

Is the future Dark 'n' Stormy for Goslings?

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Goslings Black Seal Rum has a long and wonderful history behind it, and is also famous for being a key ingredient in one of the very few trademarked cocktails of the world, the Dark 'n' Stormy®. This cocktail has led to a major resurgence in Goslings as of late, and the world has come to learn the story of this family business hailing from Bermuda.

It all started in 1806 when a certain James Gosling, the son of a British wine and spirits merchant, set sail for America, but unfortunately only made it as far as Bermuda. Here he set up a shop in the port of St George. However in 1824, James left Bermuda to travel back to England, yet his brother Ambrose decided to set up another shop in the new capital of Hamilton, which still stands to this day.

In 1860 the first oak barrels of rum arrived in Bermuda, and more importantly at the newly named Goslings Brothers shop, which was now run by Ambrose's sons. After another 3 years of trial and error, the brothers created a new blend of rum that was destined to become their own to sell in their shop.

At this time, rum was not sold in bottles, but rather distributed directly from the barrel. However when the Goslings noticed that the British Navy were drinking a lot of champagne, they decided to strike a deal with them to take back the empty bottles. These bottles were then filled with rum, corked and then sealed with their own distinctive black wax seal. It wasn't long until the Gosling's superior rum became recognised and people started to ask for a bottle of 'Black Seal', and hence the brand arrived.

I was lucky enough to meet Malcolm Gosling, the 7th generation of the Gosling family to run their company, and he explained how it was his great uncle that came up with the logo of a black seal juggling a rum barrel. This now established Goslings as a rum, but it needed the Dark 'n' Stormy® to cement their status as a classic rum.

Malcolm went on to explain how the Dark 'n' Stormy® was created, like a lot of things, by a mistake. When you start working in the licensed industry, the first thing you learn when making drinks is to pour the spirit over ice, then to top up with a mixer. However over a hundred years ago, one bartender was making drinks for a group of naval officers, he poured ginger beer over ice, then placed the Goslings on top of the ginger beer. It is said that the officers noted the mixing of the rum and ginger beer created an effect of a dark cloud that only 'Mad, Dead or Foolish Sailors would dare to sail under.'

Now we know a bit behind the rum and their history we just need to see what its like to drink. On the nose there is luscious richness, with a hint of bitter orange and vanilla. On the palate you get a deep rich and peppery hit straight away. Then straight away you get a great balance of herbal bitterness and soft caramel sweetness. It's wonderfully complex, and offers an array of flavours, some of which you would not usually expect. It leaves a long herbal finish that you can feel at the back of the throat.

So, Goslings Black Seal is a very different rum that is beautifully suited for their own Dark 'n' Stormy® but also a rum that should be enjoyed in other cocktails or simply drank neat on the rocks. Simply put, Goslings Black Seal is a rum that should be enjoyed by all, and a definite must for any self respecting rum fan.

<http://www.goslingsrum.com/home.asp>

<http://www.lovedrinks.co.uk/main.htm>

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