

# Got Rum?®

MAY 2021

FROM THE GRASS TO YOUR GLASS, SINCE 2001!

**COOKING WITH RUM - ANGEL'S SHARE - CIGAR & RUM  
MUSE OF MIXOLOGY - RUM HISTORIAN  
RUM IN THE NEWS - COCKTAIL SCIENTIST  
THE RUM UNIVERSITY - RUM ASTROLOGY  
EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW**





6



10



20



30



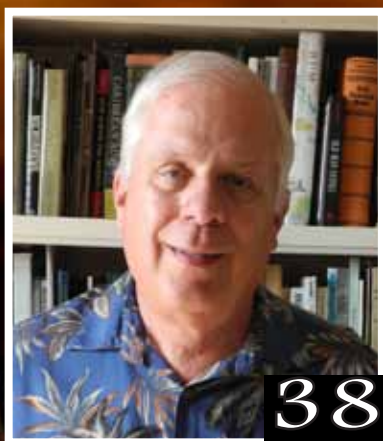
34



# CONTENTS

MAY 2021

5	FROM THE EDITOR
6-9	THE ANGEL'S SHARE - RUM REVIEWS
10-13	COOKING WITH RUM
14-19	RUM AGING SCIENCE
20-23	THE MUSE OF MIXOLOGY
24-25	THE RUM UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
30-33	THE RUM HISTORIAN
34-37	THE COCKTAIL SCIENTIST
38-41	RUM IN THE NEWS
42-43	RUM ASTROLOGY
44-51	EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW
52-55	CIGAR AND RUM PAIRING



38



44



52





# Got Rum?®

Printed in the U.S.A.  
A publication of Rum Runner Press, Inc.  
Hutto, Texas 78634 - U.S.A.

Tel/Fax +1 (855) RUM-TIPS  
© 2021 by Rum Runner Press, Inc.  
All rights reserved.

May 2021

Editor and Publisher:	luis@gotrum.com
Executive Editor:	margaret@gotrum.com
Cigar and Rum:	philip@gotrum.com
Angel's Share:	paul@gotrum.com
Rum Historian:	marco@gotrum.com
Rum in the News:	mike@gotrum.com
Cooking with Rum:	sue@gotrum.com
Cocktail Scientist:	joel@gotrum.com
Webmaster:	web@gotrum.com
Director of Photography:	art@gotrum.com

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

**news@gotrum.com**

You can download the free electronic version (low-res) of this magazine, or purchase the high resolution 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

follow us on  
**twitter**

@Got\_Rum

FRONT COVER: Got Rum? Barrel Mosaic

INSIDE SPREAD: Spiritual Contemplation

# FROM THE EDITOR

## 20 Years!

It is hard to believe that twenty years have elapsed since the first appearance of "Got Rum?" (back then, the publication was named "*Got Rum? We Do!*"). The name and the format have undergone a few changes over the years, morphing into what you are reading now. What has not changed, however, is our commitment to take readers on a journey through the wonderful world of RUM!

We are proud to have made it this far, thanks to the most talented contributing writers in the rum industry, who tirelessly and passionately help keep our readers informed.

Many things have changed in the last 20 years, such as the emergence of the craft distilling industry and the ease for consumers to share their experiences with one another via social networking applications. But many other things remain mostly unchanged, such as the fermentation and distillation technologies surrounding the production of rum.

Many of the companies we've interviewed over the years have expanded production and are now distributing their products internationally. Others, unfortunately, have not survived the test of time.

American writer Henry van Dyke Jr. wrote:

*Time is  
Too slow for those who Wait,  
Too swift for those who Fear,  
Too long for those who Grieve,  
Too short for those who Rejoice,  
But for those who Love,  
Time is not.*



I am grateful for all the feedback we get from industry members and readers in general, asking for specific articles or for new series. We are always listening and adjusting our content to reflect the market needs. While a few rum companies are very vocal about their strict views that all rum should be distilled or aged this way or that way, I believe that rum derives much of its worldwide appeal from the diverse styles that can be found, not just between continents, but often within each country.

To the spirit of the cane!

Luis Ayala, Editor and Publisher



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

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



# THE ANGEL'S SHARE

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!

## Coconut Cartel Rum

Coconut Cartel is a private label rum owned by sibling team Danielle and Mike Zighelboim that puts an interesting twist on what we in the rum world are used to encountering. The company took a Guatemalan copper column still rum that had been aged for around 12 years in once used American oak barrels and imported it to the U.S. All sounds pretty standard, right? Then, instead of using water to blend it from barrel proof to 40% ABV, the company used fresh coconut water.

Breaking from the norms of normal blending practices intrigued me and I was curious to explore what the product tasted like.

### Appearance

The rum holds a warm golden amber color in the bottle and brightens slightly in the glass. Swirling the liquid creates a thick band that spins off equally thick fast-moving legs. After a minute the band drops a second set of slow-moving legs, it takes a while before they finally evaporate leaving residue in their wake.

### Nose

It is no surprise that as I poured the rum in the glass sweet coconut wafted from it. After that aroma settled, I discovered notes of banana, mango, strawberry, dark toffee and sweet praline.

### Palate

The first sip of the rum has a silky texture that envelops the tongue with a balance of sweet coconut, caramelized vanilla, and roasted walnuts with a flash of alcohol. The tropical flavors from the aroma mingle and dance as a banana and berry flambe note manifests. As the flavor begins to fade there is a light acidic cacao note and black pepper mingles with the other flavors in a pleasant lingering finish.

### Review

This rum was a pleasant pour, I was braced for something overly sweet and coconut driven and instead discovered a sipping rum with an interesting complexity. I found it worked well with fruit juices, but was combative with cola and think a skilled bartender could mix up some interesting concoctions with this product. I enjoyed sipping it neat and appreciate the different approach the owners took in creating this product.

If you are looking for something different to enjoy on a hot summer night, this might just be the product for you. Cheers!



www.coconutcartel.co

# THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft

## Stolen Smoked Rum

The base column still rum for this product is sourced from Trinidad and Tobago. After being aged for two years in used American White Oak whiskey barrels the rum is blended with Columbian Arabica coffee, fenugreek seeds from Morocco and vanilla beans from Madagascar. Finally, the rum is smoked using American hardwood and at some point, blended to 42% ABV.

### Appearance

The rum has a walnut color in the bottle and takes on more of a cola color in the glass. Swirling the liquid creates a thin band that slowly thickens dropping a series of fast-moving legs before pebbling up.

### Nose

The initial aroma of the rum reminds me of dark roast coffee and it has obviously other notes that are buried behind it. I let the liquid rest for a few minutes and found sweet vanilla, chocolate toffee like you would find in a Heath or Skor candy bar with an odd tomato note coming in at the end.

### Palate

Sipping the rum is not pleasant. The smokiness of the rum reminds me of being in a bar at 3:00AM and the ash trays are full of stale cigarettes and spilt booze. I reluctantly took additional sips and the initial impression blessedly is tempered as other flavors enter the profile. No surprise I found dark roast coffee, but also baking chocolate, charred oak,

orange zest, dried tobacco leaf, rock salt, and ash. The smoke and ash note dominate what is a long harsh finish that water had a hard time subduing.

### Review

As I sit here still drinking water trying to make the flavors of this rum go away all I can say is I really did not enjoy this product at all. This is disappointing as I really enjoyed Stolen Overproof Rum, a very different product in the grand scheme of things. This is far from that product and I have no desire to mix or experiment with it. The smoke and ash note just throw this experience out of balance and I could not find anything redeeming about this rum.

If you spot it on the shelves, this is a *buyer beware* situation and you are better off spending your hard-earned coin on another product.







www.thisisstolen.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@gotrum.com](mailto:margaret@gotrum.com)





# 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

## Rolled Stuffed Steaks

### Ingredients:

- 2 ½ lbs. Round Steak, thinly sliced
- 1 lb. Mushrooms
- 2 Carrots
- 3 C. Water
- 1 C. Dark Rum
- 1 Tbsp. Dark Molasses
- 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire Sauce
- 2 Charred Yellow Onions\*
- 2 White Onions, chopped
- 1 Garlic bulb
- 8 Tbsp. Butter
- A dash of Soy Sauce
- Flour, to roll steak
- Salt and Pepper, to taste
- Dark Rum, to be added to gravy

### Directions:

Cut steak into 8 pieces and beat with a wooden mallet. Wash and peel carrots then chop finely. Wash mushrooms and separate caps from stems. In a bowl add chopped mushroom stems to the carrots. Add one onion chopped fine and mix together with salt and pepper. Place one tablespoon of the vegetable mix on each piece of steak and roll each square like a jelly roll. Secure the edges of the steak rolls with toothpicks or tie with strings. Salt and pepper the outside of each of the steak rolls then roll in flour. Melt butter in a skillet. Add steak rolls and brown. Add one onion, finely cut, and chopped up garlic. Preheat oven at 450°F. Once the steaks are browned, move to a roasting pan. Mix water, rum and molasses together until molasses has dissolved. Add mixture, mushroom caps and the remaining ingredients, including the charred onions into the roasting pan. Place lid on the roasting pan and bake for half an hour. Reduce temperature to 350°F and bake for an additional 2 hours. Remove from oven and remove lid. Add a little bit of rum to the gravy in the pan. Allow to sit for 20-30 minutes before serving. If you used strings to tie the steaks, remove them prior to serving on plates. Leave toothpicks in place. Allow your guests to remove the toothpicks themselves. Serves 8.



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



## Brown Sugar Rummy Cookies

### Ingredients:

- ½ lb. Butter
- 2 C. Granulated Sugar
- 6 C. Flour, sifted
- 1 tsp. Baking Powder
- 2 Tbsp. Cinnamon
- 3 Eggs
- 2 Tbsp. Dark Rum
- 1 C. Brown Sugar
- 1 tsp. Baking Soda dissolved in 1 Tbsp. Dark Rum
- Juice of ½ Lemon
- 1 C. Ground Pecans

### Directions:

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and rum, blend and beat until light. Add flour (sifted) with baking powder, baking soda mixed with rum as well as the remaining ingredients. Shape dough into a ball. Cover and refrigerate 45 minutes. Turn dough out onto a floured surface, and roll to 1/8-inch thickness; cut dough with cookie cutters. Place on lightly greased baking sheets. Bake at 400° for 8 minutes. Cool on wire racks. Yield: 5 dozen.



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





# RUM Aging Science

## American Oak: New vs. Used

### Introduction

In our first 12-part series, published from January through December 2020, we explored the transformation of rum, while aging in an ex-whiskey barrel. We selected an ex-whiskey barrel for that initial series because the majority of the rum aged around the world employs this type of barrel. The reason for the popularity of this choice is the fact that whiskey producers are required to age their spirit in new oak barrels and, once emptied, they cannot re-fill the barrels, thus creating a surplus of barrels that many other spirits are happy to use in their aging programs.

During the course of the first series, we received a considerable number of inquiries, asking how the results presented would differ if we were using new barrels. This new 12-part series is devoted specifically to address this topic: we will be conducting the same type of research as we did previously, examining the month-to-month changes to the rum while it ages in a new barrel, but also presenting side-by-side comparisons to the corresponding results from the used barrels.

There are many different levels of heat treatment that can be applied to a new barrel. This series focuses exclusively on American Oak with a Char #1 (staves and heads), from Independent Stave Company/Missouri Cooperage. Future series will explore different Char and toast level combinations, as well as, barrels constructed using French Oak.



A Research  
Collaboration Between

THE **Rum**  
UNIVERSITY

&



RUM CENTRAL

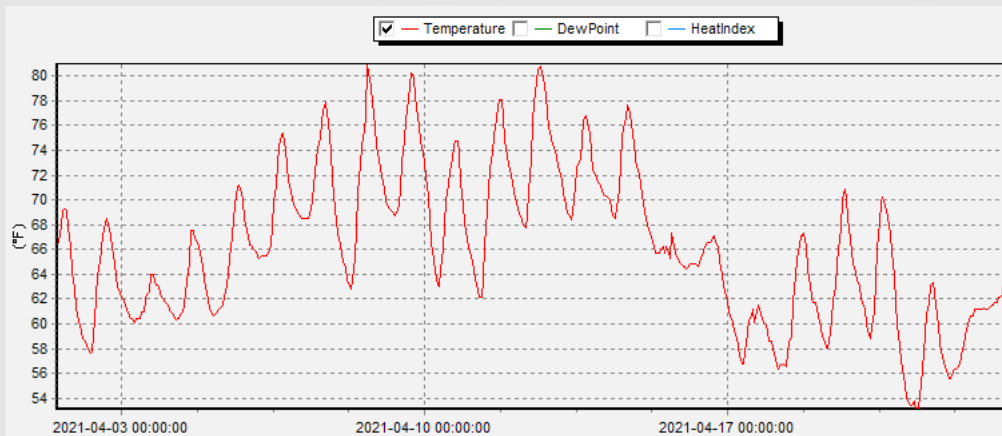


# RUM Aging Science

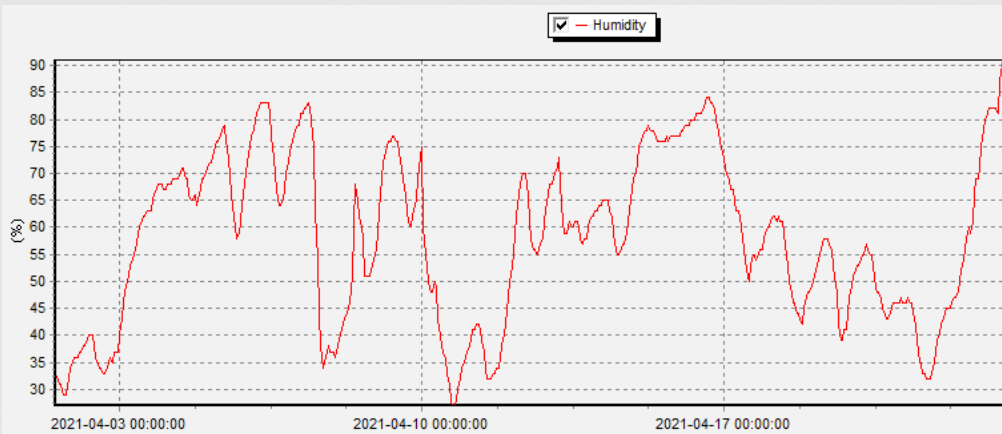
## American Oak: New vs. Used

### April's Weather

While the average temperature for the month of april may seem in line with historical records, a couple of weeks were considerably warmer and a couple were considerably colder. The daily deltas (differences between highest and lowest temperatures) were quite significant too, as depicted by the graph below.



At the end of the month we saw a much-needed increase in precipitation, with a corresponding rise in relative humidity.



### Heat's Magic

The arrival of higher temperatures marks the beginning of higher extraction rates from the barrels. Not only does solubility increase, but the volume of the rum increases inside the barrel, causing higher pressure which, in turn, forces the rum deeper into the staves. The



# RUM Aging Science

## American Oak: New vs. Used



increased volume also results in higher evaporation losses and leakage. The photograph above shows rum “bubbling” out of the barrel, through miniscule gaps between the silicone bung and the oak.

These are the pH readings, as recorded on the 1st day of each month, compared to the rum from the previous series, which was aged in an ex-Bourbon barrel:

pH	New Barrel Char #1	Ex-Bourbon Barrel
January	7.04	7.04
February	5.01	5.67
March	4.80	5.32
April	4.54	5.23
May	4.45	5.10

# RUM Aging Science

American Oak: New vs. Used



Above: color transformation of the rum in a new charred barrel. One month in a new barrel extracted more wood and tannins than 12 months in an used one. Two months later, the color has rich golden and red hues.





# RUM Aging Science

## American Oak: New vs. Used

And these are the changes in ABV % readings, also compared to the ex-Bourbon barrel:

ABV%	New Barrel Char #1	Ex-Bourbon Barrel
January	62.35	63.43
February	61.80	63.42
March	61.61	63.42
April	61.50	63.43
May	61.41	63.40

**Color:** The monthly change in color continues to be significant, even to the naked eye. The last sample retrieved from the barrel has deeper reddish-copper hues, that make it more appealing.

**Taste:** The rum's flavor has a more pronounced oak dimension, as suggested by the color. The majority of the extracted tannins are still "harsh," meaning un-oxidized, but are nonetheless helping to make the rum more interesting and complex. The reduced pH (increased acidity) is also starting to come across, with enhanced fruity notes starting to develop.

Join us again next month, as we continue to explore the fascinating world of rum aging!



# THE MUSE OF MIXOLOGY

by Cris Dehlavi



My name is Cris Dehlavi and I am a native of Arizona, but have lived in Columbus, Ohio since 2002. I just took on an exciting new role as the Brand Educator for Columbus for Diageo brands. I ran the bar program at "M", of the Cameron Mitchell Restaurant group from 2002-2020. I am currently the Vice President of Columbus USBG and was one of the founding members of the chapter.

In 2013, I attended the rigorous B.A.R. 5 Day Spirits Certification and have been recognized as one of the top mixologists in the U.S.A. I am one of the senior managers of the prestigious apprentice program at Tales of the Cocktail and work as a mentor to many bartenders around Ohio.

My contribution to Got Rum? magazine will include everything from reviews of national cocktail events, articles on mixology, garnish trends, recipes and techniques, to interviews with some of the leading bartenders in the industry.

## What Makes a Great Bar?

Happy spring, Got Rum? readers!!

With my new job, I have had the pleasure of going to a lot of bars and restaurants. They run the gamut too- from dive and sports bars to craft cocktail bars to fine dining restaurants. In regards to styles of cocktails I see everything too....from rum and coke to daiquiris to molecular mixology and liquid nitrogen. But what makes a bar *great*? Is it the cocktail menu? Is it how fancy the bartender stirs the drink? Yes, I believe these things matter, but in my honest opinion, it is all about hospitality.

The history of the hospitality industry dates back to ancient Greek times, but it was around 40 BC according to experts that hospitality services for social and religious gatherings were quite common. The word hospitality comes from the French word "hospice" which means taking care of travelers.

During medieval times, caravanserais were built as resting destinations for caravans along Middle Eastern routes, provided as refuge. This gave rise to what we now know as modern day hospitality. Hospitality, at its core, is about pampering, taking care of, and helping others. The famous bartenders whose names we all recognize (Jerry Thomas, Ada Coleman, Harry Craddock and Victor Bergeron) were known not only because of their cocktail creations, but because of their personalities and large followings.

The pineapple became a symbol of hospitality as far back as colonial days, when American colonists would display them on their establishment or home's door as a form of welcome to guests.







The pineapple is still used in hotels, resorts, and restaurants all over the world as a symbol of hospitality, and if you look on your favorite bartender's arm you might just see a tattoo of one as well! (I got mine in 2015).

So this brings me back to my original point-- what makes a great bar GREAT? It is how the bartender welcomes you, takes care of you and how he makes you feel. Many people can make a delicious cocktail, but the lasting impression they leave on you is what will make you want to go back and see them. The restaurant and hotel industry took a huge hit in this last year because of the pandemic, and it is slowly but surely rebuilding. If you are a bartender or service industry worker, dedicate every shift to showing genuine hospitality towards your guests, it will keep them coming back to you. And if you ARE the guest, thank them for their service, and tell a friend about your great experiences.

*"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."*  
-Maya Angelou

And because no Cris Dehlavi article is complete without a cocktail recipe, here is my favorite Pineapple RUM cocktail, the "Mary Pickford":

- 2 oz. Plantation Pineapple Rum
- .5 oz. Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur
- 2 oz. Pineapple Juice

Shake all ingredients well with ice, strain into a coupe glass. Garnish with a Luxardo cherry.

Cris

---







# THE Rum<sup>®</sup> UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

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





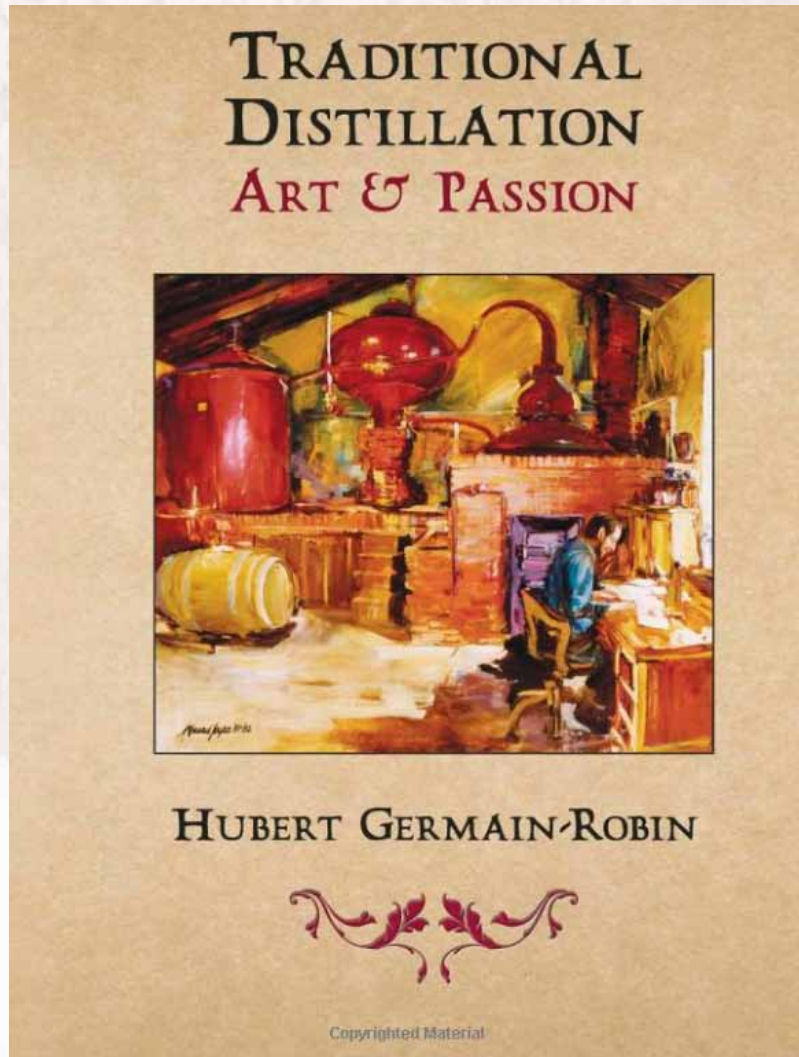
## Traditional Distillation - Art & Passion

(Publisher's Review)

*Traditional Distillation-Art & Passion* is an introduction to one of the oldest human endeavors - preserving the bounty of the summer. In this book, Hubert Germain-Robin focuses on the essential elements - philosophical as well as technical - for the production of "eau de vie," or water of life. The true art of brandy distillation is to capture, in liquid form, the very essence of the Earth and its summer bounty. All passionate distillers share the same sense of connection between the product and the most basic elements of Earth, Water, Air and Fire, which we work with to capture the essence of the harvest, the eau de vie.

### About the Author

Connoisseurs of brandy will recognize the name Hubert Germain-Robin as a world-class master distiller and master blender. Germain-Robin is the current generation of a cognac distilling tradition that dates back to 1782 in Cognac, France. In the early 1980s he moved to Mendocino County, California and became recognized and respected in America for his brandies and eaux de vie. He was among a handful of small artisan distillers, mainly in California, who were revolutionizing America's attitudes toward spirits and cocktails and he remains a leader in the art and craft of distillation. The Spirit Journal considers Hubert Germain-Robin one of the world's top ten distillers.



Publisher: White Mule Press (April 7, 2021)  
Language: English  
Paperback: 88 pages  
ISBN-10: 1736980238  
ISBN-13: 978-1736980231  
Item Weight: 5.9 ounces  
Dimensions: 6 x 0.24 x 9 inches









**Your One-Stop Shop  
for Aged Rums in Bulk!**

- Column-Distilled, Pot-Distilled or Blends
- High Congener (Including High Esters), Low Congener or Blends
- Aged in American or French Oak Barrels
- Finished in Whiskey, Bourbon, Tequila, Wine, Port, Muscat or Sherry Barrels
- Distilled in the USA, Central America, South America or in the Caribbean
- Over 150 Marks/Styles Available, plus Custom Blends
- Low Minimums and Fast Turnaround, Worldwide Shipping

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

# Got Rum?<sup>TM</sup>

THE Rum<sup>TM</sup>  
UNIVERSITY

Bulk  
Rum

Ru  
Adv

- Rum Appreciation in the 21st Century
- The Classifications of Rum
- The Business of Rum
- The Art of Rum Making
- The Art of Rum Blending
- The History and Science of the Barrel
- The Essential Rum Laboratory
- The Private Label Primer
- Advanced Rum Making for Craft Distillers
- Advanced Rum Nosing Techniques

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

- Caribbean Rum
- Central American Rum
- South American Rum
- Craft Distilled Rum
- Light, Medium and Heavy-Bodied Rum
- High Esters Rum
- Aging in ex-Bourbon, ex-Rye, ex-Tequila, ex-Wine and new casks
- Single Barrels
- Low minimums, worldwide shipping
- Bulk "as-is" or formulated

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

SPECIALIZED RUM CONSULTING SERVICES

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

+1 855 RUM-TIPS (+1 855 786-8477)





OVER 25 YEARS OFFERING  
A FULL ARRAY OF RUM CONSULTING SERVICES.  
FROM THE GRASS TO YOUR GLASS!

Rum  
Consulting

Private  
Label

Distillery  
Planning  
& Set-Up

- Formula Development
- Business Plan Development
- Regulatory Compliance
- Product Development
- Distribution Strategy
- Market Research
- Supply Chain Management
- Financial Modeling
- Packaging Design
- Branding Strategy
- Fermentation Training
- Distillation Training
- Aging Cellar Training
- Laboratory Training
- Best Practices Training
- Support Support
- International Compliance
- Supply Chain Management
- Valuation, M&A Support

- Concept Exploration
- Business Model Planning
- Financial Model Planning
- Packaging Design
- Branding Strategy
- Fermentation Training
- Distillation Training
- Aging Cellar Training
- Laboratory Training
- Best Practices Training
- Support Support
- International Compliance
- Supply Chain Management
- Valuation, M&A Support

RumRunnerPress.com

# 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 was one of the founders of the firm *La Casa del Rum*. We began by running a beach bar in my home town, but soon our passion for rum led us to select, bottle and sell Premium Rums all over Italy.

I have visited distilleries, met rum people, attended rum Festivals and joined the Rum Family: the net of distillers, professionals, experts, bloggers, journalists and aficionados that is alive every day on the Internet and on social media and, before Covid-19, met up every now and then at the various rum events all over the world. And 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.

Since 2013, I have been running this column.

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

Since 2018, I have also been contributing to the Madrid based magazine *Rumporter.es*, the Spanish edition of the French magazine *Rumporter*.

In 2019 I began to run a Blog: [www.therumhistorian.com](http://www.therumhistorian.com) and decided to leave *La Casa del Rum*.

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.



## A TALE OF RUM

### 5. BRITAIN

As we have seen in the 3° article of this series – St. Christophe - in the French Caribbean rum was made at least as early as the 1640s, that is at the same time, if not even a little earlier, than in English Barbados. Half a century later, round 1700, French Caribbean plantations produced noteworthy quantities of rum, with advanced techniques. Therefore, the question is: why, after such a promising start, did French rum lag behind? Why in the XVIII century was Great Britain and not France by far the greatest producer and consumer of rum? Sugar was not lacking, indeed as early as the 1730s France became the first European exporter of sugar. Let's see.

In the 1600s, the consumption of spirits grew a lot all over Europe and the European colonies. Nevertheless, the distilled alcohol that flourished then and became one of the most highly prized consumer goods within Europe as well as in the Atlantic world, was, in fact, French brandy, not Caribbean rum. But at the end of the century French rum production grew much and soon the French wine and brandy lobby became worried about the competition of the new spirit; possibly it was not so good as brandy, but it was very strong and very cheap. The competition was not only in the Colonies: actually, in the 1690s French sugar refiners became important producers of a mainland rum and a tough competition between



rum and brandy clearly started also in metropolitan France. To make bad things worse, because of the European wars of the late 1600s, France lost the main markets for its wines and brandy: England and the Dutch Republic. These losses made the huge domestic market even more important for wine and brandy producers. Not only rum, indeed any distilled alcohol was a competitor, a commercial threat to both the domestic and the remaining export markets. The wine and brandy lobby pressured the Crown and in 1713 a Royal Declaration prohibited the production and consumption of, and trade in, any drink distilled from an entire catalogue of substances anywhere in the kingdom, including sugar, syrups and molasses: Game Over for French Rum.

Britain dealt with the new beverage in an entirely different way than France. In the British Isles, vines did not grow and it was impossible to produce wine and brandy. On the other hand, Britons drank heavily, they had always done. For centuries, they had imported expensive wine and brandy mainly from France and Spain. But since 1689 France became a powerful and long-standing enemy, so to enrich its coffers was getting more and more intolerable. An alternative to wine was easily found by signing trade agreements with Portugal, and Portuguese wine mostly replaced French wine, thanks also to the British fondness for sweetness. But the upper classes were fond of French Brandy and didn't want to do without it, while the poor drank gin, a lot of it. Gin was produced in Britain, but it was made from grain, necessary to make bread, the staple diet of the lower classes; so the great production of gin risked causing famine and riots.

So, instead of forbidding or limiting the production and exports of rum, the British government promoted it in all possible ways, encouraging consumers to drink rum to replace gin and brandy. Rum was a perfect commodity. It was entirely produced in the British colonies by British labor and capital, and transported by British ships, so the wealth spent to buy it stayed at home. Moreover, Rum was not made from precious grain, but from molasses, an almost useless by-product of sugar production, available in huge quantities at cheap prices. It was therefore the perfect beverage to replace both brandy and gin.

To achieve this, it was necessary to develop consumption, which meant persuading British people to change their tastes and habits. It was not easy. Barbados rum (later also Jamaica rum) was massively exported to North America Mainland Colonies, smuggled into the Spanish empire and used as a trading commodity to buy slaves in Africa; it started to be distributed to sailors and soldiers in the West Indies too, but Britons at home were not acquainted with Rum, to the point that Daniel Defoe, in his *Moll Flanders* published in 1722, felt obliged to explain to his readers what rum was: "However, I called a servant, and got him a little glass of rum (which is the usual dram of that country), for he was just fainting away".

Gin was a relatively easier target. It was massively consumed by the lower classes and the full rigors of the law could be used without hesitations. Actually, it seems that excessive consumption of gin was a veritable social scourge, undermining the physical and moral health of the working classes and jeopardizing the Nation, and a huge tide of opinion mounted against the so-called "Gin Craze". To have an idea of how contemporaries saw the situation, suffice to look at the famous print *Gin Lane* made by William Hogarth in 1751. Physicians, Moralists and social reformers pushed Parliament to pass the so-called Gin Acts, imposing duties and limits to production and sale. Those measures were successful, to the point that by the second half of the century the Gin Craze was effectively over. Not only law, also scientific "evidence" was used to condemn gin and promote rum. In 1760 an anonymous wrote: "Gin is vastly more destructive to the Human Frame than the Sugar Spirit." Then, our author prescribed rum as a cure for lack of appetite and other illnesses, maintaining that rum was highly recommended for "weak and depraved appetites and Digestions, and in many other Distempers of the declining sort" and, after citing long recommendations of authoritative doctors, he concluded: "Gin is a Spirit too fiery, acrid, and inflameing for inward Use – But ... Rum is a Spirit so mild, balsamic, and benign, that if it's properly used and attempered it may be made highly useful, both for the Relief and Regalement of Human Nature."

Brandy was a different matter; it was consumed by the British upper classes that





must be treated with more delicacy. The Government imposed heavy duties and also sometimes prohibited importation, but the price was not a major problem for brandy drinkers and moreover smuggling thrived, so brandy consumption went on as usual. In addition, the upper classes did not like rum at all: it was rough, crude, not refined enough and anyway it was too cheap. Legal measures were not enough, a full-fledged campaign was needed to improve the very image of rum, to make it worthy of the upper classes. The lobby of the West Indies planters, Parliament, the Government and British officials in general joined forces to devise what today we would call a massive promotional campaign to boost rum consumption, and they got it right. Here are some simple figures: in 1697, England and Wales imported (legally) only 22 gallons of rum. In 1710 the gallons were already 22.000 and in 1733 500.000! As of 1741, rum imports regularly overtook those of brandy.

How did they succeed? With the help of science and medicine, or a sort of? British good society was very concerned with wellness and health, both of body and

mind. Modern scientific medicine was only beginning and the air, the climate, food, drinks, habits, were being studied with great dedication to protect and improve people's health and well-being. For example, it is in this century that spa treatments and the use of sea bathing for therapeutic purposes became widespread. So, in order to spur the consumption of rum, it was presented as something healthy and useful for the well-being of the people in contrast to unhealthy brandy. Just two examples. As early as 1690 a Dalby Thomas, an advocate for British Caribbean sugar interests, writes: "[Rum is] wholesomer for the Body, which is observed by the long living of those in the Collonies that are great Drinkers of Rum, which is the Spirit we made of Molasses, and the short living of those that are great Drinkers of *Brandy* in those parts." And even in 1770 when rum imports had been surpassing those of brandy for decades, a Robert Dossie, physician, wrote: "The drinking of Rum in moderation is more salutary, and in excess much less hurtful, than the drinking of *Brandy*". Pages and pages of medical evidence, chemical dissertations, pseudo-scientific experiments followed.



And yet, maybe all the efforts of the lobbies would not have been sufficient to promote rum consumption had it not been for the great success, as far as I know totally spontaneous, of PUNCH.

*"Boy, bring a bowl of China here,  
Fill it with water cool and clear:  
Decanter with Jamaica right  
And spoon of silver, clean and bright.  
Sugar twice-fin'd in piece cut,  
Knife, sieve and glass in order put,  
Bring forth the fragrant fruit and then,  
We're happy till the clock strikes ten"*

This ode to Punch - written by Benjamin Franklin in 1737 when he was still a loyal subject of the British Empire - is a wonderful example of the culture and the joy of Punch in the XVIII century. In the British social life of the XVIII Century Punch was a constant presence and the literature of the time is full of references to it. For instance, Henry Fielding has a prison chaplain say "If we must drink, let us have a Bowl of Punch – a Liquor I rather prefer, as it is nowhere spoken against in Scripture." And the famous journalist Ned Ward opined that Punch "if composed of good ingredients, and prepared with true judgment, exceeds all the simple, potable products in the universe." It was consumed in great quantities, both cold and hot, and with all kinds of spirits, citrus, spices and whatever else caught the fancy of those making it. Punch was drunk at parties, balls and weddings and every kind of social event, where women also could drink it. Moreover, usually a group of friends, often organized in a Club, gathered for a long night of revels around the *Flowing Bowl*, as it was called by its devotees. Here, a real culture of Punch developed, which brought together a great number of Gentlemen, adult and well-off. And women? No, respectable ladies were debarred from these night-long reunions, only non-respectable women were sometimes admitted. This kind of party was well captured by William Hogarth in his famous "A Modern Midnight Conversation".

To make Punch, in India they used mostly *Arrak*, a spirit largely drunk all over Asia, distilled from different raw materials, including sugarcane. In Britain, they first used Brandy, but soon Rum became the

spirit most often used in the concoction of Punch, maybe because from that time they realized that rum is excellent for any kind of mixology. Anyway, its massive use to make Punch greatly improved the image of rum because Punch was expensive. Citrus fruits were very expensive and often not easy to find. Just as expensive were spices, among which nutmeg was the most highly valued. Moreover, Punch had to be prepared every time in great quantity, so as to allow a large group of people attending a social gathering to enjoy it. Finally, the very vessel, the bowl, was expensive. It was often made of the best porcelain from China, or of silver, and became more and more elaborately decorated, embellished with precious metals and decorative motifs. Precisely because it was expensive, the British upper classes considered Punch worthy of them. Last, but not least, fruit and spices masked the aroma and taste of rum. Therefore rum lost its bad reputation as a spirit of low quality, suitable only for soldiers, sailors and people of low class, and started to be known and appreciated also by the "better sort", that is, good society.

Finally, let's not forget that, as well as promoting rum consumption among the general public, the British Authorities decided to include rum in the rations of soldiers and sailors. We talked about it at length last year, on the 50th anniversary of Black Tot Day, and there is no need to go over that again. Here it is enough to remember that the fat contracts of the State spurred the planters to produce great quantities of rum, while soldiers and sailors, who had got used to drinking it in service, continued to drink it once returned to civilian life, thus contributing greatly to its widespread use at home.

To sum up, while at the beginning of 1700 rum was almost unknown in metropolitan Great Britain, by the end of the century the British Empire was the first producer and consumer of rum in the world, Britons considered it a sign of national identity, and abroad rum was deemed a typical British Spirit.

Marco Pierini

# THE COCKTAIL SCIENTIST

By Joel Lackovich



Hello, my name is Joel Lackovich. I first became a Rum aficionado while bartending at the legendary Washington DC hotspot, NATION, in the late 90's. Serving hundreds of patrons each night, I always held a special place in my heart for Rum, whether I grabbed a bottle from the rail or from the top shelf.

Today, with over 20 years of experience in the field of life sciences, and degrees in Biotechnology, Chemistry, and Microbiology from the University of Florida, and an MBA from the Jack Welch Management Institute, I bring a unique blend of both science and human perspective to how I look at Rum, and the cocktails we all enjoy. The ingredients, the preparation, and the physical properties that constitute a Rum cocktail fascinate me. I hope you enjoy my column where I dissect a different Rum cocktail each month and explore its wonder.

Joel Lackovich (joel@gotrum.com)







Photo by Joel Lackovich

## THE FLORIDA RUM RUNNER

### INTRODUCTION

The Florida Rum Runner is a true classic Tiki cocktail that was indeed born in Florida and today can be found on cocktail menus across the globe. Served frozen or on the rocks, its popularity continues to grow, and is often mistaken for a rum punch due to the number of ingredients used in the architecture of the cocktail. But as far as classics go, the Florida Rum Runner is true liquid mastery. For the drink is not only celebrated by rum cocktail aficionados around the world, but also thirsty beach goers that are looking to quench their thirst with a delicious and savory spirited solution from the nearest beach bar.

## MATERIALS & METHODS

### *The Holiday Isle Tiki Bar Recipe at the Postcard Inn Beach Resort & Marina in Islamorada, FL (1)*

#### Ingredients:

- Light Rum – 1 oz (30 mL)
- Dark Rum – 1 oz (30 mL)
- 151 Rum – 0.25 oz (7.5 mL)
- Blackberry Brandy – 1 oz (30 mL)
- Banana Liqueur – 1 oz (30 mL)
- Orange Juice – 1.0oz (30 mL)
- Pineapple Juice – 1.0 oz (30 mL)
- Ice – 2 cups
- Garnish: Orange Slice

#### Directions:

1. First, fill blender with ice.
2. Add all liquid ingredients except for the Bacardi 151.
3. Blend all contents until completely smooth.
4. Pour cocktail mixture into a Hurricane glass and garnish with orange slice.
5. Add Bacardi 151 as a floater.
6. Enjoy!

## DISCUSSION

### Historical Origin

Like most of the iconic rum cocktails, there lies a veil of mystery when it comes to the origin of the Rum Runner and how it was invented. No one disputes the cocktail was named after the brazen individuals who smuggled rum during Prohibition in the United States from 1920 to 1933. During this time-period it was illegal to produce, import, transport or sell alcoholic beverages in the United States. These rum runners who transported rum from the Caribbean to right outside the 3-mile mark, the U.S. Territorial distance at that time, contributed to an almost Wild West environment off the east coast of Florida. Often rum runners needed to worry more about other rum smugglers than the federal officials patrolling the coast of Florida. Ambushes were unfortunately common. As a result of the situation however, successful rum runners became quite infamous and some were even seen as heroes.

The first misconception is that there is only one Rum Runner recipe, the one Tiki beach cocktail that was developed at the Holiday Isle Tiki Bar in 1972. In 1937, in Stanley Arthur's book, Famous New Orleans Drinks and How to Mix 'Em, there is reference to a post-prohibition cocktail called the "Rum Runner." The 1937 Rum Runner is the first time the title of a cocktail is called a Rum Runner, but it is quite different than the one we have all come to know and love. Upon close evaluation, the 1937 cocktail recipe reads more like a variation of the classic Daiquiri, with the only differences

being the addition of 1 oz of Pineapple Juice and 2 dashes bitters (2).

### *RUM RUNNER (1937 Rum Runner cocktail ingredients)*

2 oz Rum  
¾ oz Lime Juice  
1 oz Pineapple Juice  
¾ oz Simple Syrup  
2 dashes Peychaud's Bitters

The second ambiguous event enveloping the Rum Runner lies with why the 1972 cocktail was developed. Legend has it that Tiki John Ebert, a famous bartender in the Florida Keys at the time, was challenged by the Holiday Isle Tiki Bar owner to use up all the dead stock of liquor and make a delectable beach cocktail. Dead stock liquor is liquor that is not moving quickly enough and remains unsold. Other stories suggest that John Ebert was simply looking for a job at the Holiday Isle Tiki Bar and during the interview process was asked to make a delicious cocktail using lesser-known ingredients. Regardless of why the Rum Runner was created, everyone agrees that we are glad the 1972 Rum Runner recipe was invented.

### Flavor Profile

One taste of a frozen Florida Rum Runner cocktail and you can taste the complexity of the drink which characterizes it as both Tiki and rich in flavor. Notes of banana and blackberry are easily presented due to the intense cold from being a frozen cocktail. The TRPM5 taste receptor in our taste buds, when exposed to colder temperatures, sends a strong signal to our brain creating an enhanced taste, therefore making the cocktail taste more delicious (3).

### Rum

Like the Zombie, Jet Pilot, Navy Grog and Planter's Punch cocktails, the Florida Rum Runner involves the use of multiple types of rums. In fact, the architecture of the cocktail relies on the strategic use of a Light Rum, Dark Rum, and high proof rum to enhance the drink's flavor, color, and strength.

The first rum utilized in the Florida Rum Runner cocktail is a light rum. The light rum used is a low congener rum and is transparent. This purposeful ingredient allows the other non-rum ingredients in the cocktail to present their aromatic properties and influence the final flavor and color of the cocktail. The light rum is 80-proof (40% ABV) and contributes to the strength of the cocktail.

Dark Rum is also a designed additive into the construction of the final cocktail mixture. Dark rums, which normally are heavy rums unless



originally light with caramel coloring added, will have a strong flavor due to the aging process in barrels. The dark rum is also 80-proof (40% ABV) and adds to the strength of the cocktail.

The final addition to the Florida Rum Runner cocktail is a 151-proof rum floater which is 75% ABV. Bacardi 151 was the original ingredient used in the manufacture of the first Florida Rum Runner cocktail and was one of the most popular over-proof rums ever invented until it was discontinued in 2016 by Bacardi to share concern for their customers' health and wellbeing (4). Today, bartenders must use other over-proof rums on the market that are 151-proof to construct the perfect Florida Rum Runner cocktail. The sole purpose of using the over-proof rum in the final cocktail mixture is to increase the strength of the cocktail which is also intended to be diluted by the other ingredients.

### **Additional Ingredients**

#### **Blackberry Brandy**

Blackberry Brandy has the color and taste of the fruit used to flavor it. Typically found at 60-proof (30% ABV) the spirit is a significant contributor as well to the overall strength of the Florida Rum Runner cocktail. Brandy is a distilled spirit produced from fermented fruit juices and is typically made from grapes and fruits like blackberries.

#### **Banana Liqueur**

Banana Liqueur, also known as crème de banane, not only contributes a desired banana flavor to the Florida Rum Runner cocktail but is normally found to be 50 proof (25% ABV) and is a contributor to the cocktail's alcohol level. Most banana liqueurs are neutral alcohols flavored with an extract made from both a distillation and infusion of bananas and additionally sweetened with sugar (5).

#### **Orange Juice**

Orange Juice is a moderately sweet mixing ingredient, and its deliberate addition to the Florida Rum Runner is truly intentional. The ingredient is filled with natural sugars and is roughly 11 percent sugar and is not nearly as sweet as adding simple syrup. Secondly, it is not nearly as acidic as adding lemon or lime juice and will not overpower the cocktail with sourness.

#### **Pineapple Juice**

Manufactured from ripe pineapples, pineapple juice is a popular base used in the construction of many cocktails including the Florida Rum Runner. Pineapple juice is also not as acidic as other citrus juices, like lemon juice and lime juice. Pineapple Juice has a naturally

sweet but tart flavor and is loaded with healthy ingredients.

#### **Grenadine**

Grenadine is a very popular ingredient used in many cocktails and is overly sweet and non-alcoholic in nature. Deep red in color and rich in flavor, grenadine is traditionally made from pomegranate, and is a significant contributor to the Florida Rum Runner cocktail's pinkish red color.

### **NUTRITION FACTS**

*(Amount Per 1 Fl oz in an 8.34 Fl oz Cocktail)*

Calories:	49.7
Total Fat:	0 g
Cholesterol:	0 mg
Sodium:	0.3 mg
Total Carbohydrates:	5.6 g
Dietary Fiber:	0.2 g
Sugar:	3.52 g
ABV:	18.3%

### **CONCLUSION**

If Florida had a State cocktail it would surely be the Florida Rum Runner. The cocktail's humble roots being invented behind a bar on the beach in Islamorada, Florida has only enhanced cocktail lore and appreciation for the drink. Mouthwatering to its core, the Florida Rum Runner is not only an enchanting beach cocktail but is innovative in its masterful approach to mixing multiple unused spirits together.

### **REFERENCES**

1. Holiday Isle Tiki Bar. (2021). Retrieved from: [https://www.holidayisle.com/resources/media/holiday/user/1597437003-Rum\\_Runner\\_\\_\(2\).pdf](https://www.holidayisle.com/resources/media/holiday/user/1597437003-Rum_Runner__(2).pdf)
2. Arthur, S. C. (1937). Famous New Orleans Drinks and how to Mix 'em. United States: Harmanson.
3. Heller, L. (2005). Food temperature affects taste reveal scientists. BeverageDaily.com. Retrieved from: <https://www.beveragedaily.com/Article/2005/12/19/Food-temperature-affects-taste-reveal-scientists>
4. Bacardi. (2021). The Legend of Bacardi 151. Retrieved from: <https://www.bacardi.com/us/en/the-legend-of-bacardi-151-rum/>
5. Difford, S. (2021). Banana Liqueurs (crème de banane). Difford's Guide. Retrieved from: <https://www.diffordsguide.com/beer-wine-spirits/category/185/banana-liqueurs>

# RUM IN THE NEWS

by Mike Kunetka



These are the most recent and noteworthy headlines in the rum industry. If you want us to share your news with our readers, please send me an email to: [Mike@gotrum.com](mailto:Mike@gotrum.com).

## WEST INDIES RUM DISTILLERY

A million-dollar solar energy plant is currently being installed at Barbados' largest rum producer. Aimed at reducing the impact of its carbon footprint on the island, the West Indies Rum Distillery (WIRD) is making the investment at its Brighton, St. Michael home with the ultimate goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030. "We are constantly researching innovative opportunities to further improve sustainable and socially responsible business practices. We also have new and ambitious environmental goals and we are looking at innovative systems in order to stop the use of fossil fuels altogether and to reduce our total energy usage," said Andrew Hassell, WIRD's Managing Director. The new solar plant is expected to generate an output of more than 400 kilowatts and is estimated to produce 747,000 KWH in the first year of operation which will provide for at least 20% of the electrical consumption of the distillery. To this end, WIRD has also retained a renewable energy consultant with thirty years' experience in the field to study, establish and transform the distillery into a carbon neutral operation within the next ten years. "This solar plant is the cornerstone of our green



initiatives. Williams Solar of Williams Industries is the company responsible for phase one of this project. The roof structure first had to be replaced, and then the roof sheets had to be replaced. The Williams Solar team are in the process of installing the solar panels.” added Michael Marshall, Engineering Manager, WIRD. The distillery also has other plans in the pipeline to assist with the reduction of carbon emissions that will go into effect later this year. <https://www.plantationrum.com/>

### **BARBANCOURT**

In honor of the 25th anniversary of the Haitian Education and Leadership Program (HELP), Rum Barbancourt has committed to a five-year partnership to support higher education in Haiti. This partnership will fund three full five-year scholarships and create the Thierry Gardère Admissions and Recruitment office at HELP. The Office of Admissions and Recruitment is the first stop for all applicants who aspire to the organization's Excellence and Merit Scholarship. HELP's mission is to create a generation of young professional leaders who will contribute to a more just Haiti. HELP is proud to name this office after the late CEO of the Société du Rhum Barbancourt Thierry Gardère, who always valued higher education in Haiti. HELP Country Director, Garry Delice recalls the first check he received from Mr. Gardère in 2007. “I asked him what convinced him to make that first contribution,” Garry recalls, “he said that he always believed in education for change, that Haiti cannot take off without an educated population to push the country forward.” Over the years, Barbancourt has always been a supporter of HELP. Today, with Delphine Gardère, the current CEO, this partnership is not only giving back to the Haitian community but also honoring the legacy of her father. Delphine concludes, “As we continue to believe in a brighter future for Haiti, we are convinced that investing in HELP is the right approach and one that proudly honors my father's legacy.” Thierry Gardère's vision and investment are already producing tangible results, as Barbancourt now counts two HELP graduates among its employees. This commitment roots Barbancourt in the past, present, and future of HELP and its students. <https://barbancourt.com/>, <https://uhelp.net/>

### **HAVANA CLUB**

The Havana Club Rum Museum celebrated its 21st anniversary last month with the introduction of a new digital site that allows users a rewarding tour of the so-called ‘18th century colonial mansion’ to learn about the history and production of authentic Cuban rum. According to the creators, the website provides information about the company's services, allows you to enjoy a virtual tour of its facilities and promotes knowledge for a product linked to Cuban culture. The new site promises easier navigation, access to bibliography on the history of Cuban Rum

and the possibility of downloading a cocktail recipe book with Havana Club. The Havana Club Rum Museum has received more than two million visitors from 90 countries and, according to the TripAdvisor travel platform, the site is one of the most visited places in Havana. Unfortunately, due to the current situation derived from the Covid-19 pandemic, the center is closed to preserve the health of visitors and workers. During this time, the museum is being restored and will soon have attractive new displays and visitor comforts. [www.havanaclubmuseum.com](http://www.havanaclubmuseum.com)

### **KASAMA**

Alexandra Dorda, daughter of Tad Dorda, the co-founder of leading vodka brands Belvedere and Chopin, recently started her own brand. Rather than choosing the family tradition of vodka, she launched Kasama Rum. Inspired by her Filipino mother and Polish father's unique heritage, Kasama is distilled and aged in the Philippines before being shipped to Poland and bottled at Dorda's family distillery, for sale in the U.S. market. Per Dorda: “It is very special to connect the three countries that I am from in this unique way.” Alexandra attended Stanford and after graduation worked at Chobani in New York for several years, which taught her about building a food and beverage business. She returned to Poland to work at a private equity fund, and it was there that the idea for Kasama solidified. “I learned a few years ago that the Philippines is actually one of the biggest rum producers in the world,” says Dorda. “I suddenly had this ‘a-ha’ moment of realizing that I could create the rum that I thought was missing from the market, while also celebrating my Filipino heritage that I'm so proud of.” Kasama is distilled from fermented Noble sugarcane juice (the original sugarcane species, native to southeast Asia) rather than molasses, similar to French Caribbean rum agricoles or Haitian rums. <https://www.kasamarum.com/>

### **RON BARCELO**

Ron Barceló has introduced the first organic rum in the Dominican Republic. Barcelo Organic is distilled from the fresh juice of sugarcane grown in a select cane field of only 1.5 square kilometers, which lies on the banks of the river next to the distillery. On this land, sugarcane is grown in a completely natural way and is subject to the company's rigorous RB360 sustainability code, an ambitious program that allows the company to monitor and manage its activity across the entire business operation in alignment with the fulfilment of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In 2016, the firm's adherence to good environmental management practices made it the first Dominican rum producer to receive the Carbon Neutral and ISO14064-1 certifications, based on the NORDOM 798 standard. It was also the first to obtain and to use the Bilan Carbone® license. Ron Barceló measures its carbon emissions and reduces them by using biomass and photovoltaic cells to produce

clean energy (which represents 90 per cent of the energy used in its rum-making process), as well as CO2 recovered during the fermentation phase. This CO2 is then used to create carbonation in soft drinks. By-products from the distillation of cane juice, such as vinasse, are also used as a natural fertilizer. To offset emissions that it cannot reduce, the firm finances green projects in different countries. Those projects have been certified under the corresponding standards and contribute to the mitigation of the effects of climate change. <http://ronbarcelousa.com/>

#### **SIS4ERS DISTILLERY**

Manchester's Sis4ers Distillery, located in Salford, is best known for its infused flavored gins. Last month they changed things up a bit with the introduction of their first rum. Four Sisters Spiced Rum is a perfect blend of Caribbean inspired rum crafted with spices and warmed with vanilla and caramel. Sister Lucy McAvoy, Sales and Marketing Director for SIS4ERS DISTILLERY said, "We are hugely excited to launch our Spiced Rum. We have worked meticulously to craft the perfect balance of spices and flavor, to ensure our first rum on shelf is unique and memorable. Rum is often associated with the sea, and so we chose to add Amphitrite to the heart of our brand design. We wanted to add a feminine touch, a symbol of female strength to a drink that can often feel quite masculine." The four sisters are a 'sister' company to the Seven Brothers Brewery. Yes, there really are 11 siblings: four gin-distilling sisters and seven beer-brewing brothers. <https://sis4ersdistillery.com/>

#### **BUMBU**

Craft rum maker Bumbu has released Bumbu Crème. This new offering joins Bumbu Original and Bumbu XO, which rank among the best-selling rum lines in the U.S. Bumbu Crème is a blend of Bumbu rum, select spices, and decadent, real dairy cream. It's a rich, but not heavy, rum cream with a deep, complex array of aromas, including chai, coconut, and cinnamon. A balanced combination of sweetness, spice, and cream, Bumbu Crème is perfect chilled straight, on the rocks, or in a cocktail. Bumbu is made at a historic Barbadian distillery founded in 1893 and continuously operated for more than 120 years. Our rum is distilled using two continuous stills. The yeast used during fermentation is a distillery secret that dates back as far as 1840, when some of our original iron pot stills were cast. <https://www.bumbu.com/home>

#### **RUM CHATA**

E. & J. Gallo Winery has announced that its Spirits Division has signed an agreement to acquire Agave Loco LLC, the owner of RumChata, a leading cream liqueur brand. Inspired by the traditional milky rice drink from Mexico, founder and master blender Tom Maas began experimenting in his kitchen to

create his version of a rum-based horchata. Using fresh dairy cream, rum and a proprietary sweet spice blend, RumChata was born in 2009. Since its introduction, RumChata has steadily grown within the cream liqueur category in both retail and on-premise. "First of all, I want to thank the distributors and retailers, as well as our employees, who supported RumChata since its inception. Your backing of the brand meant the world to us and will not be forgotten. As a small independent producer, we never imagined the success of RumChata when we were just getting started back in 2009. We have taken the growth of the brand as far as possible as a small supplier, and it was the right time to find a new brand steward. I know the RumChata brand will thrive under Gallo's guidance, and I am excited to watch the brand continue to grow and evolve in the future," said Maas. <https://www.rumchata.com/>, <https://www.gallo.com/>

#### **ECHO SPIRITS DISTILLING**

Echo Spirits' owners Joe Bidinger and Nikhil Sharoff have been planning their distillery for years and had hoped to open in the spring. Both the Covid-19 pandemic and the normal process of applying for the various needed licenses delayed that. "We've obviously had to change our plans a little bit," Bidinger said. Echo Spirits' original Rum was the first product the distiller introduced to the market in October 2019, just months before the coronavirus pandemic would shut the world down. Their latest offering is Echo Spirits' Pineapple Rum. Bidinger describes the flavor profile as pineapple without the sweetness. To achieve its more subtle flavor, Echo Spirits infuses its rum with "leftover" or processed pineapple. The distiller has partnered with local company Simple Times Mixers to utilize the flesh and bark leftover after processing and juicing pineapples for their drink mixers. The remnants still have pineapple essence and oils that provide flavor, but not overwhelming sweetness. Imbibers can also feel good about drinking Echo Spirits' Pineapple Rum, as \$1 of every bottle sold (forever!) will be donated to organizations focused on the needs of the hospitality and service industry. <https://echospirits.com/>

#### **DIPLOMATICO**

Diplomático Rum announced a pilot program focused on improving sustainability within the restaurant and bar industries while helping address the ongoing food insecurity issue in the United States. Dubbed "Project Leftover," the Diplomático Rum program aims to create and connect a network of local nonprofit food rescue organizations with restaurants and bars whose food surplus would previously go unused, while helping reduce their carbon footprints and directly reduce local food insecurity. Restaurants can also realize additional savings through an enhanced tax deduction designed to incentivize businesses to donate food. Food waste is a global problem and



major contributor to climate change. Additionally, each year just in the US, 72 billion pounds of food goes to waste while 42 million people face hunger. Both food insecurity and the environmental impact of food waste can be reduced if restaurants, a big contributor to the problem, stop wasting food. Project Leftover is being organized by The LBB Agency, which provides brands and the hospitality industry with a focused approach on how to implement conscious, purpose-driven and sustainable strategies into their work, a little bit at a time. The program is expected to launch initially in South Florida with programs in Houston, New York and Los Angeles rolling out throughout 2021. Each market will enlist 25 participating restaurants and bars, who will be provided an individualized food waste reduction solution tailored to their business and paired with a local community partner organization. <https://rondiplomatico.com/>, <https://www.lbbagency.com/>

### **FLOR de CANA**

In celebration of Earth Day, Flor de Caña, a Carbon Neutral and Fair Trade certified premium rum, has pledged to plant more than one million trees by 2025. Through its own annual reforestation program, Flor de Caña has already planted nearly 750,000 trees since 2005, and now, in partnership with the environmental charity One Tree Planted, the brand will launch a global reforestation campaign that aims to ensure a greener future for generations to come. The campaign, titled "Together for a Greener Future", will include a series of initiatives with retailers, bars, restaurants and on social media (#TogetherForAGreenerFuture) to engage eco-conscious consumers and raise awareness on the importance of reforestation. Furthermore, individuals will be able to support reforestation efforts by donating through the One Tree Planted platform, which guarantees that one tree will be planted for every dollar received. In turn, Flor de Caña will match all individual donations received during the campaign, doubling the impact. "Trees are essential for biodiversity and a healthy climate, so it's great to work with a brand so committed to making a positive impact for reforestation and sustainability overall," said Diana Chaplin, Canopy Director at One Tree Planted. "As a brand, we are deeply committed to the protection and preservation of the environment. By partnering with One Tree Planted, we hope to inspire individuals who want to be part of a good cause and help restore forests around the world," said Mauricio Solórzano, Global Ambassador for Flor de Caña. <http://flordecana.com/>

### **RELICARIO**

Spanish drinks group Beveland Distillers has added a rum finished in ex-vermouth casks to its Ron Relicario range. Ron Relicario Vermouth Finish has been made using Relicario Superior rum, which is aged for between

five and 10 years in the Dominican Republic. The rum then underwent a second period of maturation in Mancino Vermouth Vecchio casks for six months. Mancino Vermouth Vecchio is made using a blend of 38 botanicals, as well as a fortified Trebbiano wine. During its production, the vermouth is aged in oak barrels for 12 months. Bottled at 40% ABV, the vermouth cask is said to impart 'botanical nuances such as wormwood, gentian root, rhubarb, chamomile and flashes of citrus. <http://www.relicariorum.com/en/>

### **RON ZACAPA**

The first instalment in the four-part Heavenly Cask series is Zacapa 23 La Doma, The Taming Cask. The limited-edition bottling will be followed every four years by a new release to create four collectable special editions. Using Ron Zacapa's 'sistema solera' ageing process, rums aged between six and 24 years were blended and matured in barrels that used to hold American whiskies, Sherry and Pedro Ximénez wines. The ex-American whiskey casks were used to 'tame' and 'give shape' to the unaged spirit immediately after distillation before the second charred cask added more character to the spirit. The third cask, ex-Sherry, brought 'new aromas', before the fourth and final cask, ex-Pedro Ximénez, added 'sweetness' to the liquid. Bottled at 40% ABV, Zacapa 23 La Doma, The Taming Cask will be available in select markets. <https://www.zacaparum.com/>

### **KHUKRI RUM**

The Nepal Distilleries Pvt. Ltd., producer of Khukri Rum, has announced its support for Clean Himalaya Program 2021 taking place under the leadership of the Nepal Army. This program aims to clean the basecamps and their peripheries of Lhotse, Makalu, Dhaulagiri, Pumori, Ama Dablam, and most importantly, Everest, the world's highest mountain. The campaign begins from the 11th of April, 2021, and continues till its conclusion on World Environment day-June 5th, 2021. This gargantuan effort aims to collect nearly 70000 kgs of waste consisting of abandoned tents, canisters, food containers, and discarded equipment that has accumulated in all 6 mountains, and transport it to Kathmandu, where the waste will be classified and managed accordingly. Nepal is home to 8 of the tallest mountains in the world, which draws innumerable global and local visitors. However, the accumulation of the resulting waste has adversely affected the mountains, their surrounding ecosystems, and communities. The flora and fauna, the fresh flowing spring waters, and the various communities and industries whose livelihoods depend on such resources are being put in a precarious position. The Khukri Rum team is invested and committed in protecting and preserving the Himalayas they call their home in collaboration with the Nepal Army. <https://www.khukrirum.com/>

# RUM ASTROLOGY

by Cris Dehlavi



Chances are, at some point in your life, someone has asked you, "What's your sign?" And, further chances are that you have the answer...but do you actually know what that means? The 12 astrological signs date back many thousands of years, to a time when the Babylonians knew that it took 12 lunar cycles (months) for the sun to return to its original position. They then identified 12 constellations that were linked to the progression of the seasons, and assigned to each of them the name of a person or animal. They divided them into four groups: earth, fire, water and air, based on the earth's daily rotation, and related them to circumstances such as relationships, travel and finances. The Greeks believed that the position of the sun and the planets had an effect on a person's life and future, and many people still today read their daily horoscope in the hopes of finding answers to anything from love to money.

The nuances are vast, but each of the 12 zodiac signs are said to have their own unique personality traits and characteristics, from the most positive to the most frustrating. That being said, we at "Got Rum?" thought it would be fun to pair a rum cocktail to each sign, based on this ancient formula.

## Taurus the Bull

April 20 - May 20

Taurus is an *earth* sign and is ambitious, reliable, stubborn, and indecisive. Like the animal that represents them, Taureans are all about strength, stamina and will. Stubborn by nature, the Taurus will stand his/her ground to the bitter end, yet they are generous with their time, possessions and love.

My rum cocktail choice for Taurus is the **Coquito**, an ambitious cocktail but also one that is traditionally shared amongst family and friends. The Coquito is a cocktail that originated in Puerto Rico, and is typically a cherished recipe handed down from generation to generation. It requires a little work, but the end result is well worth it.

Place all ingredients into a large container with a lid, shake well, and seal up tight and refrigerate for at least 48 hours before serving:

- 2 cans of Evaporated Milk
- 1 can of Condensed Milk
- 2 cans of Coco Lopez
- 1 750mL bottle of dark Puerto Rican Rum
- 1 teaspoon of Ground Nutmeg
- 3 Cinnamon Sticks

Serve over ice and garnish with your choice of ground cinnamon, ground nutmeg, or chocolate shavings.









# EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

by Mike Kunetka



Geoff Longenecker, Owner and Distiller of Seven Caves Spirits in San Diego, California, USA.

Being an entrepreneur means being an adventurer: not only do you risk your finances and so-called “guarantees” in order to pursue your dreams, oftentimes you get to do so while figuring out the rules of the game as you play it. I love interviewing craft distillers who are constantly pushing the envelope, such as Geoff Longenecker. If you thought dunder pits and high-ester rums were the exclusive playground of Jamaican distillers, think again! Serious rums for serious rum drinkers, and a fabulous team to boot!

Margaret Ayala, Publisher



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

Geoff Longenecker, Owner and Distiller of Seven Caves Spirits in San Diego, CA

**Q: What inspired you to get into the spirits industry in general and why rum in particular?**

Having lived in the San Diego area for the last 20 years, I've had the privilege of watching the craft beer scene grow from a couple of brew pubs and home brew stores to the incredible industry that it is today. The talent and creativity of that industry inspired me to think of ways I could be a part of an industry like that.

Thankfully, the timing of my own legal career permitted me the chance to expand





into an area I could use some of my creative tendencies correlated with the first rise of the craft spirits industry. I was able to visit and try spirits made at shops such as Corsair and Watershed in the Midwest, to Ballast Point and Kill Devil here in San Diego. What I saw was an industry I really wanted to be a part of and one in which I felt I could add a different voice.

I chose aged rums at my shop to start for the simple reason that I believed that rums for too long had been marketed as a sweeter, inferior product to bourbon for no good reason. I've always loved rums and have sought out their aged, un-dosed (ie not sugared post aging) variants. I love their complexity and found them every bit the equal, and occasionally superior, to bourbons and other whiskies. The rums

I make are often confused for bourbon on the nose, remain complex and delicious after time in new oak barrels, or finished in secondary casks. I'll never dose my rums as a matter of principle, not to mention doing so hides complexity.

**Q: You are originally from Louisiana, correct? Why did you decide to build your distillery in San Diego and not in Louisiana?**

While I love Louisiana and will forever cherish my time spent there, I moved to San Diego almost 25 years ago when I met my wife. We raised our two kids here and will likely spend the rest of our lives in and around southern California.

**Q: Where did you gain the knowledge needed to operate a distillery?**

Setting aside the complexities of running a small business in a very regulated arena, for me, there are really a couple areas of skill that are necessary, fermentation and distillation, then combined those with a hearty dose of trial and error.

For fermentation, I've been home brewing beer for a little over 20 years in San Diego. That's given me a pretty solid knowledge of the fermentation process in all of its various forms (and has been a key influence on much of my whiskey production).

On the distilling front, I view running my stills a little like running complicated stoves. They all have their quirks, but once you run them a few dozen times with different types of products, you gain a pretty good idea of what your capabilities are.

I am a devout reader and student of any of the projects I've undertaken in my life. Thankfully, there are phenomenal books and websites on distilling, and now years of practice on the different systems in my shop have given me a level of knowledge to create flavors I desire in my products.

**Q: What was the process like, working with your local government, to get your permit approved for the distillery? How long did it take?**

It took about 9 months for permits and the buildout when I started this project a little over 5 years ago. San Diego had lots of experience with breweries, and a few local distilleries, so the process was fairly straightforward. I did hire a great legal consultant to help guide me through the process.

**Q: Opening up a distillery has many obstacles; what would you say was your biggest challenge and how did you overcome it?**

I'd say one of the biggest challenges I've faced, and I'm sure many other craft distillers have faced, is consumer skepticism when first learning about your brand. It can be challenging as a craft



producer to try and explain to a new consumer who has never tried craft spirits why our products don't taste like mass produced alcohol. At festivals and in my shop, I constantly get asked why my rum doesn't taste sweet or tastes like bourbon, or why a new barrel aged rum that is the color of a bourbon isn't spiced.

It is one of my favorite things to take the time to explain the process, how the spirit is fermented, distilled and then aged to taste the way it ultimately does in the bottle. How choices made years before during a distilling run can radically change the final flavor after aging years later. It becomes an amazing way to earn a new customer of not just my shop, but a fan of craft booze in general.

**Q: What rums are you currently producing?**

Seven Caves produces a few different rums. We are primarily known for our Barrel Aged Rum series. These are cane sugar and molasses based rums, fermented with dunder and a yeast





selected based on the sugar when it arrives (it changes often from the same supplier, so our yeast changes). The resulting distillate is then aged in new charred oak barrels for at least 2 years. We occasionally release a secondary barrel finished rum, usually from whiskey barrels, but soon from a couple of fortified wine barrels.

We also have an 'Exploratory Series' that I use to play with interesting rum flavors in small amounts. Examples currently from this series are a Jasmine Tea rum, Orange rum, Mead barrel aged rum and a Jamaican-style Overproof rum made from molasses, lots of dunder and wild fermented.

**Q: What type of still do you use to distill your rums?**

We have three custom stills in the shop in various sizes, but all are batch distilling pots with 4 plate reflux columns. We also

have a nifty rotovap, which is more for our gin program than rums.

**Q: Can you describe your fermentation? Is it the same for all of your rums?**

This is a great question, and it heavily depends on what the final product I'm going for. For my standard barrel aged rum, I'm looking for moderate esters, but not overpowering, so fermentations with cane sugar and molasses last between 5-7 days.

I make a slightly more neutral base rum for Orange and Jasmine tea that uses less molasses, a different yeast, and ferments around 5 days.

For my Jamaican style overproof, and when I'm messing around with high dunder, molasses only rums (and when I have a fermenting tank that has the time for it), fermentations can last weeks. I just finished one recently that sat for a month.



The whole shop smelled amazing!

I keep mentioning dunder... I've had a 'pit' in my shop since the first month of operation. I use varying amounts out of it and replenish when it gets about halfway used up with fresh basket. It's a really fun thing to have and use at Seven Caves.

**Q: Are there plans to add new rums to your portfolio in the future?**

I'm constantly playing with different flavors and small batches of rums. I will have a Madiera finished rum coming (hopefully) later this year, as well as a Sherry finished rum. Both are really fun, and both will tell me when they are done and ready (they are both finicky).

**Q: In addition to your rums you also produce other spirits. Can you tell us more about these spirits?**

Seven Caves is known primarily for our

rums and gins. Currently, we have three gins on the market.

Our La Jolla Cove Gin is distilled with freshly harvested sea kelp, local meyer lemons and, of course, juniper and coriander. It's designed to be an ode to coastal California.

We have a new London Dry Gin made with juniper, coriander, jasmine flowers and two types of locally grown lemons (Meyer's and Buddah's Hand). It's the perfect G&T sipper.

Lastly, we have our Tiki Gin which is a contemporary gin with juniper, fresh pineapple, passionfruit, coconut and oranges. It's a fantastic non-traditional gin made for tropical cocktails.

**Q: I hear you also make a rum maple syrup and pancake mix. Please tell us more! It sounds delicious!**

No stop at Seven Caves is complete without trying our Rum Barrel aged maple syrup. When we empty our barrels for our aged rums, we immediately fill them with maple syrup to rest. After a period of time, we empty and bottle what is some of the most amazing syrup you'll try. Rum and maple makes perfect sense, and coupled with just a hint of the barrel, it really is a great combo.

The pancake mix was an idea we had during the last holiday season. We designed a spiced pancake mix to be sold along with the maple in a gift set. It proved extremely popular and soon might become a staple in the shop full time!

**Q: Where are your products currently available for purchase?**

My spirits are available directly at my shop, in select San Diego retailers and for delivery through our website throughout California. We are expecting to announce more widespread availability in the coming months, however!

**Q: COVID-19 has changed many things in people's lives and businesses, how**





**has it affected your operation and how are you overcoming the challenges?**

My shop has been closed to in-person tastings for over a year now. These were the primary way I introduced people to my spirits and sold my products. As a result, we pivoted and began to offer both will call pickup from the door and shipping throughout California thanks to eased restrictions by the California ABC. We sincerely hope that we will be able to continue to ship as it saved my shop over the last year.

**Q: I understand that you are offering virtual cocktail classes. Was this incorporated into your business as a result of Covid or have you always offered these classes? Can you tell us more about the classes?**

The cocktail classes began very simply... a group of friends/customers of Seven Caves were scheduled to come to 7C right after the initial shutdown order was issued. We decided to do the class virtually, so



working with an amazing local bartending supply company, we put together a few drinks, the folks got kits to make the drinks with, and we had a great time. We decided to do it again, but open it up to other customers of 7C. And it grew exponentially from there.

The format is always similar... 1.5 hours, 3 cocktails and a lot of fun. I send the list of cocktails and ingredients out the week of the event. The same local bartending company would put together a kit with ingredients and equipment, then we have the party on a Friday at 7pm pst.

**Q: Of all the cocktail classes you have done, which one has been your favorite and why?**

Now that's a really tough question... and I'm going to answer it cryptically. The next one (scheduled for April 30 at 7pm PST if you want to come along!).

Part of what goes in to the classes is an intense amount of reading and ideas



for what would make a fun class. I'm a big flavor person, so I love the process of thinking about flavors and, ultimately, creating new or refreshed cocktails using the spirits I (often painstakingly) make.

That said, and less cryptic, I really enjoyed the class when we incorporated cooking (another huge passion of mine). But I can't really pick a single one because they were all a blast!

**Q: Do you have a particular cocktail that is your favorite and if so, why?**

Another darn tough question... I'd have to say either the Pumpkin-Spiced PK-er (<https://www.the7caves.com/halloween-cocktail-class#pumpkin>) or the Zombie variant (<https://www.the7caves.com/tiki-take-two-cocktail-class#zombie>) were my favorites. The pumpkin spiced cocktail

was one that started as a bit of a joke, and turned into just a fantastic cocktail, perfect for San Diego thanksgiving time. And the Zombie was fun because it used a bunch of different things I make, and, well, zombies are killer!

**Q: Do you offer tours at the distillery? If so, are reservations recommended or required?**

I'm just about to re-open my shop. Seven Caves has two types of tastings available, one for public hours and the other for private events.

I have hours that are open to the public where, per the State of California, I'm limited on the amount I'm permitted to pour (1.5 oz. total per person, per day). I will accept one group at a time (for now) during these hours. No reservations needed,





but I can only allow one group at a time, unfortunately.

After those hours, my shop is open for private events only. In these events, I get a little more leeway in the amount I can pour. I tend to get a little creative with the cocktail making during these events. Advanced reservations are required.

**Q: Can you tell us a bit about what a customer will experience when they arrive at your distillery?**

Regardless of public hours or private events, I love talking to people about my vision of Seven Caves, my love of craft distilling and all things booze related. My shop is not huge and I conduct talkings in the heart of my facility. Often, we are drinking samples of spirits that are fermenting in the tanks next to us. I try to make it a pretty cool and memorable experience.

For Private events, as I mentioned above, I have more options as to what and how much I can pour. I generally like to treat these experiences similar to an omakase sushi dinner or tasting menu, with small tastes of both spirits and cocktails made from those spirits. Like the cocktail classes, the themes constantly change, and it really is just what I'm inspired by on those particular days. Some days it is straight stirred booze forward cocktails like manhattans, martinis and old fashioned. Other days it's tropical, island cocktails. Just depends on my mood that day!

**Q: Do you have a tasting room? If so, do you only offer tasting of your rums or do you also serve cocktails made with other products?**

Yes, spirits only during public hours. Spirits and small size cocktails for private group settings.

Sometimes I have folks that only want the rums or only the gins. I do my best to accommodate those people (unless they tell me they don't like rum because 'it is too sweet' or gin because 'it tastes like a pine tree'. Then it's game on!).

**Q: If people want to contact you, how may they reach you?**

I'm available on most social media platforms, through my website, email ([geoff@the7caves.com](mailto:geoff@the7caves.com)) or call/text 619.300.1624

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

I really am honored to be included in this. Thank you so much for thinking of Seven Caves!

**Margaret:** Again Geoff, thank you so much for this opportunity and I wish you and your entire team all the best of luck.

Cheers!

# 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).

Philip  
#GRCigarPairing



## Three's Company

Most of the time, combining two products is the simplest approach to a pairing. Throughout this series, I tried pairings between three products and they are simply marvelous and so easy to enjoy.

For this month's article, I once again reached for three products that go hand in hand: rum, coffee and a cigar (a "puro"). I say they go hand in hand because they are a classic combination and a very popular way to end a long meal, surrounded by friends and with a world that needs fixing.

The rum I selected for this pairing is one I got to taste for the very first time: Ron Zacapa Ambar, Sistema Solera 12. What does the number 12 on the label mean? A casual consumer may think it means "12 Years" but a close inspection of the label confirms the absence of the word "years." When it comes to Solera blends, one cannot talk about "years," but rather has to talk about "blends" of rums of different ages. The label goes on to say that the product was designed for mixology, suggesting that Zacapa 23 and XO be reserved more for sipping or for use in applications that do not alter their flavor very much.

I must say that, as I start tasting it, I realize it is somewhat drier than its more expensive counterparts, but still remains among the "sweeter than normal" class of rums.

The third product in the pairing is an espresso. I imagine many people now have the "pod" coffeemakers at home, able to prepare them but, if not, a traditionally-brewed coffee will also work perfectly.





Photo credit: @Cigarili





Photo credit: @Cigarili

Last but not least, we need a good tobacco. For this pairing I selected one from Nicaragua, a Torpedo from the classic line “La Joya de Nicaragua” a 52 x 6, made with 100% Nicaraguan wrapper, filler and binder, a proud specimen and a real jewel (“joya” is Spanish for jewel).

The pairing involves combining all three products consistently. What I like to do is to sip the rum first, followed by the coffee -which helps reduce the sweetness from the rum- allowing for an explosion of flavors and aromas between the coffee and the earthy and leather notes from the cigar. This is only a suggestion: each person can impose their own sequence, if any. My approach

works so well for me that I had to reach for a second serving of rum and coffee.

Just because the pairing is simple it does not mean it is plain; to me it was marvelous with very persistent and lingering aromas. This particular cigar elevates the pairing to a “must do it” level. I hope you can replicate the pairing with a “La Joya de Nicaragua” cigar but, if you can’t find a Torpedo, any other format from the same line will work.

Cheers!  
Philip Ili Barake  
#GRCigarPairing

**RUM CENTRAL**

**THE SOUL**

**OF YOUR RUM**

[WWW.RUMCENTRAL.COM](http://WWW.RUMCENTRAL.COM)

