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- Ron Abuelo Añejo
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- Sea Wynde
- Clarke's Court Superior Light Rum

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Up and Coming Rums

Attending the Annual Nightclub & Bar convention in Las Vegas is like participating in an automotive demonstration: not only do you get to "test drive" some of the latest models, but you also get a sneak peek into new rums that distillers and importers are working on. We know of several such rums that will be released during the course of this year and are anxious to review them for you.

On a separate story, notable exhibits included The Spirit of Hartford (Doorly's

Trader Vic's Navy Grog

Trader Vic's Premium Original Recipe Navy Grog Mix. Last month we had the pleasure of introducing many of our readers to Trader Vic's Mai Tai Mix. This month we'd like to add one more exotic destination by presenting another great mixer by Trader Vic.

Navy Grog Mix is, as history demands (to combat scurvy at sea and make

XO, Foursquare Spice), Distribuidora de Licores La Nacional/ Dana Wine-Spirits (Ron Zacapa Centenario), Cruzan, Appleton and Montecristo Rum to name a few.

Perhaps one of the most noticeable aspects of this year's show was the perceived decrease in the number of Tequilas and Vodkas compared to last year, and the increase in Rums. The winds of change are picking up speed even as we speak.

In the mean time I hope

the diluted daily ration more palatable), a sweet, citrus-based mixer. What better product to accompany the results of our Citrus Rum Challenge!

The nose is pleasantly sweet with elements of lime and nutmeg. Its medium body makes it a great mixer for golden and dark rums: anything lighter than that might get lost in the rich tapestry of

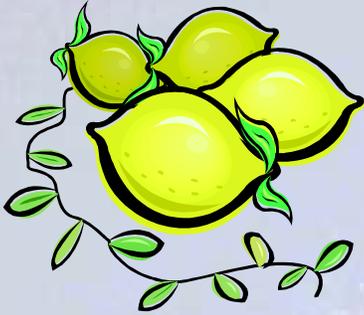
you will enjoy the results of our First Annual Citrus Rum Challenge and the great interviews with J. Wray & Nephew's Master Blender, Joy Spence, and with celebrated author Robert Plotkin.

Please share this newsletter with your friends and colleagues, help us spread the word about this most wonderful spirit. Until next time,

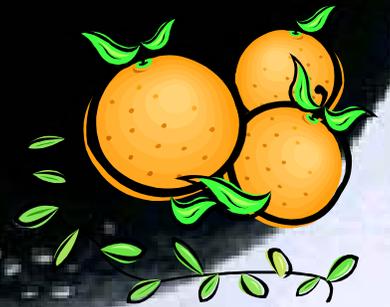
Luis K. Ayala
Publisher

taste and aroma. If you fancy a citrus rum drink, enjoy Navy Grog chilled or with large ice cubes and your favorite rum. Avoid finely crushed ice as it might dilute it too quickly. Enjoy!





2002 Citrus Rum Challenge!



LEMON/LIME RUMS:

Bacardi Limón

Baraima Citrus

Cacique Limón

Cruzan Junkanu

DonQ Limón

Flor de Caña Limón

Malibu Lime

Marti Mojito

ORANGE RUMS:

Bacardi O

Cruzan Orange

Santa Teresa
Orange Rhum

JUDGES:

Brenda Ladd, Barbados RumFest 2000 Judge

Clif Ladd, Barbados RumFest 2000 Judge

Pat Davidson, Rum Appreciation Society President

Margaret Ayala, Co-Author of The Encyclopedia of Rum Drinks

Luis Ayala, Author & Rum Consultant

About the Rum Challenge

Welcome to the First Annual Citrus Rum Challenge! With so many citrus rums available worldwide, it is becoming increasingly difficult to speak intelligently about the subject, let alone to choose the right one for any given situation. As part of our on-going effort to “lead by example,” we have conducted a very thorough test of all the citrus rums we know of. None of the companies represented in the competition contributed monetarily, there was no “entry fee” nor advertisement requirement. We believe doing it this way will give you the most objective information possible.

Historically speaking, all rums we have ever judged (for the newsletter and during international competitions) have been taste-tested “straight” (without any water, ice or any other mixers). Doing so allows the judges to be exposed to the core essence of the products. Since most of the citrus rums in the world are NOT meant to be consumed straight, for this competition we decided to give the judges the option to further test each rum using their mixer of choice. Among the mixers available were: Crushed Ice, Ginger Ale, Orange Juice, Pineapple Juice, Coconut Water and Club Soda and Monin’s Mojito Mint Syrup.

As always, please remember that when it comes to determining the best product for you, there is no better judge than your own palate, so go out and experiment!

“Neat” Competition

This part of the judging was conducted blindly. Judges were only told the number of the rum they were being served (for scoring purposes).

The Judges’ Results (from highest score to lowest score)

Lemon/Lime Rums Only

DonQ Limon
 Malibu Lime
 Cruzan Junkanu
 Baraima Citrus
 Cacique Limon
 Marti Mojito
 Flor de Caña Limón
 Bacardi Limón

Orange Rums Only

Santa Teresa Orange
 Cruzan Orange
 Bacardi O



Combined Rums

Santa Teresa Orange
 DonQ Limon
 Malibu Lime
 Cruzan Junkanu
 Cruzan Orange
 Bacardi O
 Baraima Citrus
 Cacique Limon
 Marti Mojito
 Flor de Caña Limón
 Bacardi Limón

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“Mixers” Competition

In this part of the competition, judges fixed their own drinks, using their mixer of choice on all 11 rums. Judging here was not performed blindly. The Judges’ Results (from highest score to lowest score)

Lemon/Lime Rums Only

- Malibu Lime
- DonQ Limon
- Cruzan Junkanu
- Bacardi Limón
- Marti Mojito
- Cacique Limon
- Flor de Caña Limón
- Baraima Citrus



Combined Rums

- Malibu Lime
- Santa Teresa Orange
- DonQ Limon
- Cruzan Orange
- Cruzan Junkanu
- Bacardi Limón
- Bacardi O
- Marti Mojito
- Cacique Limon
- Flor de Caña Limón
- Baraima Citrus

Orange Rums Only

- Santa Teresa Orange
- Cruzan Orange
- Bacardi O

Special Report: Ron Abuelo Añejo Especial - Panama

The history of Varela Hermanos, S.A., goes back to 1908 when Don José Varela Blanco, a young Spanish immigrant, arrived in Pesé, Panama and founded the San Isidro sugarcane estate in the Herrera Province.

In 1936 Don José agreed with his three oldest sons, José Manuel, Plinio and Julio, to distill sugarcane juice for the production of alcoholic beverages. The distillation was to be conducted in one of the garages of the sugar mill. The new company was named Hermanos

Varela and was recognized, from its early days, for its extraordinary quality.

Prior to his death, Don José asked his 9 sons to keep cultivating sugarcane for the distillation of alcoholic beverages. Today, almost a century later, a third generation of the family manages Varela Hermanos, S.A.

Ron Abuelo Añejo (75-Proof). It is often said that you never get a second chance to make a good first impression. The fine people at Varela Hermanos are obviously familiar with

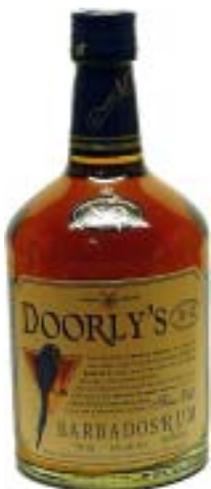
this concept and are taking advantage of it. From the moment you pour this rum into your snifter, you are charmed by its golden mahogany color and by the great depth of the aroma. The initial bouquet is that of white oak with brandy-like traces of fruit. Once in the palate, it smoothly reveals layers of sweet vanilla, muscovado sugar and just a hint of caramel. The finish is pleasantly long and silky, evoking images of barrel-filled aging cellars begging to be explored.

A fine rum that deserves to be sipped straight or on the rocks.



The Angel's Share

Doorly's XO - Barbados



Doorly's XO Barbados Rum (80-Proof). The quality and glamour of this fine rum speaks out before you even open the bottle. It has a sultry apricot-amber color with iridescent traces of gold. Profound aromas of exotic woods and aged rum fill the snifter, tempt-

ing you to get closer and closer. It opens effortlessly in the palate, setting forth sweet notes of nutmeg and light traces of vanilla. Finishes exceptionally well, with a harmonious balance of oakiness and natural sweetness. A perfect example of what a sec-

ond maturation (in Oloroso Sherry casks) can do for a rum. No serious rum collection can be complete without this rum.

Imported exclusively by The Spirit of Hartford:

spiritofhartford.com

Sea Wynde Pot Still Rum - Jamaica & Guyana



Sea Wynde (92-Proof). The enjoyment of this rum begins with its elegant presentation. The hand-applied pewter label speaks of craftsmanship and attention to detail, two qualities associated with an age when doing things right was more important than doing them on time.

rum releases intensely fruity notes reminiscent of apples with hints of berries. Traces of oak linger in the background, a reminder of the aged nature of its Jamaican and Guyanese components. It opens up decisively in the palate, where its fruitiness and robustness confirm the olfactory image previously evoked.

always be matched by an equally grand exit and this rum does exactly that. It finishes on a slightly warm note, attributable to its higher proof, surrounded by a harmonious bouquet of wood, fruit and sugar notes that begs to stay with you.

Starting the moment you fill your snifter, the shimmering orange-copper

A grand entrance should

Produced and imported by Great Spirits:

www.greatspirits.com

Clarke's Court Superior Light Rum - Grenada



Clarke's Court Superior Light Rum (80-Proof). Shimmering silver-white color with vigorous bouquet of raw sugar. Opens quickly, cleanly and smoothly, speaking of a careful distillation process.

Appropriately called "Light", this rum comes across as a great mixer for those drinkers and situations that call for a neutral rum.

the show, then this rum is for you. It can even be used in place of vodka, so go ahead and experiment!

If you need a rum to highlight a gentle mixer without stealing

Imported exclusively by:

www.realrum.com

Master Blender's Corner - Joy Spence - J. Wray and Nephew, Jamaica



What is your official title at J. Wray and Nephew Limited?

My official title is Master Blender of J. Wray and Nephew Limited, and I am also the General Manager of Technical and Quality Services. J. Wray and Nephew Limited comprises three Divisions:

* The Agri Division which includes - three sugar estates - Appleton Estate, Holland Estate and New Yarmouth Estate, the sugar factory and distillery.

* The Kingston Division which includes: the blending, bottling, warehousing and technical and quality operations as well as marketing and finance and administration.

* The Export Division which manages the export operations of all of the companies in the Wray and Nephew Group.

How long have you been involved with the distillation of alcohol?

22 years.

What is your educational background?

Bsc Chemistry first class honours - The University of the West Indies. Msc Analytical Chemistry - Loughborough University.

How would you describe your average day at J. Wray and Nephew Limited?

My average day involves all of the following tasks:

1. Approving product for Bottling and Shipping
2. Approving blend sheets
3. Performing sensory tests
4. Monitoring the blending process
5. Oversee Quality Assurance
6. Oversee Risk Management
7. Oversee the Company's Quality System
8. Technical training
9. Chairing process improvement meetings

How many different rums does J. Wray and Nephew Limited produce?

60.

What is the biggest challenge/obstacle you've encountered thus far, related to the production of your rums?

Forecasting for our 21 year old blend.

Given the state of the distillation technology today, would it have been possible to produce your rums 100 years ago using the technology available then?

Yes.



Have you perceived a change in how consumers think of rum since your involvement with the industry began?

Yes, rum is now better understood and is no longer seen as a harsh spirit but as a drink that can be consumed on any occasion.

How about consumer palates? Have you had to adjust the flavor of your rums to keep up with changing patterns in the market, or has your target market remain unchanged over the years?

Our main focus now is the premium aged rum category which offers a difference to the consumer.

Historically speaking, most people consider Ja-



maican rums to be on the "heavy" side. Do you agree with this? Other rums typically considered to be heavy are those from Guyana. How would you compare the two?

We produce light, medium and heavy rums depending on the market. Guyana also produces different styles of rum. It is this misconception that we are trying to change.

As a master blender, how easy/difficult is it for you to taste a young rum and anticipate the effects of aging on it? How much of that is within your control and how much depends on environmental/cask conditions/etc. that are harder



to predict?

It is quite easy to detect youth in a rum. The sensory test and colour are the main indicators. It is all at the mercy of the barrel and nature, however my job is to ensure consistency.

Which of your rums are you the most proud of and why?

Appleton 250, as this blend was specially made in commemoration of 250th Anniversary of the Appleton Estate which started rum production in 1749.

What is the most asked question you hear about you or your job?

How does it feel to be a female in this position.

Is there a particular message you'd like to share with our readers?

Rum is the most versatile spirit perfected in the Appleton Brands. Enjoy our spirit, pride and passion but drink in moderation.

If I come to a party at your house and ask for a rum-based cocktail, what are you likely to offer me?

Piña Colada.

Special Interview: **Robert Plotkin** by Luis Ayala

Hi Robert. I just finished reading through your excellent book “Caribe Rum: The Original Guide to Caribbean Rum and Drinks” and I want to tell you it is fascinating. I know from experience that writing a book can be a very enjoyable experience. Can you tell me what part of this project you enjoyed the most?

Writing a book can be an enjoyable process, that is of course unless it is your livelihood, then writing a book is a race against the clock and the onset of ulcers. There are moments when I do enjoy writing books—Caribe Rum was my tenth—but they’re usually at the beginning and end of the project.

What I enjoyed most about the rum book was writing the encapsulated history of the Caribbean and that of each featured island. I found the research fascinating, and the writing an extreme challenge, both to make it accurate and interesting reading.

I also enjoyed becoming more intimately familiar with the highlighted rums. Most of them became my dear friends. I now see myself as one of your rum ambassadors, serving under your tutelage, the Secretary of State of Rum, my liege.

Can you tell me a little bit about how the idea for this book came into existence?

What spawned the idea for the rum book? The project before it was entitled, *Toma Margaritas - The Original Guide to Margaritas and Tequilas*. Almost immediately upon publication, I realized that the difficulties facing the tequila category were likely to propel rum into America’s cultural limelight. I still believe that is absolutely true. Although not a very exciting story, that is how I came up with rum as the subject of our next book in “The Original Guide” series.

Interestingly enough, I was recently asked to participate in a major tequila company’s marketing planning session. The executives there were quite distracted by rum’s rapid growth and the share of the market that they were losing to rum.

You mention in the book that one of the most exciting aspects of rum is that there is no “learning curve” involved in order to enjoy it. How different are rums from brandies, whiskies and other distilled spirits in this sense?

As an on-premise operations consultant, I see this “learning curve” play out in reality all of the time. Most uninitiated spirits drinkers scrunch up their faces when tasting whiskies or brandies for the first time. While there are naturally exceptions to this, they are few and far between. Rum is an entirely different story, however. Most people take to it relatively quickly, especially when they learn that its source is the sugar cane. Perhaps that’s cheating, but hey, it’s for the good of the cause, right?

Many experts have predicted that rum will steal the spotlight away from Tequilas/Vodkas as the next top spirit. Do you agree? If so, what time-line do you anticipate?

As I mentioned, there is no doubt that rum is “on the charts with a bullet.” It is certainly grabbing market share away from tequila, and gin never really had too much share of the market to lose. Rum is a natural to assume much of the popular limelight (no pun intended). It’s got taste, diversity and romance on it’s side. Why, most people still believe tequila is distilled from cactus, for goodness sake.



What is the most common misconception about rum you frequently run into?

Far and away the most popular misconception about rum is that it's sweet. I think the reason is that people often drink it mixed with coke or in overly sweet colodas and strawberry daiquiris.

If you were to produce your own brand of rum, what characteristics would it have?

While I can't conceive of myself on the supply, I personally gravitate to the aged, alembic rums. I also melt at the sight of Rhum Barbancourt and Appleton Extra, to name but a few of my best friends.

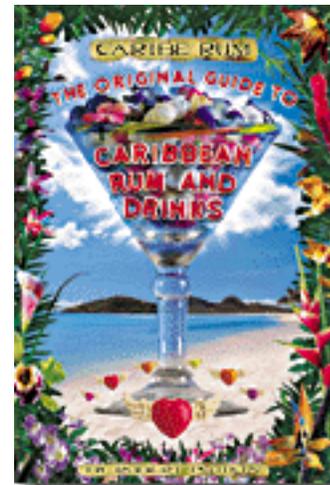
When you have company over at your house, do you have a "specialty" rum drink you like to serve your guests?

Do I have a "special" rum I share with good friends? Well, I guess it depends on which friends we're speaking of. For my pals who enjoy a good cigar, I really enjoy the Pyrat XO or Cask 23. For couples who come over for dinner, Carol and I like to serve daiquiri cocktails served straight-up. I prefer Cruzan Light or Bacardi, and I make the lime base myself.

Would you like to share anything else with our readers? Are there any upcoming books, events you'd like to mention?

I would like your readers to understand that when it comes to comprehensive rum references, I highly recommend "The Rum Experience," by my good friend Luis Ayala. There simply isn't a better book on rum available, anywhere.

As for what I'm doing? I'm currently working on a book entitled, Drinks for all Ages - The Original Guide to Alcohol-Free Beverages and Drinks. It's the partner to The Bartender's Companion - The Original Guide to American Cocktails and Drinks. It may seem like a strange topic for someone like me to write about, that is until you consider that there are far more people on this planet predisposed NOT to drink alcohol. They deserve their day in the sun too, eh what?



Tobacco & Rum

As mentioned a couple of months ago, we are taking a look at rum-flavored cigars in the market. Our first stop in the "Tobacco and Rum" journey takes us to Havana...Havana Honeys, that is. The Havana Honeys are made in the Dominican Republic using a mild blend of Seco and Olor Filler, topped off with a silky Indonesian Sumatra wrapper. You have several different flavors (and sizes) to choose from. We, of course, focused on the Rum flavor exclusively. The cigar is tightly wrapped, its dark color speaks of full flavor and depth. The rich aroma is saturated with woody notes. The wrapper is sweet with light traces of honey and just a hint of rum in the background. The smoke was pleasant, especially if you fancy full-



bodied cigars. Flavoring cigars with spirits is a tricky proposition, similar to creating a cigar-flavored rum. It must be done delicately so as not to overpower the medium, which should be the center of attention. Ha-

vana Honeys Rum Cigars succeed in enhancing the natural properties of the tobacco without compromising its character.

For more information:

havanahoneys.com

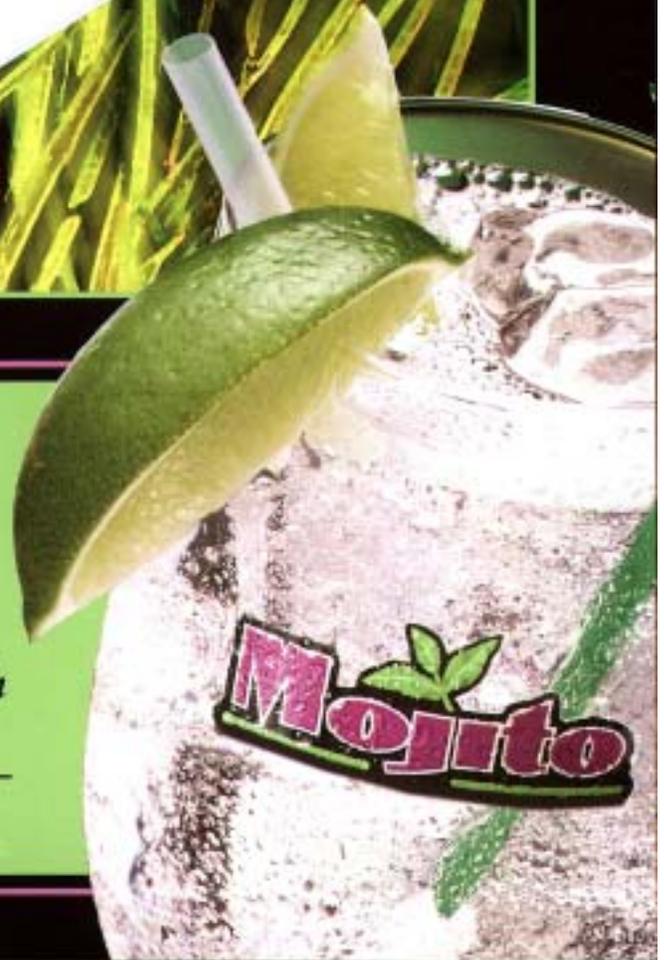
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Cool Cocktail On The Planet!!*



MONIN Mojito

*Shake 1 oz. MONIN Mojito Mint
with 1 1/2 oz. rum, the juice of
1/2 lime and 5 oz. club soda and ice.
Serve in a 16 oz. glass and garnish with
a mint sprig or lime wheel.*

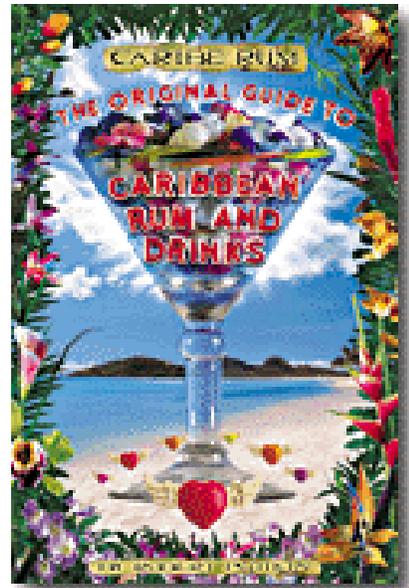
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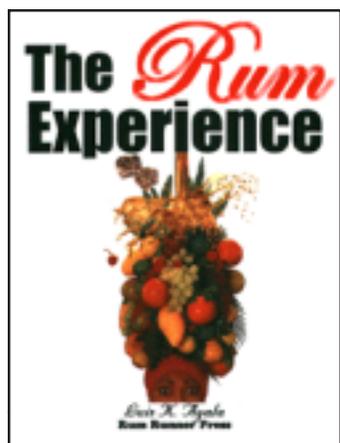
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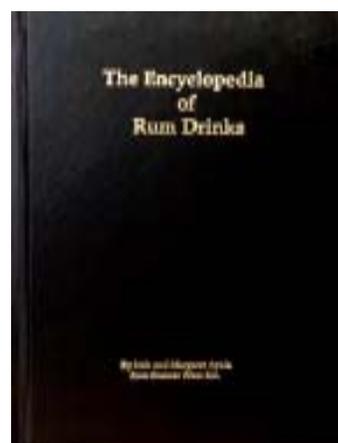
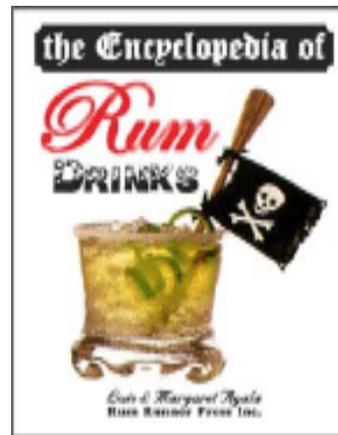
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the world about the many
faces of rum.

2) To help rum distillers and
blenders spread the word
about their wonderful
products.

3) To promote the respon-
sible and sensible enjoy-
ment of what is perhaps the
world's most underrated
distilled spirit today.

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