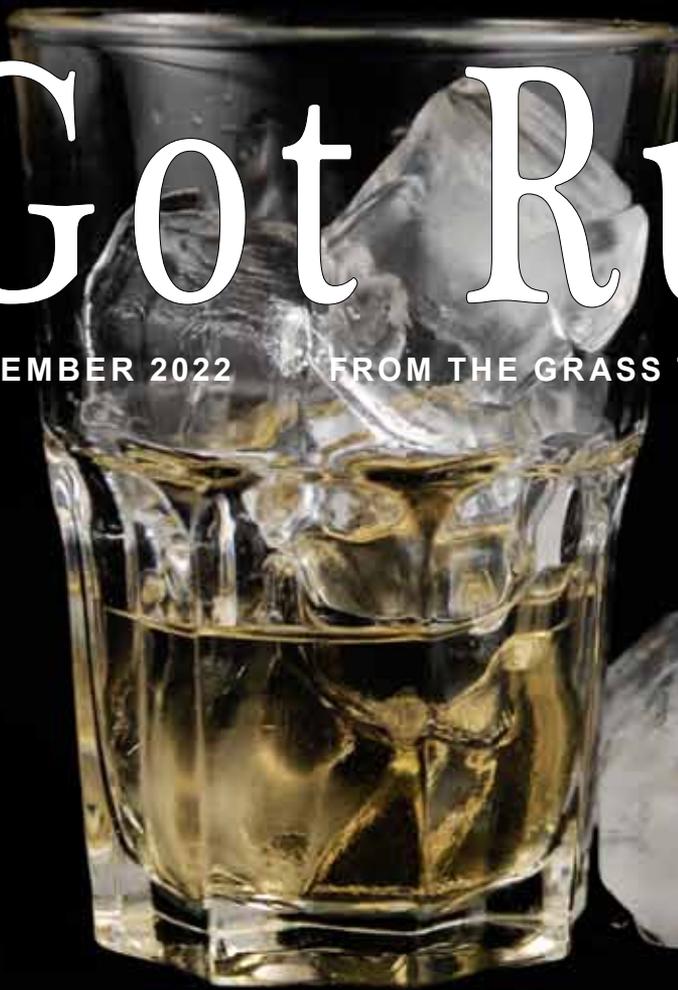


# Got Rum? <sup>®</sup>

NOVEMBER 2022

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



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# Got Rum?<sup>®</sup>

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## November 2022

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

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

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

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FRONT COVER: *The Spirit of Aguardiente*  
INSIDE SPREAD: *Enlightened Angels*

# FROM THE EDITOR

## Somber November

Nothing reminds me of the upcoming end of the year quite like November does. Sure, December *is* the last month of the year, but it is also filled with distractions, in the form of celebrations and the preparations (and preoccupations) leading up to them. November, on the other hand, firmly assumes its place on my calendar, highlighted by the turning and falling leaves from the trees around me.

In our part of the world, the days are getting shorter, and the nights are becoming increasingly colder. Soon we will have to endure another winter and I'll find myself counting the days until spring arrives again.

Gray skies and cold nights seem like a perfect combination for depression, as Thomas Hardy described in his poem *At Day-Close in November*:

*The ten hours' light is abating,  
And a late bird wings across,  
Where the pines, like waltzers waiting,  
Give their black heads a toss.*

*Beech leaves, that yellow the noontime,  
Float past like specks in the eye;  
I set every tree in my June time,  
And now they obscure the sky . . .*

But to focus only on the cold, dark aspect of winter is to suggest that it is fair to dislike nighttime only because it is so different than daytime. Both nighttime and daytime are equally important and unavoidable cycles that are defined by their antagonistic characteristics.

Breathing and exhaling, day and night, summer and winter, planting and harvesting, these are all examples of diametrically opposed concepts that cannot exist without their counterparts.



And just like a good nighttime routine can help you start the following day, ready to face all its challenges, a good year-end/ winter routine will help you prepare for a busy spring and summer. If you work in the beverage industry, then you are already up to your neck in the “OND” (October-November-December) madness we usually dread yet often desperately need.

Remember the madness, take notes of what is working and what is not, then figure out what things to avoid and which ones to repeat during the next unavoidable cycle.

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](http://www.RumJourney.com) where I share my experiences and reviews in the hopes that I would inspire others in their own explorations. It is my wish in the pages of "Got Rum?" to be your host and provide you with my impressions of rums available in the world market. Hopefully my tasting notes will inspire you to try the rums and make your own opinions. The world is full of good rums and the journey is always best experienced with others.

Cheers!

## Bombarda Culverin Rum

While visiting a local store, I was pleased to finally find Bombarda Rum on the shelves. This rum line had me curious because it checked two different boxes related to my personal interests; historical cannons that were used on ships and forts and multi-island rum blends. In my historical research, a Culverin was both a deck mounted swivel gun used on ships to defend against attackers as well as a medium sized cannon used during the Medieval and Renaissance time periods. Bombarda Culverin is a blend of rums double aged 5 to 8 years in used Bourbon and white oak casks sourced from Barbados, the Dominican Republic and Panama. The rum is blended to 43% ABV and the company states they use no additives or coloring in the production of their rum line.

### Appearance

The entire Bombarda rum line has the same proprietary 750 mL embossed cannon shaped bottle. The labels provide basic information about the rum blend, with the neck wrap having a 5 on one side and a snake on the other. I later learned that the snake's name is "couleuvrine" the French word for grass snake. The black plastic cap is secured to the bottle with clear security wrap. The cap and cork are all one piece, tightly securing the rum in the bottle.

In the bottle and glass, the rum has a light-yellow gold color with brown, amber highlights. Swirling the liquid creates a razor thin band that thickens slightly before dropping a couple of waves of fast moving legs.

### **Nose**

The aroma in a good balance of vanilla, cantaloupe, black pepper, tobacco leaf and oak.

### **Palate**

The swirl of vanilla, alcohol, tobacco and oak dances across the tongue with the initial sip. As I continued to sip, the dry wood notes really came out to play, highlighting the immaturity of the rum with the wood flavors and alcohol lighting up the tongue before fading into a vanilla rich finish.

### **Review**

When tasting a rum line for the first time, I always enjoy beginning with the immature rums in the portfolio before experiencing the older products. While Culverin is not the youngest rum in Bombarda's line up, (Drake has that honor), it was a good one to begin with as the blend was a pleasant rough and tumble rum that would be ideal for enjoying in the Prohibition Era like the Mary Pickford or Chicago Fizz. Now I am curious about some of the other rum blends in the line and will make sure to give them a try as soon as I find them in the stores.

If you are looking for an interesting new rum to use in your cocktails, Bombarda Culverin is a good place to start.



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

# THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft

## Brugal Leyenda

While traveling in the Caribbean, it is always interesting to see what is available in the duty-free stores. While visiting Puerto Plata in the Dominican Republic, we found a lot of rum by Oliver and Oliver, Barcelo, and one section devoted to Brugal rum. I picked Leyenda since I had not seen it in a store on any of my travels. Leyenda was created in 2015 in honor of the Brugal's founder and first Maestro-Ronero. The rum is aged for eight years in used American White Oak Bourbon casks, then aged for an unspecified amount of time in Spanish Sherry casks. The rum is then blended to 38% ABV and bottled in its unique 700 ml bottle.

### Appearance

The bottle of Leyenda for this review came in a box with some details about the product and the inspiration behind it in Spanish. The custom 700 ml bottle is featured in a cutout on the front of the box. The label provides a minimum amount of information about the product. The plastic cap is secured with a black security wrap and holds a large cork.

The rum in the bottle has a pleasant copper amber color with slight ruby hues as the light refracts through it. In the glass, the color mutes down to a more solid brown amber. Swirling the liquid creates a thick band that slowly drops, creating a single wave of large, slow-moving legs. By the time the legs return to the liquid, the band has already begun evaporating, creating pebbles around the glass.

### Nose

The aroma of the rum is a mix of dried fruit- apricots, raisins, and honeyed

banana chips—followed by light caramel, toasted walnuts, and just a hint of smoke before the sherry notes take over and dominate the profile.

### Palate

The first sip of the rum delivers a wave of all the dried fruit flavors and caramel found in the aroma, with a honey sweetness dominating the midpalate. Sherry and a wisp of smoke round out the initial flavor experience. Additional sips compound the sherry notes and reveal subtle notes of wood char, minerals, and alcohol that terminate in an abruptly short, dry finish.

### Review

After years of being curious about this rum and its place in the Brugal portfolio, I now have my answer. It is the evolutionary step between Brugal Anejo and Brugal 1888. The influence of the dried fruit, honey, and sherry cannot be denied as they dominate the flavor experience, making all the other notes fight to be present during the tasting experience. Even the alcohol notes are subdued and, to a certain degree, nullified, coming in with some potency right before the finish. I understand why some people really enjoy the sweet fruit profile and others struggle with it. I found myself sort of ambivalent about it, neither loving nor hating the flavors, just finding them interesting compared to other Brugal products. For fans of the Brugal line, I am sure they will enjoy this product. For others who prefer their rums to not be fruity-sweet and sherry influenced, I recommend exploring other options.



www.brugal-rum.com

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# COOKING WITH RUM

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

by Chef Susan Whitley





## Walnut Cake with Persimmons and Pomegranate

### Ingredients:

- ½ C. Extra-Virgin Olive Oil (plus more for greasing cake pan)
- 1 C. All-Purpose Flour (plus some for dusting the cake pan)
- 1 C. Walnuts, chopped and toasted
- 2 tsp. Baking Powder
- 2 tsp. Ground Ginger
- ¼ tsp. Salt
- ¼ tsp. Ground Cloves
- ½ tsp. Ground Cinnamon
- 4 Large Eggs, whites and yolks separated and at room temperature
- 1 C. Brown Sugar, packed
- ½ C. Buttermilk
- ½ tsp. Vanilla Extract
- 4 Tbsp. Rum
- 4 small Fuyu Persimmons, peeled
- ½ C. Pomegranate Seeds
- Softly Whipped Cream, for serving

### Directions:

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly oil the sides and bottom of a 9-inch cake pan. Place a parchment circle at the bottom of the pan and lightly oil the parchment. Dust with flour and shake off excess. Set the pan aside.
2. In a bowl, add chopped walnuts, flour, baking powder, ginger, salt, cloves and cinnamon. Stir well and set bowl aside.
3. In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff, creating peaks.
4. In another bowl, add egg yolks and sugar and whisk on low speed until the sugar is dissolved. Then increase the speed to medium-high and continue beating, scraping down sides of the bowl as necessary, until the mixture is thick and pale beige in color, about 5 minutes. Beat in the buttermilk, vanilla extract and rum, then slowly add the flour mixture at low speed. Slowly add ½ cup olive oil and beat for a minute or so on low to combine. Using a rubber spatula, quickly fold in 1/3 of the egg whites to help lighten the batter. Then fold in the remaining egg whites. With a rubber spatula, scrape batter into the prepared cake pan. Place the pan on a baking sheet and put it in the preheated oven on the middle shelf. Bake for 50 minutes or until a skewer inserted in the center of the cake comes out clean. Remove from oven and allow to cool in the pan on a rack for about 30 minutes, then run a knife along the pan's edge and invert onto a cake plate.

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

5. Cut persimmons into small, ½-inch-thick wedges and put in a small bowl. Add pomegranate and a pinch of sugar and combine. Allow to sit for just a few minutes.

6. Sprinkle with pomegranate seeds. Cut cake into wedges and serve with a spoonful of the fruit and a dab of softly whipped cream.

Yield: 8 to 10 servings



# **RUM**

## **Aging**

### **Science:**

**French Oak vs.  
American Oak**

A Research  
Collaboration Between

**THE Rum**  
**UNIVERSITY**

and



**RUM CENTRAL**





# RUM Aging Science

## French Oak vs. American Oak

### Introduction

In Volume 1 of **Rum Aging Science** (published from January through December of 2020), we explored the aging of rum in American Oak, ex-Whiskey barrels. In Volume 2 (published from January through December of 2021) we explored the aging of rum in new American Oak barrels. This year's Volume explores the aging of rum in French Oak barrels.

**The Rum:** Just as we did in Volumes 1 and 2, this new series starts using a low-congener, column-distilled rum, made from fermented HT (High Test or "*miel virgen*") molasses. We use low-congener rum so that we can focus more on detecting the wood extractables and their impact on the rum's profile.

**The Barrel:** We selected barrel number 20-0016, made by Independent Stave Company, with toasted staves and char #1 heads (see photo on page 18).

**The Wood Extractives:** The compositions of both American Oak and French Oak have a lot of things in common. They are, after all, both oaks. But the proportions of the components that are extractable by alcohol differ between one and the other. These extractives include:

- **Cellulose** - is the most abundant natural polymer on earth. It consists of linear chains of glucose units and remains relatively intact even after wood curing and toasting.
- **Hemicellulose** - also known as a "wood sugar" is a two-dimensional polymer comprised of many simple sugars, including: *Glucose*, *Xylose*, *Mannose*, *Arabinose*, *Galactose* and *Rhamnose*.
- **Lignin** - despite the fact that it is also one of the most abundant nature-produced materials on earth, lignin remains one of the least understood. Oak lignin consists of two building blocks: *guaiacyl* and *syringyl*. The former is responsible for producing *coniferaldehyde*, *vanillin* and *vanillic acid*, which -especially the vanillin- are easily recognized in cask-condition spirits.
- **Oak tannins** - these plant polyphenols derive their name from the Latin word *tannum*, which means "crushed oak bark," since in early times oak trees served as a major source of tannin for the leather-tannin industry. Tannins improve aged rum's character by increasing the perception of balance, complexity and roundness.

### Scope of Study

Each month we will evaluate a sample of the rum collected from the barrel and will report its pH, ABV and color. We'll compare these results against those obtained from the rums in Volumes 1 and 2.

# RUM Aging Science

## French Oak vs. American Oak



Shown above are the rum samples, taken out of the barrels on the 1st day of the month. These samples are aged in (left to right):

- a) new French oak barrel (this series)
- b) new American oak barrel (2021 series) and
- c) used American oak, ex-Whiskey barrel (2020 series).

The concentration of wood extractives is evident to the naked eye.

### Rum aged in a new, French oak barrel, after 11 months

Our rum has now spent eleven months inside its barrel at Rum Central's aging cellar. The temperature during the month of October was very hot and unusually dry. We only received a bit of rain at the beginning of the month.

# RUM Aging Science

## French Oak vs. American Oak



Above: the barrel that is the subject of this 12-month, rum-aging study. Made from French Oak, by Independent Stave Company. The barrel is being kept at the Rum Central Distilled Spirits Plant in Texas.

### Organoleptic Changes

The overall personality of the rum has started to define itself, with hints of tanned leather, aromatic pipe tobacco and intriguing fruitiness. The duration of the aftertaste also continues to increase.

### Physical Changes

These are the pH readings, as recorded on the 1st day of each month, compared to the rums from the previous Volumes, which were aged in American Oak barrels.

# RUM Aging Science

## French Oak vs. American Oak

pH	New French Oak Barrel	New American Oak Barrel	Used American Oak Barrel
January	7.04	7.04	7.04
February	5.16	5.01	5.67
March	4.88	4.80	5.32
April	4.54	4.54	5.23
May	4.52	4.45	5.10
June	4.42	4.41	5.03
July	4.28	4.29	4.96
August	4.28	4.09	4.95
September	4.27	4.22	4.84
October	4.27	4.22	4.66
November	4.27	4.22	4.64

And these are the changes in ABV % readings (as of first day of each month), also compared to the American Oak barrels:

ABV%	New French Oak Barrel	New American Oak Barrel	Used American Oak Barrel
January	62.35	62.35	63.43
February	62.30	61.80	63.42
March	61.92	61.61	63.43
April	61.89	61.50	63.43
May	61.87	61.50	63.40
June	61.89	61.30	63.40
July	61.79	61.19	63.40
August	61.80	61.14	63.50
September	61.96	61.12	63.62
October	62.06	61.25	63.72
November	62.16	61.34	63.81

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.

## Tom, Jerry, and Eggnog

Growing up, I always looked forward to the time of year when eggnog was in season. It was such a treat, and because it wasn't available the rest of the year it felt extra special and is now quite memorable. Now as an adult, I don't LOVE the store-bought stuff, so I am much more inclined to make my own. This allows me to control the sugar, and it can be a fun project with loved ones. And OF COURSE, I will add rum to it! What kind of rum, you ask? Well that my friends is up to you. I like an aged rum but I am honestly not partial to one specific brand in my eggnog, I do like to switch it up. Use the one you love. Eggnog is typically served cold, with or without ice.

Another classic and traditional holiday cocktail is The Tom and Jerry. Created in the early 1800s, it is a twist on the traditional eggnog, served with brandy and rum, and served hot. Some say it was created by British journalist Pierce Egan, but there are also numerous accounts that Professor Jerry Thomas invented it, and named it after himself and his two pet mice, Tom and Jerry. Regardless, it is a classic Christmas milk punch and you can even find the “batter” in the frozen aisles of grocery stores during the months of November and December. It takes a bit of time to make, but once you have the mix you can freeze it and the shelf life is indefinite. This can be served in a coffee mug or a large vessel like a punch bowl.

I have included below my two personal recipes for eggnog and Tom and Jerry. I wanted to make sure all of you reading this got it before the Holidays so you can add it to the recipes you will be serving. Enjoy!!





## HOMEMADE EGGNOG

- 4 C. 2% Milk
- 1 C. White Sugar
- 12 Egg Yolks
- ½ C. Brown Sugar
- 5 Whole Cloves
- 1 tsp. Vanilla Extract
- 1 tsp. Ground Cinnamon
- ½ tsp. Ground Nutmeg
- 4 C. Light Cream

Combine milk, vanilla, cloves, and cinnamon in a saucepan on low heat and slowly bring the milk to a boil. In a separate bowl combine eggs and sugar and whisk until fluffy. Slowly add the hot milk mixture to the eggs. Stir well and add back into the saucepan. Cook over medium heat for 3-4 minutes until thick but do not allow it to boil. Remove from heat and strain out the cloves. Let it cool for about one hour at room temperature. Add the cream and nutmeg, and if you wish, you may at this point add 3 cups of rum---- if you want this to be alcoholic eggnog. I personally prefer to add my rum to each individual glass, but that is up to you. I like a rich aged rum, but with so many on the market, I encourage you to choose your favorite.

## TOM AND JERRY

- 12 Eggs, separated
- ½ C. (or 1 stick) Butter, softened
- 1 C. Sugar
- 1 tsp. Ground Cinnamon
- 1 tsp. Ground Nutmeg
- 1 tsp. Ground Clove
- 1 tsp. Vanilla Extract

Separate the egg whites from the egg yolks and put them in their own bowls. Using a hand mixer, beat the egg whites until they form soft peaks, like meringue.

Add the softened butter and the sugar to the egg yolks and beat with a hand mixer until fully mixed and liquid. Gently fold the egg yolk mixture into the egg whites. Now stir in the spices and vanilla. Cover and store in the refrigerator until you are ready to serve.

\*You can also freeze this so you always have some ready to go, you will just need to thaw before serving\*

To serve:

In a coffee mug add one tablespoon of Tom and Jerry batter. Add 4 ounces of hot milk and 1.5 ounces of your favorite aged rum. Mix well, stirring to allow the batter to melt into the milk. Grate fresh nutmeg on top.

\*This is wonderful as a non-alcoholic drink as well, just omit the rum\*



A still life arrangement of liqueur bottles and glasses. In the foreground, a large, faceted glass decanter is partially filled with a red liquid. To its right, a smaller glass is filled with a yellow liquid. The background features a larger, rounded glass bottle also containing a red liquid. The scene is decorated with autumnal elements: a bunch of yellow berries, several orange lantern-shaped fruits (Physalis), and green leaves with small red berries. The entire composition is set against a light, reflective surface.

The Sweet  
World of  
LIQUEURS



### **Apple-Cinnamon Rum Liqueur**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 Granny Smith Apple, Diced
- 2 Cinnamon Sticks
- 3 Cups Light (low-congener) Rum at 40% ABV
- 2 Cups Sugar
- 1/4 Cup Water
- 1 teaspoon Glycerin (optional)

#### **Directions:**

In a quart jar, add apple, cinnamon sticks, 1 cup sugar and rum. Seal jar tightly, and place in a dry, dark place for about 2 weeks. After two weeks, strain the liquid using a double layer of cheese cloth.

In a fresh quart jar, add the second cup of sugar, the glycerin, water to top and the strained liquid. Stir gently until the sugar has dissolved. Seal and store in a dark place to rest for 2-3 months. You can then optionally transfer (and filter) into a serving decanter.

### **Coconut Rum Cream Liqueur**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 Cup Sugar
- 1 Cup Water
- 1 Can (14 oz) of Coconut Milk (or make your own, see facing page)
- 2 tsp Coconut Extract
- 1 Cup of White Rum at 50% ABV

#### **Directions:**

Make a simple syrup by combining water and sugar, constantly stirring over medium to high heat until it reaches the boiling point. Remove from heat let stand until it reaches room temperature. Combine the simple syrup, coconut milk and the coconut extract until they are thoroughly mixed. Add the rum and stir until the rum has been fully incorporated.

Store in the refrigerator for up to one month. Shake well before serving.

### Definition

Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines Liqueur as: "a usually sweetened alcoholic liquor (such as brandy) flavored with fruit, spices, nuts, herbs, or seeds." Different countries around the world have additional requirements such as alcohol strength, sugar content, etc. In the USA, Liqueurs and Cordials are controlled and regulated by the Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB). Their definition is as follows:

*Flavored spirits product containing not less than 2½% by weight sugar, dextrose, levulose or a combination thereof made by mixing or redistilling any class or type of spirits with or over fruits, flowers, plants or pure juices therefrom or other natural flavoring materials or with extracts derived from infusions, percolation or maceration of such materials.*

Rum Liqueurs and Cordials are defined as:

*Liqueur/Cordial with the predominant characteristic flavor of rum made with rum as the exclusive distilled spirits base, bottled at not less than 30% alcohol by volume (60 proof). Wine may be used but if used may not exceed 2½% by volume of the finished product.*

### Caraway Rum Liqueur

#### Ingredients:

- 3/4 Cup Water
- 1 1/2 Cups Sugar
- 2 Tbsp Caraway Seeds
- 1 tsp Fennel Seeds
- 1 tsp Aniseed
- 1 tsp Coriander Seeds
- 1 tsp Dried Angelica Root, finely chopped
- 3 Whole Cloves
- 2 Cups Overproof White Rum

#### Directions:

Bring water and sugar to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Add the seeds and boil for 4 minutes. Let the liquid stand until it reaches room temperature, strain and discard the solids. Add the white overproof rum and allow the blend to rest in a cool, dark area for 1 to 2 months.

**These recipes and many more are available by purchasing "The Rum Laboratory".  
Click HERE for more information or follow the link below with your browser:**

<https://www.magcloud.com/browse/magazine/468835>



### **Blackberry Basil Rum Liqueur**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 4 cups blackberries
- zest of one lemon
- one large handful of basil
- 3 Cups Light Rum

#### **Directions:**

Place berries in a large jar and slightly crush with a fork. Add remaining ingredients and tightly secure the lid. Allow to sit for three months in a cool, dark place, shaking occasionally.

At the end of three months, strain your liqueur through a jelly bag. (Find unbleached jelly bags [here](#).) Squeeze to get all the juice out of the blackberries.

Add 1 cup of sugar syrup (1 cup sugar heated with 1 cup water, then cooled). Stir to combine. Allow this mixture to mellow 4-6 weeks before drinking.



### **Cinnamon Rum Liqueur**

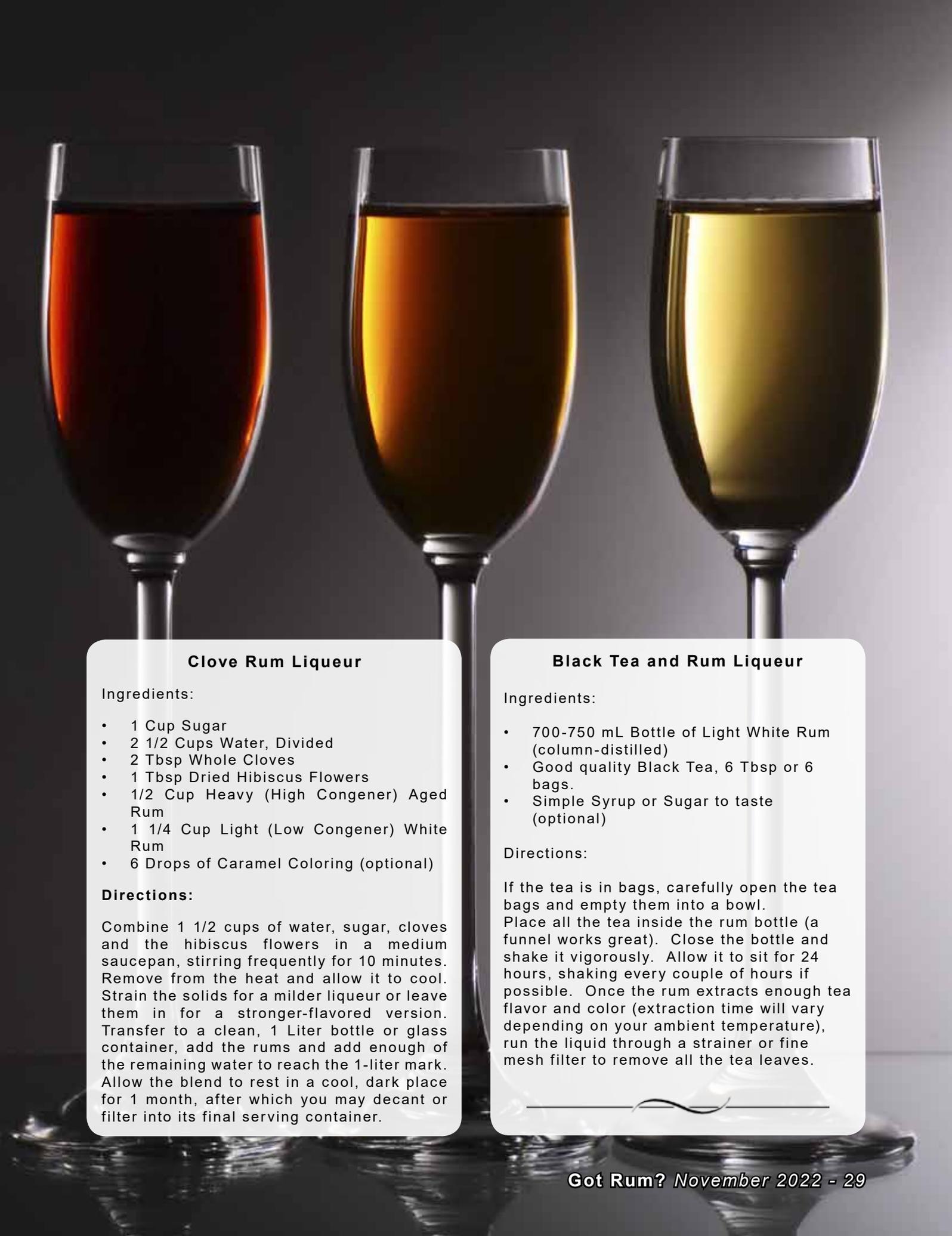
#### **Ingredients:**

- 4 Bags Celestial Seasonings Bengal Spice Tea (TM)
- 2 C. Water
- 1/2 lb Red Hots (cinnamon-flavored candies)
- 1 tsp Ground Cayenne Pepper
- 1 C. Over Proof Rum (151-Proof)
- Red Food Coloring

#### **Directions:**

Combine water, tea bags and cayenne in saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat and boil for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and remove the tea bags. Add the Red Hots candies and stir them in the "tea" until fully dissolved. Allow the mixture to cool down and transfer it into a 1-quart container. Add the overproof rum and 4 to 8 drops of food coloring, to achieve your desired color level. Cover the container and allow all the flavors to marry for at least 1 month.





### Clove Rum Liqueur

#### Ingredients:

- 1 Cup Sugar
- 2 1/2 Cups Water, Divided
- 2 Tbsp Whole Cloves
- 1 Tbsp Dried Hibiscus Flowers
- 1/2 Cup Heavy (High Congener) Aged Rum
- 1 1/4 Cup Light (Low Congener) White Rum
- 6 Drops of Caramel Coloring (optional)

#### Directions:

Combine 1 1/2 cups of water, sugar, cloves and the hibiscus flowers in a medium saucepan, stirring frequently for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow it to cool. Strain the solids for a milder liqueur or leave them in for a stronger-flavored version. Transfer to a clean, 1 Liter bottle or glass container, add the rums and add enough of the remaining water to reach the 1-liter mark. Allow the blend to rest in a cool, dark place for 1 month, after which you may decant or filter into its final serving container.

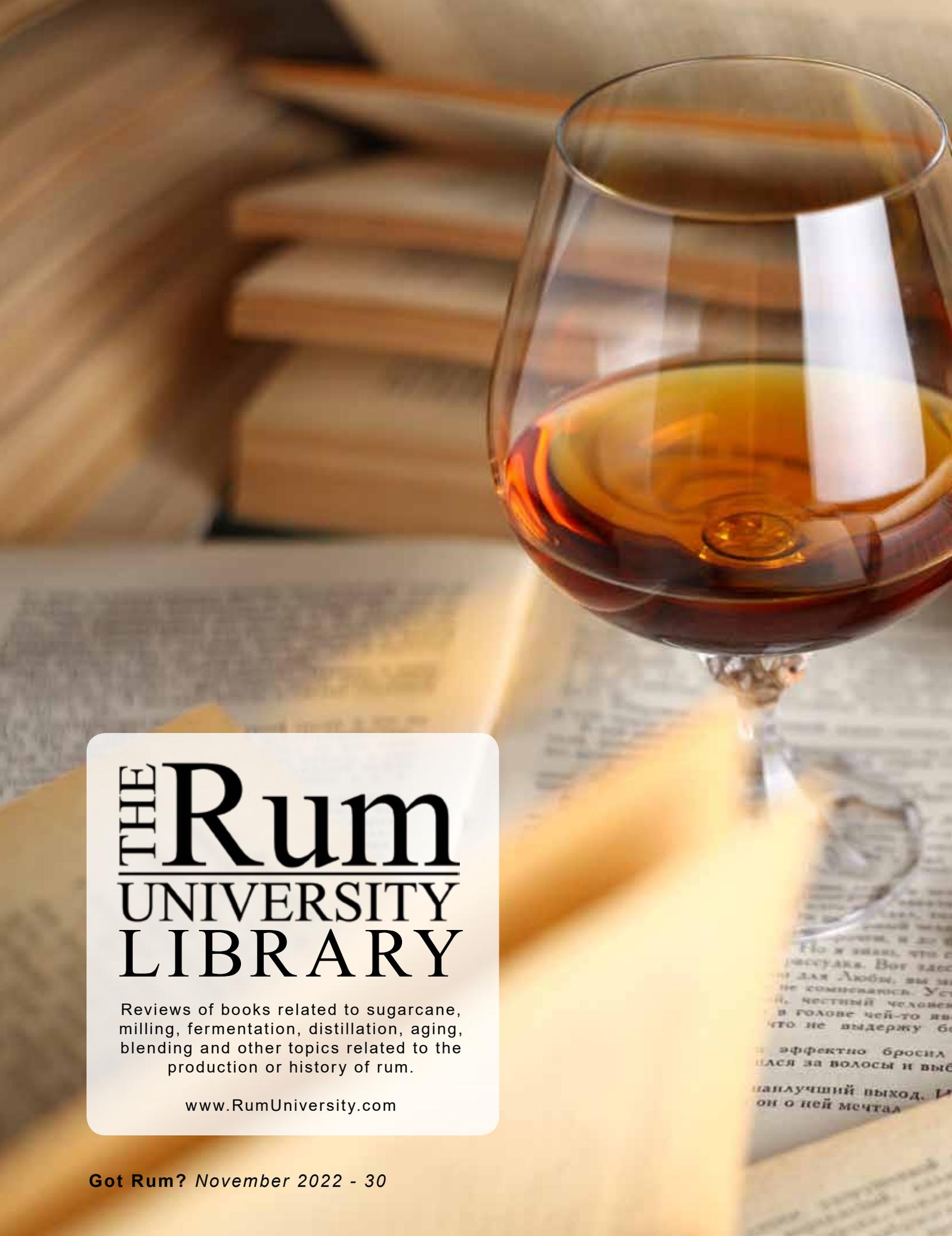
### Black Tea and Rum Liqueur

#### Ingredients:

- 700-750 mL Bottle of Light White Rum (column-distilled)
- Good quality Black Tea, 6 Tbsp or 6 bags.
- Simple Syrup or Sugar to taste (optional)

#### Directions:

If the tea is in bags, carefully open the tea bags and empty them into a bowl. Place all the tea inside the rum bottle (a funnel works great). Close the bottle and shake it vigorously. Allow it to sit for 24 hours, shaking every couple of hours if possible. Once the rum extracts enough tea flavor and color (extraction time will vary depending on your ambient temperature), run the liquid through a strainer or fine mesh filter to remove all the tea leaves.

A glass of rum is the central focus, filled with a golden-brown liquid. It sits on a stack of several old, leather-bound books. The background is softly blurred, showing more books and the texture of the paper. The lighting is warm, creating a cozy and scholarly atmosphere.

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

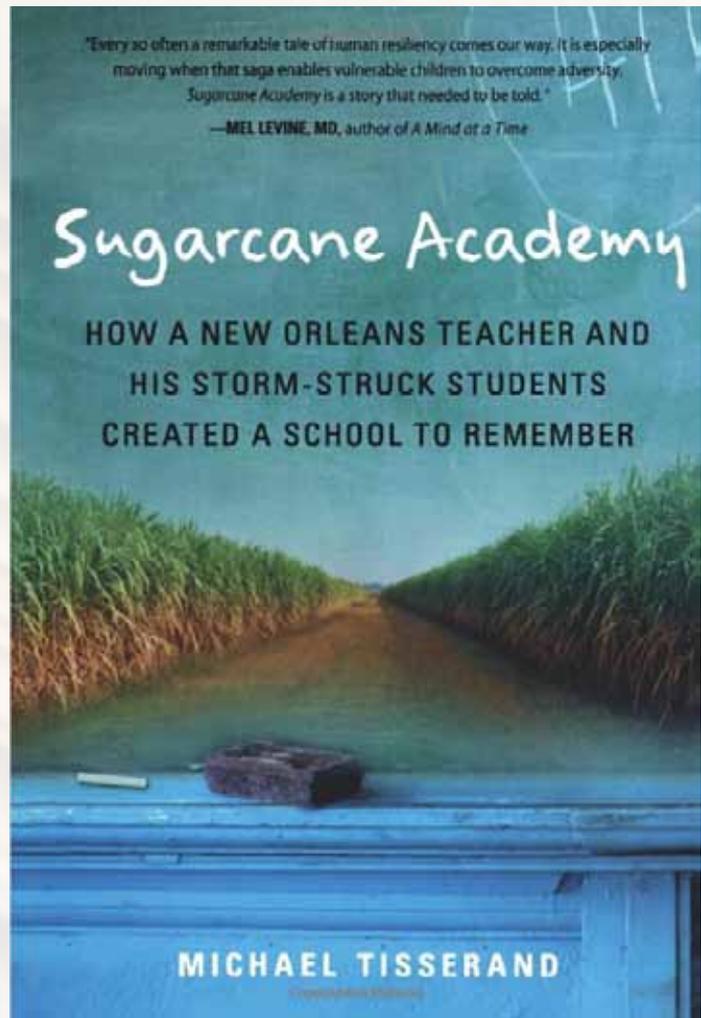
## Sugarcane Academy by Michael Tisserand

(Publisher's Review) Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans, taking lives and livelihoods and displacing thousands. Because the hurricane struck at the beginning of the school year, the city's children were among those most affected. Michael Tisserand, former editor of the alternative cultural newspaper *Gambit Weekly*, evacuated with his family to New Iberia, Louisiana. Then, rather than waiting to find out when—or if—schools in New Orleans would reopen, Tisserand and other parents persuaded one of his children's teachers, Paul Reynaud, to start a school among the sugarcane fields.

So was born the **Sugarcane Academy**—as the children themselves named it—and so also began an experience none of Reynaud's pupils will ever forget. This inspiring book shows how a dedicated teacher made the best out of the worst situation, and how the children of New Orleans, of all backgrounds and races, adjusted to Katrina's consequences.

This wonderful memoir manages to do what a flood of news-reporting could not: see the tragedy of Katrina through the eyes of children. The story of the Sugarcane Academy, an improvised one-room school in a sugarcane parish in south Louisiana, will be one of the lasting books of our tragedy." --Andrei Codrescu, author of *New Orleans, Mon Amour: Twenty Years of Writings from the City*

Michael Tisserand is the author of *The Kingdom of Zydeco*, which won the ASCAP Deems Taylor Award for music



writing. He served as editor of *Gambit Weekly*, the alternative newsweekly of New Orleans. He lives in Evanston, Illinois.

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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 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.

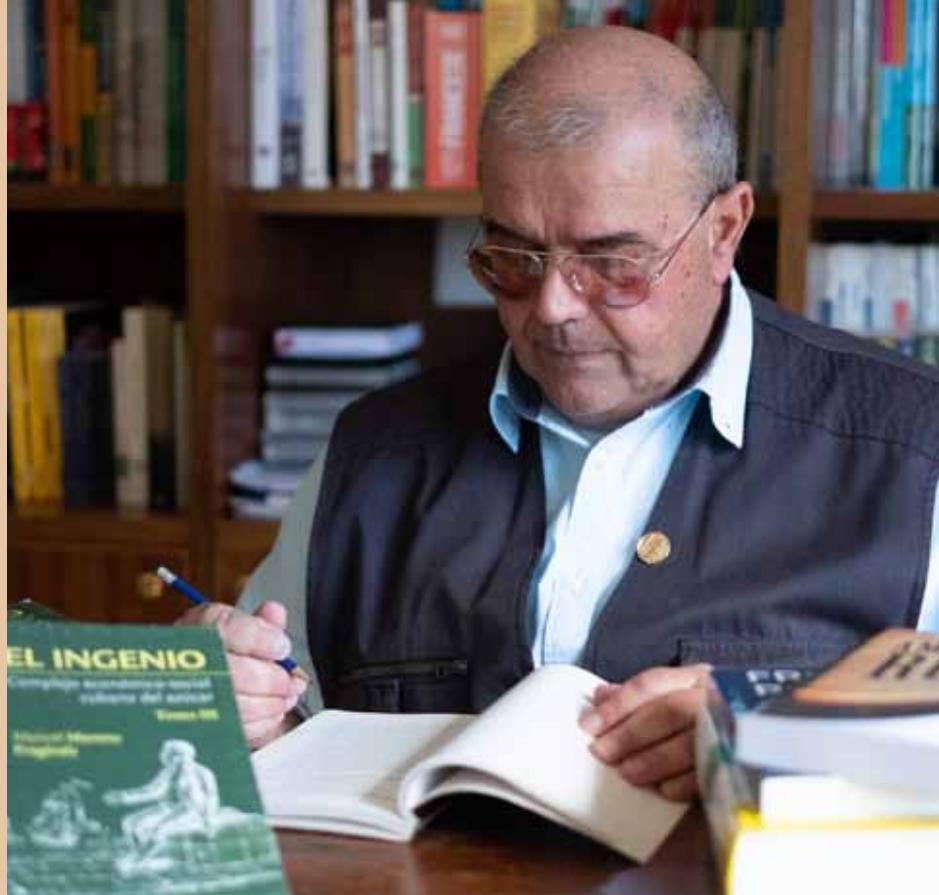
In 2017 I published the book "AMERICAN RUM – A Short History of Rum in Early America"

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.



## HISTORY OF CUBAN RUM

### 5. AGUARDIENTE RUM

To begin with, a warning: for the sake of simplicity, I will only use the term molasses to refer to the many types of sugar production by-products from which rum could be fermented.

In the previous article, we saw how in 1764, the production of rum was finally legalized in Cuba. Legalization, however, also brought with itself heavy taxation and was not accompanied by trade liberalization. Indeed, the monopoly of Cadiz, albeit with some exceptions, remained. The end of the monopoly was slow and gradual. In 1765, the other 9 ports of the Peninsula including Barcelona, were authorized to trade with Cuba and other ports of the Empire. Then, the export of Cuban rum to Yucatán and Campeche was allowed as well as the trade of various goods even with foreigners in cases of need. Finally, on October 12th, 1788, the "Regulation for Free Trade" liberalized (almost), the trade between Spain and The Indies, while the freedom of trade with the entire world occurred only in 1818.

The production of sugar in Cuba, after 1764, increased and a strong, as well as determined class of sugar planters consolidated itself on the Island, which we could call the Cuban Sugar Barons. With some similarities, but also with many differences with the well-known British Indies Sugar Barons. Let us discover even more.

“This conversion of the landowners between 1750 and 1770 so sugar production reflected the similar conversion of English landowners to scientific farming a generation earlier, though in the case of Cuba there was always an industrial side to the development of sugar cane. This first Cuban industrial revolution was essentially aristocratic, carried out by families who stayed on the island; for these aristocrats were not absentee landlords in the same way as were English landlords in Jamaica who were off to Dorset or Wiltshire as soon as they could. Cuban entrepreneurs or their families on the other hand often spent most of the year in Havana, where they would have palaces or houses. ... All remained in Cuba, providing the island with an aristocracy, however *nouveau*, that the English islands always lacked.” (Hugh Thomas *Cuba. A History*).

Cuban Sugar Barons started various local organizations, which together were centers of study, social life and political pressure: Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País (Economic Society of Friends of the Country), Junta de Fomento (Board of Development), Real Consulado (Royal Consulate) and the weekly *Papel Periódico*, the first newspaper edited in Cuba.

“These institutions expressed a body of opinion specifically Cuban rather than Spanish; even Captain-General de las Casas, though a Spanish by birth, settled down after his term of office on a sugar plantation and died there.” (Thomas)

According to Manuel Moreno Fraginals on his classic *El Ingenio* (The Sugar Mill), “it is important to distinguish what happens in Cuba from what happens in the *Sugar Islands*. The English Antilles were mere recipients of the industrial revolution. In Cuba, on the other hand, the

development of sugar production was not imposed by the Mother Country, it rather developed on its own in spite of it. The spreading of sugar plantations changed the landscape and society of the Island”. Until the late eighteenth century there was no consciousness of a common identity of the Island. Cuba is formed by very diverse settlements, with a strong sense of autonomy. Only the diffusion of Sugar Plantations, with its “tragic monotony” creates throughout the Island a physical landscape and a homogenous social fabric, with common characteristics and interests. “The green cane fields and smoky towers were homogenizing elements of the landscape”.

Meanwhile, from 1776 to 1815, Cuba closely experienced the Atlantic age of Revolutions: the American Revolution, the French Revolution and above all the Haitian Revolution. The French colony of Saint Domingue (present-day Haiti) was the largest sugar producer in the world and it alone supplied sugar to about half of the free market. With the successful slave revolt, which started in 1791, sugar production collapsed until it was almost wiped out, leaving a great void in the market. A void that various countries were trying to fulfill. In Spain and Italy, for example, they attempted to revive the ancient medieval sugar production. Yet, it was only Cuba that filled that void. Many French planters fled to Cuba, often bringing investment, know-how and even slaves. Thanks also to them and to the resourcefulness of the Cuban Sugar Barons, the Island was rapidly transformed: by the late 1700s, Cuban sugar already had a decisive influence on the world market and its influence would continue to grow. In 1795, Francisco de Arango y Parreño, the intellectual leader of the Cuban Sugar Barons, the true ideologist and promoter of the new era, introduced the more productive Otaheiti sugar cane to Cuba, which largely replaced the traditional Creole cane.

As always, where there is sugar, there will also be rum. In fact taxes, duties and monopoly certainly slowed down, but did not stop the growth of Cuban rum.

Also because Spain did not have sugar refineries and Cuba, unlike the British Sugar Islands, had to export sugar that was already refined. Therefore, it had a relatively greater quantity of molasses available and ready to go.

Actually, in many of Francisco de Arango y Parreño writings between the late 1700s and early 1800s, we find numerous references of the *aguardiente de caña* as a regular export item, along with sugar, hides, etc. Furthermore, there is a strong awareness that much more could be exported if it were not burdened by taxes and duties fees.

In particular, in the 1792 *Discurso sobre la agricultura de la Habana y medios de fomentarla* (Essay on the Habana agriculture and the ways to develop it), he writes:

“The producers must pay, according to the King’s order, two *pesos fuertes* (Strong pesos) for each barrel of thirty bottles they distill. But, since this is very uncertain and exposed to a thousand frauds, the Intendant has decided to have the producers in operation examined, their production calculated taking into account their power and impose the payment of a fixed amount per year. In addition to this heavy obligation, the *aguardiente* pays six percent when exporting from Havana.”

The pressure from the Sugar Barons and the prestige of Arango y Parreño were finally successful and with the *Real Cédula sobre azúcar y aguardiente rum* (Royal Decree about sugar and rum burning water) of February 23rd, 1796, the custom duties fee on exports were abolished, although not in all cases. Here is an excerpt:

“Desiring the King, in every possible way, to promote the agriculture and commerce of this Island, the prosperity of which has always merited his attention and care, both for the usefulness and welfare of its inhabitants and for its importance for the general good of the State, and bearing in mind the observations set forth by the Consul Count of Casa-Montalvo and by the Councilor Mr. Francisco de Arango in the petition of November 6th, 1794 and

the reports thereon, H.M. has ordered to grant the following graces. First: that sugar refineries may be set up in all the districts of the Island, to export it to these kingdoms [that is, Spain] or to other dominions of H.M. in America, knowing that they will not enjoy any exclusive privilege ... Third, that the *aguardiente rum* exported from this Island to the other parts of our America, where the introduction of this liqueur is permitted, shall be free from all Royal rights. The same is valid for that exported to the foreign ports of Europe, according to the permissions granted to the inhabitants of this Island, as well as what the foreigners, who bring us slaves, buy, remaining the rights that the rum exported to these kingdoms pays.”

The results were not long in coming. In 1792, Spain sent to America about 7,000,000 liters of grape *aguardiente* that made a strong competition to Cuban rum, and of this amount, two thirds were destined for the Port of Veracruz, Mexico. But in the following years, the Cuban rum quickly took over the market, competing with and replacing the metropolis, also taking advantage of the wars between Great Britain and France, with the resulting navigation difficulties between Spain and The Indies. In the year 1814, the total replacement of the Spanish spirits for the Cuban substitute was completed and the Island exported 4,000,000 liters of rum. Below, is the export of rum from Cuba calculated in liters, according to Moreno Fraginalls:

1778	188,000
1779	363,000
1780	458,000
1781	548,000
1782	530,000
1794	1,001,000
1802	6,318,000
1803	2,022,000
1814	4,000,000

Considering that today 1 US gallon equals 3.78 liters, and that we are here not interested in a precise figure, but rather in

having an idea of the quantities involved, in 1814 Cuba exported something more than one million US gallons. They are not enormous quantities, but neither are they negligible. The 1802 figure stands out, probably due to the Treaty of Amiens which reopened the normal trade routes for a short period.

In 1816, while the Spanish Main was in open revolt against the Spanish Crown, in the *Siempre Fiel Isla de Cuba* (more or less, Always Faithful Island of Cuba) Arango y Parreño returned to the subject, by calling for the elimination of the tax on rum production to stimulate the growth of the local industry. It is not easy for me to unravel the complexity of the Spanish tax law of the time, but I understand that the Real cedula of 1796 abolished custom duties on rum export, while the production tax was still enforced, which indeed later became even more burdensome. Here is an excerpt of the document:

“The *aguardiente*, Sir, which in the Antilles is called cane and in the foreign ones is known as ron or tafia, is part of the product of a sugar mill, like sugar, yet it is more worthy of Government protection as it requires more labor, it is not consumed in the nation and in foreign markets it is faced with many obstacles and powerful rivals ... The fact is that the molasses from which the *aguardiente* in question is produced, departs from Cuba in enormous quantities for the United States where, with an enormous advantage for the industry of that country, it is converted into rum. We impose very low custom duties on molasses and we see with indifference that the Anglo-Americans, these skilled defenders of their industries and interests, prevent the introduction of foreign rum or *aguardiente* through a massive custom duty fee, from five to ten *duros* per barrel according to its quality and strength. How much better it would have been if the Cuban Board of Treasury, instead of waging war on Cuban distillers with the well-known taxation of the four *reales*, had instead declared war on Anglo-American distillers by rationally using their own weapons! How more useful, reasonable and fair it would have

been to severely burden molasses to make *aguardiente* that we export to the United States, thus favoring a foreign industry, rather than oppressing our emerging one. The Council said that this operation must be done judiciously and gradually, because it knows that in our situation it is not possible to immediately convert all the molasses produced on the Island of Cuba into *aguardiente*. While there is no certainty of achieving this goal, it is a good thing and not a small one, to retain and attract buyers for molasses, in the same way that it is right to sell the Spanish wools at a fair price in foreign Countries, while we are not sure we can process them in our factories. Yet, just as there is no doubt that prudence and caution must be exercised in this, it is even more evident that the Cuban Board of Treasury must direct its steps only on this path.”

The tax was abolished with the Decree of the Council of the Indies on June 22nd, 1816.

With the abolition of the production tax and, two years later, the liberalization of trade, the legal constraints slowing the growth of Cuban rum disappeared. However, for Cuban rum to develop its full potential, two things were still missing: new technology and abundant labor. Both would be coming soon.

Marco Pierini

### Post Scriptum

The topic of rum names, in Cuba, is complex and we will come back to this subject. For now, it is interesting to note that, as far as I know, for the first time in 1796 in official Spanish documents, the English word rum appears and our distillate is no longer called *aguardiente de caña*, but *aguardiente rum*. Twenty years later, Arango y Parreño calls it *aguardiente*, but also *ron*, as if they were two synonyms.





**THE** Rum  
UNIVERSITY

Presents

**The Sugar Mill:  
Origins and Evolution**



## Introduction

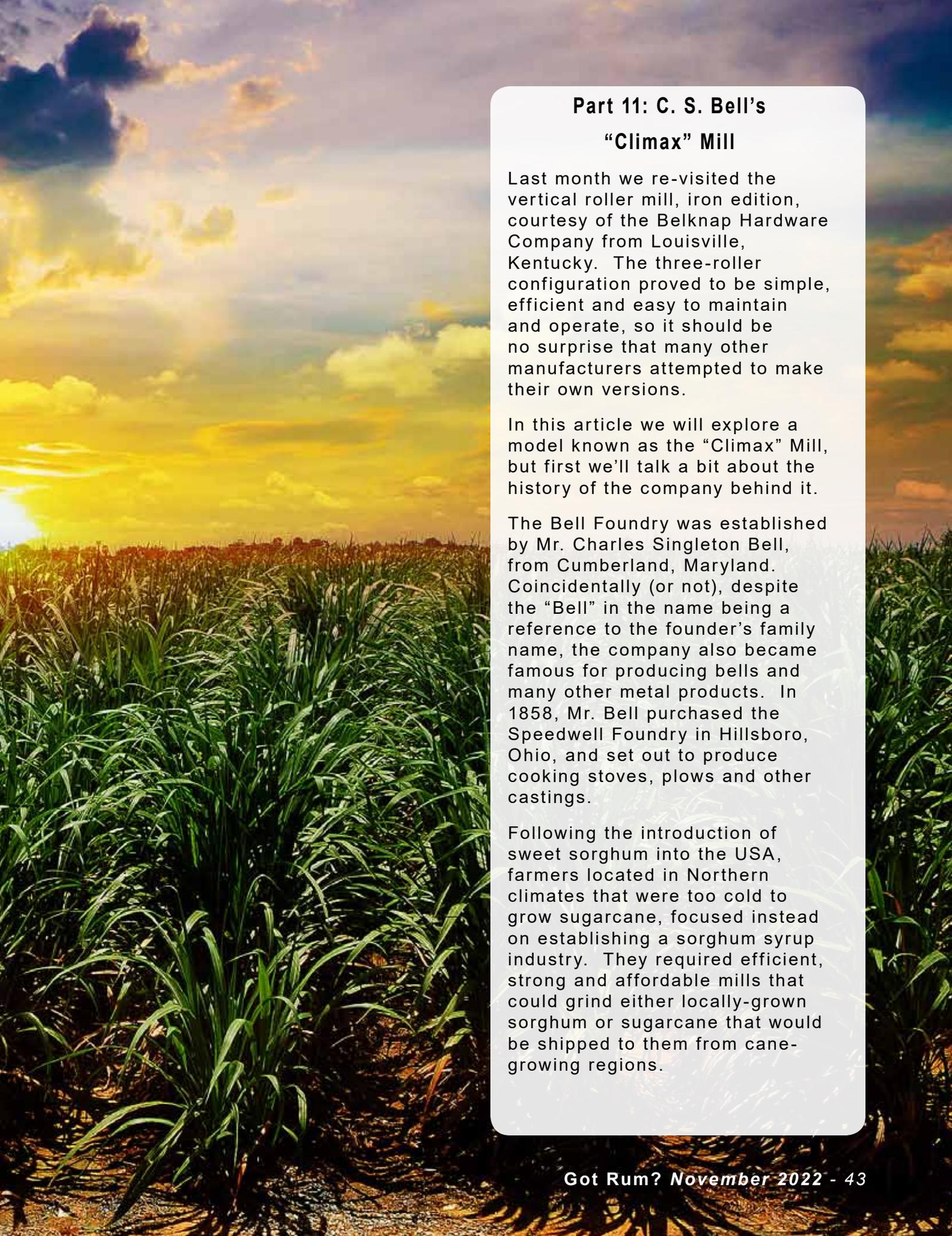
Sugarcane (*Saccharum officinarum*) is a perennial grass of the family *Poaceae*. It is primarily cultivated for its juice, from which alcohol (through fermentation and distillation) and sugar (through dehydration and refining) can be obtained. Most of the world's sugarcane is grown in subtropical and tropical areas.

It is commonly accepted today that sugarcane originated in Papua, New Guinea, where it was initially domesticated. The plant was then taken to other lands by traders, where its sweet virtues quickly made it a sought-after commodity.

It is also commonly accepted that around 10,000 years ago, the original inhabitants of Papua did not have tools to process the cane, meaning that they likely chewed it raw to extract the juice, which was consumed as-is (Noël Deerr, *The History of Sugar: Volume One*).

Not much written history exists that documents the early extraction of the juice for the purpose of dehydration and formation of sugar crystals until the publication of *De Materia Medica*, a pharmacopoeia of medicinal plants and the medicines that can be obtained from them, which was written between the years 50 and 70 of the current era by Pedanius Dioscorides, a Greek physician in the Roman army. This is the oldest record documenting the existence of crystalized sugar, which was used at the time to “treat indigestion and stomach ailments.”

How did people manage to extract the dissolved sugar from the juice? The answers to this question are at the core of this series. So join us, as we explore this fascinating topic!



## Part 11: C. S. Bell's

### "Climax" Mill

Last month we re-visited the vertical roller mill, iron edition, courtesy of the Belknap Hardware Company from Louisville, Kentucky. The three-roller configuration proved to be simple, efficient and easy to maintain and operate, so it should be no surprise that many other manufacturers attempted to make their own versions.

In this article we will explore a model known as the "Climax" Mill, but first we'll talk a bit about the history of the company behind it.

The Bell Foundry was established by Mr. Charles Singleton Bell, from Cumberland, Maryland. Coincidentally (or not), despite the "Bell" in the name being a reference to the founder's family name, the company also became famous for producing bells and many other metal products. In 1858, Mr. Bell purchased the Speedwell Foundry in Hillsboro, Ohio, and set out to produce cooking stoves, plows and other castings.

Following the introduction of sweet sorghum into the USA, farmers located in Northern climates that were too cold to grow sugarcane, focused instead on establishing a sorghum syrup industry. They required efficient, strong and affordable mills that could grind either locally-grown sorghum or sugarcane that would be shipped to them from cane-growing regions.



## THE WISCONSIN FARMER.

J. W. HOYT, : : : : : EDITOR.

Vol. XV.

MADISON, JANUARY 1, 1863.

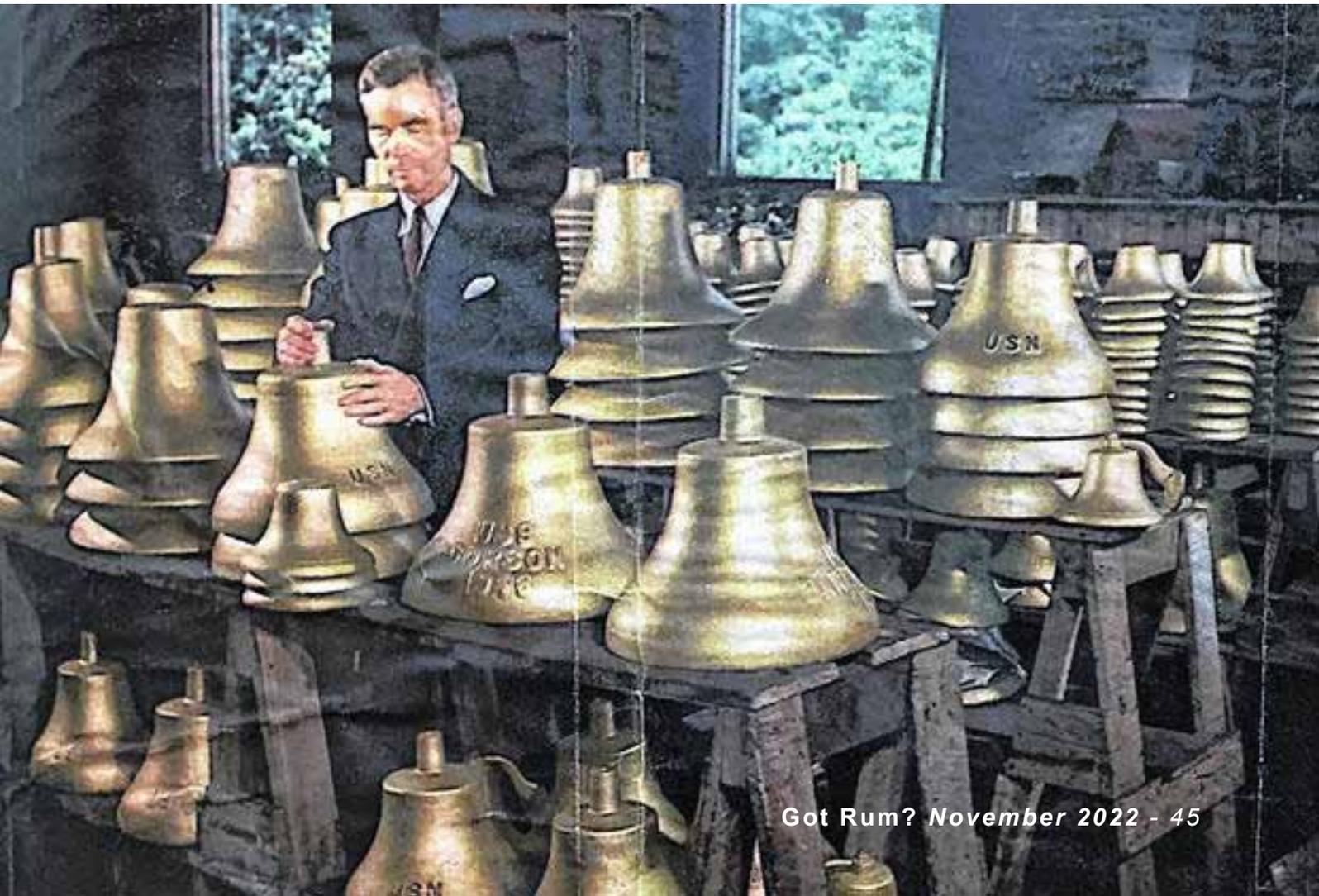
No. 1.

We are acquainted with a number of persons who, during the past year, have operated the Climax Mill, and they concur in the opinion that an active man, who has some knowledge of the business,—and any intelligent man will “get the hang of it” in a very few days—can make it profitable to purchase a mill on his own account, and work up the sugar cane of his neighborhood, on shares. Some have declared it practicable to make more money in this way, than with the best threshing machine in the country.

The Climax Mill was available in five models/sizes, ranging from Model #0 to #4, based on the desired output of cane juice per hour.

According to the manufacturer, models #0 and #1 could be operated by one horse and were capable of producing 40 and 60 gallons of cane juice per hour, respectively. Models #2, #3 and #4 all required two horses and could produce 80, 100 and 120 gallons of cane juice per hour. The prices of the mills at the time were (USD): \$30, \$40, \$60, \$80 and \$100. Shown on the opposite page is Model #2.

On the left is a testimonial published by *The Wisconsin Farmer*, on January of 1863, promoting the virtues of this mill. Below is a photo of Mr. Ignatius Lee, a local Presbyterian minister, blessing the bells produced by C.S. Bell for the Navy during World War II.





## Sugar Mill Spotlight

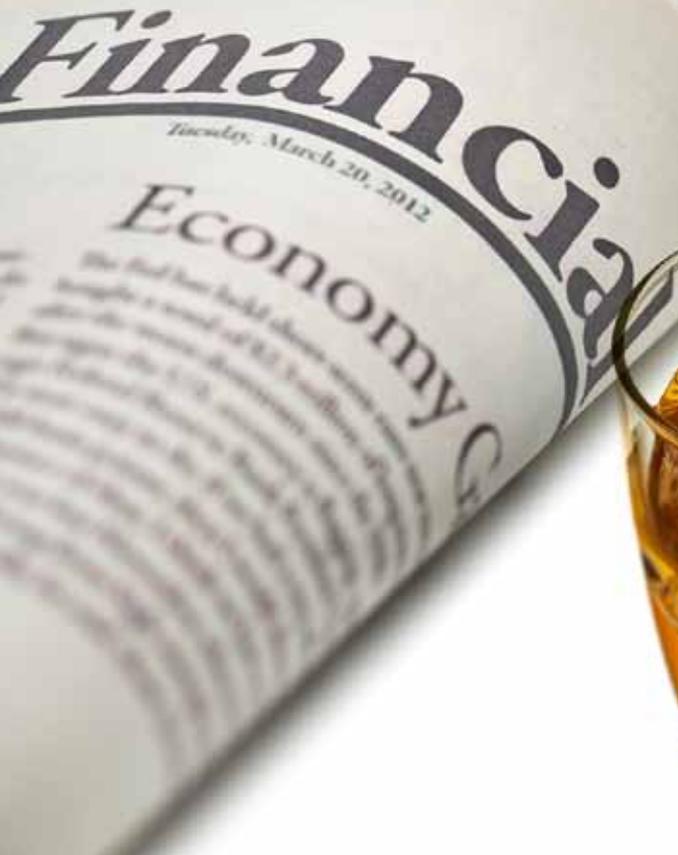
The sugar mill, once part of the Cruger-dePeyster Plantation, was built in the early 19th century. This 17-acre historic site contains the ruins of the Coquina Sugar Factory that was raided during a war between the Seminole Indians and the United States. It is located in New Smyrna Beach, Volusia County, Florida.

Join us again next month, as we continue to explore this fascinating topic!



# 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).

## MONTANYA DISTILLERS

Montanya Distillers officially fired up a substantial expansion of its rum distillery in Crested Butte, Colorado. The new and more sustainable distillery increases capacity up to 10 times its past production threshold. During the expansion process, Montanya founder and owner Karen Hoskin realized when spirits companies talk about sustainability, the implication is that an established way of doing things is worth sustaining. For women, people of color, and environmentalists, there isn't much history worth celebrating or sustaining in the alcohol beverage industry. When Montanya set out to change prevailing systems, they looked beyond sustainability and found vitality. Their leadership calls this "vitalism," which takes their team a significant step beyond sustainability. It describes their approach to changing the culture of the spirits industry and improving an environment that was problematic for many years. Montanya's newly-launched distillery expansion (August 2022) radically rethought systems in all operations. A new tasting room (January 2022) evolved its business model and employment practices in Crested Butte, a seasonal ski town. According to Hoskin, "Montanya stabilized staff turnover and employee scarcity and implemented many improved daily practices: from how we source glass to how we

biodigest waste, from how we pay our employees to how we chill fermentations, from how we capture and recirculate water to how we print our labels and recycle plastic film. We believe our approach is the future of the spirits industry.” <https://www.montanyarum.com/>

### **HAVANA CLUB**

Havana Club Don Navarro has been created in tribute to the late José Pablo Navarro Campa, who received the title of 'primer maestro del ron Cubano' (first master of Cuban rum) in 2000. Under the leadership of Havana Club's Primer Maestro Juan Carlos González, Maestros and Aspirantes from all over the island gathered at the Havana Club distillery to honor Don Navarro's contribution to the Cuban rum tradition. Don Navarro devoted 50 years of his life to his passion for rum making, constantly learning, innovating and pushing boundaries, most significantly exemplified through his creation of Havana Club 7. Created from an assemblage of aged rums from Havana Club's exclusive reserves, Havana Club Don Navarro contains some of the Centenario base which was created by Don Navarro himself more than four decades ago and gave birth to what is known today as extra aged rums. Anne Martin, Global Marketing Director for Havana Club, says: "It's an honor to pay tribute to the father of Cuban rum as only we know how and enjoy it today with an extraordinary offering from the Havana Club cellars. When we welcomed all the Maestros to our San José Distillery, we remembered Don Navarro who used to say that 'Rum is not born from a magical combination. It is a cultural heritage that is transmitted from Maestro to Maestro, from heart to heart, from Cuban to Cuban.'" <https://havana-club.com/>

### **MOUNT GAY**

Four new rums of note from Mount Gay:  
Mount Gay Pot Still Master Blender Rum Collection - This year's limited edition, crafted by Master Blender Trudiann Branker, uses only rums distilled in Mount Gay's double retort pot stills. It celebrates the way Mount Gay originally made rum for about 200 years, from the distillery's inception in 1703 until the early 1900s when a full copper Coffey column was introduced. It is bottled at 48% ABV. Trudiann Branker says "Mount Gay Pot Still Rum is paying homage to an original tradition."  
Mount Gay Andean Oak Cask Master Blender Rum Collection - For the fourth edition of the Master Blender Collection, Branker turned to Andean oak, a nontraditional wood choice, to explore another layer of aromatic complexity. The casks were used for 11 months to finish the ageing of a single batch of rums distilled twice in traditional copper pot still and aged 14 years in ex-Bourbon casks. It is non-chill filtered and bottled at 48% ABV. "This release is a journey further into innovation for Mount Gay, a chance for me to be creative" says Branker.  
Mount Gay The Port Cask Expression Master Blender Rum Collection - For this year's small-batch release, Branker used a blend of rums distilled in a traditional

column still aged for 5 years in Tawny Port casks, together with rums double distilled in a copper pot still aged for 14 years in American whiskey casks and finished in Tawny Port casks for 1 year. The Port Cask Expression is non-chill filtered in order to preserve its rich aromas and precious natural color and is bottled at 55% ABV. Branker comments "Distilled in both traditional column and copper pot stills, and aged in American whiskey and Tawny Port Casks, this is a rich, multi-faceted rum"

Mount Gay Madeira Cask Expression Master Blender Rum Collection - For this year's release, Branker looked to Madeira, the beautiful Portuguese island off the coast of Morocco, that has made an iconic fortified wine for more than 300 years. Using only column distilled rums, she placed the liquid in seasoned Madeira wine casks six years ago, carefully observing how the rum aged over time. The result is a velvety and generous blend that unfolds with every sip. The liquid has deep golden hues and the nose showcases pear, oak, grapefruit, vanilla, and butterscotch. On the palate, the bold column distilled rum is married with the subtlety of Madeira wine notes from the barrel, including honey, grapes, pear, citrus rind and dried fruit. The Master Blender Collection: The Madeira Cask Expression is bottled at 55% ABV and is non chill filtered. "Mount Gay Madeira Cask Expression is a velvety and generous blend that unfolds with every sip." Branker says. <https://www.mountgayrum.com/>

### **ROYAL CANE CASK COMPANY**

Sipping rums have never been more popular or more sought-after by collectors around the world, and The Royal Cane Cask Company has not just been at the forefront of that explosion, it's been one of the drivers. This is a team of primed palates and savvy scouts who scour the globe in search of ultra-rare, old, and sometimes forgotten casks. As they journey from Jamaica to Japan, from Australia to Venezuela, from South America to the U.S., they operate with a clear directive: that each rum the company releases is limited to but a single cask. Total Wine, through their Concierge Service, is now offering a trio of Royal Cane's finest, recent discoveries: a Foursquare 20 Year from 2002; a Clarendon 23 Year from 1999; and a Trinidad 22 Year from 2000. The first is a single cask Barbados rum from Foursquare Rum Distillery. This is one of the very few pot still rums that's this old. After distillation, it was filled into an American white oak cask at the distillery, then shipped to the UK for further maturation in the historic old docks of Liverpool. This is a 20-year-aged, molasses-based rum bottled at 102 proof. Next is the Clarendon, a 102-proof, pot still Jamaican rum, aged in an American white oak cask for 19 years (19 tropical years, which are akin to 38 years of non-tropical aging). In 2018, it, too, traveled to Liverpool for an additional 4 years of maturation. Last is the 22-year-old rum from Trinidad Distillers Limited, renowned for their rich and flavorful column distillates. This is a molasses-based rum, 110 proof, that spent 15 years in American white oak at TDL before making the trip to Liverpool, where it aged an additional 7 years. <https://www.royalcane.com/>, <https://conciierge.totalwine.com/>

## HOLMES CAY

Holmes Cay has released two of the rarest single cask rum selections they have ever come across, the Fiji 2001 and the Barbados 2002 Pot Still editions for your holiday wish lists. They are true single casks, and only 192 bottles from one barrel of each Holmes Cay "Rarest" will be available. Holmes Cay wanted to give you the official word that they will be making their way to the states where we are distributed throughout November. To the best of their knowledge, The Fiji 2001 - 21 Year is the oldest Fiji rum ever released. It is an all molasses, 100% pot still rum, produced at South Pacific Distilleries, Fiji's only rum distillery. Tropically aged for 2 years in an ex-bourbon cask, it then spent an additional 19 years in an ex-bourbon cask in the UK. It was then bottled in New York State at full barrel proof, or 53.8% alcohol by volume. The Barbados 2002 Pot Still edition is one of the rarest bottlings of distillate from Foursquare Rum Distillery, a 20 year-old single cask, 100% pure pot still mark. Distilled in Barbados and shipped unaged to the UK and casked in American oak ex-bourbon, it then spent 20 years aging in the UK. This edition is bottled at full barrel proof, or 51.1% alcohol by volume. The Barbados 2002 Pot Still edition is one of the rarest bottlings of distillate from Foursquare Rum Distillery, a 20 year-old single cask, 100% pure pot still mark. Distilled in Barbados and shipped unaged to the UK and casked in American oak ex-bourbon, it then spent 20 years aging in the UK. This edition is bottled at full barrel proof, or 51.1% alcohol by volume. Holmes Cay will be pouring and talking rum at several great events over the next few weeks.

On Saturday, November 5th, they will be hosting a rum tasting master class at the Caribbean Rum Awards in beautiful St. Barts. Then on Tuesday, November 8th, they will be at Esotico in Miami for a special Holmes Cay Rum Dinner and the unveiling of the new Holmes Cay Heritage Blend Esotico Edition. On Wednesday November 9th, they will be hosting a special Happy Hour at Roasted Spirit in Clermont, FL. <https://www.holmescay.com/>

## DON PAPA

Don Papa Rum, a rum from the Philippine island of Negros Occidental, has announced its newest expression: Don Papa Rye Aged Rum. This new bottling is distilled from local molasses on Negros and aged for four years in first-fill American rye casks. "Imagine a green, lush rye field on a beautiful Tennessee spring day merging with a warm tropical shower blowing in from the Philippine sea," says Stephen Carroll, founder of Don Papa Rum. "This is the backdrop for Don Papa Rye Aged Rum, combining the intense granular spice notes of American Rye barrels and our very own black gold molasses rum, resulting in a beautifully balanced, silky smooth and complex new rum." Borrowing from a tradition of high proof American whiskeys, the Rye Aged Rum is bottled at a bold 45% ABV. This unapologetic profile makes it as perfect in a Sazerac as it is on the rocks. <https://www.donpapurum.com/>

## DIPLOMATICO

Brown-Forman Corporation has announced that it has reached an agreement to purchase the Diplomático Rum

brand and related assets from Destillers United Group S.L. (Spain). Upon completion of the transaction, Brown-Forman will add the Diplomático Rum family of brands to its portfolio and acquire a production facility located in Panama. The Diplomático Rum family of brands is the No. 1 super- and ultra-premium rum and the No. 2 super-premium+ rum worldwide (IWSR, 2021). Super-premium+ rum has grown at an annual rate of 17% over the past five years, with rum accounting for approximately 8% of global spirits. "Diplomático Rum will join our expanding portfolio, giving Brown-Forman a market leading entry into the fast-growing super-premium rum category. This aged rum brand has distinctive packaging, strong brand positioning, and is a delicious tasting spirit," said Lawson Whiting, President and CEO, Brown-Forman Corporation. "As part of this acquisition, we will welcome more than 100 new employees to Brown-Forman." Destillers United Group S.L. will continue to produce and age the unique, carefully-crafted, and complex Diplomático Rum in their original distillery at the foot of the Andes mountains. "We are proud to have pioneered and been instrumental in developing the super-premium+ rum category around the world. Diplomático Rum is ready to accelerate its growth with Brown-Forman, one of the world's most well-known spirits and wines companies," stated Destillers United Group S.L., current owner of the Diplomático Rum brand. "We share a similar familial culture and know the brand will continue building on our legacy. We look forward to working together to bring Diplomático Rum to consumers around the world." Diplomático Rum consists of three ranges of complex rums. The Traditional Range includes Planas, Mantuano, Reserva Exclusiva, and Selección de Familia. The Prestige Range includes Single Vintage and Diplomático Ambassador, both aged 12 years and finished in Spanish sherry casks. The Distillery Collection includes a range of three limited production bottlings that showcase the distillery's unique distillation methods. [www.rondiplomatico.com](http://www.rondiplomatico.com), <https://www.brown-forman.com/>

## GOSLINGS

Goslings has partnered with Bermuda artists Nhuri Bashir and Domico Watson to create a limited edition Black Seal Rum bottle. "Their mixed media approach combined photography of paint on canvas and icons pulled directly from vintage Goslings ads and bottle labels to create a colorful and one-of-a-kind collage." The artists said, "The design is largely inspired by street art and pop art. Much like the Goslings Black Seal Rum brand, we wanted to bring together old and new and fuse them with a bold yet striking balance." The Goslings spokesperson said, "We wanted to pair the work of art inside our bottle with a work of art on the bottle." <https://www.goslingsrum.com/>

## BOTRAN RUM

Botran Rum, the top selling aged rum in Guatemala, has reentered the U.S. market after a three-year hiatus revealing a fresh look and touting new certifications. Enrobed in striking new packaging with iconography inspired by Guatemala's many natural resources,

Botran's revamped look is a complete departure from the brand's earlier, more traditional appearance. "The brand refresh is meant to invite consumers to experience the colorful, joyful and vibrant side of Guatemala while better communicating Botran's position as one of the top premium rums across the world" explained Ivan Valdez, Senior Global Brand Manager for Licores de Guatemala, the parent company of Botran Rum. "Our new vision is to fill every glass with the bright and vibrant spirit of Guatemalan rum." Botran Rum is a single estate rum that is produced from two varieties of cane harvested between November and April in the fields of Retalhuleu located on the Pacific south coast of the country. Once harvested, the estate uses the first press of sugarcane, also known as 'virgin sugar cane honey,' for a slow, discontinuous fermentation with pineapple yeast that lasts between 100 – 120 hours before it is expertly distilled in copper sectioned stills at the San Andrés Villaseca Distillery. Once complete, the distillate makes the journey to 2300 meters above sea level to Casa Botran in the Quetzaltenango Highlands where the rums slowly age at an average temperature of 14°C. The high-altitude maturation is complemented by Botran's proprietary Dynamic Ageing System, which was adapted by the Botran brothers from the solera system. Rather than a traditional solera pyramid, Botran stacks their vintages in columns. Each column features different types of casks to keep the process dynamic and amplify the flavors. As the rums are blended, the casks are repositioned, and the process is repeated. Over time, Botran's younger rums take on the bold flavors and distinct personalities of the more mature rums in the column. The rums are blended and looked after by Botran's three Master Blenders: Magda López, Master Blender and Ageing Facility Manager; Yazmín Chapeton, Master Blender and Head of Manufacturing & Blends and Leslie Taracena, Master Blender and Blend Researcher & Coordinator. <https://botranrum.com/>

## RUM ADVENT CALENDARS

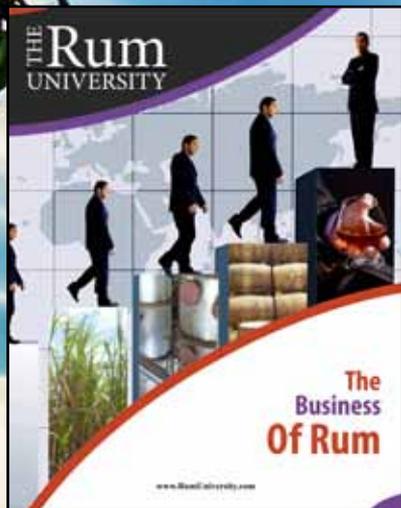
I always thought the Rum Advent Calendars would make the perfect Holiday gift for that rum enthusiast on your list. Unfortunately, few make it to the United States. For our lucky friends overseas, here are a few choices:

The Spirit Company and Masters of Malt offers the Drinks by the Dram Rum Advent Calendar with 24 different, handmade 30mL wax-sealed drams, including Angostura Rum "1919", Flor de Caña 18, Mauritius 9 Year Old 2010, Berry Bros and Rudd, Plantation XO Barbados 20th Anniversary, Don Q Añejo, Discarded Banana Peel Rum, Santiago de Cuba 11 Years Old, Diplomático Mantuano, Diplomático Selección De Familia, Gosling's Black Seal, Copall, White Rum, Matusalem 15 Gran Reserva, Diabliesse Clementine Spiced Rum, MarlinSpike Rum, Don Papa Small Batch Rum, Takamaka Grankaz, Ron Zacapa Centenario Sistema Solera 23, Ron Pampero Aniversario, Wing Walker Rum, Brugal 1888 Ron Gran Reserva Familiar,

Equiano Rum, Worthy Park Single Estate Reserve, 8Track Spiced Rum, and Black Tot Rum. I am told that The Whiskey Shop can ship to the US. <https://thespiritco.com/> <https://www.masterofmalt.com/>, <https://www.whiskyshop.com/advent-calendars> The Whisky Exchange offers the 24 Days of Rum Advent Calendar 2022 Edition With 24 rums from 24 countries, two glasses and full tasting notes. Website did not disclose the rums included. <https://www.thewhiskyexchange.com/> For something different, look at La Route Des Rhums's Rhum Advent Calendar featuring 24 agricole rums from Martinique, Guadeloupe and Marie Galante. Rhum brands include Trois Rivieres, Papa Rouyo, Clement, Saint James. La Favorite, Rhum Bielle, Longueteau, Montbelloe, Distillerie Severin, Rhum JM, Rhum Bologne, Reimonenq, Rhum J, Bally, Rhum HBS, La Mauny, Rhum Chantas Comte, Heritiers Madkaud, Papillon, Damoiseau, La Confaerie du Rhum, Opportune and Bais Des Tresors. Samples are 20mL. For lovers of sweet and fruity rums, they also offer L'arrange Des Alchimistes, the Advent Calendar of Arrange Rums. Arranged rum is a rum preparation in which various ingredients such as leaves, fruits, seeds, barks or sweets have been macerated in rum. Indeed, every day until Christmas, you can taste a different fruit rum. Samples are 40mL, except December 24th, which id 100mL. Lastly, they offer a boxed collection called Rums of the World Box #2, featuring rums from Mauritius, Belize, Jamaica, Barbados and Fiji. [www.laroutedesrhums.com](http://www.laroutedesrhums.com) The Rum Company offers Rum Advent Calendar of 24 British rums, including Salford Dark Spiced Rum, Grumblebee Honey Spiced Rum, Norfolk Rum, Chocolate Orange Liqueur, Mainbrace Navy Strength Rum, Beckford's White Pearl Coconut Rum, Eighty-Six Friends Honey Spiced Rum, Pirates' Grog Smokey Ginger Spiced Rum, Barti Spiced Rum, Old Sun Rum, Lytham Toffee Apple Rum, Wooly's Coffee Rum Liqueur, Two Drifters Signature Rum, Beckford's 'Folly' Caramel Rum and Hygge Spiced Rum, All samples are 50mL. <https://www.therum.company/> USA TODAY 10 BEST Craft RUM DISTILLERIES USA Today's 10Best Readers' Choice Awards highlight the best of the best in contests covering categories such as destinations, food and drink, hotels, and things to do. Nominees in all categories are chosen editorially by a panel of experts. Readers can vote once per category, per day. This year's Top 10 Craft Rum Distilleries were:  
No. 10: Smoky Quartz Distillery - Seabrook, New Hampshire; No. 9: Regalo de Vida - Elgin, Arizona; No. 8: Echo Spirits Distilling Co. - Columbus, Ohio; No. 7: Cardinal Spirits - Bloomington, Indiana; No. 6: KoHana Distillers - Kunia Camp, Hawaii; No. 5: Wicked Dolphin - Cape Coral, Florida; No. 4: Koloa Rum Company - Lihue, Hawaii; No. 3: Muddy River Distillery - Belmont, North Carolina; No. 2: Plank Road Distillery - Plymouth, Wisconsin; and No. 1: Lyon Rum - St. Michaels, Maryland. <https://www.10best.com/>



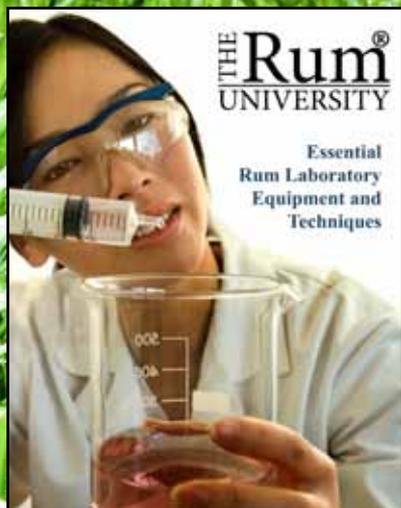
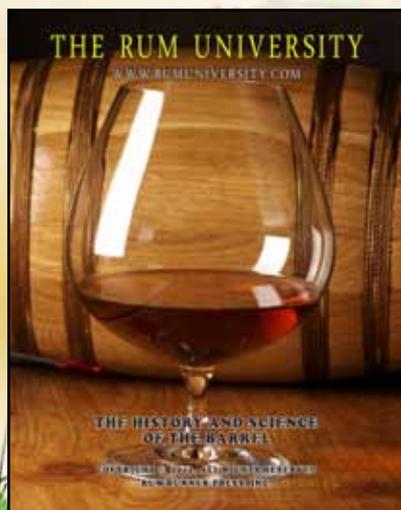
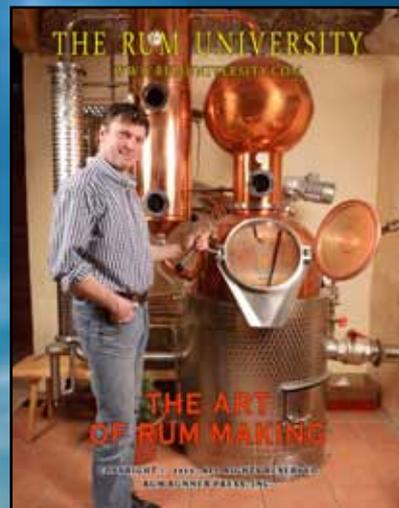
**Next 3-Day Rum Course: September 6-8 2023**



The Rum University is proud to announce the date for its next **3-Day Rum Course**, which will be offered at Moonshine University's state of the art facility in Louisville, KY.

This course is designed for both existing and future rum distillers and brand owners, the 3-day workshop combines theory and practice to provide attendees with a practical, hands-on education on all things rum. From the financial, marketing, and regulatory considerations to the distillation, aging, and blending processes, every student will leave this course with a nuanced understanding of rum production, the spirits business, and how rum fits into the global, economic landscape.

Of course, you won't miss out on any of the fun stuff: you'll get to explore the science of rum production while getting your



Did you miss out on the last course?  
Don't let it happen again!

Visit [gotrum.com](http://gotrum.com) and sign up to receive notifications for future Rum University Courses.

 **SIGN UP NOW**





hands dirty distilling at our on-campus facilities. We'll also explore the history, category styles, and production methods for rum, as well as its mash bills, fermenting, distilling, and finishing processes. With rum tastings and sensory training sessions set up throughout the course, you'll discover a variety of rum expressions and styles, and get a feel for the versatility of this delightful spirit.

Whether you're a seasoned rum distiller or newbie to the business, this class is for anyone who has or is planning to open and/or operate a distillery; production team members (blenders); and anyone else interested in refining their knowledge of rum production.

This class is co-taught by Luis and Margaret Ayala, Co-Founders of **The Rum University** and **Got Rum? Magazine**.



## 6-Day Distiller Course, 2023 Schedule

The Rum University is responsible for in-person teaching of the **Rum Curriculum** of the **6-Day Distiller Course** offered by Moonshine University at their state of the art facility in Louisville, KY.

The **6-Day Distiller Course** is designed not only to give the most comprehensive technical training and business management education in the industry, but also to offer participants social and networking opportunities with other participants, suppliers, industry professionals and world-renowned master distillers.

The Rum section of the 6-Day Distiller Course covers the following topics:

- Rum definition (technical, legal, chemical)
- Alcohol congeners, quantifications and differentiations
- Sugarcane origin, cultivation, harvest and processing
- Business and economic aspects of the rum industry
- Organoleptic assessments of rum via tasting exercises
- Overview of fermentation, distillation, aging and blending
- Hands-on distillation equipment experience
- Q&A

To register or to check for availability, please visit their website at [www.moonshineuniversity.com](http://www.moonshineuniversity.com). These are the 2023 dates:

- March 26-31, 2023
- May 21-26, 2023
- July 23-28, 2023
- October 22-27, 2023

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# EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

by Margaret Ayala



Mr. Olli Hietalahti, Founder and CEO of One Eyed Spirits. Helsinki, Finland.

I am very happy to share this interview with all our readers. Luis and I had the pleasure of meeting Olli and his partner Jouko Laune many years ago. We were impressed by their professionalism and perseverance. True passion allows us to overcome obstacles and, as you are about to read, the challenges faced in the alcohol beverage industry can be catastrophic. Nevertheless, truly devoted teams always succeed, come hell or high water. Cheers!

Margaret Ayala, Publisher



**Q: Please state your name, title and location.**

My name is Olli Hietalahti and I am founder and CEO of One Eyed Spirits. I'm based in Helsinki, Finland.

**Q: We last interviewed you in our February 2013 issue. It is hard to believe that almost a decade has passed since! Back then you were behind the Ron de Jeremy (RdJ) brand, but I understand that Ron Jeremy is facing some serious legal charges and that the brand no longer exists. Can you elaborate?**

Yes. Certainly a few things have happened since. That feels like a lifetime ago!

We started the whole Ron de Jeremy brand back in 2010 based on a joke: "Ron" is the



**“NOTHING IS  
PERMANENT  
BUT CHANGE.”**

*-Heraclitus*



Spanish word for rum and porn star Ron Jeremy was one of the most famous “Rons” in the world. For us Ron de Jeremy Rum was never about sex or porn but humor. The rum itself was serious but everything else was tongue in cheek, to say the least.

But in June 2020 Ron Jeremy was arrested, facing serious charges of sexual crimes. He has been in jail waiting for the trial ever since. We had a good run for ten years but now the joke was obviously dead. Continuing the brand was not a morally feasible option for us so we ended our agreement with Ron Jeremy and discontinued the brand.

**Q: I'd like to take a moment to explore celebrity-backed (or celebrity-focused) brands. Certainly, the benefits of**

**having a celebrity associated with a brand are very attractive, but there is also a dark side -and a big risk-, when the celebrity attracts the wrong kind of attention. In retrospect, was the concept of the RdJ brand too risky or was the fact that it was risky from the beginning what made it worth doing?**

Ha, what a great question! Celebrity branding is attractive as you instantly generate interest and awareness, you don't have to start from zero. The amount of awareness naturally depends on how much reach that particular celebrity has. We generated massive amounts of free publicity when the Ron de Jeremy brand first came out. There were hundreds and hundreds of articles, blogs, radio, tv, you name it. So, the celebrity can speed up the



go to market considerably. Looking at the celebrity branding in spirits over the past decade, you tend to see a pattern. Those brands have a shot where the celebrity is hands on and very active in promoting (for example, Ryan Gosling and Aviation Gin) but the brands where the celebrity just lends his or her name tend to wither away. The good thing about Ron Jeremy was that especially during our early years, he was very eager to promote. We toured with him all over the USA, Australia and Europe.

As the question hints, part of the brand strength was in the controversy. Ron de Jeremy Rum always created a reaction. Most often it was a smile. It was kind of “yeah, I know what you mean” reaction. Every now and then it was disgust. I loved that. If your brand is able to create such a strong emotion as hate, then there is the counter emotion, love.

In a way the brand was a bit too risky. Many gate keepers such as buyers in large chains were too conservative to take it. They might tell us face to face that “you know personally, I think this is fantastic, but you know I just can’t take it.” But what materialized later and why Ron Jeremy was arrested, that was something we did not see coming. Back in 2010 he was very well liked. He was great with people, he’d chat with anyone, never refused an autograph, always had a harmonica in pocket and he’d play songs for people and so on. He was very down to earth which really was the secret to his popularity. I think he did change over the years though and we did not actively use in the promotions during the last five years or so. I would politely say that he did not age gracefully. That is something we obviously had zero control on, but you could be right perhaps we should have been able to calculate that risk.



**Q: Let's talk now about Hell or High Water Rum. What is the story behind this brand?**

I love a quote from Margaret Atwood: "If everything is all right all the time, there is no story."

For us things certainly have not been perfect all the time. So we do have a story. It tells about hardships and trouble. Obstacles. Fire. Near death. Death. Almost going bankrupt a dozen times, mistakes, back-stabbing. Finally, there is jail.

When Ron Jeremy was arrested we were faced with three options: we could continue with the brand but of course we did not want to do that, we could quit the rum business and go back to our former lives or we could create something new.

We simply refused to quit. We are entrepreneurs and love the rum world.

So, we decided to fight and create a new brand; whose heart and soul reflect our journey from one hardship to another. You fall 7 times, get up 8.

The rum is called Hell or High Water.

For those not familiar with the expression, "come hell or high water", it means you are willing to do whatever it takes to overcome difficulties or obstacles. You never give up. Hell or High Water certainly sums up our journey but we think the story of winning through hardships is universal and touches everyone. We all face hardships and setbacks. We all understand the feeling. We like to say that "A Rough Journey makes a Smooth Rum".

**Q: I understand Finns have an expression related to learning as you go along. It is "Työ tekijäänsä neuvoo," correct? How important is this attitude or philosophy for a new brand?**



How on earth did you know that?

I think that attitude is important to any entrepreneur. You can plan as much as you like but life has a habit of throwing curve balls at you. You then need to adapt, change the course of action and hopefully learn along the way.

We have often been asked, "if you knew everything you now know, would you have started the rum brand". The answer is obviously no! Luckily one cannot know everything that is going to happen. You learn as you go. On the other hand, we would have missed quite a journey if we had known everything. It certainly has not been boring!

I'd advise to ask a lot of stupid questions and surround yourself with smarter people than you. We've tried to do that.

**Q: Are the Hell or High Water Rums re-packaged versions of RdJ or are they new and unique formulations?**

Basically yes. We have done very minor tweaks to one blend, but that was due to the availability and not branding. Our XO was quite sweet and we dropped the sugar level below the new EU requirement but that happened already during the last year of Ron de Jeremy.

We just came out with a new blend in October called Reserva Honey & Orange. It's a wonderful twist on our Reserva blend. We've offered tastings at the Vienna Rum Fest and Bar Convent Berlin and the feedback has been phenomenal. People really enjoy it.

**Q: What rums are currently in your portfolio?**

- **Hell or High Water XO** is by far our bestselling product. It is a beautiful sipping rum in an eye-catching black package that takes the brand's signature smoothness to another level. The blend includes hand-selected pot and column still rums from Barbados, Trinidad, Jamaica and Guyana aged up to 15 years in American oak barrels previously used for bourbon.

- The exceptionally well-balanced and smooth **Hell or High Water Reserva** is a proprietary blend of super premium rums from Barbados, Trinidad and Dominican Republic. The blend includes hand-selected pot and column still rums aged up to 8 years in American oak barrels previously used for bourbon. Reserva is a nice sipping rum and also works exceptionally well in cocktails.
- **Hell or High Water Spiced** is created using the rums from Barbados, Dominican Republic and Guyana. This balanced, column-distilled blend creates a perfect base for our exotic spices to shine through. Hell or High Water Spiced is artfully blended with vanilla, cinnamon, cardamom, anis seed and coriander. It is dark and flavourful while delivering the signature long, smooth finish.
- The new **Hell or High Water Reserva Honey & Orange** offers a delicious twist on our classic aged Reserva rum adding delightful extra layers of sweet honey and refreshing orange to the underlying notes of charred oak, toasted nuts and fresh sugarcane. The finish goes on, forever. It is perfect neat, on the rocks or in a classic cocktail.

**Q: How receptive and/or supportive have the RdJ consumers/fans been towards the new branding? How about the trade (importers/distributors, retailers)?**

I'd say 99 % of the Ron de Jeremy consumers understood why we could not continue with brand and supported the change. There were few vocal individuals who blamed us on abandoning Ron during his troubles. But overall people supported us.

We have very good relationships with our importers and they all understood why we had to change, supported it and immediately understood the new brand. All in all, the brand change has been surprisingly smooth.

**Q: What about Tom of Finland Organic Vodka? How does this fit into your operation?**

Our background is in advertising and branding. We love strong brands that have a story to tell and touch emotions. Tom of Finland was a revolutionary gay visual artist who created the now iconic look of masculine gay man. Coming from Finland we were naturally aware of Tom of Finland but when the Finnish Post Office published Tom of Finland stamps in 2014 it really clicked. We saw that there is everything a great spirit brand needs in one package. The story, aesthetics, values and target group. Everything was there. All we needed to do was to create an outstanding liquid and turn this into a spirit brand. Which we did. The vodka is organic blend of 95% wheat and 5% rye. It's damn good.

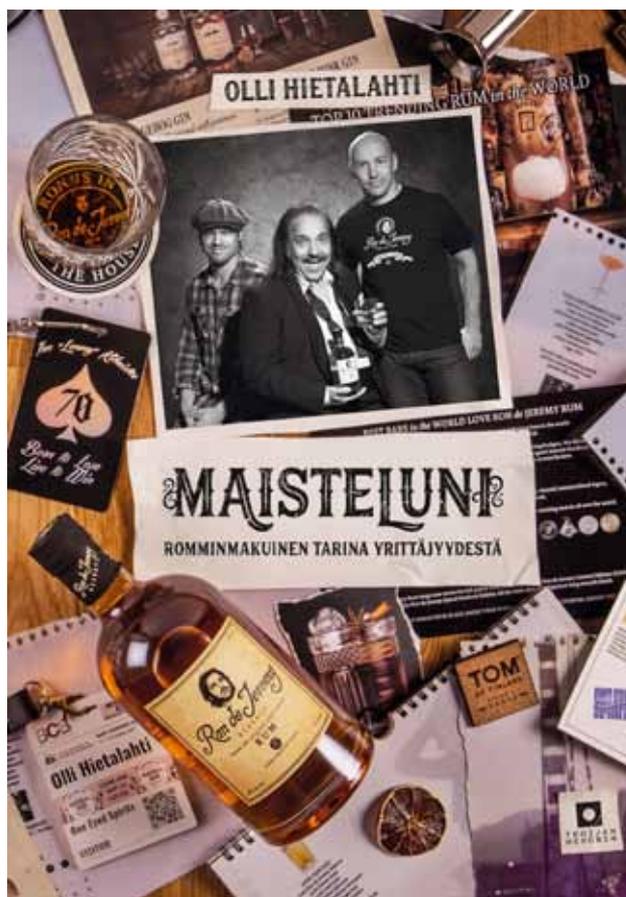
From a category perspective it may look that having rum and vodka (well we have Flame of Passion Gin as well) does not make sense but we're more into creating strong brands than thinking about category boundaries.

**Q: It really takes a lot of passion to endure all the obstacles you've overcome. I'm sure you could fill a book with all the experiences you lived along the road, right?**

Literally. I did write a book on our spirited adventures. It was published in Finland in June of this year.

**Q: Was writing your book meant to be therapeutic for you, meaning it helped you make sense of memories and experiences, or was it meant as an educational/inspirational tool for others, or both?**

First of all, it was a challenge. I wanted to see if I could do it. Every ex copywriter dreams of writing a book one day. I knew I could write short form, headlines, sentences, paragraphs, anything up to a few pages. But a whole book is a different animal. Keeping the ten-year journey together and creating a structure that people could understand and follow was



a real challenge. As they say, “writing is rewriting”. I had a very good and strict editor and she certainly whipped me. Rewrite. Again. And again. I originally thought that since I knew the story, it would take me maybe three months to write. Well, add one year.

It was a crazy amount of work, but coming back to your question, yes it was also therapeutic. It brought back all the memories, many of which I had luckily forgotten! It also clarified a lot of things for me. Some things we had done that seemed kind of stupid started to make sense when you reflect back. Writing also gave me perspective for the future.

I have received a lot of positive feedback and it does seem that our journey, all the troubles and set-backs and the stubborn refusal to quit do inspire people.

**Q: Where is your book sold and will it be offered in English in the near future?**



Currently it is only in Finnish and thus sold only in Finland. We are hoping to get it translated in English. I do believe there are elements of interest for the international reader as well. Sex and booze for example!

**Q: Where do you see the distilled spirits industry in 10 years (social responsibility, environmental sustainability, traceability, etc.)?**

I'm obviously interested in seeing small and interesting brands prosper! Let's hope the long awaited rum boom will finally materializes. All things related to responsibility and sustainability will become more and more relevant. We see that in the Nordic monopoly countries where the government nudges the consumers to that direction by issuing tenders for sustainable products.

**Q: What advise do you have for people who are considering getting into the alcohol beverage industry, as brand owners, producers or promoters?**

Hah, you know how to make a million in spirits? Start with ten!

Joking aside, you really need to concentrate hard on the branding and

packaging before coming out. Delay the launch, take the extra time and do it again. And again. The market is so crowded that the new product really needs to stand out to have a chance. Obviously, the liquid needs to be excellent but the packaging is as equally important. The branding needs to be relevant and create emotions. Invest in good creative people, that will pay off along the way.

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

My email is [olli.hietalahti@oneeyedspirits.com](mailto:olli.hietalahti@oneeyedspirits.com)

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

Just keep going, come hell or high water!

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

Cheers!

Margaret Ayala, publisher of "Got Rum?"



# 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



## The Last Of Us

As I searched for a simple, transparent pairing well-suited for the approaching cold weather, the thought that kept coming up was to prepare an easy cocktail that would not cover up the character of the rum, but with a few additional hints that would take it to the next level.

I named this pairing "The Last Of Us" in honor of the last Bolivar Belicoso Fino (52 x 140mm) left in the cigar box, it is a Habano that turned out to be 100% fantastic. I kept the box in my humidor for more than 10 years, smoking them only on special occasions and nothing better than smoking the very last one for this pairing for all of you.

For the cocktail I selected an Agricole rhum, Rhum Bielle Millésimé 2011. Some of you may be thinking that these rhums are not meant for mixology and I totally agree. But if you are careful with the proportions of the ingredients employed, respecting the aromatic qualities of the rhum, I believe that you can make an excellent, well-received cocktail.

I started by finding a black tea, specifically an English Breakfast Tea, it needs to have a lot of tannins. How will we use this tea? Prepare a cup of tea using only half the amount of water, make sure the water is hot but not boiling, then allow the tea to cool down (you can add ice cubes to it if in a hurry). When it is cold, or at least at room temperature, pour the tea into a large mixing glass or shaker with a few large ice cubes. Stir the ice and tea for 40-60 seconds or until the tea is chilled.

Discard all the liquid from the glass, keeping the tea-infused ice cubes. Then add the following ingredients:

4 ½ oz. Rhum Bielle Millésimé 2011  
1 ½ oz. Vermouth Rosso  
1 dash of Chocolate Bitters (optional)



Photo credit: @Cigarilli



You can proportionally adjust the volume of all the ingredients, depending on the size of the glass you are going to serve it in, just make sure you maintain the ratios between the ingredients and you'll have a similar result.

It is now time to light up the Habano. The draw was excellent, as was the case with all the previous cigars from this box. The intensity that is characteristic of the Bolivar brand was considerably reduced due to the prolonged aging. I hope you too can age some of your cigars for 10 years so that you can experience this transformation. If you don't have any cigars this old available to you, I suggest that you select instead a cigar with medium body/intensity.

The pairing blew my mind: the bitter tea notes remained consistently in the background. The Chocolate Bitters, it

turns out, were unnecessary. I thought they would play a better role but in the end they were not as noticeable as the black tea was.

The rum showcased subtle "Agricole" notes and the oak dimension from the aging was not overpowering. So, if you must replace this rum with another one, do not use a rum that has too much oak or that is too sweet. I think a rum aged no more than 10 years would be ideal.

I hope you can replicate this pairing too. If you do, please share photos of your results on social media (use the tag **#GRCigarPairing**). Enjoy this simple, yet elegant pairing!

Cheers!  
Philip Ili Barake  
**#GRCigarPairing**



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