

Got Rum? [®]

NOVEMBER 2025

FROM THE GRASS TO YOUR GLASS, SINCE 2001!



COOKING WITH RUM - ANGEL'S SHARE
CIGAR AND RUM PAIRING - THE RUM MIXOLOGIST
THE RUM HISTORIAN - THE RUM LIBRARY
RUM IN THE NEWS - THE RUM LABORATORY
THE SWEET BUSINESS OF SUGAR - THE SUGAR MILL



6



10



14



24



28



CONTENTS

NOVEMBER 2025

5	FROM THE EDITOR
6-9	THE ANGEL'S SHARE - RUM REVIEWS
10-13	COOKING WITH RUM
14-17	THE RUM MIXOLOGIST
18-19	THE RUM UNIVERSITY® LIBRARY
24-27	THE RUM HISTORIAN
28-31	THE RUM LABORATORY
32-33	RUM AND THE ENVIRONMENT
34-37	RUM IN THE NEWS
38-46	THE SWEET BUSINESS OF SUGAR
48-55	THE SUGAR MILL: ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION
56-59	CIGAR AND RUM PAIRING



34



38



56

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FRONT COVER: Falling For It
INSIDE SPREAD: Amber Paradise

FROM THE EDITOR

Stories and Storytelling Part 2

In last month's column, I stressed the need for distillers and brands to have a good story AND to be great at storytelling.

Several readers reached out to me to share some of the specific challenges they face, including:

- Some brand owners already have a great story, but face challenges when their story is being repeated/shared by people outside their organization.
- Other brand owners struggle with their own employees not knowing the story well or not being particularly good at telling it.
- Most of the feedback I received, however, was from executives or financial backers who were unsure if their story was relevant to today's consumers.

While there is no blanket answer or "magic pill" that can solve all the challenges listed above, it is always good to understand the fundamental points that make a good story:

- **Characters:** They should be well-developed, relatable, and driven by clear desires or motivations. The best stories show how characters are changed by their experiences and what they learn about themselves.
- **Plot:** This is the sequence of events. A good plot poses a question early on and provides a satisfying resolution at the end, driven by a series of causes and effects and the character's reactions.
- **Setting:** The setting grounds the story in a specific time and place, providing context for the characters' actions. It doesn't need to be vast; even a small, familiar space can be immersive if described well.

A good storyteller, on the other hand, should be confident, empathetic, and enthusiastic, incorporating vivid details and very descriptive language to draw the audience in. Good storytellers are also



good listeners, able to read the audience's reaction and adapt their delivery, tell a clear and structured story, and be vulnerable and authentic. Key skills include a strong memory, the ability to simplify complex ideas, and the use of non-verbal cues like body language and pauses.

Identifying or developing great storytellers from among your staff can be accomplished via company-sponsored "storytelling competitions" that are open to numerous topics. Their goal is to identify candidates with the best potential, so that their skills can then be further polished and fine-tuned.

Cheers!

Luis Ayala, *Editor and Publisher*



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

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

THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft



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

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

Cheers!

Brugal Colección Visionaria Edición 01

When Brugal's Maestra Ronera Jassil Villanueva created this limited-edition expression for Brugal rum, she pulled from childhood memories of growing up around cacao fields and was inspired to create something new for the brand. The first step the company took to create this product is to toast cacao beans in their Virgin European Oak casks, using their aromatic cask toasting technique. The beans are removed, and the cask is prepared to be filled with the rum. Brugal uses molasses as the core ingredient; they ferment it 12 to 40 hours using proprietary yeast. After this process, they double distill the liquid using column stills. The rum for the expression is aged for an unspecified amount of time, then blended and bottled at 45% ABV.

Appearance

The rum is packaged in a blue box that provides a minimum amount of information about the product. The bottle is a short-necked 700 mL custom bottle that is wrapped in black netting. Three-quarters of the bottle is frosted with a black design, with the upper third revealing the rum inside. The cap and cork are enclosed in black wax, with a black and gold neck wrap. The front label/wrap provides basic information about the rum along with the batch number, which for this bottle is from batch DR005B, and notes that it was bottled in 2023.

Swirling the liquid created a thick band around the glass that proceeded to release several waves of fast-moving legs, then the legs slowed down and eventually stopped. The band quickly evaporated, leaving a few beads around the glass.

Nose

The aroma leads with the aroma of hot chocolate and is immediately followed by dried fruit, lightly charred oak, lemon zest, and vanilla bean.

Palate

The first sip leads with caramelized vanilla, immediately followed by roasted cacao notes and the heat of the alcohol. Oak spices drift in midpalate, presenting as allspice and mace. Dried banana chips and orange zest overtake the spice notes with a pop of roasted cashews and walnuts. As the nut flavors begin to fade, the sweetness in the flavor profile manifests and is balanced by the oak notes in a long finish.

Review

I found this rum to be a good addition to the Brugal lineup and was relieved it was not a variation of 1888. The roasted cacao notes clearly added some depth to the flavor profile that turned the base rum into a dynamic sipping experience. I can see where it would be a quality ingredient in some classic cocktails; however, it would have to be handled carefully with fruit juice-heavy ingredient drinks. As an after-dinner sipping rum, this stands out, as it is not as sweet as Leyenda or as sherry-forward as 1888. Overall, it is a positive testament to the craft and vision of the Maestra Ronero Jassil Villanueva and her team at Brugal. It will be interesting to see what the next Visionaria Edición will be and what new flavor experience they will share with the world.



www.brugal-rum.com

THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft

The Shaldon High Ester Overproof Rum

In the United States, rum consumers have not had the opportunity to purchase many rums from South Africa. Due to this, the Mhoba rum line has had a bit of added mystique due to the limited opportunities to experience it. Recently, through a strategic partnership with Weyside Spirits, parent company of Holmes Cay, and Mhoba Rum, the U.S. will now have access to some of the rums in the line. The Shaldon High Ester Overproof Rum is the first Mhoba rum to be imported and released in the United States. The rum is named after Shaldon Englebrecht, who is the distiller and blender of this rum.

All rums in the Mhoba portfolio are produced at the Mhoba Distillery in Malalane, located in the Nkomai region of Mpumalanga, South Africa. For this expression, two cane varietals were harvested between August and November of 2024. The harvested cane is pressed, and then the juice goes through a month-long fermentation process using airborne yeast while stored in plastic vats. The juice is then distilled using custom-built pot stills. One portion of the blend is from a single distillation, and the second portion goes through a second distillation. The rum is then blended and bottled at 63% ABV. No color, sugar, or flavor additives were used to make this product.

Appearance

The 700 mL short-neck bottle has brown and white labels that display a great deal of information about the rum on the front and back labels. The security wrap holds a synthetic cork to the bottle.

The rum is clear in the bottle and glass. Swirling the liquid creates a super thick band around the glass that unleashes a large wave of fast-moving legs before beading up and evaporating.

Nose

The aroma of the rum has an earthy, mineral-rich opening, followed by butterscotch, mint, tropical fruit notes, and vanilla.

Palate

The first sip comes in with a punch of the high proof of the rum and a funky vegetal swirl that mutes the other flavors of the spirit. Each additional sip revealed a new note during the evaluation: candied apples, mango, fresh-cut banana, and tart papaya. An earthy vanilla emerges in a buttery finish that lingers on the palate for quite some time.

Review

When I review high proof/high ester rums, my evaluation approach is different than a regular review. The process involves careful evaluation of the aroma while trying not to burn out the nose and taking tiny sips to find the flavors without getting overwhelmed by the volatile esters and alcohol content. As advertised, this rum is a hard-hitting, take-no-prisoners overproof experience. If you enjoy high-ester rums with this particular flavor profile, this product is for you. It is like high ester Jamaican rum with fewer flavor hooks for the palate and drink ingredients to lock on. If you do not enjoy this kind of flavor profile, please look elsewhere. During the evaluation process I took tiny sips to discover the flavors but found that too big of a sip and the proof of the rum would overwhelm the flavor profile and palate, and I would have to take time to let my palate recover. When using it in a cocktail, the rum will have to be matched carefully with other ingredients to help balance the flavor experience. I will be curious to see what other products are released to the United States from this distillery.



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COOKING WITH RUM

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

by Chef Susan Whitley





Rummy Chicken Pot Pie Bread Pudding

Ingredients:

- 2 C. Cooked Chicken, diced
- 6 C. One Day Old Bread, cubed
- 1 Tbsp. Butter
- 1 Tbsp. Olive Oil
- 1 Medium White Onion, finely chopped
- 1 C. Carrots, diced
- 1 C. Celery, diced
- 4 oz. Canned Whole Kernel Corn
- ¾ C. Frozen Peas
- 4 Garlic Cloves, minced
- 3 Tbsp. All-Purpose Flour
- 2 C. Chicken Stock
- 1 C. Whole Milk
- ¼ C. Heavy Cream
- 3 Tbsp. White Rum
- 3 Large Eggs
- ½ tsp. Dried Thyme
- ½ tsp. Dried Oregano
- 1 tsp. Sea Salt
- ½ tsp. Ground Black Pepper
- 1½ C. Shredded Mozzarella Cheese
- 9x13-inch (23x33 cm) baking dish

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. In a large frying pan on medium heat, add the olive oil and butter. Add the carrots, celery, onion, corn, garlic, salt, pepper, dried thyme, and dried oregano. Mix everything together and allow to soften a bit. Then add 2 tablespoons of flour to the pan and stir. Add the chicken stock and stir, mixture will begin to thicken. Now add the milk, heavy cream, and Rum. Stir to mix well. Add the chicken, frozen peas and one cup of Mozzarella cheese. Since everything is cooked, you do not need to bring the chicken mixture to a boil.
3. In a large bowl, add the cubed bread. Then pour the chicken mixture onto the bread and stir. Allow the bread to absorb the juices, about 10 minutes.
4. In a small mixing bowl, crack the three eggs and beat with a fork. Add 2 to 3 tablespoons of milk and beat with fork again. Pour half of the egg mixture into the bread bowl and mix. Now transfer the mixture into the 9 x 13 inch baking dish. Careful not to press down on the mixture, you want to keep it light and airy. Chicken pot pie needs open areas to allow the remaining egg mixture to fill in the gaps. Once you have poured the rest of the egg mixture add Mozzarella cheese on top (put as much or as little cheese as you like). Now cover the baking dish with foil in a tentlike shape. You want to allow steam to build up inside.
5. Bake the pot pie for 25 minutes. Remove the foil and place back in the oven for an additional 20 minutes (until golden and set). Ready to serve!



Photo credit: loulougirls.com

Pecan Pie Dump Cake

Ingredients:

- 1 can (21 oz.) Pecan Pie Filling
- 1 box (15.25 oz.) Yellow Cake Mix
- ½ C. Butter, melted
- 4 Tbsp. Dark Rum + 2 Tbsp.
- ½ C. Pecans, chopped
- ¼ C. Water

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Grease a 9×13-inch baking dish (butter or cooking spray works great).
3. Open the can of pecan pie filling and pour straight into your greased baking dish and spread it evenly with a spatula.
4. Now open the box of yellow cake mix and sprinkle it dry right on top of the pecan filling, distributing it evenly.
5. In a small sauce pan, melt the butter then add the 4 Tbsp. of dark rum and stir to blend well then pour the liquid evenly over the dry cake mix.
6. Sprinkle chopped pecans across the top. Then take your ¼ cup of water and add the additional 2 Tbsp. dark rum to it and mix. Lightly drizzle it over the entire cake.
7. Place baking dish in the oven and bake for 35-40 minutes (until top is golden brown and edges are bubbling). Remove from oven and allow it cool for about 10 minutes before serving.



Photo credit: www.recipes.evsroad.com

THE RUM Mixologist

A space devoted to the exploration
of classic and new rum cocktails

THE RUM[®]
UNIVERSITY

A close-up photograph of a bartender's hand, wearing a white shirt, pouring a clear liquid from a bottle into a glass. The glass is filled with ice cubes and sits on a dark, perforated metal bar surface. The background is dark and out of focus, with some warm, bokeh light spots.

What Is Mixology?

Mixology is the study and skill of inventing, preparing and serving cocktails and other mixed drinks. Mixologists are experts in this field, but mixologists' knowledge goes beyond memorizing basic cocktail recipes: it includes historical information, basic chemistry behind flavor combinations and a capacity for combining common ingredients in new ways.

Join us, as we explore the essential collection of rum cocktail recipes that every mixologist needs to master.



THE Rum[®] UNIVERSITY

Got Rum? November 2025 - 16



THE RUM Mixologist

This Month's Cocktail:
Hot Rum Apple Cider

About Apple Ciders

Hot Apple Ciders are the perfect match for cold weather. It is hard to imagine a better pairing, that is, until you add rum! The gold flakes from Goldschlager take the presentation to the next level. This drink is so easy to make that it will quickly become one of your cold-weather staples, if it is not one already.

Easy Hot Rum Apple Cider

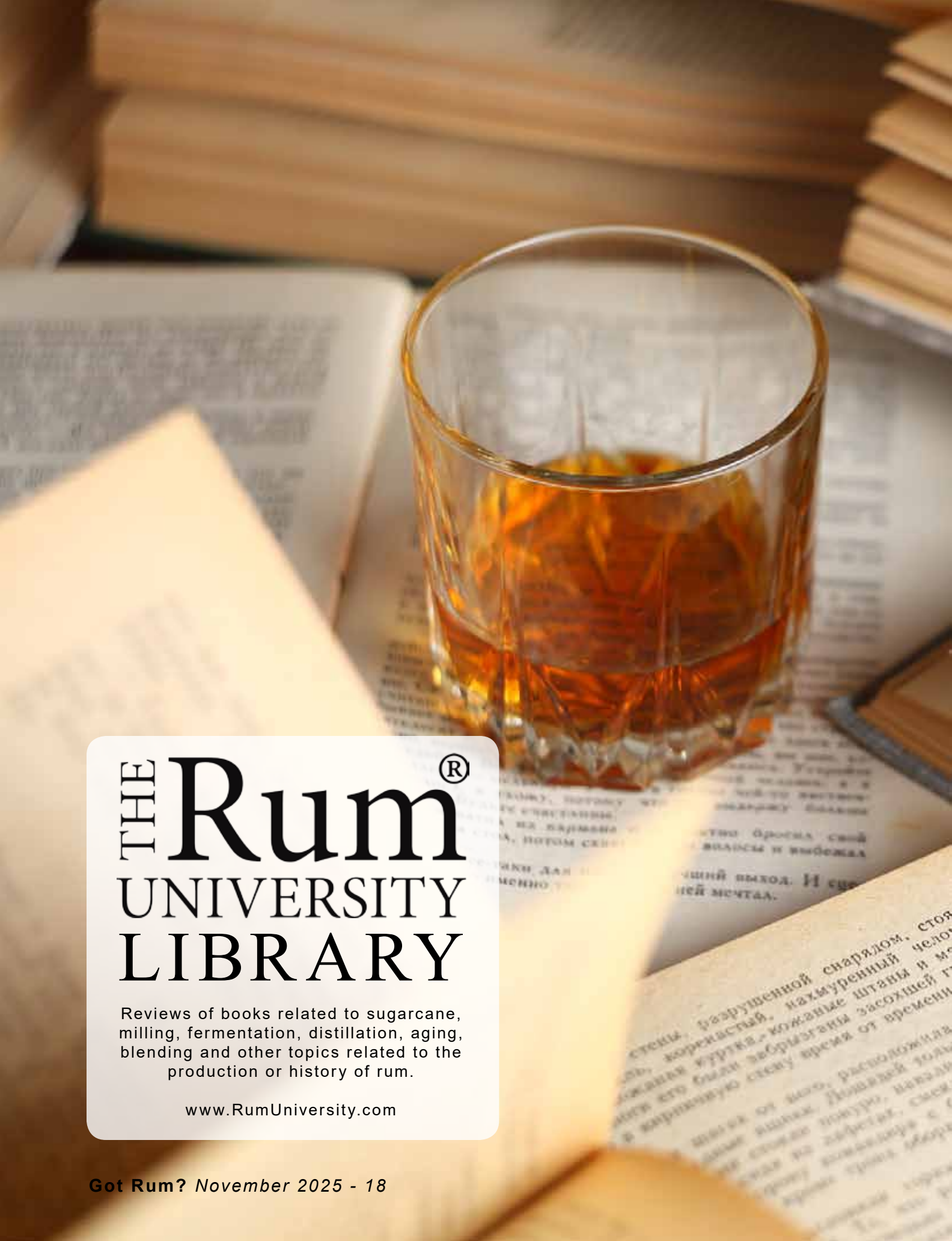
Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups Dark Rum
- 1 1/2 cups Goldschlager Cinnamon Schnapps
- 4 cups Apple Cider
- 4 Cinnamon Sticks
- 6 Whole Allspice Berries
- 10 Whole Cloves
- 1 Orange, Sliced

Directions:

1. In a large pot, combine all the ingredients.
2. Stir and cover. Heat and slowly bring to a boil, stirring occasionally.
3. Lower the heat, cover, and allow to simmer for 1 to 2 hours, stirring occasionally.
4. Transfer to an insulated punch bowl and serve in mugs, or keep it covered on the stove and heat it up periodically. Enjoy.



A glass of amber-colored rum sits on a stack of old, open books. The background is a warm, golden-brown color, suggesting a library or a study. The glass is a simple, clear tumbler, and the rum is about halfway full. The books are thick and have yellowed pages, with some text visible but mostly illegible due to the focus on the glass.

THE Rum[®] UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

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

www.RumUniversity.com

Coconut. Ginger. Shrimp. Rum: Caribbean Flavors for Every Season by Brigid Washington

(Publisher's Review)

The recipes in this book highlight seasonal bounties and four major Caribbean flavors, resulting in a basketful of healthy, edible treasures!

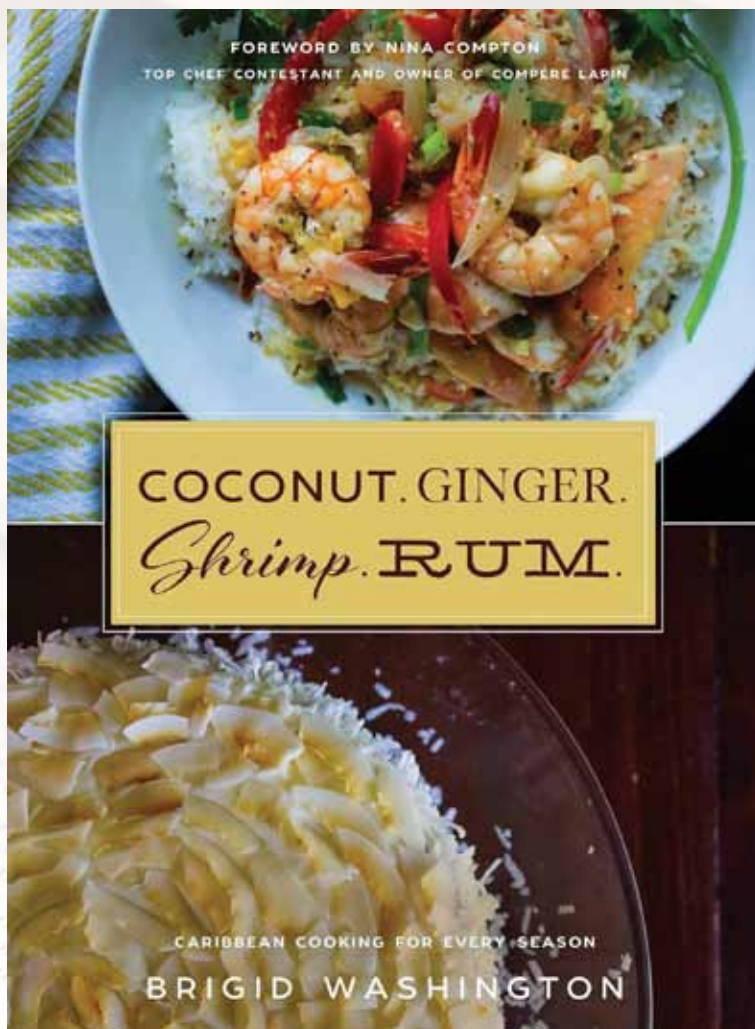
This innovative cookbook presents a new way to look at the four seasons through four ingredients that are integral to Caribbean flavors and culture, but available everywhere. Coconut, ginger, shrimp, and rum each boast unique health benefits, but are still simple and fundamental ingredients that will take any cook through the year, and especially highlighting seasonal ingredients!

The book is divided into four seasons, and each of those is divided into "Light Fare," "Mains," "To Sip," and "Sweets." Recipes include:

- Coconut spiced cashews
- White coconut gazpacho
- Rum buttered jerk wings
- Spring pea and ginger risotto
- Rhubarb & ginger challah
- Salsa verde coconut rice
- Grilled strawberry ginger shortcake
- Garlicky parmesan shrimp & fava bean ravioli
- Poached pear negroni

About the Author

Brigid Washington is a chef and journalist. She was Editor-in-Chief of the Culinary Institute of America monthly publication, La Pappillote, for whom she continues to write on a project basis.



Raised in Trinidad and Tobago with the food and spirit of the West Indian table, but Brigid's first language is modern American food, focusing on vegetables prepared in new and innovative ways.

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Dimensions: 7 x 0.7 x 9.5 inches





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Nothing announces the arrival of Fall,
like the scents and flavors of Pumpkin Spice.
Here is a simple recipe to warm up your soul!

Pumpkin Spiced Rum Latte

Ingredients:

- 1/2 C. Strong Hot Coffee or 2 Shots of Espresso
- 2 C. Milk of choice, dairy or non-dairy
- 2 Tbsp. Pumpkin Puree (adjust to taste)
- 2 oz. Spiced Rum
- 1 Tbsp. Sugar or Maple Syrup (adjust to taste)
- 1 Tbsp. Vanilla Extract
- 1/2 tsp. Pumpkin Pie Spice, plus more for serving
- Whipped Cream, optional for serving

Directions:

1. Add milk, pumpkin puree, and sugar to a saucepan over medium heat. Slowly heat the milk until hot, but do not boil.
2. Remove the saucepan from the heat and whisk in the vanilla, pumpkin pie spice, spiced rum and the coffee or Espresso. Taste and adjust with more sugar or spices.
3. Divide the mixture between two mugs.
4. Top with whipped cream and a sprinkle of pumpkin pie spice.

Makes 2 servings

THE RUM HISTORIAN

by Marco Pierini

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



CUBAN RUM: 28. ARECHABALA

After a few months' break, here I am again, taking up again the story of Cuban rum from where we left off. We had reached the beginning of the 1930s with the end of Prohibition in the U.S. (See REPEAL in the June 2025 issue), but now I will resume the narrative from a few decades earlier. This series of articles tends to focus on Bacardi, in part because of the objective importance that Bacardi had and still has in the world of rum, but also because, whereas there are many sources about Bacardi, on the contrary it is difficult to find reliable material on the other brands. This does not mean that they did not exist. The Cuba of the period was all a flourishing of small and medium-sized rum companies. But of them little more than the name remains. Moreover, Cuba is living a very difficult situation and, unfortunately, I have not been able to find adequate sources. Still, I couldn't help but write something about the other iconic Cuban rum, Arechabala, that is, the family and the company that invented the most famous brand of Cuban rum, Havana

Club, which still today is the protagonist of hard political, legal and commercial battles on a global scale.

Fortunately, I have recently found some useful sources about Arechabala.

Anyway, I have already touched on the topic of Arechabala's origin (See "OVERCOMING THE RUM INFERIORITY COMPLEX (ALMOST)" in the May 2024 issue), but it deserves to be told more in depth. I would like to start with part of a short and tasty article published in 2018 by the Spanish, actually, Basque journalist Ana Vega Pérez de Arlucea; the translation is mine, with a little help from my family. For the original, here is the link:

<https://www.euskalkultura.eus/euskara/besteek-esana/jose-arechabala-el-vizcaino-que-transformo-el-ron-de-cuba-el-correo-n?p=85>

"On September 21, 1862, a 15-year-old man from Vizcaya landed in Havana with the desire to eat the world. It was a different time, and 15-year-olds were much cleverer than now because of hunger and need, so you mustn't get too shocked. José Arechabala Aldama, this was the boy's name, had left his native Gordejuela behind to get on by his own in Cuba, surely dreaming of earning a good living and, if at all, earn enough bucks to go back some day and raise an *indiano* mansion [*Indianos*, that is, Indians – so the enriched returned immigrants were called] to leave his villagers flabbergasted. He crossed the Atlantic with ambition, but not even in his wildest dreams could he have thought that 150 years later his name would be associated with one of Cuba's best-known and sold products: Havana Club Rum. You probably know that another great brand of rum, Bacardí, owes its name to a Barcelonese, and yet the story of Havana Club and its Basque founder, much more intimately connected to us, goes unnoticed. Never again! From today we can drink the *cubalibre* properly,

knowing that behind this brand was the work of a Biscayan clan. And truly it was a clan, since in the nineteenth century it was common to emigrate with the support (and perhaps the promise of a job) of some relatives or acquaintances. This was the case of José Arechabala, who began his Cuban adventure in the shadow of another Gordejuelan businessman. Domingo Aldama, a distant relative of the young José, had enriched himself thanks to the slave trade and the sugar plantations. Between 1815 and 1870 he attracted to the Caribbean island a multitude of countrymen from the Basque Country, dazzled by his power. Our protagonist began working in Matanzas in the sugar trade and then, in 1869, he passed to a maritime agency in which another Basque robber baron had participation, Julián de Zulueta. Marqués de Álava, mayor of La Habana and multibillionaire, in 1873 Zulueta appointed José Arechabala as representative in his estates in the neighboring and flourishing city of Cárdenas, "the Cuban Chicago". Actually, José settled there, married a Cuban woman named Carmen Hurtado de Mendoza and saved up to set up his own business in 1878, a small distillery called *La Vizcaya*. With the Biscayan coat of arms as a trademark, with its oak and its two wolves, Arechabala began to make liqueurs, cane brandy and rum with the by-product that came from a sugar factory also owned by him. His hard work and his fine nose for trade led him to quickly succeed and become one of the largest manufacturers and exporters on the island, knowing how to survive cyclones, revolutions, wars and a thousand other misfortunes. At the beginning of the 20th century, José Arechabala already had everything: money, family and an Indian house in Gordexola (which currently houses the Town Hall). Honorary President of the Spanish colony in Cuba and a prominent member of the Basque Center of Havana, he devoted his fortune to beautify Cárdenas with a theater (the Arechabala,

demolished in 1963) and to stroll through Varadero, beret cocked.”

In Cárdenas, Basque immigrants built a real industrial district based on their common origin, as had been the case of Catalan immigrants in Santiago, some decades earlier.

And here a brief reflection is in order. Bacardí and Arechabala were Spanish immigrants and, like them, many other successful entrepreneurs in Cuba. The birth of these and other successful companies is not so easy to understand, in view of wars, insurrections, violence and widespread corruption. One of the reasons for their success was certainly the strong bond among Spanish immigrants. Link that materialized in the foundation of a *Casino*, an association that brought together immigrants from the same region and the whole of Spain for the preservation of regional and national identity, language, culture and cuisine etc. They were cultural associations and social meeting places for leisure activities with dances, parties, etc. at the same time; decisive relation networks for businessmen and also mutual assistance societies, offering jobs, housing and medical assistance. Last, but not least, they promoted the immigrants' participation in local civic life with donation, civic works, lobbying and so on, in some ways making up for the weakness of Cuban public institutions. Some *casinos* became rich and powerful, especially in Havana, with prestigious locations.

As far as I know, in the first ad of *La Vizcaya* published in 1900, the firm promoted itself as a *destilería*, but later in the same year the magazine *Cuba Ilustrada* called it *alambique*. According to the *Real Academia de la Lengua*, the Spanish word *alambique* means: *Utensilio que sirve para destilar una sustancia volátil, compuesto fundamentalmente de un recipiente para calentar el líquido y de un conducto por el que sale la sustancia*

destilada (more or less: Apparatus for distilling a volatile substance, consisting mainly of a vessel for heating the liquid and a conduit through which the distilled substance exits). It sounds like a traditional Pot Still, but sadly the word is often used for distilling apparatuses in general and also for spirit factories.

One of the characteristics of the young Cuban republic is its constant reflection on itself. In addition to a strong cultural and political debate, this reflection has produced some splendid books (See “*EL LIBRO DE CUBA 1925 (THE BOOK OF CUBA)*” in the June 2024 issue). In 1917, the same reasons led to the publication of “*El Libro Azul de Cuba/ The Blue Book of Cuba*”. It is a remarkably good work, a bilingual book in Spanish and English, illustrated with many period photos, introducing the social, economic and technological advantages of the island and its major protagonists. Large space is devoted to companies and entrepreneurs, halfway, I think, between information and promotion. It is a beautiful object too, with the unique flavor that only vintage documents have, but on the Net it costs \$1250 ... I must therefore be satisfied with the English version of the article dedicated to José Arechabala Aldana. Here are some excerpts. The entire book online can be found at this link: [Simurg | Vista | Libro azul de Cuba = The blue book of Cuba](#).

“The business was started in 1878, with one small building and poor machinery, but steadily, day by day, it manufactured its small quantity of rum and alcohol. As time passed a lighter was added to the equipment and more space provided for the storage of the molasses to be used in the Still. In 1885 a modern Distillery was installed and business began on a much larger scale. The business continued to prosper and in 1903, Mr. Arechabala was able to add an up-to-date Sugar Refinery to his establishment, and at the same time start a schooner line from Cardenas to Havana in order to facilitate his increasing exportation.”

Later on, *The Blue Book of Cuba* describes the situation of the distillery in the present, its present of course, that is 1917.

“The present establishment, known as ‘La Vizcaya’ covers the following departments: an up-to-date distillery for the manufacture of spirituous liquors and alcohol, a modern sugar refinery, extensive warehouses for sugar storage and molasses tanks, and an excellent schooner and launch service.

The distillery contains five large modern stills, two for distilling and three for rectifying the spirits. It produces on average three thousand hogsheads a month, of which the greater part is exported, (mainly to Europe), England and France alone taking immense shipments. The sugar refinery produces two hundred and fifty barrels of white sugar a day, the majority of which is consumed locally and in Havana. The warehouses for sugar storage are numerous and extensive and one immense warehouse is used only for the giant molasses tanks that hold the molasses to be used in the Distillery.”

Don José always remained very close to his native land and returned, as soon as his economic success in Cuba made it possible to do so, with his head high, in a large and prestigious house.

“Mr Arechabala has many commercial and financial interests ... His palatial residence, ‘Villa Carmen’, on the Paseo de las Quintas, is one of the largest and most beautiful in Cardenas. He also owns a splendid residence in Gordejuela, Vizcaya, his native home in Spain. There, he and his wife spend their summers, in company with their daughter Mercedes, whose home is in that city. Besides these two magnificent homes, they are the owners of a charming chalet in breezy, picturesque Varadero.” He would die in 1923 without seeing his best-known legacy, Havana Club.

The speed of its growth is impressive: founded in 1878, in 1911 it was already able to finance the Teatro de Cárdenas. Then there were many public works, the transformation in 1921 of the company into a joint-stock company: JASA, José Arechabala Sociedad Anonima. There followed further growth and diversification of production: sugar, rum, alcohol for medical use and as household fuel, and many other products. Its catalogue included different rums such as Arecha, Caña 1920, Habanita, Doubloon, Bucanero and Tres Arbolitos. In addition, it imported some foreign spirits and other things. All this growth happened despite two devastating hurricanes, 1888 and 1933.

POST SCRIPTUM

A little Rum History nerds digression. My a THE QUEST FOR QUALITY, April 2023, prompted some interesting observations by Richard Nicholson, Matt Pietrek and Andrew Nicholls in the FB group RUM HISTORY, on the relation between Pot and Column Stills in Cuban rum. We knew that in 1832 some continuous stills were already operating in Cuba (See *INGENIOS AND THE CONTINUOUS STILL*, March 2023), and Cardenas was a modern town, but we had no incontrovertible evidence. Now there is good news: I have just received a great book written by a descendent of the Arechabala family and by a renowned historian: María Victoria Arechabala Fernández and Antonio Santamaría García “*Arechabala Azúcar y Ron*” 2023. It is full of family stories, period photos, documents and seminal information based on a rich and rare bibliography. I have only just begun to explore it, we’ll see. And while we’re at it, Richard, I have read you’ll be publishing your book! Please keep me posted.

Marco Pierini





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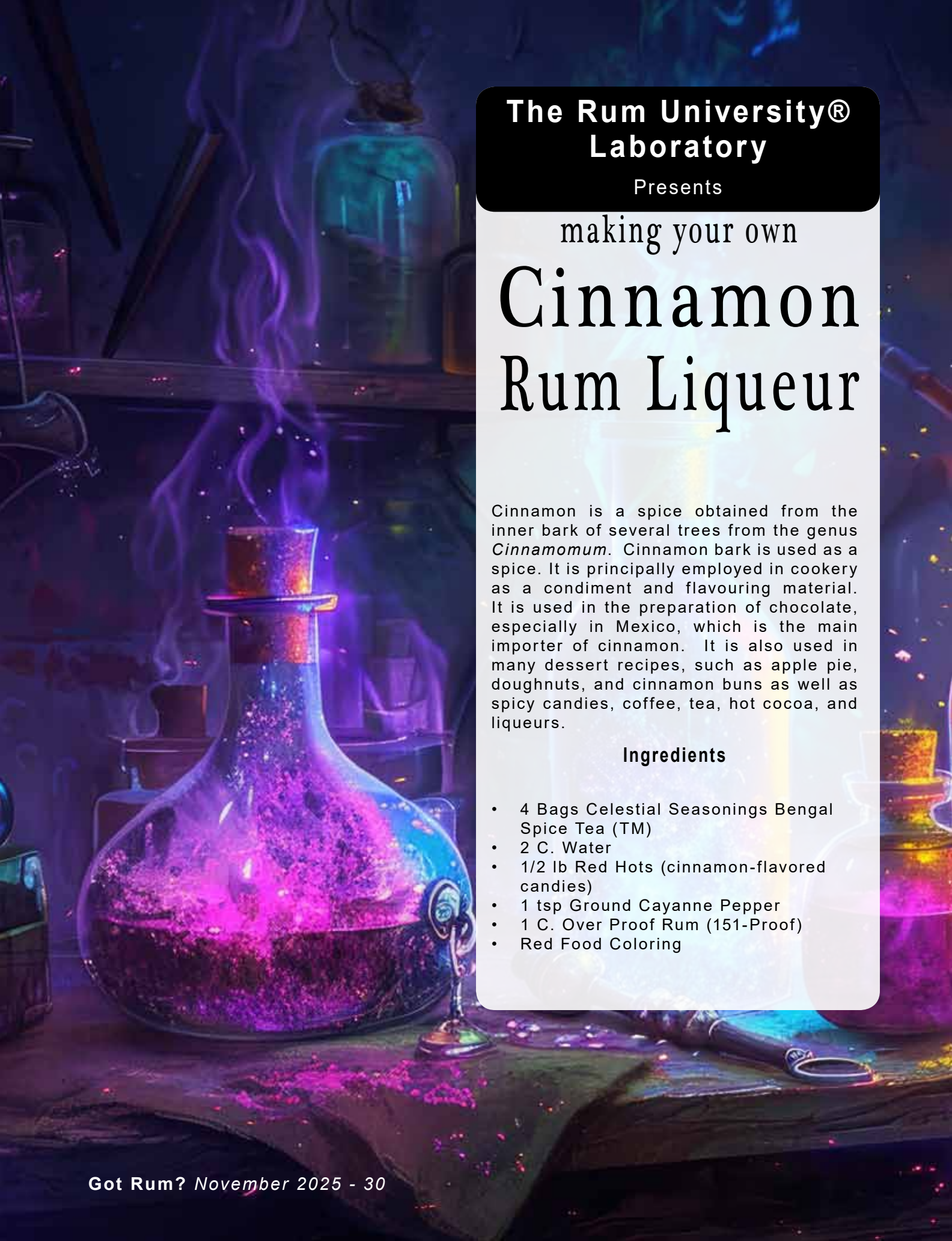
Got Rum? November 2025 - 28

The Rum Laboratory

Presented by

THE **Rum**[®]
UNIVERSITY

Join us as we explore the world of
rum spices and flavors!
In this series you will learn to flavor
your own Rums and to create your
own Liqueurs and Creams.



The Rum University® Laboratory

Presents

making your own Cinnamon Rum Liqueur

Cinnamon is a spice obtained from the inner bark of several trees from the genus *Cinnamomum*. Cinnamon bark is used as a spice. It is principally employed in cookery as a condiment and flavouring material. It is used in the preparation of chocolate, especially in Mexico, which is the main importer of cinnamon. It is also used in many dessert recipes, such as apple pie, doughnuts, and cinnamon buns as well as spicy candies, coffee, tea, hot cocoa, and liqueurs.

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

THE Rum[®] UNIVERSITY



Procedure

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.



RUM

And The Environment

ACTION ITEMS

November's Action Item Is . . .

Spend More Time In Nature

According to numerous articles, including one from Springer Nature (<https://www.nature.com/articles/srep28551>), some of the benefits of spending time in natural habitats include:

- Reduced blood pressure
- Reduced risk of mortality from cardiovascular disease, and
- An improved mood

According to a research article from The University of Queensland, if people spent just half an hour in their local park each week, cases of depression could decrease by 7% (<https://news.uq.edu.au/2016-06-24-dose-nature-just-what-doctor-ordered>).

UQ CEED researcher Associate Professor Richard Fuller said the research could transform the way people viewed urban parks.

"We've known for a long time that visiting parks is good for our health, but we are now beginning to establish exactly how much time we need to spend in parks to gain these benefits," he said.

"We have specific evidence that we need regular visits of at least half an hour to ensure we get these benefits."

"Our children especially benefit from spending more time outdoors. Kids who grow up experiencing natural environments may benefit developmentally and have a heightened environmental awareness as adults than those who don't."

As you've seen throughout this series of articles, there are plenty of simple, cost-free ways you can contribute to a more sustainable planet and/or a better health. It doesn't matter whether you decide to take on something personally, like investing in a reusable coffee cup, or as a household through planting a native tree or composting. No matter how small the habit may seem, it compounds over time into something hugely beneficial. By adopting these resolutions, you'll be aligning your personal growth with environmental responsibility, and contributing to a more sustainable lifestyle.



RUM IN THE NEWS

by Mike Kunetka



HURRICANE MELISSA HITS JAMAICA

As you probably know, Hurricane Melissa crossed the island of Jamaica last month as a Class 5 monster, the biggest storm they have ever seen. As I type this, pictures and videos online show heartbreaking destruction; 70% of the island does not have power and cell phone coverage is limited. The eye of the storm crossed western Jamaica where most of our beloved rum distilleries are located. Several distilleries have reported minor damage, but I have not seen anything yet on Long Pond and Clarendon. No word from Appleton Estate, which is in St. Elizabeth Parish, one of the hardest hit areas. Worthy Park posted they had no structural damage and their staff were safe. By the time this magazine is published, I am sure we will know much more. We do know that Jamaica has been dealt a devastating blow. If you are able, please consider contributing to the relief and recovery efforts. To make sure monies go where they are most needed, the folks at Worthy Park have suggested the following organizations:
The American Friends of Jamaica-
<http://www.theafj.org/>



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.

Food For the Poor – Jamaica
<https://foodforthepeople.org/index.php>
Jamaica Government Support-
<https://www.supportjamaica.gov.jm/>
Global Empowerment Mission-
<https://www.globalempowermentmission.org/>
I would also add World Central Kitchen. As in previous hurricanes, Chef José Andrés is working with local restaurants, chefs and cooks to serve thousands of meals every day to the homeless and hungry. World Central Kitchen
<https://wck.org/en-us/relief/melissa-25>

PONCHE KUBA

Last month, Ponche Kuba, the iconic Caribbean rum cream liqueur established in 1942 by Don Jaime A. J. Sprock, unveiled refreshed packaging in select markets. While the look evolves, the beloved original recipe remains unchanged, continuing a legacy of more than 70 years of craftsmanship. The new design reflects Ponche Kuba's commitment to staying relevant to consumers while reducing environmental impact. Both the bottle and label have been reimagined with a modern lens. The updated 700ml bottle retains its elegant silhouette while achieving an 80g weight reduction (from 630g to 550g), resulting in a significant 24.4% decrease in CO2 emissions per case (from 13.6kg to 10.3kg CO2 eq/cstd). The new label blends native Caribbean botanical elements with the brand's bold signature red, refreshed with contemporary design cues. The result is a vibrant, festive aesthetic that captures the proud, passionate melting-pot culture of the Caribbean. "Ponche Kuba's refreshed packaging is a natural evolution for the brand, one that celebrates our Caribbean roots, enhances our premium credentials, and advances our commitment to sustainability, all while preserving the recipe our consumers know and love," said Antoine Couvreur, Mount Gay Distilleries Managing Director. The cherished Ponche Kuba liquid remains unchanged: a creamy, thick rum liqueur with rich, sweet notes, a lightly spiced aroma, and a perfectly balanced taste rooted in traditional family-style ponches. Crafted with savoir-faire at Mount Gay Distilleries in Barbados and bottled at 9% ABV, it is versatile enough to be enjoyed neat, on the rocks, or as the base for indulgent cocktails. Ponche Kuba 700ml will roll out in the United States this November and in other key markets starting this month: the Caribbean (October 2025), the Netherlands (February 2026), and the Dominican Republic (September 2026). <https://www.mountgayrum.com/>.

BRUGAL

For five generations, the Brugal family has been devoted to crafting fine rum and now Brugal is entering a new creative chapter with a new brand campaign. At the heart of this campaign is a simple yet powerful message: "Passion is what sets us apart, and passion is what brings us together." Through striking visuals that reflect a deep commitment to rum

mastery, this campaign celebrates the passion that has guided Brugal's hands and hearts since 1888, setting Brugal apart, one bottle at a time. "In every cask, there is a story, and we hope to share ours, our passion for rum, with the world," said Jassil Villanueva Quintana, Brugal's Fifth-Generation Rum Master and second-great granddaughter of Brugal's founder Andres Brugal. "I'm inspired by my family of Rum Masters who came before me, and together our passion for our craft ensures that every blend is a careful composition of the finest hand-picked casks and aged rums, balanced to perfection. Our rum is more than just a spirit, it's a bond shared between family, Maestros and community. Every bottle is a story of unity, dedication and care that's meant to be enjoyed together." The campaign launched last month in the U.S. with a bold, multi-channel strategy designed to maximize visibility and drive deep consumer engagement. "Brugal is so much more than rum. It is a family business, it is a commitment to legacy, and rum mastery, adds Gregory Cozzolino, Marketing Director of Breakthrough Brands at Edrington. "This campaign allows us to share with the world what sets Brugal apart."

<https://www.brugal-rum.com/en-us>

MOUNT GAY

Mount Gay, the World's oldest running rum distillery with a legacy spanning over 320 years, announced the release of the third and fourth editions of its exceptional **Single Estate Series, 25_03_Vt24CF** and **25_04_Vt19dp**. Crafted by Master Blender Trudiann Branker, this unique dual launch continues and expands the terroir driven series, presenting two distinct yet complementary expressions born from Mount Gay Estate sugarcane harvests in St Lucy, Barbados. This time, she decided to capture the 2024 harvest with edition **25_03_Vt24CF**, and the 2019 harvest with edition **25_04_Vt19dp**. "These two new additions to our Single Estate Series are a masterclass in contrast and complementarity. 25_03 is the first unaged rum of the Series, while 25_04 is matured for five years in American oak ex-bourbon barrels. Moreover, 25_03 is a 100% Coffey Still distilled rum, while 25_04 is a 100% double pot distilled rum. This year, 2025, presents the fascinating opportunity to experience their two different perspectives of Mount Gay's heritage and terroir side-by-side."

Trudiann Branker, Mount Gay Master Blender.

- **Mount Gay Single Estate Series 25_03** was created using 100% molasses created from sugarcane grown at the Mount Gay Estate in St Lucy, Barbados. Speaking at a launch event for the new expressions, Branker explained that 25_03 is the first in the Single Estate series where she was able to convert the sugarcane to molasses in-house before proceeding with fermentation. "This would be our first release where we've monitored what goes into the

sugarcane. It really cemented the craftsmanship that exists at Mount Gay in-house, and the fingerprint of every single person in the distillery is in every bottle of Single Estate” she said. Using proprietary yeast cultivated from the Mount Gay Estate, the molasses was fermented for 9 days, which led to a secondary fermentation. It was then distilled in the rare 100% copper Coffey Still, one out of two remaining functioning Coffey Stills in the entire world. Recommissioned at the Mount Gay distillery only in 2019, the Coffey Still and its 19th century origin bridge the gap between history and modernity. The rum is transparent and bottled at 48% ABV.

- **Mount Gay Single Estate Series 25_04** was created using 100% molasses created in 2019 from sugar canes grown at the Mount Gay Estate in St Lucy, Barbados and processed at a local sugarcane factory on the island to make a specialized molasses for Mount Gay. The molasses had a very high sugar content (72%). Like the 25_03, it was fermented using their proprietary yeast for 9 days and then in a secondary fermentation.
- **Mount Gay Single Estate Series 25_04_Vt19dp** is a blend of two distinct pot still distillations combined into one singular expression, making it a 100% double pot distilled rum. The blend matured for five years in American oak (*Quercus Alba*) ex-bourbon barrels, allowing the flavor of the rum and its unique terroir to shine. It is bottled at 55% ABV.

For a more complete description of these two rums and how they were made, check out their very informative website:
<https://www.mountgayrum.com/>

ANGOSTURA

Last month, Angostura announced that effective October 17, there would be price adjustments to their locally manufactured rums. This follows the Government's recently announced increase in excise duty on rum and spirits, which took immediate effect as part of the 2025/2026 National Budget. As a responsible corporate citizen with more than 200 years of heritage in Trinidad and Tobago, Angostura® fully supports the Government's efforts to strengthen fiscal sustainability and national development. They went on to state that over the past several years, Angostura® has absorbed increases in input costs through improved productivity, energy efficiency and innovation to minimize any impact on their consumers. However, this recent increase in excise duty now requires price adjustments to ensure business continuity and the continued employment of their workforce of over 537 citizens. Angostura® remains deeply committed to maintaining the world-class quality of their rums and bitters, supporting their local economy and supply chain, and promoting Trinidad and Tobago's brands in over 170 international markets. In other news, Angostura announced the appointment of Ian Forbes as the acting CEO of Angostura Holdings Limited. Ian was

appointed to act as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Angostura Holdings Limited and its subsidiaries with immediate effect from October 01, 2025, for a period of six (6) months, in addition to his substantive duties as Chief Operating Officer (COO). Prior to this occasion, he was appointed to act as CEO in September 2020, a position he held until January 2023. Additionally, he was first appointed to act as CEO from April to December 2019. Ian holds an MSC Food, Science & Technology from the University of the West Indies and BSC Chemistry and Bio-Chemistry. He attained his MBA certification (with Distinction) at the Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business, where he also earned the Best Student Award 2007. He is also a certified Distiller having earned his diploma in 2025 from the Chartered Institute of Brewing and Distilling (CIBD) where he is also a professional member. This serves as a testament to his expertise, dedication, and professional excellence in spirits manufacturing, thereby rounding off an exclusive career in the alcoholic drinks industry.
<https://angostura.com/>

RUM CONSORTIUM 2025

In celebration of Queensland Rum Day last month, the Beenleigh Distillery once again joined forces with some of the state's most iconic distilleries, Bundaberg, Nil Desperandum, Kalki Moon and Burdekin Rum, to craft the Rum Consortium's exclusive 2025 release. This remarkable blend unites the finest aged rums from all five distilleries, ranging from 2 to 12 years old, capturing the bold character and craft of Queensland rum in every drop. It is a true expression of collaboration, craftsmanship and the spirit of the Sunshine State of Australia.

Since 1906 "Queensland Rum" is defined by Australian law as a spirit of at least 37% ABV obtained by the distillation in Queensland and maturation in Queensland by storage in wood for at least 2 years of a fermented liquor derived from the products of sugarcane, being distillation carried out in such a manner that the spirit possesses the taste, aroma and other characteristics generally attributed to rum. Queensland Rum is most commonly made from molasses but can also be made from sugarcane juice, sugarcane syrup and sugar.
<https://www.beenleighrum.com.au/>
<https://www.bundabergum.com.au/>
<https://burdekinrum.com.au/>
<https://nildesperandum.com.au/>
<https://kalkimoon.com/product-category/spirits/rum/>

RHUM SAINT JAMES

This year is the 260th anniversary of the founding on Saint James. Since 1765, Saint James has been making rhum agricole using pure sugarcane juice from its own plantations. Perpetuating traditional methods of distillation and aging, Saint James is certified A.O.C Martinique and is a leader in the rhum agricole category. The year has been filled

with celebrations and competitions. The highlight of the anniversary will be the release of Cuvee 260. Spirits Business reports that it will be crafted from six distinct vintages, with each vintage selected with precision, and all drawn from single casks and carefully aged barrels. The combination of vintages from 1997, 1998, 2001, 2004, 2006 and 2009 has subsequently created a blend that showcases both the unique identity of each harvest and the unmistakable style of Saint James rum. The 1997 vintage, aged over the course of 18 years in American oak barrels, brings candied citrus, rancio and cigar box notes, while the 1998, a 16-year-old with notes of rich spices, fruit and silky oak tannins, adds remarkable balance. The dry harvest of 2001 highlights dried fruit and strong toasted oak, while 2004's low yield brings intensity with roasted, nutty, and forest floor aromas. Aged for 18 years in French oak, 2006's vintage adds length, marmalade sweetness and chocolaty smoothness, while 2009's vintage, the youngest at 15 years, contributes lively, woody notes with soft roasting. Last month Saint James also released Cuvée Transat 10 years, celebrating the 17th year of TRANSAT CAFÉ, the famous transatlantic crossing between Normandy and Martinique. Produced in a limited edition (1260 bottles for mainland France), this cuvée pays tribute to the passion and courage of those who cross the Atlantic, while celebrating the centuries-old know-how of the Martinique distillery.

<https://rhum-saintjames.com/>

PUSSEY'S RUM

Pusser's Rum announced the launch of Night Watch, a new limited-edition expression released to commemorate Trafalgar Day on 21st October 2025. Night Watch marks a bold new direction for Pusser's. It is crafted with Louisiana Blackstrap Molasses, prized as the finest in the world. The blend combines aged distillate from vintage wooden pot stills in Guyana with the deep, rich character of blackstrap rum, a style once synonymous with resilience and strength in the Royal Navy. With its bold flavor, evocative depth and heritage-driven authenticity, Night Watch pays tribute to the steadfast sailors keeping vigil through the midnight watch, echoing the spirit of those who first received the daily rum ration aboard His Majesty's ships. Made from a blend of wooden pot and column still distilled rums, aged for up to a year, the Night Watch rum has molasses, caramel, island spices and Demerara on the nose and a rich, sweet, spicy and multi layered palate. This limited-edition release will be available to the UK on-trade and retail from 13th October 2025 from Paragon Brands.

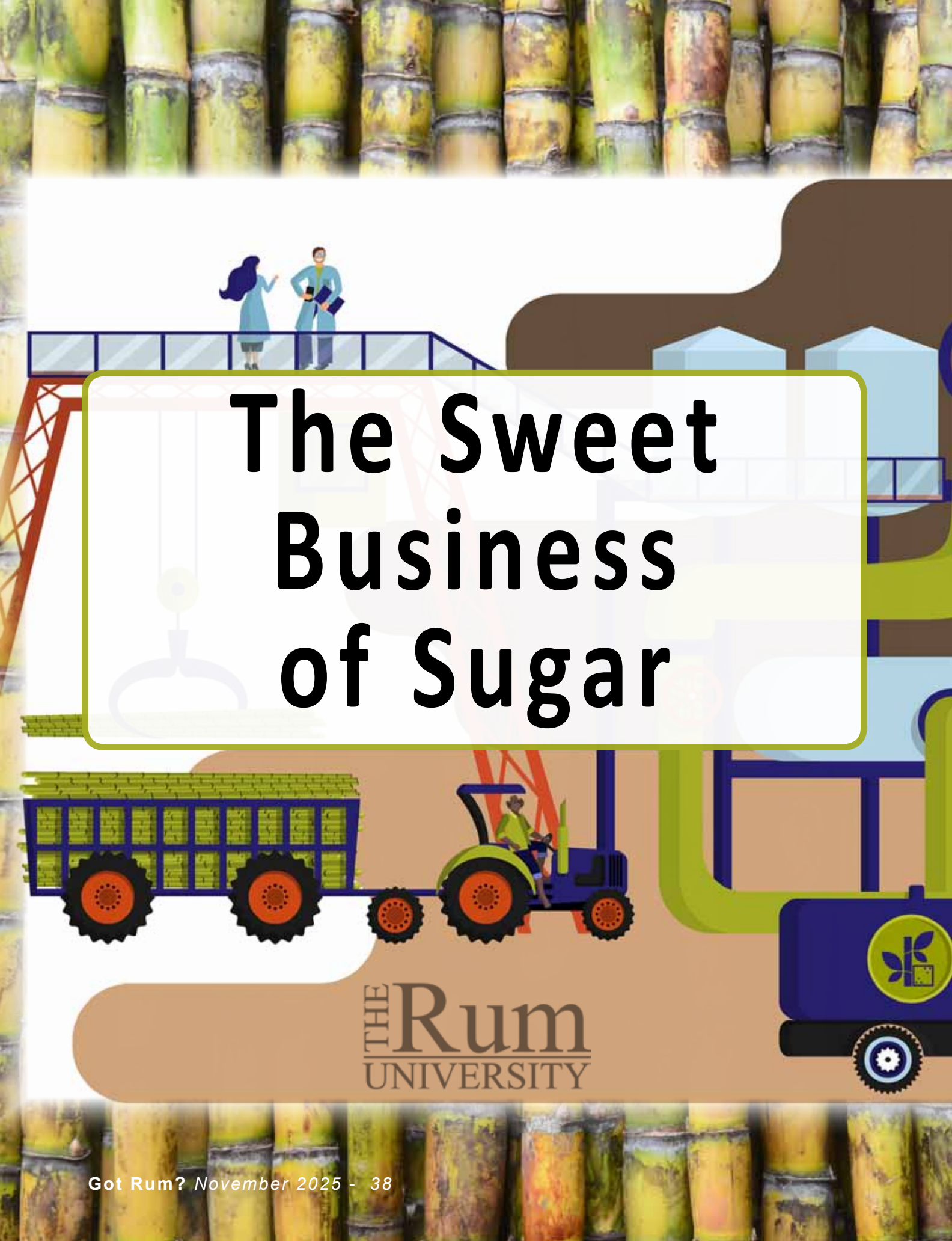
<https://pusser'srum.com/>

LA MAISON and VELLIER

Habitation Velier is a co-bottling project featuring exclusive bottlings created through partnership with some of the best rum producers in the world. The

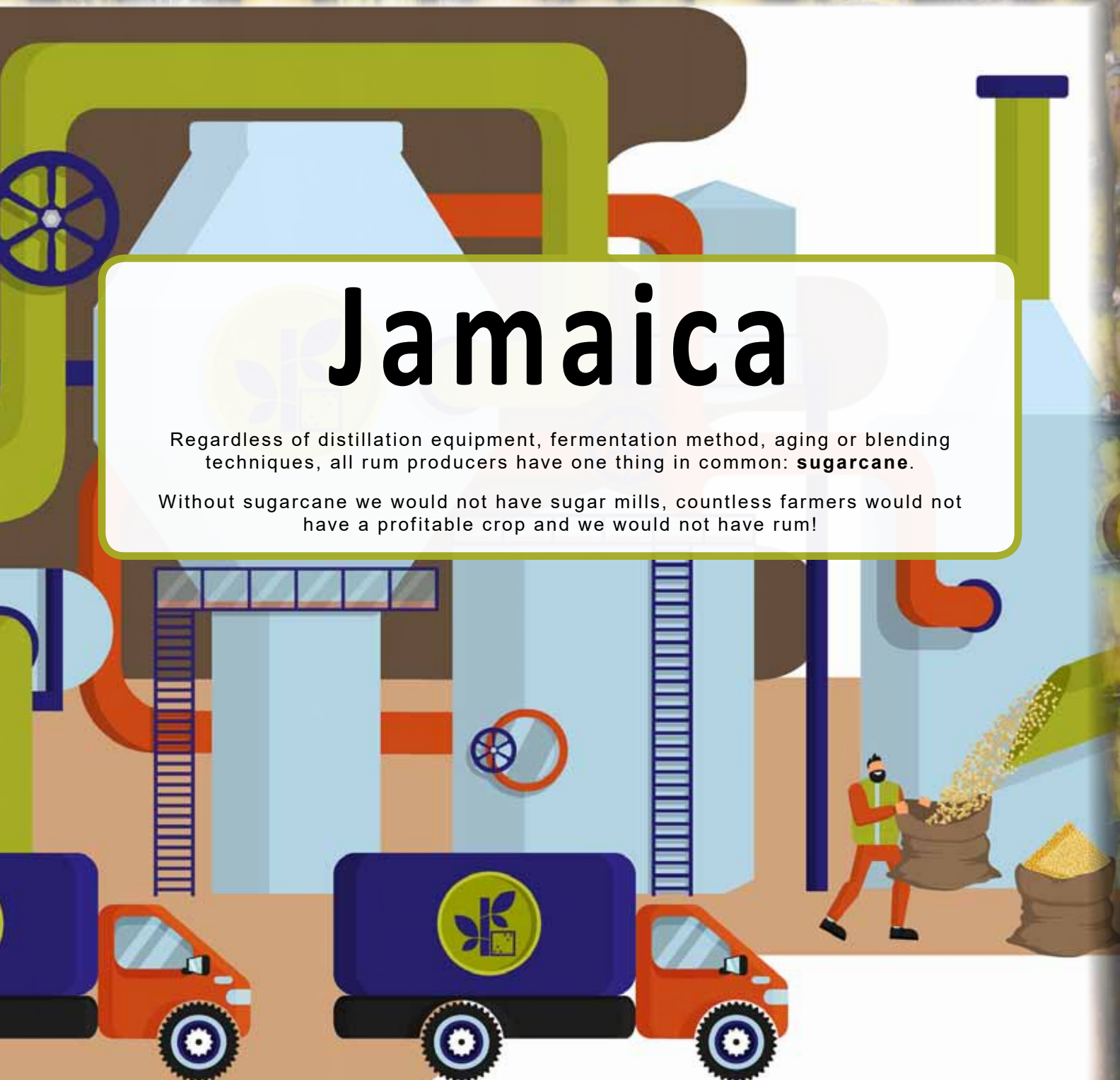
range is focused on 100% pot still rums which are entirely aged in (often tropical) conditions of the distillery. This range serves as a didactic research project into the depths of pot still distillation to create awareness of stylistic differences between types of pot stills, distillery styles, regionality and specific production methods of the liquid. Habitation Velier is bottled at full or high strength with no sugar, coloring or additives. The latest releases are:

- **HABITATION VELIER RENEGADE OLD BACOLET.** This is the first time Habitation Velier has bottled a white rum from the Renegade distillery in Grenada, which closed in 2024. Situated on a flood plain between two small rivers, the area benefits from sedimentary soil and a high-water table, producing lush cane. This version is made from the Cain sugarcane variety grown in Old Bacolet, a farm located on the south coast of Grenada, making it one of the most windswept farms in the country. Bottled at 55% in 750 ml, this bottling shows a congener content of 328.1 g/hLAP.
- **HABITATION VELIER SAVANNA HERR.** HERR is an acronym coined by Savanna itself, meaning "High Ester Rum Reunion," which denotes its defining characteristic: an exceptionally high concentration of esters, which contribute to intense fruity and funky aromas. As a grande arôme, HERR is produced from molasses and is double distilled in a pot still, a method that captures intense aromatic compounds. The production involves a uniquely long fermentation process (typically 5-11 days) and utilizes specific bacterial cultures, added to the molasses wash (often with vinasse), to cultivate the high ester profile. Sought after by rum enthusiasts and collectors for its distinctive character, Habitation Velier Savanna HERR is bottled in 700 ml unaged at a high proof of 62% abv with a congener count of 499.9 g/hLAP.
- **HABITATION VELIER MHOBA LONG FERMENTATION.** Habitation Velier's inaugural unaged Mhoba release is made from pure N49 + N57 cane juice, both local varieties that grow in the Mpumalanga River Valley in the northeastern South Africa. The cane juice comes from freshly cut cane that has been grown organically and manually crushed in a handmade press. This blend showcases a dual fermentation process: the primary component undergoes a long 28-day wild fermentation using pressed cane juice and dunder from previous distillations. Additionally, a smaller portion of the blend is produced through a 14-day wild fermentation process with a higher organic content which creates a distinctive profile. After distillation in custom-made stills crafted by the master distiller himself, the new make is collected in separate cuts and only the finest cuts are then blended. Bottled at 66.2% in 700 ml, this bottling has a congener content of 3019.7 g/hLAP. <https://www.lmvusa.com/>



The Sweet Business of Sugar

THE **Rum**
UNIVERSITY



Jamaica

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

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

Required Report: Required - Public Distribution

Date: April 17, 2025

Report Number: JM2025-0002

Report Name: Sugar Annual

Country: Jamaica

Post: Kingston

Report Category: Sugar

Prepared By: Rasheeda Hall-Hanson

Approved By: Eric Baylor

Report Highlights:

Production for Jamaica sugar is projected to fall to 33,000 metric tons (MT) for marketing year (MY) October 2025 to September 2026, consistent with the ongoing downward trend observed in the industry. Labor shortages, elevated production costs and antiquated equipment remain the main limiting factors affecting production in the country. Despite the sliding production forecast, Jamaica plans to continue exporting raw sugar to the United States under the World Trade Organization (WTO) tariff-rate quota program, while also meeting both domestic and regional demand, especially in markets where prices are favorable.

Production

Table 1: Production, Supply, and Distribution

Sugar Cane for Centrifugal	2023/2024		2024/2025		2025/2026	
Market Year Begins	Dec 2023		Dec 2024		Dec 2025	
Jamaica	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Area Planted (1000 HA)	14	0	14	14	0	14
Area Harvested (1000 HA)	6	0	6	6	0	6
Production (1000 MT)	415	0	410	429	0	422
Total Supply (1000 MT)	415	0	410	429	0	422
Utilization for Sugar (1000 MT)	407	0	402	421	0	414
Utilization for Alcohol (1000 MT)	8	0	8	8	0	8
Total Utilization (1000 MT)	415	0	410	429	0	422
(1000 HA), (1000 MT)						

Table 2: Production, Supply, and Distribution

Sugar, Centrifugal	2023/2024		2024/2025		2025/2026	
Market Year Begins	May 2023		May 2024		May 2025	
Jamaica	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Beginning Stocks (1000 MT)	4	4	4	4	0	4
Beet Sugar Production (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cane Sugar Production (1000 MT)	36	36	34	35	0	33
Total Sugar Production (1000 MT)	36	36	34	35	0	33
Raw Imports (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Refined Imp. (Raw Val) (1000 MT)	60	60	60	60	0	60
Total Imports (1000 MT)	60	60	60	60	0	60
Total Supply (1000 MT)	100	100	98	99	0	97
Raw Exports (1000 MT)	7	7	7	7	0	0
Refined Exp. (Raw Val) (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	7
Total Exports (1000 MT)	7	7	7	7	0	7
Human Dom. Consumption (1000 MT)	89	89	87	88	0	86
Other Disappearance (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Use (1000 MT)	89	89	87	88	0	86
Ending Stocks (1000 MT)	4	4	4	4	0	4
Total Distribution (1000 MT)	100	100	98	99	0	97
(1000 MT)						

Sugar Production

For MY 2025/2026, sugar production is projected lower at 33,000 metric tons (MT) from 422,000 MT of sugarcane, primarily driven by high production costs, labor challenges, and outdated equipment. In MY 2024/2025, Jamaica's raw sugar production is estimated at 35,000 MT, produced from approximately 429,000 MT of sugarcane.

Sugar Cane Production

The planting area is expected to remain flat at 14,000 hectares in MY 2025/2026 given that only two sugar mills are presently operating in the country. Additionally, area harvested is estimated to remain relatively steady from the previous period if challenges, such as availability of labor, input supplies, and factory inefficiencies continue.

For MY 2024/2025, roughly 50 percent of the approximately 14,000 hectares dedicated to sugar cane cultivation is expected to be harvested due to long-standing constraints encumbering the industry.

Recent data from the sugar industry show a sustained underperformance in major production areas for both raw sugar and sugar cane. Figure 1 indicates raw sugar output slid from 42,000 MT in MY 2021/2022 to 35,000 MT in MY 2024/2025. Meanwhile, the volume of sugar cane milled also trended downward compared to the same marketing years. However, a modest rebound is expected in 2024/2025 due to higher harvest expectations and marginal gains in yields.

Figure 1: Quantity of sugar production and sugar cane milled in Jamaica between 2021/2022 and 2024/2025 production years.



Source: Graph constructed using data from Sugar Industry Research figures
* estimate; ° forecast

Due to ongoing challenges in the sugar industry, former sugarcane cultivation areas have now been repurposed for housing and other cash crops, further exacerbating the decline. The government has also redistributed lands, which were previously under sugarcane cultivation for other agricultural undertakings.

Most sugar mills have ceased operations in recent years, leaving only Pan Caribbean and Worthy Park operating in raw sugar production. Jamaica's reliance on imported refined sugar persists due to current limitations in manufacturing capacity, a situation that is expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

To support the industry, the Government of Jamaica (GoJ) continues to provide transportation subsidies, particularly to small sugarcane farmers, to offset costs associated with transporting sugarcane to factories.

Table 3: Sugarcane production for crop year 2023/2024

Factory	Company	Estate Area Reaped (HA)	Farmer Area Reaped (HA)	Total Area Reaped (HA)	Estate Cane Milled (MT)	Farmer Cane Milled (MT)	Total Cane Milled (MT)	Raw Sugar Produced (MT)
Appleton	Campari	0.00	900.00	900.00	0.00	44,327.53	44,327.53	0.00
Frome	Pan Caribbean	1,852.20	681.17	2,533.37	121,556.21	28,988.14	150,544.35	12,142.71
Worthy Park	Worthy Park (includes Monymusk farmers)	2,095.06	1,468.39	3,563.45	154,720.41	79,683.02	234,403.43	23,493.42
*	Everglades	0.00	27.35	27.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
GRAND TOTAL		3,947.26	3,076.91	7,024.17	276,276.62	126,464.31	429,275.31	35,636.13

* Farmer-reaped sugarcane is generally transferred to one of the above factories for processing.

Source: Sugar Industry Authority (Preliminary) 2025

Consumption

Local sugar consumption for MY 2025/2026 is forecast to drop to 86,000 MT (26,000 MT of raw sugar and 60,000 MT of refined sugar) compared to MY 2023/2024. On average, per capita consumption of sugar in Jamaica fluctuates, but remains approximately 82 lbs.

The manufacturing sector in Jamaica consumes most of the imported refined sugar. However, in recent years, the Ministry of Health and Wellness, as well as the Heart Foundation of Jamaica, have jointly launched a national campaign warning against excessive sugar intake. In response, some manufacturers have lowered sugar content in their products. Since 2019, the GoJ has proposed a tax on all sugary beverages to discourage consumers from purchasing products with high sugar content. To date, the GoJ is still deliberating legislation to implement this policy, which if enacted, would undoubtedly further curb both raw and refined sugar consumption in Jamaica.

Annually, the spirits' industry uses an estimated 100,000 MT of molasses and 5,000 MT of raw sugar. Though other sweeteners are available locally, their market share remains minimal compared to cane sugar, which continues as the preferred choice among consumers.

Trade

Jamaica has historically exported sugar to the European Union (EU) under the European Union Sugar Protocol (EUSP), which extended benefits to countries in the African, Caribbean, and Pacific (ACP) group. Under the EUSP, Jamaica could ship raw sugar to the EU at a premium price and import raw sugar for domestic consumption at a lower price.

In 2009, the EUSP was replaced by the Economic Partnership Arrangement, which reduced the price difference between the world market price and that of ACP countries. In 2013, the EU revised its Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), known as [EUCAP](#)¹, effectively removing the preferential price enjoyed by ACP countries. This policy change led ACP countries, such as Jamaica, to operate under regular market conditions, characterized by high input costs and low efficiency relative to other global sugar markets.

The changes to the EU policy reshaped Jamaica's raw sugar marketing strategies. Currently, sugar is primarily used for domestic purposes, and exported to the Caribbean, the United States (under pre-determined quotas), and in modest quantities to the EU, even at reduced prices.

Despite the lower production forecast for MY 2025/2026, local industry intends to continue supplying sugar to the United States, though the entire quota may not be filled, as indicated in recent years. In 2024, Jamaica exported 4,500 MT of raw sugar to the United States, out of the 11,834 MT allocated. Sugar produced also satisfied domestic and other export markets, including to the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

Jamaica expects to continue importing refined sugar since it is not produced locally. Imports are projected to remain relatively stable for the outyear. In 2024, Jamaica mainly imported refined processed sugar from Guatemala, Colombia, and the United Kingdom.

Stocks

Generally, producers maintain stock levels at 4,000 MT of raw sugar due to prohibitive storage costs. Importers also stock a limited amount of refined sugar.

Policy

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Mining (MoAFM) oversees Jamaica's sugar industry, governing policies related to land usage, irrigation, subsidies and other matters.

Under MoAFM, the Sugar Industry Authority (SIA) is the regulatory body that exercises oversight in areas of arbitration, research and development and monitoring and evaluation. The SIA also regulates the marketing of sugar and molasses.

¹ <https://www.cepal.org/en/publications/3173-impact-changes-european-union-import-regimes-sugar-banana-and-rice-selected>

Initially, the Jamaica Cane Products Sales (JCPS) Limited served as a private marketing company created in 1994 to issue marketing licenses to factories it represented under the jurisdiction of the SIA, as these factories lacked individual licensing capabilities for their own products. However, subsequent policy changes by the GoJ rendered JCPS obsolete, leading to its closure in 2018, as the SIA began directly issuing licenses to sugar factories.

The Jamaica Country Strategy for the Adaptation of the Sugar Industry (JCS)² is the primary policy guiding the Jamaican sugar industry. The JCS I (2009-2015) was designed in response to the EU's policy changes that regulated sugar export trade in ACP countries. Following the revisions, prices paid to ACP countries for raw sugar fell by 36 percent.

The *JCS II (2016-2020)*, updated by MoAF in July 2019, outlines three main strategic objectives:

- i. developing and maintaining a sustainable private sector-led sugar cane industry with diversified product offerings;
- ii. strengthening social resilience, economic diversification, and environmental sustainability in Sugar Dependent Areas (SDA);
- iii. maintaining progress towards the GOJ's macroeconomic goals.

The policy, which is currently in effect, adopts a three-phase approach: transition, transformation, and consolidation. These updates aim to minimize industry risks, while opening avenues to boost revenue streams. MoAFM envisions a comprehensive transformation of the sugarcane value chain, emphasizing the production of products beyond traditional commodities. Value-added prospects include the production and generation of energy products, such as ethanol, refined sugar, as well as the expanded production of premium products, such as rum and other spirits.

Marketing

Pan Caribbean Sugar Company and Worthy Park Estate are the only two sugar marketing agents in Jamaica. These companies have been licensed by the GoJ to market their own products, which allows them the authority to set their own pricing strategies. Refined sugar, which is entirely imported, is distributed to retail markets and various manufacturers of beverages and baked goods by independent companies. The pricing of sugar within Jamaica is set by marketing agents and verified by the SIA. Current local sugar prices are outlined in table 2 below.

Table 4: Price of sugar

Type of Sugar	Prices (US\$/pound)		
	Producer to wholesaler	Wholesaler/Importer to retail	Retail to consumer
Raw	N/A	0.81	1.06
Refined	N/A	1.13	1.50

²<https://jis.gov.jm/cabinet-approves-revised-country-strategy-for-the-sugar-industry/>

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The background of the entire page is a photograph of a large, cylindrical stone mill. A large, dark, circular metal gear is visible on the left side of the mill. The mill is surrounded by lush green trees and foliage. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent white rectangular box in the upper half of the image.

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 C. S. BELL CO.

1896

CLIMAX

NO 2

THE WISCONSIN FARMER.

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

Vol. XV.

MADISON, JANUARY 1, 1863.

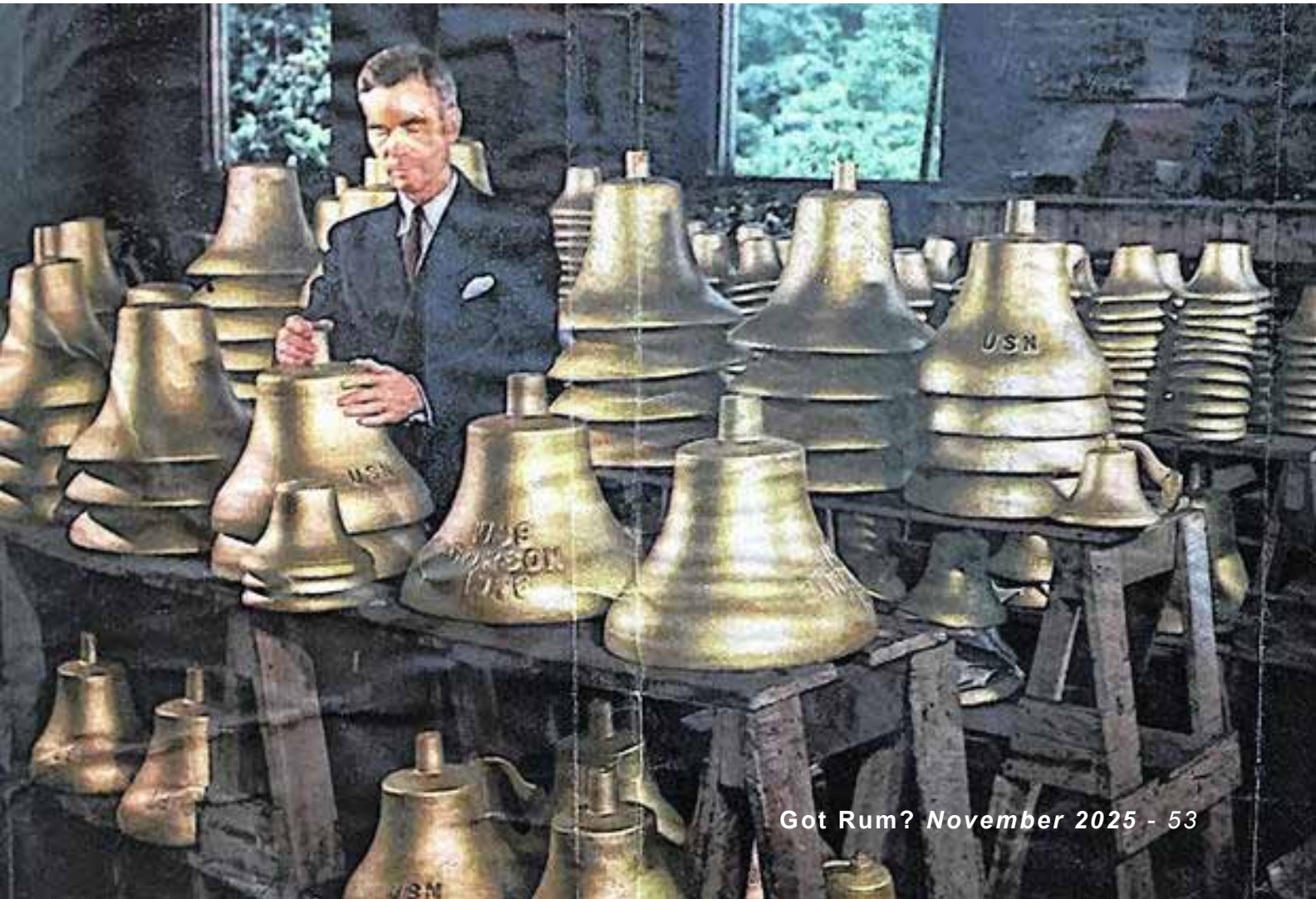
No. 1.

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!



CIGAR & RUM PAIRING

by Philip Ili Barake





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

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

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

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

Philip
#GRCigarPairing



My Space

For a long time, I've wanted what every serious cigar smoker needs: my personal Bergère-style chair, where I can comfortably and quietly smoke, with a great view of the Strait of Magellan. I ordered it and it was delivered to me just in time for this pairing.

I took advantage of a sunny day; I opened up all the windows and set out to create an excellent pairing. For the cocktail, I opted for a Rum Manhattan. If you have many options in your rum bar, choose a rum with a dry character, ideally with heavy alcohols (fusel oils). For this cocktail, I selected Angostura 1919, an 8-year-old rum from Trinidad & Tobago.

The recipe is a classic one, but it has room for small adjustments. I did a 3 x 1, meaning 3 ounces of rum for each ounce of Vermouth Rosso. As we've done in the past, I chilled the serving glass. I mixed the ingredients in a cocktail shaker, with ice cubes, to dilute the mix slightly so the combination is not as intense.

For the cigar, I had to select something no longer than a Robusto, due to the smoking time. I opted for one that I've smoked a lot, especially when I don't have a lot of time. I selected a Casa Magna Maduro Robusto, from Quesada Cigars, with a very dark wrapper, very oily texture, with freshly brewed Espresso notes and toasted/charred coconut. This cigar line normally has a medium-high intensity, and this particular cigar was no exception.



Photos credit: @Cigarili



Photo credit: @Cigarili

This type of pairing has a long-lasting aftertaste, the character of both the cigar and the rum linger on the palate, changing the pH of the saliva. For this reason, it is imperative to use a “rough” cocktail, with strong leather notes. I refer to the smell of a dark leather jacket that has been well kept for a very long time; these notes are usually at the core of good memories and are similar to the ones left on the palate with this pairing.

What changes would I make to this pairing if I didn’t have either of these products? I would not change the format or the cigar, nor would I decrease the cigar’s intensity. Rums like the Angostura 1919 are not as flexible in

their mixability as lighter, more common rums, so it would have to be replaced with a rum with a similar congener composition.

I think that I accomplished my mission to enjoy a pairing on my new chair, with a fantastic view. Clearly this is the first of many more pairings. I imagine every reader also has a special place for pairings too and I hope that this pairing will help you remember the first cigar you enjoyed in that special place.

Cheers!
Philip Ili Barake
#GRCigarPairing



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