



Just rummy

By Jeannine Klein Menzies

Gosling's has entered into the gourmet food market with the launch of a line of rum cakes, sauces and preserves made with its Black Seal Rum.

The new Bermuda company Gosling's Gourmet Limited hired former local media personality and "Curious Cook" Ed Bottone for the to create the line.

Malcolm Gosling, president of Gosling's Export (Bermuda) Limited said: "We hired Mr. Bottone as a consultant to develop the gourmet products from scratch," he said. "I worked with him for two years - I would not class myself as a chef in fact I'm not allowed near the stove - but these are just excellent products and we finally hit the taste profile that equals the quality of the rum products."

Gosling's manufactures the actual gourmet products overseas, but barrels of Black Seal Rum - which are the base of each product - must still be shipped from here to the manufacturers. A Scottish company creates the Dark 'N Stormy Ginger Conserve, Bermuda Sunrise Orange Marmalade and Rum Swizzle Apricot and Pineapple Preserve. The "sweet heat" sauces - Passionate Plum, a hotter Dark 'N Stormy and the hottest Mango Tango Habanero Sauce are made in Pennsylvania. A bakery in small town Mississippi makes the CocoRumba Double Chocolate Cake, Dark 'N Stormy Island Spice Cake and Bermuda Rum Swizzle Cake.

Although reaction was positive for all three cakes, the CocoRumba was slightly more favoured during a completely unscientific taste test by *Royal Gazette* staffers.

While Gosling-Castle Brands is aiming to place the products in gourmet shops across the United States, here at home Gosling's - which wants to maintain its local focus on its core business of spirits, wine and beer - has handed over distribution of the gourmet line to Pitt and Company. They began distributing the line last week and are already having to reorder some of the items.

Mr. Gosling said: "They are treating it like a serious gourmet line and that is what we wanted. We felt that if we kept it [within Gosling's stores] people would see it and you would have people selling wine, rum and, oh yeah, you want cakes too.

"It would be seen as just an add-on. It wouldn't be seen as a serious line in its own right and we spent too much in development for it to create that impression."

Gosling's Gourmet is already developing other products that it can add to the line. The company is also pushing the versatility of Black Seal Rum as a cooking product with Mr. Bottone assigned to convince restaurants to take the bottles from the bar and into the kitchen.

"If you can also get a chef that realises the value of putting the name Gosling's Black Seal on its menu, it is yet another testimonial out there so we are working on that," Mr Gosling said adding that the concept of pushing brands into restaurant is rare but hardly a new strategy.

"There aren't a whole lot of brands applying the strategy but Grand Marnier is a typical example of moving from the bar into the kitchen to where you had well-known chefs insisting on just using Grand Marnier in their desserts and so that is what we are working to do with the whole culinary programme."