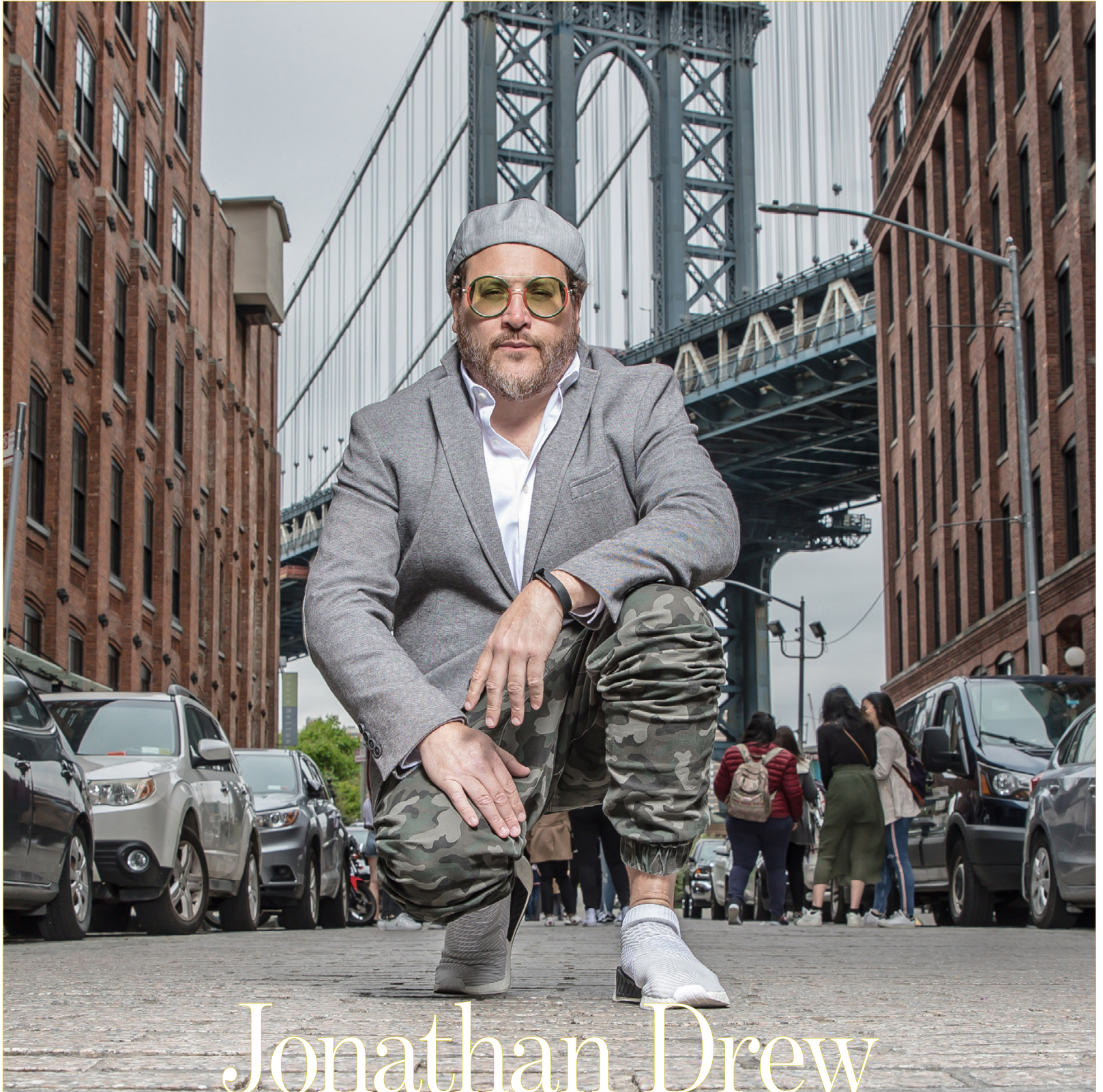


CigarsLover MAGAZINE

AUTUMN 2021



Jonathan Drew

- ALUMINIUM PACK - SILENCIO - FROM A TO ZINO - EL TITAN DE BRONZE - PAIRINGS: CIGARS AND SPIRITS
- FOURSQUARE: INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD SEAL - MIXOLOGY AND BITTER - COCKTAIL: SAZERAC - ALCOHOL VINI
- WINE: A MOST NOBLE ROT - BEER: OTHER THAN BARLEY - AYAM CEMANI: THE INDONESIAN BLACK ROOSTER

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Editor's thoughts

The delays of the new cigar lines and the great new releases!

The delays in the new cigar lines and the exceptional new releases! Arriving in the autumn of 2021, the new releases, intended as new lines and new sizes, are slow to arrive. Compared to previous years, despite the announcement of many digital innovations and during the PCA held in July, the vast majority of products are not yet available on the shelves. All this is due to many problems concerning the raw materials and everything that revolves around the cigar, from the bands to the boxes. Despite all this, the new releases we tried in the blind tastings proved to perform well, with several new cigars reaching interesting ratings, well above 90 points.

In this autumn issue, we review some of the new releases of 2021, such as the brand new European line "Silencio" and the new version of the "Zino". We then retrace the history of a brand that has changed the way of approaching the cigar, creating a real following, thanks also to the charisma of Jonathan Drew, who was able to give life to the Drew Estate brand. On the spirits side, an interview with Richard Seale, with whom we review the products of Foursquare, the distillery that created the winner of the 2020 Rum Awards.

Moving on to the other articles proposed, in the last pages of the magazine, the 72 products tested for the autumn issue, the last blind tasting that precedes our awards at the end of the year!

#refineyourtaste



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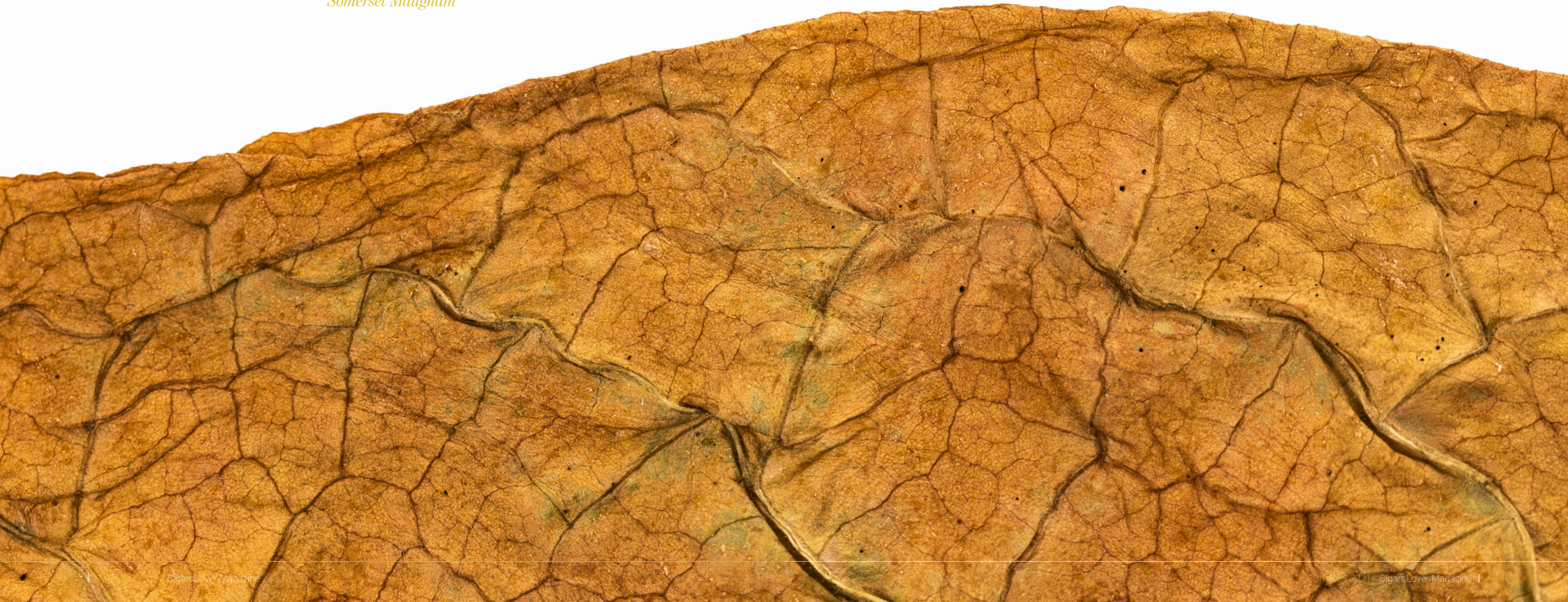
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CIGARS

“I promised myself that if ever I had some money,
I would savor a cigar each day after lunch and dinner.
This is the only resolution of my youth that I have kept, and the only
realized ambition which has not brought disillusion.”

Somerset Maugham



Aluminum pack

*A packaging has its origins in the 1940s,
today it is used by the big brands to offer elegance and quality.*

by Giuseppe Mitolo

In recent years, several manufacturers have decided to market their products in small tin packs. In particular, during 2020, Habanos SA released three aluminum packs (Romeo y Julieta Club Kings, Partagas Capitols and H. Upmann Regalias) bringing back to the stage a packaging style from days gone by.

In fact, although the historical origins related to the use of this type of packaging cannot simply be attributed to a particular year, it is believed that they could be considered contemporary to those years when the usage of the first aluminum tubos were introduced, around the 1940s. Unfortunately history did not leave reliable indications, or traces of the exact progenator of this style of packaging. Despite these problems, it is possible with relative certainty to identify in Belinda, H. Upmann, Maria Guerrero and Punch as the first brands that used the metal pack for sale. In particular Punch, with its Souvenirs De Luxe (40x126mm), has resisted well beyond the revolutionary period, coming out of production only in the 80s.

In the post-revolution period, however, there were four Cuban brands which were identified to market cigars specifically produced and sold in metal boxes.

For Romeo y Julieta the machine-made Favoritas (vitola de galera belvederes 39x125mm) and the handmade Club Kings (mareva 42x129mm), were produced.

Partagas also had two cigars in its large portfolio, but both were machine-made: the Eminentes (eminente 44x132) and the Capitols (petit cetros 40x129). The latter, in last year's re-issue, in addition to being now produced by the torcedores, thus becoming hand-made, changed its vitola and size, becoming a mareva.

Punch, like Partagas, made two cigars but, unlike the latter, one was machine-made and the other was hand-made.

The two products, despite having the same apellido de salida Souvenirs De Luxe, differed in size: the hand-rolled one was a londres (40x126mm) while the machine-made one was a petit corona (42x129mm) and was wrapped in cellophane, a method which can not be considered standard in Cuban cigars.

The same situation was also true for H. Upmann: two editions, same name, different sizes. After the Cuban revolution it was possible to find two H. Upmann Media Corona: the handmade one was a mareva (42x129mm), while the machine-made one was an eminente (44x132mm). All of these products were packed in five-piece metal packs and their marketing was suspended during the 1980s. Partagas Capitols went out of production, officially, in 2001, but its availability was very limited in the decade leading to its demise.

The reasons that led to the withdrawal from the market of these metal packages 80's and 90's, were probably twofold. The first concerned the simultaneous entry into the worldwide market of machine made cigarillos manufactured in Europe, also sold in tin packages. It is easy to understand how, independent from the quality of these market newcomers, these products indirectly diminished the prestige of a Cuban cigar sold in an identical metal package.

The second reason concerns the start of the petacas (or cardboard packs) which were launched in the market exactly in the same period. The graphic design of the cardboard packs, more colorful and captivating than a metal pack, seemed almost to diminish the latter, which was soon considered cheaper than the first despite the obvious price difference in raw materials. After about twenty years of oblivion, the year of the relaunch of this packaging among Cuban brands was 2010. That year the Romeo y Julieta Julietas was presented, which, in contrast to the fashion large ring gauge cigars which seems the trend nowadays, offered a small and thin product (julieta No.6, 33 x 120mm), still made and sold exclusively in





this packaging. In 2012, H.Upmann Half Corona and in 2018 the Montecristo Media Corona (both half corona 44x90mm) followed. In reality, the latter two would be appropriately classified as different packages for current products. Both productions were already sold in Semi Plain Box of 25 pieces: H. Upmann Half Corona was released in 2011, while the Media Corona by Montecristo in 2015. The latest released products, namely the Romeo y Julieta Club Kings, Partagas Capitols and H.Upmann Regalias, all of identical sizes 42x129mm, only the first two are cigars are sold exclusively in metal packs, since the Regalias has been produced by H.Upmann since the pre-revolution period. Rumor has it that Habanos S.A. is planning another re-issue in the foreseeable future, this time under the Punch brand; at present, however, nothing has been confirmed.

Leaving the Cuban island, among the other cigar producing countries the marketing of aluminum packages, although not particularly common, offers products of excellent quality. Outside Cuba, aluminum packaging is perceived and intended to be more an alternative packaging than a new edition on its own. To give a few examples, Arturo Fuente brand markets, in packs of three cigars, the Arturo Fuente Opus X Perfeccion X (48x159mm/6.25') and the Reserva d'Chateau (48x178mm/7'), regularly sold also in a more conventional box. Same for PDR Cigars by Abe Flores: the 1975 Gran Reserva SUN GROWN Half Corona (46x90mm/3.5') is offered to the public both in boxes and in metal packages of 5 cigars each.

Even among the big Nicaraguan brands, everyone makes a cigar sold also in metal packs: Padron the Corticos (35x108mm/4.25), Fonseca by My Father the Cosacos (42x136mm/5.35') and Drew Estate the Liga Privada Papas Fritas (44x114mm/4.5). The latter, however, chose a metal tin containing four cigars compared to the classic five.

The choice to opt for this new (or newfound) type of packaging lends itself to different interpretations. As for Habanos S.A. the intent is clearly the result of a commercial strategy: to revive a very popular packaging from the past, also through evocative appellations such as "Linea Retro". For all other manufacturers, the metal pack is a supplementary offering for the consumer, who can opt for the purchase of a product of undoubted quality, in a packaging with less demanding expense than that of a box. Another positive element is the size of these sparkling tins, fitting perfectly in one of the pockets of a jacket of the modern aficionado. Aesthetics meets substance in the sizes that this solution offers. It is no coincidence that most of these cigars (almost all of them are handmade) are proposed in vitolas ranging from half corona to corona, passing through the petit corona and the short panetela: all sizes that offer a more than satisfying smoke in a short amount of time.

In conclusion, it is not of critical importance if this new trend is the result of a marketing strategy or of a packaging choice: if this stimulates large brands to propose good quality, hand-made cigars that can satisfy the smokers, aficionados have only good reasons to rejoice and purchase them.



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SILENCIO

*The new brand
designed completely for Europe*

by **Luca Cominelli**

Months ago, in February, the Scandinavian Tobacco Group announced the release of a new luxury cigar brand in Europe. The new brand is called Silencio.

Mark Renard, STG's international marketing manager, explained to us how, for the Silencio line, the attention to detail starts with the tobacco seeds which are meticulously selected by agronomists and cultivated in special climate-controlled greenhouses. The plants are then grown in nutrient-rich soil to ensure that each leaf bears the Silencio cigar's specific characteristics. While the Silencio

leaves hang in the curing barns, the agronomists monitor the tobacco closely as the leaves express moisture and release their natural sugars. All this is aimed to create a complex cigar made for the connoisseur. The blend is created around an aged Cameroon wrapper, which encloses an Indonesian binder and three varieties of aged Cuban seed tobaccos grown in the Dominican Republic, where the cigars are also made. There are two sizes available: a Robusto (5 x 49) and a Churchill (7 x 49). To better know this new brand coming to Europe and understand what the Scandinavian Tobacco Group wants to achieve with its introduction, we talked at length with Mark Renard.





Mark, why did you decide to create Silencio Red Dot exclusively for Europe, and what target of smokers do you want to reach?

Silencio is for a discerning smoker. We believe that cigar connoisseurs tend to choose a cigar for the moment, for the occasion during which they will smoke. Silencio was created for a true moment of enjoyment. Amongst our other brands, Silencio meets this need in a unique way. In combination with a wrapper from Cameroon and a blend that brings forth the subtle taste nuances of the wrapper to deliver great complexity and balance, we are confident we have a special proposition at hand. The popularity of handmade cigars continues to grow, and within the category, cigar lovers embrace new blends. We believe that Silencio offers an exciting addition to the cigar smoker's repertoire.

Why was Silencio created?

Silencio was created to deliver a unique and singular smoking experience, one that evokes moments of quiet contemplation. We have blended the cigar to feature an aged Cameroon wrapper which is as known by cigar connoisseurs for its rarity as it is for its unique natural sweetness. Meticulously handcrafted of fine, aged tobaccos, Silencio Red Dot was developed to be a cigar to accompany the smoker's finest moments.

Why did you decide to launch this brand now and not in years past?

Our portfolio has grown and matured over the years, in response to the demands of cigar smokers in Europe. Given that cigar lovers are becoming more deeply involved in pursuing their passion for handmade cigars, we saw an opportunity to deliver a cigar that would offer an elegant and memorable smoking experience. Silencio speaks to connoisseurship, and we believe the market for this type of cigar has grown tremendously throughout the continent.

What is the result you would like to achieve with the introduction of this new line in Europe?

With the introduction of Silencio, we are taking another step into the realm of creating cigars for memorable moments. From a business standpoint, we want to have our portfolio represented in every taste profile and also in every price point. Taking this a step further, we also want to be sure we are meeting the needs of cigar lovers when it comes to occasions, and we feel we have delivered that with Silencio Red Dot. Whether these smoking occasions are had alone or in the company of others, we believe there is always a time for a cigar that makes the cigar smoker feel they are part of a special experience. We believe Silencio delivers well on this promise.

Will there be any other new vitola coming soon to the European market?

We are currently introducing two sizes, the Robusto and the Churchill size. Within the Red Dot line, we will focus on these two sizes currently. We will keep the cigar lover's need in sight and will evolve the range of sizes according to the preferences of Silencio smokers.



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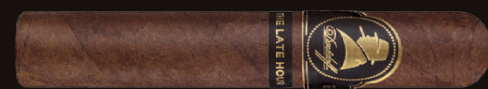
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From A to Zino

*The Zino brand has been rejuvenated
with the new Zino Nicaragua*

by **Michel Arlia**

Zino Davidoff is a legend in the cigar world and every aficionado knows or has at least heard his name. Zino, the brand, might not be as familiar in some smokers' minds. This changed with Oettinger Davidoff's launch of the Zino Nicaragua line, reimagining a classic.

The cigars that first carried the name Zino on the band were initially created for the US market and were sold under the Zino Mouton-Cadet moniker. These cigars were made by hand in Honduras, which made it possible to be sold globally.

In 2020 Oettinger Davidoff planned to resurrect the Zino brand, but the COVID pandemic forced them to change their strategy and move it to 2021. Earlier this year, they

finally presented the reimagined brand as Zino Nicaragua. The slogan "Live life from A to Zino" pays tribute to Zino Davidoff's spirit for adventure and discovery and is underlined by vibrant colors and images. The slogan also translates to the cigar itself.

Not only did Oettinger Davidoff change the packaging, but they also completely overhauled the blend. The last thing that makes this new release come full circle is the fact that the production continues to be made in Honduras.

The boxes and bands are bright orange, and the cigars are sold either in twenty-five-count boxes or in four-count fresh packs for people on the go. Oettinger Davidoff also narrowed down the range of sizes to three: Robusto, Short Torpedo, and Toro.



We had the pleasure to talk to Patricia Rodriguez, one of Oettinger Davidoff's Master Blenders who was fundamental in creating the new blend, and Sam Reuter, Davidoff's Head of Product Innovation & Global Brand Ambassador.

Hello Patricia, tell us about your journey in the cigar world. What made you decide to become a master blender?

Patricia: the cigar world is a mixture of feelings and flavors that capture us with great passion to taste what nature has given to us. This is my personal inspiration and also the reason why I chose to become a master blender. I have many years of professional and personal learning, and in particular, I really enjoy the experience in the field and all the love I can put into my daily work. All of this gives me huge personal satisfaction. Also, I am proud of my team that supports me in helping to meet the expectations to create exciting blends for the future.

There has been an increase in females taking a more prominent role in the cigar industry over the past couple of years. What would you say to those women that want to pursue a career in this industry and someday get to the point you are now?

Patricia: personally, I believe that women can and have the ability to venture into any field they want. It takes a lot of discipline and desire to do your best in each challenge in this industry. Above all, you have to love what you do. Moreover, it requires some sacrifice, mostly in the family environment, but you can feel the reward every day when you get inspiration for your ideas to develop new blends for a demanding market. Plus, what motivates me is to meet current demands and, most importantly, defend my convictions with knowledge, expertise, and intelligence.

All tobacco aside, what do you do when you are not working in the factory?

Patricia: it is difficult to get away from the world of tobacco because even being at home, I am always thinking about how to create new blends related to future initiatives. Nonetheless, I enjoy my family, my free time, and I love reading. But the reality is – my true passion is tobacco.

The Zino Nicaragua line was introduced to breathe some new life into the Zino brand, and you were a fundamental part of creating the new blend. Did you have a particular idea in mind where you wanted to take the blend?

Patricia: my aim was to create a blend with a range of unique flavors: creaminess, a light woody, floral touch, and a medium strength, achieving a contrast for the cigar lover.

Sam: to add on Patricia's answer, it was key to develop a cigar that is unique in flavors compared to our current cigars. Therefore, the decision to craft the Zino Nicaragua cigars in Honduras, where different tobacco varieties add to this uniqueness in taste. Also, as Patricia mentioned, it was key to keep the strength in a medium-range and instead please the palate with complex flavors, making this cigar ideal for the novelist but also for the connoisseur.

What was the blending process for this project like, and

how long did it take until you got to the final product that you wanted?

Patricia: before I start the blend development, I always get a cigar brief from Sam. I receive inputs on how the final cigar should taste and look. I can then let my creativity and expertise flow and create the first samples of a blend that I am convinced matches the new initiative. For Zino Nicaragua, it took us several months to create the blend.

Sam: I am responsible for the initial inputs (cigar brief) and for signing off a blend. Patricia is creating the first samples, which are then tested in our master blending competence center (12 experts from Honduras and the Dominican Republic) and also in our internal tasting panel in Basel, Switzerland. It is essential to always test the samples against the initial objective to determine if the cigar matches the expectations. Since Patricia is such a good blender, there were not more than two rounds of samples required.

The line is made up of three sizes, a Robusto, a Short Torpedo, and Toro. In which size do you think the blend comes through the best?

Patricia: in my opinion, the three formats result in a very interesting experience; they all have the same tobacco elements in the blend so that every cigar lover can taste any of the three elements while finding the same range of flavors that characterize them. So, for me, all three forma-

ts have their own characteristics.

What do you want to achieve with the new Zino Nicaragua line? Who do you want to reach?

Sam: the inspiration for Zino Nicaragua came from Zino himself. Zino Davidoff was an open-minded entrepreneur, traveler, pioneer, and aficionado whose curiosity and eagerness to learn from different cultures took him through Europe, Africa, South America to the Caribbean– So the Zino Nicaragua cigars are for the open-minded those longing for experiences, always driven by their curiosity to live life from A to Z. The new Zino brand translates this thirst for spontaneity into a cigar experience appealing to consumers who want to enjoy a cigar for every occasion. These are the cigar Aficionados we want to reach, and I am pleased to say that we are getting many positive feedbacks from the markets, confirming that we have achieved what we wanted. Another point are the freshpacks, which are an important add-on and an enabler to make these cigars suitable for the Life from A to Z.

What are your plans for the future?

Patricia: I have many plans. I would like to continue sharing my knowledge about tobacco, to be inspired by new blends and initiatives for the company, and continue to improve the tobacco fermentation process. My fundamental goal is to continuously maintain the quality and consistency required in our cigars to keep our customers satisfied.



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Jonathan Drew

The American Dream

by **Michel Arlia**

From rags to riches," or "from the bottom to the top," or "... There are so many colloquialisms that describe someone's ascension from nothing to something. Making it big is synonymous with the American Dream. One of these amazing stories is Jonathan Drew's rise in the cigar industry with Drew Estate. Their "Rebirth of Cigars" mantra couldn't be truer, as the brand is among the leaders of the "Boutique Cigar" craze and was also pivotal in helping get the cigar industry out of the post cigar boom slump. Their modern approach introduced a new generation of smokers to cigars. This year marks the company's 25th Anniversary; we talk with Jonathan about the past, present, and future.

Jonathan, before you stepped into the cigar industry, what was your dream in College? What did you want to be?

I was studying Intellectual Property Law with a real focus on Digital Law, Internet Law and how that was based on Property Law, which is essentially based on the Torah. That was my big interest in college and law school. In 1991, I worked for Alfonse D'Amato (U.S. Senator from New York) as an intern in Washington, D.C., and that's where I got introduced to cigars. At Brooklyn Law I did my internship at the Suffolk County District Attorney's office.

Back in 1995, you started selling cigars out of a small Kiosk in New York City's World Trade Center. What pushed you to open a Kiosk, and why did you focus on cigars?

In 1995, I was an Assistant District Attorney in Suffolk





County and I had a house that I partly owned in the Hamptons and that's where I became "The Cigar Man." Everyone who wanted cigars came to me. I was buying them for me. I would bring a couple of boxes down so that I had some choice and by the end of the weekend I had none left. I was giving them away. The next weekend, I brought five boxes down and by the end of the weekend there were none left. I began thinking that if everybody was coming to me for cigars, I should open a cigar shop because I enjoyed it, and everybody knew me as The Cigar Man. The next year was the year that I opened my kiosk in the World Trade Center.

Shortly after, you launched your first line, La Vieja Habana. Why did you want to make your own cigar, and where was the cigar made at the time?

La Rosa on Sixth Avenue in Manhattan made La Vieja Habana. I didn't know it then, but I was always a brand man. It's not that the cigars out there weren't good enough or had diverse flavor, it's that my concept of what was a brand had very little to do with the cigar in the box. It was a lifestyle brand, about the culture. It was about creating that journey for cigar people to get together and have brands that they felt were theirs. It was about creating a cigar culture more than a brand.

I went from retailer to brand owner to independent rep back to brand owner. As soon as I opened my retail store, I wanted my own brand. But the brand extended beyond just the cigars--it was about getting together, smoking together, having fun and doing fun things and having great intellectual conversations. It was the early embryonic stages of a community and lifestyle brand. That's what made it so authentic. What made Drew Estate so authentic was that we were really doing the same thing in our first year that we are doing in our 25th year--building a brand that was deeper than just a box of cigars on a shelf. The brand is about exploring life to the fullest, having fun and being communal.

Everything was about Cuba at the time. It was all rooted back to Cuba and Drew Estate wanted to be everything that was not Cuba. The brand was beyond cigars. Even in the earliest days it was about a lifestyle brand. We were as much about the event as we were about the cigar; we were as much about community and being together and doing fun stuff as we were about ringing the register. We were a New York original and were never trying to be about Cuba. In all the industry, everything toggled back to Cuba and Drew Estate never did that. There was no historic connection to Cuba. It was all fresh and clean. New York ingenuity and New York lifestyle. It was a New York lifestyle brand. We didn't see the same borders and boundaries that started and ended with Cuba. We removed that from the entire equation.

Yet your first brand's name was rooted in Cuba.

We did it because it felt right. It wasn't as thoroughly thought through. It didn't catch. It was a misstep. That was our brand at our kiosk. It was learning the difference between a brand like La Vieja Habana that you had to push all day as opposed to ACID, which people immediately recognized as Drew Estate. La Vieja Habana was a natural and organic realization of

who we are and who we were becoming. It was like, "Whoa, why did we even do that?" It was part of our self-discovery.

In 1997 the bubble of the cigar boom burst, and all seemed over. How was your business doing at the time?

We were in transition. We were still a retailer, but we were preparing our plan to move to Nicaragua. Our business was doing terribly because we were in limbo making the transition between retailer and independent rep and moving to Nicaragua to establish Drew Estate as a manufacturer.

You also decided to move to Estelí, Nicaragua, in '98. How much of a culture shock was it when you got there?

It was incredible. By the time I came home months later, I looked like a mountain man with a long ZZ Top beard. The culture shock was tremendous getting there and after a year being there and coming back to the States, people really noticed that I was struggling very much.

Back then, Nicaragua wasn't what it's like now with all the cigar tourism and great restaurants. Estelí was a city with three or four restaurants in it. There were bullet holes in doors and buildings everywhere and huge potholes in the streets where bombs had exploded. The town had two gas stations and one traffic light. The culture shock was immense. It was like moving from New York City to Mars. I didn't speak Spanish and I had nowhere to live. To put it mildly, it was shock and awe.

Your family does not have any history in the cigar industry, so you had to build relationships with people in the industry to expand your knowledge. Who were and are some of your influences, mentors in the cigar business?

Jose Orlando Padron. Nick Perdomo Sr. Kiki Berger. Nestor Plasencia Sr. Juan Francisco Bermejo. Omar Ortiz. Carlito Fuente. Manuel Quesada. Ernesto Perez-Carrillo. Rolando Reyes Sr. Benji Menendez. Estelo Padron. Frank Iannessa. The ones who helped me the most were Kiki Berger, Orlando Padron and Nick Sr.

Instead of going to a cigar manufacturer and let you have them make the cigars for you, you went against the grain and owned your own factory. Why didn't you go the easy way?

It was all about being authentic. Perdomo made La Vieja Habana for me but that was phasing out. By the time I moved to Nicaragua we made everything ourselves. We wanted to have privacy and do our own thing. In our transition from New York to Nicaragua we had cigars made for us but after that, we did it all ourselves.

The first couple of years were rough, to say the least. Were you ever close to going bankrupt or quitting everything?

We were in a perpetual state of being close to bankruptcy.

On one of your trips back to Brooklyn, you returned with some new blends, among which was also what later was going to be the "ACID" blend. How did you decide on the name?

The brand was based on a person who lived in New York City who we thought was a super-cool dude who really represented what we were all about. The concept of ACID





was about tying a New York, local institution, this guy, ACID Scott Chester, to the great cigars that we wanted to make. A new way of thinking. A new company that wasn't there just to hock cigars but create a New York attitude.

While infused cigars weren't anything new, you made a big splash, and the "ACID" cigars were an instant hit. What do you think was the reason that the brand did, and still does, so well? Whose idea was it to do an infused cigar?

It does so well because it tastes good and it's authentic. It has New York swagger. People love the smell of it as much as the taste of it, so it's a very inviting and welcoming cigar. It's an easy-smoking cigar that's not made to test the level of strength that you can handle.

It's foundationally strong--it tastes good, the style is right, the fit is right, the company behind it is authentic, and people who smoke it want to be part of our family. They smoke

ACID because they love the way it tastes, and they love the way they feel about themselves when they're smoking it. That hasn't changed.

Ultimately, Marvin [Samel, Jonathan Drew's partner in creating Drew Estate] and I came to that decision together.

Another significant factor that resonated especially with the younger generation was and is your modern artwork. How much of New York City's influence is reflected in your designs?

New York City graffiti/urban/hip-hop culture is embedded in the cornerstones of the brand.

In 2007 you released the Liga Privada No. 9, your flagship premium line, and won over even the more traditional cigar smokers with it. What was it that made the Liga Privada stand out so much more than the other non-infused

lines in your portfolio?

Our commitment to the Connecticut River Valley and being able to completely explain what you're smoking when you're smoking Connecticut River Valley tobacco. Just as Nicaragua has its right time to shine and make it on the world stage, so does the Connecticut River Valley. We happened to be there for both of those moments. We were there when the explosion happened. We believe we had a lot to do with both of those explosions.

Liga Privada uses tobacco from Honduras, Nicaragua, Brazil, and the US. There are seven different tobaccos from four different origins used in the blend. How did you get access to these tobaccos, and why did you decide on a multi-origin blend?

For Liga Privada, we were looking to create a cigar that had strength, smoothness, and a little bit of uncut rawness. It was a very complex cigar to create. If I had to compare Liga

Privada with a person, it would be like someone who is wearing a \$20,000 Italian suit and seeing him later in the afternoon at the pool and his body is covered with tattoos.

Liga Privada covers that range in its blend. To do that, we had to blend from a diverse group of farms. All those tobaccos were tobaccos that we loved independently. All of them were great individually and when we put them together to create the first nine blends to create Liga Privada No. 9 it was like putting together all our favorite tobaccos together. They were immaculate by themselves but when they came together, they created a symphony.

Next to the launch of Liga Privada in '07, you also opened the largest cigar factory in Estelí, La Gran Fabrica Drew Estate. Was building that factory also a way for you to give back to the people of Estelí?

No. That was a way to consolidate from 11 small factories



across Estelí to one central place. That street, that block, that 'hood became Drew Estate's home.

You switched from a small factory to being one of the biggest factories in the business. How crazy was the change? How much time were you spending in Estelí back then?

It was a dream come true. Very few people will understand how much the shift from those 11 small factories to La Gran Fabrica Drew Estate was a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Let's jump forward to 2014 when Swisher International acquired Drew Estate. Were you approached, or were you looking to sell, and why? How tough were the negotiations?

We kind of came together. The two cultures of the companies fit together really well. They are a very irreverent company, and we are a very irreverent company, so there were a lot of similarities between our two companies. One was more mature, more professional and more executive and the other one was a little more raw, younger and kind of unchained. Behind all that, we shared similarities of quality and being built to last.

After the purchase from Swisher, only 3 years passed until you were back as President of Drew Estate. What was going on at Drew Estate during those years that they wanted you back? What were you doing in those three years "off"?

I didn't have three years off. I was on the road spreading the Drew Estate culture as an ambassador for the company I

had built. I was not in an operational role. When I became President three or four years ago, I took on an operational role again. I never went a day after selling Drew Estate without getting a paycheck from Drew Estate. I was the Founder, and my job was to reinforce the company's culture and spread it throughout the world. Then they decided that they wanted me to take up an operational position and use my talents to help grow the business while ensuring that we stayed true to our roots.

Now, 25 years later, Drew Estate has become a worldwide recognized brand. What is the trajectory of the brand from here? What do you have in store for us for the future?

Continue to strengthen the Drew Estate branded house by not just releasing products but by also continuing to allow the cigar community and our fans to have fun and enjoy the ride. It's not just about selling more cigars but by maintaining the culture and growing the community by teaching the world that we can have great times together and share great moments together.

From the house of brands side, it's to continue to be artists and enlist our imagination; push the boundaries of our authenticity and experiences in life; and collaborating with new forms of The Rebirth of Cigars. There are a lot of components that have nothing to do with tobacco and we want to continue investigating those aspects that make us an interesting company.





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El Titan de Bronze

The boutique factory where torcedores are called artists and sign their creations

by **Simone Poggi**

Antonio Maceo y Grajales was a true hero of the Cuban War of Independence from Spain between 1868 and 1898. His humble origins and the color of his skin soon generated racist attitudes towards him within the independence army. It was also the cause of a considerable delay in his promotion to Major General; obtained mainly because of his remarkable ability to disorient the Spanish army. His incredible physical strength and resistance to gunshot wounds also earned him the nickname of the Bronze Titan (El Titan de Bronze in Spanish).

It was he who inspired Sandy Cobas when she decided to add a small cigar factory for her customers to her liquor resale in Westchester; in fact, she sought a manly and strong image, fiery Cuban, that proudly showed its origins, despite the gratitude to the United States of America that

had "adopted" her. She decided, a little later, to move the activities to the famous Calle Ocho section of Little Havana in Miami. It was the boom of the cigar industry of the 90s and in Miami and very important companies such as Padron, My Father and Perdomo were making their own products. At first it was only one or two torcedores, but the growing business allowed the small company to expand, up to 10 rollers in 2016, able to produce 250 to 300 thousand cigars per year.

Over the years several projects have been developed and some important figures have joined the owner, marking the story of a small, but unique reality of the cigar world. The first one that is significant to remember is Maria Sierra. The kind and smiling image of this Cuban immigrant is perhaps the most indicative of the personal and unique





mention of El Titan de Bronze. Maria began working in 1967 in Cuba, in the famous factory of El Laguito. The same year that the Cuban government opened the doors of cigar production to women, allowing them to learn the art of making cigars, an occupation until then of pure and exclusive prerogative of men. The then eighteen-year-old Maria learned the art of torcedor from the best of the best, legendary characters such as Eduardo Rivera and Avelino Lara, who, in those years followed each other as the head of the factory where the legendary Cohibas were produced. For 31 years the woman worked in Cuba, reaching level nine, that is, the highest specialization of the manufacture of Cuban puros, a teacher capable of creating all kinds of Cuban vitolario sizes; an honor that, in recent times, is no longer awarded. At the very moment she decides to immigrate, her daughter showed up at Sandy's factory to try to find a job for her mother; Sandy, getting to know the mastery of the person who was about to arrive, opened the doors of El Titan to her. In the years to come Maria is the driving force behind a great growth of the small manufacturing in terms of image.

Her signature is placed in particular on the La Palina Goldie, a truly special cigar made in a very limited edition every year in a different size. In addition, at El Titan de Bronze workers do not team-up in roller-buncher pairs, as in many cigar factories in Central America: here the torcedor prepares its own cigar from start to finish, making an almost total contribution to the final work of burnable art. The personal and unique dimension works, the story makes a catch, the cigar is a real success and some customers start coming from afar to learn about the torcedora that signs all their favorite cigars.

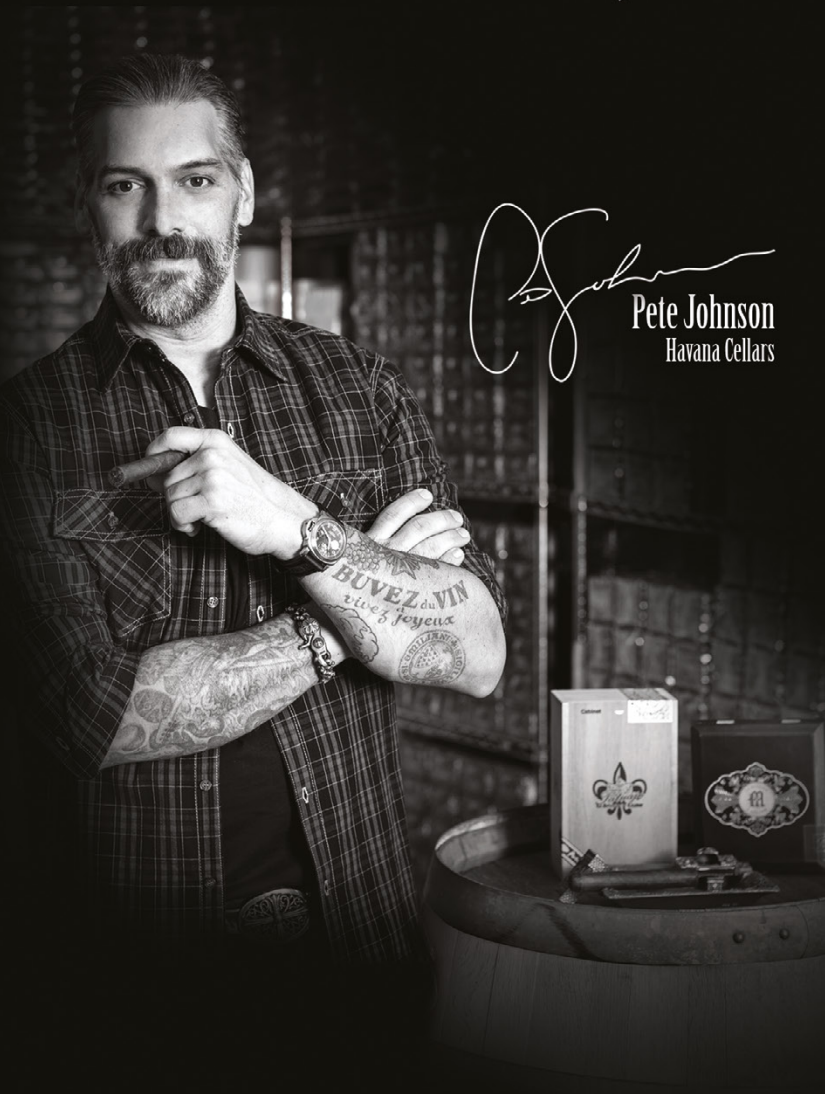
In essence, as we often talk about boutique brands for companies that produce limited quantities of cigars in special editions, the concept of boutique factories begins to strike the imagination of aficionados, manufactures where you can create something unique and special, such as a tailor-made dress, the result of the artistic skills of a few individuals. The concept is so strong that at the time of Maria's retirement, in September 2017, the same company La Palina publishes greetings to the creator of the Goldie, and cheers the handover to the new torcedor, Lopez Perez, telling the full story of the three years spent by the latter under the aegis of Maria Sierra herself, making him ready to continue her artistic work. This example continues in the creations of El Titan de Bronze for the brands La Palina, Cornelius & Anthony, Warped, Chinnock Cellars. Special mentions also deserve the Herrera Estelí Miami and the very recent Cohiba M Series.

Willy Herrera, master blender at Drew Estate, is actually Sandy Cobas's son-in-law, and began his career at El Titan de Bronze, where Jonathan Drew, one of the most eclectic characters in the industry, met him in 2011 offering to create cigars for him. Following this transition, Willy decided to gift the boutique factory that made up his springboard with a special version of his most famous cigar, the Herrera Esteli, which he modified in a version called Miami, making it at El Titan de Bronze and using a Dark Habano capa from Ecuador, a Sumatra capote also from Ecuador and Dominican and Nicaraguan fillers.

The project related to the creation of the Cohiba M Series, on the other hand, has been carefully thought and designed for a long time to offer a truly unique and rare product (only 5,000 total boxes made) to the most experienced consumer, using only extensively aged tobaccos. The cigar is a toro size selling for 30 dollars each, thus targeting the luxury market, with double capote, closed foot, triple head and closure with a very particular pigtail. The tobaccos used are a Corojo wrapper from Nicaragua (a first time for the non-Cuban Cohibas), the two binders also from Nicaragua and as fillers leaves from Jalapa and Piloto Cubano from Dominican Republic.

Maria Sierra passed away in January 2019, but her kind and modest smile contributed a lot to the pleasure that many experts have felt in tasting one of her creations, an individual's personal work, and not only the result of an industrial process.

tatuaje



Pete Johnson
Havana Cellars



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PAIRINGS

From the moment that CigarsLover Magazine defined its pay-off, "Refine Your Taste", starting to accompany the tastings of cigars to those of spirits such as Whisky, Rum, Armagnac and Cognac, we have set ourselves the problem of addressing the issue of cigar-spirits pairing. It is a thorny field, and often the results achieved are not what we expected and the pairing can give as much emotion as dissatisfaction if something goes wrong.

Cigar size: Robusto/Piramide/Toro. These are nowadays the standard formats of the market, offering a representative smoking experience for the various producers and terroirs. Technically speaking, they do not present particular challenges, yet they still offer a satisfying aromatic experience and allow to appreciate the evolution of the smoke in parallel to the tasting of the spirits.

The Rating Scale: 100 points. We have chosen to keep it in the pairings as well, to simplify the comparison of ratings. In this case, however, this scale only evaluates the pairing,

and not the individual qualities of cigars and spirits. If you have both excellent products, for example, but an unbalanced and inconsistent pairing, the rating will be low. On the contrary, the excellent marriage of two products of decent quality could give rise to a very positive evaluation.

The Tasting: Nose, Palate, Finale. Since our goal is to explore the complexity of a pairing, we thought it was appropriate to decline the experience in the three areas, following what is usual with spirits and that is also made in the cigar tasting, with pre-lit scents, aromas during the smoke and the persistence.

The Comparison: 1 Cigar with 2 Distillates. We decided to start from the selection of a cigar, and ask specific questions such as: perhaps with this cigar is preferable a lower alcohol gradation? Maybe the ex-sherry oloroso barrels marry better than those moscatel with this cigar blend? Perhaps the excessive peat hides the more sophisticated notes of cigar? In order to answer the questions, we selected two spirits to investigate which one is the best cigar partner and why.



PAIRING

Cigars
&
Spirits



CASA TURRENT 1880 OSCURO

INTENSE AND FULFILLING

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●	\$ 20 € 14
DIMENSIONS	
55 x 165 mm	
COUNTRY	
MEXICO	

Rich with earthy, toasted, and peppery notes. Average strength, but wide and prolonged smoke intensity. Herbal scents, dry fruit, then leather, chocolate, black pepper, and a long balsamic sensation that sustains the darker and loamier part of the cigar. The suggested pairing is with two traditional English rums from molasses: an innovative partnership Australasia/France finished in cognac and a powerful cask strength Barba-



UNDERCROWN SUNGROWN BELICOSO

BALANCED AND RICH

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●●	\$ 11 € 14
DIMENSIONS	
52 x 152 mm	
COUNTRY	
NICARAGUA	

Aromatic and oily, it has a refined aromatic palette with hazelnut, oak, nutmeg and black pepper. The strength is medium-high. It is combined with two very different distillates, a creamy Caol Ila with pleasant marine and citrus notes and a Rye with deep hints of orange and vanilla, with a moderate aromatic herbs character.



H. UPMANN MAGNUM 54

STRUCTURED AND BOLD

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●●	\$ - € 12
DIMENSIONS	
54 x 120 mm	
COUNTRY	
CUBA	

Since 2017 at the top of Cuban production. It develops an interweaving of walnut and almond, supported by notes of white pepper and coffee, and then enriched with nutmeg, earth and piquant spices. Aromatically rich. The intensity of the cigar allows to select two high ABVs; different single-malt profiles are chosen, a distillate aged in ex-rum barrels more fresh and fruity, the other more animal and coastal.



PLANTATION RUM

2008 Fiji

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Fiji/France	50.2% - 100	\$\$
TYPE	AGE	CASK
English Rum	14 years old	-

Plantation meets South Pacific Distillery for a triple column rum from molasses, aged 14 years in ex-bourbon casks and then finished in ex-cognac 350 liter casks with a light sugar content of 4 g/l.

Compelling olfactory pairing between the earthy cigar's notes and the rum's spiciness from exotic fruit and aged wood. The first puffs offer toasted dry fruit, balanced by the rum's plum notes. The cigar fills the palate with a range of leathery and peppery notes, stimulated by an herbal and balsamic vein. The rum chases it with velvety mango and pear notes and plenty of aged elegance. Yet the rum's fine scents of smoky and toasted wood are not able to harmonically match the intensity of the cigar, which ends up overpowering the aromas.

Pairing score 87

VELIER FOURSQUARE

Plenipotenziario 2007

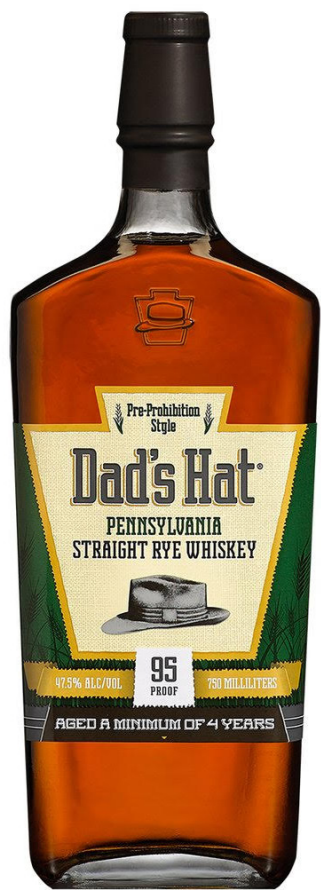
COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Barbados	60% - 120	\$\$\$
TYPE	AGE	CASK
English Rum	12 anni	-

Foursquare x Velier limited edition that merges Richard Seale's wisdom with Luca Gargano's vision. It's a blend of several Coffey still rums from molasses aged 12 years in ex-bourbon casks and bottled at cask strength.

The rum's viscous potency of coconut, chocolate, and banana split perfectly matches the Oscuro's earthy and herbal notes. In the mouth, the rum explodes with the intense elegance of an American oak soaked in toasted and oily dry fruit notes that perfectly integrates with the cigar's textured weave of leather and spices. The rum's alcoholic strength dominates the lesser cigar's strength, but the aromatic finale evens out thanks to surprising whiffs of shellac that harmonically matches the Casa Turrent's balsamic vein.

Pairing score 92





DAD'S HAT
Straight Rye

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A. (Pennsylvania)	47.5% - 95	\$
TYPE	AGE	CASK
Rye Whisky	-	vergini

Round and well-structured rye, with a very ripe orange and vanilla nose, wood and fresh herbaceous notes of rye, menthol. The palate entrance is of sweet woody spices. In the finale the caramel envelops the palate, with also a memory of orange and a balsamic scent. Intriguing nose of the pairing, with orange dressed in precious spices and the sylvan vein that comes later, giving complexity. Multifaceted and surprisingly continuous. On the palate the rye dominates, thanks to marked aromas; it gives pleasant notes of orange now burned, turning to toffee with spices. Hardly better however the puffs far from the spirit. In the finish the cigar resumes the woody trajectory, with a hazelnut finish covered with spicy chocolate. Complex and interesting.

Pairing score	88
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BERRY BROS. & RUDD
Caol Ila 2009-2020

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scozia	46% - 92	\$\$
TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	11 years old	ex-bourbon

A product of great pleasure, creamy and elegant, with marine peat, velvety and gentle with a balsamic aromaticity. The balsamic side fades into the sweetness of a delicate, almost floral honey. Very light lemon. A touch of buttery puff pastry.

The noses are quite dissimilar, they try to come together with no success, yet both remaining pleasant, aromatic wood that burns in a warm fire on the beach with fresh lemons, but they struggle to find a complete integration. The palate is truly remarkable; the creaminess of the whiskey envelops the palate giving the freshness of the lemon cream, and the salty notes sharpen the spiciness of the cigar, which gives almost piquant tips, all without smudges. Rich and amazing, beyond the description of each aroma.



Pairing score	90
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MILK&HONEY
Ex-Rum Single Cask #2017-0189

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Israele	55 % - 110	\$\$\$
TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	-	ex-rum

The whiskey has a discreet intensity nose, with yellow fruit, lemon, cedar and brown sugar. Fresh, with a floral touch. The palate is more lively, warm and spicy, with orange peel and a hint of lemon. Following the spices become sweeter and more persistent.

On the nose the yellow fruit is light and breaks on the woody tones of the cigar. Only the creaminess manages to mitigate some aspects. Among the most discordant. The palate is a whole other story; the cigar expresses well its character of white pepper, and then softens in the long finish, in which fresh and pleasant citrus tones are rediscovered. A pairing that recalls much more cigar-mojito than cigar-whiskey, but that amazes for ease and freshness.

Pairing score	87
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BUNNAHABHAIN
An Cladach

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scozia	50 % - 100	\$\$
TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	-	ex-sherry

The coastal side is dormant, while the animal and sulphurous notes are present, especially on the nose. The palate is warm and chocolatey, with also red fruit and notes of salted caramel. Soft and persuasive, even in the finish of dried fruit and plum, now with a certain minerality. Great consistency on the nose; the coffee of the cigar becomes leather, sulfur and smoke come together by calling for tasting. The palate is masculine and dark, intense and sticky. The fruit of the whiskey gives a new depth to the Cuban. Then salted caramel, without the savory note sharpening the spiciness of the cigar. The smoke is even more chewable, a real pleasure. In the final an impression remains of earthy components and coffee, perhaps coffee beans covered with dark chocolate.

Pairing score	91
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SPIRITS

The difference between cognac and armagnac?
Imagine a length of velvet and another of a silk fabric.
Stroke them. The velvet has a deep, rich texture.
That is an armagnac. The silk is pure finesse, and that, to me, is a cognac
Salvatore Calabrese, bartender in London

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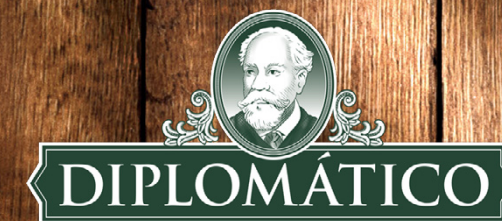
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Foursquare

*The heritage of a
tireless commitment to quality*

by **Luca Cominelli**

The Seale family has been making rum in Barbados ever since 1820. After four generations, Richard Seale managed to transform his family business into a symbol of Barbados' tradition and of international rum making. Over the past decade, the Foursquare brand has become synonymous with total attention to the quality and the artisanal authenticity of rum by refusing to add sugars and colorants and, at the same time, by constantly implementing the most recent technologies to improve production. Special collaborations with the best worldwide distributors allowed to their boldest and most particular products to reach a new public of aficionados that have largely fueled their myth and contributed to their success. Above all, the special series made in collaboration with Luca Gargano and Velier proposed some of the best reviewed rums in the world.

What does your motto "We do it right!" exactly mean? Is rum making only a matter of knowledge and technology, or is there something more?

The motto simply refers to our commitment to authentic methods, to reflect the Barbados style, and to offer genuine rum without flavourings and with true age statements.

Rum making is a matter of experience and know-how passed from generation to generation. The methods are based on the same principles of old even if we have some innovations to assist with keeping a consistent quality.

You have always been against market trends, yet Foursquare has earned the fame and success of a major trendsetter. How has your way of making rum changed from the 1990s to today?

The ways have not changed, certainly not in principle. But they are shifts in what we can bring to the market. Today, there is more appreciation for the pot still style of rums so this is more present in our portfolio. Today, there is a larger audience for cask strength rums so we can offer these in our portfolio. And most importantly, we can invest more in old stocks because there is a stronger market for old rums.

How much does the obsession for sugarcane sourcing matter in rum making? Many distilleries are trying to capitalize on the trend for an organic and integral control over production, but they are not always capable of producing top level bottlings. What are the major difficulties with a sustainable approach in rum production?

It really depends on your objectives - we use mainly molasses and the rums from molasses are more reflective of the methods than the source of the molasses. Of course the molasses has to be of a suitable quality. We also make rums directly from cane juice and in this case the style of these rums are much more linked to the source - for example we would only use Barbados sugar cane for these rums and we select the cane from only certain estates.

We do not use organic sugar cane at the moment because it is not an area in which we have expertise but it is always possible in the future.

Sustainability is a big challenge but it relates more to ener-



gy and packaging inputs than the agricultural input. At the moment we make surplus electricity from solar but we still need fuel for the boilers. This is already one of our targets for the future to generate more energy from sustainable agricultural sources.

Your range is quite wide and offers many special editions in addition to the historical bottles. What directions have you been recently exploring and how are they mirrored by your most important bottlings of 2021?

Our approach is really very simple - to keep doing what we are doing but try to do it well. It is less about exploring and more about perfecting what we do by investing in good casks and increasing our aged stocks. We want to make even older rums. This is reflected in releases like 'Sassafras' and 'Shibboleth'.

The brand you launched in 2016 with Luca Gargano and Velier presented some very special releases. What is the story behind this collaboration? After five years, what did this initiative represent for you?

So with Luca, we created a very special Foursquare series of rums, known as the Velier series of Foursquare rum. This collaboration was very important for us because Velier has a very precise distribution and an incredible reputation in rum. It is not enough to simply produce these rums, it is critical they arrive to the right audience. With another distributor they could easily have failed. Luca and Velier represent an essential partnership for us.

How did you face the difficulties caused by the Covid-19 pandemics? Do you think that this crisis might turn out to be a good opportunity for the most alerted and committed producers?

We have been very fortunate as our rum business has not been affected by the pandemic. For Barbados, it has been hard because the Island depends on tourism.

Where do you see the rum world is going? Do you see a change in the market towards a more conscious and qua-

lity savvy consumption?

Yes, this is clearly the case - the rum category is developing an excellent market for authentic, old rums and we are thrilled to be part of this.

Can you describe to our readers your state-of-the-art distillery? We know that you work with selected pot-still batches, but do you also have a constant production with the column stills? How do you distinguish the two lines in your range?

We have one twin column continuous still and two double retort pot stills. The second double retort pot still is coming on line this year.

From these stills, together with the different types of fermentations, we can create several different types of rums. All of our rums are blends of the two types of still.

How do your long-aging processes work? Do you use multiple warehouses with different temperatures to tweak the evaporation grade?

No, all warehouses are at Barbados ambient temperature. Different casks will produce different rums under this climate. It is our essential philosophy to mature rums under the natural Barbados climate. One point of difference is that we have an open style, very well ventilated warehouse.

In retrospect, what do you think are your most important bottlings? Which were the most and the least liked by consumers among them?

I think the creation of Doorly's XO in the late 90s was a very important and successful rum for us. Likewise, our velier release Foursquare 2006 was an important milestone for us.

What can we expect from Foursquare during next year? What will be your most important releases?

'Shibboleth' was an important release for us because at 16 years, it is our oldest official release. We have invested in good stocks in excellent casks and so we have many aces still to play.



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SWISS ALPINE WHISKY



EDITION DREIFALTIGKEIT

SMOKY & INTENSE

Alc. 52% vol

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LIMITED EDITION ALPSTEIN N°17

RUM CASK FINISH – 2421 BOTTLES

Alc. 48% vol · Aged 7 Years

The Sântis Malt «Edition Alpstein» acquires its award-winning quality when it is first laid down in the oak beer casks seeped in history. It gains its unmistakable aroma when it is finished in a barrel in which bourbon, port, sherry or other specialty slumbered. Every barrel is a rarity full of character. This whisky is produced as a continuous, limited edition. This year's bottling convinces with a finish in finest Caribbean Rum casks. The malty whiskey character is immediately recognizable, framed by vanilla, coconut and reminiscent of muffins with caramel pieces.

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CigarsLover MAGAZINE

WINTER 2020



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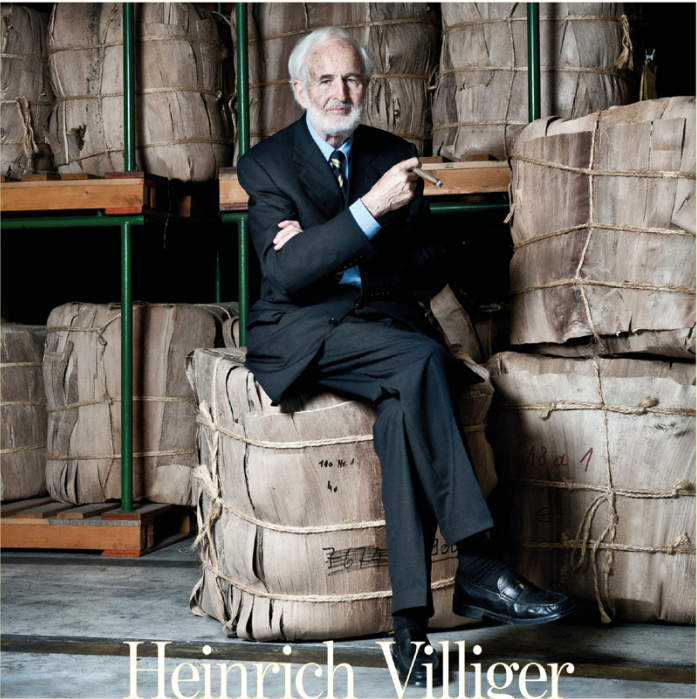


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Bitter

From the 16th century pharmacopoeia to mixology, it helps balance a cocktail and can also be made at home

di **Nicola Ruggiero**

In many recipes of the mixology world an ingredient can often be found: the bitters. If we rely on literal translation, it will only provide us with one simple dimension of flavor: bitterness. In fact, even the definitions in the various educational books describe it as a product "obtained by extracting bitter and aromatic substances or just bitter substances, with a mixture of alcohol and water, sometimes adding little sugar or syrup." Conceptually similar is the "amaro" liquor, although obtained with different procedures and easier to be enjoyed without dilution.

Historically, however, the bitter, as well as "amaro" liquor, was born from essays and wonders of pharmacopoeial alchemy of the sixteenth century, an era in which in Europe, thanks to the flourishing exchanges between the East and the New World, countless spices, seeds and plants hither-

to unknown arrived. The recipes and related procedures for the preparation of these compounds were kept secret, which is why it was possible to find a specific one for each "illness". Changing the dosage or process changed the curative indication: for example, for indigestion, two teaspoons of bitter diluted in wine were enough, which became a spoon for heart problems.

In 1700, Venice became the square with the widest choice of bitters, thanks to an increasing interest in these products by eastern travelers and merchants, who brought an amazing amount of spices and herbs of unknown origin. According to various historical sources, at that time more than a hundred spices shops could be counted in the lagoon city. This flourishing activity of importing spices, from which countless healing remedies were prepared, constituted a

great stimulus, for pharmacists and doctors, for the creation of concoctions and early pharmaceutical remedies. In fact, the practice of remedies based on healing herbs and spices had already been widespread several centuries before. It was known to the Greeks, was better elaborated by the Arabs, and then spread throughout the Western world thanks to the studies of the University of Medicine of Salerno. Even the study centers for this discipline were not limited to Venice alone, but were emerging in every major city where trade was flourishing, such as Florence, Paris and Amsterdam. All this shows how much attention, at that time, and appreciable curiosity was drawn by healing remedies with the infusions of herbs and spices. Indeed, their spread became so famous and fashionable to the point that these "remedies" were taken even without any specific illness or reason, in the mere assumption that they stimulated body

and mind, perhaps for the high alcohol content or for a mere psychological "creed" transferred from producer to consumer. A simple headache or even just the desire to rest better was enough to get the coveted prescription. Bitters, therefore, were on everyone's mouth and stomach, but let us not underestimate the importance of square charlatans, real geniuses of public sales and responsible of the spread of these long-life elixir.

Bitters, as we know it and taste today, was born in 1828 by its creator John G. Boker (Boker's Bitter), still for healing purposes but indicated above all for digestion difficulties. In fact, the basic ingredients were cardamom and bitter orange peel, useful for digestion, but also calamus, a natural antiseptic, or bitter quassia, with digestive powers and other effects peddled as secrets.

Of bitters today we know flavors and aromaticity in different facets, from the sweetest to the bitterest, but in general always very pleasant. Consumers of the past, however, were not so lucky: in ancient times, many bitters were not so pleasant to the sense of smell and often, not to feel its aromas, consumers drank them by capping their noses.

Another aspect typical of bitters, a reminiscence of its own history, is its small format. As explained above, each bitter was prepared right at the time, as a panacea for specific problems and for that customer, which is why every curative was released in small quantities. The compact format also made it very common among soldiers and sailors, precisely because of its ease of transport. The very high alcohol content, which made it resistant to bacteria, was often diluted with water or other beverages.

Getting back to our time, bitters made their way into the mixology world around the nineteenth century, during the golden age of drinking culture in the United States. It was the moment that marked the transition from pharmaceutical to purely recreational consumption. A few drops of bitters were enough to enhance the complexity of the distillate without altering its taste, so as to create a perfect balance. In this way, bitters no longer only play the eupeptic role of adjuvant of digestion and appetite but can rather be considered as a formidable bitterness balancing tool in mixology, capable of amplifying the taste of a cocktail.

If you wanted to know the flavors of the past and experience some of the first bitters marketed as natural remedies, today used in the preparation of cocktails, you need to look for products such as Angostura by Dr. Johann Siegert, who in 1824 produced, for the first time, aromatic bitters as medicinal dye, designed to relieve stomach disorders. Even today, Angostura is the favorite bitters of bartenders and consumers for the preparation of an old fashioned cocktail, a famous contemporary whisky-based drink. But Peychaud's bitters, made by Dr. Antoine Amédée Peychaud's in 1830 as a panacea, is also famous for being the essential ingredient for the preparation of another great classic cocktail: the sazerac.

Today the market offers a very large variety of bitters and everyone takes inspiration from various cultures. Currently, among the most recent trends, is the Japanese one, which brings a new conception of bitters to the bar counters. Offering combinations never experienced before, these new Japanese products offer bitters based on yuzu, shiso and umami that we consider very interesting and stimulating.

As reported, there are hundreds of bitters available on the world market and rather than advising some, we would like to give you the opportunity to make your own bitters at home. All you need is time, patience and your trusted grocer, who will play a crucial role.

- 1 teaspoon of gentian
- 1 teaspoon of cloves
- 1 teaspoon of rhubarb root



- 1 teaspoon of dried lemon peel
- 1 teaspoon of dried bitter orange peel
- 1 teaspoon of cardamom seeds
- ½ teaspoon of cumin seeds
- 1 teaspoon of coriander seeds
- 300 ml wheat alcohol 90% ABV (ethanol)
- 600 ml water (better if filtered)
- 130 g sugar
- Airtight tins

Everything starts with the infusion of spices into pure alcohol, which constitutes the basis of each recipe of home-made bitters. In this very early stage of the preparation, you can opt for a promiscuous or single infusion. Therefore, place the ingredients in an accurately selected airtight container and cover them with wheat alcohol. Close the container and leave it in a cool and dark place for at least fifteen days. On a daily basis, we recommend carefully shaking the jar.

After the fifteen days, filter the alcohol with a sieve (even better if this tool is accompanied by a food gauze), to divide the solid part from the liquid part. If you use the recommended gauze, we recommend squeezing it very well, since the most concentrated and flavorful part remains right there.

To create the "sweetener" part of your home-made bitters, put the 130 g of sugar (you can have fun using different types of sugar) in a small saucepan with 65 ml of water and, first using low heat and then gradually increasing the intensity, bring it to boiling point. At this stage it is necessary to mix constantly, to prevent the sugar from caramelizing completely. When this process is finished, remove it from the heat and let it cool.

Pour the sugar into the infused alcohol, adding water in a 1 to 1 proportion, thus obtaining a bitter at an ABV of about 45%. To obtain a bitter with a higher alcohol content, it is enough to reduce the amount of water. Let the whole mixture rest for a week, always shaking it once a day.

After this further rest phase, it is necessary to re-filter everything, to then store it in an aromatic bitter bottle or in a bottle with dropper. Your bitter is ready and you can store it outside the fridge for just over 1 year.

Some more advice on the same topic. If you want to make a bitter that has the aroma of a single, well-defined ingredient, we recommend always using this recipe as a basis, and then adding or unbalancing a single spice. For example, for a licorice flavored bitter, we will use a teaspoon for each of the other spices, while for licorice we will add three roots instead. Another suggestion is to replace, for infusion, ethanol with a distillate as neutral as vodka. In this particular case, however, having the latter a lower ABV percentage, the infusion time will necessarily be longer.

The important thing is that your final home-made bitter has an alcohol content between 45 and 70% of the volume (ABV). And then try it in the best of your old fashioned.

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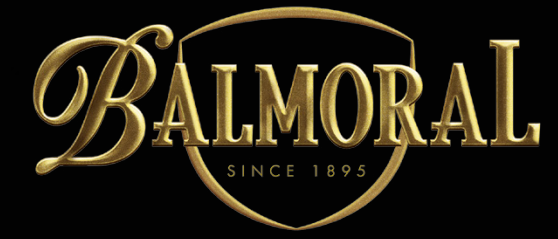
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INTERACTIVE



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you experienced something
for the first time?



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#CuriosityDrivesDiscovery



Sazerac

From the unlikely union between pharmaceutical herbs, cognac and prohibition a drink was born which, still today, is full of style, flavors and aromas

by **Davide Pertino**

New Orleans is the most important city of Louisiana, rich in exuberance and contrasting stories. Among the various neighborhoods that animate the city, there is the French influenced "Vieux Carré," a crossroads of different races, cultures and musicians. Here several drinks were born such as Ramos gin fizz, Hurricane, Vieux Carré and the dynamic Sazerac.

The Sazerac is a cocktail that owes its origins to pharmacist Antoine Amédée Peychaud, better known as the inventor of several aromatic bitters including the homonymous "Peychaud," a fundamental ingredient in preparing a good Sazerac. After his move to New Orleans in 1834, the famous pharmacist used to serve his relatives and friends, in addition to cognac, a mixture of medicinal and pharmaceutical herbs. The compound was served in an egg box, in French

as "Coquetier," a term from which the word cocktail would seem to derive, but without any clear, documented proof. The mixture was created as a digestive, medical and restorative remedy and for this Sazerac is today recognized as one of those drinks magical and rich in history. In fact, looking for its historical origins, we will find ourselves straight in mid-nineteenth century New Orleans: a port city rich in culture, the cradle of jazz, with many people thirsty for alcohol. All elements that would be chosen to be mixed, as in a cobbler, to give life to the best drink.

Around 1850, in "The Merchants Exchange Coffee House," a popular New Orleans bar, owner Sewell T. Taylor served a brandy cocktail consisting of Cognac, sugar, Peychaud bitter, water, and lemon zest. In a very short time it became a very popular drink in the city; especially among musicians.

A few years later, Taylor decided to sell his business to undertake the business of importing and selling alcoholic products, including a cognac called Sazerac-de-Forge. The bar was subsequently purchased by another New Orleans icon, Aaron Bird, who decided to change its name to "Sazerac Coffee House," just because Bird began serving Sazerac, like the cognac imported by his predecessor and with the addition of Mr. Peychaud's pharmaceutical bitter.

Over the years, the place changed management and ownership many more times, until the arrival of Thomas Handy, the former bar accountant, who took over in 1870. In the same year, French vineyards suffered a real epidemic caused by the phylloxera, resulting in a drastic reduction in cognac production. A problem that led Thomas Handy to change, partly because of the phylloxera and partly according to taste preferences, the base spirit, replacing cognac with rye whiskey (produced with at least 51% rye); a spirit truly beloved by most of Americans. Thomas Handy, in addition to being the first to replace cognac with rye whiskey, was also the first to use absinthe Sazerac, which was very trendy at the time.

An addition that consecrates the Sazerac with all the honors of a cocktail. In fact, as David Wondrich suggests in his book "Imbibe!" the Sazerac, without the addition of the anise note provided by absinthe, would be a very normal Whiskey old Fashioned; it is precisely this extra touch given by absinthe that creates a completely new taste. However, the revolution brought forward by absinthe was short lived. With the advent of prohibition, the use of absinthe was banned because it was responsible for hallucinogenic effects. For this reason it was replaced with Herbasaint, a medicinal plant with therapeutic and antiviral properties with similar flavors. Although the historical period of prohibition was among the most difficult ones for the world of spirits mixing, those were also the years in which a series of events in favor of trade and preparation of new recipes and bar habits. Even Thomas Handy, after obtaining the production rights of Peychaud's bitter and the name of the cocktail itself, was also so successful that he could start the production of Sazerac directly in bottles and thus ready to drink. In addition to being an iconic drink, easy to prepare at home or drink in your favorite cocktail bar, Sazerac has lent its name to one of the world's largest companies for the production of American spirits. The Sazerac can also be found in a "Ready-To-Drink" version, bottled and ready to be tasted as a real cocktail. It is produced in Kentucky at the Buffalo Trace distillery, also called baby Saz because it is the regular version of the precious Sazerac 18yo and of the Thomas Handy Sazerac Straight Rye Whiskey, not artificially colored and unfiltered.

Sazerac is a cocktail perhaps not present on many current drink lists, but it remains a fascinating icon, able to boast noble origins. In 2008, it was named as the official drink of the state of Louisiana, where it can still be appreciated with the taste of whiskey and jazz, all together. The "Sazerac House" bar is still in operation and has become one of New Orleans' most renowned attractions. Inside, a real museum has been set up, where the first bottles of Sazerac are stored.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 Cl of Rye Whiskey or Cognac
- 1 sugar cube or 4 gr
- Soda
- Peychaud's bitter
- Absinthe
- Lemon peel

GLASS

Low Tumbler or old fashioned

PREPARATION

Fill the glass with crushed ice or cubed ice and water, to have a homogeneous cooling of its walls. Cool a mixing glass and then insert the sugar and drops of Peychaud's bitter until the sugar is soaked. Melt the mixture with a splash of soda water and add the Rye whiskey or Cognac. Cool and dilute for several seconds with the help of a bar spoon. Remove the ice from the glass and pour a few drops of absinthe just to "perfume" the walls. With the help of a strainer, pour the drink directly into the glass and serve without ice, if we want to respect the original version, with a splash of lemon essential oils.

SUGGESTIONS

In this drink the chilled temperature is everything. Effectively cooling the glass and mixture then serve the glass promptly is a very important to the process for the success of the drink. Another suggestion may be to insert ice into the glass with water and a few drops of absinthe, to obtain a homogeneous cooling of the walls of the glass and, at the same time, adding the anise scent of absinthe.

Alcohol Vini

*From medieval alchemists to alcohol chemistry,
understanding the interactions of ethanol with the human body*

by **Riccardo Noya**

The intoxicating effects of alcohol consumption have been known since the dawn of history. It is estimated that the discovery and consumption of alcoholic beverages dates back to prehistoric times, as a probable result of an accidental fermentation of fruits or cereals.

The uninhibiting effects of these drinks, obtained from the fermentation of fruits, tubers and cereals, made their consumption very popular both in the social and religious gatherings of different periods. Examples are the use of mezcal (obtained from a complex process of fermentation of agave) by pre-Columbian civilizations or of wine, used in ancient Greece and at the time of the Romans for celebra-

tions of the mythological deities of Dionysus and Bacchus among the others. However, in the following centuries, various types of alcoholic beverages (wine, beer, mezcal and many more) were used to replace water for a single fundamental reason: alcohol, compared to water, resisted bacterial infection better and where a potable, safe water supply was a serious problem, alcohol became the only safe alternative for the (partial) rehydration of the body.

The word alcohol, according to the most accredited sources, derives from the Arabic term al-kuhl, which indicated the "very fine powder" used by women for cosmetic purposes. Subsequently, medieval alchemists began to use the term to indicate those "very fine", that is, impalpable ele-

ments, to refer to the noblest part of a substance. However, it was Paracelsus, a very famous doctor and alchemist who lived between 1400 and 1500, who was the first to define *alcohol vini*, that can be literally translated with "spirit of wine", definitively providing the term "alcohol" the same meaning it bears today.

From a scientific point of view there are different types of alcohols. The one contained in alcoholic beverages is chemically known as ethanol and is produced in nature by the alcoholic fermentation of glucose through the metabolism of different microorganisms. Alcohol is perfectly soluble in water and, passively spreads through cell membranes. It is rapidly absorbed in the stomach and is distributed just

as quickly both in the circulatory stream and in the tissues of the human body. As is well known, the speed of absorption of alcohol varies depending on the "fullness" of the stomach: in an empty stomach an alcoholic drink will be absorbed more quickly by the body. Additionally, generally speaking, men can tolerate almost double the amount of alcohol compared to a woman of similar size: this is largely due to the difference in metabolism and body composition of females, which make ladies more susceptible to its intoxicating effects. However, this is not an absolute truth. The key to alcohol tolerance and effectiveness is related to the liver's ability to effectively metabolize alcohol.

How does this substance interact with the human body?



Alcohol quickly and without any difficulty reaches the nervous system, causing, when taken at moderate doses, a euphoric, uninhibitory and anxiolytic effect. Paradoxically, however, with the increase in the amount of consumed substance, the depressive effects will begin to appear, such as psychomotor slowdown, drowsiness, up to coma or death in the worst of the cases.

As well known, the pleasant effects deriving from the intake of nicotine [for more in-depth analysis, please refer to CigarsLover Magazine Spring 2021], are caused by the stimulation of specific receptors present on nerve cells with the consequent release of neurotransmitters, mainly dopamine and serotonin, which cause the activation of specific nerve centers, triggering the typical feeling of satisfaction. Alcohol, unlike nicotine, does not have a specific neuroreceptor with which to interact, is still able to influence the release of neurotransmitters. It has been shown that alcohol, like nicotine, within the scope of moderate intake, is able to activate the release of the "pleasure neurotransmitter", that is dopamine, in some areas of the brain such as the nucleus accumbens, the deep structure in the brain responsible of inducing in the individual a feeling of pleasure and gratification.

However the biological mechanisms linked to the intake of alcoholic beverages involve many other systems in the central nervous system: examples are the endogenous opioids system, the glutamine and the gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA) circuits, and even though these interactions can be perceived as "pleasant" in case of moderate and voluptuous intake, it can become dangerous and irreparably harmful to the body in case of excessive and continuous alcoholic intake. In fact, alcohol gives a general effect of sedation and psychophysical relaxation, due to the activation of GABA receptors, being GABA the most important inhibitory neurotransmitter, but the abuse of ethanol leads to a reduction of GABA receptors (desensitization) up to a reduction in memory and atrophy of the hippocampus.

For a long time there has been discussion about the effects of alcohol on the cardiovascular system and some research has shown that small amounts of alcohol can have beneficial and protective effects, mainly related to the vasodilatory and antiplatelet action of alcohol itself. However, other studies have shown exactly the opposite.

We can therefore conclude that, as well as with the nicotine of our beloved cigars, moderation is also fundamental in the case of alcohol since ethyl alcohol is recognized by our body as a substance capable of being responsible for several toxic actions. In fact, once consumed, the liver metabolizes it not for nutritional purposes, but to neutralize it and expel it from our body. Perhaps it is no coincidence that Paracelsus himself was the first to hypothesize that "only the dose makes sure that the poison does not take effect" ("dosis sola facit, ut venenum non fit"), demonstrating that, even for alcohol, a small amount can only make us a little more jovial.



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TASTE

“In victory, you deserve Champagne.
In defeat you need it.”
Napoleon Bonaparte



A Most Noble Rot

*The Great
Botrytized Wines*

by **Vincenzo Salvatore**

The allure of botrytized wines is impossible to dispute. They are among the most expensive and exclusive dessert wines, and for very good reasons, as the difficulty of making them is second only to the incredible quality they can give.

Botrytis cinerea is a fungus that easily attacks and ruins wine grapes with a “bunch rot” during cold, humid, vintages. Yet, under special environmental conditions and when perfectly controlled by the winemaker, botrytis can instead produce “a noble rot” that removes waters and help grapes to concentrate sugars, acids, and minerals offering the best base materials for dessert wines. Even if this also leads to a degradation of most varietal aromatics, what makes botrytized wines so special is their perfect balance between sweetness and acidity thanks to the increase in glycerol, gluconic acid, relative sugar content, and laccase, a powerful polyphenol oxidase.

The noble rot adds up to the already complex handling of late harvesting, dehydration, and raisining of grapes, as a successful vintage of botrytized grapes happens to be the result of perfect climatic combination of night humidity, sunshine, and dry breeze, such a combination is quite rare. Historically, only few grapes and territories have been able to develop an historical tradition of botrytized wines that stand the test of time.

The three most famous botrytized wines are the Hungarian Tokaj from Furmint, the French Sauterne from Semillon, and the German Beerenauslese and Trockenbeerenauslese from Riesling. Today, there are many other lesser known but incredibly high-quality productions in Austria (Ruster Ausbruch DAC), France (among which Barsac AOC, Monbazillac AOC, Gaillac AOC, Alsace Sélection de Grains Nobles), Canada, USA, South Africa (Noble Late Harvest), Italy (Orvieto DOC, Vin Santo del Chianti DOC, Amarone della Valpolicella DOCG, Albana di Romagna DOCG, just to name a few) and many other individual productions outside of these appellations.

In the northeast of Hungary, Tokaj-Hegyalja is home to the oldest botrytized wines in the world, as mentioned in legal documents that dates to the half of the 16th century. From the 17th century on, Tokaj has been considered the most exclusive and luxurious wines for the nobiliary tables across the world.

The two famous botrytized versions are named aszú and eszencia, and they are strictly related. Winemakers handpick only the best dried-up berries from the best cru of furmint, yellow muscat, and hárslevelű hit by the noble rot stimulated at night by the damp air coming from the rich network of local rivers. The berries are then placed and crushed in 20-liter buckets called puttonyos to create

a paste that they call aszú "dough". This dough is extremely rich in sugar-content and flavor. Must or wine of from the normal grapes is added to the aszú dough for several hours before being racked off into wooden casks for many years of fermentation.

The extremely limited quantity of juice that naturally pours out of the puttonyos for gravity is called eszencia: this juice is mostly used to implement the quality of the aszú, but a very limited quantity is fermented and bottled pure as the most expensive and incredible sweet wine in the world (it reached peaks of 900 grams of sugar per liter and very low alcohol). The regular aszú wines are then graded according to a scale of 3-4-5-6 puttonyos: in the past, it literally referred to the number of puttonyos of aszú dough poured into the regular must, while today it more technically indicates the concentration of sugar from 60 to more than 150 g/l. Aszú Tokaj are famous for their amber color and their aromas of luscious tropical fruit, apricots, peaches, beeswax, cream-filled cakes, honey, but also with an intensely mineral finish that perfectly handles the relatively high alcohol content (usually 13/14%).

In Germany, botrytized wines are mostly made from Riesling vineyards on the hillside shores of rivers like the Mosel, Nahe, Rhine, and Main where the damp night air is often balanced during daylight by intense thermic ranges and dry winds. Here botrytized wines are made at least since the late 18th century, and quickly became esteemed as the Hungarian Tokaj.

There are two degrees of botrytized wines: Beerenauslese (selected berries) and Trockenbeerenauslese (selected dried berries). As the name suggest, the TBA wines are made with the highest quality of grapes that reached a perfect raisining in addition to the Botrytis, while the BA ones include slightly perfect grapes too. These wines showcases the full potential of Riesling: highest levels of acidity, lowest contents of alcohol, incredibly complex aromas ranging from tropical fruit, honey, figs, and dates, to herbs, leather, minerality, petroleum, varnish, and all possible spices. In general, German producers do not age botrytized wines in oak, so these aromas are purely dependent on the combination of the grapes and the noble rot.

It has been proved that they have an extremely long aging potential, with a recommended cellar time of at least a couple of decades before reaching their optimal peak, as they need time to develop the full array of their aromatic complexity. Due to the recent growing interest in long-aging wines, the most important producers have been witnessing an incredible spike in demand over the past decade, making especially the Mosel and the Rheingau wines extremely expensive.

In France, from the early 19th century on, Sauterne has not only been another crown jewel of the Bordeaux wine-region, but it has also become a national culinary tradition insofar as it was customarily paired with some of the most representative French cuisine preparations such as



foie gras and cheeses. As always, the difference is made by the local Ciron river that cuts across a windy region of white-pebbles and limestone, stolen by the river from the Pyrenees through the geological eras, that constituted the perfect terroir for botrytized Semillon, Sauvignon Blanc, and Muscadelle vineyards. The blend of these three different allows for more freedom and difference in the possible grand cuvées that the local chateaus can obtain every vintage.

In general, both harvest and fermentation are quite slow, following multiple stages and respecting the differences among the three grape varieties. Then, aging can go from at least 18 months to several years, usually in virgin oak barriques or slightly bigger casks. In general, sauternes should reach an alcoholic content of 13/14%. Another French difference is the famous 1855 Grands Crus Classés classification that still marks the quality scale of the local chateaus producing sauterne.

Despite the evident differences in price and status, sauterne (and the local neighbor from Barsac AOC) producers always offer a very elevate quality with wines that can wonderfully age for many years, if not decades, and are always capable to surprise even the most selective palates.

As we said, the traditional pairing is with foie gras and cheeses, but the peculiar botrytized notes of sauternes make it perfect to match sweet and sour preparations from Asian fusion cuisine, a pairing that made sauterne extremely successful in the Far East and, subsequently, quite rare elsewhere. Indeed, differently from Tokaj and TBA Riesling, Sauternes tend to be more structured and, thus, more easily pairable with a variety of fish and meat preparations as long as they include sweet ingredients like fruit or candied vegetables that can balance out the sweet tendency of the wine.

In some cases botrytized white wines share many similarities in their impressive sweet and decadent aroma of tropical fruit, patisserie, marmalade, and honey balanced by an even stronger mineral and acidic counterpart. It is that mineral vein that makes the biggest difference among them, as if the former is the mark of the noble rot, the latter is the unmistakable mark of the unique terroir they come from. This is the reason why even less famous botrytized wines can be a true delight, even when compared to their more famous colleagues. Yet, outside the most famous territories, there is so many varieties that it becomes difficult to offer even a brief summary. For instance, most consumers probably don't realize that the best Amarone della Valpolicella are made with botrytized grapes. True, only a handful of producers still make it that way, but those grapes of botrytized Corvina really make the difference by degrading the typical "cherry-almond" varietal aroma and adding the more complex oxidized phenolic character of the best Amarones. As always, the best advice is to learn as much as possible about the spectacular treasures that the wine world provides for us.

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Other than Barley

*Beer styles made with alternative cereals
and special ingredients*

by **Vincenzo Salvatore**

Usually, when we think about beer, we think about the magical combination of three basic ingredients – barley, hop, and water – fermented with yeast in a neutral cask.

Such a paradigmatic recipe was enshrined in 1516 by the Bavarian Reinheitsgebot (purity order), and this trinity has been influencing the common understanding of beers ever since. Yet, humans have been making beers with all possible ingredients and in different styles for a long time before and after 1516. Moreover, it was customary for farmers to brew their own farmhouse ales with whatever grain was left after having sold the harvest. In fact, that Bavarian law was not meant to protect the purity of beers, but to prevent spikes in bread prices: wheat and rye had to be reserved for use by bakers. For the same reasons, many other countries enacted similar laws in the 16th century, and even if the agricultural situation would eventually change, the cultural impact of such purity orders was significant.

Standard beer came to be identified with fermented barley malt pretty much everywhere in the world. Few countries held to local traditions with alternative cereals and other ingredients, mainly as regional curiosity or special purposes.

In any case, when mass industrialization happened, the standardization of productive processes made for a long time most of these styles economically unsustainable, re-

stricting alternative cereals to adjunct for barley-dominated grain bills. Thirty years ago, one could easily count the beers made with ingredients other than barley available on the market.

If we think hard enough, we might realize that some quite famous and appreciated German, French, and Belgian beers are made with wheat, namely Weizenbier or bière blanche.

Yet, if marketing made wheat beers a standard offering on the market, other cereals are definitely less known. Luckily, with the development of new technologies, the rise of microbrewing, and the rediscovery of alternative beer styles and traditions, things started quickly to change. Nowadays there is once again a vast offering of beers made with ingredients other than barley (and wheat).

Of course, no one can dispute the fundamental importance of barley, but why would we ever want to give up on the pleasure of drinking peculiar and unique styles made with other cereals and ingredients? Brewing is just a technology, and it should be used for obtaining the best results from the combination of the best ingredients.

For instance, back in the days before the Purity Order, Roggenbier was one of the most beloved styles in Germany. Forgotten for about four centuries, rye beers made a huge





comeback at the end of the 1980s both in Germany and abroad. Made with up 60% of malted rye, this beer style is often served unfiltered and highly carbonated, it showcases a dark red earthy color, low hop levels, a thick body, and a strong spicy flavor that reminds of pumpernickel bread.

In the US, craft- and micro-breweries experimented with variations like rye pale ale, as well as rye porters, and other seasonal versions that magnify the peculiar spicy flavor of rye with loads of noble hops. Famous German rye beers are Schierlinger Roggen (the first modern one, made since 1988) and Paulaner Roggen, whereas among the most famous American craft rye beers we have Founders Red's Rye IPA and Sierra Nevada Ruthless Rye IPA. A peculiar heritage style is Finnish sahti, a farmhouse beer made with rye and juniper, filtered through juniper twigs, and fermented with baking yeast.

Today, pretty much all craft breweries have at least one rye beer in their range. Suggested pairings are with jerk meat, medium-aged cow hard crumbly cheese, and smoked fish, but considering the great array of possibilities, rye beers can be great drinks for all seasons and pairings.

Oatmeal stouts are another example of a classic style made with an alternative cereal, without drinkers probably realizing what that "oatmeal" in the name implies. Oat beers were common in medieval times but mostly disappeared around the 16th century (except the Dutch Koyt beer that lasted a little longer), only to resurface at the end of the 19th century with the "oatmeal stouts" advertised as restorative and nutritious breakfast drinks in Scotland and England. While their healthiness can be arguable, oatmeal stouts are, indeed, quite different from the traditionally dry Irish stouts. In any case, the combination of marketing and taste made oatmeal stouts extremely popular for several decades, until light lagers came to dominate the market. In the late 1970s, though, beer-guru Michael Jackson wrote about this style in his World Guide to Beer leading in turn the Yorkshire

brewery Samuel Smith to rejuvenate their old recipe, which was then quickly piggybacked by American micro- and craft-breweries.

In the contemporary recipes, oat comprises usually 10-30% of the grain bill that – mixed with a variety of Pale, Caramel, Chocolate and Black Patent Malt – offers a sweeter, silkier, and creamier taste thanks to the high proteinic and lipidic content of oat. Many producers took the "oatmeal" part of the name well beyond the composition of the grain bill: it's very common for oatmeal stouts to have coffee, chocolate, and peanut butter added to "complete" the breakfast menu. Famous examples are the classic Samuel Smith Oatmeal Stout, the double chocolate coffee Founders Breakfast Stout, the drier and darker New Holland's The Poet, and the nuttier Altamont Beer Works Nutty Operator. Many aficionados like to pair oatmeal stout with their breakfast, and, indeed, they work well with a classic bacon, egg, and cheese as well as with maple syrup pancakes or French toasts loaded with berries and sausages.

Finally, given their peculiar mixed nature, we can group under the term Specialty Grain all those beers made with alternative grains like corn, rice, buckwheat, millet, sorghum, spelt and other heirloom varieties, if the amount of these grains has a significant impact on the bill. In general, corn and rice are important supplemental cereals, meaning that their contribution to the grain bill does not characterize taste, but it will help to stabilize beers with less haze issues: corn tends to smoothen taste, while rice produces a drier and cleaner taste.

Both are commonly used in many industrial lagers (like Peroni, Heineken, Budweiser, Estrella), but usually only corn suffers from a bad reputation of being used in cheap industrial beers. Conversely, there are some specific varieties of rice – namely japonica short rice like Pearl, Mochi, Somi, and Cahose – used with great success by Japanese industrial producers and many craft breweries around the world

to create lagers and ales with a moderate bitterness and a trademark dry finish. Famous brands are Asahi, Sapporo, Kirin, but also craft producers like Lagunitas, Three Taverns, Anderson Valley, and The Wild Beer Co. An important factor in the growing success of Specialty Grain beers is that they can be gluten free, if made without barley, wheat, rye, and spelt in the bill. The diffusion of these alternative grains in craft brewing opened the world of beer styles to coeliac and gluten intolerants: with these grains is possible to successfully emulate most of barley-based malts used in ales, lager, porter, stouts, etc. without having to severely impact on the protein content with gluten-reduction processes that rely on mechanical filtrations and technological finings that end up standardizing taste, appearance, and aroma. Another peculiar trend in multi-grain beers is the combination with fruits, herbs, and honey. Such multi-ingredients beers can be made in many different styles, making it difficult to offer a comprehensive profile. In general, they can range from aromatic saison beers to surprising grape ales, daunting sour ales, and complex cellar beers, aged in wine or liquor cask and boasting impressive aging potential, where the mixed grain bills offer an impressive diversity of results. Most of these beers are often seasonal and bounded to the vintage, very much like wines, changing over time and showing different stages of maturation during their life span, both as draft and bottled.

This short excursus shows only a fraction of the wide array of amazing possibilities offered by the usage of alternative ingredients and grains. Today, combinations are limited only by the imagination and expertise of the brewer, while consumers can enjoy a mature and open market capable to satisfy all tastes and inclinations. If industrial producers seems to be somewhat conservative and slow to offer new products, craft- and micro-breweries shows a much faster capacity to anticipate the multifaceted tastes of consumers, reinvigorating the image of beers as a vital and important artisanal product after the past decades of declining consumption in favor of other beverages.



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SPIRITS

威士忌標籤

怎麼找出來
你喝的是什麼

Federico Bosco

所有威士忌飲用名經常進行激烈分析，偶爾或熱情，幾乎一直是購買的主要吸引力。但足有一個更精確的細節，必須加深，能夠揭示許多有用的新聞，標量。

無論是大的還是小的，有時用玻璃瓶裝，有時是雙面（正面和背面），有時在瓶蓋的信息，有時更簡單。標量應該給我們所有的信息，以了解更多的東西，而不僅僅是內容。它並不總是正確的，但一般的一些事情總是有效的。

雙面單生產商以威士忌命名為威士忌這同樣適用於美國世界。相反，在蘇格蘭和世界其他地方，我們談論沒有“e”的威士忌：在蘇格蘭的情況下，名稱擴大了蘇格蘭區。單一麥芽蘇格蘭威士忌保留了單一釀酒廠的標量。一些蘇格蘭釀酒廠增加了生產區域，以強調產品的地域性。

*歲升之後經常出現的數字對產品的最低年齡有標。最低年齡因為，與標量不同標飲混合相比，最年輕的數字是相低的。示例：使用三個標分別標建8年、12年和29年的威士忌將顯示“0

歲”字樣，無論標桶的老年化情況如何。公司有責任報告其他桶的年齡，但這不是強制性的。有時，您可以找到沒有年齡的威士忌：沒有恐懼，沒有修改後假單產品，它們是所謂的NAS（無年齡聲明），其中適用於最低3年威士忌的標量上則。製片人選擇不標年齡，這仍然是未知的：它將由我們的口味來驗證味道和愉悅。

在標量上，始終報告酒精含量，必須至少為40%。在這個數字下我們不能說威士忌。如果等級更高，有時公司會標告“Cask Strength”（英國世界）或“Full Proof”（美國世界）：我們在沒有用水稀釋的產品存在。因此，好像它們只是從桶中直接。然而，無助使用也可以使用多種桶的威士忌的較低等級的木桶強度威士忌



忌，特別是如單前者俱有一定的年齡。

*Un Chillederred這個詞讓我們知道威士忌沒有被“冷過”，以及“沒有顏色”，或“沒有添加防腐”（或其他類似的詞），解釋說沒有添加防腐劑正顏色。

在特殊情況下，我們還可以找到所用桶的指示，甚至標桶的數量。這種情況經常發生在非常有趣的版本中，這是在獨立裝瓶商的情況下使其成為購物的來源。此外，我們可以找到Single Cask或Single Barrel這兩種詞，它們強調了它的獨特性。另一個選擇是Small Batch，它仍然是一個更廣泛的概念：您可以從兩桶中取出，但仍比標小一些（但一些例子：獨立桶Caskhead的更標為自己的小批量結合了兩個或三個桶，而與

本小灣沒有宣布使用的桶數量，但他們肯定會把更多的桶放在一起）。

在特殊情況下，它總是發現精神和強烈的日期，特別是當涉及到單個桶時：生產者想要強調精神在桶中花費的時間。

桶的組合符合精確的標準：您可以將來自同一釀酒廠，不同釀酒廠，甚至麥芽（大麥）和小麥（穀物）桶的麥芽威士忌混合在一起。在第一種情況下，沒有標籤（這是一種常見做法）。在第二種情況下，我們將有混合麥芽威士忌（今年將以標桶為Vatted），第三種情況是混合威士忌（或混合），還有Grain Whiskies：這個術語是指由各種穀物生產的威士忌。在美國世界，我們經常遇到和流行飲用的各種詞語，或者使用的唯一範例（黑麥威士忌，玉米威士忌）。

我們試圖解釋各種標量上最常見的術語，沒有絕對的記憶。每個標量都與自己的事情。但是，遵循這些指導原則，在這個廣闊而獨特的世界中，它將更容易自找。

Ayam Cemani

The Indonesian black rooster blends history and oriental mysticism together

by **Vincenzo Lopez**

The first time I heard these words, I must admit that I perceived a certain mysticism, as a tongue-twisting mantra, and then discovered that I had taken a large part of it right from the beginning. Its meaning, for a rare case, is the simplest of translations: from Indonesian Ayam (chicken) and Cemani (black). Let us then return to the cradle of eastern Indonesia discovering a truly fascinating breed of domestic rooster.

It is not at all uncommon to meet, perhaps while you are moving around the island of Java by scooter as a tourist, these strange raven-like specimens, where the adjective does not properly represent the impenetrable black plumage, beak and eyes.

This splendid rooster, thanks to a really curious joke played by mother nature, owes its being completely black to a dominant gene, cause of a deep hyperpigmentation (fibromelanosis) which renders a shiny black with subtle violet – green reflections its plumage, its beak, its eyes, its legs, but also entirely black is its flesh. Even the bones are characterized, almost timidly, by a dark gray, while only the blood remains the typical red color.

Males are often in great muscular shape. In its genetic code, the Ayam Cemani rooster enjoys a truly remarkable speed and its consequent muscle development has made it an optimal candidate for cockfighting. Typically folkloric for the Indonesian people, it is a practice currently left only to the elderly, because the new generation seems not to enjoy this decidedly cruel tradition.

Its origins date back to the twelfth century and, between tales and religious stories, it is quite interesting the mysticism laid upon the figure of this black chicken. It was a belief not only for Indonesians, but also for Japanese and Chinese cultures, that their flesh had mystical powers. It was often used as an omen for fertility or to recall the strength of the warrior, but it was always used, over the





centuries, with veneration and respect. All this until the advent of the nouvelle cuisine or, at least, the colonialist campaigns of the Belgians who first exported this breed. Export has created and maintained a curious fact: it is one of the most expensive species of ground bird in the world. An Ayam Cemani chick can cost 400 dollars, while for an adult specimen, with certification, can reach 4000 dollars. In the history of starred dining, at least as reported in the cooking texts, the first to make a gourmet dish with Ayam Cemani were the French, tempted by such a new and fascinating meat.

Curiosity has obviously reached an amazing peak, but what does this black chicken taste like? What exotic delicacy does it hide? Does its texture differ so much from the more common gallus domesticus? Sorry to disappoint you. Unfortunately, there are no great differences in taste from a classic chicken, indeed, if eaten in Indonesia it may also be found to be just stringy, given the enviable musculature of a chicken that seems to have a special crush for "fitness". A separate speech has to be considered in case you wanted to try quite different and more expensive tastings, the results obtained by chefs who have embraced this peculiar aesthetics to create dishes of absolute and wonderful audacity.

Personally, as a professional in the sector, the curiosity was tenacious and I could not escape the inspiration to

look for the best way to serve it. It was then tested with low temperature cooking, without scalding or scorching, to leave its immense black color vivid. Pon pon candies of black chicken thighs cooked for 24 hours at 65 °C, confit cherry tomatoes gel, bbq sauce from reduction of its bones with scent of lime. The dish was called "It's Black!".

I still remember the moment and the expression of our staff when we tested the dish served for the first time, it was the same as when I went to the Papaya mall to buy it: you have to try and have an open mind, as it is true for most of the experiences.

The first time, I decided to try it in one of the local recipes that most fascinated me, in smoked black tea soup, local vegetables, garlic (lots of garlic) and the inevitable spicy note of sambal paste. Overall the flavor was typical of a good meat ramen, with black tea to sweeten the broth, but the freshness of the sauces managed to create new and exciting taste notes. The overcooked meat, on the other hand, was very tender and, as mentioned, nothing varied compared to the taste of classic chicken. Overall, however, I can describe it without hesitation as a really pleasant and interesting taste experience.

The art of cooking belongs to the world, and the world is so pleasantly chaotic and varied that it would be a crime not to enjoy its infinite facets to take a tasty break.



CHOOSE WHO TO BELIEVE.

A MIRACULOUS LIE

*Inspired to the miraculous
and fraudulent remedies
sold by charlatans
in the 1700s.*

A BITTER TRUTH

*A craft amaro bitter,
made by infusion and
distillation of herbs,
spices and barks.*

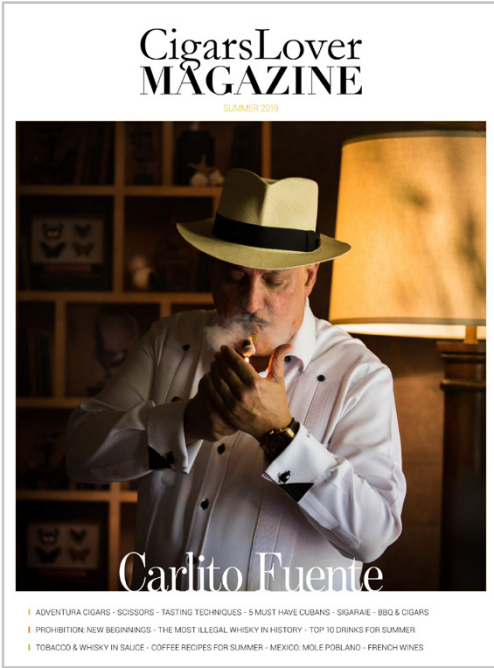
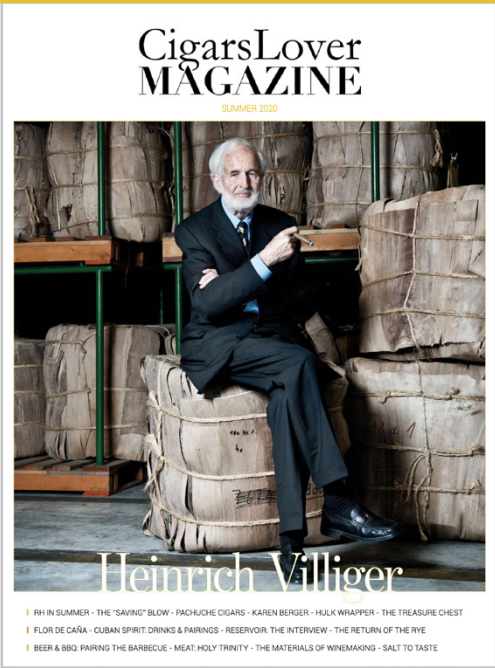


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CIGARSLOVERS MAGAZINE

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INTERACTIVE

Blind Tasting



100 SPIRITS

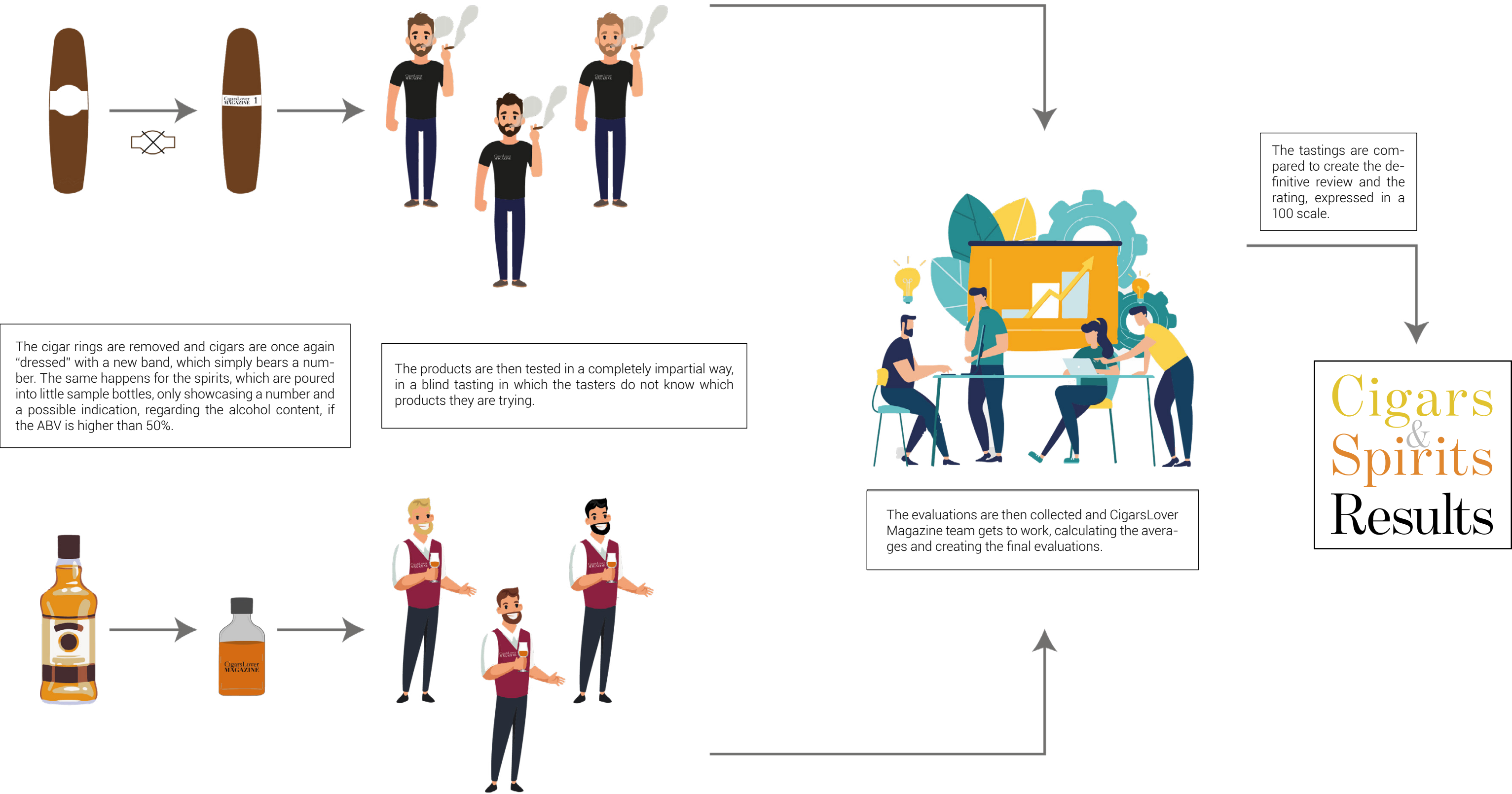
- 102 Rum
- 108 Whisky

115 CIGARS

- 116 Panetelas/Lancero
- 120 Piramides
- 124 Robusto
- 128 Toro



HOW ARE THE BLIND TASTINGS MADE?





1

Legend

All the information in the blind tasting

To place the spirit inside of an ample rating scale, we adopt a scoring system made of 100 points. The rating of each spirit is made by the average given score by the reviewers. Blind tasting means every spirit is tested without knowing what it is. No information about the brand or origins are given. The reviewers only knows if the spirit is above 50% ABV.

- 1

Spirit image.
- 2

Name of the spirit reviewed.

“yo” means “Years Old” and indicates how many years the product has been matured. If there is no indication of that, it is because the producer didn’t declare it.
- 3

• COUNTRY: where the spirit is made.

• ABV-PROOF: percentage of alcohol contained in the spirit.

• PRICE:
\$ less than \$50
\$\$ between \$50 and \$100
\$\$\$ between \$100 and \$250
\$\$\$\$ above \$250
- 4

The tasting is divided in three parts: what is perceived to the nose, to the palate and in the finish. The final rows describe the overall experience that brought to the rating.
- 5

Rating scale: **95-100** memorable and excellent in every detail. **90-94** great quality and highly satisfying. **86-89** high quality and very pleasant. **81-85** decent, delivering a good dram . **Less than 80** not recommended.

KAVALAN

Solist Fino Sherry

2

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Taiwan	57.8% 115.6	\$\$\$\$

3

— NOSE —

Ripe fruit, with rich plum notes, together with honey and a mix of exotic fruit, including coconut. Then cocoa.

— PALATE —

Exotic fruit, caramel and honey, along with rich white pepper notes and orange zest.

— FINISH —

Long persistence. White pepper, cocoa and walnut. A touch of orange peel.

Complex and incredibly rich, it is a very satisfying whisky.

4

94

5

SpiritsLover MAGAZINE

350+
SPIRITS
TESTED
YEARLY

Rum



The chosen 12

Several brand new releases are part of this blind tasting, which includes the latest releases and the great classics, which have dominated the market for quite some time.

Results

The first four products are placed in the evaluation range of 90 points. The first rum excels, reaching a decidedly uncommon rating.



SAINT JAMES *Brut de fut 2003 batch 2*

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	56.4% 112.8	\$\$

— NOSE —

Aromas of spices, seasoned wood, licorice, and balsamic herbs. Then currant jam.

— PALATE —

There are notes of wood, spices, balsamic herbs (juniper stands out), mountain pine, and licorice present.

— FINISH —

Long finish. Notes of mountain pine and spices, together with juniper.

Warm and enveloping. Wide and varied profile. Intense and structured.

94



LA FAVORURITE *Cuvée Privilege Lulu*

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	41,3% 82,6	\$\$\$

— NOSE —

Aromas of mandarin and chinotto, honey, spices, and candied orange. A hint of cinnamon.

— PALATE —

Intense notes of vanilla, mandarin, and a touch of spice. Echoes of cocoa and shades of red fruit.

— FINISH —

Medium-long finish, with cocoa and spices. Lastly, vegetal nuances.

Structured, complex, and endowed with good complexity. Broad profile.

92



DIPLOMATICO *Seleccion De Familia*

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Venezuela	43% 86	\$\$

— NOSE —

Honey, toffee, and raisins enriched with seasoned wood and vanilla aromas and a touch of orange peel.

— PALATE —

Seasoned wood, honey, and vanilla. Spices are also confirmed, which embellish the bouquet.

— FINISH —

Medium to long finish. Vegetal echoes with hints of tobacco.

Round and velvety. Incredibly balanced.

90



AH RIISE

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Danmark	60% 120	\$\$

—NOSE—
 Caramel, cardamom, vegetal notes, and balsamic notes, with menthol and cloves, are present.

—PALATE—
 A mix of candied orange peel and citrus. Caramel, vegetal notes, and cloves. Then honey.

—FINISH—
 Medium. Honey, particularly sweet. A profusion of candied orange peel.

An intense flavor profile that can be appreciated even at full strength.

90



DEPAZ
Vsop

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	45% 90	\$

—NOSE—
 Caramel, milk chocolate, hazelnut, and a vegetal touch, enriched by a suave spicy background.

—PALATE—
 Oily, with spices followed by caramel, cocoa, leather, and a hint of chili.

—FINISH—
 The finish is medium long. Honey and caramelized, with a toasty touch.

Great balance. Elegant and refined. Easy to drink and easy to appreciate.

89



JM
Xo

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	45% 90	\$\$

—NOSE—
 Candied plum and citrus, followed by vanilla and lemon cream. Then oak, white pepper, potpourri, and tobacco.

—PALATE—
 Gentle opening, with intense notes of spices, pepper, and tobacco. Sugar cane follows.

—FINISH—
 Medium-long finish. Spices. Vegetal nuances.

Elegant nose and splendidly balanced on the palate.

87



HAVANA CLUB
15 Year Old

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Cuba	40% 80	\$\$\$

—NOSE—
 Honey and banana, then sugar cane, toasted hints, dry wood, and petrichor.

—PALATE—
 Rather viscous. Notes of wood and nuts are released, along with a mineral nuance.

—FINISH—
 Medium finish. Slightly balsamic, with hints of wood.

It is equipped with a good complexity and structure. Balanced.

87



ZACAPA
23 Year Old

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Guatemala	40% 80	\$\$

—NOSE—
 Dark chocolate and caramel. Butterscotch, and toasted nuts, with walnut standing out.

—PALATE—
 Dark chocolate and caramel, together with a spiciness in the background and a vegetal touch. Walnuts.

—FINISH—
 Medium. Caramel and butterscotch, with a veiled spiciness.

Round and easy to appreciate. Well balanced.

86



DON PAPA
Baroko

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Philippines	40% 80	\$

—NOSE—
 Intense notes of orange peel and a mix of citrus. Then orange chocolate. Orange gummy candies.

—PALATE—
 Sweet, with a mix of orange peel, orange candy, and a veiled spice.

—FINISH—
 Short. Sweet. Orange candy.

Rather contained flavor profile. That said, the background sweetness makes it drinkable.

85



KAKRUERA
L'Expression Brut De Fut

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Guadalupe	50,1% 100,2	\$\$

— NOSE —
 Caramel, cocoa, almond, and molasses, with balsamic nuances.

— PALATE —
 Wood varnish, molasses, spices and chili. Honey.

— FINISH —
 The finish is medium-long. Molasses, wood, caramel, spicy nuances.

Intense and with an explosive but sometimes rustic flavor profile.

84



LARIMAR
Peated

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Dominican Rep.	40% 80	\$

— NOSE —
 Hints of butterscotch, caramel, and honey. Vanilla tips.

— PALATE —
 Sweet, with notes of caramel and cocoa, along with honeyed nuances.

— FINISH —
 The finish is medium-short. Caramel.

Rather contained profile. A little too sweet.

83



LA MAUNY
Blanc Ter Rouj

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	45% 90	\$

— NOSE —
 Mineral shades. Notes of unripe citrus.

— PALATE —
 Citrus fruits are confirmed, now enriched by sugary nuances, not particularly accentuated. Slightly dry.

— FINISH —
 Medium-long. Mineral and sugary. Dry.

Somewhat perceptible alcohol component, although the ABV is not high.

82



INTERTABAK AG

OFFICIAL IMPORTER OF HABANOS IN SWITZERLAND

Whisky



The chosen 12

Seven producing countries have been selected for this blind tasting, which includes some well-known products and others not yet particularly widespread.

Results

Two Scotch whiskies are placed in the first two positions. Only one product ended up touching the 90 points score in this blind tasting.



CALLISTO XI
Scotch Universe

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	52,70% 105,4	\$\$

— NOSE —

Seasoned wood, plum, intense spices, and a touch of petrichor. Nuances of pan brioche and peat.

— PALATE —

Peat and mineral aromas, almost earthy. Then vanilla, medicinal herbs, and citrus fruits (lemon peel).

— FINISH —

Long finish. Smoky. Peat and lemon zest. Balsamic hints.

Intense and satisfying, with a balanced and structured flavor profile.

90



GLENALLACHIE
15 years old

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	46% 92	\$\$

— NOSE —

Ripe fruit and plum, followed by caramel.

— PALATE —

Definitely "sherried". Spices, oak wood, cocoa, and then leather.

— FINISH —

Medium-long finish. Sweet, spices, and sherry notes.

Balanced. Profile with good structure and complexity.

89



PUNI ARTE
Limited Edition 02

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Italy	46% 92	\$\$

— NOSE —

Ripe fruit, where pineapple, wood, and honey stand out. Spices and hints of balsamic herbs follow.

— PALATE —

Honey and vanilla, enriched with spices that recall white pepper. A hint of cereal biscuits.

— FINISH —

The finish is medium-long, and the spices and vanilla are confirmed.

Excellent balance. The flavors are structured with a large and elegant profile.

88



DISTILLERY 291
Rye

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A.	50,8% 101.6	\$\$

— NOSE —

Sour cherries and plums in alcohol. Black currant, medicinal herbs, and rhubarb.

— PALATE —

Plums and black cherries. At times vinous notes. A suave spiciness in the background.

— FINISH —

Medium persistence. Fruity and balsamic.

Straightforward and at times one-dimensional, but easy to appreciate.

87



ELSBURN
The Journey 2020

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Germany	43% 86	\$

— NOSE —

Aromas of sherry, with cherries in alcohol, spices. Notes of ripe fruit follow.

— PALATE —

Spices and seasoned wood. Slightly dry. Some vegetal nuances are also perceptible.

— FINISH —

Medium finish. Spices, with peppery undertones.

The profile is more performing on the nose. The flavor intensity is good.

87



HUDSON
Baby Bourbon

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A.	46% 92	\$

— NOSE —

Fresh wood, vanilla, and wood resin. Then nuances of raisins and a touch of maple syrup. Caramel and panforte.

— PALATE —

Oily. Spices, fresh wood, and wood resin. Slightly dry.

— FINISH —

Medium finish. Wood is the protagonist.

Better on the nose. It lacks in structure, but it is easy to appreciate.

86



TOMINTOUL
Tlath

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	40% 80	\$

— NOSE —

Delicate. Malt, barley, butter biscuit, honey drop. A surprising hint of herbs.

— PALATE —

Notes of barley and malt, followed by herbs, which are the protagonists.

— FINISH —

Medium finish. Licorice and balsamic notes.

Not too demanding and intense. Pleasant.

86



AKASHI
Meisei

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Japan	40% 80	\$

— NOSE —

Fresh, with aromas of wild herbs, supported by lemon, cedar, and yellow fruit. Wildflower honey.

— PALATE —

The opening is fresh and light, with sparkling notes of ginger and vanilla.

— FINISH —

Short finish. Almond and a hint of lemon.

Fresh and light. The flavor profile is not very structured.

85



KIRIN
Fuji-Sanroku

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Japan	46% 92	\$\$

— NOSE —

Fresh, with notes of vanilla and butterscotch. Hints of red apple and then an almost imperceptible touch of cereals.

— PALATE —

Intense honey and vanilla notes, along with wood and a touch of spice.

— FINISH —

The finish is medium, with spices, wood, and vanilla.

Discreetly balanced and with good intensity. Easy to appreciate.

85



WATERFORD
Sfo Sheenstown

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Ireland	50% 100	\$\$

— NOSE —
 Fresh, with hints of vanilla and citrus, where the lemon peel stands out. Hints of custard.

— PALATE —
 Velvety, with vanilla, nuances of red fruit, wood, and hints of lemon peel.

— FINISH —
 The finish is medium. Wood and vanilla are confirmed.

Balanced. Round and easy to appreciate, albeit not very structured.

85



963
Malt & Grain

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Japan	46% 92	\$\$

— NOSE —
 A mix of cereals and a hint of smoke, almost peaty. Aromas of ripe yellow fruit. Mineral hints.

— PALATE —
 Cereals and yellow fruit flanked by spices. Echoes of vanilla and honeyed tips. Sweet. A bit of peat.

— FINISH —
 Medium finish. Faintly smoky cereal hints. Vegetal nuances.

Discreet balance. It is easy to drink and easy to appreciate. Little structured.

84



FLÓKI
Stout Beer Finish

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Iceland	47% 94	\$\$

— NOSE —
 Very vegetal, with hints of wild herbs and wood resin. Pine needles and a touch of marjoram.

— PALATE —
 Earthy notes, wood varnish, and vegetal notes. Then pine needles again, now joined by cereals.

— FINISH —
 The finish is medium-short and spicy.

Particular flavor profile. It is not that structured. Not for everybody.

83



ALEC BRADLEY



THANK YOU FOR THE FIRST **25 YEARS**,
 LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEXT.

- ALEC, ALAN AND BRADLEY RUBIN



PAGE

1000+ CIGARS TESTED EVERY YEAR


FIND CIGARS



Legend

All the information inside the blind tastings

To place cigars inside of an ample rating scale, we adopt a scoring system made of 100 points. The rating of each cigar is made by the average given score by the reviewers. Blind tasting means every cigar is smoked without knowing what the cigar is. No information about the brand, blend or size are given. This is the only way to evaluate cigars objectively.



ADVENTURA
Royal Return King's Gold Robusto

COMPLEX AND RICH

It releases cocoa and citrus, enriched with earth and a touch of incense. The base is honeyed. Then, it continues with spicy notes of white pepper, which gradually become more intense, culminating in hot spices.

3

95

4

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x127mm (5")	\$ 13.5 € 13.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
U.S.A.	MEXICO	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA, U.S.A.

1

Cigar picture.

2

Cigar tasting notes: the flavor profile delivered throught the smoke.

3

Rating scale: **95-100** memorable and excellent in every detail. **90-94** great quality and highly satisfying. **86-89** high quality and very pleasant. **81-85** decent, delivering a good smoke . **Under 80** not recommended.

4

Flag identifying the country where the cigar is made.



Cuba



R. Dominicana



Nicaragua



Honduras



Brasile



Messico



U.S.A.



Costa Rica



Italia



Filippine



Francia



Panama

5

- STRENGTH: described on a scale from "●" (lightest) to "●●●●●" (strongest).
- SIZE: ring gauge (1/64 of inch) and legnth, written in both millimeters and inches.
- PRICE: cigar price in US Dollar and Euro.
- WRAPPER: the external leaf.
- BINDER: the leaf under the wrapper.
- FILLER: the leaves inside the cigar.

Gordo



The chosen 12

Most of the cigars featured in this Gordo blind tasting are regular products, easy to find and available in almost all countries worldwide.

Results

The first two spots are taken by a Nicaraguan and a Costa-rican cigar, which registered scores above 90 points. Two great smoke that will keep you company for a long time.



PLASENCIA ALMA FUERTE SIXTOII HEXAGON

FLAVORFUL AND COMPLEX

Leather and wood open the smoke, with coffee and vegetal notes being perceptible as well. Black pepper and hazelnut appear later on, joined by aromas of cream.

91



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	60x152mm (6")	\$ 21 € 21
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



CASDAGLI DAUGHTER OF THE WIND DAHMAN

COMPLEX AND SMOOTH

The cigar starts with aromas of coffee, leather and earth, with a hint of pepper. A caramel sweetness is also present. Cocoa notes are added in the second half as the intensity increases.

91



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	56x180mm (7")	\$ 16.5 € 16.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	COSTA RICA	DOMINICAN REP., PERU



ALEC BRADLEY PRENSADO DOUBLE T

WELL BALANCED AND SATYSFYING

It delivers notes of earth and black pepper, enriched by a balsamic vein, the latter mainly perceptible in the aftertaste. Occasional hints of leather as well.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	62x152mm (6")	\$ 12.5 € 9
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
HONDURAS	NICARAGUA	HONDURAS, NICARAGUA



ARTURO FUENTE ORO MAGNUM R SUPER SIXTY

SMOOTH AND ROUND

The smoke opens with wood and hazelnut notes, that are later joined by coffee and herbal notes. There are light cinnamon aromas present in the retrohale. The smoke is quite creamy.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	60x152mm (6")	\$ 12 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



ASYLUM PREMIUM
SIXTY

RICH AND FULL FILLING

It exhibits aromas of fine wood, white pepper and a hint of vanilla. In the background there are earth and ground, enriched with some balsamic nuances.

88

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	60x152mm (6 1/8")	\$ 8 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



LA AROMA DEL CARIBE
EDICION ESPECIAL NO. 60

HARMONIOUS

The cigar develops earthy and spicy notes, together with some leather. In the second part, the spices get more intense, with black pepper and piquant peaks.

87

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	60x152mm (6")	\$ 9 € 8.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



UNDERCROWN
SHADE GORDO

CREAMY AND BALANCED

It delivers vegetal notes and aromas of wood, together with some tree nuts. There are some hints of white pepper as well. The smoke is creamy.

87

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	60x152mm (6")	\$ 11 € 11
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



FLOR DE SELVA
TEMPO MADURO

LIMITED EVOLUTION

The flavor profile is all about wood and roasted coffee, together with some vegetal hints. Some nutty notes are occasionally delivered.

85

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	60x152mm (6")	\$ 12 € 11
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
HONDURAS	BRAZIL	HONDURAS



LA AURORA
115TH GRAN TORO

BALANCED

Wood, walnut and ripe fruits are supported by a mix of spices, mainly black pepper, make up the flavor profile. The smoke is quite creamy.

87

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	58x152mm (6")	\$ 11 € 10.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	BRAZIL	BRAZIL, DOM. REP., NICARAGUA



VILLIGER
LA MERIDIANA GIGANTES

CONTAINED FLAVOR PROFILE

The cigar delivers notes of earth and wood, together with leather and a vegetal vein in the background. In some puffs, aromas of anise are present as well.

84

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	60x152mm (6")	\$ - € 8.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



AVO SYNCRO
NICARAGUA FOGATA S. TORO

A LITTLE ON THE DRY SIDE

It delivers notes of cinnamon and nutmeg, followed by cedarwood and earth. Hints of bread are perceivable as well.

87

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	60x152mm (6")	\$ 12 € 14
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	MEXICO	DOM. REP., NICARAGUA



PATORO
SERIE P BALTHASAR

CREAMY

It delivers notes earth and wood, together with spices, where the black pepper and the cinnamon stand out. The finale is all about vegetal aromas.

84

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	58x152mm (6")	\$ 11 € 12
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
BRAZIL	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.

Robustos



The chosen 12

Cigars coming from five different countries are featured in this Robusto blind tasting. Some of them are new releases, some classics.

Results

Six of the cigars tested scored at least 90 points. One stand above all the others and it is made in Honduras, featuring a gold square on its wrapper leaf.



CAVALIER BLACK ROBUSTO

RICH AND FULFILLING

It exhibits rich black pepper notes, together with mild chili, earth and a roasted vein of coffee. There are hints of leather and a touch of vegetal as well.

91



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x127mm (5")	\$ 10 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	BRAZIL	HONDURAS, NICARAGUA



DAVIDOFF DOMINICANA 2014

ELEGANT AND REFINED

It delivers cinnamon and black pepper, together with vegetal hints and some leather. Then, the flavor profile is enriched with seasoned wood and roasted notes of coffee beans.

90



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x130mm (5 1/8")	\$ 21.5 € 21
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
DOM. REP.	ECUADOR	DOM. REP.



H. UPMANN MAGNUM 54

CREAMY AND BALANCED

It delivers nutty notes of almond and walnut aromas. Then there are nutmeg and pepper. In the final part, cedarwood is added.

90



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x120mm (4 3/4")	\$ - € 13
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



LAURA CHAVIN TERRE DE MYTE G. ROBUSTO

BALANCED AND NUANCED

Wood and walnut are joined by roasted espresso notes. The base is sweet. Herbal notes and white pepper appear further into the smoke, flanked by a pleasant sour component.

90



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	54x125mm (4 1/4")	\$ - € 24
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



LIGA PRIVADA NO. 9
ROBUSTO

RICH AND FULFILLING

It delivers intense earthy notes, enriched by black pepper and piquant spices. There also aromas of cocoa and coffee beans.

90 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x127mm (5")	\$ 13 € 15.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
U.S.A.	BRAZIL	HONDURAS, NICARAGUA



PARTAGAS
SERIE D NO.4

BOLD

The cigar revolves around notes of cedarwood, black pepper and earth. Some puffs deliver leathery notes as well.

88 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x127mm (5")	\$ - € 12
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



VIKING VALHALLA
RAGNAROK

BOLD AND STRUCTURED

It delivers rich notes of leather, roasted coffee beans, chili spices and dark chocolate. The aftertaste is a slightly tangy.

90 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x124mm (4 7/8")	\$ - € 11
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



GRAN HABANO
BLUE IN GREEN ROBUSTO

SMOOTH AND FLAVOURFUL

Wood and citrus are joined by white pepper, with a sweet undertone. Coffee is added to the profile later on, as well as leather towards the end.

87 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x127mm (5")	\$ 9 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
U.S.A.	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



ADVENTURA THE NAVIGATOR
VESPUCCI

WELL BALANCED

It delivers vegetal and wood notes, together with a touch of spices; mainly white pepper. In the last part of the smoke, balsamic notes and leather are added.

88 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	52x124mm (5 1/4")	\$ - € 9.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



ROCKY PATEL
HAMLET 2020 ROBUSTO

BALANCED BUT A LITTLE STATIC

It exhibits roasted notes of coffee and earth, together with leather aromas. The second part of the smoke becomes a little earthier.

86 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x140mm (5 1/2")	\$ 10.5 € 9
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	HONDURAS	HONDURA, NICARAGUA



CASA TURRENT
ORIGIN MIAMI

BALANCED AND RICH

It delivers wood and roasted notes, together with a hint of leather. Halfway through the smoke, the flavor profile becomes richer, with notes of black pepper and piquant spices.

88 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	54x140mm (5 1/2")	\$ 7 € 5.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	MEXICO	DOM. REP., MEXICO, NICARAGUA



ACE PRIME M.X.S.
TIAGO SPLITTER ROBUSTO

FLAT AND ONE DIMENSIONAL

The cigar reveals nutty aromas that are supported by wood and herbal notes throughout the entirety of the smoke. There is an evident sweetness present as well.

84 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x127mm (5")	\$ 11 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA

Shorts



The chosen 12

Six countries involved in the production of the Shorts featured in this blind tasting. A size which is getting more and more popular year after year.

Results

Two products stand out, one is made in Honduras and the other in Nicaragua. Both are rich and bold, both will deliver a great half an hour smoke.



ALADINO HABANO VINTAGE SELECTION ROTHSCHILD

FLAVORFUL AND COMPLEX

Roasted nuts and wood dominate the flavor profile, joined by white pepper and vegetal notes. Earth and citrus aromas are added in the second half.

91

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	48x114mm (4 ½")	\$ 6 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
HONDURAS	HONDURAS	HONDURAS



OLIVA SERIE V NUB

INTENSE AND RICH

The first half delivers green wood, black pepper and earth. Then the flavor profile is enriched with some cinnamon hints and a touch of citrus in the background.

90

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●●	60x101mm (4")	\$ 8 € 10.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



MONTECRISTO PETIT EDMUNDO

FULFILLING

It releases notes of leather, seasoned wood and spices, where the black pepper stands out. In some puffs, there are some nutty notes as well, recalling pecans.

89

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	52x110mm (4 1/3")	\$ - € 12
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



BALMORAL ANEJO XO NICARAG. PETIT ROBUSTO FT

BALANCED AND ROUND

Wood and leather are the main flavors, followed by well outlined aromas of walnut and white pepper. Coffee notes are added in the second half.

89

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	48x108mm (4 ¼")	\$ 8.5 € 7.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	BRAZIL	BRAZIL, DOM. REP., NICARAGUA



BRUN DEL RE
RAIN FOREST SHORT ROB.

BOLD AND RICH. FEW AROMAS.

The cigar alternates intense notes of wood, leather and earth. The smoke is dense and almost meaty.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x89mm (3 ½")	\$ - € 6.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
COSTA RICA	COSTA RICA	COSTA RICA



COHIBA
MEDIO SIGLO

A LITTLE HARSH

It delivers aromas of earth, together with green wood and a touch of black pepper. In the second part it turns to roasted notes.

86



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x101mm (4")	\$ - € 20.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



HOYO DE MONTERREY
PETIT ROBUSTO

WELL BALANCED

It exhibits vegetal notes, together with rich aromas of black pepper and some piquant peaks. Then it turns to cedarwood and nuts.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x101mm (4")	\$ - € 10
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



PAUL GARMIRIAN G. S. III
30TH ANN. SHORT ROBUSTO

BALANCED BUT A LITTLE TOO STATIC

It delivers aromas of seasoned wood, and a mix of walnut and hazelnut. In the second half of the smoke, a note of cappuccino is added.

86



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x114mm (4 ½")	\$ 16 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



BRICK HOUSE
TEASER

BOLD AND SATISFYING

The cigar delivers notes of espresso, cedar and pepper, together with nuances of walnut. The second half of the smoke becomes earthy.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	56x89mm (3 ½")	\$ 6 € 5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



VEGAS DE SANTIAGO
D8 EMPERADOR CORTO

A LITTLE TOO "SHARP"

It delivers leather and roasted coffee notes, together with aromas of black pepper in the after-taste. In the second half, the spices becomes dominant.

83



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	60x101mm (4")	\$ - € 10
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	ECUADOR	COSTA RICA, DOM. REP., PERU



HEDON
ECLATANT

CREAMY

The cigar alternates notes of cinnamon, wood and hazelnut. There are some hints of fine spices as well. The base is a little sweet.

87



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x105mm (4 ⅞")	\$ - € 14
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
FRANCE	FRANCE	FRANCE



EL SEPTIMO
BLUE BULLET

ON THE HARSH SIDE

The first puffs deliver vegetal notes, some hazelnut, and cocoa. Then, the flavor profile turns to smoky notes and nuts.

83



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x89mm (3 ½")	\$ 22 € 20
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
COSTA RICA	COSTA RICA	COSTA RICA

Toros



The chosen 12

Coreline products and new releases are featured in this Toros blind tasting. Four are the producing countries involved in the tasting.

Results

The first three places are from three different countries: Dominican Republic, Honduras and Cuba. All have in common a score higher than 90 points.



CALDWELL THE LAST TSAR TORO

CREAMY. GREAT HARMONY

On a sweet base, it delivers vegetal notes and a mix ginger and chili peppers. Then, rich walnut notes, leather and roasted coffee beans complete the flavor profile.

94

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x152mm (6")	\$ 11 € 9
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
BRAZIL	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



GRAN HABANO HABANO GRAN ROBUSTO

WIDE AND STRUCTURED FLAVOR PROFILE

It delivers leather, nuts, and cedarwood, with a nice hint of white pepper in the background. Vegetal and tangy notes are added later on.

91

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x152mm (6")	\$ 7.5 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
HONDURAS	NICARAGUA	COSTA RICA, MEXICO, NICARAGUA



PARTAGAS SERIE E NO. 2

GREAT BALANCE

It exhibits aromas of cedarwood, earth and a touch of black pepper. Halfway through the smoke, coffee beans and leather are added.

90

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x140mm (5 ½")	\$ - € 14
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



VIKING NORDIC WARRIOR TORO

STRUCTURED AND SMOOTH

The cigar brings to the palate nutty flavors, together with leather, earth, and coffee beans. There are also some vegetal nuances.

89

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x152mm (6")	\$ - € 11
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



ZINO
NICARAGUA TORO

STRUCTURED AND FULFILLING

It delivers notes of pepper, wood and hay, together with a graphite nuance. Halfway through the smoke, coffee beans are added as well.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x152mm (6")	\$ 7 € 7.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	DOM. REP., HONDURAS, NICARAGUA



PICHARDO
RESERVA FAM. CONN. TORO

RICH AND FULFILLING

It exhibits wood and wood varnish, together with peppery notes. Halfway through the smoke, the flavor profile is enriched with vegetal and balsamic notes.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x152mm (6")	\$ 12 € 12
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



JOYA DE NICARAGUA
ANTAÑO CONN. TORO

BALANCED AND INTERESTING

Citrus and wood dominate in the beginning, joined by herbal nuances. Spicy and nutty aromas are added to the profile halfway through the cigar.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	56x152 mm (6")	\$ 8 € 7.7
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



MONTECRISTO
OPEN EAGLE

WELL BALANCED

The flavor profile rotates around vegetal notes and wood, together with walnut and honey hints. The final part is balsamic.

86



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	54x150mm (5 7/8")	\$ - € 16
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



AGANORSA LEAF
RARE LEAF RESERVE TORO

COMPLEX AND SMOOTH

A combination of wood and earth are followed by nuts and herbal notes in the beginning, with black pepper present in the retrohale. Leather is added halfway through the smoke.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	54x152mm (6")	\$ 11.5 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



L'ATELIER
LAT56 SELECTION SPECIALE

BALANCED BUT A LITTLE STATIC

The cigar delivers vegetal notes and wood. There is a little sweetness going on in the background. Closer to the mid-point, a green tea aroma is delivered as well.

85



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	56x165mm (6 1/2")	\$ 10 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



PERDOMO RESERVE
10TH ANN. SUN G. EPICURE

SWEET AND SPICY

Black pepper notes are followed by aromas of wood, cocoa and coffee. Leather and nuts, together with cinnamon are added in the second half. The base is sweet.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	54x152mm (6")	\$ 9 € 11
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



CAMACHO
FACTORY UNLEASHED

FLAVORFUL BUT WITH A LITTLE UNBALANCED END

The cigar develops aromas of leather, together with rich herbs, nutty notes, and white pepper nuances. There is also a touch of wood. Hints of lemon zest complete the aromatic profile in the finale.

85



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x152mm (6")	\$ 7.8 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	HONDURAS	DOM. REP., HONDURAS, NICARAGUA

Credits

Cover page

picture by: Drew Estate

Aluminum pack!

picture by: Mario Amelio

Silencio

picture by: Mario Amelio

Dalla "A" allo Zino

picture by: Davidoff

Jonathan Drew

picture by: Drew Estate

El Titan De Bronze

picture by: Mario Amelio

Pairings

picture by: Mario Amelio

Pairings: Cigars & Spirits

picture by: Renz A. Mauleon

Foursquare

picture by: Foursquare distillery

Bitter

picture by: Nicola Cima

Sazerac

picture by: Nicola Cima

Alcohol Vini

picture by: Mario Amelio

La muffa più nobile

picture by: Sohu.com, MulberryLodge.net

Oltre l'orzo

picture by: Mario Amelio

Ayam Cemani

picture by: Pinterest.se, Reddit.com

Blind tasting

picture by: Mario Amelio

Blind tasting - Spirits

picture by: Renz A. Mauleon

Blind tasting - Cigars

picture by: Mario Amelio