

# THE Rum UNIVERSITY

## Rum Appreciation In The 21<sup>st</sup> Century

### Lesson XI





# Lesson XI - The Perfect Rum Bar

By Robert Plotkin, Alcoholic Beverage Expert

## IS THERE SUCH A THING AS THE PERFECT RUM BAR?

Rum is perhaps the most dynamic and diverse spirit in the world. It is made in exotic places, graced with brilliant hues, rich aromas, and captivating flavors. Rums come from the beautiful, exotic islands in the most romantic of seas. They taste and smell great, which means that there's no learning curve necessary to enjoy rum. It's a spirit that takes well to barrel aging, which adds a whole other dimension to the subject.

The Caribbean region produces an intriguing array of styles and types of rum. There are overproof, vintage-dated, flavored, agricole, naval and single barrel rums. One evening you could be sipping a 1929 vintage J. Bally agricole rhum, and the next be quaffing a grog made with British naval rum. It's just really easy to stay interested in rums.

Another advantage rum enjoys over other spirits, such as brandy or single malt scotch, is that it is relatively inexpensive. Appleton Estate Extra, which is aged in wood for a minimum of 12-years, wholesales for about \$20 per 750ml. Compared to most 12-year old spirits, that's a considerable bargain.

But the shared attributes that put rum on the map are their mixability and universally popular flavor. Rum is extremely versatile, equaling vodka in that respect. But unlike vodka, rum has an irresistible taste and a savory aroma that lifts it head and shoulders above any other light liquor. In most cocktails, vodka's characteristics go unnoticed, and it adds little flavor to the drink. Rum is nearly always a primary flavor and adds greatly to a drink's ability to captivate.

Equally important, rum is fun and enjoyable. It has a reputation that few other products enjoy. So jump in with both feet and catch a rum state of mind.

## MASTERING RUM SPEAK

Regardless of the type of still used, distilled spirits exit the still absolutely crystal clear. So if all rums are distilled from sugar cane in some form, what distinguishes one rum from another? There are a number of factors that work in concert to affect on the quality and character of a finished rum.

• **MICRO-CLIMATE AND RAW MATERIAL** — Sugar cane is a grass, and as is the case of all plants, it is highly affected by the micro-climate in which it is cultivated. Conditions such as elevation, temperature, humidity and soil composition all impact the quality of the sugar cane, and the quantity and quality of the juice. For more details about this subject, please refer to **Lesson I**.



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• **PRODUCTION VARIABLES** — Among the first of the production variables is whether the rum is distilled from fresh cane juice, cane syrup or molasses. Each yields a different tasting rum. Another of the variables is the length of fermentation. The longer the fermentation process, the fuller-bodied, and fuller-flavored the resulting rum will be.

The unique qualities of the particular strain of yeast will play a significant role in determining the characteristics of the finished rum. Most distillers use carefully cultured strains of yeast to start the fermentation, while others rely on wild yeasts present in the air to jump start fermentation. Some yeasts rapidly precipitate fermentation, while others take longer.

The quality of the water used throughout the production process will affect the taste of the finished rum. The water used to irrigate the cane fields will affect the flavor of the cane juice. Water is also used during fermentation and distillation.

The addition of “dunder” or “limings” to the fermenting wash plays a large role in creating the final character of the rum. Both dunder and limings help achieve consistent conditions for fermentation. They also both contribute to the finished rum’s bouquet and flavor.

It is certainly ill advised to disregard the alcohol content of the rum. In addition to the commonly noted affects of rum, alcohol content can be perceived on the palate.

• **DISTILLATION** — There are three types of stills used to distill rum. Heavier, fuller-flavored rums are typically distilled in alembic (pot) stills. Lighter rums are most often distilled in a column still or continuous still. For more details about this subject, please refer to **Lessons IV and V**.

• **AGING** — Take a fiery spirit straight from the still and age it in wood for a decade and magical things happen. Over time, the rum will begin to soften and become mellow. Rum gathers its color from aging in wood. Barrel aging affects every dimension of the finished rum. Rums produced in pot stills are invariably aged in wood. This allows its constituent elements to marry, while the wood works to smooth out any rough edges.

While length of aging is a principle point of distinction, the type of wood in which a rum is aged is significant. Rum is often aged in used bourbon barrels, however, a wide variety of different wood type casks are used to age Caribbean rum. Both the type of wood, as well as what was in the cask previously, play a role in creating the finished rum.

The last of the aging variables are the specific conditions under which the rum is aged. Temperature and humidity are the two primary factors. Certainly resting in an open-air warehouse in Barbados is very different than being aged in the Scottish Highlands or along the Irish coast. For more details about this subject, please refer to **Lesson II**.



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• **FILTERING AND BLENDING** — There are rums that are bottled unfiltered and undiluted. The rum is essentially drawn directly from the cask and bottled. Others are fastidiously filtered to remove any particulate from the rum, and then diluted down to alcoholic proof with purified water. The majority of all rums are created by marrying numerous rums together of various distillations and ages. The practice of blending spirits requires a heightened olfactory sense and a highly developed palate. The objective is to combine a number of different rums to create a spirit that best showcase the outstanding qualities of the constituent elements. It's a classic case of something becoming more than the sum of its parts. For more details about this subject, please refer to **Lesson IX**.

## A GUIDED TOUR OF CARIBBEAN RUM

Nearly all rums fall into one of two major categories—heavy and light. Heavy rums are typically distilled in alembic or column stills. Continuous stills are also capable of producing heavy rums, although the spirit is likely removed from the first column. Heavy is an unfortunate label for these highly flavorful spirits, one that casts the impression that these rums are dense and chewy. While more substantial than their lighter counterparts, heavy rums are labeled as such because they are loaded with flavoring agents (congeners). They are aromatic, full-bodied, full-flavored spirits with long lasting finishes. Heavy rums are invariably aged in wood.

Light rums are usually distilled in column or continuous stills. They have light bodies and crisp, clean palates. Light rums are distilled to high proof rendering them extremely pure. They are occasionally aged for brief periods to round out their character. Light rums are unsurpassed for their mixability.

While there are scores of different brands of Caribbean rums, the good news is that there are only a small number of types of rum to distinguish between. Take heart, here's a brief guide to get you started.

• **WHITE RUM (A.K.A. LIGHT, SILVER RUM)** — These are dry, clear and light-bodied rums. The majority of rum distillers have at least one of these spirits in their repertoire. White rums are typically blended and left unaged.

• **GOLD RUM (A.K.A. ORO, AMBRÉ RUM)** — These rums are typically medium-bodied and slightly more flavorful than the white version as a result of being barrel aged. Most derive their golden color during aging, however, many contain a touch of caramel coloring to enhance their presentation.

• **DARK RUM (A.K.A. BLACK RUM)** — These aromatic rums are most often distilled in alembic stills and barrel aged for extended periods of time. Dark rums are invariably full-bodied, full-flavored with long, lingering finishes.

• **AGED RUM (A.K.A. AÑEJO, RHUM VIEUX)** — Rums age extremely well in wood. The peak age being somewhere between 15 to 20 years, after which the rum begins to decline. Rhum Vieux are aged a minimum of three years in barrels of no less than 650 liters in capacity. Rhum Très Vieux are barrel aged a minimum of ten years.



- **OVERPROOF RUM** — These spirits are most frequently white rums bottled at an extremely high alcohol content. Technically overproof spirits are those bottled at more than 50% alcohol by volume (abv), however, most overproof rums are bottled in the range of 150-151 proof (75-75.5% abv).
- **FLAVORED AND SPICED RUM** — As the names would imply, these rums are altered by the addition of natural fruit flavorings or a small bevy of spices. White rums are most often married with fruit flavoring, while gold or aged rums are more often used as the base for spiced rums.
- **VINTAGE & SINGLE BARREL (A.K.A. SINGLE CASK, SINGLE MARK RUMS)** — There are a number of vintage rums on the market. A vintage on the label of a rum signifies the year that the sugar cane was harvested and the rum distilled. Single barrel rums—also known as single mark rums—are spirits drawn from a single cask. These rums are singular in as much as each barrel of rum is slightly different, making these rums unique, never to be repeated products.
- **RHUM AGRICOLE** — In the simplest possible terms, rum is a spirit distilled from fresh sugar cane juice, cane syrup or molasses. When the harvested sugar cane stalks are crushed and ground the process expresses a sweet, green-colored sap rich in sucrose. This sap is referred to as fresh sugar cane juice. Most of the rums produced on the French islands are distilled from fresh sugar cane juice and called rhum agricole. Famous brands such as Martinique’s Rhum Saint James, J. Bally and Haitian Rhum Barbancourt are sterling examples of rhum agricole.

## THE IDEAL RUM BAR

One of the joys of being a rum enthusiast is sitting at a bar and seeing an all-world selection of rums from which to choose staring back at you. This raises the question—what is an all-world selection of rums? Here’s my take on what brands and types to consider. This, of course, presumes that you have a huge back bar and are sufficiently swayed by my unusual take on life.

- **ANGUILLA** — Save room on the top-shelf for the whole range of Pyrat Rums. The A super-premium line of Anguillian rums are made from a blend of molasses-based, barrel-aged, alembic rums produced by 7 Caribbean distillers. The blends are solera aged in 55-gallon, French oak barrels and range in age between 8 and 40 years. I highly recommend the PYRAT PLANTER'S GOLD XO RESERVE and PYRAT CASK 23.
- **ANTIGUA** — Produced by the Antigua Distillery, English Harbour Rums are a “must have” selection. There are two that need to grace your shelves: the 5-year-old ENGLISH HARBOUR RUM AGED and the famed ENGLISH HARBOUR RUM EXTRA OLD. Both are matured in small oak barrels and will exceed the expectations of even the most critical aficionados.
- **AUSTRALIA** — If you catch a glimpse of STUBBS QUEENSLAND RUM, grab it. While hard to come by, the rum is dry and flavorful and worth the effort.





• **BARBADOS** — When you speak of Barbadian rum, Mount Gay rightfully tops the conversation. Possibly the oldest producer of rum, the Mount Gay line includes ECLIPSE, a blend of pot still and continuous still rums that are aged a minimum of 2 years; SPECIAL RESERVE, a blend of rums aged 2 years and SUGAR CANE, a blend with a high proportion of pot-distilled rums that range in maturity up to 7 years. MOUNT GAY EXTRA OLD is a super-premium rum made from a blend of mature pot still and continuous still rums from 12 to 17 years in maturity. All are mandatory selections. New from Mount Gay are vanilla- and mango-infused rums. Both are well worth stocking. Another preeminent distiller of Barbadian rum is R. L. Seales. If you can find it, grab DOORLY'S XO. It is a super-premium barrel-aged a minimum of 10 years and finished with a second maturation in sherry oak casks. The distillery also has a 10-year-old that is hard to come by but a marvelous addition to the top-shelf. There are two other Barbadian rums to hunt down. One is COCKSPUR V.S.O.R., a classic 10-year-old spirit. The other is super-premium OLD PLANTATION, a blend of molasses-based, vintage dated and alembic rums.

• **BERMUDA** — The national spirit of Bermuda is Gosling's Black Seal Rum. The premium rum is a blend of 3-year old, molasses-based rums. The distillery also makes an excellent overproof (151 proof). Gosling's rums are highly recommended.

• **BRAZIL** — The indigenous cane spirit from Brazil is cachaça and the finest is arguably YPIÓCA (Ee-pee-oh'-kah). A super-premium line of Brazilian cachaça, Ypióca is made from fermented sugar cane juice and produced in continuous stills and aged in balsamic barrels. The line includes Silver, which is aged 10 months, Prata, which is aged 2 1/2 years and Ouro (Gold), which is aged 3 years in balsam barrels.

• **CADENHEAD'S** — The Scottish firm of Cadenhead's produces a special cask strength collection is comprised of pot-distilled rums that are bottled unfiltered, undiluted and unaltered. The cask strength rums range in strength from 70.4% abv (140.8 proof) to 74.1% abv (148.2% proof). The firm also produces a collection of special bottlings similar to the cask strength releases called the GREEN LABEL rums, which are diluted with pure water to reduce it from cask strength to 46% abv (92 proof).

• **CUBA** — If you can find a bottle or two of the HAVANA CLUB rums, they are well worth sampling. If not, try the rums made by MATUSALEM. The super-premium line of rums originated in Cuba and is aged according to the solera method. MATUSALEM GRAN RESERVA is solera aged approximately 15 years and is comprised of rums between 8- and 32-years old. Various other rums are then added to the core blender. These barrel-aged rums are produced by several West Indies distilleries and range in age between 3 and 4 years. Matusalem Gran Reserva must be sipped to be fully appreciated.

• **DEMERARA** — There are several great Demerara rums available now in the country. I highly recommend EL DORADO SPECIAL RESERVE, a premium blend of pot-distilled and continuous-distilled rums produced by 300-year old Demerara Distillers of Guyana. Consider also the special bottlings of Demerara rums by Cadenhead's.

• **GRENADA** — The brand to look for from Grenada is WESTERHALL PLANTATION a premium agricole rhum made on the island of Grenada by the Westerhall Distillery in St. David. The rum is double distilled in



pot stills and aged 6 years in charred American oak barrels.

- **GUADELOUPE** — One of the gems from this former French colony is KANICHE GUADELOUPE, an amber agricole rum distilled in copper alembic stills and aged 10-years in oak barrels. It's an outstanding spirit.

- **GUATEMALA** — There are a number of marvelous rums from this Central American country. MONTECRISTO is a blend of molasses-based, continuous-distilled rums produced in Guatemala. The constituent rums are aged in American ex-bourbon barrels between 12- and 23-years. RON ZACAPA CENTENARIO is a super-premium rum made from a blend of molasses rums that are aged a minimum of 23 years in oak barrels. Consider also ZAYA GRAN RESERVA, a super-premium rum, column distilled and aged in oak barrels for 12 years. All three are outstanding.

- **HAITI** — One of the finest rums produced in the world hails from Haiti. RHUM BARBANCOURT is a range of super-premium agricole rhums double distilled, first in a column still and then in a copper pot still before being aged in Limousin oak vats. Rhum Barbancourt is available in three versions: THREE-STAR, which aged a minimum of 4 years; FIVE STAR RÉSERVE SPÉCIALE, which is aged a minimum of 8 years, and ESTATE RÉSERVE, which is aged for a minimum of 15-years. These are all-world spirits.

- **HAWAIIAN** — For a bit of fun, consider playing with Whaler's rums. This line of premium continuous-distilled rums includes ORIGINAL VANILLE, a dark, vanilla-flavored rum; GREAT WHITE, a silver rum; RARE RESERVE DARK, an aged, amber rum; KILLER COCONUT, a silver, coconut-flavored rum, and a spiced rum.

- **JAMAICA** — One of the gems of the Caribbean, Appleton Estate rums are made at the oldest distillery in Jamaica. The range includes V/X, a blend pot-distilled and continuous-distilled spirits and aged in American oak barrels for 5 to 10 years and ESTATE EXTRA, a blend of pot-distilled and continuous-distilled spirits and aged in American white oak barrels up to 18 years. The flagship is APPLETON ESTATE 21-YEAR OLD, a super-premium blend of pot-distilled and continuous-distilled spirits aged in American white oak barrels a minimum of 21-years. The blend is aged an additional 2 years to allow the constituent rums to marry.

- **MARTINIQUE** — There are numerous great agricole rhums distilled on this former French colony. Among the finest produced on the island is RHUM SAINT JAMES, a super-premium line made in a continuous still and aged in Limousin oak barrels. The top-of-the-line is undoubtedly RHUM SAINT JAMES HORS D'AGE, which is age a minimum of 6 years. Another magnificent brand of Martinique agricole rhums is J. BALLY. The super-premium J. Bally line includes RHUM VIEUX, available at both 7-years and 12-years and RHUM VIEUX MILLÉSIME, which are barrel-aged and vintage-dated. Add to the list of magnificent rhums from the island is KANICHE MARTINIQUE, which is aged 12-years in small cognac casks.

- **MEXICO** — Hailing from Mexico and the maker's of Kahlúa is KUYA FUSION RUM, a delicious blend of continuous-distilled cane sugar spirits. These rich, golden rums are then infused with natural citrus flavor extracts and an array of island spices. It's a fusion between a classic spiced rum and a new breed of fruit-



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flavored rum. Consider also RON COBÁ, a small batch, añejo agricole rum made at the Achurra Distillery located on the Yucatan coast. The rum is barrel-aged a minimum 12-years in oak.

• **NAVAL** — Deep down, naval rums appeal to nearly all men. There is something compelling about drinking the same type of rum that was the daily tot of sailors in Her Majesty's Navy, which makes this a "must have" category." Introduced in 2000, SEA WYNDE BRITISH ROYAL NAVY RUM is an ultra-premium rum made in the traditional British naval style. It is made from a blend of five, molasses-based, pure pot still rums from Jamaica and Guyana and range in age from five to eleven years old. If you find yourself with a few extra bucks in your pocket, grab a demijohn of BRITISH ROYAL NAVY IMPERIAL RUM. This ultra-premium, 108 proof naval rum is made from a blend of alembic spirits distilled in the West Indies and aged in American oak barrels. It is marketed in an authentic, 4.54-liter demijohn flagon with a stainless steel label affixed to the woven wickerwork. Arguably the best-known brand in the category is PUSSEY'S BRITISH NAVY RUM. The rums are produced on the island of Tortuga from a blend of six pot-distilled rums produced at several West Indies distilleries in Guyana, Trinidad and the British Virgin Islands. Pussey's Blue Label is 95.5 proof and Red Label is bottled at 80 proof.

• **NEW ZEALAND** — If you're thinking about stocking a brand of rums that most Americans haven't heard of but soon will, then the clear choice is Inner Circle. This classic range of rums from Australia is produced in pot stills from sugar cane grown in Fiji and Australia. The result is a brilliantly flavored rum with a singular personality. The range includes an 80-proof, 90-proof, 115-proof and a 151-overproof. The Inner Circle Rums are marvelously distinct and cannot be confused with any other rum past or present.

• **NICARAGUA** — The brand to hunt down from Nicaragua is FLOR DE CAÑA CENTENARIO. This highly sophisticated rum is distilled from a blend of molasses-based, continuous-distilled rums and aged in oak barrels for a minimum of 21 years. It is a spirit not to be missed. Consider also the FLOR DE CAÑA BLACK LABEL, which is aged for 5 years and the altogether elegant, 7-year-old GRAN RESERVA.

• **PUERTO RICO** — The island nation is synonymous with the rums of Bacardi. The famous brand originated in Cuba, but the family members left the country after Castro's revolution. BACARDI CARTA BLANCA (Silver), CARTA ORO (Gold) and BACARDI SELECT are mandatory back bar selections. BACARDI 8 RESERVA SUPERIOR is made from a blend of continuous-distilled and pot-distilled rums that are charcoal filtered and aged a minimum of 8 years in charred, American white oak barrels. The rum is crafted using the original recipe and aging process created by Don Facundo Bacardi in 1862. There's not a rum aficionado who wouldn't appreciate this spirited gem. Bacardi also has a range of sterling flavored rums, including LIMÓN (blend of lemon, lime and grapefruit extracts); BACARDI O (orange); CICLÓN, a blend of gold rums infused with tequila and natural lime flavors; RAZZ (raspberry); VANILA (vanilla) and COCO (coconut).

• **TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO** — The principal player on the island of Trinidad is Angostura, but fortunately for the residents of the island, Angostura rums are marvelous and should be near the top of your short list. I highly recommend all of the Angostura range, but particularly the ANGOSTURA 1824 LIMITED RESERVE, a blend of continuous-distilled, molasses-based rums that are aged for a minimum of 12 years in charred, American oak barrels. The rums are hand-blended in small batches and then recasked. It definitely falls in



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the magnificent range. Consider also ANGOSTURA 1919, which is aged a minimum of 8-years.

• **UNITED STATES** — There are three brands of rum produced on our shores that are well worth hunting down and stocking on your back bar. One is certainly the rum of the Conch Republic. These rums are made in Florida from a blend of molasses-based, continuous-distilled and pot-distilled rums and include CONCH ISLAMORADA LIGHT, a silver rum aged 2 to 3 years in oak barrels and CONCH MATECUMBE DARK, a dark rum aged 2 to 3 years in oak barrels. Domaine Charbay in Napa Valley, California is widely acclaimed as one of the finest distilleries in the world. The family-operated firm recently released two exceptional spirits, CHARBAY RUM and CHARBAY TAHITIAN VANILLA BEAN RUM. Both are triple-distilled in alambic Charentais pot stills from a proprietary blend of Hawaiian and Caribbean sugar cane syrup. The spirits have substance, expansive bouquets and are loaded with delectable flavors. As one would expect from handcrafted, artisan spirits, they both have long, memorable finishes. Finally, consider Hurricane Rum made by the good people at the Triple Eight Distillery on Nantucket Island. The region's first micro-distiller, Hurricane is an overproof (88.8 proof) rum made from imported sugar cane and aged in ex-bourbon barrels.

• **VENEZUELA** — PAMPERO ANNIVERSARIO is likely on every rum enthusiasts short list of “must have” brands. The super-premium, special reserve is a blend of pot still and continuous still rums aged a minimum of 8 years. You really need to experience it in a glass to believe how sumptuous it is.

• **VIRGIN ISLANDS** — Last but certainly not least are the rums from this tiny slice of heaven. The name to know in Saint Croix is Cruzan. The esteemed distiller makes a range of world-class rums, all of which would arguably be on the back bar of the ideal rum establishment. The line includes ESTATE LIGHT, a blend of molasses-based, continuous-distilled rums that are aged in charred oak barrels from 2 to 3 years; ESTATE DARK, a blend of rums aged between 2 and 4 years, and ESTATE DIAMOND, a blend of rums aged between 5 and 10 years. The super-premium CRUZAN SINGLE BARREL ESTATE is made in limited quantities from a blend of molasses-based, continuous-distilled rums aged in charred, oak barrels between 5 and 12 years. After blending, the rum is placed in a newly charred, white oak cask for secondary aging. Finally, do not fail to stock the Cruzan flavored rums, a range that includes mango, coconut, banana, orange, citrus, pineapple and vanilla. They are all Virgin Island rums made from a blend of continuous-distilled rums aged in oak barrels from 2 to 3 years.



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# Featured Cocktail - Corn 'n Oil

Corn 'n Oil is a famous Barbados mixed drink that has Rum, Falernum and a dash of Angostura Bitters. Falernum was developed by John D. Taylor of Bridgetown, Barbados in 1890. Here are some recipes of Corn 'n Oil and if you can not find Falernum in your neighborhood, don't worry we have the recipe as well for you.

## Corn 'n Oil (as suggested by Mr. Taylor)

1 oz. Rum (Light or Dark Rum)  
1 oz. Velvet Falernum  
Add a dash of Bitters

Pour over crushed ice all ingredients and stir. Ready to serve.

## Corn 'N Oil

2 oz. Rum (light or Dark Rum)  
2-4 oz. Falernum  
Dash of Bitters  
Ice

Fill glass with ice and pour rum. Add Falernum to taste, start with 2 oz.

## Falernum

9 Gallons of Rum  
3 Gallons of Lime Juice  
12 Gallons of Water  
1 Gallon of Milk  
½ Gallon of Brandy  
56 lbs. Sugar  
1 oz. Isinglass  
½ oz. Cloves  
½ oz. Bitter Almonds  
1 Tbsp. Almond Essence

Combine all ingredients until sugar is completely dissolved. This recipe makes 30 gallons.



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## Lesson 11 Questionnaire

- Q. What are some of the attributes that have made rum such a popular drink?
- Q. Mention at least 4 of the 8 different types of rum.
- Q. Where is Cockspur V.S.O.R. made?
- Q. Where are the Demerara rums produced?
- Q. Which is the oldest distillery in Jamaica?
- Q. Why are "Naval Rums" called that?
- Q. Where is Ron Pampero produced?
- Q. Mention three rums produced in the USA (including the US Virgin Islands)
- Q. In which country is the city of Angostura located?

## Answers to Lesson 10 Questionnaire

- Q: What are some of the characteristics of a Classic rum?
- A: That it is produced over a long period of time during which it consistently pleases a large number of people.
- Q: Name at least three rare rums based on the definition offered in this lesson.
- A: British Royal Navy Imperial Rum, Felton's New England Rum and Government House Rum, etc...
- Q: What are the main rum styles in today's market?
- A: French, Cuban, Jamaican and Trinidadian.
- Q: What rum style contains both column and pot still rum and is heavy/dark?
- A: Jamaican Style.
- Q: What has been the trend among spiced and flavored rums in the last few years?
- A: To concentrate more on quality by using better (aged) rum and ingredients.
- Q: Name at least three coconut flavored rums.
- A: Malibu, Cruzan and Tortuga.
- Q: Blending is a very important aspect of rum production. What are some indications that the blending process is not as refined as it can be?
- A: An indication would be when the taste and smell do not match.
- Q: Admiral Edward Vernon became known as the "Father of Grog". Why and how did he obtain the name "Old Grog"?
- A: The sailors aboard ship called him Grog from the cloak called grogram that he wore. It was Admiral Vernon that began mixing rum with water due to issue of sailors being drunk and their lack of discipline, thus gaining the name of "Father of Grog".
- Q: Why were sugar and lime juice added to the rum and water mixture that was given to sailors?
- A: To make the rum and water more palatable sugar was added. Later lime juice was added to the mix to prevent scurvy.



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# About Robert Plotkin

Robert Plotkin is no stranger to the demands of business in the beverage industry. He has over 32 years of hands-on experience, starting as a bar back while attending the University of Wisconsin at Madison where he majored in political science and American history.

Robert has worked his way up through the ranks as a bartender and beverage manager for numerous highly successful independent operations, as well as such companies as, Lunt Avenue Marble Club, El Torito and Sheraton Hotels. He also gained invaluable experience as the owner/operator of his own state-accredited bartending school and highly successful beverage catering service in Tucson, Arizona for over ten years. He sold the business in 1990 to expand his opportunities in other areas of the beverage industry.

Beginning in 1985, he has since worked steadily as a writer for many national trade publications, as a well as a frequent speaker at trade shows and conventions around the country. His array of experiences has given him a clear understanding of what is required for success in the beverage industry. He is as comfortable motivating groups of 20 in a boardroom, as he is leading training sessions of 700 at national trade shows. His reputation for professionalism blended with a sense of humor is well known.

In 1986, Mr. Plotkin started a consulting firm specializing in controlling costs and how to run beverage operations successfully. He based its foundation on systems developed over twenty years of combined experiences working with independent operations as well as regional franchises. His clients have included Sauza, Bacardi, Kerry Foodservice, Vita-Mix, Hueblein, Seagrams, Motts, Gallo and True Crystals.

The following year he founded BarMedia, a publishing company dedicated to producing the many sought after texts and training manuals he was writing. To date he has published 12 books on beverage management and mixology trends.

Through proven management concepts and a long professional career, Robert Plotkin has become a leader in motivation, training, speaking and business concepts that define success in the beverage industry today.





CARIBE RUM

THE ORIGINAL GUIDE TO

CARIBBEAN  
RUM AND  
DRINKS



BY ROBERT PLOTKIN