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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
TOM SANDHAM & BEN MCFARLAND
THINKING DRINKERS

THE RUM EDITION



DISTILLED

WORLD SPIRITS FROM CARLSBERG UK





WELCOME TO THE THIRD EDITION OF THE 2018 SPIRITS SUPPLEMENTS FROM DISTILLED

We have uncovered some cracking whiskies and gins in our first 2 editions, so what's next? Of course, it has to be rum! A personal favourite of mine and set to be following close behind gin as the "one to watch". Rum has a wealth of history and variety. Be it white, golden, dark, spiced; neat, mixed or in a beautifully crafted cocktail, in the words of Erik Voskamp, "there is a rum for everyone, but they don't know it... yet".

The first modern rum, distilled from sugar cane by-products, was found in the Caribbean during the 17th century when slaves, most likely in the island of Barbados, found that molasses could be fermented into an alcoholic beverage which could then be distilled in order to remove its impurities. Today we are lucky enough to enjoy rums from all over the Caribbean, South America and beyond.

As with the first 2 spirits editions from Distilled, we bring you 12 exciting new products to try. Enjoy these rums from July to the end of September and if you like them enough, they can be added to our permanent range for the rest of the year!

When it comes to ranging rums, choice and variety of styles is key. Featuring in our limited edition range we

have 5 golden rums from across the Caribbean and South America including; Angostura 1919, Bacardi Añejo Cuatro, Chairman's Reserve, Pampero Especial and Ron Abuela. Moving onto the darker and aged rums we have included; Diplomático Mantuano, El Dorado 15 and Matusalem Gran Reserva 15 – all great sipping rums.

Onto spiced, we have a cracking new rum from the Pembrokeshire coast Barti Ddu (pronounced "Barti Thee") which has amazing savoury seaweed notes, Chairman's Reserve Spiced to pair with the original and Dead Man's Fingers from Cornwall. Finally for the rum range, we couldn't be without a classic for the summer in Mahiki Coconut! A blend of Caribbean rum and coconut to produce a great tiki-style rum liqueur for the perfect Piña Colada!

So make sure you have a selection of rums and rum-based drinks on your summer menu and tell us what you think of the range... Enjoy!

Katie Hewitt
Category Manager Spirits

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D A R K R U M M A T T E R S

Dark rum matters. If you're questioning as much then it's time to make like a pirate and get on board, because the consumers are finally navigating their way through the spirit.

Indeed, in a recent conversation with stat wizards CGA, it was revealed that rum is the second best performing category after gin. Which really is something, considering all the noise gin has been making. In spring, the organisation reported the spirit had enjoyed +3% volume growth and +7% value growth in the previous 12 months. And get this, rum was also outperforming the wider spirits market (-1% volume and +3% value).

Granted there's some way to go; in terms of size, the category sits below gin, whisky and vodka, but it has most certainly arrived and is here to stay. White rum is a part of this, it remains important when it comes to volume; but it is premium and aged rum that is driving value.

Cocktails are a crucial component in the ongoing success of the spirit. Rum is a masterful mixer and sits at the base of some all-time classics - from the discerning Daiquiri, to the party perennial Piña Colada. It has established versatility and staying power in cocktails for centuries, and with that in mind we spoke to Diplomático, a brand that has enthusiastically engaged with

bartenders. We had the pleasure of judging the Venezuelan rum's excellent Diplomático World Tournament Cocktail Competition a few years ago, so asked the team to suggest some award-winning examples for this edition.

But Diplomático is also a perfect example of how rums' versatility is now earning it sipping status. One of the biggest recent cultural changes in rum consumption has been the realisation, that this spirit can stand proud next to the likes of whisky and cognac. Granted the spirit is not contained by the same legislative boundaries of other sipping peers, but the idea of premium rum is still relatively

new, so it is still finding its feet. What's important is that the customers are growing in courage when it comes to approaching rum neat.

What with the customer asking more questions, we figured it made sense to present some education through the pages of this edition, so expect to discover some insights on rum production. The talented Tristan Stephenson, award-winning bar owner and author, presents some science on sugar, and some of the world's greatest distillers talk us through styles of rum and pot and column stills, as well as maturation.

We even have insights from the great El Dorado who produce demerara rum on a wooden Coffey still.

To help form a wider understanding of the category, we turned to Ian Burrell, the global rum ambassador, and one of the most important voices in rum right now. And we've also suggested some cocktail recipes for bartenders, and a few handy anecdotes to help any readers with ambitions of storytelling.

Of course, we also provide a bit of background on some of the rums available, to help you mix up your rum portfolio in the bar. In the

second half of the edition you'll find essential production notes, taste profiles and simply some great stories to share with your customers.

Blend it all together and you've got a handy one-stop shop about rum to fill a moment before or after your shift. Hopefully it will inspire you to expand and experiment with your rum selection.

Cheers
The Thinking Drinkers



IAN BURRELL

Whatever you do, try not to befriend Ian Burrell on social media. It'll only depress you. Throughout the wet, cold winter months, he simply won't go away - popping up on your phone, always somewhere absurdly exotic and warm, always with a rum in his hand and a cheeky grin on his face, wearing his trademark colourful Tiki shirt and a fine-looking Fedora perched on his head.

It's by no means the only hat that Ian's worn. Prior to becoming one of the most travelled and acclaimed figures within the rum industry, he was not only a professional UK basketball player but also an internationally acclaimed recording artist known as "The Dude" – in fact, his song "Rock da Juice", featured on numerous PlayStation games as well as the soundtrack for Hollywood blockbuster "Scooby-Doo". Zoinks!

But it is his role as The Global Rum Ambassador for which he is now famed. He conducts masterclasses, seminars, sips cocktails and judges competitions across all 7 continents around the world – even opening a pop-up rum shack in the Antarctic.

In 2014 he even took the time to break the Guinness World Record for the largest organised rum tasting and masterclass, he is also the driving force behind the world's first international rum festival the UK RumFest, which is now approaching its 12th year featuring more than 400 of the world's best rums.

In short, there's very little that Ian doesn't know about rum. We sat down and talked to him about it.

You've been involved in the UK rum scene for years now, and as the founder of the hugely popular UK Rumfest, how have you seen the scene evolve since you first started championing it?

It's grown significantly as more and more consumers have demanded a wider range of rums. When I started the UK RumFest back in 2007 there were no events to promote the diverse category of rum. Now there are many events that bring rum loving people together to learn that rum is more than just white, gold and dark.

Sales of rum are soaring and 2018 is being hailed as the year for the sugar cane spirit. Why do you think that it is capturing the imagination of consumers?

Rum has always been popular. Most people will drink it in a cocktail or with their favourite mixer, but now we are seeing an increase in sales within the premium sector of the category. Most people's perception of a premium spirit is one that can be sipped neat or with a dash of water or a couple cubes of ice. There are now many rums brands that are capturing the imagination of connoisseurs and casual rum drinkers alike, thus increasing awareness and sales.

What must the rum category do to ensure this growth is sustained?

It needs to continue to evolve. Educate its consumers. Embrace technology but not forget its traditions and heritage. Continue to be fun.

What are the key issues facing the rum category in the UK?

The biggest issue is the perception that anything made from sugar, or that is sweet and spiced, or 'Rum' flavoured, is RUM. There is a lack of understanding among the trade on what is the real definition of a rum.

This lack of knowledge is then passed onto the consumers who rarely understand the spirit definitions. They just want a drink that tastes good. For example, rums are still categorised as white, gold and dark on most menus but they are more complex than that. Colour tells you nothing about the product in your bottle. Imagine a wine list merely saying 'white wine', without clarifying the grape variety or country of origin.

You've previously been outspoken about regulations within the rum category – what do you feel needs tightening up in this regard?

There are many countries that have rules and regulations on how they make and market their rums. But once these products are sold to a third party or brought into another country, they can be manipulated in any way deemed fit to promote it as a premium drink. In some countries you are allowed to use age claims on your bottle referencing the OLDEST rum that was used in your blend, but most consumers believe that an age claim means how long a product has been aged for. So if there is no level playing field because the regulators are not enforcing rules to help consumers make an "informed" choice for their rum, then some companies will take advantage of any loophole to promote anything that looks, tastes and smells like a rum as a premium rum.

What must the governing bodies be doing to ensure that the consumer isn't hoodwinked?

Enforce their own rules. Or create up-to-date rules that everyone can agree on. Similar to whisk(e)y. Or just employ me. I'd create a rum "standards of identity" in a matter of months. Make it law, then ban any brand that wants to flout this law.

Do you think there needs to be a global agreement on what defines rum?

Definitely not. Why? Because everyone is entitled to make their own version of what they perceive as rum. What is the global agreement for whisk(e)y? Or brandy? Or vodka? There isn't one. BUT if you're adding any form of additive to your rum that is in the customer's interest to know what they are drinking, then that should be disclosed. Especially to the trade who are more inclined to support honesty than marketing bullshit.

What makes an "authentic" or "pure" rum in your opinion? What is your opinion on adding sugar back into the rum?

The word 'authentic' is frequently misused, especially in the spirits industry. It is normally bandied around as the "right way" among the rum industry. I like to refer the term 'authentic' as the "old way". This does not mean that the old way is the best way. It's merely creating a product that captures part of a company's history and traditions. So for me, rums created using old batch distillation or discontinuous methods are making their rums in an authentic way, as this was the only way rums were made when they were first created.

But evolutionary methods are traditional methods waiting to happen! Thus continuous methods of distillation have improved how some rums are made. These can also be traditional to particular brands, especially the single and twin column stills used in the Caribbean.



Where do you stand on the "sugar" topic?

The sugar topic in rum will always be an interesting debate around the world. It is normal in some countries and alien in others. I personally don't mind "sweetened" rums as long as it's disclosed how sweet they are or what's been added. Champagne adds sugar to some of its wines. And the consumer (if they know what to look for) can see this on the label. Brandy does not disclose how much sugar is added to it. Nor does vodka. Again, if I were the "Rum Tsar" for rum standards in the UK, your rum would have to state certain words on the label, if it exceeded a certain number of grams of sugar per litre. I like the Champagne method of Brut, Extra Sec, Sec and Demi Sec. This wouldn't stop me from drinking sweetened rums, nor would it stop anyone else who enjoyed the taste of it, but at least you know where you stood.

If you're looking to pay more for a premium rum, are there any rum-producing countries, that have tight regulations to ensure that what is in the bottle relates to what is on the bottle? And any nations that one should avoid?

There are a few but Jamaica, Barbados, Martinique, Cuba, Puerto Rico and Venezuela are a few rum producing countries that have strict guidelines about what must be in the bottle, and what it says on the label. I know what I'm paying for when it comes to countries like these.

What questions should bartenders be asking to ensure that the rum is authentic?

Where was it distilled? Where is your distillery? How was it made? Where was it aged? Has anything been added to it?

What can the bartending community do to improve consumer knowledge of rums?

Empower themselves with knowledge of the rum category. Learn from the blenders, the distillers, the ambassadors. Then do their due diligence. Attend REAL rum festivals that invite the people that are behind the brands. Not just the events that promote rum as just a "party spirit". Come to one of my masterclasses!



Bars that don't focus on rum, what are they missing out on?

Nothing. Just an amazing diverse spirit category that holds its own against any other spirit out there. If your bar has a great whisk(e)y selection, as well as brandy, gin and vodka but only has a few rums on the shelf, categorised as white, gold, dark and spiced on your menu... Then you are not offering your customers a complete rum experience.

What advice would you give to high-end bars looking to improve sales of premium/sipping rum?

Create a special part of your menu for premium rums. Sit them side by side with the single malts, cognacs, and after-dinner drinks. Explain why they command a premium. Arrange tastings, food and rum pairings. Offer a small jug of water for cask strength rums. Serve more cask strength rums. Remember, in the minds of most people, rum is cheap because the biggest brands in the world are fairly affordable, and the true premium rums don't have the big marketing budgets of a vodka or gin to create that intrinsic value for the consumer.

How would you recommend bars serve Navy rum? Is it due for a revival?

I'm not sure if Navy rum is due for a revival, but it has been doing well in cocktails. I'm seeing many bars offering their versions of "Dark & Stormies" using a dark Navy rum. Or within cocktails such as Treacles or Rum Old Fashioneds. I personally think the Navy rum story is a great one and can only help the sales of Navy rums.

Spiced rum seems to be doing very well. How should bars approach that?

Like they do with their gins. Spiced rums in a Highball can be a fun way to introduce someone to rum cocktails. I recommend spiced rum and ginger, tonic, Ting, even various styles of cola of course. I don't come across many people who sip their spiced rum neat... but there are a few spiced rums (which are real rums that have been spiced, and not vodka flavoured with caramel, vanilla, spices and sugar) that taste great neat, or with ice and a slice of orange.

Compared with cognacs and whiskies, do you get more bang for your buck from top-end rums? Is this to do with the ageing?

Well as many rums are aged in tropical climates, the evaporation rate of the liquid in the barrel is faster than a spirit aged in cooler climates. For example, a whisky barrel in Scotland could lose up to 3% of volume over the course of a year. In Jamaica, a barrel of rum can lose up to 6% of its volume in the intense tropical heat over a same period, thus ageing twice as fast. So, a 5-year-old rum in Jamaica is equivalent to a 10-year whisky from Scotland. This is not to say that the rum would be better than the whisky, but that both products will have matured at different rates. Of course, the 10-year whisky will cost more than the 5-year-old rum even though they may have the same maturity.

Should bars be categorising their rums based on geography? Style? Or occasion?

I would like to see more menus categorise their rums on geography. This is what they do with their whiskies. Why not their rums? Also on how they are made; 'Pure Single Pot Rum' – 100% pot still rum from a single distillery; 'Single Blended Rum' – a blend of pot and traditional column still rums from a single distillery; 'Traditional Rum' – made in the traditional single or twin columns still; 'Rum' – made in the modern multicolumn still.

What does rum offer the discerning drinker that other spirits cannot?

Geographical diversity in flavour profile and distillation methods.

What are the three greatest rum cocktails in your opinion?

The Planter's Punch: the drink that launched a thousand other rum drinks including Tiki cocktails - the Daiquiri, the Mai Tai and any other rum drink that takes advantage of the recipe of rum/lime/sugar with a little spice and water.

The Cuba Libre: some would say the rum and Coke (with lime) is the most requested way to drink rum around the world. Not limited to just Cuban rum it is the king of the rum highballs. The Gosling's Dark 'n' Stormy is a nice alternative.

The Mai Tai (Trader Vic): this cocktail is king of the Tiki drinks. A drink that showcases the quality of a heavy-aged rum or a blend of several rums, enhanced by the subtle flavours you'd naturally find in a well-balanced aged rum. Nuttiness, sweetness, citrus, and vanilla.

What food pairings do you think suit rum? Chocolate? Cheese?

Chocolate, of course, is a natural fit. Cheese works surprisingly well with some rums. Cold red meats and game also work well with great tasting rums.

What advice do you have for bars looking to serve rum punches?

Create your own amazing recipe. Stick to it. Batch the drinks beforehand. Buy a few beautiful punch bowls with cups or glasses to match. Create a punch menu. Offer it to your guests. Watch your profit margin increase.

What advice do you have for bars looking to serve rum punches?

Our 12th Annual RumFest on 20th & 21st October will be better than ever. More rums from across the world to sample. More seminars to learn about the category. More private tastings of rare rums to understand authenticity. More rum ambassadors, blenders and distillers to learn from. More cocktail competitions on our main stage, and the launch of London Rum Week from 15th - 21st October which will create rum experiences all over London for seven sensational days.



SUGAR, OH HONEY HONEY

Sugar cane is a grass and in some places still harvested by men called cutters using machetes. It's pressed to extract the water, then crushed to get the sugary juice. This cane juice can be fermented, but more commonly is then boiled and treated to make sugar, the by-product being molasses which is thick and black. The molasses is diluted, fermented and distilled to give you your rum.

LEGALS

Rum is any spirit made from sugar either cane juice or molasses, and can be distilled anywhere. Famous in the Caribbean and South America, it is also produced in countries like India and Australia. When rum was first exported to Australia it was used as currency to finance buildings, catch criminals and you could buy a wife with a gallon of the stuff. We don't know how much more you had to find to give her back, arf, arf.

IN THE NAVY

The British navy included a rum ration in the sailor's salary and rumour has it they would check its quality by pouring it over gunpowder. If the gunpowder lit, it was proof the rum was alcoholic enough. It needed to be around the 57% mark to light, equating to the 100% proof term you see on American bottles today, also giving us the term Navy Strength.

BLUDFIRE

A naval term for rum in Nelson's Blood. When transported back from his final battle at Trafalgar, Admiral Nelson was pickled in a rum barrel. When he arrived in port the rum had disappeared, consumed by a rum thirsty crew. Was this true? We don't know, we weren't there.

GOT WOOD

Ageing is important in rum, it darkens the spirit, rounds and imparts flavour and usually happens in old bourbon casks. In tropical climates the pores of the wood open up so the spirit takes on more of the wood character, over a shorter time compared to Scotland. Because wood is porous the spirit can evaporate and be lost, this is romantically called the angel's share.

ESTERS

Not a little old lady but the flavour compounds created in fermentation that are present in the most pungent rums and give banana and nail polish aromas.

DUNDER

Dunder is something that is used to enhance the esters that arrive in the most pungent rums. Dunder is a non-alcoholic residue left after distillation and is buried in the ground to attract bacteria. It's added during fermentation and raises the acidity to promote the esters, particularly in Jamaican pot still rum. Smells bad, but makes the rum taste good.

WORD PLAY

The etymology of 'rum' is attributed to many sources, among the best are an abbreviation from the Latin for sugar Saccharum; rummage, the name of an English ship's hold and what people did when they searched for cane spirit in their pockets; Brum possibly after the great sugar cane fields in the Midlands, but more likely after a drink the Dutch sailors took from the Malaysians. Rum was also called "kill-devil" by the English.

STYLE IT OUT

You can select your rum according to some general styles:

WHITE RUM

Colourless and usually not aged, although in some cases aged then charcoal filtered to remove the colour. Sometimes light and usually crisp, they are blends and can also be pungent and aromatic.

SPICED RUM

A golden rum base with a variety of spices added.

RHUM AGRICOLE

A style that uses fermented cane juice rather than molasses. The juice has to be used fresh and is harvested and crushed with rollers. It's an artisanal skill, protected by an Appellation d'Origine Controlle.

AGED RUM

Divided into two categories nothing to officially determine each, but you'll see 'golden' and 'dark' as a general guideline. Golden rum has spent less time in oak but as the name suggests, is golden. Dark will have spent more time in oak and quality examples will be rich and spicy.

NAVY RUM

Part of the dark rum family; normally a blend of light column still, pot still and heavier, sweet Demerara rum.

COCKTAIL HOUR

While the growing trend for enjoying rum neat is rewarding for fans of the spirit, it remains an essential tool in cocktails. Here, the team at Diplomático suggest three very different drinks to show the versatility of the Diplomático Mantuano rum, including a lively twist on a serious classic, an innovative straight up creation from Sweden, and a simple but refreshing long libation.



BANANA OLD FASHIONED

From Jon Lister, European Diplomático Brand Ambassador

INGREDIENTS

- 50ml Diplomático Mantuano
- 10ml homemade banana and leather syrup
- 2 dashes of black walnut bitters

GLASS Rocks glass

GARNISH Slice of banana

METHOD Add all ingredients in a mixing glass add ice and stir. When chilled, pour into a rocks glass. Add fresh ice, zest with grapefruit and disregard.



BLOOD, TEARS & GOLD

From Swedish star Charlotte Halzius, winner of the Diplomático World Tournament in 2017

INGREDIENTS

- 50ml Diplomático Mantuano
- 20ml Amer Picon
- 10ml cherry syrup
- 2 dashes of gold tincture

GLASS Coupe

GARNISH Maraschino cherry and lemon zest

METHOD Pour all the ingredients into a mixing glass, previously chilled. Stir and strain in a coupe glass, previously chilled. Serve without ice.



MANTUANO HOMEMADE LEMONADE

Jon Lister at Diplomático created this and says: "Sometimes we just want a cool, long refreshing drink. When using fresh ingredients you can elevate even the most simple of drinks. There is something rustic yet so satisfying about a homemade lemonade. Using either still or sparkling water, it's sure to hit the spot. Mantuano adds vanilla, spices and a splash of stone fruit."

INGREDIENTS

- 50ml Diplomático Mantuano
- 1 lemon
- 3 barspoons caster sugar
- 1 glass filled with still or sparkling water

GLASS Highball

GARNISH Lemon

METHOD Chop up lemon into wedges, making sure to leave a large wedge for garnish. Add caster sugar and then muddle, making sure to dissolve the sugar with the juice of the lemon. Add ice and rum, stir all then part fill with still or sparkling water stir again. Add ice to fill glass, topping with more water if needed.

Sugar is the core ingredient in rum and is what sets it apart from other spirits, so understanding the agriculture is important if you plan to build a programme around it in the bar. So we turned to Tristan Stephenson, one of the most pioneering bartender and bar owners in the world. While researching his comprehensive book on rum, he explored the science of sugar and here provides some technical insight on the crop from his critically acclaimed “The Curious Bartender’s Rum Revolution”

SWEET SCIENCE

An aerial photograph showing a wide, reddish-brown dirt road that cuts through a vast field of tall, green sugarcane plants. The rows of cane are neatly spaced and extend far into the distance. In the middle of the road, a group of about seven people, dressed in blue work clothes and hats, are walking away from the camera. The overall scene is one of a rural agricultural landscape.

While researching and writing my book on rum, my journey has taken me across over 20 countries and dozens of islands. I've travelled to distilleries on horseback across active volcanoes, through rivers in a 4x4 and around tiny islets by boat. The lingering taste of rum has coated my mouth as I watched the sun set over the Amazon, and as the sun rose on the Virgin Islands. Rum made me dance the salsa in Cuba, drink all night with locals in Barbados and swim in the sea at dawn in Martinique. I've bought rum for \$10 a gallon and \$100 a shot. I've met people who depend on rum for the livelihood of their families, and have encountered islands that depend on rum for the livelihood of their communities. Is there another drink that offers such a taste of the human world?

The starting point for all this rum is sugar. Sugar cane is a giant of the Gramineae (grass) family, certain varieties of which can grow up to 6 metres (20ft) tall. The green leaves of the plant look like giant blades of grass, but the stem has a similar appearance to bamboo (also a member of the grass family) with a stem comprising interconnecting boney-looking joints, known as nodes. Each stem is typically 3–4 metres (10–13ft) in height and about 6cm (2in) in diameter.



Sugar cane is harvested during the dry season, which typically lands between January and July in the Caribbean and Latin America. Where possible, the cutting is done by machine, but it's still necessary to hand-cut the cane if the terrain is on a steep hillside, or generally impassable. Cutting sugar cane by hand has to rank as one of the worst jobs on the planet. It's back-breaking, monotonous, hot and dangerous. I have tried my hand at it a number of times, and after only five minutes of cutting and stripping the cane with a machete, I was desperate to never cut another piece ever again.

On some plantations, where cane is cut by hand – and especially those in Latin America – the cane is first burned before it is harvested. While not an environmentally sound practice, this does make the hand-harvesting process a lot easier and reduces labour costs. The fire scorches the outside of the cane, which minimizes juice loss during cutting. It doesn't damage the main structure of the cane, but it does strip the cane of any dry pieces of fibre, and protects the dense grass from the attention of dangerous insects and snakes.

Where cane is cut by machines – usually by a sugar cane harvester, which was originally developed in the 1920's – it's usually conducted in tandem with a tractor trailer. The sugar cane harvester has a pair of conical shaped drills at the front that wind around, grabbing the cane and wrenching it from the earth. Mechanical harvesting is only possible on flat or very nearly flat terrain, so the majority of the world's sugar cane is still cut by hand. Mechanical harvesting is more damaging to the cane itself compared with cut cane, and the farmer suffers greater harvest losses. It's also more ecologically damaging because it compacts soil and damages the root and stem of the remaining plant stub.

However the cane has been cut, it's possible to encounter it being transported by any means imaginable. During the Caribbean harvesting seasons, roads and tracks are littered with dropped lengths of cane, which ideally needs pressing within 48 hours to prevent the sucrose being broken down into simpler sugars by the enzyme invertase.

Thanks to its size and leaf surface-area-to-mass ratio, sugar cane is a champion photosynthesizer. In the prime sugar cane-growing regions of the tropics, a single square metre (11 square feet) of sunshine can produce up to 17kg (37lbs) of sugar cane in a season. And we're going to need it. It's estimated that the world will consume 174 million tons (191 US tons) of sugar in 2017 and around 80% of that sugar will be extracted from cane, the remainder coming from sugar beets.

Both of these plants are unusual because they store energy in the form of sucrose instead of starch. Starch is the energy of choice for the rest of the plant kingdom because it isn't water soluble and doesn't draw water into the storage cells. In the case of sugar cane, this sucrose is dissolved into fluid in the stem of the plant. Good news for us, but bad news if you're short on water, because sugar cane needs a lot. Shortly after the cane has flowered, it stockpiles sugar in preparation for growth in the following year, but if you cut it down at the right time, it's possible to literally raid the candy store. Thanks to centuries of continued cane cutting, the plant has retaliated by packing even more sugar into its stem, to the point where around one fifth of its pressed juice is pure sugary goodness.

Being a grass has its advantages. One of which is that the plant does not require annually reseeding. If cut correctly, the leftover stub will send up new stalks (called a ratoon) each season for up to 10 years. Successive harvests give decreasing yields however, so after 4–6 seasons it becomes necessary to replant the entire field. Mechanically harvested fields require more frequent replanting.



Tristan Stephenson's The Curious Bartender's Rum Revolution

Once the cane arrives at the mill, the crop is weighed and the value calculated. In some countries it is a legal requirement that a sample of cane is taken and the sugar content measured. Sweeter cane makes more alcohol, and is naturally worth more money, so this encourages farmers to cut it only when the plant has reached its peak ripeness. Once calculated, the sweetness and the weight are entered into a formula that gives a price that the farmer is paid.

But this is simply the starting point, from here you need to consider production of molasses, fermentation, distillation and maturation, all of which further changes the nature of what you end up with. This means that rum style varies a lot. For better or for worse, "rum" is a loose category, vaguely strung around sugar cane and the 50-or-so countries that currently make it – bad news if you're looking for a neat summary; good news if you like being surprised and enjoy exploring new flavours.

Varela-Hermanos is home to Ron Abuelo, one of the few distilleries to cultivate its own sugar for the rum.

TERROIR-ISTS

Here the distillery's president, Luis J. Varela Jr. tells us why the Panamanian terroir is crucial to the profile of the spirit.

When it comes to our sugar cane, the climate conditions in Pesé, Panama are quite unique in that they are tropical, dry and "Savannah-like". The temperatures range from 25°C to 32°C with humidity levels oscillating between 75% and 100%. Panama has two seasons: dry, which runs from January to April, and wet, running from May to December. The sugar cane will absorb all the water needed during the humid season and is then harvested during the dry one.

OUR TERROIR

Our "terroir" is composed of volcanic origin sandy soil in some parts and clay in others, meanwhile the terrain is a mix of hills and valleys, with the plantations covering around 1600 hectares. The variety of conditions means you can't be restricted to only one type of sugar cane, so there is a specific cane used in sandy soil that is tough and thrives in dry conditions; and another style for the clay that's resistant against humidity.

In addition to this challenge, every five years we have to change production cycles and adapt the sugar cane types to the weather alterations. In fact, every five years we reseed the fields with the most convenient sugar cane types.

Right now we are working with more than six types, including, amongst others, sugar cane with Barbadian, Brazilian or Dominican Republic origins. There are more than 600 sugar cane types used in the rum industry, so each rum producer will choose the varieties that fit in the specific climate and terroir of each country.

When it comes to fermentation, Varela Hermanos uses 'distiller yeast pineapple type' and fermentation is continuous and controlled for approximately 48 hours. We ferment molasses for our most complex rums and sugar cane juice for our lighter rums. At the end of the process, we obtain a "wine" of 7-8% vol.

THE FERMENTATION

The fermentation is very important because it creates all the aroma compounds we will "extract" during distillation. Without good fermentation, the spirit would be poor. That's why we ferment for two days. Then we develop two different rum profiles which will be blended later in the process: rum from the first steel column with copper head is coming from molasses fermentation, while the light rum is coming from the sugar cane juice fermentation. Our column is 12.5m with copper concentration plates to help with extracting the congeners we need.

Every single process in rum production is crucial, so you need good prime materials in the sugar to start and create an ideal environment for the yeasts. In addition, the rum profile will be defined with the quantity of congeners that you isolate during fermentation and extraction through the distillation processes.

Then we get to maturation, which is less about the sugar, more about the wood. The fact of having very high temperatures and huge humidity gives us the highest angels' share. We lose between 8% and 15% per year! The high angels' share will cause a very quick concentration and thanks also to the high temperatures and humidity the rum will take the tertiary aromas coming from the wood out very fast. So, the extraction of the oak aromas and flavour concentration will be three times superior to Scotland's conditions for whiskies. It means in terms of ageing, in other words, that one year in Panama is four years in Scotland!

AGED RUM IS NOW AN ESSENTIAL PART OF ANY BACKBAR, SO UNDERSTANDING THE MATURATION PROCESS AND THE BARREL WILL ARM YOU WITH SOME VITAL INSIGHT TO PASS ON TO THE CUSTOMER.

Peer into the glass of an aged rum and you'll notice it's brown. This is not a revelation, but it's interesting to note the rum wasn't always this colour. When the distiller ran spirit off a still it started life 'water white' or transparent, so maturation engenders the spirit with much of that leathery, tan tint. But how the spirit looks is a small part of intrigue when customers approach aged rum, and when considering the spirit, it's important to understand how maturation impacts flavour and aroma.

Most producers will use oak barrels of varying sizes, and many of the brown spirits you'll be familiar with, including rum, rest in American oak ex-bourbon barrels. Bourbon barrels are particularly prevalent in aged spirits because, according to the regulations of bourbon, it must be matured in new, charred American oak barrels. This legislation was implemented to protect the coopers, the craftsmen who make the barrels, and not only ensures each bourbon run gets a spanking new vessel, but also presents the rest of the world with plenty of barrel stock.

American oak is useful because it can be fashioned into a shape, providing perfect ratios of liquid to surface area making it waterproof but not suffocatingly sealed. When spirit is rested in an oak barrel it permeates the wood, dipping into and out of the pores for the duration of its stay. The oak holds flavour compounds, so as the spirit makes itself comfortable it extracts new flavours. Vanilla is a regular bedfellow of American whiskey and indeed rum, this comes courtesy of vanillin in the wood. Elsewhere the eugenol keeps things spicy under the sheets and lactones deliver a lovely bunch of coconuts.





The balance of extracting the elements of the oak without damaging the drink is the tricky part, so maturation is carefully managed from beginning to end. If the spirit gives you too much wood this is a confusingly unsexy experience, the drink can be overpowering, drying and killing the essence of what the distiller wanted. Tannins, the phenolic substances wood imparts, are astringent and bitter – too much and it's too tart. Blending, then, is a final part of the ageing process where wood doesn't get a say, as producers work with a selection of barrels to marry the spirits and find consistency in flavour for flagship brands.



The charring process of the barrels was originally employed to kill off other flavours and aromas, with wines once being stored in barrels that might have been used for fish. But producers soon learned this layer of carbon subtracts harsh congeners in young spirit. Levels of char vary, in America a 1000 degree flame is burst into the empty barrel for 45 seconds or more depending on how heavy the char required and this develops rich, creamy, vanilla and caramel flavours. More relevant in the first fill, these are still likely to impact on the future use of the barrel in rum.

Meanwhile, the fact the oak is not hermetic is helpful when ensuring the spirit has air, vital in the process of oxidation. The spirit can evaporate, again taking out some of the harsh congeners, meanwhile oxygen, wood and spirit play together to enhance or soften flavours. Depending on the climate this occurs quickly or slowly, in the warm conditions water evaporates first, so the alcohol content of the spirit rises resulting in more spirit penetration with the wood. In the tropics of rum regions, natural weather ensure a rapid wood interaction.

Interestingly the white rum Bacardi Superior, fresh, crisp and still essential in a Daiquiri, has been rested in wood. The transparency is because it is subsequently charcoal filtered. As a result, Bacardi is very familiar with the process of maturation, which is why the Añejo Cuatro is a very tasty rum at an incredibly competitive price point. We asked Bacardi's Maestro de Ron, Juan Piñera Guevara to give us the lowdown on maturation at the distillery.

"Wood and its treatment are key elements when generating the profile of spirits. The style of the wood is important and Bacardi ages its rums in American white oak traditional barrels. That means 200 litres as standard. Oak barrels give notes of wood, vanilla and other spices, depending on the ageing time, without unbalanced notes of resins. The other key element is barrel treatment. We can use toasted barrels or charred barrels depending on the profile that we want to obtain, and the relation between the volume of the distillate versus the wood surface contact is extremely important.

Time is another key element to factor in, so that the wood extraction process and evolution can take place. Bacardi Añejo Cuatro is aged in Puerto Rico, which is very important as the weather is a key factor during the ageing process. High temperature increases the solubility of wood flavours and the creation of new flavours due to its combination with the liquid. Temperature is a natural catalyser.



During the ageing process, two basic changes occur: Distillates take flavours from the wood. Flavours from the distillates and wood change due to the interaction between the flavours and oxygen from the air. Our youngest distillate has been aged for at least four years, but we do use distillates that have been aged a little bit more. Our ageing is natural, and then sometimes it's necessary to blend the distillates with a more aged product to reach the profile of each rum.

Bacardi rums have a unique profile generated by our processes due to the fermentation of Bacardi yeast and the flavours created during distillation. The Bacardi profile is then maintained after ageing in the flavours produced."

EL DORADO

There's a famous sketch from classic comedy *Only Fools & Horses* where Trigger, the daft as a brush road sweeper, boasts that he's had the same broom for 20 years.

But then he adds that the broom has had 17 new heads and 14 new handles. It's a similar story for the famous wooden stills at the Diamond Distillery in Guyana, home to the El Dorado's award-winning range of Demerara rums.

There are 13 stills at the Diamond Distillery, of which three are wooden. The oldest dates back to 1732 but over the years, as the oak has creaked and cracked, the wood getting more worn and weary, spent panels have been replaced with fresh versions as part of the El Dorado's unwavering commitment to Guyana's rum-making history.

The story of Guyanese rum began with the Dutch, famed water whisperers who knew quite a lot about canals, who introduced irrigation and waterways that carved up the land into 300 different sugar plantations – hence Guyana's nickname as "the land of many waters".

At its production peak at the turn of the 19th century, there were just as many distilleries – mostly based on the banks of the Demerara River – and, under British control, they would have been pot stills. Thing is, Guyana has never been financially flush and, back then, copper and steel were expensive – so the Guyanese distillers turned to the trees that grew plentifully amid its native rainforests. They built their steam-powered stills using native Guyanese Greenheart wood which is still considered the most durable and stiffest wood in the world.



Immune to decay, water resistant and highly resistant to fire (helpful if you're exposing it to intense heat), it is used to build jetties these days and, back then, was the closest natural alternative to metal the distillers of Guyana could hope for.

But as time went by, with prices for sugar forever fluctuating, the vast majority of these small-batch sugar mills with distilleries on the side were shuttered and by 1900, there were just 55 distilleries in Guyana.

Over the next 50 years, this rapid consolidation continued and, sadly, a lot of the equipment and stills were scrapped and lost forever. In 1952, there were just nine distilleries remaining. Due to a law passed some years earlier dictating that apparatus, stills and marques had to be retained – the remaining rum-makers were home to an array of esteemed Guyanese distilling equipment.

When Guyana gained independence in 1966, there were just four distilleries and that number was whittled down to just one by 2000 when the Diamond Distillery became the last-man standing. Part modern distillery and part sepia-tinted celebration of Guyana's rich rum heritage, the Diamond Distillery is made up of arcane equipment, brands and individual expressions with expertise stretching back three centuries.

It is the trio of wooden stills that remain the most remarkable feature of Diamond Distillery. Apart, perhaps, from some tiny rudimentary and rustic Mexican distilleries making Mezcal in minute quantities, the use of wooden stills is utterly unique to El Dorado.

Entirely heated by steam, the stills have water poured all over them during distillation to ensure that the wood doesn't dry out and crack. Cotton cord is called upon to keep the wood together but there's none of the stainless steel certainty going on here in Guyana – this is rum distillation at its rawest and most romantic.

“There are copper fittings such as the neck which obviously still have an influence in the distillation process”, says brand ambassador Dean MacGregor, “but the wood is what creates the character. While it's a very dense, tight-knit type of wood, the spirit and vapours still permeate the pores and it has a huge influence. It's not just the wood itself, it's the effect of each distillation that went before it...”

The oldest and most famous of the three stills is the Port Mourant still, said to have been built back in 1732 to meet the demand of the British Navy's rum ration – which was a blend of rums of which 70-80% were from Guyana. It is still the key constituent of Pusser's Navy Rum.

Today, any rum marques that come off the Port Mourant still are considered catnip among rum connoisseurs and the name has developed a strong following among in-the-know imbibers, producing independent bottled rums with a strong cult following and nose-bleed prices.

Considered perhaps the oldest working still in the world, Port Mourant is a beast of a distillation device – creating rich, robust rums full of stone-fruit flavours, smouldering smoke and black tea. It's the engine room of El Dorado's 15 year-old expression.

The other pot still, single rather than double, is Versailles – pronounced 'Versaize' by locals – came from an eponymous French-owned distillery situated on the Demerara river's west bank and built more than 150 years ago – perhaps longer.

The rums it creates contrast with those produced by Port Mourant according to MacGregor. **“They're more saline in style, flavours of dry tobacco, earthy notes and hints of liquorice too,”** he said. **“The Versailles single pot still rums are only used in the 15 and the 21 year-old expressions”.**

The third still, EHP, named after its creator Edward Henry Porter who built it for the Enmore plantation back in 1880, is an exact replica of the Aeneus Coffey's very first design. It is the world's only surviving wooden Coffey still and, refreshingly ramshackle in appearance, it provides the backbone for the El Dorado brand – with medium bodied rums, full of floral notes and spicy tones that feature in every expression apart from the three year-old.



In 2016, El Dorado released its “Rare Collection” a selection of three single-still, single-vintage spirits showcasing the bespoke character of each of the wooden stills. Only 3000 bottles of each rum were released, exclusively in Europe, and the few that remain boast price tags that would quite rightly worry most people's wallets.

El Dorado are constantly delving deep into the ways in which the wood sculpts its spirits and remain acutely aware that, while economically expedient to do so, it would be downright daft to swap it for stainless steel.

After all, El Dorado 15 year-old, instrumental in raising rum to the same sipping status as single malts when it was launched back in 1992, has been named the best rum in the world at the International Wine & Spirits Competition on six different occasions – including four years on the trot (in fact, El Dorado has taken home the trophy nine times in 18 years).

“Lose the wooden still and you'd lose the essence and the rum-making heritage of Guyana,” says MacGregor. “Of the ten oldest working stills in the world, El Dorado owns five and they are very proud of this – and want to celebrate it. Plus there would be absolute uproar among rum drinkers.”

One of our earliest adventures in the world of rum was to the Caribbean Island of St Lucia, home of St Lucia Distillers. It was an extraordinary location to start a rum education because the distillery produces a vast range of rum. Found in the Roseau Valley, as many as 25 rum and rum-related brands come from the distillery, many of them award winners, including Chairman's Reserve. The variety makes for a fascinating visit. Granted if it's your first encounter with a rum distillery it's rather bamboozling, but in a strange way, it's the perfect introduction to the spirit. Unlike something like cognac, made on a very specific style of still, or single malt whisky, made in copper pots with varying shapes, rum can be produced from all manner of stills, pots and columns in all shapes and sizes. For good or ill, rum is freer than any other spirit, making it a suitable starting point for any journey into distillation.

STILLS



LIFE

Lennox Wilson is Production Manager at the Saint Lucia Distillers Group of Companies, which is owned by Groupe Bernard Hayot based in Martinique, where they also produce Rhum Clement and Rhum JM. Matthieu de Lassus. Overseeing this vast breadth of rum styles makes him a useful source of education when it comes to making the spirit, and in Chairman's Reserve he produced a quintessential rum that combines many different techniques, for a remarkably accessible price point.

"Chairman's Reserve enjoys the benefit of being made from both pot still and column still rums," explains Lennox. "So we have rums made on John Dore 2 pot still and two types of rums made on our Coffey Still. The main base of the Chairman's blend is column still, but it has a signature of pot still component which significantly defines the blend."

While this is not necessarily a unique production process in the world of rum, it immediately showcases the styles of stills available. From here things get technical, but as you learn more about the rum, it's clear the detail counts.

"Esters are a vital component of rums both at the time of distillation and there is further development of these during maturation," explains Lennox. "The various combinations of alcohols (ethyl alcohol and higher alcohols) and small concentrations of acids result in a wide range of esters being generated. Common esters with smaller molecules like ethyl acetate are typically more evident, but some of the fatty acid esters which are in lower but still significant concentrations do add their own unique twists to the complex flavour profiles of St. Lucia rums.

"Distillation is very important, it can be considered a refining process where the essence of the fermentation is extracted for further processing. Preceding that is the most important process of fermentation, which is where the most substantial transformation occurs: sugars to alcohol and those very important initial congeners. Having got the fermentation right, the settings during distillation need to be appropriate for the distillate it's being aimed at. If this isn't achieved, then the flavour balance required will not be achieved in distillation. Consistency is very important.

For Lennox, the ambition is to find a balanced rum, and distillation plays a huge role in this, but so does fermentation and maturation thereafter, and indeed terroir.

"Chairman's Reserve can only be fermented, distilled, aged and blended at Roseau in St. Lucia," adds Lennox "The environments in which the fermentation and ageing take place matter. I would suppose we could ship the liquid anywhere on earth for bottling! If we tried to do it any other way it wouldn't be Chairman's Reserve; would it?"

JOHN DORE 1 POT STILL (JD1)

Description	Double-retort pot still
Material	100% copper construction
Origin	UK
Capacity	450 litres fermented wash kettle
Cycle duration	4 to 5 hours per batch
Special features	Essentially triple distillation in one go: kettle to low wines retort, low wines retort to high wines retort, high wines retort to condenser. Able to retain desirable number of congeners in a small batch to produce rums with body. High wines and low wines from previous batch are used in a subsequent batch and so this enhances consistency from batch to batch.

HERE'S A BREAKDOWN OF THE STILLS AVAILABLE TO LENNOX AT ST LUCIA DISTILLERS:

JOHN DORE 2 POT STILL (JD2)

Description	Double-retort pot still
Material	Copper and stainless steel construction. All sections which come in contact with vapour are made of copper
Origin	UK
Capacity	6,000 litres fermented wash kettle
Cycle duration	4 to 5 hours per batch
Special features	Similar to JD1 but on a larger scale and so produces a noticeably different flavour profile.



VENDOME POT STILL (VD)

Description	Hybrid pot still with a rectifier superior to a kettle
Material	100% copper construction
Origin	USA
Capacity	1,360 litres fermented wash kettle
Cycle duration	10 hours per batch
Special features	This type of still is probably more typically used for whiskey production. Combines elements of pot still and column still features. Classified as a pot still as it is operated as a batch process. The impact of the rectifier lightens the spirit produced on this still compared to the other two pot stills.



COFFEY COLUMN STILL

Description	2-column column still of the Coffey Still design
Material	Copper and stainless steel construction
Origin	UK
Capacity	2,700 to 3,200 litres fermented wash per hour
Cycle duration	Continuous process
Special features	Able to produce a range of light rums with vastly different congeneric profiles. Washes for this still are made using different yeast strains and so this adds to the variation in taste profiles.

ANGOSTURA 1919

40%
ABV

£27.28

PER 70CL

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO



GOLD

The Trinidadian psyche is steeped in rum, the spirit percolates through its past, playing an integral role in everyday life on the island - acting as the carefree catalyst for the incredible annual carnival when the Port of Spain explodes into a steel-drum driven celebration of drink, dance and traditional Trini culture.

The Angostura distillery, built on the Port of Spain's periphery, is Trinidad's only rum distillery and is one of the largest of all the Caribbean islands in terms of volume. The vast majority of its production is dedicated to Angostura's most iconic elixir - Angostura Bitters - although it also makes a number of local hero rums seldom sipped outside Trinidad.

There can't be many distilleries in the Caribbean built to such high-

spec and each step of the process, from crop to cask, is subjected to intense scrutiny. Unlike distilleries on other English-speaking islands, Angostura also eschews the pot still (there hasn't been one here since the 70's) in favour of its column counterpart, with seven of them smudging the island skyline.

Its maturation programme, consisting of ex-bourbon barrels, is one of the largest in the world and this expression is aged for up to 8 years. 1919 is a celebration of a crucial date in Trinidad & Tobago's rum-making history when, following a fire that destroyed the Government Rum Bond in 1932, the master blender and owner of Fernandes Distillery, Joseph Bento Fernandes, snapped up some surviving casks.

The barrels marked "1919" were particularly decent and he blended a new rum, based on these casks. Decades later, Fernandes sold the rum and his distillery to Angostura and they pledged to keep his liquid legacy alive.

Big on bourbon character from the barrel, with vivid vanilla notes, this is a splendid sipping rum with sweet golden syrup notes, a touch of Christmas spice and some chunks of milk chocolate in there too.

While delectable in a Daiquiri, the quintessentially Caribbean serve is stunningly simple - lengthened with coconut water and the optional dash of Angosturabitters. Obviously.



1919 DAIQUIRI

50ML ANGOSTURA 1919

25ML FRESH LIME JUICE

12.5ML SUGAR SYRUP

3 DASHES OF ANGOSTURA BITTERS

LIME SLICE

1. SHAKE ALL INGREDIENTS TOGETHER IN AN ICE-FILLED SHAKER
2. STRAIN INTO CHILLED COCKTAIL GLASS
3. GARNISH WITH LIME SLICE

BACARDÍ AÑEJO CUATRO			40% ABV
£17.53	PER 70CL	PUERTO RICO	▽ ✦ GOLD

The Bacardi family is the most famous rum-making family in history, if not the world's most significant distilling dynasty. Bacardi's well-documented and quite momentous timeline began in 1862 when Don Facundo Bacardi Masso created the original "light white" Cuban rum, a bartender-friendly blend of heavy-bodied and light-bodied rums designed deliberately for mixing – and originally called "Ron Superior de Bacardi Y Cia" and packing a potent ABV of 49%.

Don Facundo's creation was a clear catalyst for light Cuban rums. While Jamaica and the Bahamas have their pot still rums and Martinique its cane, Cuba's legacy is linked integrally to the influence of the column stills that Don Facundo so shrewdly embraced back in the 1860s.

Cuba's column stills created a light, sweeter spirit than the heavier copper pot still rums, synonymous with other islands

in the Caribbean and their sheer mixability was crucial in the creation of a glorious Cuban cocktail culture. Prior to Prohibition, when Cuba became inundated with American bartenders and tourists thirsty for the island's intoxicating elixir, Havana had its own exciting cocktail scene that twisted on American classics – turns out it wasn't all Ernest Hemingway's work.

However, the years from 1920 to 1959 remain the golden age of Cuban cocktails and the most famous liquid legacies from this era are undoubtedly the Daiquiri and the Cuba Libre, cocktail menu mainstays betrothed to Bacardi rum.

As ever with a brand that is so ubiquitous and iconic, innovation is key and to complement the incredibly popular Superior, Bacardi has unleashed Añejo Cuatro, a four-year old golden rum that provides loyal Superior drinkers with an acutely affordable initial step down a premium

pathway that leads to Bacardi's eight-year old and then, eventually, its legion of luxury rums. Perfect for raising rum-drinks up a notch, the Añejo Cuatro kickstarts the consumer conversation about ageing – in particular the wood, vanilla and spice flavours that Bacardi cleverly coaxes from the American white oak, that expands and contracts in the intense Puerto Rican heat.

Aimed squarely at a more adventurous rum drinker looking to broaden their horizons - but without emptying their bank account - Añejo Cuatro is an adaptable addition to the Bacardi stable, offering an accessible entry point to premium rums. It can step in for Superior across an array of rum drinks, but we're hailing its flavours of honey, clove, light vanilla and toasty wood notes here in this easy-to-make, margin boosting serve with ginger ale and bitters.

CUATRO HIGHBALL

50ML BACARDÍ AÑEJO CUATRO

100ML GINGER ALE

1 DASH ANGOSTURA BITTERS (OPTIONAL)

3 PINEAPPLE LEAVES

1. FILL A TALL GLASS WITH THE DESIRED AMOUNT OF ICE
2. POUR IN BACARDÍ AÑEJO CUATRO RUM
3. FILL THE GLASS WITH GINGER ALE
4. GARNISH WITH PINEAPPLE LEAVES

CHAIRMAN'S RESERVE			40% ABV
£18.56	PER 70CL	ST. LUCIA	GOLD

The mountainous, volcanic island of Saint Lucia is home to this gorgeous, great value and hugely versatile golden rum made by one of the most respected distilleries in the Caribbean.

Saint Lucia Distillers can be traced back to the 1930's when the Barnard family, who first arrived on the island in the 1820's, established their own distillery and began making rum from molasses sourced from Saint Lucia's bountiful sugar plantations.

In 1972, with the cessation of Saint Lucia sugar production, the Barnards were one of only two

family-owned distilleries on the island. They joined forces, settled in the Roseau Valley and took sole control of the distillery twenty years later.

It first launched this rum in 1999 when the then chairman, Laurie Barnard, set out to create a rum that epitomised the iconic style synonymous with Saint Lucia. It's a mellifluous marriage of aged rums distilled on both the distillery's Coffey column stills and copper pot stills.

Blended post-maturation, the blend is then returned into oak barrels, formerly used to age

bourbon and Tennessee whiskey, for a further six months so that the flavours can marry. Located next to Saint Lucia's biggest banana plantation, it's no surprise that among the aromas exuding from this brilliant golden-hued rum are banoffee pie alongside vanilla, fresh mango and crème brûlée.

The wood influence is noticeable, not too much but there's enough oak and spice there to give it the required oomph for use in cocktails. It has enough character to stand up to Coke in a Cuba Libre and muddled with mint, it also makes a marvellous Mojito.



CHAIRMAN'S MOJITO

50ML CHAIRMAN'S RESERVE FINEST

SODA

25ML LIME JUICE

20ML SUGAR SYRUP (1:1)

1 LEMON SLICE

6-8 MINT LEAVES

1 GRAPEFRUIT SLICE

1. MUDDLED AND BUILT OVER CRUSHED ICE
2. MIX IN CHAIRMAN'S RESERVE RUM
3. TOP WITH SODA, ADD LIME JUICE & SUGAR SYRUP
4. GARNISH WITH MINT, LEMON AND GRAPEFRUIT



PAMPERO ESPECIAL			40% ABV
£16.50	PER 70CL	VENEZUELA	GOLD

The Pampero distillery was first founded in 1938 by Alejandro Hernández, a fisherman from the Isla of Margarita, situated just off the coast of Venezuela.

Distilled in Venezuela from molasses and aged in casks that have previously held bourbon for between two and four years, this golden rum is a blend of column still rums, with an aroma that will seduce those susceptible to serious sweetness.

But on the palate, fears of a potentially saccharine experience are skilfully allayed with a strong, smooth sweetness that doesn't smother the measured mix of

caramel, toffee, dessert wine, toffee-apple and ripe bananas left a bit too long in a leather school satchel.

Bottled in Italy and now part of the Diageo stable, the range of Pampero rums are enormously popular within their Venezuelan homeland, where it is affectionally known by the name "Caballito Frenao", which translates into English as 'Bitten Horse'.

It refers to the brand's label which depicts a cowboy astride a wild horse that is rearing up on the Venezuelan plains while the name, continuing the cowboy theme, derives from the bursts of cold

wind that would sweep up from the south into areas of warm conditions and create violent gales, acute humidity and thunderstorms – before a refreshing coolness descends.

Adaptable as it is approachable, and acutely affordable, Pampero is a great golden rum to have within easy reach for bartenders. You can sip it, you can shake it, it can provide superb sweet characteristics to cocktails and, as we're doing here (and continuing the equine theme), it lends itself perfectly to easy to make (and drink) long drinks like Pamperos Especial Caracas Mule too.



PAMPERO ESPECIAL CARACAS MULE

50ML PAMPERO ESPECIAL

100ML GINGER BEER

ORANGE SLICE

1. FILL A TALL GLASS OR COPPER MUG WITH THE DESIRED AMOUNT OF ICE
2. POUR IN PAMPERO ESPECIAL
3. FILL THE GLASS WITH GINGER BEER
4. GARNISH WITH A SLICE OF ORANGE

RON ABUELO AÑEJO			40% ABV
£16.58	PER 70CL	PANAMA	GOLD

It was only six years before the completion of the Panama Canal, one of the most impressive engineering feats in history, and just five years after it declared independence, that Panama opened its first ever sugar mill.

More than a century later, sugar is the nation's most profitable crop after bananas, while rum plays an integral role in the economy of a curvy Central American country that links the Americas together. Panama makes for rich cane-growing and rum-making territory, sharing a lot of characteristics with the Caribbean; volcanic soil rich in nutrients kept irrigated with water that flows down from the mountains and into the valleys.

There is a trio of distilleries in Panama making different styles of rums, and arguably the most famous is the family-owned Varela Hermanos distillery, which was responsible for constructing that first ever sugar mill back in 1908.

Don Jose Varela Blanco, who founded the mill and refinery, fathered nine children and it was his three oldest sons who built a distillery alongside the family business back in 1937. Home to Ron Abuelo (which translates as "Grandfather's Rum" in Spanish), the distillery proudly oversees every aspect of production from cane to cask – more than 50,000 tonnes of their own sugar cane is cultivated and hand-harvested from their own cane-growing estate stretching over 2,000 acres.

After distillation, maturation sees the rums aged in American White Oak ex-bourbon casks for a minimum of seven years. Older rums are also given finishes in oloroso, port and Cognac casks. The Añejo aged doesn't divulge the age of the rums within but it's clearly got some gravitas.

Amber in hue and light in texture with toasted almonds on the nose, it's a fabulously fresh, wonderfully woody and nutty drop with hints of pistachio, aniseed, aromatic citrus hops and a touch of tobacco on the finish. Robust enough to be sipped on the rocks, it can also maintain its independence with the addition of a muscular mixer like ginger ale, cranberry juice or, well, you name it really.



POMCHI SMASH

40ML RON ABUELO AÑEJO

60ML CRANBERRY JUICE

GINGER ALE

30ML LEMON JUICE

15ML SIMPLE SYRUP

1 DASH ANGOSTURA BITTERS

10 RASPBERRIES

5 MINT LEAVES

- MUDDLE RASPBERRIES AND MINT IN SHAKER
- ADD REST OF INGREDIENTS, BAR GINGER ALE, AND SHAKE WITH ICE
- STRAIN INTO HIGHBALL GLASS AND TOP WITH GINGER ALE
- GARNISH WITH RASPBERRY AND MINT

DIPLOMÁTICO MANTUANO			40% ABV
£22.39	PER 70CL	VENEZUELA	AGED

The rather handsome and hirsute Don Juancho Nieto Melendez has become a reassuringly regular sight for UK rum lovers in recent years.

A well-travelled rum aficionado, who lived close to the Diplomático distillery in the 19th century. Don Juancho toured the Caribbean amassing an hugely impressive rum collection and was fascinated by the effects of climate and casks on the rum-making process.

Famous for throwing extravagant dinner parties, where he would crack open his collection of Caribbean rums, and other exotic liqueurs, Don Juancho is the 'visage' of Venezuela's Diplomático Distillery which is located in the Planas valley, situated at the base of the Andes mountains, where it is surrounded by sugar cane fields.

Diplomático rums are made with both sugar cane molasses and sugar cane honey – the former used for its lighter rums and the honey harvested for more complex

rums. Low in ash content and viscosity, the molasses deliver a high concentration of sugar that is fermented using a Diplomático's own yeast strain.

While a short day-long fermentation suffices for the light rums made from molasses, the fermentation period for intermediate and complex rums made with sugar cane honey takes twice as long.

Distillation at Diplomático embraces myriad methods, light rums are created on continuous column stills, batch kettle stills are used for intermediate rums while the more complex rums come off the pot stills.

Diplomático rums are aged amid high humidity in array of different oak types, chiefly former bourbon and malt whisky barrels that are exposed to warm days and cold nights, stretch and shrink – imparting a lot of oak influence in the rums.

Having been founded in 1959, it was given a new lease of life by a group of local entrepreneurs back in the early 2000s, who broadened Diplomático's distribution beyond its homeland. In the last few years, it has developed a strong following in the UK, spearheaded by the success of Diplomático Reserva Exclusiva and supplemented by its luxurious prestige range.

The Mantuano rum, a recent replacement for Diplomático's Reserva, is made from both molasses and sugar cane honey, aged for up to eight years and is a blend of column, batch kettle and pot still rums.

It's a deceptively easy-sipping dark rum with deep notes of dark chocolate designed for either drinking neat or as a key component in cocktails such as the Mary Pickford, a classic rum cocktail created in Cuba back in the 1920's.



MARY PICKFORD

50ML DIPLOMÁTICO MANTUANO

40ML PINEAPPLE JUICE

5ML GRENADINE

2.5ML MARASCHINO

2.5ML DRY VERMOUTH

PINEAPPLE LEAF

1. ADD ALL INGREDIENTS INTO A COCKTAIL SHAKER
2. FILL WITH ICE AND SHAKE UNTIL COLD
3. STRAIN INTO A CHILLED GLASS
4. PINEAPPLE LEAF TO GARNISH

EL DORADO 15^{YO}			40% ABV
£39.41	PER 70CL	GUYANA	AGED

And then there was one. At the beginning of the 1800's, there were approximately 300 distilleries operating in Guyana, South America.

Within 50 years, the number of distilleries in Guyana had almost halved and within a hundred years, by the turn of the 20th century, only 64 remained. Following independence from Britain and a whole host of government interventions, by 2000 - only one distillery remained and that was the Diamond distillery, a distillery within which the whole history of Guyanese rum-making has been... er... distilled.

The home of El Dorado is located on the east bank of the Demerara river, where the silt, rich in minerals, ingrains a distinct flavour into the molasses and the rum it produces - it's a most sought-after substance with Guyanese molasses used by approximately half of all Caribbean rum-makers.

At the Diamond distillery, centuries of consolidation have seen it accrue a splendid collection of distilling equipment and it is now home to two wooden pot stills and the world's only remaining wooden Coffey still - hewn from native Greenheart wood, its influence is integral to the character of the rums it produces.

Embracing the rich rum-making traditions of Guyana's past, but with no intention of getting stuck there, El Dorado's distillery is a truly unique and remarkable set-up. It mixes old-school approaches with cutting edge technology to create a unique range of outstanding rums that embody Guyana's rich rum-making history.

Synonymous with sweetness, big flavours and strong oak influence, El Dorado's Demerara rums refuse to be made with anything else than local Demerara sugar cane before being aged in diminutive casks of American oak. After blending by the master distiller, a six-month

marrying process ensures flavours become more melodious.

Aged exclusively in ex-bourbon American White Oak casks, the 15 year-old was released in 1992 as one of the very first premium aged rums on the market. It features rums up to 20 years old. Acutely complex, it's a single blended rum consisting of a quartet of different rums from four different stills - a blend of pot and column stills, three of which are the wooden stills.

It has been awarded the Rum Trophy (World's Best Rum) by the IWSC a record six times and you can see why - it's gorgeously sweet without being sickly. There's toffee in there, golden syrup too with a lovely layer of liquorice, a burst of bruised bananas and an undertone of oil.

It's fantastic. Coax out this award-winning complexity in an Old Fashioned, a cocktail that really allows the rum to shine.



RUM OLD FASHIONED 15YO

60ML EL DORADO 15YO

3X DASHES AROMATIC BITTERS

BAR SPOON DEMERARA SUGAR

ORANGE TWIST

1. BUILD IN AN OLD FASHIONED GLASS WITH THE DESIRED AMOUNT OF ICE
2. MIX THE INGREDIENTS TOGETHER
3. GARNISH WITH AN ORANGE TWIST

MATUSALEM 15 GRAN RESERVA			40% ABV
£25.83	PER 70CL	CUBA/DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	AGED

Matusalem rum was first created in Cuba back in 1872 by the Camps Hermanos (the Camps brothers - Benjamin and Eduardo).

They built a distillery in Santiago de Cuba and, for years, their rum was an iconic ingredient during Cuba's golden age of cocktails. Yet just like the Bacardi family, who had begun distilling in Cuba a decade earlier, the Camps were forced to flee the island during Fidel Castro's Revolution in 1959 and they've yet to return.

Today, they operate out of the Dominican Republic where the soil, climate and quality of sugar cane enables them to create the kinds of expressions, that made Cuba such a revered rum-drinking destination between the 1930's -1950's.

Despite this displacement, the methods used to make the Matusalem range of rums retain a fierce fidelity to its Cuban roots and the particular production techniques first employed by the Camps Brothers and their partner Evaristo Alvarez.

Their aim was to create a rum unparalleled in its smoothness and given the brothers' Spanish heritage, the design of their rum distillery drew strongly on the distillation and blending traditions synonymous with Spanish wine, sherry and brandy.

Central to this was the solera system – an ageing approach it shares with sherry production. Introduced by sherry producers back in the 19th century to improve consistency, barrels holding rum

of different ages are ranked in tiers, and a small amount of rum is taken from the oldest barrel at the bottom, then topped up with younger rum taken from a barrel on the tier above and so on until the top tier is filled with fresh rums.

This drip-down technique ensures each rum maintains its house character, adorning the younger wines with depth and giving older rums the exuberance of youth. The Gran Reserva 15 year old, known as the "Cognac of Rums" and aged in ex-bourbon American oak, deftly articulates this ageing process with zesty fresh citrus notes combined with black pepper spice, vanilla, white chocolate, Christmas cake and crème brûlée – flavours which come to life in a Rum Old Fashioned with a teaspoon of sugar and a dash of Angostura bitters.



RUM OLD FASHIONED

60ML MATUSALEM 15

1 TSP SUGAR OR AGAVE SYRUP

1 DASH OF ANGSTURA BITTERS

ORANGE PEEL

1. STIR IN A ROCKS GLASS OVER ICE
2. RUB A TWIST OF ORANGE PEEL OVER THE RIM OF THE GLASS AND USE TO GARNISH

BARTI DDU (PRONOUNCED BARTI THEE)			35% ABV	
£17.40	PER 70CL	PEMBROKESHIRE	▽	✂ SPICED

The Welsh, as well you know, are serious about their seaweed. They love the stuff – with a particular penchant for it in puree form, most famously lathered on bread to make laverbread, otherwise known as “Welsh Caviar”.

This regional delicacy thrives along the breathtaking Pembrokeshire coast in West Wales and on the very shoreline that once saw a cottage industry born out of a hunger for laver, a tiny team of seaweed pickers can be found tugging and lugging it from the rocks past the lost and forgotten seaweed huts of the 1800's. Why? To create the cornerstone of a Welsh Caribbean-style spiced rum named after a pirate from Pembrokeshire. Obviously. Barti Ddu (pronounced thee) spiced rum was launched in 2017 by Jonathan Williams, founder of the Pembrokeshire Beach Food Company, and is a blend of white rums from Trinidad and Tobago

‘spiced’ with creamy vanilla, subtle clove, ginger and hints of citrus.

But the conductor waving his wand and harmonising these notes together is that wild Welsh plant known as seaweed. More savoury than salty in character, the seaweed softens the sweeter ingredients to create a dark and very drinkable and smooth seaweed rum full of citrus flavour, with a little bit of spiciness in there too.

What must surely be the most esoteric entrant into the burgeoning spiced rum category is named after John Roberts, a Pembrokeshire Pirate known as Barti Ddu or, in English, Black Bart. He was a Welsh seafaring scoundrel and one of history's greatest pirates - capturing 400 ships in three years and accruing a bounty worth £50million in today's earnings.

An early advocate for equality, he wrote the pirate code and insisted on music being played during raids on enemy ships. Nice. When he fought the Navy, he was shot through the throat and buried at sea. A true pirate. It's worth mentioning, however, that Roberts was also a teetotaler – literally, as in he drank tea. Something that probably doesn't need dwelling on...

Anyway, if you're looking to get punters to part with their hard-earned cash in exchange for this quirky Caribbean rum crafted in Pembrokeshire, there's are loads of impressive hooks here – just like a load of pirates who have had their hands shot off.



WEST 'N' STORMY

50ML BARTI DDU SPICED RUM

CRUSHED ICE

GINGER BEER

GENEROUS SQUEEZE OF FRESH LEMON

1. FILL A TALL GLASS WITH THE DESIRED AMOUNT OF ICE
2. POUR IN BARTI DDU SPICED RUM
3. POUR IN THE DESIRED AMOUNT OF GINGER BEER AND STIR
4. GARNISH WITH A SLICE OF LEMON

CHAIRMAN'S RESERVE SPICED			40% ABV
£19.15	PER 70CL	ST. LUCIA	  SPICED

In the Caribbean, there's a long-standing tradition of adding fruits, roots, herbs and spices to flavour their rum. Initially, additional ingredients were added to soothe minimally aged fiery spirits.

But just as rum has become more refined, so too has its spiced sibling – and it currently finds itself in the midst of a remarkable renaissance, with sales of spiced rum soaring in 2017. In the off-trade, 9.2m bottles were sold worth £123m (12 months to Sept) while spiced and flavoured rums represented the largest subcategory in the UK on-trade and account for 85% of all rum value growth in pubs and bars. (CGA OPMS MAT P03 2018 (data to 24/03/2018).

If you're looking for a spiced rum capable of rising to the occasion, then this award-winning St.Lucian is a solid bet, quite literally. Among the ingredients added to Chairman's Reserve, the base rum used here, is "Bois Bande", a Caribbean wood traditional infused in rum and said to have aphrodisiac qualities.

It literally means "erect wood" and derives from the French, bois (wood) and bander (to have an... well, you get the idea...). As well as the tumescence-causing tree, the distillers add an array of locally-sourced spices and fruits including nutmeg, vanilla, allspice, lemon and orange peels, cinnamon and cloves during the ageing and finishing stages.

A marriage of pot still rums and Coffey column still rums, it's aged separately by batch and by type of still in ex-bourbon barrels, then blended and rested in oak vats for an additional six months. The result is a complex rum, deep maroon in hue, with a sumptuous texture on the tongue. The various spices spring out on the nose yet play nicely together on the palate, before the snappy citrus finish rounds things off.

As the only spiced spirit to win the rum trophy at a major international competition, it can be sipped short or served longer in a spiced rum Negroni, a twist on the classic Italian apéro.



CHAIRMAN'S SPICED NEGRONI

25ML CHAIRMAN'S RESERVE SPICED

25ML CAMPARI

25ML VELVET FALERNUM

ORANGE ZEST

SPRIG OF MINT

SLICE OF LIME

1. FILL A GOBLET GLASS WITH THE DESIRED AMOUNT OF ICE
2. POUR IN CHAIRMAN'S RESERVE SPICED, CAMPARI AND VELVET FALERNUM AND STIR WELL
3. GARNISH WITH ORANGE ZEST, MINT SPRIG AND A SLICE OF LIME

DEAD MAN'S FINGERS

37.5%
ABV

£15.56

PER 70CL

CORNWALL



SPICED

Three years ago, a restaurant in the Cornish town of St.Ives threw its tricorne hat into the flourishing spiced rum market with the launch of its own small-batch house spirit.

Dead Man's Fingers, named after a crab's incredibly tough and indigestible grey gills, was launched in 2015 at "The Rum & Crab Shack", a harbourside restaurant with a rum range boasting more than 50 different bottles.

Created in a region synonymous with sea-faring skulduggery, but now part of the Halewood International stable of drinks, "Dead Man's Fingers" is a harmonious blend of rums from both Barbados

and Trinidad that have been aged for a minimum of three years – combined with a bit of Cornish culture.

Vanilla, cinnamon and nutmeg are among the ingredients involved to create a versatile spiced rum designed for high volumes, highballs and high times. On the nose, there's the signature vanilla notes and deep toffee tones one would associate with other spiced rums - but instead of the sickly sweetness you sometimes find in similar styles, there's some bitter orange in there, saffron case, some Pedro Ximenez sherry in the mix and a distinct dryness on the finish.

Even though it was partly inspired by the discerning Diplomático Exclusiva Reserva, "Dead Man's Fingers" is by no means a rum to sip meaningfully from a snifter in a leather wingback chair, staring into the smouldering embers of a once roaring fire.

Instead, it's an excellent all-rounder that can perform excellently on ice or as a flexible friend to bartenders in a myriad of mixed drinks. Serve with Coke, ginger beer or breathe life back into the restaurant's "Dead Man's Grip" cocktail, a distinctive blend of passion fruit syrup, Benedictine from Normandy, lemon and lime juice, peach bitters and egg whites.



POLDARK & STORMY

50ML DEAD MAN'S FINGERS SPICED RUM

100ML GINGER BEER

25ML FRESHLY SQUEEZED LIME JUICE

2 DASHES ANGOSTURA BITTERS

SLICE OF LIME

1. FILL GLASS WITH ICE
2. SQUEEZE LIME OVER THE ICE
3. TOP WITH GINGER BEER
4. GARNISH WITH LIME

MAHIKI			27% ABV
£10.25	PER 70CL	POLYNESIA & JAMAICA	☉ COCONUT

Back in 2006, when Mahiki opened in London's Mayfair as a late night Polynesian playground, it quickly became the favourite hang-out for the Royal princes, celebrities and a super posh party crowd.

Kitted out kitsch like an episode of Magnum P.I. with a menu featuring more than a hundred different rums, Mahiki was famed for its tasty, tongue-in-cheek Tiki-tastic cocktails, especially the signature punches served in a treasure chest.

Not content with opening further venues in Kensington, Manchester, Dubai, Marbella and Sardinia, Mahiki last year unleashed its own branded coconut rum onto the market – along with a trio of pre-mixed rum cocktails.

Mahiki Coconut brings together coconuts from Western Samoa, rums from both Polynesia and Jamaica and a sizeable splash of the kind of escapist, Aloha spirit that gave the Mahiki bars its reputation for glamorous good times.

It's made using a column still rum distilled in the Caribbean that's then dovetailed with a pot-distilled Fijian rum. On the nose, there's notes of dry desiccated coconut, some macaroon, fresh roses and jasmine; the Polynesian pot still peppers the spirit with sprightly sugar cane sweetness that treads softly on the palate, while the long coconut finish is clipped with an aniseed sign off.

Clear in colour and creamy in texture, yet less than 50 calories per 25ml, it's perfectly placed to play a prime role in party-friendly long punches; it can be combined long with cranberry juice, cola and coconut water; and it can even be poured neat over ice.

But we like what it does in the rather retro creamy Piña Colada. Ripe for rediscovery, the often derided yet delicious 1950's classic cocktail is still a cracking drink when prepared properly. Not only does it satisfy the consumer's sweet tooth, it also makes for superb summer drinking.



MAHIKI COCONUT PIÑA COLADA

50ML MAHIKI COCONUT

30ML PINEAPPLE JUICE

30ML FUNKIN COCONUT PUREE

2 DASHES ANGOSTURA BITTERS

CRUSHED ICE

PINEAPPLE SLICE

1. BLEND ALL THE INGREDIENTS WITH THE ICE FOR SEVERAL SECONDS AND POUR INTO A GLASS
2. GARNISH WITH A PINEAPPLE SLICE

