

Cigars Lover MAGAZINE

ISSUE 3 - 2023



Sean Williams

- THE CONNECTICUT RIVER VALLEY - COHIBA SIGLO VI - VALENTINO SIESTO - RABBIT AIR A3 - PAIRING IRISH WHISKEY
- CLUB DE CANTINEROS - HOW TO STORE YOUR COLLECTIBLE BOTTLE OF WHISKY? - CORKS & CAPS - VIEUX CARRE
- THE PROPERTIES OF EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL - SUMMER DESSERTS: COFFEE GRANITA

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Editor's thoughts

Two interviews and a special on whisky bottles.

For the third issue of 2023, we interviewed Sean Williams, the brand ambassador of the Cohiba brand in the U.S.A. - Silencio for Europe. Multiple cigars from this brand have received accolades from CigarsLover Magazine. Among those, the 1° position of the Cohiba Serie M in the 2021 Awards (Rest of the World Category and 4° cigar in 2021 TOP50 list) stands out. In the following pages, there is another interview featuring an up-and-coming brand: Valentino Siesto.

A special by Nicholas Melillo on the Connecticut River Valley will give you a different view of one of the most emblematic tobaccos available. A sentimental recap of the twenty years of the Cohiba Siglo VI is followed by the parings, with a special on Irish whiskey. For the 10th anniversary of CigarsLover Magazine, we republish a great article about how to store your collectible whisky and what to look for when buying old bottles.

As usual, you will find more than 60 products paired and reviewed right after cocktail and dessert for the summer and a special on the gorgeous olive oil.

Enjoy the reading.

#refineyourtaste



CigarsLover MAGAZINE

Thank you for
TEN YEARS

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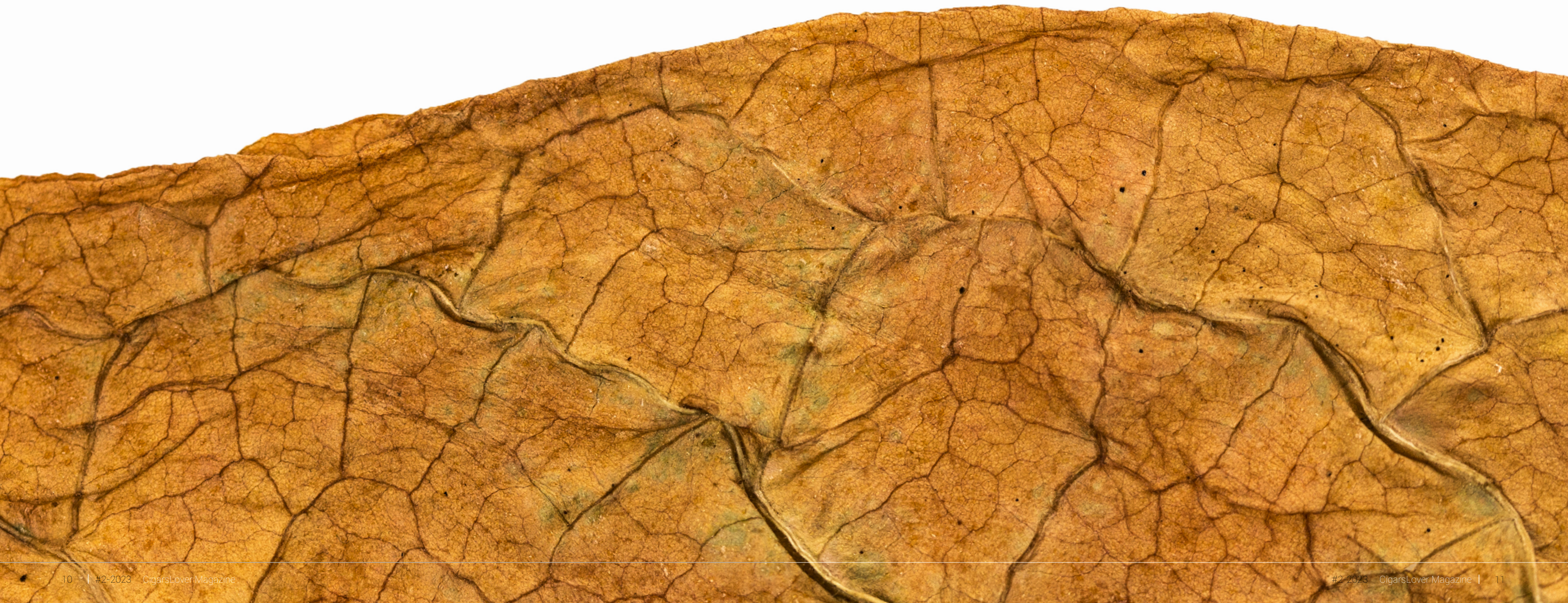
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CIGARS

“The only way to break a bad habit was to replace it
with a better habit..”

Jack Nicholson, explaining why he switched from cigarettes to cigars.



SILENCIO

LUXURY
IS IN THE DETAILS

DISCOVER THE WORLD'S
FINEST CIGARS



Sean Williams

"I enjoy the exchange of ideas and I always end up learning something in the process."

by Michel Arlia

Sean Williams has been the face of the Cohiba brand in the USA since 2017. The same goes for the Silencio brand, introduced to the European Market and other global markets in 2021. We had the opportunity to talk to the man representing Scandinavian Tobacco Group's premier cigar line.

What was your first cigar experience like, and what did you do prior to getting into cigars?

My first cigar was on a cruise with some lifelong friends and our wives. We had been friends since the 9th grade, and we hadn't all been together in many years. We took a New Year's cruise to reconnect and introduce our wives to one another. One of my friends was a cigar smoker and invited us to the piano bar for a cigar and a drink. I remember it so well: I had a Fuente Double Chateau and paired it with a brandy. And from that moment on, I was taken with the whole experience, the enjoyment, the camaraderie, the relaxation, and the luxury of smoking a cigar. After that New Year's cruise, cigars became a passion for me. Immediately before I got into cigars, I was involved in real estate. I had a mortgage business, and I did home construction. Prior to that, the bulk of my career was focused on pharmaceutical and medical sales.

You are based in Atlanta. How has the cigar scene evolved over the years you have been smoking?

I founded the Atlanta Cigar Society in Atlanta in 2005, so I've seen the city's cigar scene grow, just as I've seen cigars grow throughout the country. It's not like the cigar boom of the 1990s, where there was a wild rush of people interested in cigars because they were trendy at the time. This is a much steadier influx of adult smokers to the category, it's made up of people who are dedicated to the premium cigar lifestyle, and it's been great to witness. I've seen firsthand that the growth in the premium cigar category includes

more diversity. There has been an increase in ownership of both brands and cigar shops among black cigar lovers, and there has also been a significant growth of females at every level in the cigar community. Cigars are about connecting people and bringing people together, and as the business continues to evolve, it's exciting to see where the cigar world is going to go.

You are the brand ambassador for STG's Silencio brand (Cohiba in the U.S.). How were you approached by STG about the job, and what does it entail?

I received a call from a friend and former colleague, Rick Rodriguez, who, after some internal discussion within STG, approached me about a very unique opportunity to join the company. Obviously, this role meant that I would have to step away from the brand that I had created. Having developed and successfully managed my own cigar brand prepared me for all the things that this important role with COHIBA entails. I'm involved in virtually every aspect of the business, from blend development, marketing, and brand experiences to social media. I even consult on package design. I get to do everything that I did on my own brand, except I'm not occupied by the administrative stuff like accounting, regulatory affairs, and the like, so this job is absolutely ideal for me.

While the Silencio brand is a new brand, the blends aren't. They are the ones used for STG's Cohiba brand, which is sold exclusively in the U.S. Why did you decide now to venture outside the US, and what is behind the name Silencio?

STG has a strong presence in the global handmade cigar market, where the popularity of non-Cuban brands continues to grow. At the same time, STG has very strong and well-established blends that perform well in the US, and we bring some of these blends to Europe and other global markets. We also launch blends in Europe and other markets and bring them to the US, offering variety and excitement on the world stage for cigars. Silencio mirrors this approach. In the US, the Silencio brand is my signature blend, meaning that it is only available at special events that I personally host. This blend is not one of the blends available in Europe.

What was the reason behind keeping the look the same and not going with something different?

We own the COHIBA brand in the US, and those cigar blends are extremely popular with the brand's high net-worth US consumers, many of whom travel frequently. We wanted to make the Silencio brand connection seamless for those consumers, just as we set out to highlight the red dot iconography, which we are working to scale on a global level.

How do you approach blending for STG or for your El Primer Mundo projects? And what criteria do you have to consider for STG-related blends that you would not necessarily consider for your own stuff?

When it comes to blending for STG, I am a member of a team that collaborates to create our blends. The brand team and I are always thinking about our range of cigars and the overall luxury cigar market as well, to make sure that we have blends that complement each other and also address palates and profiles that we may be missing. Sometimes we



simply think we can offer something a little different. There are other times when we are approached by organizations, as in the case of the wonderful cigar that we make with the Weller Bourbon brand in the U.S. Once we have a project in mind, we start the process of working on a blend or deciding on a blend that we have worked on previously. I am always experimenting with different blends and tobaccos at home, and the incredible team we have at the factories is always doing the same. We often have a baseline to start from with a blend because we've been experimenting with different tobaccos for a while. As a team, we will have several sessions where we meet as a group. In some instances, the factory team flies up to the U.S. from all of our different factories for what we call a Blend Summit, and we spend days testing the blends that we are working on and sharing feedback and suggestions for refinement of the blends. Our

cigars are typically created from these summits. It may be the most enjoyable thing that I do as a cigar maker! I have not worked on El Primer Mundo blending projects since before joining STG in 2017. The last blend I developed for El Primer Mundo was in 2016.

What has been the most fun project you have worked on for the Cohiba/Silencio brand so far?

Serie M has been a very fun project so far. This blend will be released in Europe this summer. The team and I are super excited to release a cigar that we make collaboratively in Miami with a small and renowned artisanal cigar factory. I look forward to sharing more details with European cigar smokers this summer.

You have to travel quite a lot for your job. During the

SILENCIO

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pandemic, everything shut down. How did you keep the consumer engagement going without being able to meet physically? And what did you focus on during that time?

Cigar lovers and our retail partners were open to connecting virtually during the pandemic. And we got very creative to keep the engagement going. We did everything from hosting virtual cigar dinners and online pairing events to virtual cigar shop events. One thing we did consistently that was a hit for months was our Friday Nightcap series which was centered on a musical theme for each session, paired with a featured cigar from the brand portfolio for the evening. What was surprising was that once I went back to traveling, many of the people I engaged with virtually supported the events, even more so in person.

Silencio was launched internationally in the Summer of 2021. How is the Silencio brand being received so far, and which markets are you planning on focusing on next?

The Silencio brand is doing very well in multiple regions across the world like Europe, Middle East-Africa and Asia. We are excited about a couple of new projects to be released this summer which include Silencio Serie M and Los Rios. I look forward to sharing these great cigars with smokers all across the world.

The U.S. Cohiba lines are made in many different factories. For example, what differs between blending in the STG factory in Esteli and the El Titán de Bronze in Miami? Blending is a collaborative process, no matter where we

do it, and it is a little bit more intimate in a smaller, family-owned factory like El Titán de Bronze. I enjoy both processes very much because I enjoy the exchange of ideas. And I always end up learning something in the process.

The Spectre line is one of the more exciting projects under the U.S. Cohiba brand. This yearly limited edition release goes above and beyond, especially in terms of packaging. How was the idea of the Spectre birthed?

With Spectre, we wanted to make a statement and flex our creative muscles by offering something extraordinary and exclusive to the long-time cigar lovers who have supported Red Dot over the years. With Spectre, we have the chance to show off the rare and exceptionally-aged tobacco that we have and rarely have occasion to use. To be honest, we've been a little surprised at just how incredible the response continues to be for Spectre because Spectre sells out almost as soon as it arrives at cigar shops. This incredible demand for the product drives us to want to raise the bar each year.

What can we expect from the Silencio brand and Sean Williams in the future?

You can look forward to some exciting innovations with our blends and packaging, and hopefully, you can look forward to seeing a lot more of me in Europe. I look forward to interacting with the people who will make the ultimate judgment on Silencio's success, which are cigar lovers and retail partners all across the globe.



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The Connecticut River Valley

*The importance of Connecticut tobaccos
in the world of cigars.*

by **Nicholas Melillo**

When most people think of the state of Connecticut, they rarely think of it as producing some of the best and most respected cigar tobacco in the world. If you are a cigar smoker, you most likely have seen the word Connecticut Shade or Connecticut Broadleaf on cigar bands, boxes, or tobacco shops. Still, most should realize the deep and rich history of the Connecticut River Valley that rivals that of Cuba. Before 1959, Cuba and Connecticut had a long history of trading cigar tobacco. Cigars produced in Cuba would use Connecticut seeds, and cigars manufactured in Connecticut would use Cuban filler tobacco. To this day, Havana Seed is grown in the Connecticut River Valley, and Cubans use hybridized seed varieties called US Type 61, aka Connecticut Shade.

I grew up on Connecticut tobacco lore from my grandfathers, who smoked Connecticut Valley cigars since I could remember. Their fathers smoked cigars manufactured in New Haven, Bridgeport, and Hartford factories. Connecticut claims the oldest cigar factory in the New World, in Suffield. I did not fully realize the importance of Connecticut tobacco in the world of cigars until I moved to Esteli, Nicaragua in 2003. I was 24 years old and found myself among some of the greatest cigar makers in the world. Most were Cuban artisans who fled Cuba in the 1960s after Fidel Castro had nationalized the tobacco fields and factories. These Cuban master blenders departed Havana looking for similar climates and soils to grow dark air-cured tobaccos, aka cigar tobaccos. Nicaragua, also known as the land of lakes and volcanoes,

became many Cuban cigar makers' new home. The fertile, rich volcanic valleys of Esteli and Jalapa mimic those of Vuelta Abajo and Pinar del Rio and yet are unique in their own right.

As I began my career running a cigar factory in Nicaragua, the Cubans would ask me, "De Donde Eres?" Where are you from? "Soy de Connecticut." I would reply, and their eyes would light up!

I witnessed a tremendous amount of respect for this strange word "Connecticut" that was so familiar to me.

The origins of the word Connecticut derives from the Mohegan-Pequot word "Quinnehtukqut," meaning the

"long tidal river." The Connecticut River begins near the border of New Hampshire, flowing southward more than 650 km through four states, and empties into the Long Island Sound. Fifteen thousand years ago, a large ice sheet covered most of this watershed terrain, eventually melting into a gigantic glacier finger lake called Lake Hitchcock. After 3,000 years, Lake Hitchcock began to erode, causing it to drain into the Long Island Sound and eventually transform into the Connecticut River. In this lengthy process, the sandy loam of the lakebed settled on 30,000 acres north of Hartford, known today as the Connecticut River Valley.

It is because of this River that Connecticut tobacco is so unique. Most cigar tobacco-growing regions are volcanic,



but Connecticut's sandy loam soil created by the Laurentide Ice Sheet left very few rocks than in other areas of New England. On average, the Connecticut River Valley has ca. 84 cm of this topsoil.

As a result, perfect amounts of silt and clay permit excellent drainage and air circulation around the roots of the plants, causing them to run deep before hitting clay. Stable roots make for a strong and healthy plant and cause the tobacco to be naturally sweet and earthy, with flavors, unlike any other growing region in the world.

It is still undetermined exactly how long indigenous communities have grown tobacco in Connecticut. Scholars have generally accepted that tobacco use dates back some 5,000 years ago, but new discoveries this past year in the Great Salt Lake Desert mudflats in Utah suggest that humans' tobacco use began 9,000 years earlier than previously thought. Most indigenous communities used a strain of tobacco called *Nicotiana Rustica*, a much more potent plant than used today in cigars containing 3-4 times the amount of nicotine. This tobacco would

cause the user to experience a psychoactive effect in which the shaman could allegedly communicate with the spirit world. As time went on and Europeans arrived in the Americas, less potent strains of *Nicotiana Rustica* and *Nicotiana Tabacum* began to grow and hybridize because they were more palatable and sweeter after fermentation.

In the early 1600s, a Dutch explorer named Adrian Block was the first European to travel up the Connecticut River and began trading tobacco with local tribes. Then, in 1640, the English arrived in Windsor, CT, and started growing tobacco in more significant quantities after recognizing the fertile locks of the river valley. Due to trade among sailors and early merchants, many settlers brought Cuban, West Indian, and Virginia seeds. These varieties started to hybridize with local varieties, known as Poke or Ottomauch because they were not as strong or bitter, making them more favorable amongst colonists.

Over the next 100-plus years, the cash crop of tobacco began to grow significantly. Cigars were peddled via wagons and produced mainly on homesteads and farms

throughout the valley. Then in 1810, the first factory was established in Suffield. By 1833, the Connecticut Broadleaf variety emerged and changed the world of cigars. Broadleaf is known for its substantial-sized silky leaves, incredibly earthy, and naturally sweet flavor. It is also one of the most complex and challenging tobaccos to grow and ferment. Through my research, the origins of the broadleaf seed are not precisely clear. Many sources state a Maryland seed was brought to Connecticut and hybridized with local strains. However, different books say a Bahamian origin. Regardless, it is now considered one of the five main varieties from which all the other seed varieties come. The 5 are Brazilian Mata Fina, Sumatra, Mexican San Andres Negro, Habanesis (or Cuban), and Connecticut Broadleaf.

The Connecticut River Valley's growing season occurs between April and September. It then is hung in unique curing barns for another 2-3 months until the tobacco is packed in farmer's bales and shipped in refrigerated containers to the Caribbean and Central America. As weather challenges all farmers, Connecticut is no different. Connecticut's summer weather can bring hailstorms, mi-

cro-tornadoes, insects, mold, and other diseases. If the plant survives these obstacles, it faces even more challenges in curing barns and then years in fermentation.

Knowledge and know-how are crucial in every step of the journey, from seed to cigar. However, what may seem simple is much more complicated than it appears. Temperature and humidity play a pivotal role from the seed beds to the fields, fermentation, the production floor, and, finally, the humidor in tobacco shops. These areas must be addressed in order to avoid the destruction of whole crops and the loss of massive investments in money and time.

The Connecticut River Valley has profoundly impacted my life and career. I recently chose to build my new office for my company, Foundation Cigars, on a 100-acre tobacco farm in Ellington, CT. My mission over the next five years is to share the history and importance of the Connecticut River Valley in the world of cigars and continue to help farmers in the region. The Connecticut River Valley is as vital as any other major growing area worldwide. Let's educate more people and preserve this national treasure.



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Cohiba Siglo VI

Twenty years after the launch on the market of Cohiba's flagship cigar, let's retrace its history and the reasons that consecrated it in the Olympus of Cuban cigars.

by **Giuseppe Mitolo**

We often find ourselves writing about brands that, for some reason, have been significant for the history of Cuban Tabacalera production. Sometimes the importance is given by a character behind the birth of the brand or by an innovation introduced in the production chain, which later became the heritage of Cuban know-how, other times by daring events, halfway between legend and reality. Less often we had the opportunity to talk about individual cigars that, despite their uniqueness, represent real milestones in Cuban production. This is the case of the Cohiba Siglo VI, a cigar that represents much more than an icon.

Siglo VI was presented, with full honors, in November 2002, during a world event in Paris. It was an addition to the "Siglo" line, officially introduced ten years earlier and consisting of five sizes that, at the time, reflected the appreciation of aficionados. Those who could not attend the presentation event, had to wait a few months (2003) to be able to buy the first boxes that were relatively quickly and indeed, also arrived abundantly on the world market. Therefore, in 2023 this top product of Cohiba turns twenty. What made this cigar great and why, twenty years later, do we celebrate the anniversary of its birth? Let's retrace its history, since its launch on the market, to discover all the peculiarities that have given prestige to this product.

Being an extension of the Siglo line, no news was expected on packaging as it would have been sold in a 25-unit Slide Lid Box, like the other "Siglo" offerings. Here is the first important news. Together with the 25-piece box, a SLB of 10 pieces was also produced, probably to make cigars available in boxes that required a lower economic outlay by the end customer (think that in some countries the sale of single cigars is prohibited, unless with a special single unit cellophane). In addition, just two years later (2004) the aluminum tubo was also offered, a unique packaging for a premium Cuban cigar. This choice was then extended not only for the entire Siglo line (in 2008) but also for other references of other Cuban brands.

The real innovation, however, was the choice of the size, which was successful and, even today, unique. The vitola de galera of the Siglo VI was a cañonazo (52x150 mm – 5.9"), a size that was specially created for the launch of the new Cohiba cigar (actually, historical traces of this size, dating back to 1997, can be found in the books of the Partagas manufacture. For more information, please refer to the article "Niki Lauda" published on CigarsLover Magazine – Summer 2019). A vitola that responded to the nascent demand for cigars with a generous grueso and in fact, in 2002, the Siglo VI was the only parejo cigar having a cepo 52 (omitting, in fact, figurado and double figurado). This size, with its cepo 52 and length of almost 6 inches





(today it would be a perfect Toro), ensured a respectable smoking time, satisfying both those who wanted higher volume of smoke in the mouth and those who preferred a more meditative smoke. Even today, this format, despite the popularity and wide appreciation of the public, has not been replicated for any other cigar in the ordinary portfolio of Habanos S.A.. As for the special productions, the cañonazo was used for the Montecristo Grand Edmundo -Limited Edition 2010- and, in the variant with the pig-tail, for the cigars contained in the humidor for the 40th anniversary of the Trinidad brand (2010). A total different history, however, is that of the revival of the Cohiba Siglo VI Gran Reserva, cigar chosen in 2009 for the birth of the "Gran Reserva" series: products already present in the standard portfolio but made with tobacco aged at least five years before the torcida.

When smoked, the Cohiba Siglo VI was perfectly representative of the brand and the line: sweet, aromatically very rich (ripe and dried fruit, wood, spices, sometimes cocoa), harmonious, round and perfectly balanced with a strength never over the top. Today, despite the natural fluctuations of cosechas, the Siglo VI remains a true champion, not only at the top of the brand but of the entire Cuban production. A product that has never feared comparisons, if not with its eternal alter ego, the Trinidad Robusto Extra. Launched in 2004, the Trinidad product, in fact, despite a different vitola de galera (dobles) had very similar measures (50x155mm – 6.1") to those of Siglo VI. Even the aromatic palette was very similar and this was enough to put smokers in crisis: many felt more akin to one or the other, other aficionados, simply, loved both. For years, the two products have shared space on retailers' shelves and smokers' humidors. However, Cohiba is the top brand of Habanos S.A. and constitutes, the world over, the image of the Cuban cigar par excellence. Thus, the fear that any product could overshadow this image of perfection and exclusivity became more and more concrete, to the point that Habanos S.A., following a rationalization of the product portfolio, in 2012 decided to end of sales the Trinidad Robusto Extra.

The Siglo VI was a real forerunner for many cigars that followed, in particular for all formats beyond cepo 52. We have already mentioned the Robusto Extra of Trinidad but we cannot forget another great protagonist of the Habanos S.A. portfolio, also launched in 2004: the Montecristo Edmundo (vitola de galera edmundo, 52x135mm- 5.32"). The list of references could still grow but the result would not change: after Siglo VI, products with a ring gauge greater than 52 were no longer a taboo for Cuban production.

Nowadays, the latest global increase in Cohiba prices as well as a previous and now physiological scarce availability of Cuban premium cigars, makes Siglo VI a product that is not within the reach of the average consumer. Those lucky enough to have some pieces (or boxes) among their reserves will keep tight a cigar that, despite its twenty years, has immediately expressed a great maturity.



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Valentino Siesto Cigars

*"Our goal is that our cigars
will be recognized worldwide."*

by **Zac Mitchers**

Valentino Siesto Cigars has made quite a splash since their first official appearance at the Intertabac fair in Germany last year. But the company has been quietly making moves behind the scenes since Valentino opened the factory in Tamboril, Dominican Republic, back in 2014. We chatted with Valentino to find out more about him and the brand.

Valentino, what did you do for a living before getting into the cigar world?

I had jewelry stores, and I was dedicated to designing jewelry. That was my passion, and this passion made me want to develop the perfect cigar. I was also active in the digital marketing of my companies.

How was your first introduction to cigars, and what made you start your brand?

My introduction to the cigar world was between 2001 and 2002 when I moved to the Dominican Republic. All my friends smoked cigars and drank rum, and I didn't smoke or drink at the time. I chose cigars. I began to appreciate the flavors of the cigars and how fascinating this world is. Cigars are a social medium, and they open doors to new friends. I fell in love with cigars and decided to dedicate myself to learning more about the world of cigars.

You started your factory in the Dominican Republic. What was the reason behind opening up your factory, and why in the Dominican Republic and not another country?

The idea of starting a brand came after 2006. I was curious and visited factories in Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic. Knowing there was a lot of peculiar culture in this, I wanted to understand it, and my passion for cigars grew



through that. I decided to have my brand use special tobaccos and unique blends to share experiences with passionate people like me. The decision to stay in the Dominican Republic was made because I met the right partners here.

Starting a factory is quite an undertaking. What have been good and bad experiences in having your own factory?

I became a partner in a factory in the Dominican Republic with the excellent master blender Juan Gómez. We started as partners in the Valentino Siesto Cigars brand project, and we made successive investments in the growth of the factory. Since then, we have supported each other in developing excellent aged cigars, matured with patience, experience, and tradition that dates back 50 years.

The good experience is the relationship that I have with my partner Juan. He is an excellent person. We became family. We have been working together on new amazing vitolas with impressive tobacco blends. We always try to create blends with completely different flavors from those already on the market. We want to be able to provide a new experience for all smokers and fans of the cigars. As for bad experiences, I don't remember any.

The name Valentino Siesto Cigars has popped up in the last couple of years, and from the outside looking in, you appear to be a pretty new company. But you have been making cigars since 2014. What was the journey from then to now like?

In 2014 we started making cigars to test the quality of our blends. We used to work without a label. We have been sharing cigars with friends and smokers at events for several years in order to get as much feedback as possible. The idea was to find the right path based on the smoker's feedback. Over the years, after many cigars, we found the right way. After that, we finally decided to launch the Valentino Siesto brand.

How have you built your company and work team to achieve global market presence in a relatively short time?

In 2020 we decided to turn to the international market. We presented our brand in Europe, Asia, and the USA. I brought on board two professionals and friends who have been enthusiastic about our cigars for years. They both are used to deal with the International Market. They have passion and talent. Gianluca Berti has always been involved in international trade. He is the CEO and responsible for the markets outside the Dominican Republic. Julio Moltó is an entrepreneur in technology. He is the CEO of the operation in the USA and manager of our flagship cigar club and store in Panama City. Having them take care of the international distribution, I have all the time to dedicate to the production and quality of our products at the factory with Juan Gómez. We deal directly with each international customer. We present ourselves as a team and quickly resolve challenges.

You offer an array of blends in your portfolio. How long

did you work on the blends, and which one has been the most time-consuming to get right?

We have had this variety of blends from 2009 to 2014. We have been making blends during these years, looking for perfection. The most challenging vitolas were retouched five to six times before putting them on the market. There is no one specific vitola that we worked more on it. All of them have the same complexity, cure for the creation, and amount of time that went into them.

To a smoker new to your brand, which cigar from your portfolio would you suggest to him to have the best introduction to Valentino Siesto Cigars?

I have to say that all our cigars can be smoked by someone who wants to start as well as someone with a lot of experience. Our cigars are of medium strength, along with perfect construction. I suggest choosing a Connecticut with a black coffee in the morning. After lunch, a Robusto is great, a Pico de Pato or a Torpedo in a Habano wrapper that has a little bit more flavor and strength. During the night at dinner or when sharing a good drink, it could be a good time for a Maduro wrapper in a Gran Toro, Pico Pato, or El Mono Serie #1 size. They are all excellent blends for someone new to the world of cigars. The Double Figurado, or the Anniversaries, with more aging and complexity, are a little more complex. I recommend them to those who have more experience.

You also have an office in Panama. What is your connection to that country?

We have an office in Panama and also a Valentino Siesto cigar club, our flagship clubhouse. I have been living between Panama and the Dominican Republic for 15 years, and I love Panama. Living there we have decided to have our marketing head office.

Speaking of Panama. You have a project on the way with one of Panama's national heroes, the legendary boxer Roberto "Mano de Piedra" Durán. How did the project come to be, and what can we expect?

Boxing is another passion of mine. When I was young, I practiced boxing and martial arts. Mano de Piedra was always an idol when I was 14, and Roberto won several world titles. Living in Panama for 15 years, I created a friendship with him. I decided with my partners to dedicate something to Mano de Piedra, and we formed an alliance with him to make a dedicated cigar. A tribute to the great Roberto Durán so that his name is also remembered in the cigar world as the great champion that he is.

With almost ten years in the books, what does the future hold for Valentino Siesto in the next ten years?

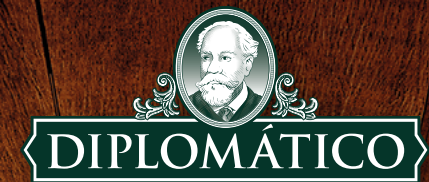
In the next ten years, Valentino Siesto Cigars intends to make his tobacco known in the best Cigar Clubs in the United States, Europe, and Asia. At these places, smokers can meet other smokers, make friends, smoke together, and share experiences. I hope all the sacrifice and great work we have done with the whole team will be appreciated. Our goal is that our cigars will be recognized worldwide.





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Drink responsibly.



Rabbit Air A3

*Enjoy your cigar
in clean air.*

by **Luca Cominelli**

Smoking during spring and summer is easier, and the main things you need to care about outside are rain and wind. But some people also have a third potential issue: allergens.

Especially in colder times, you probably already faced the issue of lighting up a cigar in the house or the office. During the smoke, almost everybody not enjoying a cigar will not be pleased with the cigar's odor. But the main reason you should consider while smoking inside doors is that you are going to inhale the smoke, and nowadays, we all know it is not that smart. If you have allergies and/or for everybody inside, this is where the air purifiers come in handy.

Quite a few products are available, and we tested several

models in the past months. One that stood out was the Rabbit Air A3. The machine works quieter than other models and has an option dedicated to cigar smokers: an odor filter. You have to consider this because it will help remove the VOCs (Volatile Organic Compounds). The A3 can do that because one of the six filters inside it includes activated carbon. But there is more. Almost every quality air purifier has a HEPA filter, but the one in the A3 differs. They called it the BIOGS® HEPA filter, composed of a proprietary fiber material that traps more of what you don't want to be circulating in the air you breathe. It's not over yet. You can choose the sixth filter based on what your needs are.

About the machine, it produces lower noise compared to other models. The fan has five-speed levels, and you nor-

mally experience level 3 or level 4 while smoking. The level 3 is fairly silent, you can notice it, but it won't disturb any conversation or other sound you are listening to. (Level 3 is around 45dB, while Level 4 is 50dB).

You can install an app on your device and use it as a remote controller, allowing you not to use the touch controls placed in the upper part of the machine. You can customize the A3: there are two available colors (white and black), and you can have multiple covers to choose from. Also, while working, you can select from four colors to display in a LED light under the controls. Last but not least, the filters are very easy to remove and install, and they are bigger compared to many other air purifiers that can be easily moved inside your space. The size is: 19.7" x 18.9" x 8.4".

We spoke with Tamina Park, Senior Team Member of Rabbit Air, and we asked her a couple of questions.

You designed the A3 with multiple filters, including a patented Hepa filter: the BioGS HEPA Filter. What is the difference with a standard HEPA?

The main difference between a typical HEPA filter and our BioGS HEPA filter is that a standard HEPA filter's life is not as long, and there is the potential to have growth on the filters. This can be alarming when the filters are meant to trap different contaminants, such as germs and bacteria. Our BioGS HEPA filter can trap pollutants at 99.97% at .3

microns as well as reduce pollutants, so the life is significantly longer.

Also, you have a customizable filter. Choosing among a Germ Defense Filter, a Toxin Absorber Filter, a Pet Allergy Filter, and an Odor Remover Filter is possible. The latter is the recommended one for the cigar smoker. Could you tell us some more about it?

The Customized Filter option is a great way to enhance the filtration and capturing of the pollutant that you're most concerned about. For smoke reduction, the Odor Remover is the best choice as it was manufactured with cigar smokers in mind and it is able to capture odors at a 6.5% increase compared to without.

What can we expect from Rabbit Air in the near future?

We're constantly striving to be the best in the industry, whether it's for smokers, pet owners, or people suffering from allergies. Our goal is to create products that help people and improve their quality of life.

The Rabbit Air A3 positively surprised us. It is a quiet machine, capable of cleaning the air and removing odor better than many competitors. Is it customizable, both in terms of aesthetics and filters and it does the job without having you disturbed by the noise of the fan.

The price for the A3 is \$ 749.95.



PAIRINGS

From the moment CigarsLover Magazine defined its pay-off, "Refine Your Taste", starting to accompany the tastings of cigars to those of spirits such as Whisky and Rum, 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 most common formats, 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, Finish. 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, tasting aromas and 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 Irish Whiskey

*Triple distillation or pot still?
Different characteristics for combinations of equal satisfaction.*

by **Simone Poggi**

The journey takes us, after various adventures, to green Ireland whose whiskeys popularity are quickly growing, as reported in article from CigarSLover Magazine N.4 of 2022. This remarkable dynamism leads producers to experiment with numerous recipes, aging and finishes, thus creating a plethora of products, at times even more varied than Scotch. Thus, let's try to juggle the numerous proposals, trying to offer some advice, without the ambition to be exhaustive, but isolating some specificities of the Irish distillate, even before indulging in the most daring experiments.

Triple distillation, very popular among whiskeys, removes most of those "heavy components" that flank and balance full-bodied tobacco, those powerhouses that are so fashionable. It therefore seems counterproductive to combine a Padron with an Auchentoshan (Scottish), being a Three Wood whisky as well as a much more seasoned release. The same principle applies to simple and mass-market products, such as Paddy Irish Whiskey or Egans Vintage Grain (the latter does not declare a triple distillation). Much better then trying in assonance a persuasive and delicate Dominican tobacco, perhaps an ADN Dominicano of La Aurora or a Cao Pilon, whose sweetness is very peculiar, or the delicate woodiness of a Davidoff of the Classic series or even daring a Clasico of Joya de Nicaragua (just more peppery but always balanced). Among the Cuban modules, perhaps the woody Rafael Garcia Marquez are among the most suitable to approach these ethereal products. If you do not have light cigars, and you want to try pairing triple distilled whiskeys with more intense tobacco, it is bet-

ter to select products less impetuous and richer in shades of leather and seasoned wood, and indulge in whiskies that have undergone secondary finishes with a more pronounced imprint (sherry, calvados, madeira, port). For sherry finished products, remember Writers' Tears Red Head and Hinch 10yo Sherry Cask Finish, which can be well combined with a Creamy Amendola or an ADV La Bucanera Artilleria 56. Another excellent product is Glendalough Single Cask Madeira Finish, which maintains an Irish profile consistent with the tradition of delicacy, but adds a slightly more original side and balances very well tobacco even with veiled peppers (a Villa Zamorano Reserva N.15 as an example) with vanilla and honey of excellent quality.

What if you can't do without a rich and sometimes powerful Nicaraguan tobacco? It is possible, even in this case, to combine a triple distilled spirit but maybe one which has experienced aging exclusively in ex-port barrels, such as the Dingle Ba-



ter 6, with tobaccos of good intensity and thickness, such as an Oliva Serie V Melanio Robusto; the dark and vinous notes, of tropical overripe fruit, integrate very well with the coffee and the spiciness of the cigar, in a sensual and very evocative dance. This success reminds us once again that in pairings it is important to evaluate all aspects of both products, thus avoiding making mistakes caused by stereotypes, which would state that all triple distilled products can support only cigars of medium-light intensity and body.

Irish whiskeys made with the Pot Still technique, which combines malted and unmalted barley, immediately presents a more complex and stimulating problem to manage than the apparently simple triple distilled single malt, where the distillate is obtained from 100% malted barley, since the spicy component adds, in addition to a creaminess that could play in favor, a superior minerality and spiciness. Very sweet tobaccos such as those offered

in combination with products distilled three times would probably be too delicate for this balsamic side of ginger, but in the same way cigars featuring intense spices (such as Nicaragua or Cuban of high intensity such as Partagas or Bolivar) could easily make the peppers enter a sort of resonance and tire almost immediately during the fruition. In this regard, woody and creamy cigars are suggested, with medium body, but without "roughness".

For a Writers' Tears Copper Pot, a Teeling Single Pot Still or a Hinch Pot Still you could then buy a Laura Chavin Concours Corona, an ADV Queen's Pearl Corona, a Silencio Robusto, a Highclere Castle Edwardian.

Even from an affordable product like The Busker Single Pot Still you would not expect a great complexity of flavors, and the product tasted alone certainly does not stand out to a very structured palette. However, the pairing can surprise and, almost like a balsamic and herbaceous rye, with spices and ginger, integrate very well with cigars of character, such as an H. Upmann Corona Major, for a masculine and impetuous experience, but of great satisfaction.

There is no shortage of Cask Strength releases such as the excellent Redbreast 12yo Cask Strength, which combines notes of wood, honey and vanilla with a controlled and enjoyable sherried character, but pay attention to the combination of the cigar, since it can explode at any moment! However, it is a cask-marked product, able to support a good Royal Corona from Bolivar or a Furia Megaera, even better an Avo Heritage, in the size you prefer.

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THAT SETS THEM APART

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PAIRING

Cigars
&
Spirits



H. UPMANN CORONA MAJOR

MEDIUM-BODIED, RICH IN NUTS.

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●	\$ N/A € 10
DIMENSIONS	
42 x 133 mm (5 ¼")	
COUNTRY	
CUBA	

Brand of traditional elegance, this short format offers cedar and nuts, mainly hazelnuts, followed by leather and a minor pepper note, with the latter gradually becoming the protagonists of the smoke. The medium strength goes well with two delicate Irish products, one sweeter and fruitier, while the other is spicier, a really masculine pot still whiskey.



GRAN HABANO 20TH ANNIV. EL DESAFIO

INTENSE AND EVOLUTIVE.

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●●	\$ 17 € N/A
DIMENSIONS	
54 x 152 mm (6")	
COUNTRY	
HONDURAS	

Intense, yet balanced and harmonious, with a wide flavor profile and marked evolution. It develops dense notes of coffee, earth, black pepper and cocoa, with piquant peaks. Spices are prominent, without being overwhelming. Two bourbons are investigated as pairings, the first with subtle woody nuances, the second is slightly more mineral, yet balanced and rich in secondary notes of vanilla and orange zest.



A. FUENTE DON CARLOS EYE OF THE SHARK

CREAMY AND COMPLEX.

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●●	\$ 20 € 27
DIMENSIONS	
52 x 146 mm (5 ¾")	
COUNTRY	
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	

A masterpiece of complexity with medium-high strength, it releases a symphony of hazelnut, cocoa, spices and citrus fruits, on a slightly savory base, with a surprising sweetness. A smoke of excellence, which deserves spirits of great depth, an elegant and sophisticated Speysider, and a Campbeltown malt that makes craftsmanship and powerful character its pride.



THE BUSKER
Single Pot Still

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Ireland	44.3% - 88.6	\$
TYPE	AGE	CASK
Pot Stil	NAS	ex-bourbon, ex-sherry

Spicy and sometimes rough, this pot still whiskey, instead of playing all its cards on creaminess surprises for its resin, aromatic herbs and heather honey green and wild notes. On the nose the aromas chase each other, in a disconnected way; the cigar is woody, and the distillate accompanies with wood spices, green resin wood and sometimes even acetone. The minor sweetness of the unmalted cereal is sometimes scratchy. Even on the palate the spiciness of the pot still whiskey gives herbaceous tones almost balsamic and pungent, making the wood of the cigar more masculine, almost burnt, transforming into earthy sensations. The pepper becomes almost dark. It reminds of a rye whisky pairing. Totally unexpected and surprising. The finish is of decent length, sometimes rough, but intense, played on earth, pepper and toasted wood.

Pairing score

88



HINCH
10yo Sherry Cask Finish

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A.	43% - 86	\$\$
TYPE	AGE	CASK
Ireland	10 Years Old	Oloroso finish

Modern and creamy, a straight forward approach. The aromas revolve around baked apple with vanilla and a more acidic touch of red grapefruit and not fully ripe peach. Distant floral notes and a hint of dried fruit. In the beginning the nose of the cigar expresses more pepper than expected and contrasts the more persuasive and floral notes of the distillate, which is intimidated. During the fruition this aspect calms down, and the integration improves somewhat. The palate is much better: the white pepper is tamer and the baked apple wraps the cigar better, enhancing a sweetness of tobacco that could only be glimpsed before, with wood and leather. The creaminess of the products is synchronous. The finish is short and clean, played on wood and vanilla of discreet sweetness.

Pairing score

86





JEFFERSON'S *Ocean Aged at the Sea*

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A.	45% - 90	\$\$

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Bourbon	NAS	New

Interesting, with an oaky component on top of several quality notes (vanilla, orange zest, mixed spices). Some minor bitter notes and a touch of salt. Alcohol is present but not overwhelming, for a pleasant fruition of good intensity. Balanced and centered. Nose of the spirit is slightly shy, allowing the cigar to take the lead; the impression is that the subtle spicy vanilla will be the perfect fit for the tobacco, yet the ABV could be slightly higher to resist the impact of the strong earth and wood. From the first sip the herbal and orange zest freshness pair the coffee very well. The salty hint also pushes the tobacco intensity without exaggerating the spices. Very rewarding. The finish is played on mixed salty/sweet spices, on the woody background. Excellent.



Pairing score 92

WOODFORD RESERVE *Double Oaked*

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A.	45.2% - 90.4	\$\$

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Bourbon	NAS	New

A balanced, smooth texture, truly enjoyable spirit. Aromas may not be extremely original (wood, wood spices, balsamic herbs and ripe cherries), but the overall sensation is of a well-integrated palette, with the perfect ABV. The noses of the pair are interesting together; the complex cherry note integrates with the woody and spicy hints provided by the tobacco, while the darker earthy and spicy notes of the Honduran is refreshed by a balsamic freshness. The spirit sip, thanks to its velvety structure, gives the tobacco character ways to shine, not jeopardizing its nature, rather gifting it with a sweet cherry aftertaste. Cocoa is stronger and darker. The finale keeps again the tobacco intensity, with traces of balsamic sweetness. Layers on layers of taste.



Pairing score 89



GLENFARCLAS *25 Year Old*

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

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	25 years old	ex-sherry Oloroso

An elegant, almost theoretical exercise. Red fruit seems almost dehydrated, only essential ideas, devoid of tannins and with a contained and balanced sweetness, enriched with dried fruit (walnut and hazelnut). The noses integrate in a complex and multifaceted way; sensations of nuts with custard and red fruit compote (apple, ripe peach, black cherries), citrus hints and a generous crush of spices. The maturity of the Oloroso casks goes beyond tannic notes, recalling animal sensuality and giving off high quality aromas, well integrated with the richness of Dominican tobacco and the sweetness of the Cameroon capa. On the palate the cocoa explodes, inebriating and balancing between gianduja and brownies, with ripe red fruit and excellent spiciness. Very long and tasty finish, rich, with darker spices.



Pairing score 93

SPRINGBANK *18 Year Old*

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

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	18 years old	ex-sherry, ex-bourbon

Complex and rich distillate, with slightly peaty coastal notes, with also citrus, apple, tobacco and sulphurous hints that become more intense on the palate, with also licorice and grilled pineapple. This time the two products are combined in a more languid atmosphere and the spices are warmer and more sensual; coastal scents chase each other with tobacco and leather, fruit is almost gone, sweaty blankets, wet with sea water. Evocative and epicurean. On the palate the sensation is of blackberry jam of rare creaminess, with dried fruit and cocoa powder, a dark and persuasive dimension without being bitter. At times a balsamic side of salty licorice returns, with the Cameroon head that balances with a sophisticated sweetness. Unique and surprising, complex and dynamic. Magnificent.



Pairing score 95

SPIRITS

“Drinking rum before 10 am makes you a pirate, not an alcoholic.”
Granger Smith

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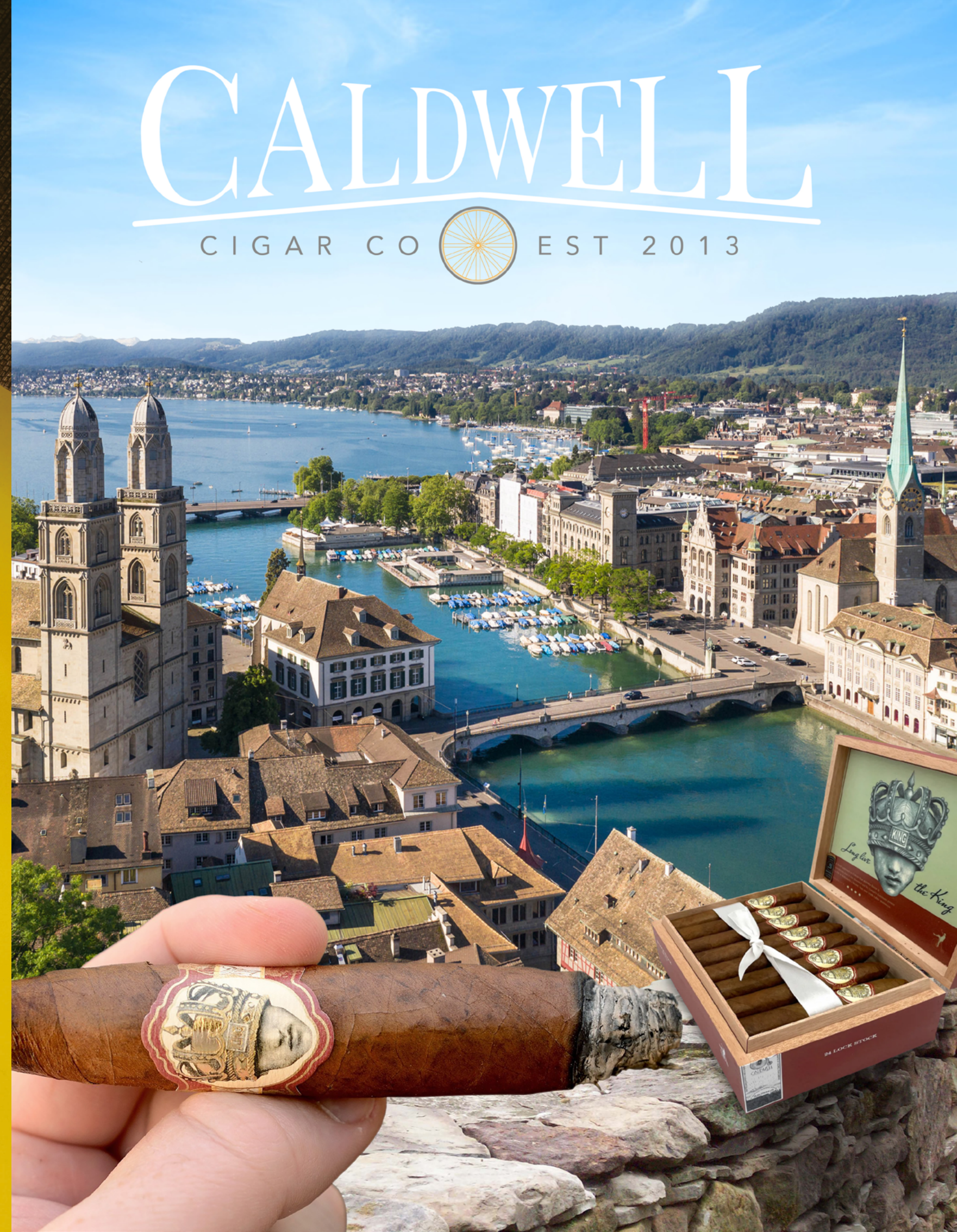
Great Wall Classic No.2 Torpedo

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Club de Cantineros

When prohibition took alcohol off the market in the USA, an association was born in Cuba that trained professionals in the beverage sector.

by **Nicola Ruggiero**

Cuba. Island of cigars, without a doubt, and of famous cocktails such as Mojitos and Daiquiris. That could already be enough to state how innovation, invention and initiation have never been lacking on the Isla Grande. If an innate spirit of sharing, research, and the pleasure of being together is added to this, we will have fertile ground for something innovative to sprout.

Perhaps these were the conditions (who knows!) with which, in 1924, one of the first forms of an association known in the world of barmen was born. The Club de Cantineros de la Republica de Cuba is the oldest national corporation of bartenders to have been officially registered anywhere in the world. It arose with the main purpose of promoting the professional growth of new bartenders, not only Cubans. Let's take a small leap in time to understand in which historical and social context this Club was born.

Between 1920 and 1933, the United States experienced the longest alcohol drought ever known: Prohibition. A series of federal measures prohibited the production, trade, and consumption of alcoholic beverages throughout the United States. This monumental Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, in addition to making the smuggling market involuntarily flourish, created a boom in unemployment for all workers in the sector, including barmen. However, above all, it left many people "thirsty". In such a context, with Cuba flourishing just a short distance away, the island soon became the point of arrival for Americans looking for work or alcohol. Thus were born distilleries and dozens of sparkling bars and hotels, with service at the highest levels, to be the envy of Paris and London.

In this context, on the initiative of Emilio Gonzalez and Costantino Ribalaigua Vert, the Club de Cantineros came to life right in the heart of the booming hotel district, with Bacardi (the only spirits company to have participated since its origin) participating.. Initially, the Club consisted of twenty-five members and



sixteen so-called founders. To be part of the exclusive Club, they had to demonstrate the mnemonic knowledge of at least one hundred cocktails and also be innovative and creative. In order to give even more visibility to the Club, and the bartenders who trained within it, the Cantinero festival was inaugurated in 1929; an occasion during which bartenders from all over the world gathered in Havana every October 7 (this day would later be named El día del cantinero). A few years later, in April 1935, the Club organized its first cocktail competition, where Juan Aldin won the prize thanks to his drink made with Bacardi, lime, brown sugar, and a spoonful of fresh mint liqueur. In the following years, the Club devoted itself to the publication of various books, the most famous of which was "" (the art of bartenders, wine and spirits) and founded its own clubhouse, complete with bar, billiard room and library, as well as establishing language courses to ensure that all its members have an impeccable knowledge of Spanish and English languages.

However, with the Castro revolution of 1959 the Club was profoundly changed by the communist regime despite the efforts to remain operational.. Today the club is something very far from the spirit that animated its foundation and growth over the years. Those original cantineros were among the protagonists of one of the brightest seasons of the culture of drinking, as well as the inventors of never-ending drinks, from the Mojito to the Cuba Libre, from the Pina Colada to the Daiquiri. The latter, in particular, whose name derives from a place near Santiago de Cuba and is often confused with the canchánchara due to the similarity between the two recipes but is still recognized today as the national cocktail of the island... together with a dozen others.

Over the years, the Club de Cantineros has inspired generations, professionals, and associations in the beverage world, with its history linked to professionalism, innovation, and being together, not an end in itself. A perhaps little-known story of a Cuba where, as well-informed people know, not only excellent cigars are produced.



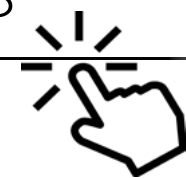
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How to store your collectible bottle of whisky?

Paying attention to cork and bottle level.

by **Kaarel Kluge**

Most whisky lovers know that, unlike wine, a bottle of whisky should be stored upright. But why is that? What happens to a whisky in a bottle during its years (or decades)? And what else is important to know when getting into older bottlings of whisky?

It's all rather simple coming down to one magic word: evaporation (or rather oxidation, which is the main cause of evaporation). The whisky would change very little with a perfectly sealed bottle over the years. In reality, though, very few bottles are in this condition.

The cork is the most common sealant these days, and it is a natural product affected by environmental factors surrounding it, such as temperature fluctuations or its contact with high-alcoholic spirits, for example. The continuous contact between whisky and cork (not to mention the adhesive used to attach the cork to the top of the stopper) will almost always result in breakage or disintegration in a rather short period. The problems are much more common with older bottlings, though, especially the ones having spent part of their lives stored on their sides. Aluminum screw caps were widely in use up until the mid-nineties. When a natural cork moves slightly, it's not going to destroy your whisky, but when you



lose tightness with a screw-cap, the effect is similar to if you had opened the bottle.

So what can one do to limit the evaporation in the bottle? When buying a recent bottling, there is no real way to know the condition of the cork. The best thing to do is to store the collection standing upright in a dark and cool place with minimal temperature fluctuation. You can use the “Parafilm M” to seal all the bottles you are not planning to open in the next few years. It is a cheap and simple procedure, so there is no reason not to do it.

Finally, when buying older bottlings, it is fundamental to keep an eye on the neck fill level of the bottles. It is probably the most important indicator of how the bottle has been stored and its cork condition. Of course, it might not be the absolute truth. That said, a whisky can sell for 5.000 and 7.000 euros at the same auction, the only difference being about 1 cm in neck fill level. And while it might seem like paying 2.000 euros for just an extra 2cl of whisky, there is a good chance that the whisky in one of these bottles will be very close to what it was when it was originally bottled. At the same time, the whisky in the other might be a little oxidized. These 2cl are, without any doubt, the most important in the bottle because they can give off much information.

Corks & Caps

*The troubling issue of
how to preserve whisky bottles.*

by **Vincenzo Salvatore**



When we think about whisky evaporation, we think about the fascinating phenomenon of the angel's share, that is the natural loss of liquid during cask aging that is integral to whisky maturation. Yet, there's a much less useful form of evaporation that does not improve the taste of your favorite beverage. On the contrary, it can make it worse. Whisky collectors and aficionados know all too well that opening dozens of bottles might not be the best tactic. Once opened, the whisky inside a bottle starts interacting with the oxygen in the air, and this time not for the best. That's why the solution chosen to close the bottle might be of the utmost importance to preserve the quality of your beloved liquid.

Now, in winemaking there has already been a major shift from cork caps to screw caps, as producers got tired of battling with poor quality corks or paying the

premium price of high-quality ones for wines that do not need to age, as they are intended for fast consumption. The diffusion of synthetic corks brought many producers to go back to the classic and romantic popping cork, but the die was cast (and synthetic corks have their own issues): the screw cap is simply much better and cheaper for certain typologies of wines.

What about whisky though? We might not have ever realized how dearly regarded that popping cork is also when we enjoy a whisky. But is it that convenient in all cases? Cork has three major issues: it doesn't last forever, it can crack, and it can taint the whisky. Sure, it's a rare thing, but why risk it? We rely on the durability of something that might not last at all, and we might not notice it until it's too late. Once you find a compromised cork, the whisky is probably already gone, either literally (in the sense that it evaporated)

or bacterially (it got tainted from cork fungi or from oxidation). In a perfect world, all cork caps would be of the highest quality to avoid failures, but this is not possible, we should never underestimate producers who decide to use a much more reliable screw cap.

Screw caps, obviously, might be cheaply made too: they might be in aluminum, which is toxic, and might need a plastic internal capsule to avoid having the whisky touch the metal. The well-made screw caps, though, are almost fool-proof and, for the fraction of the cost, they are safe in a way that cork caps cannot ever be. Sure, they will not pop in that romanticized way; they will not be sealed with fanciful wax (but do we seriously like that messy practice?); and they will not be uniquely characterized by cool or old-fashioned stoppers. With these benefits it's probably not a surprise that Japanese producers have been using

screw caps for all their bottlings since they started production, including super-premium and extremely expensive limited editions.

In Europe and the US, screw caps have been relegated to blends and entry-level products in the past but now things are changing too. Craft and new distilleries are shifting to screw caps not only due to the contemporary difficulties of the cork supply chain, but mainly to avoid wasting even a drop of the hard-labored and deeply beloved liquid they eventually bottle. If we might turn up our noses in seeing a premium bottles with a screw cap, we can at least be sure that we will enjoy a perfectly preserved whisky for a long time. In any case, once we open a bottle we expose the whisky to oxygen, light, and other disturbances: there is no cap capable of fully preserving it. The golden rule is to not let that bottle sit too long in your cabinet.

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Vieux Carre

In New Orleans, the City That Care Forgot, a cocktail was born that has recently made huge comeback which owes its fortune to a renowned hotel and a carousel..

by **Vincenzo Losappio**

The International Bartender Association list collects a series of cocktails that is periodically updated with the drinks that, at least theoretically, are in vogue and that every international bartender should be able to prepare. Being a continuously updated list, it offers interesting food for thought on fashions and consumer satisfaction.

The Vieux Carrè made it to the I.B.A. list in 2020, despite it being created in 1938 New Orleans. This juxtaposition demonstrates how much we are witnessing a return to the classics and simplicity in the world of mixology. This list of seventy-seven cocktails is divided into categories and the Vieux Carreè is considered among the "unforgettable" or rather one of those classic drinks whose recipes represent the bible

of cocktails with a consolidated global diffusion. The cocktail was born in the Vieux Carrè French quarter, the oldest historic center of New Orleans from which it takes its name. The main city of Louisiana has always been considered the world capital of cocktails, and the "Tales of Cocktails", the most important event in the bar world, takes place annually here. One of the venues of the event is the Monteleone Hotel, now called Carousel, where the head barman Walter Bergeron created this cocktail. The Monteleone Hotel is located on Royal Street and was purchased in 1886 by a Sicilian nobleman and heir to a footwear company; Antonio Monteleone. He had a shoe shop two streets from the hotel, and as soon as he had the opportunity to take it over, he didn't let it pass him by. He managed the hotel, and upon his death, he left the task to his

family, who, in the fifth generation, continue to take care of it. The real value of this place is inside the bar called Carousel. The bar received this name because in 1949 a real carousel was installed..

However this was not ordinary carousel; instead of a rotating platform with wooden animals for children to ride the rotating platform was the bar itself with stools around it. Even today, visitors can sit on the stools decorated with circus animals and enjoy a drink as it spins, like on a carousel. The circular tour lasts fifteen minutes. Many famous American authors frequented the Carousel Bar: Ernest Hemingway, Tennessee Williams, Eudora Welty, William Faulkner, Anne Rice, and Truman Capote (who claimed to have been born in the Monteleone Hotel). This bar appears in some of their writings, demonstrating their love for the bar and the hotel. During the Tales Of Cocktail event, which takes place annually in June, thousands of bartenders who participate in the event go to the Carousel Bar for a Vieux Carrè, not only to savor the taste of the cocktail but to experience the history of one of the cornerstones of mixology.

The first recipe for this drink was published in 1938 by the Louisiana journalist and historian Stanley Clisby Arthur in his book "Famous New Orleans Drinks and how to mix them". The Vieux Carrè, according to the I.B.A. recipe, is made with rye whiskey, cognac, sweet vermouth, Dom Benedictine (French brandy-based liqueur with twenty-seven different herbs and spices), Peychaud's bitter (aromatic bitter with floral scents). It is prepared in a mixing glass, served in a cocktail glass, and garnished with an orange peel or a Maraschino cherry. Its fame, however, made it the subject of several reinterpretations. Some versions provide for serving in a glass filled with ice, others provide for the addition of angostura bitters, others suggest replacing dry vermouth instead of sweet vermouth, and some garnish it with lemon zest.

It is a cocktail from a bygone era with a high alcohol content: there are two basic distillates and no non-alcoholic components. It can be considered, in some ways, a variant of a Manhattan or a Negroni. It is a drink that we could define as meditative, a reflective drink, to be sipped slowly to savor that vintage taste that distinguishes it and for which it is loved. Whiskey and cognac are the masters, vermouth, and that touch of Dom Benedictine softens it a bit and gives it spiciness. Peychaud's bitter gives slightly bitter and fragrant notes. It also lends itself to being combined with a smoke, perhaps with a product that is not too strong or too spicy, to prevent the sum of the gustatory perceptions from sending the palate into a tailspin.

When you drink the Vieux Carrè, it feels like taking a sip of the past, getting on a carousel to enjoy the thrill of light-heartedness and happiness, just like when you were a kid.

INGREDIENTS

- 30 ml of Rye Whisky
- 30 ml Cognac
- 30 ml Sweet Vermouth
- 1 Bsp Dom Benedictine
- 2 Dashes Peychaud's Bitter

GLASS

Cup or low rock.

PREPARATION

Pour all ingredients into a mixing glass. Add ice and mix. Pour into the glass and garnish with orange zest and/or marasca cherry.

ADVICE

Better to serve it over ice and garnish it with lemon zest to give it more freshness.



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AWARDS 2022
NICARAGUA

#1

TASTE

"A recipe has no soul. You, as the cook, must bring soul to the recipe."
Thomas Keller



Extra Virgin Olive Oil

A fruit juice source of health and well-being.

by **Vincenzo Scivetti**

Also called green gold for its very health value, extra virgin olive oil is a food often underestimated by those who pay little attention to their diet. Feurbach, a German philosopher of the XIX century, argued that "eating is an automatic act, feeding serves to live; eating properly, on the other hand, is an act of self-love." The use of fats in cooking and therefore for human nutrition, sees the use of fats of different origins according to local crop availability and tradition. From butter to seed oils, these products have different technological and health characteristics. In the heart of the Mediterranean, tradition, culture, and cultivation see Extra Virgin Olive Oil as the absolute protagonist of their culinary arts.

The Mediterranean diet, cooking fats are exclusively represented by Extra Virgin Olive Oil both as a raw condiment and in cooking and frying. The tradition is ancient and derives from local production, perhaps the most important in the world because it links absolute quality with large quantities of production. On the dishes of southern Italy, for example, a drizzle of oil is always the cameo that enhances the taste of the main ingredients; from the soil to the sea.

Wanting to define the Extra Virgin Olive Oil we could, without a doubt, frame it as the juice of a fruit, the olive, in absolute purity, without any corrective intervention, neither chemical nor otherwise. Healthy ripened olives are harvested intact and immediately pressed, protecting the end product from oxygenation in milling (the act of pressing of the olive) which represents a danger to the quality of

the product. The Extra Virgin Olive Oil thus obtained should be filtered to separate solids and potentially harmful elements and then stored in appropriate containers in the absence of light and oxygen and at a suitable temperature.

A good extra virgin olive oil brings to the plate only and exclusively the essence of its supply chain, the sign of the geography, the geology and the climate of its territory, the work in the olive grove of men and the careful, but not intrusive, extraction activity of this fantastic fruit juice, which does not require preservatives or excipients or additives of any kind: only and exclusively fruit juice.

A good extra virgin olive oil contains the essence of its entire supply chain. The flavors are not created solely by the fact that it is the juice of olives. Like all other products made from natural materials, the flavors can vary by the geographical location the olives were grown and the climate in which the olives were raised. Digging deeper, the techniques and care of the farmers can shine in the flavor. Olive trees, identical in every other way, separated merely by a fence, dividing two different farms, can produce olives with markedly different flavors because the trees are managed in different ways by different farmers. Additionally, the method of extraction of the oil affects the flavors because a heavy-handed extraction can damage the fruits and the-



reby the oil. Finally, it is worth noting that Extra Virgin Olive Oil does not require preservatives, excipients, or additives of any kind so the flavors are purely an expression of the fruit juice and the care it has recieved throughout its life. The excellent taste is not the only reason for us to consume extra virgin olive oil; this wonderful food also benefits human health. When a food has certain health characteristics determined by science it is called Nutraceutical, a neologism created by the fusion of the words nutrition + pharmaceutical. Nutraceuticals explains the molecular mechanisms of food and its components for which therapeutic benefits are obtained using the scientific approach.

The health benefits of Extra Virgin Olive Oil are numerous and include: reducing the cholesterol in the blood; a reduction in the incidence of heart disease; improvement of blood pressure; improvement of glucose metabolism; the slowing of cognitive decline and Alzheimer's; and a mild prophylactic for all types of cancer. Extra Virgin Olive Oil contains oleic acid, an unsaturated fatty acid which makes it an excellent replacement of saturated fats in the diet which contributes to the maintenance of normal blood cholesterol levels. For the European Food Safety Authority, health claims can only be used for foods high in unsaturated fatty acids, as indicated in the indication "High Unsaturated Fats", governed by EC Regulation no. 1924/2006. It is no coincidence that even the U.S Food and Drug Administration has allowed the use of health claims for Extra Virgin Olive Oil in relation to the reduction of cardiovascular risks since 2004.

Of great interest are also the nutraceutical properties related to the polyphenols present (minimum 400mg/l): a good extra virgin olive oil always contains high quality of those. The list of biochemical components favorable to our body does not end here. Extra Virgin Olive Oil also contains oleocanthal (a very powerful anti-inflammatory, five times more effective than ibuprofen by weight, as ascertained by Prof. Breslin and his team of over 40 researchers and 12 PhDs), hydroxytyrosol (an antinitrosating agent, therefore anti-cancer for the precursors of nitroso compounds), oleuropein (the main polyphenol present in the leaves and fruits of the olive tree, with a hypoglycemic effect, attenuates hepatic steatosis and reduces obesity, with effects on neurodegeneration). Finally, there is also squalene: extra virgin olive oil has always been considered a soothing ointment for skin protection thanks to its squalene content which is also used in the production of vaccines, to enhance their activity thanks to its immunostimulant action.

Extra Virgin Olive Oil-enriched diets have been linked to protective and preventive effects on colorectal cancer (CRC) associated with ulcerative colitis (UC). This beneficial effect has been associated with an improvement in the activity index of the disease and a lower number of dysplastic lesions so it has a beneficial activity also on chronic inflammation of the intestine (IBD), so much so that a



tablespoon of Extra Virgin Olive Oil with a high polyphenol content in the morning is recommended. It is also a food very rich in vitamin E, which contributes to the protection of cells from oxidative stress. The many positive effects should not, of course, lead to excessive consumption. The role of Extra Virgin Olive Oil is, and remains, to complete the preparation of food with its organoleptic and technical properties. Unsurpassed in raw seasoning, a base of absolute value in cooking.

How do you recognize the quality of an Extra Virgin Olive Oil on a sensory level? It is not difficult at all, little information is necessary but a lot of attention in the purchase is required. You have to make sure to buy Extra Virgin Olive Oil, not to be confused with Olive Oil or Virgin Olive Oil, nor Olive Pomace Oil: only Extra Virgin Olive Oil has the above mentioned health properties. The reading of the label is important, for example the expiration date is not mandatory and the preferable consumption must be related to the antioxidant strength of the product: so it can be inferred that an Extra Virgin Olive Oil with a preferable consumption date of one year is less rich in polyphenols than an oil that declares three years or more, although the health effects are more pronounced within a year of pressing the olives.

On a sensory level, our sense organs become protagonists. Aside from judging based on the packaging we must turn to our senses. The sight recognizes the color that should manifest itself as green gold, at least in youth. The sense of smell is crucial to recognize the technical quality of an extra virgin olive oil: the absolute absence of defects that manifest themselves in the form of bad smells (even if barely perceived) that lead to production problems in the olive grove or in the mill. Without going too far into the theme, we point out what are the most common scents of a defective oil: wilted (wine, vinegar), metallic, mold, rancid. For health reasons, the mouth requires more attention: when we have ascertained the absence of olfactory defects, the extra virgin olive oil demonstrates its virtues when tasted: bitterness and spiciness are revealing of the content of polyphenols; Therefore, the greater the bitter/spicy sensation, the greater the contribution of polyphenols, which at nutraceutical levels will be decidedly intense. The greater intensity of bitter/spicy, however, is compensated with the lower amount of use: an oil of great personality should be dosed in a few drops of health, avoiding flooding dishes and casseroles.

A high-quality Extra Virgin Olive Oil also has a strong aromatic personality, incisive in the combination and sometimes quite dominant, especially in frying, nevertheless it is the type of frying oil that guarantees a "smoke point" at the highest temperature, limiting the production of toxins typical of frying while manifesting its expressive power. Extra virgin olive oil clearly has wonderful benefits to life, health and flavor. Next time you reach for an oil while cooking consider trying Extra Virgin Olive Oil instead.



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SPIRITS

威士忌標籤

怎麼找出來
你喝的是什麼

Federico Bosco

所有威士忌飲用者經常進行類型分析，偶爾或熱情，瓶子一直是購買的主要吸引力，但是有一個更精細的細節，必須加深，能夠揭示許多有用的新聞：標籤。

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），有時是圓的，有時是方形的，標籤傳達給我們所有的信息，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。

雙面標籤通常其名字為威士忌，這同樣適用於美國世界。相反，在蘇格蘭和世界其他地方，我們說沒有“e”的威士忌：在蘇格蘭的情況下，名稱擴大了蘇格蘭威士忌，單一面蘇格蘭威士忌保證了單一產區的純正性。一些蘇格蘭威士忌增加了生產區域，以強調產品的地域性。

“歲月”之後經常出現由數字與產品的最低年齡有關。最低年齡因為，與標籤不同桶的混合相比，最低年齡的數字是相同的。示例：使用三個桶分別釀造8年，12年和20年的威士忌將顯示“8

歲”字樣，無論舊桶的氧化情況如何。公認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，沒有夢想或假冒產品，它們是所謂的NAS（無年齡聲明），其中適用於最低2年威士忌的標籤上。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快。

在標籤上，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，有時公司會報告“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取出。然而，無夢飲水可以使用更多稀釋的威士忌的較低等級的木桶強度威士忌。



忌，特別是如果前者有一定的年齡。 “Un Chilled”這個詞讓我們知道威士忌沒有被冷過，以及“沒有顏色”，或“沒有添加劑”（或其他類似的詞），解釋說沒有添加劑修正顏色。

在特殊情況下，我們還可以找到所用桶的指示，甚至是桶桶的數量。這通常及經常發生在非常有趣的木桶中，或者在獨立裝瓶商的情況下使其成為驕傲的來源。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。另一個詞是Small Batch，它仍然是一個更廣泛的概念：您可以從兩個桶中取出，但仍比前邊小一些（舉一個例子：獨立和Cadenhead的裝瓶桶為自己的小批量結合了兩個或三個桶，而奧

本小還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，它總是發現精神和龍族的日期，特別是當涉及單個桶時：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造廠，不同釀造廠，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（多年混合或稱為Vatted），第三種情況是混合威士忌（或混合）。還有Grain Whiskies：這個術語是指所有種類的威士忌。在美國世界，我們經常遇到與威士忌相關的各種問題，或者使用的唯一一類：黑麥威士忌，玉米威士忌。

我們試圖解釋各種標籤上最常見的術語：沒有絕對的紀律，每個製造商都有自己的事情。但是，遵循這些指導原則，在這個廣闊而獨特的世界中，您將更容易自說。

Coffee granita

An all-Italian preparation based on coffee and ice, which can be interesting when combined with a cigar.

by **Giuseppe Mitolo**

Although the coffee plant grows in a completely different part of the world, in Italy there are various ways to prepare and drink it, bordering on satire. "Coffee corto, coffee lungo, macchiato, coffee corretto" are just some of the expressions that can be heard in any Italian bar, all without considering the various dishes that have coffee as the basis of their preparation. Among the many, the coffee granita deserves special mention.

Explaining what a coffee granita is is not easy. It is halfway between an ice cream and an iced coffee but without the butteriness and sweetness of the former nor the dryness and sensation of ice between the teeth of the latter. Although it may seem simple to make, its preparation is often the secret recipe of restaurateurs. What is certain is that it is necessary to start not only from a good blend but also from an excellent extraction of the coffee.

It is usually served in a bowl and enjoyed with a simple teaspoon, perhaps accompanied by a wafer that offers sweetness and crunchiness at every bite.

In the mouth, as mentioned, it imparts both the flavors and the retronasal aromas of the coffee, albeit mitigated by the dilution of the small frozen crystals, which, in contact with the oral cavity, turn into water. This freshness then be-

comes the stimulus to follow with another teaspoon and then another until you start scratching the bottom of the bowl. It is at this point that the "magic" happens because if you have consumed it at the right pace a completely liquid ground of "diluted" coffee will have been created. In that case, put down the teaspoon and drink what remains.

All this should be enough to entice or intrigue most. Yet, if you want to indulge in another delicacy, the coffee granita is almost in perfect combination with the addition of whipped cream on top. Again, be sure it is of excellent quality. Never ever use whipped cream that comes in a spray can! Don't be worried if you forget to ask for it because, in Italian bars where they serve coffee granita, the usual question will be "Panna?" or "Cream or double cream?". In the latter case, by opting for "double cream," the same will be placed both on the bottom of the cup and the top of the granita. The cream's lightness, sweetness, and volume offer a perfect balance on the teaspoon because it gives greater creaminess to the taste.

Can the coffee granita accompany a smoke? Sadly not, as it would melt before any cigar is finished. However, it can be perfect before smoking (it doesn't weigh down or spoil the palate too much) or as a finish to refresh the palate and smooth out the natural astringency of the smoke.



Blind Tasting



80 SPIRITS

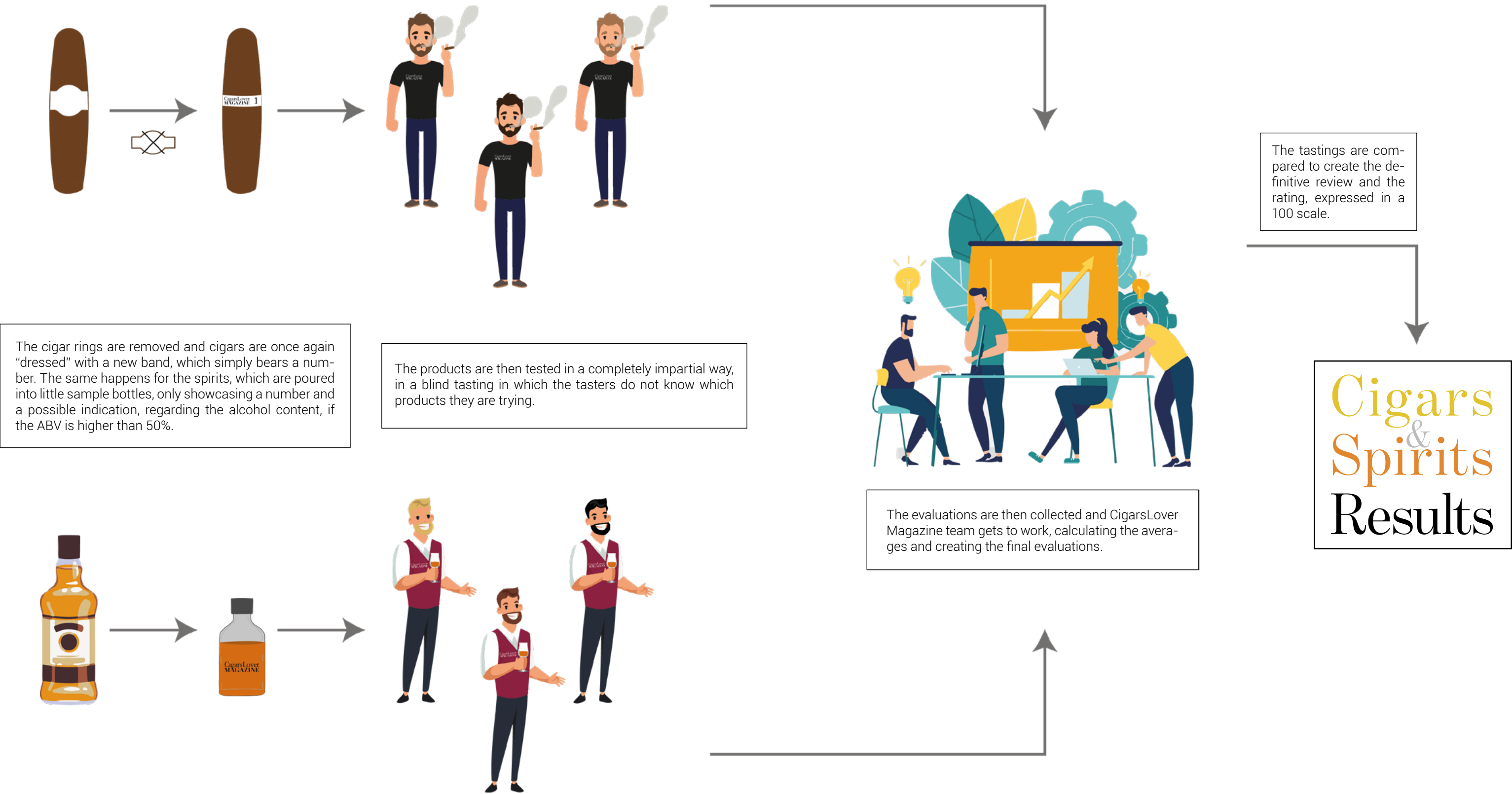
- 82 Rum
- 90 Whisky

96 CIGARS

- 97 Churchills
- 104 Lancero
- 108 Robusto
- 115 Toro



HOW ARE THE BLIND TASTINGS MADE?





1

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

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.

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Rum



TROIS RIVIERES
Millésime 1999

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	42 84	\$\$\$

— NOSE —
Sandalwood, a touch of cinnamon, myrtle-leaved orange and stewed apple. Some vegetal hints.

— PALATE —
Nice mouthfeel. There are vanilla, wood, ripe fruits, a vegetal touch and some walnut.

— FINISH —
Medium long. Wood spices, a touch of cinnamon, vanilla and wood.

Deep and complex flavor profile. Smooth and velvety.

92



ROYAL CANE
Fiji 2004

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Fiji	60.2% 120.4	\$\$\$

— NOSE —
Rich vanilla pod scents, honey, petrichor, and toffee, together with a balsamic touch.

— PALATE —
A riot of ripe fruits, toffee, wood, wood spices, balsamic notes, and ginger. A hint of cinnamon.

— FINISH —
Long. Wood spices, ginger, balsamic notes, and vegetal aromas.

Rich, bold but at the same time complex and bosting a wide flavor profile.

91



MANUTEA
Blanc Bio

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Thaiti	55% 110	\$\$

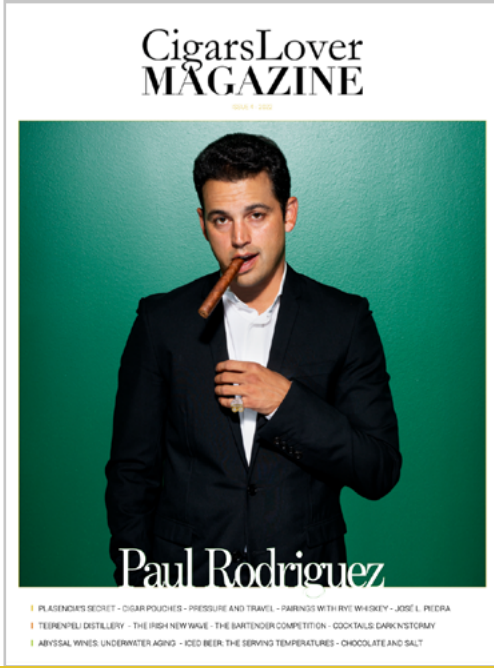
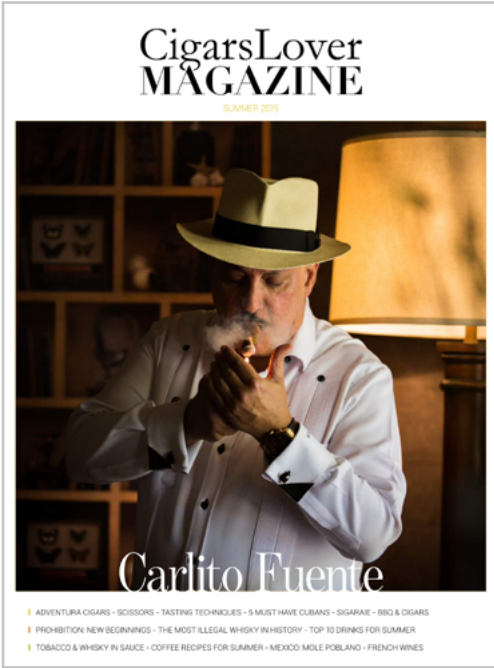
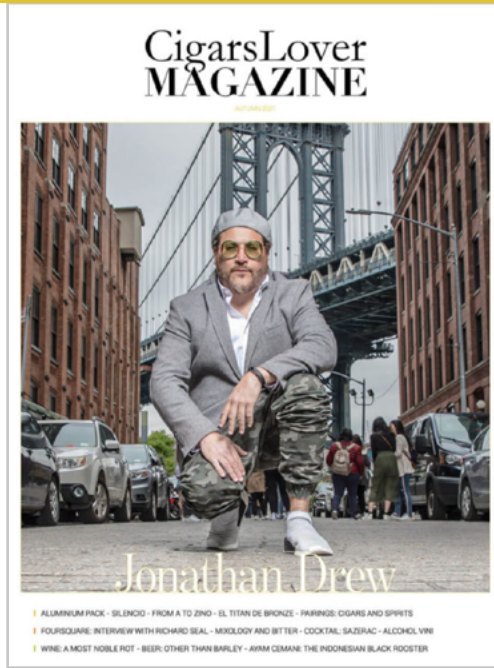
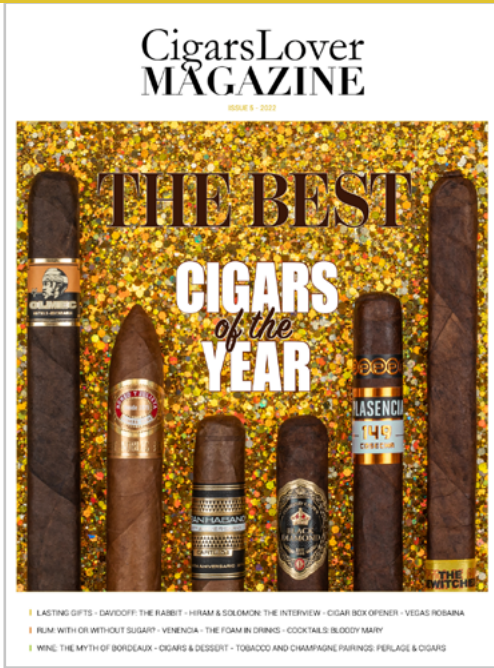
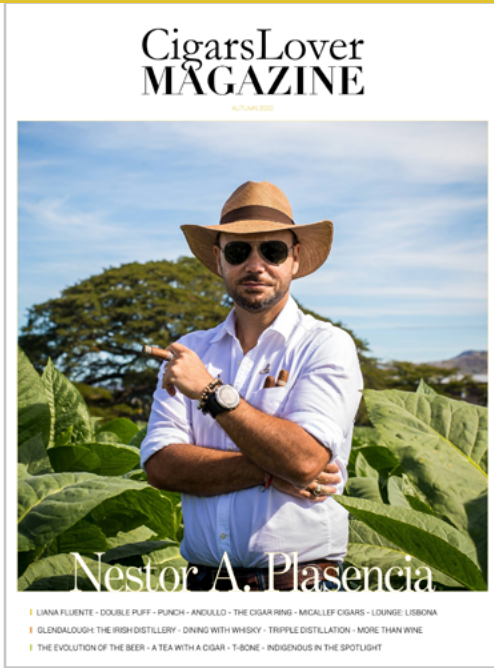
— NOSE —
Sugar cane scents, cotton candy, and a mix of mints, star anise, and a touch of cinnamon. A touch of chicory.

— PALATE —
Licorice notes, sugar cane, pepper (that recalls the Sichuan) and balsamic herbs.

— FINISH —
Medium persistence. Sugar cane, licorice and anise.

Smooth and balanced. It boasts a broad flavor profile.

91



CIGARSLOVERS MAGAZINE

DISCOVER ALL ISSUES



INTERACTIVE



SAMPAN
Cellar Series
fût ex-cognac

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Vietnam	47.1% 94.2	\$\$

—NOSE—
Pan brioches, red fruits, cherry in alcohol, a touch of fire match and a hint of walnut.

—PALATE—
Smooth. White pepper, cocoa, vanilla, cherry in alcohol. Then warm tropical fruits.

—FINISH—
Medium finish. Wood, cocoa and roasted notes. Tropical fruits.

Complex and deep flavor profile. Weel-structured.

91



DIPLOMATICO
Distillery Collection
n°3

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

—NOSE—
Vegetal notes, followed by tropical fruits, pastry, and a touch of vanilla.

—PALATE—
Round and velvety, with aromas of vanilla, cocoa, tropical fruits, wood and some resin.

—FINISH—
Medium-long persistence. Wood, fruits and cocoa.

It delivers a velvety flavor profile boasting a good depth.

90



LA FAVORITE
Vintage 2014
9 years

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	47.1% 94.2	\$\$\$

—NOSE—
Toffee, wood, some minerals, ripe fruits, a hint of fire matches.

—PALATE—
Oak, toffee, mineral notes, white pepper, a touch of citrous, and ginger.

—FINISH—
Medium long. Toffee and wood spices, with white pepper. Vegetal.

Wide and intense flavor profile. A little sharp.

89



A 1710
Carafe Rhum Blanc
Renaissance 2022

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	52% 104	\$\$

—NOSE—
Fresh, with vegetal and brine scents, with a nice citrusy to it. A nice sugary touch with ripe fruits.

—PALATE—
Sugar cane, vegetal aromas, some spices where the ginger stands out, and a little brine.

—FINISH—
Medium finish persistence. Brine and vegetal notes.

Rich and complex, with a nice structure.

89



SANTOS
DUMONT
XO

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

—NOSE—
Intense ripe tropical fruit scents, with banana and pineapple, honey and roasted nuances.

—PALATE—
Smooth. The ripe fruit notes are confirmed, together with toffee, and a hint of tree nuts.

—FINISH—
Medium finish. Smooth. Toffee.

Well-balanced flavor profile, easy to enjoy.

88



FERRONI
La Dame Jeanne
16 Afrique du Sud

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Africa	57% 114	\$\$

—NOSE—
Olives, field flowers, some vegetal notes, a touch of brine. Then sugar cane scents.

—PALATE—
Sugar cane, brine, and fruity hints. Earthy and almost chewy. A mineral touch with some wood varnish.

—FINISH—
The finish is medium long with wood spices, olives and brine.

Rich and powerful, yet round. Quite ample flavor profile.

87



CHAMAREL
XO Oloroso Finish

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

—NOSE—
Honey, dark red fruit, with wild berries, cocoa, and hints of roasted coffee beans.

—PALATE—
Smooth, with fruits and caramel. The cocoa is still there, but in a more contained way.

—FINISH—
The finish is medium. Roasted coffee beads and caramel.

Easy to appreciate rum, due to the sweet flavor profile.

87



PÈRE LABAT
White Organic

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Antilles	52% 94	\$\$

—NOSE—
Rich scents of sugarcane, hints of corn, some vegetal undertones and olives.

—PALATE—
Round, with vegetal notes, olives and some exotic fruits.

—FINISH—
The finish is medium. Olives and vegetal notes.

Round, capable of delivering a balanced and enjoyable flavor profile.

87



CLÉMENT
Blanc Colonne Créole

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	49.6% 99.2	\$\$

—NOSE—
Vesou, vegetal scents, and sugar cane. After a little, light pepper notes.

—PALATE—
The palate is richer, with vesou, sugar cane, and hints of brine. Dry.

FINISH
Medium-short finish. Brine. A little on the dry side.

Limited flavor profile, but it is straight and with no frills.

84



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Whisky



THE LAKES
Infinity

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
England	52% 104	\$\$\$

— NOSE —

Sherried. Strawberry jam, sultanas, figs, blackberries, and red ripe fruit. Chocolate praline.

— PALATE —

Solidly sherried. Dark spices, blackberry, black currant, and dark chocolate ganache.

— FINISH —

Medium-long. Dark spices and red berries. A balsamic touch.

Intense and fulfilling nose. Quite classy and persistent.

91



ARMORIK
10 Year Old

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

— NOSE —

Fresh butter with ripe apricots, peaches, melon, pineapple, and guava. Toffee and caramel.

— PALATE —

White pepper, followed by a citric hint before the ripe yellow fruit takes over. Maple syrup.

— FINISH —

Medium-long, with notes of white pepper and toffee.

Satisfying and with a nice intensity.

90



DAD'S HAT
*Rye Whiskey
Finished in Port Barrels*

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A.	52% 94	\$

— NOSE —

Sherried notes, wet sultanas, dried-out figs, strawberry jam (dried out in the sun). Vanilla and toffee.

— PALATE —

Warm mouthfeel with sweet spices and white pepper. Bloody orange, very ripe peaches.

— FINISH —

Medium long. Bloody orange with spices.

Nice finish and palate. Something is missing to the shy nose.

88



HUNTER & SCOTT
Bourbon

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A.	50% 100	\$

—NOSE—
Quite fragrant, with ripe peach, apricot, and yellow apple, buttery biscuit with vanilla, and some toffee. Honey.

—PALATE—
The same fruit of the nose is mixed with cinnamon and nutmeg. A minor herbal note and a touch of salt.

—FINISH—
Medium. Balsamic hints, a pinch of salt, and some citrus oil.

Well-crafted. Rich. Rather complex profile for a captivating fruition.

87



AMRUT
Single Malt

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
India	45% 90	\$

—NOSE—
Leather, wood resin, oak, and some vegetal hints, followed by wood spices. Caramel and balsamic aromas.

—PALATE—
With a drop pf water, there are oak, wood spices, charcoal, vanilla, orange zest, and a little honey.

—FINISH—
The finish is long, with spices, honey, and oak.

The flavor profile is ample and deep. Rich.

87



GLENMORANGIE
14 Year Old
Quinta Ruban

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

—NOSE—
Fruit, with bloody oranges, blackcurrant, and plums. Winey. Some vanilla pod.

—PALATE—
Winey, with dark fruity notes and Gianduia chocolate.

—FINISH—
Medium. Winey and sweet. It is slightly dry.

Intense and creamy, fulfilling.

87



PUNI
Aura 03

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Italy	56% 112	\$\$\$

—NOSE—
Cereal biscuits, vanilla, fresh floral notes, a hint of pecan and then roasted scents. Apple.

—PALATE—
Vanilla, with roasted aromas, an almost nutty note and wood spices.

—FINISH—
Medium-long. Vanilla, oak, wood spices and a roasted touch.

Better performing on the nose. The alcoholic component is well integrated.

86



MELLOW CORN
Straight Corn Whiskey

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A.	50% 100	\$

—NOSE—
Honey and a delicate spiciness, reminding of cinnamon.

—PALATE—
Chewy. Sweet character, with vanilla, oak, and spices.

—FINISH—
Medium persistence. Sweet.

The flavor profile is sweet and easy to enjoy.

86



GOALONG
Single Malt
5 Year Old

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

—NOSE—
Floral, perfumery style, among jasmine, rose and lemon flowers. A minor drop of lemon. Some lychees.

—PALATE—
Quite watery. A minor lemon hint on top of a very light body, again reminding of lychees.

—FINISH—
Short. Flowery and with a subtle sweetness.

A unique product. The flavor profile is light and with a complex sweetness.

86



HIGHLAND
PARK
12 Year Old

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	40% 80	\$

—NOSE—
 Leather and roasted coffee. A hint of brine. Then vanilla pod, wood resin, cinnamon, and yellow fruits. Buttery.

—PALATE—
 The lemon peel is confirmed, together with oak, wood spices. Raisins.

—FINISH—
 The finish is medium. Oak and wood spices.

Balanced and with a decent intensity. Not that deep though.

84



TIMAH
Double Peated Whiskey

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Malasya	40% 80	\$

—NOSE—
 Very subtle peat notes, gently iodine and herbal. Some citrus. Candied ginger, sweet lemon.

—PALATE—
 Sweet. Medicinal and herbal with peated notes. Bonfire smoke with lemons and some grassy notes.

—FINISH—
 Clean and short. Peat.

Pleasant and easy to appreciate.

84



HUDSON
Baby Bourbon

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

—NOSE—
 Very simple. Minor malty notes, raw cereals, some liquid sugar sweetness.

—PALATE—
 Very neutral, with the liquid sugar sweetness coming straight forward. Unripe fruit note nuances, with lemon candy.

—FINISH—
 Very short. Truly simple sweetness.

Simple, with a very entry-level sweetness covering the flavor profile.

84

THE CHEDI
ANDERMATT, SWITZERLAND

2013
2023

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DIFFERENCE

TASTE
THE
DIFFERENCE

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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.



1

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.

5

- 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



Dominican Rep.



Nicaragua



Honduras



Mozambique



Mexico



U.S.A.



Costa Rica



Italy



Philippines



Cina



Haiti
- 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.

Churchill





ARTURO FUENTE
DON CARLOS PRESIDENTE

COMPLEX AND FLAVORFUL

Nuts, leather and spices give way to the smoke, followed by citrus notes. The smoke is creamy. Coffee and cinnamon notes are added later on, as the smoke becomes spicier.

93



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x165mm (6 ½")	\$ 13.50 € 19.80
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CAMEROON	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



MI QUERIDA
BLACK SAKAKHAN

BOLD BUT CONTAINED

Pronounced black pepper notes give way to the smoke, accompanied by leather and earth. Further into the cigar, the smoke becomes creamy and nutty flavors are added to the profile.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x184mm (7 ¼")	\$ 15.95 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
U.S.A.	MEXICO	DOMINICAN REP., HONDURAS, NICARAGUA



QUAI D'ORSAY SÉLECTION
ROYALE ED. REG. SUIZA 2020

BALANCED AND COMPLEX

Vegetal and wood notes give way to the smoke, followed by white pepper and a hint of citrus. The smoke is creamy, with nuts and leather being added later on. Toasted notes in the finale.

92



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x184mm (7 ¼")	\$ - € 30
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



ROMEO Y JULIETA
CHURCHILL'S

BOLD AND DIRECT

It delivers notes of cocoa and hazelnut, enriched by white pepper. Then cinnamon and vegetal hints are added. In the end, nutty notes together with hot spices and balsamic herbs.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	47x178mm (7")	\$ - € 22
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



THE WISE MAN
MADURO CHURCHILL

BOLD AND FULFILLING

It exhibits a mix of earth and roasted aromas. The spices pick up advancing in the smoke, with a riot of black pepper, chili, and nutmeg.

92



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	48x178mm (7")	\$ 11.7 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



LA FLOR DOMINICANA
SOLIS

COMPLEX AND ROUND

Hazelnut, white pepper, and wood are present in the beginning. Cinnamon and herbal nuances join the profile later on. The smoke is creamy. It turns balsamic and spicy towards the end.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x165mm (6 ½")	\$ 13.2 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP.



FLOR DE SELVA
CHURCHILL

RICH AND EVOLUTIVE

It delivers black pepper, fine wood, honey, and a touch of vanilla. Then cinnamon and coffee, with hints of hazelnut.

92



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	49x178mm (7")	\$ - € 13
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
HONDURAS	HONDURAS	HONDURAS



CALDWELL T.K.I.D.
ESCAPE PLAN AUTOPILOT

COMPLEX

Walnut, wood, and milk chocolate open the smoke, followed by a herbal underline. A leather note is added later on, and the smoke becomes creamy. A light pepper spice is present as well.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	48x178mm (7")	\$ 15 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA, PERU



JOYA DE NICARAGUA CUATRO CINCO ED. EU. DOBLE CORONA

FLAVORFUL

Black pepper, coffee, and leather make up the core flavors of the profile. Later on, a walnut aroma is added. The profile turns balsamic and spicy towards the end of the cigar.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	52x178mm (7")	\$ - € 19
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
N/A	N/A	N/A



ALL SAINTS SAINT FRANCIS HABANO OSCURO CHURCHILL

BOLD BUT STATIC

Once lit, the cigar brings aromas of cocoa, leather, and wood to the palate, which are the main flavors throughout the smoke. Later on, they are joined by earth and black pepper.

87



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	48x178mm (7")	\$ 11.4 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



BOHEKIO CHURCHILL

LIMITED EVOLUTION

It develops walnut, and vegetal notes, with roasted coffee, and leather with a bit of earth. A little sweet. Then smoky notes black pepper and a touch of ginger. Balsamic hints.

86



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x178mm (7")	\$ 13 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
DOMINICAN REP.	HAITI	HAITI



BYRON 19TH CENTURY EPIQUE POEMAS

RATHER STATIC

The first few puffs deliver vegetal and nutty notes, followed by earth and a touch of cinnamon. Balsamic notes in the last part of the smoke.

85



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	54x178mm (7")	\$ 38 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	ECUADOR	NICARAGUA, PERU

BACK TO OUR ORIGINS

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BY JRE TOBACCO



“If you can’t send money send tobacco”

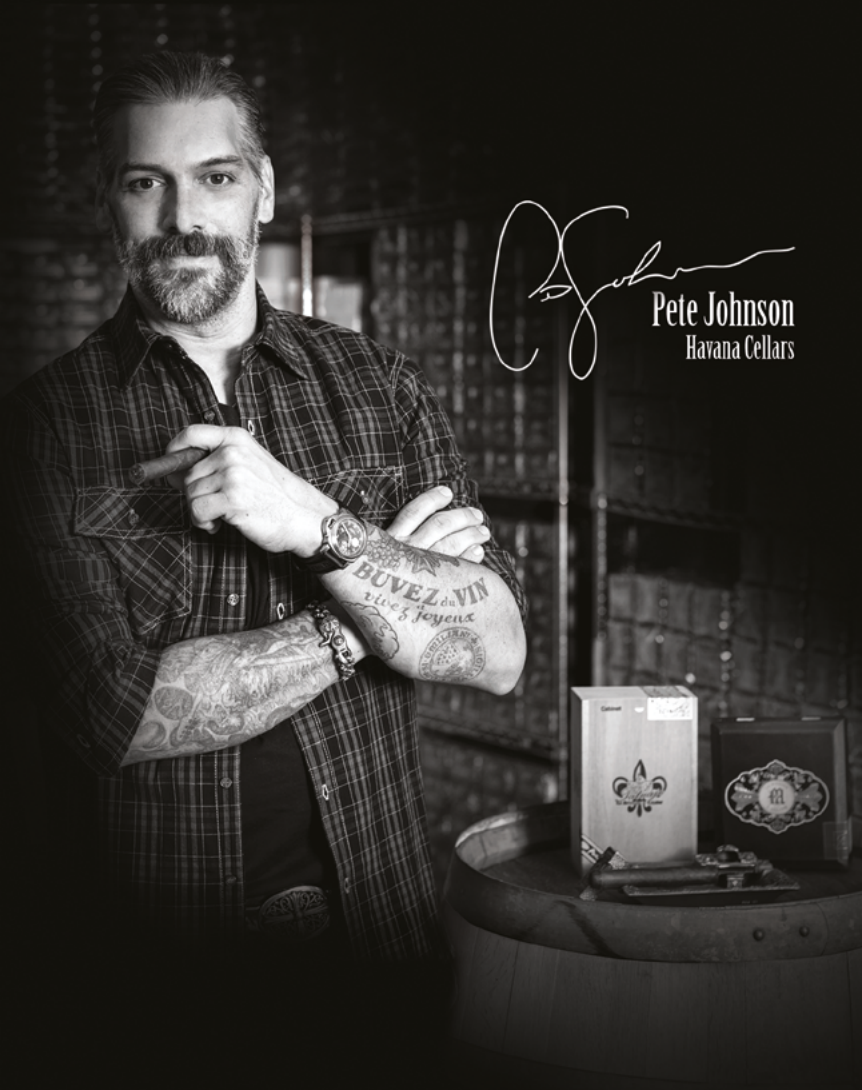
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“And Whiskey”

-Reservoir Distillery



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Lancero



DAVIDOFF MILLENNIUM LANCERO LE 2023

COMPLEX AND EVOLUTIVE

It delivers notes of roasted coffee, cocoa and a hint of undergrowth. Balsamic nuances in the aftertaste. Then earth, white pepper and a touch of wild honey.

93

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	40x178mm (7")	\$ 29 € 35
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	MEXICO	DOMINICAN REP.



HIRAM AND SOLOMON VEILED PROPHET LANCERO

BALANCED AND FLAVORFUL

Black pepper, cocoa, and earth are supported by coffee and wood. Nuances of citrus fruits are added later on. The profile becomes spicier towards the end of the smoke.

90

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	38x178mm (7")	\$ 12.4 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
INDONESIA	INDONESIA	DOMINICAN REP., BRAZIL, NICARAGUA



VILLIGER MIAMI LAGUITO NO. 1

INTENSE AND SATISFYING

A mix of honey, nuts, and vegetal notes gives way to the smoke, joined by espresso and herbs. A light chili spice nuance appears, which becomes more pronounced towards the end.

90

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	38x190mm (7 ½")	\$ 15 € 15
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



MACANUDO INSPIRADO LANCERO

WELL BALANCED

White pepper, leather, and wood notes open the smoke, accompanied by hazelnut and herbs. Aromas of earth are added later on. The smoke is very creamy, almost buttery.

90

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	38x190mm (7 ½")	\$ - € 7
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
HONDURAS	HONDURAS	DOMINICAN REP., HONDURAS, NICARAGUA



S.T.K. ZULU ZULU
MAS PAZ BLACK LANCERO

COMPLEX AND SMOOTH

The cigar opens with hazelnut and wood, followed by aromas of coffee. The smoke is creamy. Honey, herbs, and white pepper flavors are added further into the cigar.

90 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	40x190mm (7 ½")	\$ 11 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



CALDWELL
ANASTASIA 2022 IGOR

INTENSE AND RICH

It delivers spices, with a mix of white pepper and ginger, followed by wood, and roasted notes. In the last sector, rich earthy aromas.

88 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	38x190mm (7 ½")	\$ 30 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
N/A	N/A	N/A



MONTECRISTO
ESPECIAL

FLAVORFUL AND ROUND

The first half is marked by vegetal and floral aromas, supported by pepper notes. In the second half, the pepper remains, but the rest of the profile turns to coffee and leather aromas.

88 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	38x190mm (7 ½")	\$ - € 15
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



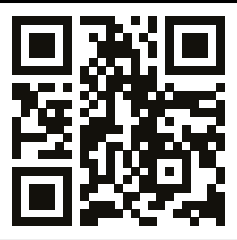
DRUNK CHICKEN
ORIGINAL LANCERO

SMOOTH

Black pepper, nuts, and wood are present in the first half. Leather and coffee aromas are added in the second half of the smoke, joined by herbs and chili spice towards the end.

87 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	38x190mm (7 ½")	\$ 11.5 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	ECUADOR	NICARAGUA



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GILBERT DE MONTSALVAT SIGNATURE GRAN ROBUSTO

RICH AND BOLD

It develops intense notes of dark chocolate and earth, together with a rich roasted coffee aroma. In the second half, vegetal nuances are added in the aftertaste.

90



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	54x140mm (5 ½")	\$ - € 15
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



VALENTINO SIESTO ANIV. ROBUSTO REAL #5

GOOD BALANCE AND STRUCTURE

It develops walnut, leather and earth, with black pepper in the aftertaste. In the second half, the spices pick up, with white pepper and piquant peaks. Cedar wood and nutty notes.

90



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x140mm (5 ½")	\$ - € 22.9
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



LA ESTANCIA EDICIÓN EXCLUSIVA 52

HARMONIOUS AND INTENSE

It opens up with nutty notes, where the peanuts stand out, black pepper and roasted notes. The base is slightly sweet. Then vanilla, white pepper and rich spices.

90



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	52x148mm (5 7⁄8")	\$ 27.57 € 26.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
N/A	N/A	N/A



RAMÓN ALLONES ALLONES NO. 3

WELL BALANCED AND CREAMY

It exhibits notes of leather, together with some cedarwood and a light pepperiness, mainly perceivable in the background. Then nutty aromas and roasted coffee, with vegetal hints.

90



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x138mm (5 3⁄8")	\$ - € 16
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



CAO
GOLD ROBUSTO

BALANCED AND SMOOTH

Once lit, the cigar starts out with vegetal aromas with a creamy, almost buttery smoke. Later on, black pepper and herbal notes join the flavor profile.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x127mm (5")	\$ 8.8 € 6.6
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



ARTURO FUENTE
ROTHSCHILD MADURO

FLAVORFUL AND INTENSE

Black pepper and wood notes are the main flavors from the first puffs on, followed by coffee and herbs. Molasses and mineral nuances appear in the second half of the smoke.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x114mm (4 ½")	\$ 6.6 € 11.7
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
U.S.A.	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



MONTECRISTO
WIDE EDMUNDO

BALANCED

The cigar opens with marked nutty and leathery notes. Further into the smoke, wood and sour cream notes are added. A light peppery aroma appears in the second half as well.

87



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	54x124mm (4 ⅞")	\$ - € 19.2
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



VEGAFINA
1998 VF56

BALANCED BUT A LITTLE STATIC

It delivers wood, earth and vegetal notes. Then nutty aromas complete the flavor profile.

86



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	56x127mm (5")	\$ - € 8.2
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	INDONESIA	DOMINICAN REP., COLOMBIA, NICA.



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made by infusion and
distillation of herbs,
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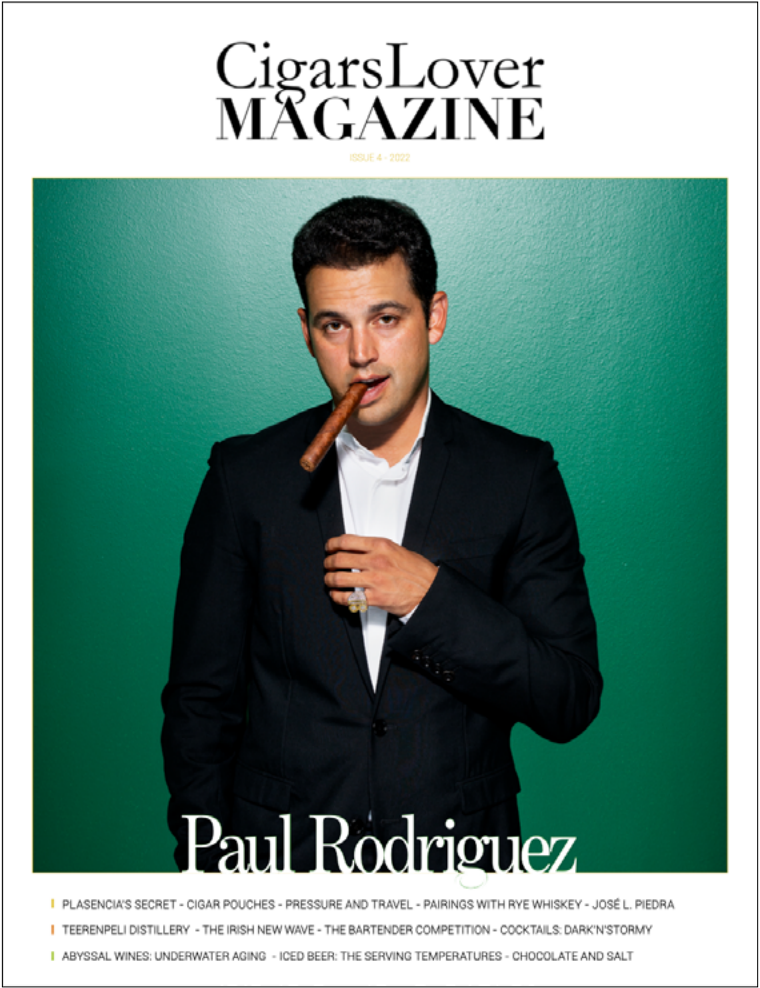
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KAMIKI: THE INTERVIEW - ALTERNATIVE ICE - PISCO: PERU OR CHILE? - COCKTAIL: THE PISCO SOUR
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ADVENTURA CIGARS - SCISSORS - TASTING TECHNIQUES - 5 MUST HAVE CUBANS - SIGARIE - BBQ & CIGARS
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TOBACCO & WHISKY IN SAUCE - COFFEE RECIPES FOR SUMMER - MEXICO: MOLE POBLANO - FRENCH WINES



CigarMate

*Handmade CigarMate
for handmade cigars*



The CigarMate is a cigarholder created to let your cigar lay on a smooth surface of wood, providing the best natural support.

The design is completely studied in Italy and the production is entrusted to the most experienced woodworkers of the Philippines. Each CigarMate is completely made by hand, starting from a block of mahogany wood and slowly giving it size and shape. At the end of the process the cigarholder is lacquered manually with a brush. Each one has small differences from the others, which make it unique.

The CigarMate is composed of several collectible pieces.

Toro





GRAN HABANO CONNECT
NO. 1 GRAN ROBUSTO

RICH, INTENSE AND COMPLEX

It delivers cedarwood, vanilla pod, and vegetal aromas, with a touch of hazelnut. Then white pepper and piquant spices. After the half, mineral notes and balsamic nuances. Wild pepper, nutmeg and cocoa in the finale.

94

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x152mm (6")	\$ 7.5 € 14
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



AGANORSA LEAF
ANIV. MADURO TORO

BOLD AND FLAVORFUL

Pepper and leather start out the smoke, followed by coffee and nutty aromas. An earthy component is added in the second half and the profile becomes fuller towards the end.

89

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	52x158mm (6 ¼")	\$ 15.5 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



PLASENCIA ALMA FUERTE
COLORADO CL. EDUARDO I

FLAVORFUL AND STRUCTURED

The smoke opens with cinnamon and creamy leather, followed by hazelnut. A subtle sweetness is present in the background. Balsamic herbs and hot spices are added towards the end.

93

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	54x158mm (6 ¼")	\$ 23.32 € 21
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



MACANUDO INSPIRADO
BRAZILIAN SHADE TORO

WELL BALANCED

The first puff delivers woody and peppery aroma, followed by green pepper and a citrus note in the background.

88

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x158mm (6 ¼")	\$ 10.5 € 9.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
BRAZIL	MEXICO	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA, BRAZIL



MENELIK
TORO

FLAVORFUL AND ROUND

Earth, cocoa, and black pepper are the core flavors throughout the smoke. Along the way, the profile is enriched with leather, balsamic herbs, and coffee. A sweet component is also present.

91

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x152mm (6")	\$ 16.5 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



ZINO
NICARAGUA TORO

BALANCED AND ROUND

The cigar starts out with aromas of black pepper, earth, and cream, accompanied by wood. Toasted bread and coffee notes are added from the second half on.

87

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x152mm (6")	\$ 7.3 € 8-3
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	DOMINICAN REP., HONDURAS, NICA.



ROJAS
UNFINISHED BUSINESS TORO

BALANCED AND COMPLEX

Wood and backing spice give way to the smoke. Bread, cappuccino, and nutty aromas are added further into the cigar. The profile becomes herbal and spicy towards the end.

91

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x152mm (6")	\$ 10.5 € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	MEXICO, NICARAGUA



VILLA VIEJA
TORO

STATIC

It delivers notes of walnut and earth, quickly turning to earth and mineral notes. Then nutty notes and wood.

83

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	56x152mm (6")	\$ - € 9.6
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA

Credits

Cover page

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Sean Williams

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The Connecticut River Valley

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Cohiba Siglo VI

picture by: Habanos S.A.

Valentino Siesto Cigars

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Rabbit Air A3

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Pairings

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Pairing Irish Whiskey

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Cigars & Spirits

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Club de Cantineros

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How to store your collectible bottle of whisky?

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Coffee granita

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Blind tasting

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Blind tasting - Cigars

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