

Got Rum?®

SEPTEMBER 2026

FROM THE GRASS TO YOUR GLASS, SINCE 2001!



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



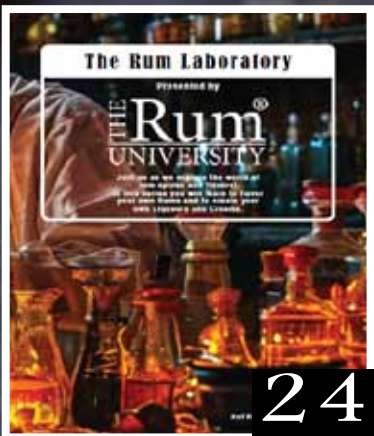
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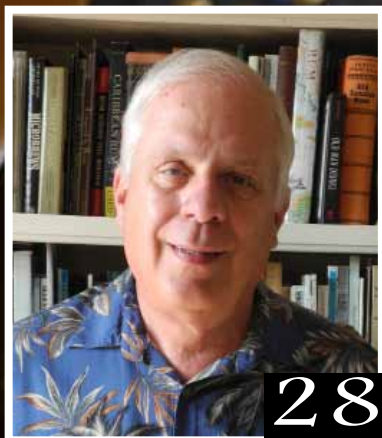
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WWW.GOTRUM.COM

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FRONT COVER: Summer Unraveled
INSIDE SPREAD: Rum Sour Hour

FROM THE EDITOR

Balance is a Journey, not a Destination

Have you ever tried to see how long you can stand on one foot, without losing your balance? If so, you'll probably recall all the muscles that start twitching in your leg, and elsewhere throughout your body, as you try to remain balanced. Your extremities start to move almost involuntarily, and quite possibly your breathing also becomes irregular. But as soon as you achieve balance, everything seems to be blissful and perfect, even if only for a few seconds.

If you have practiced meditation, then you are also familiar with the "*beginner's mind*" and the struggles to clear your thoughts and to focus your attention.

An ordered house (or office) also represents a finite point in time, an isolated moment of bliss or perfection, one that is invariably followed by the chaotic nature of our everyday lives, with an unescapable power of disorder.

In business, it is as in life: balance is momentary, yet it takes a lot of effort to achieve it. And despite its finite nature, most of us work hard for it. In these chaotic times, it may seem like the amount of effort we pour into trying to achieve balance far outweighs the balance we get in return.

If you are facing such struggle, remember Albert Einstein's advice:

"Life is like riding a bicycle.

*To keep your balance,
you must keep moving."*

My article last month (on optimism and courage) prompted several emails from



readers, many of them chiming in with similar views and attitudes. This month's article is a continuation of that message, since both optimism and courage are forms of "fuel" needed for action.

If you are on a personal or commercial journey and you find yourself in a place other than where you'd like to be, evaluate the "fuel" you're using, change if needed and, in the words of Einstein, keep moving.

Cheers!

Luis Ayala, *Editor and Publisher*

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

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

THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft



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

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

Cheers!

Crossfire Hurricane Gold Rum

In 2024, the rum world witnessed the release of the first incarnation of the Crossfire Hurricane rum to the market as part of the Rolling Stones' Hackney Diamonds tour. The rum disappeared from the shelves quickly, and they were rumbling that it was being reimagined from a multi-island blend into something new. Earlier this year, the announcements went out that the newest incarnation had arrived. The Rolling Stones partnered with Ian Burrell and created two expressions for the Crossfire Hurricane brand, the Gold and the Reserve Batch 0001. During the collaboration process of creating this new rum, they decided to use 100% Jamaican with rums sourced from Clarendon, Hampden, Long Pond, and Worth Park Estate distilleries. This tied directly with the band's history on the island where they lived and created music, most notably the 1973 album "Goat Heads Soup."

The Gold expression uses unaged pot still rum, and a blend of pot and column still rums that have been aged in used bourbon barrels for up to five years. The components are blended into the final product at 40% ABV. No additives are used during the production of this rum.

Appearance

The 700 ml gold-capped bottle is an interesting design that is easy to spot on the shelf. The front of the bottle has the minimum amount of information one is used to viewing on a label. It is all about the name, the lips logo with the sound waves, and letting light cut through the amber liquid, drawing attention to the bottle on the shelf. The back of the bottle is loaded with information, along with the legal requirements and tiny autographs from Mick Jagger and Keith Richards.

The metal cap has the Rolling Stones logo on top and holds a synthetic cork. The short neck of the bottle makes it difficult to do a controlled pour due to the heftiness of the

glass bottle. The neck label notes that the rum is from batch 0001.

The liquid, as mentioned, is a solid light amber, and swirling the liquid creates thin bands that thicken and quickly release several waves of fast-moving legs. The bands thicken and evaporate, leaving a significant bit of residue around the glass.

Aroma

The aroma of the rum hits with a strong banana note; light mineral and vegetal notes and acidic pineapple and citrus notes together create a light funkiness to the product. Herbaceous vanilla, toasted coconut, caramel, and light oak notes round the experience out.

Palate

The first sip delivers a sweet swirl of fruit flavors and vanilla, followed by caramel and toasted coconut from the aroma. Additional sips reveal more of the funky flavors built into the liquid, with cooked bananas, dried tobacco, acidic pineapple, and baking chocolate, rounded out by a sturdy mango note and smoky pepperiness that keeps the wood tannins in check. All of this culminates in a light fruit laden finish that lingers on the tongue and slowly fades in a pleasantly dry finish.

Review

When a brand states that a rum in their portfolio is branded “gold,” I tend to think of minimally aged cocktail ingredient products, and most of the time that is exactly what is engineered. This time the blenders have delivered something that is an enjoyable entry-level introduction to Jamaican rums. The funkiness that makes this genre of rum so unique is present, but at 80 proof, it is not overly pronounced and never dominates the profile. I enjoyed sipping the rum and would have no problem sharing it with a neat pour. However, I tested it in a few cocktails and learned that the flavor profile melds well in citrus forward drinks.

It is interesting to see a rum brand be reformulated and recreated so quickly, but from presentation to final sip, Crossfire Hurricane is a good expression to add to your rum repertoire.



www.crossfirehurricane.com

THE ANGEL'S SHARE

by Paul Senft

R.L. Seale's Old Brigand Barbados Rum

During my first visit to Barbados in 2011, my wife and I visited the Foursquare Rum distillery for the first time. Back then the company was known for making R.L. Seale, Doorly's, Tommy Bahama, and Old Brigand. The distillery and rums they make have changed, and distiller Richard Seale has become a trusted voice in the international rum industry. The Old Brigand brand was purchased from the Alleyne Arthur Company by the R. L. Seale and Company in 1993 and is still being produced today. The product is a blend of pot and column still rums that have been aged in used bourbon casks for five years and blended to 43% ABV before bottling.

Appearance

The 700 ml is a standard Madeira bottle design with a metal screw cap. The liquid holds a golden amber color in the bottle and glass. The label provides the basic information about the rum with the "Brigand" centered on the label over a map of Barbados.

Swirling the liquid creates a medium band that slowly thickens and releases a couple of waves of tears before leaving pebbles around the glass.

Aroma

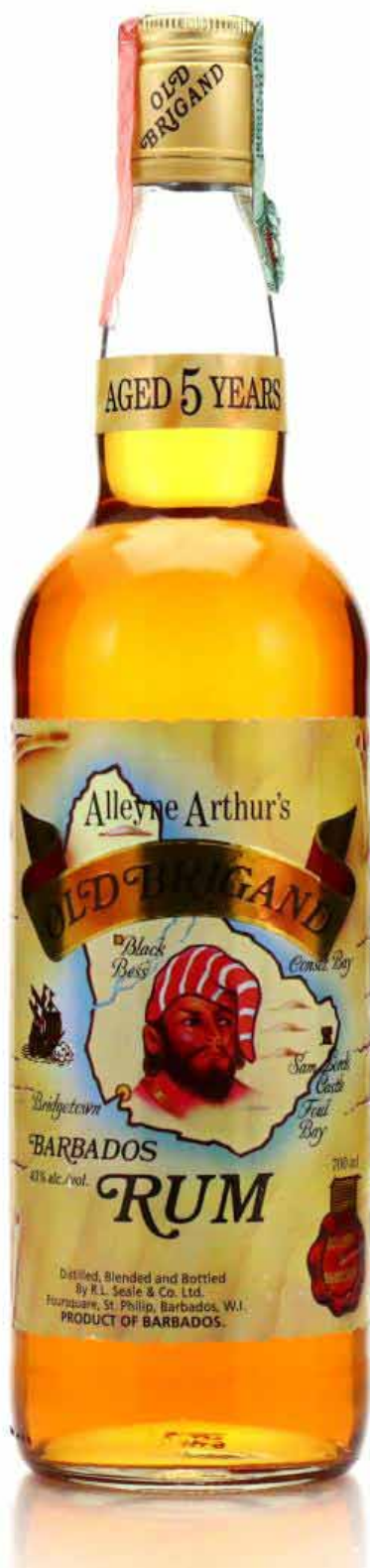
Caramel apple, honeyed vanilla, clove, and baking spices dominate the aroma. As the rum settles, the light char and wood spices and mineral notes intermingle with the other notes.

Palate

The first sip delivers a light buttery mouthfeel with a rush of spicy vanilla custard. Additional sips reveal notes of dark chocolate toffee, cinnamon, cloves, and nutmeg. There is a touch of dried orange peel and toasted oak tannins punctuated by black pepper notes. The wood notes begin to dominate, and mineral rich tobacco notes form what becomes a nice long finish.

Review

When visiting Barbados, it is easy to spot establishments featuring the Old Brigand logo, and along with Mount Gay, it was easily the most recognizable brand seen around the island. This rum is a workhorse rum for Foursquare Distillery, easy to sip, and multifunctional in a large range of cocktails. From rum and cola to traditional rum punches to tropical and Tiki cocktails and even hot buttered rum, Old Brigand does a good job augmenting a flavor profile and not getting lost in it. A great deal has changed at Foursquare Rum Distillery, but it is good to see that the tried-and-true Old Brigand products continue as a cornerstone for the historic brand.



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COOKING WITH RUM

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

by Chef Susan Whitley





Spiced Rum Carrot Cake

Ingredients:

- 2 C. All-Purpose Flour
- 1 tsp. Baking Powder
- 1 tsp. Baking Soda
- 1 tsp. Ground Cinnamon
- ½ tsp. Ground Nutmeg
- ½ tsp. Salt
- 1 C. Granulated Sugar
- 1 C. Brown Sugar
- 1 C. Vegetable Oil
- 4 Large Eggs
- 3 C. Grated Carrots
- ½ C. Crushed Pineapple
- ½ C. Spiced Rum
- 1 tsp. Vanilla Extract
- 1 C. Chopped Walnuts (or Pecans)

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (175°C).
2. Grease and flour two 9-inch round cake pans.
3. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt.
4. In a separate large mixing bowl, combine both sugars and vegetable oil. Use a hand mixer (or stand mixer) to beat until well combined. Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Slowly stir in the grated carrots, crushed pineapple, spiced rum, and vanilla extract. Mix well together.
5. Gently stirring, gradually add the dry ingredient mixture to the wet mixture. Do not overmix! Combine the ingredients just until you no longer see dry flour. Overmixing

can cause the cake to get dense and tough rather than having a light and fluffy texture.

6. If you are adding walnuts (or pecans), gently fold them in now.
7. Divide the batter evenly between the two prepared cake pans. Use a spatula to spread the batter evenly in the pans.
8. Place pans in the middle rack of oven and bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until cake tester (or toothpick) comes out clean from center of cakes.
9. Remove cakes from oven and allow to cool in the pans for about 10 minutes. Carefully transfer the cakes to a wire rack to cool completely.
10. Frosting: while the cakes are cooling, you can prepare the cream cheese frosting (recipe below).

Cream Cheese Frosting:

Ingredients:

- 8 oz. Cream Cheese, softened
- 4 C. Powdered Sugar
- ½ C. Unsalted Butter, softened
- ½ tsp. Vanilla Extract
- 1 Tbsp. Spiced Rum

Directions:

- In a mixing bowl, beat together cream cheese, powdered sugar, butter, vanilla extract, and rum until smooth and creamy.
- Preparing the Cakes- once the cakes are completely cool, place one cake on a serving plate and generously spread frosting on top. Place the second cake on top and cover the top and sides with the remaining frosting.

Other Options & Add-ons:

- **Gluten Free Option:** Substitute the all-purpose flour with a 1:1 gluten-free flour blend. Be sure to check that all your other ingredients, such as baking powder and sugar, are gluten-free as well. The resulting cake will still be moist and flavorful with all the wonderful spices intact.
- **Vegan Option:** Substitute eggs with flax eggs (1 tablespoon of ground flaxseed mixed with 2.5 tablespoons of water per egg) and replace cream cheese frosting with a vegan cream cheese or coconut whipped cream.
- **Add-ons:** Enhance your cake's flavor profile by incorporating $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of raisins and/or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of shredded coconut. These can add a new texture and flavor dimension to your cake. Be careful not to add too much of these moist ingredients, as they can affect the cake's texture.

Source:

<https://yummybric.com/spiced-rum-carrot-cake/>



Photo Credit: www.walnuts.org

THE RUM Mixologist

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

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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 warm, bokeh-style 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.



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THE RUM Mixologist

This Month's Cocktail: Queens Park Swizzle

The Queens Park Swizzle is one of the most well-known members of the swizzle cocktail family, drinks named for the tool used in their preparation. After you've added your ingredients, fill your glass halfway with the ice and place your palms on either side of the stick's shaft; slide your hands back and forth to agitate the ingredients until frost forms on the outside of the glass. If you don't have a swizzle stick on hand, you can also use a bar spoon for this step. This icy mix of demerara rum, mint, sugar, lime juice, and Angostura bitters has served as a delicious and eye-catching way to cool off since it debuted at the Port of Spain hotel (Trinidad and Tobago) in the early 20th century.

Ingredients

- 8-10 Mint Leaves
- 3/4 ounce Simple Syrup
- 2 ounces Demerara Rum
- 1 ounce Lime Juice, Freshly Squeezed
- 4 dashes Angostura Bitters, divided
- Garnish: Mint Sprig

Directions

1. Add the mint leaves and simple syrup into a Collins glass and gently muddle.
2. Add the rum, lime juice, and 2 dashes of bitters. Fill the glass nearly full with crushed or pebble ice and swizzle with a swizzle stick or bar spoon until frost forms on the outside of the glass.
3. Fill the glass with more crushed or pebble ice, mounding slightly above the top of the glass.
4. Top with 2 dashes bitters.
5. Garnish with a mint sprig.

A glass of amber-colored rum sits on a crumpled newspaper. In the background, several books are stacked, creating a library-like atmosphere. The lighting is warm and focused on the glass.

THE Rum[®] UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

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

www.RumUniversity.com

The Easy Eswatini Cookbook

by Amelia K. Ross

(Publisher's Review)

Savor the comforting flavors of Southern Africa with 100+ approachable recipes, a stunning full-color picture with every recipe, easy-to-find ingredients, and simple step-by-step instructions.

Craving smoky grilled meats, creamy groundnut sauces, warm maize dishes, nourishing greens, and traditional Swazi flavors-but worried the recipes may feel unfamiliar or complicated?

The Easy Eswatini Cookbook makes it simple to bring the warmth and character of Eswatini into your home kitchen. Created for cooks of every skill level, this collection uses familiar ingredients, straightforward methods, and clear instructions to help you prepare satisfying meals with confidence.

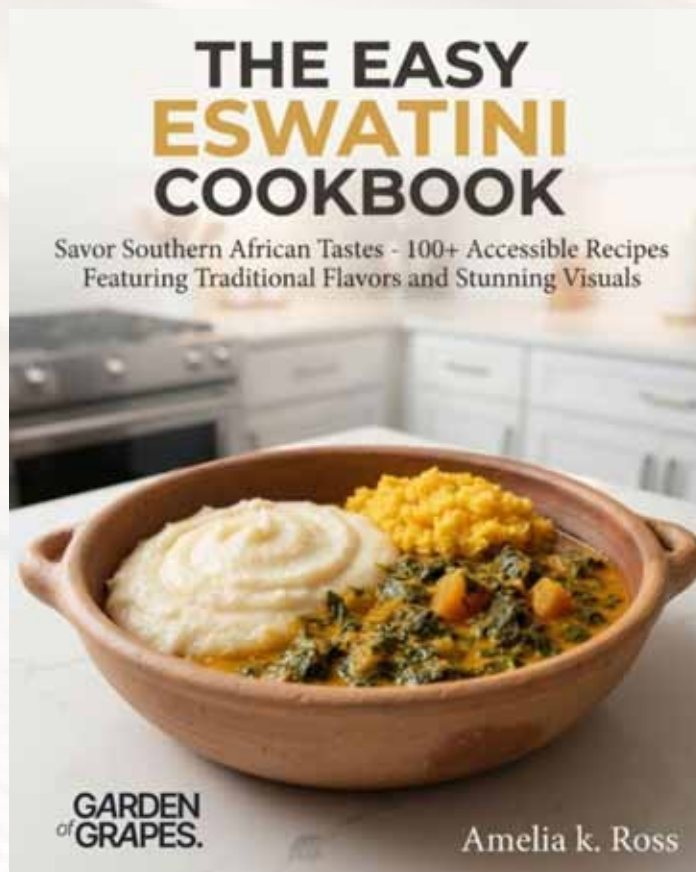
From nourishing breakfasts and quick lunches to hearty stews, grilled meats, bean dishes, vegetables, grains, breads, snacks, drinks, and desserts, you'll find delicious recipes for every meal and occasion.

Inside this cookbook, you'll discover:

- 100+ approachable Eswatini recipes
- A stunning full-color picture with every recipe
- Easy-to-find ingredients
- Clear, easy-to-follow steps
- Traditional Swazi flavors made approachable
- Recipes for every meal and gathering

Find satisfying dishes for busy weeknights, family dinners, relaxed weekends, celebrations, and generous meals shared with friends.

Imagine meat sizzling over a smoky grill while tomatoes, onions, and chilies simmer into a vibrant relish. Picture creamy peanut sauces, warm maize porridge, tender



beans, roasted pumpkin, flavorful greens, and welcoming platters placed at the center of the table.

Eswatini cuisine reflects the country's fertile landscapes, agricultural traditions, family gatherings, and generous hospitality. Maize, legumes, peanuts, vegetables, greens, and meats come together to create food that is simple, hearty, and deeply comforting.

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ISBN-13: 979-8295892912

Item Weight: 14.3 ounces

Dimensions: 8 x 0.4 x 10 inches



Eswatini's Traditional Marula Drink:

Buganu

Imagine a beverage so cherished that it warrants its very own annual festival. In the heart of Eswatini, this delightful concoction is celebrated for its unique flavours and its potency that adds a special spark to any gathering. We're talking about Eswatini's traditional Marula fruit drink, often referred to as "buganu." This exceptional brew is crafted from the succulent juice and pulp of ripe marula fruit, and its creation is a time-honoured tradition. Join us as we delve into the fascinating process of how this beloved drink is made, from peeling ripe marula fruit to the magic of fermentation, resulting in a beverage that captures the essence of Eswatini's rich cultural heritage. So, get ready to embark on a journey into the heart of Eswatini's culinary traditions and discover the secrets of this extraordinary Marula fruit drink.

Preparation time: 6 Hours

Ingredients:

- Marula fruits. The quantity depends on the desired yield.

- Sugar
- 20 Litres of Water
- 3 x containers

Directions:

1. Find at least three containers to work with. You'll need one container for raw Marula fruits, another for peeled Marula fruits, and a third for the peels. Having an extra pair of hands can be quite helpful during this process.
2. Peel the Marula fruits and place the peeled ones in a separate container. The peels should be collected in the third container.
3. Extract the Juice by using a specialised tool or your hands to smash the fruits and separate the meat from the stone. It may require some effort. Squeezing the fruits with your hands can make a difference and adding a little water when it gets sticky can help.
4. Adjust the consistency by pouring just enough water to make the juice look more like soup than paste. Smash and



squeeze the fruits further until the meat separates from the stone. Give a final squeeze to extract all the juices and then discard the leftover stones into an empty container.

5. Begin Fermentation by covering the bucket and leaving the mixture to ferment for a few hours.
6. After a few hours, you'll see clear juice settling at the bottom of the bucket while the rest floats to the top. Scoop off the top layer or foam, as it won't be used. You can now drink the sieved fruit juice.
7. Add the sugar and let sit for 2 more hours. If you wish to turn it into alcohol, let it ferment for 2 - 4 days (optional: add sugar each day you check if desired).
8. Once fermentation is complete, serve the Marula fruit drink in a cup or "lidziwo."

About the Tree

Sclerocarya birrea, commonly known as the *marula*, is a medium-sized deciduous fruit-bearing tree, indigenous to the miombo woodlands of Southern Africa, the Sudano-Sahelian range of West Africa, the savanna woodlands of East Africa and Madagascar.

The tree is a single-stemmed species with a broad, spreading crown. It is distinguished by its grey mottled bark and can grow up to 18 metres (59 ft) tall, primarily in low altitudes and open woodlands. The distribution of this species throughout Africa and Madagascar has followed the Bantu in their migrations. There is some evidence of human domestication of marula trees, as trees found on farm lands tend to have larger fruit size.







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The Rum Laboratory

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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

Lemon & Mint Rum Liqueur

(Mojito Liqueur)

Lemon and mint are a refreshing combination, the perfect match for a hot summer day at the beach or the park.

Ingredients

3/4 Cup Fresh Mint Leaves, loosely packed
1 1/2 Cup Light White Rum
1/3 Cup Fresh Thyme Leaves, loosely packed
1 Cup Refined White Sugar
2 Cups Water
1/3 Cup Fresh Lemon Balm, loosely packed
1/3 Cup Fresh Lemongrass
2 tsps Lemon Zest

Procedure

Coarsely chop the mint leaves and place them in a 1 liter container, add the rum, close the container with a tight-fitting lid and let the contents rest in a cool, dark place for 7-10 days.



Strain and discard the leaves. Coarsely chop the Thyme leaves and add them to the rum, cover and let it rest for an additional 7-10 days.

Make a simple syrup by combining water and sugar, constantly stirring over medium to high heat until it reaches the boiling point. Coarsely chop lemon balm and lemongrass and add to the syrup, boil for an additional 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat let stand for 5 more minutes and then strain and discard the solids.

Add simple syrup and lemon zest to rum mixture. Store the container in a cool, dark place and let it sit there for at least 2 months. Rack or filter if you want to remove sediments.

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RUM IN THE NEWS

by Mike Kunetka



LA MAISON & VELIER

LM&V has released VELIER BEENLEIGH 2013. The Beenleigh Distillery was founded in 1884 and it is Australia's oldest operating distillery. Located in Queensland on northeastern coast of the country, it is in the heart of an area known for its sugarcane. The history of Beenleigh forms part of the heritage of Australian rum, including being an historical supplier of the British Royal Navy. Beenleigh produces its rums from local water and molasses. Distillation first takes place with a traditional single column still and then in a pot still. This pot still is called 'The Old Copper' and it's a vat still similar to the old Demerara ones. The rums are then aged in large wooden vats and ex-Bourbon barrels. This release was distilled in single column and redistilled in the distillery's pot still in August and September 2013. This rum has been aged in ex-bourbon barrels in the tropical climate of the Beenleigh warehouse, with a total angel's share of more than 25%. Bottled overproof at 59% abv. Additive-free.

<https://www.lmvusa.com/>



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.

MONTANYA RUM

Montanya Rum has announced the development of a truly notable advisory committee, comprised of some of the most reputable, globally recognized experts across the wider beverage industry:

- Jeff Sarfino, Chairman & CEO, Lanterna Distributors, Inc.
- Jimmy Bruton, Experienced alcoholic beverage leader with over 30 years of experience, most recently serving as CMO for Via Carota Craft Cocktails.
- Michelle Ivey, A proven brand builder who helped scale Illegal Mezcal from early growth through its acquisition by Bacardi, with a track record of building culturally resonant premium brands across spirits, hospitality, and lifestyle; CEO of Lake Hour Cocktails and Co-Founder of Como No Energy.
- Sivan Cotel, Strategic executive and board leader with 20 years of experience, including a decade+ launching new startups and managing profit/nonprofit boards to drive business performance and client service excellence.
- Taylor Foxman, Founder & CEO, The Industry Collective.
- William Kehler, Liquor and Beverage Industry Veteran with over 12 years of experience; having launched 3 product lines across whiskey, flavored shots, and hemp beverages; expertise in social media influencer marketing, new product formulation, and supply chain.

Expertise across the advisory board encompasses notable tenured work across finance, communications, marketing, venture capital, go-to-market, commercialization, and operations, with 50+ years of industry experience. "Montanya has always been built around bold thinking, a sense of adventure, and the belief that world-class rum can come from the mountains of Colorado. As we enter our next stage of growth, this advisory board brings together experienced founders, operators, and brand builders who will challenge our thinking, expand our network, and help us scale with discipline, while staying true to the fun, adventurous lifestyle and strong sense of place that make Montanya Rum unique.," said Megan Campbell, CEO and Head Distiller of Montanya Rum. <https://www.montanyarum.com/home>

BEENLEIGH

The latest from Beenleigh is their 2026 XO Rare Release. Distilled in 2013 and matured for more than a decade in Queensland's tropical climate, this limited release pot still

rum has been carefully selected, cask by cask, by their Distiller Levi de Loryn to showcase the depth, richness and complexity that only time can create. They selected older parcels of rum to deliver even greater depth and character. Beenleigh also introduced a premium presentation gift box that better reflects the craftsmanship, heritage, and story behind Beenleigh rum. To further enhance the drinking experience, XO Rare 2026 is bottled at 43% ABV, creating a smoother, more approachable palate while retaining the rich complexity and long, warming finish that defines this exceptional rum.

<https://www.beenleighrum.com.au/>

KRAKEN

The Kraken Spiced Rum makes its ready-to-drink debut with two offerings in the UK market with classic flavors: Kraken Black Spiced & Cola combines its signature spiced black rum with cola and a hint of lime.

Black Spiced & Ginger mixes the rum with spiced ginger beer.

Their website also shows a Kraken Rum Punch, featuring a burst of tropical flavors and Caribbean spiced rum.

All three are offered at 5% ABV in a 330ml canned format. <https://www.krakenrum.com/>

PUSSER'S RUM

Calm Seas Painkiller® is a premium tropical fruit juice cocktail inspired by the legendary Caribbean drink that has captivated beach bars for decades, now reimagined with hemp-derived Delta-9 THC. Pusser's took the familiar flavors of pineapple, orange and coconut, blended them with real juice, and added a precise 5mg of Delta-9 THC for adult social occasions. The result is a juice-forward beverage that tastes like an island vacation.

It's everything you love about the iconic island cocktail, just lighter, calmer and made for a new kind of happy hour. The slim, 12-ounce cans feature 54% real juice and no alcohol. <https://pusser'srum.com/>

CASA BACARDI

For the first time, BACARDÍ rum is opening the doors of its legendary aging warehouses in Puerto Rico to the general public, giving visitors unprecedented access to the craftsmanship, heritage and innovation at the heart of its rum-making tradition. This experience is a result of a multi-million-dollar investment in warehousing and the visitor center experience and comes as the company celebrates 90 years in Puerto Rico, where it

operates the largest premium rum distillery in the world. The recent investment Bacardi has made in Puerto Rico provides a new experience that allows visitors to learn about aging and blending processes. The new warehouses use technology and recycled materials to reduce impact and improve efficiency, all while increasing aging capacity. In addition, the new visitor experience has created additional jobs on site. This most recent expansion brings the company's total investment in Puerto Rico to more than USD 100+ million in the past five years alone. Edwin Zayas, Senior Director of Supply Chain for Bacardi in Puerto Rico and Jacksonville said "This investment represents the company's ongoing commitment to producing exceptional rums and preserving the craftsmanship that has defined BACARDÍ for generations. By continuing to invest in our world-class facilities and visitor experiences, we are honoring our heritage while offering new ways for consumers to experience the art of rum making." With the addition of the warehouses, visitors can now experience a new 90-minute-long 'Maestro's Walk' tour. The Maestro is the master behind every rum blend and guardian of the rum-making tradition passed down by the Bacardí family for seven generations. Visitors will follow the same walking path as a Maestro, right into the heart of the BACARDÍ rum aging process, where rum patiently matures. Once inside the aging warehouse, they can sample rum straight from the barrel and learn about the art and science of aging and blending. Katalina Puig, Casa BACARDÍ Senior Operations Manager added "We're excited to invite guests beyond the tasting room and into the heart of our rum-making process. Our new tour offers visitors a rare glimpse into our aging warehouses and an opportunity to immerse themselves in the tradition of 164-year-old craftsmanship that defines BACARDÍ rum."

<https://www.visitcasabacardi.com>.

BRISTOL CLASSIC RUM

For the rum collector, Bristol has an extremely limited, very rare, high-quality bottling of Jamaican Rum from the historic Long Pond Distillery. It was distilled in 1986, and was originally part of a private collector's personal stock and long aged in an ex-bourbon before being moved to Scotland, where it was bottled on December 6, 2018. Because it was originally intended for a small batch of private drinkers, only a tiny number of bottles exist, making this a rare opportunity to buy one for your collection. The Rum itself is the IRW mark (Ironshore Rum Wedderburn), and it has not been chill-filtered.

<https://www.bristolclassicrum.com/>

CADENHEAD'S

Cadenhead's is now offering monthly London Rum Tastings. This tasting experience lasts approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes and the next session takes place on Tuesday, September 29th. You will have the opportunity to taste 6 rums (6x15ml) during the tasting, featuring some rums from their May/June 2026 Rum Release, plus a few favorites from previous releases. As well as tasting some great rums, your host will also provide you with information on each of the rums featured, a brief history of Cadenhead's and more. Your host will also be happy to take questions. For more information, please contact the London shop directly via london@cadenhead.scot. <https://experience.cadenhead.scot/>

RUM TAX AS A PERMANENT FUND

Puerto Rican news source, The Weekly Journal, reported that Puerto Rico Representative Tatiana Pérez is looking to convert a portion of the revenue the territory receives from the federal rum tax into a permanent fund to finance scientific research, medical infrastructure, environmental projects, and technological development. House Bill 1350 proposes allocating a portion of these funds to create an Endowment Fund and investing and utilizing only the returns it generates in the future. In the past, Puerto Rico received between \$300 and \$400 million annually from the refund of federal excise taxes on rum produced on the island and sold in the United States. Starting in January of this year, the tax rate increased from \$10.50 to \$13.25 per gallon, which could bring the annual total to close to \$500 million. Under the current plan, 25% of these funds are allocated to incentives for the rum industry, and the rest is added to the general fund. "What this project proposes is that, instead of spending all that money year after year, a portion be dedicated to creating a permanent asset for Puerto Rico," stated Pérez, representative for the New Progressive Party (PNP) and author of the bill. The measure establishes that, after the current allocation of 25% of those funds for incentives to the rum industry, the Secretary of the Treasury will deposit annually into the new fund an amount equivalent to 20% of the revenue from the federal excise tax on rum. "What I'm seeking is to legislate with a sense of conscience and with future generations in mind, not to apply temporary fixes now, only to find ourselves having to solve the problem tomorrow, as is happening now," the legislator explained. According to the measure's explanatory memorandum, the fund's principal will remain

intact for the first five years. During that period, all interest and profits generated will be reinvested to increase the fund's assets. Once that term is over, the capital will remain permanent, and only the returns earned on its investments may be used.

BRUGAL RUM

Brugal announced the final installation of its limited-edition series: Colección Visionaria Edición 03, Coconut. Crafted by fifth generation Maestra Ronera, Jassil Villanueva Quintana, the new offering marks the completion of a three-part exploration into the Dominican Republic's heritage with a window into an ingredient deeply rooted in the culture of the island. Under the stewardship of Villanueva, Colección Visionaria Edición 03 continues the journey led by the first two releases, toasting French oak casks with Dominican coconuts creating a subtle, elegant character. The result is an attractive, tropical rum, deeply rooted in the brand identity, that maintains the layered complexity of the Colección Visionaria series. "Colección Visionaria was born from a desire to capture the beauty of my home, through 100% Dominican ingredients," says Jassil Villanueva Quintana. "For this final addition, I chose coconut because it is the rhythm of our island, from the shade of the palms to the ritual of coconut water shared among friends. In Colección Visionaria Edición 03, we have captured that warmth, creating a rum that is as much a tribute to our future as it is to our heritage."

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

DEMERARA DISTILLERS

Demerara Distillers has broken ground on a US\$10 million expansion of its facility on the Caribbean island of St. Kitts. The new multi-purpose complex will feature expanded bottling, packaging, and state-of-the-art warehousing capacity, positioning the facility as a pivotal hub to serve St. Kitts & Nevis, as well as surrounding island markets across the Eastern Caribbean. Beyond enhancing core manufacturing and logistics, the development will feature dedicated retail and commercial spaces, along with an interactive Heritage Center modelled after DDL's renowned Heritage Centre at its corporate headquarters in Diamond, Guyana. The St. Kitts Heritage Centre will curate and celebrate the rich history and cultural legacy of rum in the Federation, offering curated tours and immersive experiences for local visitors and international tourists alike. Speaking at the sod-turning ceremony, Prime Minister of St.

Kitts and Nevis, the Honorable Dr. Terrance Drew, welcomed the investment as a powerful testament to economic confidence and intra-regional partnership saying "Your decision to invest here sends an important message that our federation remains a jurisdiction in which serious investors can establish roots, expand their operations, and build enduring partnerships with our people." DDL Executive Chairman Komal Samaroo emphasized that the expansion reflects DDL's unwavering, long-term commitment to deepening its investments in the region and driving sustainable economic integration,

"Demerara Distillers has been an integral part of the business landscape in St. Kitts and Nevis for 31 years. This US\$10 million expansion is not merely an investment in infrastructure; it is an investment in our people, our heritage, and the future of regional trade. By expanding our bottling, packaging, and distribution capabilities, we are better positioned to supply regional markets while celebrating the shared historical craftsmanship of Caribbean rum through our new Heritage Centre"

<https://demeraradistillers.com/>

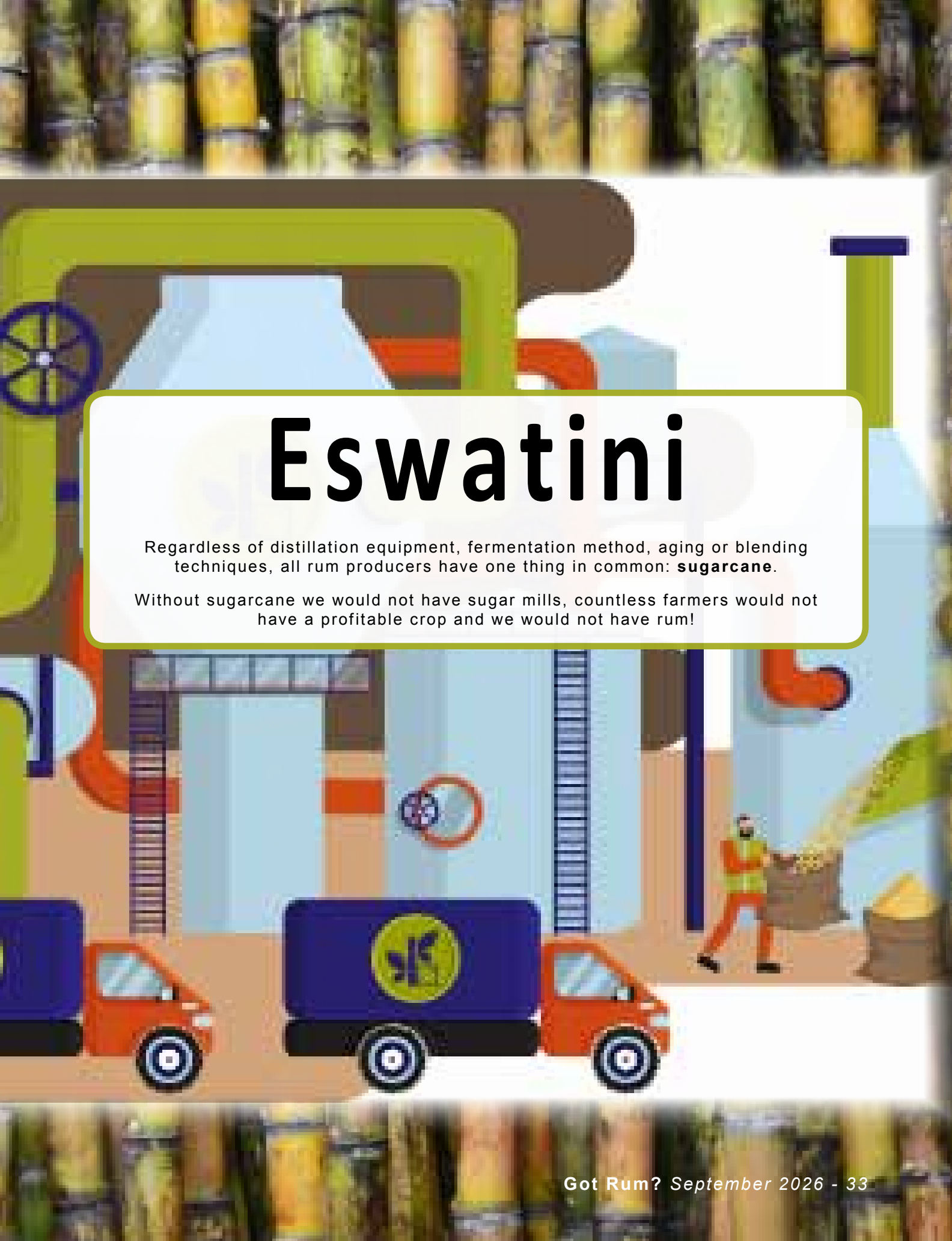
LAMB'S RUM

Corby Spirit and Wine Limited announced it has sold the Lamb's rum brand and certain assets to Maison des Futailles, L.P., a subsidiary of Phildan Inc., and Glen Turner Company Limited, a subsidiary of La Martiniquaise-Bardinet for \$39.2 million. Under the agreement, Phildan acquired the North American rights to the brand, while La Martiniquaise-Bardinet acquired the rights to the brand in the rest of the world outside North America. "Lamb's is one of Canada's most recognized rum brands, and we're proud to welcome it into our family. This acquisition strengthens our brand portfolio, expands our presence in the spirits category and reflects our long-term commitment to investing in brands with strong consumer recognition and significant growth potential," said Hugues Gauthier, President of Phildan. "Lamb's is a well-established brand in the United Kingdom that complements our existing portfolio and strategic objectives. We are excited about the opportunities ahead and committed to supporting the brand's continued success and building the next chapter of its long history," said Christophe Pichambert, International Director, La Martiniquaise-Bardinet. <https://corby.ca/en/>
<https://www.vinsdandurand.com/en/>
<https://www.la-martiniquaise.com/en/home-2/>



The Sweet Business of Sugar

THE Rum
UNIVERSITY



Eswatini

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 20, 2026

Report Number: SZ2026-0001

Report Name: Sugar Annual

Country: Eswatini

Post: Pretoria

Report Category: Sugar

Prepared By: Masego Moobi

Approved By: Oliver Flake

Report Highlights:

Sugar cane production in Eswatini is forecast to improve by two percent in MY 2026/27 year-on-year, based on expanded area under production and sufficient water for irrigation. Sugar production is forecast to increase from MY 2025/26 in line with sugar cane production. This expanded production is expected to increase exports by two percent, as Eswatini continues to supply its traditional markets. Eswatini received a sugar tariff rate quota allocation of 17,213 MT to the United States market for FY 2026.

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Executive Summary

- Sugar cane and sugar production:
- FAS/Pretoria forecasts that MY 2026/27 sugar cane production will increase by two percent from MY 2025/26, based on expanded planted area and normal weather conditions. Although the yellow aphid is a major pest affecting cane yields, infestations have reportedly decreased in affected areas due to preventative spraying. Sugar production is forecast to improve by two percent based on sustained cane recovery rates.
- Domestic consumption: MY 2026/27 domestic consumption is forecast to remain unchanged from MY 2025/26, based on available sugar supply.
- Exports: Sugar exports are forecast to increase by two percent in the MY 2026/27 year on year, based on increased domestic production. Eswatini is expected to supply its traditional markets: the Southern African Customs Union, United Kingdom, EU, and United States.

Report Notes

The marketing year (MY) for sugar cane is April-March, while the sugar marketing year is considered May-April. For the purposes of this report, refined cane sugar has been converted to raw value basis using a factor of 1.07.

Sugar Cane

Table 1: Production, Supply, and Distribution (PS&D) for Sugar Cane

Sugar Cane for Centrifugal Market Year Begins	2024/2025		2025/2026		2026/2027	
	Apr 2024		Apr 2025		Apr 2026	
	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Eswatini						
Area Planted (1000 HA)	64	61	0	63	0	64
Area Harvested (1000 HA)	60	60	0	62	0	63
Production (1000 MT)	5534	5359	0	5600	0	5700
Total Supply (1000 MT)	5534	5359	0	5600	0	5700
Utilization for Sugar (1000 MT)	5534	5359	0	5600	0	5700
Utilizatn for Alcohol (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Utilization (1000 MT)	5534	5359	0	5600	0	5700
(1000 HA) ,(1000 MT)						
OFFICIAL DATA CAN BE ACCESSED AT: PSD Online Advanced Query						

Area

FAS Pretoria forecasts that area planted in MY 2026/27 will increase by two percent, as FAS Pretoria contacts report newly planted cane area that will be harvested in MY 2026/27. New irrigated plantings reportedly replaced land previously under subsistence maize production. This forms part of a government project to integrate smallholder growers into commercial agriculture.

At the same time, growers are replanting some cane to enhance yields and are investing in solar-powered generators and drip irrigation systems. The cost of these investments limits further expansion of the total area under cane.

Growers and the industry anticipate several challenges, including expected increases in fuel and fertilizer costs due to the conflict in the Middle East. In addition, the electricity tariff rates are expected to rise by an average of 11.74 percent as of April 1, 2026, while global sugar prices are on a downward trend.

Despite these challenges, sugar cane remains the main enterprise for most growers, supported by the well-established sugar marketing channels of the Eswatini Sugar Association. FAS Pretoria revises MY 2025/26 area planted upwards to reflect the reported gradual expansion of irrigated cane area.

Production

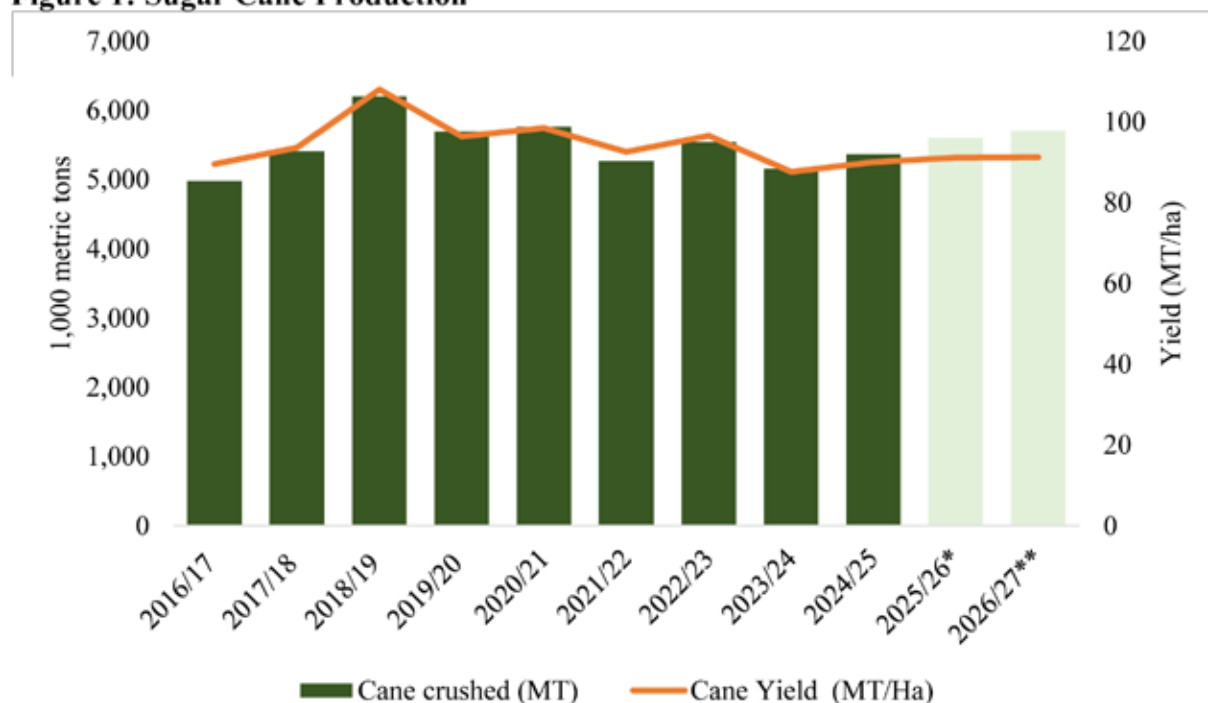
FAS Pretoria forecasts that cane production will improve by two percent, based on normal weather conditions, expanded planted area, and sufficient water for irrigation. Dam levels supplying water for sugar cane, including the Maguga and Mnjoli dams, are reported to be at full capacity due to sustained rainfall. Growers expect to harvest cane from April until early December. FAS Pretoria contacts reported that in MY 2025/26, some growers experienced cane lodging even with minimal wind conditions, which will likely continue to affect growers in MY 2026/27. Cane lodging can lead to sugar yield losses and increased harvesting costs.

FAS Pretoria contacts report that although yellow sugar cane aphid poses some challenge to cane yields, there is some reduction in areas affected due to increased mowing and preventative spraying. However, the leafhopper has emerged as a concern and is known to reduce sugar content and yields.

MY 2025/26 sugar cane production is revised upwards by 100,000 MT, representing a four percent improvement from MY 2024/25, based on sufficient irrigation water and expanded area under production. Typically, cane harvesting runs from April until November or early December. However, FAS Pretoria contacts report that early rains in December 2025 resulted in some cane being left for harvest in March 2026. In March 2026, Eswatini experienced some rains which further disrupted harvesting. Despite this, FAS Pretoria contacts plan to complete harvesting before the new marketing year begins in April. FAS Pretoria maintains MY 2024/25 cane production at 5,359 MMT.

Figure 1 shows sugar cane production and yields in Eswatini since MY 2016/17. Cane yields in MY 2026/27 are forecast to remain unchanged from MY 2025/26.

Figure 1: Sugar Cane Production



Source: Eswatini Sugar Association, Eswatini Cane Growers Association, & Post Forecast

*FAS Pretoria MY 2025/26 sugar production estimate

** FAS Pretoria MY 2026/27 sugar production forecast

Sugar

Table 2: Production, Supply, and Distribution (PS&D) for Sugar

Sugar, Centrifugal Market Year Begins Eswatini	2024/2025		2025/2026		2026/2027	
	May 2024		May 2025		May 2026	
	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post	USDA Official	New Post
Beginning Stocks (1000 MT)	68	68	174	104	0	155
Beet Sugar Production (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cane Sugar Production (1000 MT)	641	641	660	660	0	672
Total Sugar Production (1000 MT)	641	641	660	660	0	672
Raw Imports (1000 MT)	2	1	2	1	0	1
Refined Imp.(Raw Val) (1000 MT)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Imports (1000 MT)	2	1	2	1	0	1
Total Supply (1000 MT)	711	710	836	765	0	828
Raw Exports (1000 MT)	430	501	500	500	0	510
Refined Exp.(Raw Val) (1000 MT)	32	30	40	35	0	37
Total Exports (1000 MT)	462	531	540	535	0	547
Human Dom. Consumption (1000 MT)	73	73	73	73	0	73
Other Disappearance (1000 MT)	2	2	2	2	0	2
Total Use (1000 MT)	75	75	75	75	0	75
Ending Stocks (1000 MT)	174	104	221	155	0	206
Total Distribution (1000 MT)	711	710	836	765	0	828
(1000 MT)						
OFFICIAL DATA CAN BE ACCESSED AT: PSD Online Advanced Query						

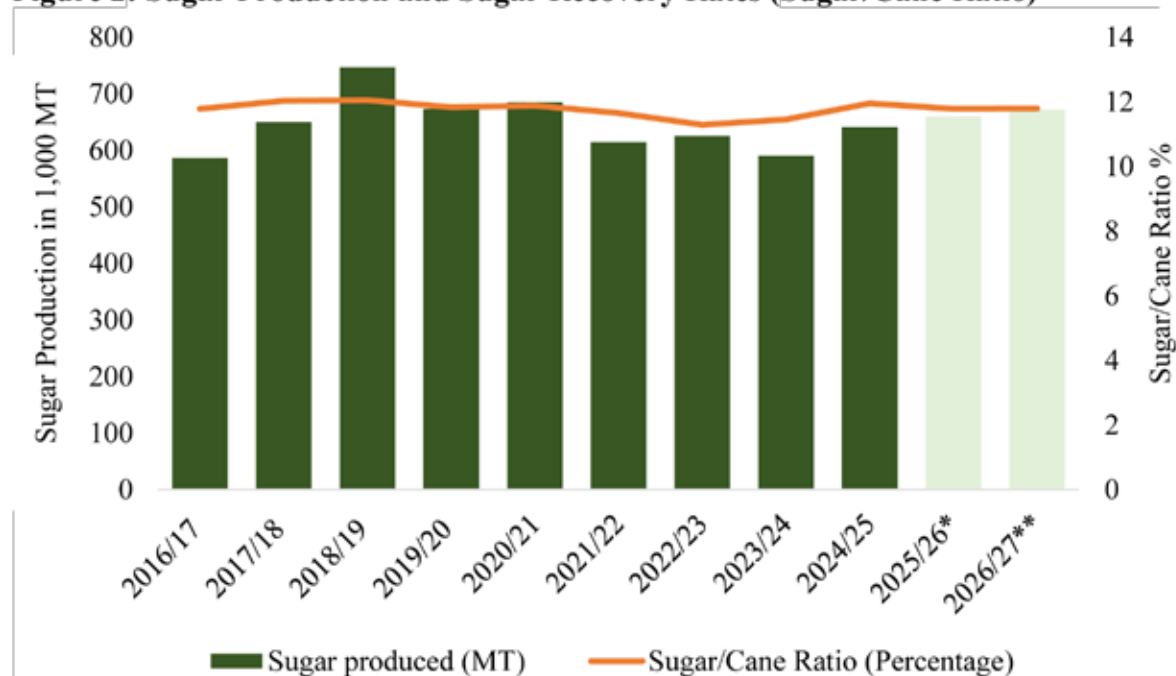
Production

FAS Pretoria forecasts that sugar production will increase by two percent, driven by improved cane deliveries and sustained sugar recovery rates. Millers conducted off-crop maintenance between January and March to prepare for MY 2026/27 crushing. Crushing is expected to run from April until early December.

FAS Pretoria maintains MY 2025/26 sugar production at 660,000 MT, reflecting a three percent increase from MY 2024/25 due to improved cane deliveries. FAS Pretoria contacts report that a major milling company is expanding, and some cane was diverted to another mill for crushing. In addition, some cane was not crushed in 2025 because of wet conditions; this cane was carried over into 2026 and is expected to be crushed in the last week of March

FAS Pretoria maintains MY 2024/25 sugar production at 640,738MT on finalized industry data.

Figure 2: Sugar Production and Sugar Recovery Rates (Sugar/Cane Ratio)



Source: Eswatini Sugar Association and FAS Pretoria Forecast

*FAS Pretoria MY 2025/26 sugar production estimate

** FAS Pretoria MY 2026/27 sugar production forecast

Consumption

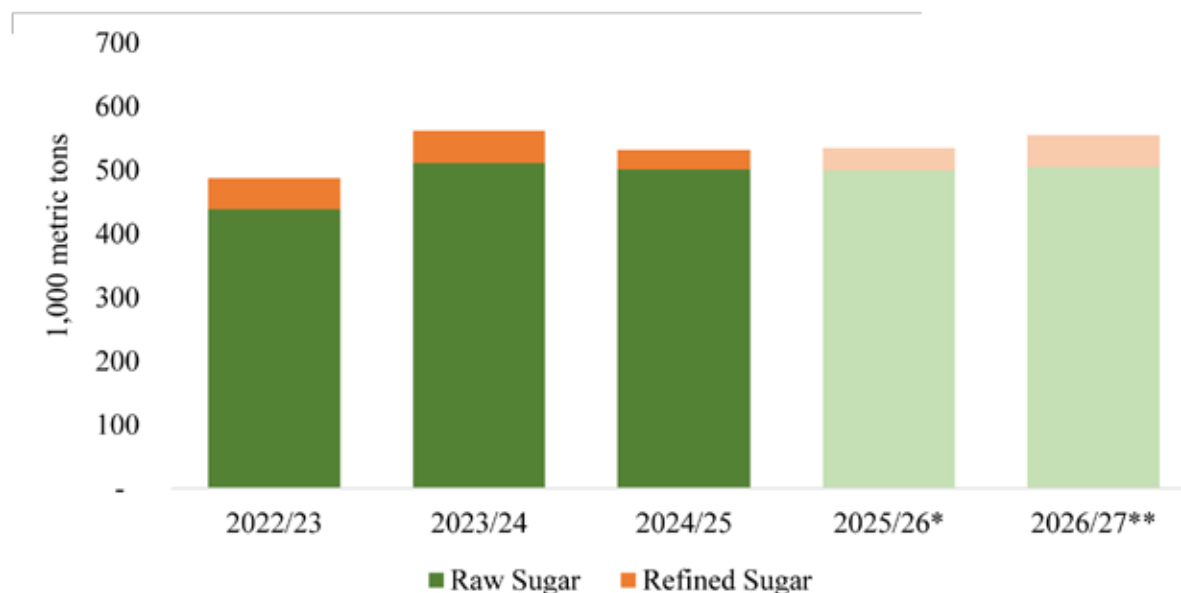
FAS Pretoria forecasts that MY 2026/27 sugar consumption will remain unchanged from MY 2025/26 on available supply of sugar. Per capita consumption of sugar in Eswatini is approximately 45.5kg, supported by improved market access in remote areas of the country, which are now serviced by large retail groups such as Shoprite under the Usave brand. FAS/Pretoria contacts report that there is gradual growth in demand for locally produced low Glycemic Index (GI) sugar in retail stores to appeal to niche consumers.

Eswatini enjoys strong sugar demand from food and beverage manufactures who use sugar as one of their main ingredients. The impact of alternative sweeteners on sugar consumption has thus far been insignificant in the country, and the local sugar industry is not concerned at this stage. However, given the increasing trend of using artificial sweeteners in South Africa, in the long run it is expected that Eswatini manufacturers may also adopt the use of artificial sweeteners to remain competitive in the region.

Exports

Eswatini traditionally exports raw sugar via the sugar terminal, Sociedade Terminal De Açúcar De Maputo (STAM) located in Maputo, Mozambique, which is jointly owned by Eswatini, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, and South Africa. On average, just over 90 percent of sugar exports from Eswatini are raw sugar exports (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Eswatini's Raw and Refined Sugar Exports



*FAS/Pretoria Estimate

** FAS/Pretoria forecast

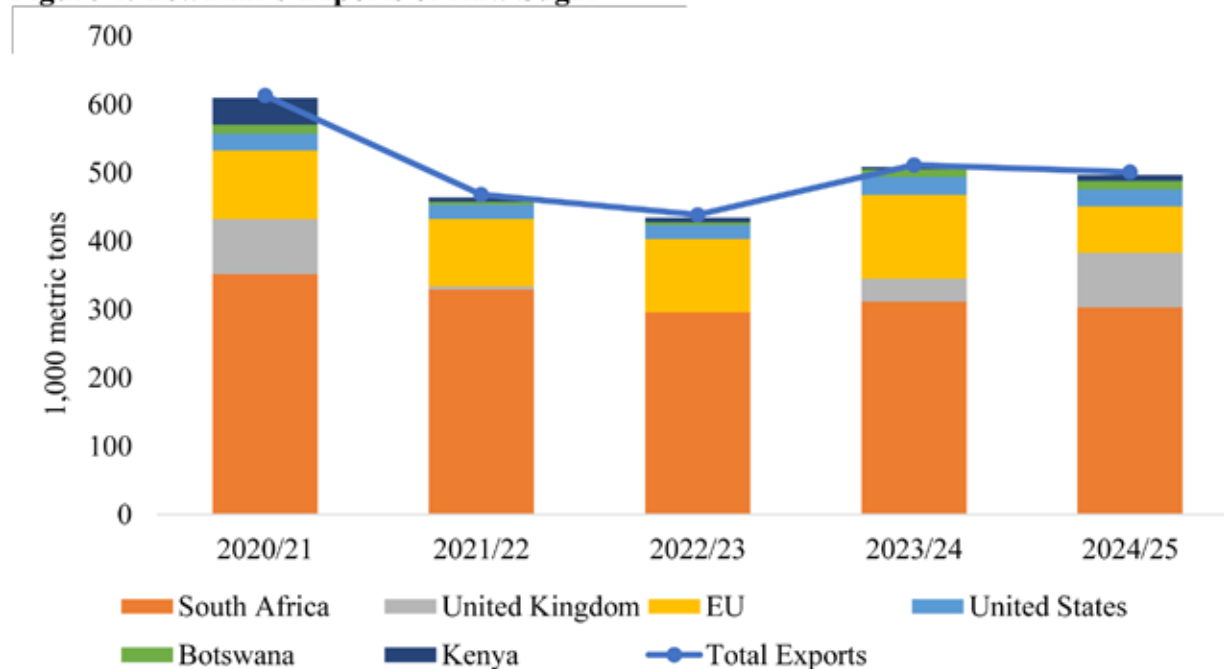
Source: FAS Pretoria using Trade Data Monitor, LLC. data

FAS Pretoria forecasts that MY 2026/27 total sugar exports (raw and refined sugar) will increase by two percent from MY 2025/26 based on expected improvement in sugar production, available stocks, sustained supply to the region, and the U.S. TRQ.

FAS Pretoria revises MY2025/26 total exports downwards by 5,000 MT based on the pace of exports through January 2026, particularly for refined sugar. South Africa, one of the leading markets for Eswatini's sugar, experienced a surge in imports from other countries in MY 2025/26. FAS Pretoria contacts report that discounts were offered to buyers in South Africa to encourage sales amid this increased competition. As a result, year-to-date exports of refined and raw sugar to South Africa increased by 24 percent and 12 percent, respectively. Therefore, FAS Pretoria estimates that MY 2025/26 total exports of sugar will increase by one percent from MY 2024/25. To support sales in South Africa, discounts may continue in MY 2026/27 while Dollar-Based Reference Price (DBRP) investigations by South Africa's International Trade Administration Commission remain ongoing (see South Africa's annual sugar report for more information on the DBRP investigations).

MY 2023/24 exports are revised upwards by 69,000 MT based on finalized trade data.

Figure 4: Eswatini's Exports of Raw Sugar



Source: FAS Pretoria using Trade Data Monitor, LLC. data

Eswatini exports sugar mainly to South African Customs Union (SACU) members, the EU, UK, and the United States, with smaller volumes to other African countries outside of SACU. SACU is the main market for Eswatini's raw (63 percent in MY 2024/25) and refined sugar (85 percent in MY 2024/25), with most exports destined for South Africa. As a member of the customs union, Eswatini has duty-free access into Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, and Namibia. In MY 2024/25 and MY 2025/26, non-SACU countries exported some sugar to South Africa, taking away some market share from Eswatini's exports. The EU is another large export market, as Eswatini has quota-free and duty-free market access for sugar exports to the EU under the Southern African Development Community-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (SADC-EU EPA).

Historically, Eswatini exported in-quota sugar to the United States duty-free; however, as of August 7, 2025, Eswatini's sugar is subject to both an in-quota duty and an over-quota duty based on weight. The United States is considered a premium market for Eswatini's sugar, with prices much higher than other export markets. Typically, Eswatini exports five percent of its raw sugar to the United States. On August 15, 2025, the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) announced a TRQ allocation for raw cane sugar of 17,213 MT for FY 2026 (October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026) (see Table 3). By November 2025, Eswatini had fully utilized its FY 26 TRQ.

Table 3: U.S. Tariff-Rate Quota Allocations for Eswatini Raw Cane Sugar, Refined and Specialty Sugar, and Sugar-Containing Products. (Values in Raw Value Metric Tons)

	Volumes in Metric Tons Raw Value		
	FY 2024 Oct 1, 2023- Sept 30, 2024	FY 2025 Oct 1, 2024- Sept 30, 2025	FY 2026 Oct 1, 2025- Sept 30, 2026
Initial Allocation	17,213	17,213	17,213
Unused Reallocation	5,802	0	
Increase Allocation	2,998	0	
Total	26,013	17,213	17,213

Source: FAS Pretoria using USTR information

The sugar industry marketing year runs from April to March, while the TRQ year runs from October to September, which results in the TRQ for two different FYs being recorded in one MY.

Imports

Eswatini's sugar imports are minimal due to the country's high production volumes, which typically far exceed domestic consumption. Eswatini's imports are mainly from South Africa and are less than 3,000 MT per marketing year.

Stocks

FAS/Pretoria forecasts that ending stocks will increase to 206,000 MT in MY 2026/27 as domestic production is expected to increase while the domestic demand is saturated. In MY 2025/26, South Africa experienced a surge in imports, which led to other deep-sea suppliers taking up some market share from Eswatini. This is likely to continue in MY 2026/27. The Eswatini Sugar Association owns the ending stocks of unsold sugar at the end of the season. Stocks held by retailers, wholesalers, and pre-packers are considered sold at the end of the season. Ending stocks greater than 40,000 MT pose a challenge to the industry as the Eswatini Sugar Association must pay storage fees and compensate millers and growers for any sugar not sold at the end of each season.

Trade Policy and Regulations

Sugar Marketing and Sales

The Eswatini Sugar Association (ESA) is responsible for marketing of all sugar produced in Eswatini (both raw and refined). The revenue obtained through the sale of sugar and molasses is shared between growers and millers based on an agreed process and formula guided by the Sugar Act of 1967 and the Eswatini Sugar Agreement. The ESA provides a rebate (discount) to value-added industries located within Eswatini to encourage and support domestic sugar sales.

SUGAR IN ESWATINI:

The lifeblood of communities across the country

2024/25
performance

Sugar produced

640 738 tonnes

(2024: 590 367 tonnes)

Production volume increased by 8,5% despite the challenges of climate change, pest and disease outbreaks, and production bottlenecks

Molasses produced

224 755 tonnes

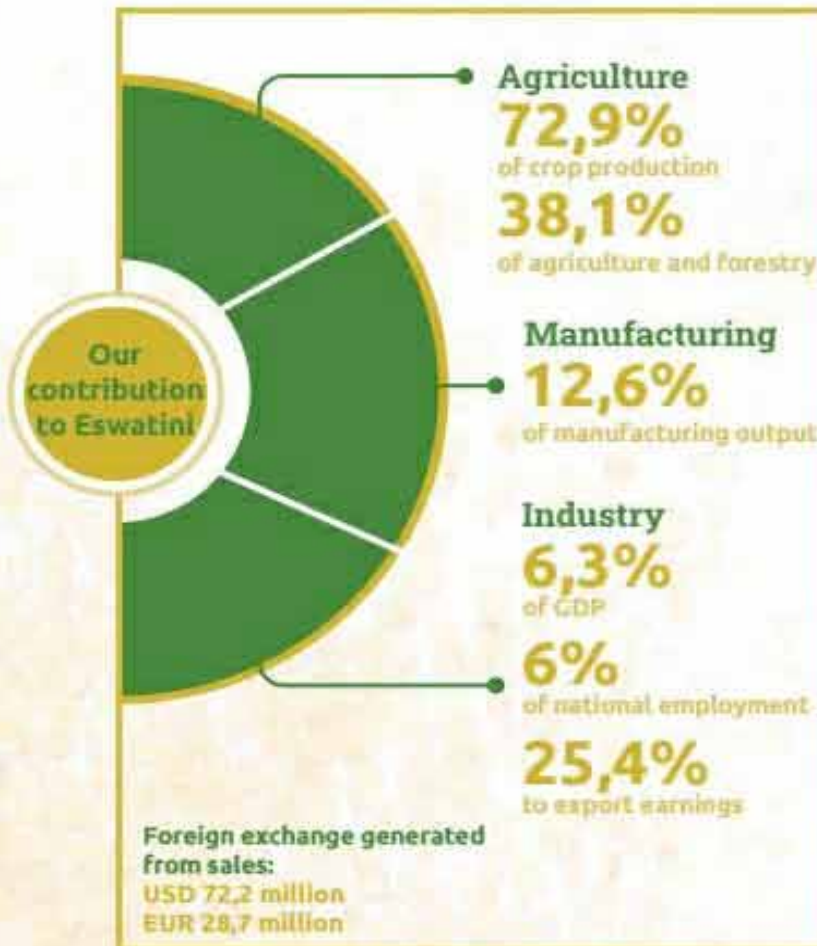
(2024: 226 623 tonnes)

Another year of record revenues

E7,7 billion

(2024: E7,4 billion)

Increase of 4% in revenue despite a downturn in global sugar prices



Our members

Net total amount to be shared amongst members is

E7,3 billion

68,1%
to growers

38,9%
to millers

Our outlook

- We are increasing efforts to adapt to climate variability
- Increased imports into the SACU region, driven by low tariffs and a strong Rand, undermines prices and results in lower returns
- Continued uncertainty of global trade policies
- The volatility of the regional and EU markets will require agility and responsiveness
- World market sugar prices are currently at a 4-year-low, at around 16c/lb (compared to an average of 19,89c/lb last season)

We are
changing from
**Eswatini Sugar
Association**

to simply,
Eswatini Sugar.



ES



**Eswatini
Sugar**



THE Rum[®] UNIVERSITY & RUM CENTRAL

Present

THE HISTORY AND SCIENCE OF THE BARREL

In the world of distilled spirits, nothing evokes elegance, sophistication and transformation more than barrel aging. The right barrels, in the right hands, can transform the mundane into the spectacular. Whether it is American, French, Colombian, Bulgarian or other oak variety, a well-made barrel is the magic chamber within which time slowly transforms the contents.

Join us as we explore the world of barrels. We'll take a deep dive into the physical and chemical transformations that take place inside the world's preferred aging vessels.





The History and Science of the Barrel

Lesson 9: Rum Transformation Inside the Barrel

Welcome to Lesson 9 of 12 of the Rum University's latest course! You can find previous lessons of this course by visiting the Archives page on www.GotRum.com, you can also find additional courses and material on the university's official website at www.RumUniversity.com.

Modern Day Alchemy

The sugarcane alcohol is in the barrel, patiently awaiting for "aging" to take place. What exactly will happen and how long will it take? Describing what will happen is relatively straightforward, but defining how long it takes is much harder. There are many variables to consider: type of wood used, type of char or toast, the aging warehouse's climate and, last but not least, the type of alcohol the barrels are filled with (light, medium or heavy).



What the alcohol will lose as it is converted into rum:

- Very light (volatile) components will be the first ones to evaporate. These alcohols are thinner and more easily absorbed and perspired through the oak staves.
- Because of the above, the proof of the alcohol will decline with the passing of the years. The highest loss will come in the first year, and losses after the second or third year will level out, as long as the barrel remains structurally sound and as long as the warehouse manager has a good practice for topping off barrels regularly (once to twice a year).
- Some aromas will be lost, especially when aging in charred oak barrels, due to the odor-absorbing effect of the inner surface carbon.

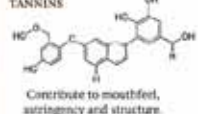
THE Rum UNIVERSITY

EXTRACTION FROM OAK (TANNINS & COMPOUNDS)

Ethanol in the rum extracts compounds from the oak, adding color, flavor and structure.

KEY COMPOUNDS EXTRACTED FROM OAK

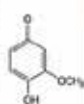
TANNINS



LIGNIN DERIVATIVES

(e.g., Vanillin)

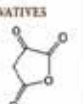
Add flavors of vanilla, spice and sweetness.



HEMICELLULOSE DERIVATIVES

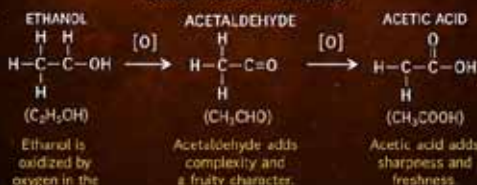
(e.g., Oak Lactones)

Add coconut, woody and spice notes.

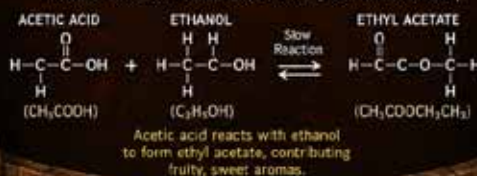


RUM AGING IN OAK BARREL

OXIDATION OF ETHANOL



FORMATION OF ETHYL ACETATE (ESTERIFICATION)



EVAPORATION (THE ANGEL'S SHARE)

Alcohol and water evaporate through the porous wood staves, concentrating flavors over time.

TYPICAL LOSS

~1-2% of liquid volume per year depending on climate and barrel.

THE RESULT

Over time, these chemical interactions create a smoother, more complex rum with richer color, deeper aromas and a well-balanced flavor profile.



VANILLA



COCONUT



DRIED FRUIT



SPICE



TOASTED OAK

What the alcohol will gain as it is converted into rum:

- Light to dark amber color. Toasted barrels will take longer time to impart color, while charred barrels will do so faster.
- Tannins. French Oak barrels that are toasted light to medium will impart the highest concentration of tannins. Charred American Oak barrels will take the longest.
- Other wood extractives will be delivered to the rum, resulting in increased mouth complexity and prolonged aftertaste. Lighter char levels tend to show more fruit esters and spice notes while darker char levels will extract more vanilla flavors and color into the rum.
- Complexity. The aromas and flavors mentioned in the previous bullets will continue to react with the oxygen inside the barrel, transforming into additional compounds.

When we stop to carefully analyze each and every step described above, it is hard not to compare the aging of rum to modern day alchemy (the art of transforming base metals into gold).

Our special thanks to Independent Stave Company for their support in our research of oak.

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



Light Coffee Old Fashioned

One of the hardest things for cigar smokers living in the southern hemisphere is finding calm days that allow for smoking outdoors. I was constantly monitoring the weather broadcasts for the following days, looking for the perfect window to plan the pairing, just like in the movie "Pressure." Finally it happened, the sky was clear and there was no wind, the ideal conditions to enjoy a smoke.

For this occasion, I thought about a cigar from AJ Fernandez, from the New World Connecticut line. I selected a Robusto (5 x 50), which allows for a relaxed smoking session of around 30 minutes. This cigar is marketed as having a medium intensity, Connecticut wrapper, binder from San Andrés (Mexico) and filler from Nicaragua and Brazil. Let's see if this blend is actually as it is described.

For the cocktail, I opted for a mixology classic, a Rum Old Fashioned, but with two added twists: the first one I had tried previously, which consists of coating the rocks glass walls with an espresso (to add the aromatic dimensions of coffee). The second twist was to avoid adding the sweetness and the bitterness from the original, classic recipe. For this reason, I decided to use a light rum, one that would balance itself against the coffee notes, with only an orange peel as garnish. The resulting cocktail was clean, light, with mild citric notes, with subtle coffee and bitter cocoa, reminiscent of the cocoa powder atop a Tiramisu. It was a smooth and ideal combination for this pairing.

Lighting up the cigar was a bit difficult, despite the absence of strong winds, but it finally lit up evenly, which was the goal. During the first third, the cigar's intensity level was on the low side of medium, but this was technically due to the good draw during this stage of the cigar.

Photos credit: @Cigarili





Photo credit: @Cigarili

As I sipped the cocktail, its flavors combined very well with those from the cigar, showcasing dry cocoa powder, paired with roasted coffee beans. The lack of sweetness did not come across as a deficiency. Quite the opposite, it helped maintain the balance as I progressed through the pairing. The rum by itself provided the sweetness which, when combined with the toasted components, produced an experience of dark tanned leather with a very classic bitterness dimension.

Even though the cocktail lacks the sweetness from a typical Old Fashioned,

selecting the right rum can have an impact on the final result, influencing the profile in a very meaningful way.

All the notes typically associated with sweetness were, in this case, augmented by the coffee, resulting in hints of cocoa, dry fruits and tanned leather, culminating in a dry and light experience that is definitely worth repeating.

Philip Ili Barake
#GRCigarPairing



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