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It's a Family Affair: Malcolm Gosling 7th

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The Gosling family have been making rum in one of the nicest parts of the World since 1806.

Malcolm Gosling the 7th, CEO and President of Goslings, travels the world visiting bars and spreading the Gospel of the Dark and Stormy. Then he nips back to Bermuda when the fancy takes him.

We are, of course, very jealous of this lifestyle and wanted to dislike him. Unfortunately we found him to be a thoroughly agreeable chap with a real passion for rum, and happily chewed the fat at Trailer Happiness, glass in hand. Should there be a tasting in a bar near you, we urge you to pop in and listen to the genuinely interesting story of the foundation of Gosling's rum.

BLUK: Malcolm, we can tell by your surname that you are one of the Gosling family, so could you tell us a little of your family history.

MG: Well, I'm the 7th generation of Bermuda's oldest business. In 1806 one of my ancestors owned a liquor store in England and he loaded a ship with £10,000 Stirling worth of wines and spirits and sent his son James on a voyage to Virginia. To cut a long story short, after 91 days of sitting in becalmed seas, he was literally dumped off (*on Bermuda, the closest landmass to the ship's position. ED*) because the charter had run out. Since then it has continued on as a family business.



Rum Club at Trailer Happiness

Around 1850 they started experimenting with the ageing and blending of various distillates and they came up with a wonderful product. They weren't very good at marketing, but they took a sip of it and said: "Wow, this tastes like really old rum" so they called it Old Rum, and so that's what it was called all the way until after World War One when tourists started coming to the Island.

At that point tourists started wanting to bring the Old Rum back with them, but you couldn't take a 200 litre barrel with you. At the time the only way you could buy it was by taking your own bottle into our store, so they started collecting empty Champagne bottles from the Royal Navy's officer's mess, which were the strongest to travel with, filling them with rum and covering the cork with black sealing wax. There was no label, they just put them right up on the shelf.

After 45 years of hearing people affectionately referring to it as 'Black Seal Rum' they decided to change the name officially and by this point it is Bermuda's best selling spirit.

BLUK: Have the recipes used to make Black Seal changed much over the years?

MG: It's changed in the way that we no longer use a bucket and a rowing oar (laughs) but other than some subtle changes to the production methods, which happened way before my time, they remain the same.

BLUK: Of the different varieties you have at the moment, which is your favourite?

MG: I love the Goslings Gold, I can just drink that with soda water and squeeze of lime... it's just wonderful. But I have to say, that Family Reserve, either with a cigar or a nice piece of chocolate, is pretty special. I know I haven't answered your question yet, but we have just launched our own brand of ginger beer, which has had a really positive effect on the sales of the Dark and Stormy, and I do love a Black Seal Dark and Stormy.

BLUK: You obviously get to travel a great deal with Goslings. Which bars have most impressed you so far?


MG: Wow. Well, there are so many here in London, and so many in the US, but there is a wonderful bar in Bermuda, it's a landmark really, called the Swizzle Inn. Their slogan is 'swizzle in and slide right out' and there's never been a truer word (laughs).

BLUK: One last question for you Malcolm. The Goslings website says that Black Seal is a key ingredient in the Bermuda Fish Chowder. Tell us more about this...

MG: Bermuda Fish Chowder is a tomato-based broth. If you are going to make it traditionally, you literally need to let it simmer for 18 hours or so. The chefs use a fair amount of Black Seal Rum in the making of it, but during the simmer, the alcohol cooks off and the Bermudans don't like that, I can tell you (laughs).

So whichever restaurant you go to, from the most economical to the most expensive, they are going to bring you a cruet set. One has cherry peppers and the other has Black Seal Rum, and you add your own rum to it again at the end for flavour. It really is a wonderful, unique soup if made correctly.

Contact Kirsty Loveday at [Love Drinks](http://LoveDrinks.com) for more information on the Gosling's rum range.

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About the Author: Andy Ives has over 10 years hospitality publishing to his name and has written for trade magazines such as CLASS and Theme. Most recently he worked as editor of Industry magazine (the Australian version of Theme), bars editor of Australian Bartender magazine, and launched (with Simon) www.4bars.com.au, which is now Australia's leading bar industry website.

