINESS RESEARCH COMPANY'S RUM MARKET INSIGHTS OF 2023

The Business Research Company released the Rum Market Insights of 2023 report last month. It is an extensive and comprehensive report that provides a complete analysis of the market's size, shares, revenues, various segments, drivers, trends, growth, and development. The report also highlights the limiting factors and regional industrial presence that may affect the market's growth trends beyond the forecast period of 2030. The market research aims to give a complete understanding of the industry's potential and to provide insights that will help businesses make informed decisions. The Rum Market Report is an impressive 126 pages long document that includes a comprehensive table of contents, a list of figures, tables, and charts, as well as extensive analysis. The report indicated that the global rum market is expected to grow from \$13.69 billion in 2022 to \$14.35 billion in 2023 at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 4.8%. The rum market is expected to reach \$17.68 billion in 2027, at a CAGR of 5.4%. The countries covered in the rum market report are Australia, Brazil, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Russia, South Korea, UK, and USA. <https://www.thebusinessresearchcompany.com/report/rum-global-market-report>



The Sweet Business of Sugar



THE **Rum**
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Nicaragua

Regardless of distillation equipment, fermentation method, aging or blending techniques, all rum producers have one thing in common: **sugarcane**.

Without sugarcane we would not have sugar mills, countless farmers would not have a profitable crop and we would not have rum!

Required Report: Required - Public Distribution

Date: April 13, 2023

Report Number: NU2023-0002

Report Name: Sugar Annual

Country: Nicaragua

Post: Managua

Report Category: Sugar

Prepared By:

Approved By: Evan Mangino

Report Highlights:

FAS/Managua projects Nicaraguan sugar production and exports recovering in marketing year 2023/24, despite deteriorating political and economic conditions in Nicaragua, with the anticipated arrival of an El Niño weather system and drier weather in the latter half of 2023. Record-setting precipitation in 2022 helped drive agronomic and processing yields lower, with marketing year 2022/23 sugar exports the lowest since marketing year 2018/19, on lower sugar production and exportable volumes.

Sugarcane Production

MY 2023/24

FAS/Managua projects marketing year (MY) 2023/24 sugarcane production at 7.3 million metric tons (MT), up 4 percent from MY 2022/23, with 2023 precipitation levels expected to be closer to the historical range. Sugar producers expect the return of an El Niño weather system, typically associated with less precipitation and drier conditions in the Pacific growing areas of Nicaragua, could significantly improve sugarcane agronomic and processing yields in MY 2023/24, especially on irrigated sugarcane plantations. FAS/Managua expects less precipitation to improve cultural management and fertilizer application conditions, while additional sunlight and higher average temperatures would benefit plant growth and sugar concentration in MY 2023/24.

FAS/Managua estimates sugarcane area harvested in MY 2023/24 at 73,000 hectares (ha), a 1 percent increase above MY 2023/23. One sugar mill is planning to increase area planted by 500 ha in MY 2023/24 to improve utilization of its biomass electrical power plant capacity. FAS Managua does not anticipate any significant rotation of area planted out of sugarcane (typically into peanut) in MY 2023/24, given relatively high world sugar price offers (above \$0.20/pound as of March 24, 2023). FAS/Managua expects financing will be readily available at relatively low rates in MY 2023/24, as sugar exports continue to be among the most reliable export revenue generating activities.

FAS/Managua anticipates MY 2023/24 agronomic yields recovering to 99 MT/ha, mostly due to drier weather conditions. Preliminary forecasts from the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), indicate up to a 60 percent probability of an El Niño weather system developing in the second half of 2023. Additional forecasts suggest the anticipated El Niño would be weak to moderate in strength, which could mitigate the intensity or probability of drought-like conditions emerging during MY 2023/24.

Roughly half of Nicaraguan sugarcane farms have integrated irrigation – drip or sprinkler-based systems – into their operations, making efficient use of limited water resources and improving sugarcane yields in drier years. Widespread planting of drought-tolerant sugarcane varieties, like the Guatemala-developed CG02-163 variety, further raises the expected floor for sugarcane yields in drier production cycles, like those associated with an El Niño system.

MY 2022/23

Preliminary data from the Nicaraguan Sugar Commission (CNPA) estimate total MY 2022/23 sugarcane production falling to 7 million MT, down 4 percent from the previous year. Industry sources reported a 1 percent decline (approximately 1,000 ha) in sugarcane area planted in MY 2022/23, as several farmers in the department of Chinandega transitioned land to peanuts and bananas.

Although MY 2022/23 production conditions were relatively free from pest and disease pressures, CNPA reported agronomic yields at 97.74 MT/ha, down 2 percent from the previous year, primarily due to excess precipitation. One sugar mill recorded over 4,200 millimeters of water during the 2022 rainy season (typically May – October), shattering the region’s previous record high of 1,300 millimeters

several times over. Although most sugarcane producing regions have soils with good drainage, excess precipitation resulted in a late start to and subsequent pauses during the MY 2022/23 harvest, as muddy conditions prevented harvesting equipment from accessing plantations or from operating effectively.

In addition to excessive precipitation, sugar mills reported additional factors that dragged down production in MY 2022/23. Producers faced short supplies of desiccants, which help concentrate sugar content before the harvest, as well as a lack of helicopters to apply desiccants and other applications throughout the season. High staffing turnover at mills and on-farm (especially experienced truck drivers that haul sugarcane from the fields to the mills) reached up to 30 percent in some companies as a result of record-setting outbound migration – more than 200,000 Nicaraguans fled the country in 2022 – amidst the ongoing political crisis. Industry sources noted this turnover in spite of competitive salaries and benefits designed to maintain the labor force from year-to-year.

The high rate of sugar harvest mechanization – more than 95 percent of the harvest is mechanized in some of the most productive areas – has largely insulated the sector from the negative effects of migration on the labor supply (except as noted previously). Harvest mechanization provides further benefits in the form of environmental services: farmers generally do not need to burn sugarcane stubble after harvest, reducing soil degradation and erosion and preventing the release of large amounts of carbon dioxide and harmful pollutants into the air.

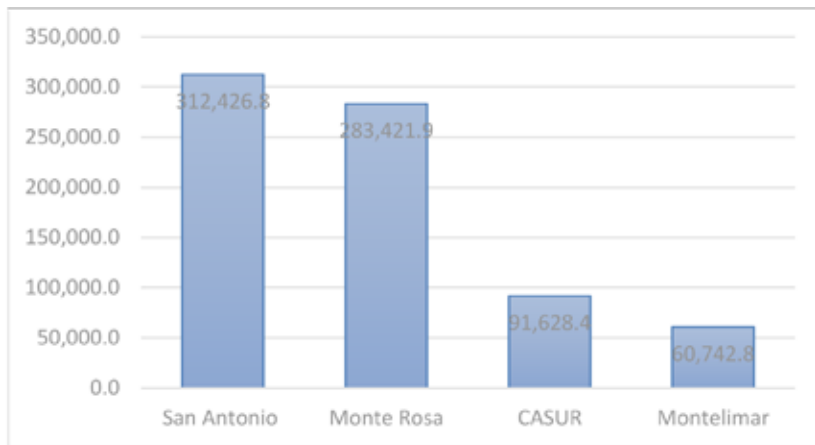
FAS/Managua estimates Nicaragua will remain the third-largest sugarcane producer in Central America, after Guatemala and El Salvador in MY 2022/23. Sugarcane is produced along the Pacific Coast and harvested from November through May. Four sugar mills produce approximately 60 percent of total sugarcane on company-owned plantations, with roughly 600 independent farmers producing the remainder. Up to 40 percent of sugarcane is still harvested by hand, where smaller-sized plots have prevented the introduction of mechanized harvesting.

Sugar Production

FAS/Managua projects MY 2023/24 sugar production rebounding to 800,000 MT, up 7 percent from MY 2022/23, assuming a weak to moderate El Niño developing in the latter half of 2023. FAS/Managua projects processing yields in MY 2023/24 returning to 241 pounds of raw sugar per MT of sugarcane on improved sugar concentration associated with drier growing conditions.

Preliminary CNPA data estimate MY 2022/23 sugar production falling to 748,220 MT, down 7 percent from MY 2021/22 on a 4 percent decline in sugarcane production and a 3 percent drop in processing yields. Based on estimated sugar and sugarcane production, FAS/Managua estimates MY 2022/23 sugar processing yields at approximately 233 pounds of raw sugar per metric ton of sugarcane, down 3 percent from the previous year.

Figure 1. MY 2022/23 Centrifugal Sugar Production by Sugar Mill (MT)



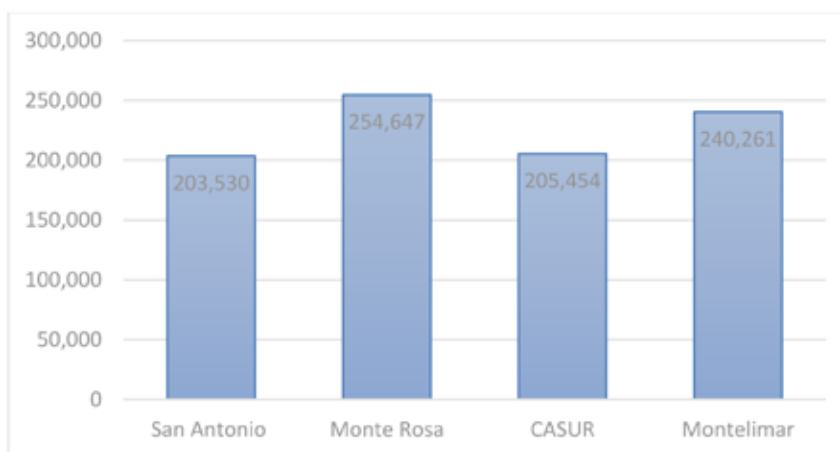
Source: Nicaraguan Sugar Producers' Association (CNPA)

Sugar prices in Nicaragua have been relatively stable in the last five years, with a slight increase in the white plantation sugar price and a more marked increase in the refined sugar price dating back to 2019, when the Nicaraguan government began applying the 15 percent value added tax to sugar sales. Refined sugar prices at wholesale and retail were estimated at \$0.40 and \$0.47 per pound in March 2023, while white plantation sugar for wholesale and retail were estimated at \$0.35 and \$0.39 per pound. CNPA anticipates modest price increases in 2023, due to increasing production costs and broader inflation.

Co-Production

Besides sugar production, the four sugar mills operate biomass power plants capable of generating over 120 megawatts of electricity per hour for approximately 9 months each year, using bagasse and other crop residue for feedstock. Power generation has become an indispensable revenue stream, vital to the industry's economic stability and profitability. According to industry sources, additional energy co-production investments are currently on hold, due to the continuing political crisis in Nicaragua.

Figure 2. MY 2022/23 Energy Production by Sugar Mill (megawatts/hour)



Source: Nicaraguan Sugar Producers' Association (CNPA)

Nicaraguan sugar mills did not produce ethanol in MY 2022/23 despite relatively high gasoline prices. Only one of Nicaragua's four sugar mills has ethanol production capacity, but that equipment was not operational in MY 2022/23 due to the lack of a national policy to promote fuel ethanol.

Consumption

FAS/Managua projects MY 2023/24 sugar consumption at 274,000 MT, down 2 percent from MY 2022/23, due in part to the significant level of emigration in 2022, when more than 3 percent of the population left the country. CNPA estimates MY 2022/23 sugar consumption at 278,000 MT and per capita sugar consumption at 41 kg.

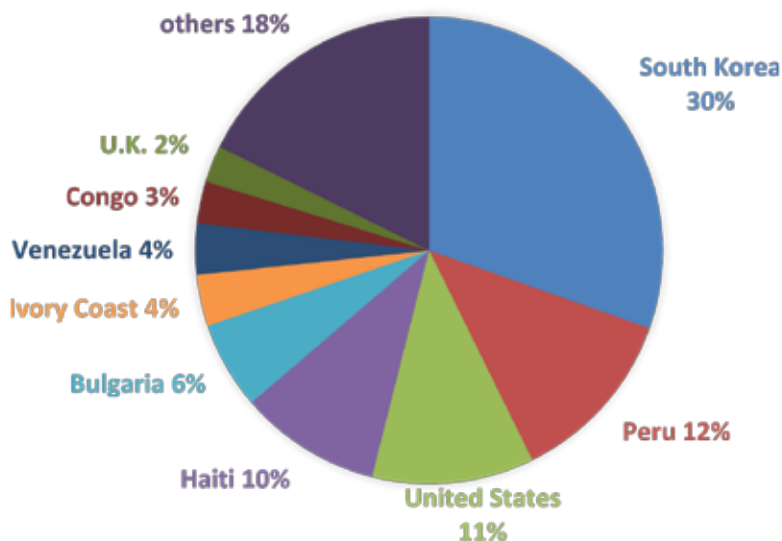
In recent years, sugar mills reported increases in sugar demand from local softdrink manufacturers expanding production to avoid paying the 15 percent Consumer's Selective Tax (ISC) on imported beverages. [Note: In 2019, the Government of Nicaragua revised taxes on several imported goods, including carbonated beverages, driving ISC up from 9 to 15 percent. End note.] However, from September 2022 through January 2023, sugar sales to softdrink manufacturers were reportedly lower, as more Nicaraguans continued to leave the country, which could suppress calendar year (CY) 2023 consumption.

Generally, about 40 percent of total sugar production is consumed domestically in the Nicaraguan market, with the remaining 60 percent exported. White plantation sugar accounts for 75 percent of all sales in the domestic market, while the rest is refined sugar. All sugar in Nicaragua is enriched with vitamin A to combat nutrient deficiency.

Trade

FAS/Managua projects total sugar export volumes at 526,000 MT in MY 2023/24, up 12 percent from MY 2022/23, largely on additional exportable supplies as production recovers. According to the Nicaraguan Central Bank, total CY 2022 sugar exports were 423,966 MT, with South Korea, Peru, and the United States as the top three destinations totaling more than 50 percent of export shipments.

Figure 3. CY 2022 Centrifugal Sugar Export Destinations (by volume)



Source: Nicaraguan Central Bank

Table 1: Centrifugal Sugar Export Volume in MT (Oct/Sep Marketing Year)

Destination	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022
United States	86,100	101,632	98,600
South Korea	195,325	93,169	128,920
Peru	11,873	0	39,619
Haiti	35,315	31,412	38,537
Bulgaria	3,855	0	25,657
Cote d'Ivoire	0	0	15,000
Ghana	4,625	5,943	11,881
United Kingdom	0	7,960	10,742
Other Asia, nes	0	52,000	8,600
Chile	3,484	2,386	6,439
Colombia	2,259	11,644	5,962
Canada	19,000	0	0
Portugal	0	24,222	0
Mauritania	46,073	12,000	0
Taiwan	57,895	8,159	0
Mexico	6,726	375	0
Other Markets	25,901	17,297	3,040
Total	498,431	368,199	392,997

Source: Trade Data Monitor, LLC.

Sugar Quotas

Nicaragua continues to benefit from preferential market access arrangements under several free trade agreements, including for refined sugar under the Dominican Republic-Central American Free Trade Agreement (29,480 MT in 2023), the Association Agreement with the European Union (26,879 MT), the Association Agreement with the United Kingdom (8,665 MT), and with South Korea (preferential access without quota allocations).

When Nicaragua diplomatically recognized the People’s Republic of China in December 2021, Taiwan ended a preferential sugar quota of 70,000 MT previously set aside for Nicaraguan exporters. The U.S. Government has not included Nicaragua in its World Trade Organization (WTO) sugar tariff-rate quota allocations or re-allocations since April 2022.

Stocks

FAS/Managua expects stocks to remain unchanged in MY 2023/24 at approximately 40,000 MT. The Nicaraguan sugar industry typically maintains ending stocks to guarantee domestic and exportable supplies ahead of the out-year harvest. These stocks mitigate risks associated with possible supply shortfalls from the Atlantic hurricane season (September through December).

Policy

The Government of Nicaragua does not set sugar prices, nor does it provide subsidies nor special credit programs for sugar production or export. However, the sugar industry does benefit from relatively high domestic prices compared to world sugar prices as a result of high tariffs on imported sugar. Sales at higher than world prices in Nicaragua, stable exports to the United States, and revenue from biomass energy production have helped insulate Nicaragua’s sugar industry from fluctuations in international sugar pricing. Nicaragua does not have a law to promote production and/or use of fuel ethanol.

Table 2: Sugarcane for Centrifugal Sugar: Supply and Utilization

Sugarcane for Centrifugal Market Year Begins Nicaragua	2021/2022		2022/2023		2023/2024	
	Oct 2021		Oct 2022		Oct 2023	
	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Planted (1,000 HA)	73	73	74	72	0	73
Area Harvested (1,000 HA)	73	73	74	72	0	73
Production (1,000 MT)	7239	7,351	7250	7053	0	7,300
Total Supply (1,000 MT)	7239	7,351	7250	7053	0	7,300
Utilization for Sugar (1,000 MT)	7239	7,351	7250	7053	0	7,300
Utilization for Alcohol (1,000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Utilization (1,000 MT)	7239	7,351	7250	7053	0	7,300

(1,000 HA), (1,000 MT)

Table 3. Centrifugal Sugar: Production, Supply and Distribution

Sugar, Centrifugal Market Year Begins Nicaragua	2021/2022		2022/2023		2023/2024	
	Oct 2021		Oct 2022		Oct 2023	
	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Beginning Stocks (1,000 MT)	40	40	40	40	0	40
Beet Sugar Production (1,000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cane Sugar Production (1,000 MT)	780	804	780	748	0	800
Total Sugar Production (1,000 MT)	780	804	780	748	0	800
Raw Imports (1,000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Refined Imp. (Raw Val) (1,000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Imports (1,000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Supply (1,000 MT)	820	844	820	788	0	840
Raw Exports (1,000 MT)	300	342	325	306	0	340
Refined Exp. (Raw Val) (1,000 MT)	200	184	170	164	0	186
Total Exports (1,000 MT)	500	526	495	470	0	526
Human Dom. Consumption (1,000 MT)	280	278	285	278	0	274
Other Disappearance (1,000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Use (1,000 MT)	280	278	285	278	0	274
Ending Stocks (1,000 MT)	40	40	40	40	0	40
Total Distribution (1,000 MT)	820	844	820	788	0	840
(1,000 MT)						

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CIGAR & RUM PAIRING

by Philip Ili Barake





My name is Philip Ili Barake, Sommelier by trade. As a result of working with selected restaurants and wine producers in Chile, I started developing a passion for distilled spirits and cigars. As part of my most recent job, I had the opportunity to visit many Central American countries, as well as, rum distilleries and tobacco growers.

But my passion for spirits and cigars did not end there; in 2010 I had the honor of representing Chile at the International Cigar Sommelier Competition, where I won first place, becoming the first South American to ever achieve that feat.

Now I face the challenge of impressing the readers of "Got Rum?" with what is perhaps the toughest task for a Sommelier: discussing pairings while being well aware that there are as many individual preferences as there are rums and cigars in the world.

I believe a pairing is an experience that should not be limited to only two products; it is something that can be incorporated into our lives. I hope to help our readers discover and appreciate the pleasure of trying new things (or experiencing known things in new ways).

Philip
#GRCigarPairing



Coffee Ball

During the last days of June, while thinking about July's pairing, Luis shared an interesting idea that had some potential, which was to freeze a shot of espresso and use it instead of regular ice in a pairing. Let's see how this works out. Hopefully you'll have an ice cube tray around. In my case I had a silicone mold to make ice spheres, but you can use a traditional tray/shape if that is all you have available.

I made my ice sphere with Costa Rican coffee, using a coffee maker I have at home. It was strong and I didn't add any sugar, which turned out to be a mistake, as you'll find out soon. As you recreate this at home, I suggest that you add a tablespoon of sugar and dissolve it well, prior to freezing. This will balance the pairing later.

I was thinking about an elegant pairing, one that would showcase the true character of the rum, but also one that would change along as the pairing progressed (as the intensity of the espresso increased). I selected a Rhum from Martinique with a very special character, Clement 10 years old, but at the beginning of the pairing, the opposite occurred. The first few sips were interesting, but the coffee very quickly dominated the color, aroma and the taste. It could be related to how the ice ball melted, possibly releasing more intense coffee elements first, leaving more water than coffee behind. I learned the lesson and decided to change the rum for one that had a high concentration of



MARTINIQUE

Clément

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Distillés de l'Acajou - Le François Martinique

COHIBA

BLUE

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sugar per liter. My options included Ron Hechicera, Diplomático and Zacapa 23. I selected this last one, to turn the pairing around, since I still had time to save it.

As far as the cigar, while smoking the first third there really was no pairing. The first attempt (with the Clement) was disproportionately intense, with the coffee notes dominating everything. Now with the second rum, the pairing was acceptable, the coffee moved away from the spotlight and into the background, the sweetness of the rum was well integrated in the pairing and I was also able to detect the tobacco notes from the cigar. For this pairing I had selected a Cohiba Toro (54 x 6) from the Blue line, which is Dominican tobacco with Honduran wrapper. This cigar is supposed to have a high

intensity, which was not noticeable during the first third. My cigar started to burn unevenly, perhaps for the frequency of my puffs while fighting with the first rum, but after changing to the second rum, the cigar's character was more aligned with my expectations, offering a better experience.

In summary, it is a good experiment to conduct at home, but keeping in mind my comments about adding sugar to the espresso and using a sweet rum. I hope that you can recreate this at home, personalizing it to your liking, if you follow my advice, your results will be better than my first attempt.

Cheers!
Philip Ili Barake
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