

Rum's Running

THIS TROPICAL SPIRIT MAY BE FUELING GLOBAL WARMING (TO COCKTAILS)

by Jenny Adams

Across America in 2010, there was a warming trend behind the bar. Tropical cocktails saw more sales than since their inception in the 1930s and '40s—once again morphing from an occasional Mai Tai on a menu to being the infrastructure of entire concepts.

In New York, tiki dens like Painkiller and Lani Kai opened to acclaim from *The New York Times*. Smuggler's Cove fed the frenzy for tiki in San Francisco, and restaurants such as Eva's Caribbean Kitchen in Laguna Beach stocked such an astounding selection of rums that guests could pick one label a day for a year and never worry about repeating.

Rum is indeed on the minds and lips of drinkers across America, and it's in the hearts of bartenders in every type of venue, tiki-themed or not. According to the Distilled Spirits Council, rum is the second largest spirits category, with 24.9 million cases sold in 2010.

Mass Market Mavericks

Although the economy has been tough for all, "I think in general the rum category is re-entering the growth phase," offers Toby Whitmoyer, Vice President of Bacardi Rums. "We've seen an increasing consumer interest in traditional rums as well as value brands. And the flavored lines are also doing very well."



Bacardi Arctic Grape

Continuing a legacy of production set forth by company founder Don Facundo, Bacardi rum gets a seven-step production process and aging in American white oak barrels. The latest in their flavor line, Bacardi Arctic Grape, combines the sweetness of white

grapes with the bold, tart kick of the Scandinavian-sourced lingonberry. Puerto Rico, 70 proof, \$13.99, Bacardi USA



Brugal 1888

Brugal 1888 is a blend of rums aged five to 14 years in medium-roasted American white oak casks and subsequently in European oak casks, previously used for aging sherry. The 1888 label is smooth and full-bodied with a notable finish of toffee caramel, wood and licorice.

Dominican Republic, 80 proof, \$49.99, Rémy Cointreau USA

Cruzan Light Aged Rum

The Nelthropp family has been an integral part of St. Croix's rich history since the 18th century, perfecting the art of balancing, blending and aging rums. The brand has a distinct five-column distillation process. Cruzan Light is aged a minimum of 14 months for a dry, clean taste with vanilla overtones, while Cruzan Dark is aged a minimum of two years, yielding a medium-body, rich color, texture and flavor.

St. Croix, 80 proof, \$15.99, Beam Global Spirits & Wine



Captain Morgan Original Spiced Rum

Made with molasses, water, grain and yeast, and distilled in a continuous still, the brand's characteristic taste really is achieved through the final addition. A unique and proprietary recipe of exotic, indigenous island spices produce a rum that has pirated away the hearts of rum fans all over the world.

St. Croix, 70 proof, \$14.99, Diageo



Creative Campaigning

Part of what makes rum so appealing is the category's sense of fun. A few brands take their campaigns a step further, targeting the passions and hobbies of specific demographics. Whether prompting patrons to get a tattoo or join a social network, these brands manage to stay relevant in a virtual sea of offerings.



Sailor Jerry Spiced Navy Rum Like all good Caribbean rums, Sailor Jerry starts with the careful fermentation of quality molasses, yeast and water. But it was the label's namesake, artist Norman "Sailor Jerry" Collins, whose tattoo art lent the modern brand a legion of inked followers.

Through creative promotion via concerts and tattoo culture, the brand has gained traction for its spiced label marked by vanilla, nutmeg cinnamon, and cassia. A special edition celebrates the 100th anniversary of Collins's birth this year.

U.S. Virgin Islands, 92 proof, \$20, William Grant & Sons

Gosling's Black Seal Rum Bermuda's largest export, this iconic brand is also famous for being the signature ingredient in the trademarked Dark 'n Stormy cocktail. Malcolm Gosling, a seventh-generation rum maker at the company, spearheaded the campaign to recreate Bermuda's national cocktail perfectly in American bars. It's put this extremely smooth, intensely flavored rum in the hands of bartenders across the country.

Bermuda, 80 proof, \$20, Castle Brands, Inc.



Hand-Crafted Cocktails & Slow Sippers

"In 2006, if you asked an average consumer to name rums, it was always Bacardi, Captain Morgan and maybe Mount Gay," offers Ben Jones, North American Managing Director for Rhum J.M and Rhum Clément. "Now, with the increasing availability of rums and rhum agricoles, consumers are learning about how rums are made and how they are crafted." This increased interest is due to higher availability, but also the craft cocktail movement and the repositioning by the brands. Aged, spiced and agricole rums are finding traction similar to high-end scotches and fine cognacs in both cocktails and neat pours.



Banks 5 Island Rum The first blend ever of both Eastern and Western rums, this liquid is a marriage of 20 rums from five countries. The never-before aspect continues: Banks is carbon-filtered before being bottled. That process renders this viscous, full-flavored, aged blend perfectly clear.

West Indies, 86 Proof, \$29.99, Winebow



Santa Teresa 1796 Santa Teresa 1796 was launched to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Hacienda Santa Teresa. It's a blend of light, heavy and hand-crafted pot still rums, aged up to 35 years. This rum is an excellent choice for rum versions of Manhattans and Sazerac cocktails.

Venezuela, 80 proof, \$35, Santa Teresa USA

Rhum Clément V.S.O.P. Rhum Agricole Vieux

Gentle and oaky, with a deep vegetal flavor profile, this aged rhum agricole is a little over four years old, but bears more resemblance to a 12-year-old whisky than to aged molasses-based rum.

Martinique, 80 proof, \$39.95, Clément USA Inc.



Zacapa Rum 23 This ultra-premium blend (six- to 23-year-old rums) is distilled only from first-crush virgin sugarcane of Guatemala. Aged in a traditional *sistema solera*—a process typically reserved for fine whiskies and sheries—this rum offers a dark, dense nose of toasted wood, almond and chocolate with a long, smooth finish.

Guatemala, 80 proof, \$45, Diageo



Rhum J.M Rhum Agricole Blanc A big full-flavored white rhum agricole with a palate entry preceded by a bouquet of white pepper and lilies. It gives way to pineapples, raspberry and warm biscuits throughout the mouth and slowly moves into a long, dry finish.

Martinique, 100 proof, \$37.95, Domaine Select



Ron Abuelo 7 Años Distilling estate-grown sugar cane in Panama since 1936, the family offers their 7 Años label as the perfect sip to accompany a fine cigar. Amber in the glass, the spirit is medium-bodied with tones of caramel, tea leaf and toasted coconut. The finish exudes wood spice and roasted walnut.

Panama, 80 proof, \$22.99, Van Gogh Imports



Pyrat XO Reserve
Ultra-premium Pyrat is a complex yet mellow blend of carefully selected aged rums sourced from throughout the Caribbean. Characterized

by its rich amber color and oak wood aroma, the taste is a complex blend of oak wood, vanilla, orange and light cane sugar.

Caribbean, 80 proof, \$24.99, Patrón Spirits

Flor de Caña 12 Year Centenario

Matured in American white oak, Flor de Caña Rums from Nicaragua are slow-aged, guaranteeing they are 100-percent naturally aged without additives or artificial accelerants. This label is stately and semi-sweet, with hints of nougat, almond butter and molasses.



Nicaragua, 80 proof, \$32.99, Sky Spirits

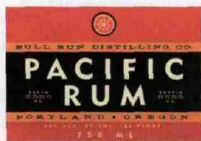


Appleton Estate Reserve Luxurious and sophisticated, it's a superbly balanced blend of 20 estate-produced rums, aged in handcrafted oak barrels. Sippers get a full-bodied flavor with a complex bouquet of intense fruit and notes of orange peel, butterscotch and vanilla.

Jamaica, 80 proof, \$24.99, Kobrand Corp.

New And Noteworthy

Rum is an ever-evolving category. These brands are fresh to the market or coming soon to a distributor near you.



Pacific Rum Portland, Oregon's Bull Run Distillery launches its Pacific rum label this year. Both the six-week barrel-aged white and the dark rum aged one year will be made from 100% turbinado sugar sourced in Hawaii. Aged in Oregon, they are expected to take on unique characteristics thanks to the temperate climate of the Pacific Northwest. *Oregon, low \$20s, Bull Run Distillery*

Mount Gay Eclipse

Black Molasses dons the nickname "black gold" in Barbados, and the latest reincarnation from Mount Gay gives off char and wood smoke on the nose, gingery cinnamon and pepper on the palate and the crisp finish expected from continuous distillation and aging in Kentucky white oak bourbon casks.



Barbados, 100 proof, \$24.99, Rémy Cointreau USA



BlackBeard Spiced Rum Launched a few months ago and now in national distribution, this rum is not your typical spiced rum; rather, it's an aged rum with a profile of secret citrus and wonderful baking-spice aromas (nutmeg) with a delightful vanilla finish.

Puerto Rico, 86 proof, \$14.99, Destilería Serrallés, Inc



Cruzan Strawberry Launched this spring, Cruzan Strawberry is crafted with fine Cruzan rum, all-natural flavors and cane sugar. Combining the taste of ripe strawberries with a touch of ginger, Cruzan Strawberry is available nationwide.

St. Croix, 42 proof, \$15.99, Cruzan International

Malibu Cranberry-Cherry

In 2011, consumers logged on and texted in to choose Cranberry-Cherry as the next flavor to join the growing family of popular Malibu rums. It combines the flavors of juicy ripe cherries and tart cranberries.

Barbados, 42 proof, \$14, Pernod Ricard USA



Bacardi OakHeart A smooth spiced rum straight from the heart of charred oak barrels for a subtle hint of smokiness, OakHeart begins with a blend of Bacardi Superior and Bacardi Gold rums. Select spices are added, and the liquid is filtered in a proprietary manner to retain a hint of smoke. Launches this fall.

Puerto Rico, 70 proof, \$12.99, Bacardi USA