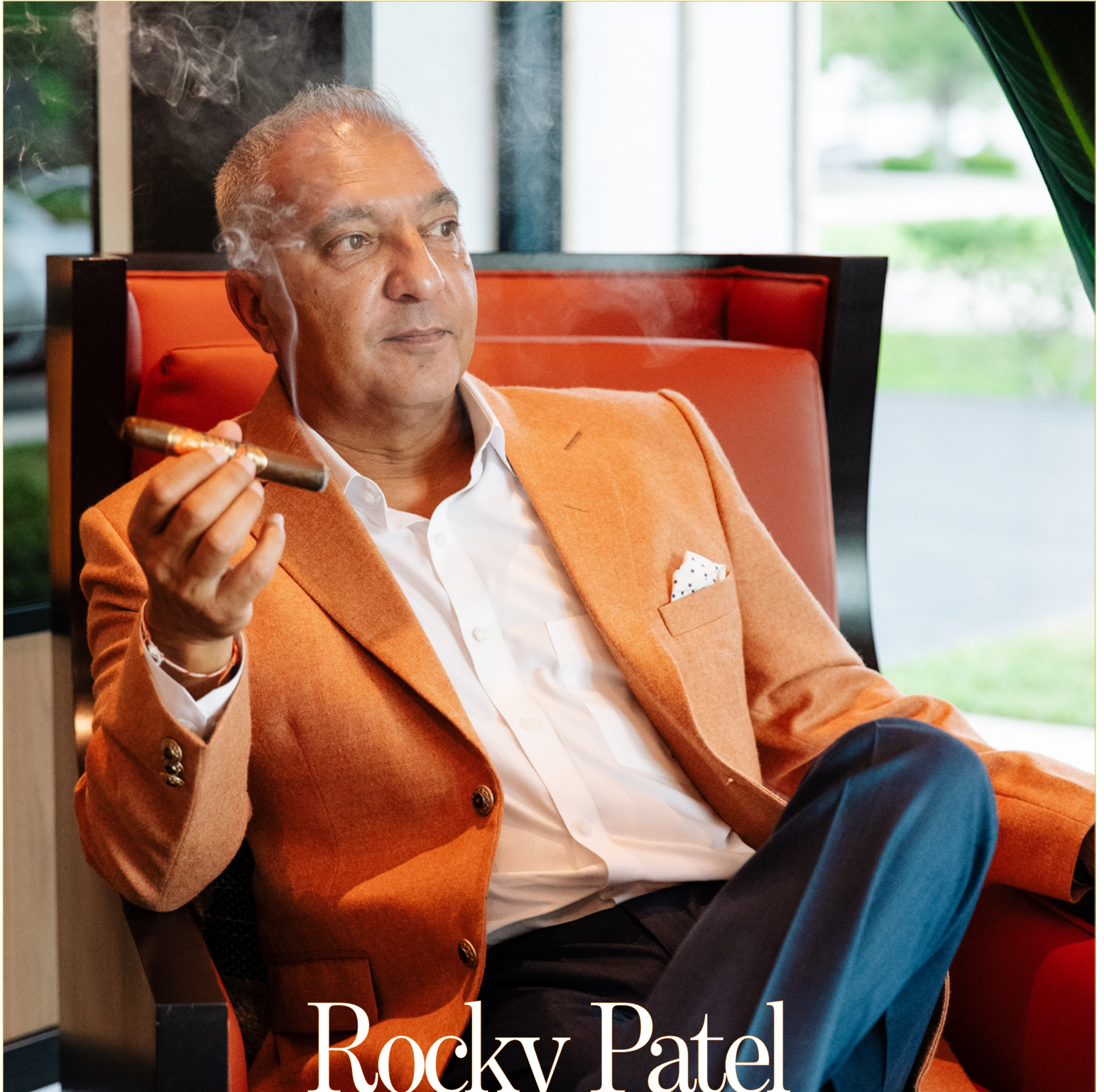


# Cigars Lover MAGAZINE

ISSUE 4 - 2023



## Rocky Patel

- | A CELEBRATION OF PROMINENCE - PAIRINGS: KENTUCKY & TENNESSEE - FLOR DE SELVA NO.15 - BACK TO SLIMS
- | JOY SPENCE & APPLETON ESTATE - TOASTING & CHARRING - FERRO CHINA - BLACK OR WHITE RUSSIAN?
- | BEER: THE AUTUMNAL MALTS - UMAMI: NEW OR REDISCOVERED TASTE?



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## Editor's thoughts

*Three personalities in this fourth issue.*

This fourth issue of 2023 features quite a few interviews. We sit down with Rocky Patel to follow the steps that brought him to create his established and recognized brand. It is a journey that is 26 years long, with many stories to tell, and you will enjoy some of them.

We discovered the project that Maya Selva launched this year—the same cigar but with a significantly different aging: ten years. We spoke with Filippo Costi to better understand what is behind the concept that brought Maya to this idea.

In the spirits section, the vision of Joy Spence, the master blender at Appleton Distillery, about the rum world that we can enjoy nowadays.

You are going to find nine products paired, together with a special on the Kentucky Straight bourbons and Tennessee whiskies, sixty among cigars, rums, and whiskies reviewed, and a lot of contents spacing from autumnal beers, the process of toasting and charring and what's behind the White and the Black Russian cocktails.

Enjoy the reading.

#refineyourtaste





# CigarsLover MAGAZINE

*Thank you for*  
**TEN YEARS**



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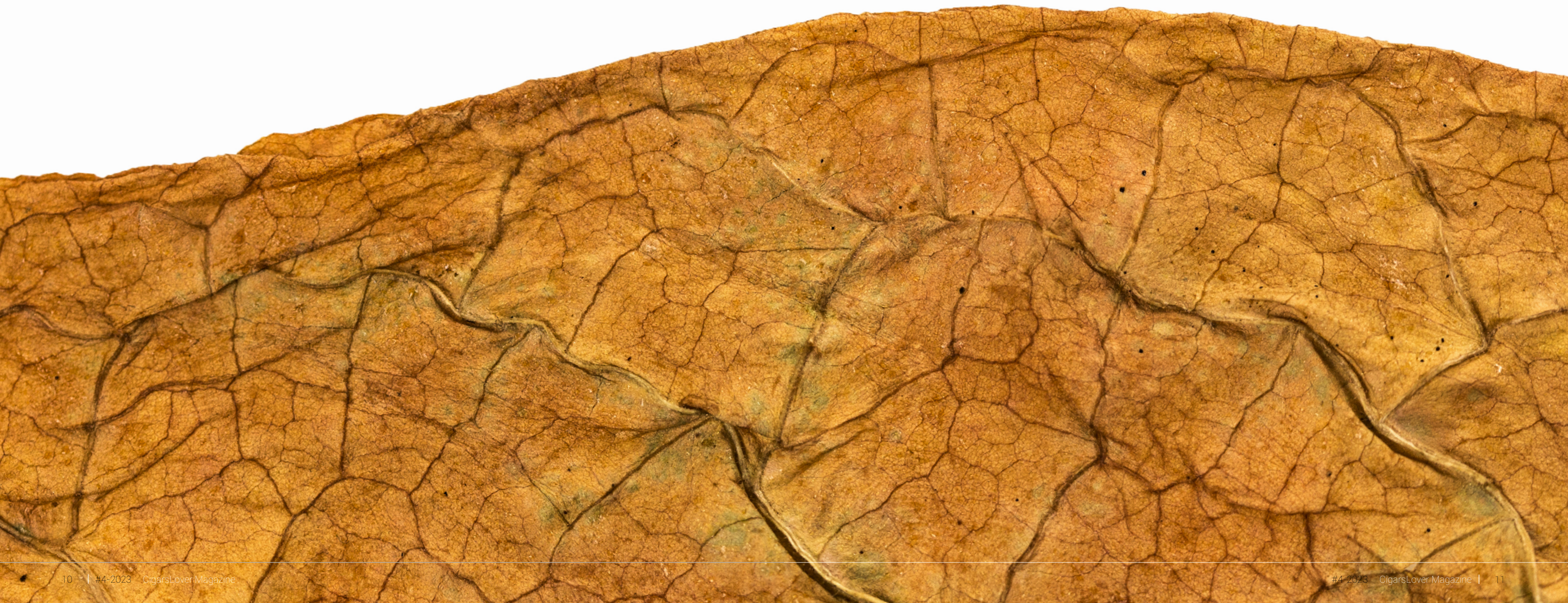
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# CIGARS

“I drink a great deal. I sleep a little, and I smoke cigar after cigar.  
That is why I am in two-hundred-percent form.”

*Winston Churchill*





**SILENCIO**

LUXURY  
IS IN THE DETAILS

DISCOVER THE WORLD'S  
FINEST CIGARS





# Rocky Patel

*"You have to have conviction.  
Proving them wrong is what drove me."*

by **Michel Arlia**

**R**ocky Patel needs no introduction. He's nicknamed the hardest-working man in the business for a reason. He is the definition of where putting in the work can take you. In Rocky, passion and dedication for the cigar world meet hustle and determination. We had the pleasure of sitting down with the busy globetrotter for an in-depth interview.

**Rocky, who were you before becoming Rocky Patel, the cigar manufacturer?**

Well, I was born and raised in India. I lived there until I was 14, and then my family moved to Green Bay, Wisconsin. I attended high school, undergraduate, and graduate school at the University of Wisconsin. And then, I ended up leaving Wisconsin to attend law school in California. I practiced law there. I lived there probably for about 15 to 16 years.

**How were you introduced to cigars, and what was your first experience with it?**

The first cigar a friend of mine introduced to me. Her name was India Allen. She was a Playboy Playmate. I think I remember smoking it with her at the Grand Havana Room. And then, after that, I started smoking some cigars on the movie set of a movie called Double Dragon in Cleveland, Ohio, and I think it was a Macanudo Prince Philip.

**Before Rocky Patel Premium Cigars, there was Indian Tabac Cigar Co. What selling point made you go through with investing in the project?**

I was a member of the Grand Havana Room. My office was in Beverly Hills, down the street. We'd go there after work to relax, smoke a cigar, and have a cocktail. We had a lot of friends there. They were writers, producers, directors, actors. We would hang out there, and after about four or five years, a gentleman named Phil Zanghi approached me and said, "I've started a company called Indian Tabac, making some cigars out of Honduras. I'm looking for a partner both for financial and business guidance." I was young, passionate, and willing to take risks back then. So, I thought it'd be a fun, exciting project to invest in and start.





**Was there a transition phase where you went from an investor to more actively involved, or was that immediate?**

There definitely was a transition phase of at least three or four years. I was doing little with the company for the first three or four years. I was an investor, and Phil was running the company. Now, I came up with some very good ideas for packaging, and I was involved in the graphic design of the boxes and the presentation of the cigars and boxes. So, I was more involved in the brand building, but not certainly the cigar making or the cigar quality aspect. Finally, I took over that company and worked part-time in the cigar business. Slowly, I started falling in love with it, and everyone said, "You can't make it. This is a business that's handed down from generation to generation. You're wasting your time." And that's what drove me to passionately get involved in the cigar business.

**How was the tobacco learning process for you? Who were some people who taught you the ins and outs of the business from seed to finished product?**

Well, my desire to want to seek and learn information is really how the whole journey started. I went and visited a lot of the different factories in the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Honduras. I saw what people were doing wrong and what people were doing right, and I tried to pick up all the good practices. Certainly, when it came to tobacco growing and tobacco itself, I learned a lot from Nestor Plasencia Sr. and Julio Eiroa. He was another one who taught me quite a bit about tobacco primings and things like that. I spent a lot of time with some of the people that were working in the factory. I would ask a lot of questions. I learned a lot about fermentation, hanging out with some of the people who have been in the business for 30 to 40 years and just spending time with them daily, listening to them. So, it's been a learning journey for the last 26 years. Every time I go, I learn something new.

**In 1996 you attended your first RTDA (predecessor of the PCA). How was the Indian Tabac Cigar Co. received, and how did the cigar industry look to you as someone attending the trade show for the first time?**

I remember the show was in Cincinnati, with 100s and 100s of new brands. And I remember staying up all night trying to put our booth together. We were sitting there with nails and hammers, trying to put this booth together. It was wild back then. The people were just nuts about cigars. There was such a demand. I've never seen anything like it. The people were passionate and nuts. When the show started, people were literally coming up to us with suitcases and bags of cash saying, "Here, here's the cash. Send us as many cigars as you want." I thought I had won the lottery. It was crazy. I was utterly perplexed and shocked, a complete outsider, not knowing the business, not knowing anything. It was just an eye-opening experience for me. It was like landing on a different planet.

**You went through the Cigar Boom of the mid-90s and the bust of it. What was a pre- and post-cigar boom business day like, and how were you able to survive the years after it?**  
So it was interesting. In the boom, it was like a quick ride. There were 100s of little companies that popped up. I was





little, too, don't get me wrong. I remember starting, and the biggest challenge was getting tobacco. The other most significant challenge was getting people to make cigars for you because they always needed more materials. And then they would make cigars that were inconsistent. They would change the binder, they would change the wrapper, they would change the filler. I remember the cigars, just the quality not being there. It was utterly ridiculous. Post boom, slowly, the demand for cigars kept going away. And one by one, the companies kept falling apart and falling apart. The customer was looking for quality, and I realized that the only way we could succeed and survive was if we had complete control of our sorting, curing, fermentation, and production. So I went down to Honduras to Larry Palumbo, who was president of USG tobacco, and I know they were slowing down their business considerably. They had like 80 or \$90 million of old aged tobacco. I said, "I'd like to buy that tobacco," because I was looking for rare things. And they said, "We won't sell you the tobacco, but if you make the cigars here, we'll let you use it." And I said, "The only way I'll make cigars there is if I have complete control to create my own little factory in this giant factory that you have with all these buncheros and roleros that are not working. So, they allowed me to be in charge of everything. I made about 123 blends, which I still remember to this day. And I chose the one blend, and that was the Vintage 1990. That was the first time I put my name on the cigar because I was proud and entirely in charge of the quality. It was going to be consistent. They had enough raw materials. That was the post-boom era when that cigar took off for us. And that's really how it all started.

**Was there ever a point after the boom, and before things picked up again, were you thinking of throwing in the towel?**

Yeah, that thought came to us quite often. When we moved to Florida in 1999, three of us were working there: myself, my cousin Nimish, and Edward Jansen. And there was a guy in the warehouse, Tom Coleman. There were some tough times. Especially the early Indian Tabac days. It wasn't easy. Cigars would sell when I went to the store and did an event, but as soon as I left, they wouldn't sell because the quality wasn't there. I was like, I can't believe I quit law. I had a great practice back in LA and moved to Florida. What am I doing? This is ridiculous. And it was tough. There were two years where I was second-guessing myself, but then things turned around. It was when the Vintage brand launched that we started to get hope. And that's when I put it under my name.

**You are nicknamed the hardest-working man in the business, and I've also heard that you know every retail store in the US by person and phone number. How has customer relations changed for you over the years?**

Well, I realized early on that I didn't have a legacy. I didn't have the heritage and all these old Cuban families with grandfathers and fathers in the business. So, I had to go out and show people that I know and am very educated about the entire tobacco process. I would go from road to road, meet consumers, meet retailers, and explain to them the quality of the product, the artisan work, and the detail that goes into the quality control. And so I spent years in the



United States and all over Europe. I've been everywhere, all over, educating because I didn't have the story of a grandfather or father. I had to prove to them that I knew the science of tobacco. It took a lot of time to get the respect in the industry, not only from consumers but also from fellow cigar manufacturers. So, finally, I've earned it. I finally have the respect. But it took a lot of work.

**You make cigars in Honduras and Nicaragua. How has the landscape changed in those two countries over the last thirty years?**

Well, it's been drastically different. When I started, it was wild. You had just finished the war between the Sandinistas and the Contras. There was a lot of US military when I first went there. They were down there removing mines. Everybody was with AK47s, guns, pistols. We used to have to go to Jalapa to pay the farmers. We had two guys sitting in the car with guns so that nobody would rob us. Everywhere we went, you had to be careful. Everybody had guns. It was dangerous. I have a story that we went to look at a farm. I was supposed to be gone for a night, and I showed up four days later, and it was down the Coco River. In the middle of the night, at 4:00 in the morning, we were sleeping outside, 10 of us, and only three of us knew each other. A machete fight broke out. And this guy took a machete across this guy's face and cut his whole face open. And I was sitting there for eight hours holding his lip up, riding in a boat with pigs and chickens till we got him to the hospital. So it was crazy time. Now, there's infrastructure. You have schools, universities, malls, hospitals. So, the cigar industry has done a lot for the people's lives in these countries. Of course, there's more room for improvement, but it's a significant change compared to what it was.

**In Nicaragua, you own your own factory, Tabacalera Villa Cuba S.A., and some fields. Was the way to vertical integration always the goal?**

Yeah, that's always been my goal. I can't remember the exact years, but I want to say 2007. We started our factory in Nicaragua since then. We bought two big farms in Esteli, and then we have another farm in Condega. And then we just started a venture with another farm in Jamastran.

**How would you describe your blending style?**

Yeah, I say that I like to make cigars that are very, very complex and have layers of flavor, just like the type of wines I like to drink. And so I like a lot of complexity and balance. I like to work with old, old tobacco. So yeah, I enjoyed that. And I love pushing the envelope, and that's why I love this business. And I still to this day, I blend every single cigar myself, and my favorite part of the business is creating blends. And sometimes people say, "You have too many brands. You have too many brands." Well, that's because I love to create dishes and different blends. And so when I create something good, and it's good, I work with it. I play with it for a year, for two years, and when it's good and I like it, we put it out in the market.

**Your newest creation, "Conviction", is probably your most ambitious project yet. How long have you been working**





#### on it, and what is the idea behind naming it Conviction?

Well, I've been working on Conviction for probably a little over two years. And the goal was to come up with a project that would scream luxury lifestyle. After my travels to many places, I realized there was a need. A segment of the market was seeking ultra, ultra luxury, and how could I create that? And to sell a cigar for \$100, it has to be special. And so when I was in Nicaragua, looking at the tobacco inventory, we came across bales from our first crop of 2014. I said, "Well, this is perfect. Let's use this. We don't have to make that many cigars. This is a small batch project. Let's use this." And then we went out and got some of the oldest wrappers we could get. Then, we had to come up with some beautiful packaging. We had five different concepts that we were working on. We're back and forth, back and forth. And then, finally, this one concept just stuck with the beautiful gold tubes and the box. And so it's gorgeous. It's exciting. I love it. I think people will enjoy the cigar, so we're very proud of it.

#### What do you do to wind down and take your mind off cigars and tobacco?

Rarely does my mind go off of cigars and tobacco. But I enjoy golfing. I enjoy fishing. I working out and exercising. One of the things that relaxes me most is cooking. So we're always having people over for dinner. And we cook a lot at my house. I love to entertain. I'm always trying new recipes. Most of my time at home is spent around the kitchen.

#### Lastly, where do you want to take your company in the next thirty years?

Well, we have several goals. Now, we're working on many pet projects, small batch projects, and working with a lot of old-age tobaccos. We've collected a lot of inventory over the last 20 years of different types of tobacco. We are also creating a luxury lifestyle environment for people to enjoy cigars for years. When you go to New York, Vegas, Chicago, or anywhere in Europe, we're like the outcast, right? When we want to go to a really nice place to have a drink and smoke a cigar, it's not allowed. So, we created this concept of Burn by Rocky Patel. We have one in Atlanta, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Oklahoma City, and Naples, where you can go to the finest lounge in the city, and guess what? You can enjoy a cigar and a cocktail. And we built it. So it's dynamic, architecturally beautiful, stunning. It's luxurious. We want to grow that concept a little more so that cigar smokers have a dazzling place to enjoy a cigar. We're building a brand new factory now in Esteli. That work has been underway for two years. It's in the final stages of getting permits. Architectural work is all done. So we're excited about that. We're deciding what we're going to do with Honduras. We keep growing our production there. So now we're going to build a big factory. The factory will be on the farm, and all the tobacco fermenting and sorting will be behind the factory. So that's next. And lastly, I've always wanted to work on a scotch. So I'm thinking about coming out with a scotch in the future.



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# Back to Slims

*On the market it is possible to find significantly more lancero and panetela cigars than in the past. Rediscovery of an older way of smoking or yet another fashion?*

by **Giuseppe Mitolo**

Until not recently, it was difficult to find manufacturers launching a panetela or a lancero size. If finding new cigars was not already difficult enough, this situation is also effected by divestments or interruptions of stocks of small ring gauge products that boast a long history.

In recent years, however, we have witnessed a new wind that seemed to stir something between consumers and producers. At first, some brands began to offer lanceros/panatelas as limited editions of a line or to celebrate a corporate anniversary. Other times some owners or master blenders have responded to a specific request from their customers; such as Steve Saka who, after nagging requests to produce a lancero, released one in 2019, sarcastically baptizing it #NLMTHA (Now Leave Me The Hell Alone). The list of examples could get considerably longer. It is probably too early to be able to acclaim a trend reversal, but the significance of these releases, in a world seemingly dominated by large ring gauge cigars, creates some questions: Is it a short-term trend or is the public consciously rediscovering slim formats? In this case, it is difficult to find an answer and, if you ask to several producers, you will get many different opinions. Let's try to share some insights. It is well known that the cigar world is dominated by the laws of the market and fashion. This, on one hand, allows producers to drive production in order to offer to an ever-evolving and always "new" demand. This ability to drive demand with the "newest" products is enabled significantly thanks to streamlined communication by social networks, strengthened

after the Covid-19 pandemic. On the other hand, these market forces can cut out the aficionados who are more rooted in the past and have slowly seen the retailers of thin and medium ring gauge cigars emptied). Very often, the grossest lie passed off as rigorous market analysis is this: there is little time to smoke so no one wants cigars that offer a long smoke anymore. In the face of this statement, there should have been a boom in the petit corona, corona and short robusto sizes (the latter also in vogue, for a certain time). On the other hand, we have seen an increase in toros and a rapid increase in extreme ring gauge cigars.

At the same time the offering of slim formats was getting thinner and thinner, not only leaving lovers of those vitolas orphans but also depriving many new smokers from trying formats that may open their eyes to new flavors. One thing to consider with these small ring gauge cigars is that they require special attention when smoking because they are easy to smoke too fast and overheat. This is another crucial point that, in its own way, has fueled the divestitures. Yet smoking a thin format is not, in itself, more difficult than others. A format such as a lancero requires greater attention to the mechanics of smoke than a format with a more generous vitola. The latter, thanks to a larger diameter, will allow greater passage of air and will be enough to make it more difficult to extinguish itself. It is exactly the opposite for thin formats. It is also necessary to correctly time the puffs with consistent intervals, to make the right supply of air (oxygen) flow through the cigar. Therefore, unless you are an experienced smoker or you are serious about dedi-

cating yourself to the cigar, it will be difficult to manage a lancero or a panetela during an evening of carefree chatting with friends, during a match on TV or at a poker table. These are cigars designed to be smoked when the smoker's attention is directed almost entirely on the smoke. This is meant to be a picture, without claiming absolute truth, of the context experienced in recent years. Thus, what was the spark that generated this return to lanceros? Without a doubt, curiosity, the engine of every true aficionado. Certainly the (new) smokers have begun to receive the news related to thin formats, both those "handed down" by those who had a greater historical memory and searching on the internet, among blogs, sites, and magazines. Paradoxically, even the simple claim that the lancero format was difficult to smoke triggered a certain feeling of challenge in some smokers that led them to say "I want to try!". Therefore, on the one hand there was a demand that, without a doubt, alone could not move the producers because sales have never recorded significant increases, on the other hand, there were the producers, looking for innovative ideas to charm the market and draw attention. We arrive, therefore, at the manufacturing site that, although it may seem the last stage of our journey, is actually the starting point. Making a lancero or, in any case, a cigar with a thin profile, is a real challenge for master blender, jefe de production and torcedor. It is a module that must be balanced perfectly because in the receta the wrapper leaf will be dominating, since the filler is not made up of a large quantity of tobacco (on average, for a 38/40 cepo two and a half or three leaves are used). It is therefore necessary to have tobacco that performs extremely well, able to return aromas and possesses good combustion capabilities. Not all cigar quality tobacco can be placed in a thin cigar. Last but not least, it is essential to have the work of a torcedor who is not only good, but who has the knowledge and experience to create such a product. To all these problems, we must also add the necessity to make a cigar that, in addition to being "good", also offers the market a novelty.

Under this last aspect marketing returns, once again. Compared to that "vacuum" of supply that has been created over the years, with the end of sales of references and modules, especially in Cuban production, which manufacturer would not try to fill it by creating a product tailored to specific demand? In a single blow it would both cover a segment of the market that requires slim smoke and offer a "new" product that responds to the tastes and preferences of today's smoker. In conclusion, whether it is a blowback (conscious rediscovery by smokers) or a flash in the pan (fashion) only time will tell. However, at present, we rest on a single certainty: on the market there are more panatelas and lanceros to try. For the curious aficionado it is not a trivial matter.





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# Flor de Selva No. 15

*Ten years  
in the making.*

by **Raul Torres**

Coming up on almost three decades in the cigar industry, there is much to be said about Maya Selva. One thing is that to make it in any industry for almost thirty years, it takes a couple of crucial things. Among the most important are consistency and quality. Doing this for nearly thirty years with a particular product such as cigars is nothing short of amazing.

To underline and showcase said consistency and quality, Maya Selva Cigars has launched the Flor de Selva No. 15 2012-2022. While getting the chance to smoke a cigar that has been aged for some time before it reaches the market is not entirely new, Maya Selva's approach and foresight to bringing well-aged cigars to the market is unique.

Maya foresaw a market for aged premium new world cigars and producers that would guarantee the aging process of their brands. They set aside thousand of cigars in various vitolas in their aging room. Each vitola had its own space under carefully controlled humidity, light, and temperature.

With this project, you are getting the chance to smoke ten cigars rolled in 2012 (still wearing the old bands), and ten rolled in 2022 (with the new bands). We talked to Filippo Costi, Maya Selva's Chief Commercial Officer, about this special launch.

**Was the time frame of ten years predetermined, or did the tobacco dictate it?**

We had yet to set ourselves a time, also because there was the possibility of having to throw everything away at some point in the process. Still, after ten years of waiting, we wanted to share this new "experience of flavors" with the aficionados and the rest of the industry.

**Getting into this project is quite an undertaking that seems easier said than done. Not only are you risking potential sales by withholding thousands of cigars, but with a natural product such as tobacco, the process could have worked out differently than you envisioned. What criteria did the cigars have to fulfill to continue their aging journey?**







There is a saying that I always share: "If you are a good man, you'll become a good old man; if it's good tobacco, it'll become good old tobacco"; we have always been, and continue to be, very demanding with the quality of our tobacco as well as in all the steps of the production process. Therefore it is not just a criteria exclusively for tobacco but for the whole process. We had more experience using aged tobacco in bales than aged rolled cigars. When you age tobacco in bales, you know that time is a limiting factor, for example, for the wrapper leaves. You also control each tobacco separately. Aging a rolled cigar was a whole new experience and challenge; tobaccos are a living entity, and having the opportunity to let the rolled tobacco breathe together in unison for ten years has allowed time to merge them in a unique way.

#### Did the project turn out how you imagined it?

We were still determining exactly what to expect, and for this reason, we aged several vitolas because we wanted to check if the larger vitolas would age better or worse than the smaller ones. If we had not been satisfied with the result, we would not have presented the work of these ten years; let's say that we are certainly satisfied with the first reactions of those who tasted the two cigars together, experimenting with this new "experience of flavors", which

has always been one of the characteristic proposals of Flor de Selva.

#### How often would you check up on the aging process during a year?

We have generally tested the cigars of all vitolas every couple of years, except maybe during the COVID period.

#### Consistency in making cigars is one of the more difficult things to guarantee, and as a company, you are putting yourself out there for scrutiny with a project like this. What can the cigar lover expect, and what do you hope to showcase with the cigars?

As you correctly say: speaking of "consistency" in the end can be meaningless or even dangerous, which is also why this project fascinated us, as we could finally test it first-hand (i.e., with the palate). Almost thirty years ago, we introduced the concept of "terroir" from the world of French wines to that of Premium Cigars by offering an "experience of flavors," first with Flor de Selva and then with Cumpay. Today, faithful to our DNA, we want to provide a new "flavor experience" by tasting the same cigar with ten years of difference. Finally, we really hope that the market for New World CTYRC (Certified Ten Years Rolled Cigars) will become a reality from now on.



[www.mayaselvacigars.com](http://www.mayaselvacigars.com)



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# A celebration of Prominence

*"Davidoff digs deep into the brand's history for the third limited edition release under the White Band Collection."*

by **Zac Mitchers**

Davidoff's 2023 year is marked by their "The Difference" campaign, which is focusing the limelight back on what has made the brand what it is today: their white banded classics. These masterpieces are the foundation, the four cornerstones, as you could call them, of what has made the company famous. The white banded lines are namely: the Signature, Grand Cru, Aniversario and Millennium.

Davidoff has re-rolled cigar history and brought back some of the classics of its White Band Collection as limited releases. One classic size returns for each of the four lines mentioned above. At the beginning of the year, Davidoff launched the first one, the Signature No. 1. Then followed the Millennium Lancero.

For their third release, they have turned to the Aniversario line, and the vitola that they chose to bring back is a prominent one. Literally and figuratively. A Double Corona vitola, also known as Prominentes, that boasts quite a history. It is none other than the Aniverario No. 1.

Founder Zino Davidoff celebrated his 80th birthday in 1986, and for the occasion, Davidoff produced a special creation that would later be known as the Davidoff 80th Aniversario. The size they chose was the majestic



Double Corona, which was quite the popular size back in the day. Not only did this cigar celebrate an icon, but it also inspired what would later become the Aniversario line, including this impressive size that would thereafter be known as Aniversario No. 1.

Another novelty that made the release back then unique was the packaging of cigars coming in a wooden tubo. An innovation that was not seen before in the cigar world. The idea was born in-house and implemented by none other than the late Dr. Ernst Schneider (another famous figure in Davidoff's company history). The cylinders are cut out into shape and closed by a peg. Back in 1986, that was quite a laborious process. This wooden tubo is returning for the limited edition release, and the overall presentation is inspired by the slide lid boxes from the past.

The blend for this colossal limited edition size is made up of an Ecuadorian Connecticut wrapper over an Ecuadorian binder and Dominican fillers (Piloto Visus, San Vicente Visus, and San Vicente Mejorado Visus). The more discerning eye will see that, on paper, the blend is not the same, but the taste experience is. Davidoff's Master Blenders tweaked it so that they could achieve an identical taste experience to that of the





original: a medium-bodied cigar with balanced flavors of cedar wood, roasted nuts, and fresh spice.

Now, this imposing size is returning in all its glory, and with a production limited to only 20,800 boxes world-wide, it will, without a doubt, be a highly sought-after release by old and new cigar lovers. Seasoned aficionados who knew the Aniversario No. 1 of old will be surprised how Davidoff’s Master Blenders have man-

aged to recreate this classic. Novices who never had the chance to try one before will be brought back in time when elegant sizes such as this majestic vitola were in vogue.

Whoever you are and wherever you are, be sure to get comfortable because, with an enjoyment time of 120 - 140 minutes, the Aniversario No. 1 Limited Edition Collection will keep you company for a while.

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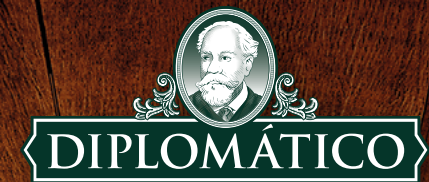
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# PAIRINGS

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.



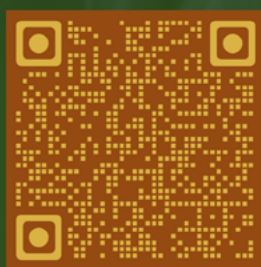




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# Kentucky Straight Bourbons & Tennessee Whiskies

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

by **Simone Poggi**



American whiskies are very different in nature, and we can start taking into account that products belonging to this category can be created out of a mash composed of different types of grains. Our notes here will take into consideration mainly low rye products, as some aspects of rye whisky have already been discussed in a previous article (CLM 39, IV 2022).

From a general standpoint, the sweet character provided by the high percentage of corn in the mash of a bourbon pairs properly with cigars. In essence, cigars are getting their flavors out of combustion and, especially in the second half of the smoke, will develop toastier and heavier notes, especially if a proper cigar purge is not performed. For this reason sweetness is an important requisite of every American whisky we will explore.

Let us start from bourbons whose corn component in the mash must be higher than 51%, but a certain percentage of rye is often present, providing a distinct and refreshing herbal/balsamic hint, such as the Eagle Rare 10 year old, quite a bargain for such a maturation. Some of the suggestions indicated when pairing rye whiskies can be again revisited here. In primis, the attention to salt&pepper or spicy cigars, whose piquant notes can be highlighted by the ginger freshness, exhausting the tastes buds. Some of the Macanudo Inspirado or some releases from AJ Fernandez may prove to be slightly overpowering. Even the concordance of some powerhouses made out of Connecticut Broadleaf, because of their vegetal aromas, may prove to be on the bitter side of the spectrum. Without exaggerating into sweet cigars such as a CAO Pilon, we would select a nutty, woody, medium body cigar with darker notes, rich in chocolate; maybe not reaching the Antano, but a recent batch of Joya Red will be a great choice, as well as a Black Market Esteli from Alec Bradley.

Ezra Brooks Old Ezra 7 y.o., a very pleasant Kentucky straight bourbon with rye herbal balsamic hints, pairs very well in assonance with dark yet herbal tobaccos such as the Montecristo No.1. Same considerations can also be drawn for the nice Jefferson Ocean, a unique craft which experienced sea aging, resulting in a mild yet present mineral influence, which has to be paired with caution, as peppery cigars can be risky choices. A Davidoff Grand Cru or a Flor de Selva can make the deal quite well, as both these Nica-

raguan and Honduran tobaccos feature different profiles, yet their outstanding balance can be a nice background for the salty peaks of this special whisky.

Very interesting mild bourbons, such as the offerings (Straight Kentucky Bourbon, Double Oaked), with their subtle texture and their coherent, yet smooth bourbon profile rich in vanilla, oak and sweetness, feature ample varieties of pairing opportunities; we would pick a Cuban powerhouse, maybe a Partagas or a Montecristo Open of a recent batch. However, the possible disasters are always near the corner: the Woodford Reserve Kentucky Derby, maybe of the several different releases we can choose the 147 from 2021, seems to be a very similar choice to the previously mentioned releases from the same brand. For this reason an interesting pairing could be the one with the nutty essence with black pepper nuances of a El Loco La Viuda. Will the herbal notes become better in assonance? Are the allspices getting warmer? On the contrary, the intense vanilla notes with orange and the hard cherry candy palate of the whisky does not integrate at all with the tobacco, which pushes black pepper on top of sweetness (not pleasant at all), with the herbs standing totally alone. A true unsucces, an example of how special releases can be different from the core range and complicate the pairing strategy.

I will try my very best to avoid the rather famous question whether Tennesse whisky is also a bourbon or not; for the sake of pairing I prefer to concentrate on the aspects associated to taste which can be somehow introduced, or better, removed from the new make spirit when it passes through the charcoal and wool blankets which are typical of the Lincoln County process. I am in favor of recognizing to many releases a certain mellower texture of these products when compared to straight bourbons; this aspect, quite intense in George Dickel 9 y.o. as well as Jack Daniel's Single Barrel, is a true opportunity for pairing. There are quite a number of cigars which are looking for a partner adding to the mix a way to quench piquant spices or somehow bitter tastes; a Pepin Garcia Blue Label, a Nica Rustica, a Liga Privada, a Triqui Traqa, an old school Bolivar or Ramon Allones. The intense sweetness and the velvety texture are for sure a good match for these powerhouses, even though I would go for a Joya de Nicaragua Antano, the best of the best when it comes to flanking a Tennesse whisky high-quality product.







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PAIRING

Cigars  
&  
Spirits



CALDWELL THE LAST TSAR CORONA

CREAMY, GREAT HARMONY.

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●	\$ 11   € 9
DIMENSIONS	
46 x 140 mm (5 ½")	
COUNTRY	
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	

On a sweet base, it delivers vegetal notes and a mix of ginger and chili peppers. Then, rich walnut notes, leather and roasted coffee beans complete the flavor profile. The broad aromas spectrum can be the start of an investigation about the sweet wines finishes; we are selecting two products, one finished for a year in Madeira and the one more extensively aged in Port wine.



DREW ESTATE NICA RUSTICA EL BRUJITO

VERY PERSISTENT & RICH IN EVOLUTION.

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●●	\$ 11   € 13
DIMENSIONS	
52 x 152 mm (6")	
COUNTRY	
NICARAGUA	

True powerhouse, features several of the signature flavors of both Connecticut Broadleaf (wrapper) and Mexican San Andres (binder) tobacco varieties, among which earth, black pepper and spiced cocoa, with piquant hints. The finish is extremely intense and persistent. Such a strong profile can be well paired with two bourbons, one more balsamic, while the other sweeter and more mellow.



HIRAM & SOLOMON CHABAL

BALANCED AND NUANCED.

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●●	\$ 14   € N/A
DIMENSIONS	
52 x 165 mm (5 ½")	
COUNTRY	
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	

A medium body cigar with earthy and slight sweetness on the cold draw, cedar, dark chocolate with natural sweetness citrus notes that grows into more of a citrus peel in the second third with a finish of nuts and spice notes. Two different bourbons have been selected, a wheated creamy one and a more traditional heavily corn-driven one with the special contribution of millet.



GLENMORANGIE

14yo Quinta Ruban

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	44.3% - 88.6	\$
TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	NAS	Ruby Port Pipes Finish

Well-crafted product: the port wine character is preserved, yet extra fruity notes and very well integrated alcohol pushes the experience towards unexplored territories, with bloody oranges, deep, dark fruity notes (blackcurrant, plums) and Gianduia chocolate. Intense and creamy, fulfilling. Leather and port wine is probably the essence of elegance; the wood of the tobacco is enriched by deep wet leather, with a decadent sweetness. Spices play with the sweetness of demerara sugar and animal sensations. Excellent. On the palate the rich Gianduia becomes darker, adding back cherries, plums, roasted walnuts, with a oriental sort of spices. The cigar is no shy of complexity, yet the spirit respects it with a boast in character. Long, rich chocolate finish with several variations.

Pairing score

91

ARDNAMURCHAN

AD/10:22 Madeira Cask Release

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	58.2% - 116.4	\$\$
TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	NAS	Madeira Finish

Fragrant and fresh, expressive with yellow apple and unripe citrus fruit, white peach, grapefruit. Flowery at times, with a touch of heather honey. Intense vanilla, with medium creaminess texture. A spring whisky, though with an intense alcoholic note. Warmer on the palate, with some gingery components and white pepper, backed later on by vanilla, cooked apple and peaches. There is something unrested, nervous and uncontrolled on the nose; the fruit of the spirit is still too unripe to sooth the spicy coffee character of the tobacco. Some green walnut notes are also coming through. The sensation of rivalry continues on the palate, to which a major salty pinch from the whisky is added, making the cigar very peppery, even bitter at times. A true manual of great products which are not well suited together.

Pairing score

82







EAGLE  
Rare 10 y.o.

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

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Bourbon	10 Years Old	New

A very nice, traditional bourbon with a respectful aging, delivering woody and vanilla notes, with an intricate herbal and balsamic quality. Some minor spices are completing the aromas palette, which is not very ample, but rather well integrated. The pairing provides darker sensations, wood and burnt Demerara sugar, red berries balsamic candies and cocoa. Overall, precious aged wood impressions, with a subtle sweetness. Very good. Palates are interesting together, even though the less pronounced sweetness has tougher times in calming down the pepper, brought in front by the balsamic side of the whisky. Bitter cocoa and a major enhancement of the vegetal Broadleaf character, evident in the finish.



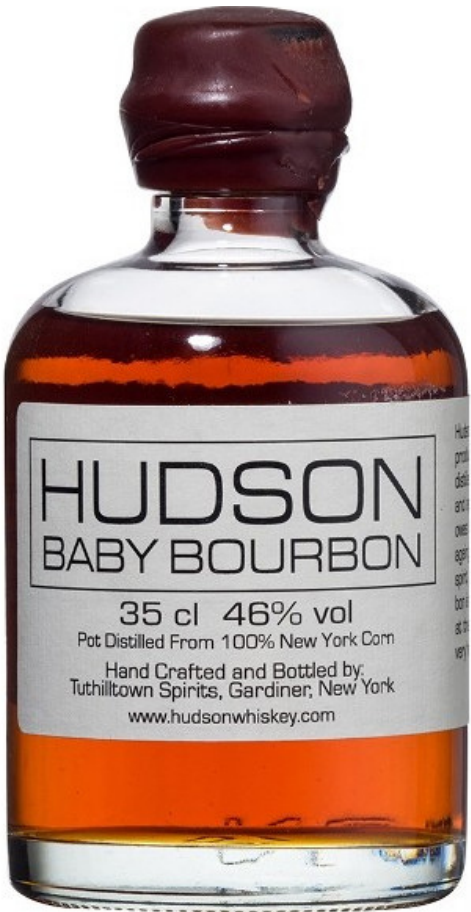
Pairing score 88

HUDSON  
Baby Bourbon

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

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Bourbon	NAS	New

Definitely a special product, capable of providing interesting nuances out of the 100% corn mash: cherries, coconut, a slight menthol freshness and some wet wood on top of a vanilla base. The sweetness is market, with caramel and a minor ginger component on the palate. The noses are playing together a symphony: decadent, tropical fruit of the American sweetens the intense woody character, without obscuring some cocoa and black pepper. Even vegetal notes are finding their way through, for a rich, complex and suggestive integration. On the palate the black pepper re-sounds, yet it mellows down almost immediately, with the vanilla note and some corn sweetness taking over, yet with sweet spices. The finish is the natural continuation, with some spicy hints on the tip of the tongue.



Pairing score 86



KOVAL  
Single Barrel Bourbon

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A.	47% - 94	\$

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Bourbon	NAS	New

Mash with 51% corn and 49% millet. Of good intensity, features oak and cinnamon, with a minor fresh balsamic herbaceous note. Palate is spicier at the beginning, with a marked sweetness that is a counterpoint to the initial spices. Orange juice, very ripe apricot. At times semi-sweet licorice. The noses are convincing together; the earthy cedar of the cigar pairs well with the sweet toasty oak of the spirit, an assonance rich in mellow tones and burnt sugar. Less sweet than expected, very pleasant. The intensities are well designed also for the palate integration, where the dark and bitter tones of the cigar are properly quenched by the bourbon, which contributes with dark fruit and some remote herbal tones. There is a certain interplay of pleasant bitter aftertastes with semi-sweet licorice and earth. Long finish.



Pairing score 90

LARCENY  
Kentucky Straight Bourbon

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

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Bourbon	NAS	New

Velvety bourbon, features a mash including corn, wheat and malted barley. The nose is played on butterscotch and a touch of spicy oak. The sip is more oriented to vanilla and toasted caramel with chocolate and demerara sugar. A touch of coconut. The noses are developing very intriguing aromas, where the dark fruit and butterscotch are enveloping the burnt wood of the cigar in a rich chestnut honey. Probably extra sweetness would help the balance, yet the integration adds to both. Palates are darker and deeper, with ripe black cherries adding on top of burnt wood and spicy chocolate. The mouthfeel is of great texture, the rougher sides of the cigars are perfectly balanced. Maybe some freshness is lacking, in favor of a truly long-lasting dark sensation.



Pairing score 90



# SPIRITS

“While I can't walk on water, I can certainly wobble on whisky.”  
*Ashwin Sanghi*



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# Ferro China

*In the vast landscape of bitter liqueurs,  
here is an ancient and precious bitter drink.*

by **Nicola Ruggiero**

In the field of mixology the balancing of flavors in cocktails takes place through the combination of different components with specific flavor profiles, among which we include bitterness. Although in most preparations the bitter taste is obtained with more or less aromatic bitters, in recent years there has been a real "wave" of rediscovery of the use of bitter liqueurs. This is a fairly niche market segment if we think of the spread of sweet products such as whiskey or rum. Yet the bitters sector of the market has never lost ground and, indeed, now winks at several admirers, both among those who prefer to sip them "smooth" and for those who use them in cocktails. Obviously, as for all product categories, even in the "niche" there are even more niche productions, such as Ferro China.

Ferro China is presented as an alcoholic beverage, dark in color, belonging to the category of bitters. It was originally born as a medicinal elixir and later gained popularity as a digestive and restorative drink and, is also used as an aperitif. The name "Ferro China" derives from its main ingredient, cinchona bark, which gives the drink its characteristic bitter taste. Its history cinchona bark has ancient roots and was known for its medicinal properties. In the seventeenth century, Jesuit missionaries in China deepened the therapeutic use of this bark by the local population, who used it mainly to treat malaria, thanks to its antipyretic and antimalarial properties. With such an identity, the Jesuits soon decided to bring it back with them to Europe, where it became an object of great scientific and medical interest. Ferro China as we know was born in the nineteenth century, from an idea of the entrepreneur Felice Bisleri who began to propose it in the province of Milan as a tonic and digestive, a real panacea for body and mind. Initially offered as a medicine to doctors and pharmacists together with a brochure that listed the principles and benefits. Soon began to find great success abroad, mainly in Asia and India, where it was mixed with water and used as a disinfectant. However, its use became the most disparate: men consumed it at the end of a meal to combat fatigue, children were given a drop as a tonic to combat sickness, while women drank it as an iron supplement. Ferro China was con-



sidered an invigorating tonic with digestive properties and an excellent supplement for the blood: it was believed that diluted in alcohol it was also easily metabolized by the body. It is said, as an anecdote, that the mothers of that time added it to beaten eggs to help their children grow. Its composition involves the prevalent use of iron citrate and cinchona bark, mixed with other herbs and sugar concentrates in order to increase its alcohol content. A fundamental detail is to be underlined: it is the first liqueur ever to be made with the salt of a metal, earning the place of precursor of supplements and tonics. A secret formula conceived by Bisleri back in 1800, then brought to the Italian market first and then became widespread worldwide. This original formula included all natural infusions of rare, beneficial and pleasant herbs, with digestive and aperitif properties. It has two main ingredients: calissaya cinchona bark, known to pharmacists and herbalists for its antimalarial and antipyretic action, and iron citrate. In its production phase the cinchona bark is ground and immersed in alcohol for a period of time so that during this maceration phase, the oils and compounds present in the bark dissolve in the alcohol, creating a solution rich in active ingredients. Afterwards, the solution is filtered and distilled to remove impurities and concentrate the liquid. Once distilled, Ferro China is usually enriched with a variety of herbs and spices, such as gentian root, angelica root, cinnamon, cloves and citrus fruits. All of the added ingredients contribute to the flavor and complex aroma of this bitter. Ferrochina Bisleri, represents a historical digestive, wrapped in a fascinating halo and a history that was lost over the centuries only to return to the market in 2020 thanks to the acquisition of the brand by the Caffo group, which did not want to distort its essence, leaving the recipe and its dark bottle unchanged.

A liqueur for connoisseurs that stands out from other bitters in the market for its intense and decisive flavor and for its taste profile capable of balancing sweetness and bitterness generating a unique taste experience in the consumer. Used, with wisdom, as bitters in your cocktails, it will give the drink a unique aromatic depth.





# Spirits Lover MAGAZINE

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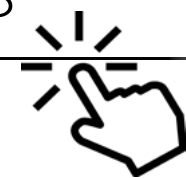
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# Black or White?

*Not all cocktails can have interesting backstories to tell, but not all the cocktails that have them can boast the success of the Black or White Russian.*

by **Vincenzo Losappio & Stefano De Martino**

Coffee is probably one of the best-known and most consumed beverages in the world. Despite the different botanical species, the different terroirs, the different roasting styles, and, last but not least, its preparation, coffee intake is both related to a "domestic" and solitary use and also to a more social one when used for a relaxing break with a friend at work, home, or a cafe. Soon, however, coffee crossed the limits of the beverage world, even becoming a protagonist in Michelin-starred and non-starred kitchens, but also establishing itself as a respectable ingredient in cocktail preparations.

The first drinks and progenitors of this family of cocktails are undoubtedly the Black Russian, made with Vodka and Kahlua (a sweet Mexican coffee liqueur, obtained from a blend of roasted coffee beans, rum, corn syrup, vanilla,

and sugar), and the White Russian, a variation of the Black Russian with the addition of fresh cream. Legend has it that the Black Russian was prepared for the first time in 1949 by the Belgian barman Gustave Tops, of the Hotel Metropole in Brussels. It was created specifically for the American ambassador Perle Skirvin Mesta, who was on an official visit, famous for having inspired the Broadway musical « Call me Madame » in 1950. The name of the cocktail comes from the dark color given by the coffee liqueur and the Russian origins of Vodka. However, according to other theories, the name could find inspiration directly from the time of its creation, during that of the Cold War. If so, despite the strong geopolitical tensions between the USA and the then USSR, during the 50s and 60s, the cocktail became very popular in the States, especially among hippies and artists, among whom it was also known under the name of Black Magic.

The Black Russian, as well as other drinks, has increased its fame thanks to its support from numerous celebrities. In fact, in the 60s, his rise to fame was strengthened thanks to the American show "The Dick Van Dyke Show", where the character Rob Petrie, played by Dick Van Dyke, was often framed while drinking a Black Russian. Another honorable mention was dedicated to the cocktail in the 1965 novel "The Man with the Golden Gun", from the successful James Bond series, where the world-famous British secret agent 007 orders a Black Russian in a bar in Paris. It was also the favorite cocktail of Richard Nixon, one of America's most talked about presidents. This success was only recognized internationally in 1986, when the Black Russian, together with its "White" variant, was added to the second edition of the International Bartender Association (IBA) list. From that moment on, the two cocktails have remained solidly present, on an ongoing basis, in all subsequent IBA lists.

However, one of the more incomplete histories is that of the White Russian, whose authorship was lost in the 1960s. The first specific mention dates back to 1965 in a Californian newspaper. The fact is that this new and younger version of the cocktail quickly gained popularity in the United States during the 1970s. However, it owes its real boom, especially in pop culture, to the film The Big Lebowski, written and directed by the Coen brothers. In this cult classic of the 90s, the protagonist Jeffrey, known as the Dude, played by Jeff Bridges, not only drinks in large quantities, but the glass itself becomes a supporting actor because it is carried around by the Dude everywhere, even in out of the ordinary scenarios (some will recall the delirious monologue in the limousine of the old Lebowski). Later we will find the White Russian again starring in the popular TV series Mad Men, in which the drink is ordered by various characters of the hit show.

Now, to go more in detail, these are two energizing and very versatile drinks: in the White Russian, it is possible to use different types of cream (such as cream and milk or, incorrectly, whipped cream), or it is possible to add aromas such as vanilla or hazelnut syrup, or a cinnamon bitter to give the cocktail a unique touch. In the United States, there are also versions of the Black Russian, which include the addition of a top of ginger beer or Coca-Cola (called The Colorado Bulldog cocktail), which makes it a long drink to be sipped in complete carefreeness.

Basically, these are two drinks with a strong gustatory impact given by the coffee liqueur. Without having an aromatic aptitude, Vodka mainly provides the drink with an alcoholic boost. Due to the presence of coffee, it would be preferable to drink it after a meal, while for those who find it difficult to abandon themselves in the arms of Morpheus, it is not recommended to order it in the evening. In the "White" version, in addition to the visual impact offered by the layering of cocktails and cream, the addition gives the drink a velvety and smooth touch which also makes the cocktail easier to drink. Whether you prefer the Black or White, sipping one of these two Russians will give you the right energy to face the day.

## INGREDIENTS

- 50ml Vodka
- 20ml coffee liqueur
- Fresh cream top (for the White version)

## GLASS

Old-fashioned or low tumbler.

## PREPARATION

Pour all the ingredients directly into the glass, then add ice and mix. The basic recipe does not include any garnish.

## ADVICE

Since Vodka is neutral, attention must be taken when choosing a good coffee liqueur.

For the preparation of the White Russian, the cream is added after mixing the Vodka, coffee liqueur, and ice. The advice is to mix the cream lightly: a strictly ice-free shake is sufficient. The important thing is not to whip the cream!



# Appleton Estate

*From the Heart of Jamaica,  
through the Joy of Innovation.*

by **Vincenzo Salvatore**

The history of Appleton Estate dates back to 1749, and for the past century the distillery has been making some of the foremost Jamaican rums. In 1997 Joy Spence was appointed leading master blender at the distillery. Her tenure led the brand Appleton Estate to become a major worldwide representative not only of Jamaican rums, but of high-quality premium rums, a whopping success that made Spence one of the most influential personalities in the rum-making world.

In 2012, the spirits giant Campari bought the distillery and its brands. After the acquisition, Campari revamped the productive sites, built a state-of-the-art visitor center, and planned a series of major investments that extended the market share and the global reach of Appleton Estate products.





We had the pleasure to have a conversation with Joy, and talk with her about tradition, innovation and information in the rum world.

**Appleton Estate is one of the few major producers making rums from “cane-to-cup.” What does it mean to control the whole productive cycle of your rums? Also, how difficult is to preserve the Jamaican tradition with the global dynamic of a big production?**

For the team and me at Appleton, preserving the traditions of Jamaican rum is critical. We’ve always adhered to the highest production standards we can and continue to utilize many of the techniques that made Jamaican rums renowned around the world, from our copper pot stills to our own limestone filtered water source. All Appleton Estate rums also follow the standards outlined through the Jamaican G.I. (or Geographic Indication). These rules include using Jamaican limestone filtered water, minimum aging practices, no additives and of course being aged under tropical conditions, among other standards. Our team has been advocating for the GI since 2018 and we hope to see more rums adopt the same methods to best protect our long heritage of rum-making.

**Appleton's impressive core range of high-end aged rums made the history of the brand. How has the company been improving on such a major inheritance over the past decade?**

We’ve been able to create signature rums by perfecting the balance of science and art. Evolving our fermentation, ageing and distillation techniques, while also maintaining the tradition of the copper pot still distillation and even our unique yeast, has allowed Appleton to remain a leader in the industry and bring new and exciting rums to the forefront. We’re committed to making the highest quality of rum we can and a part of this is always developing new ways to challenge ourselves. In recent years, we’ve updated our bottles and packaging to reflect our path forward while also ensuring our rich heritage is still represented, resulting in what I feel is an outward reflection of the quality of liquid inside. My focus also continues to be on innovation. Our recently released 17-Year-Old Legend was one of the most challenging projects of my career, but also one of the most rewarding, because we were able to re-create one of our most iconic rums in a new way.

**What distinguishes a big company from a small craft distillery regarding the possibility to experiment with styles and innovations?**

My work here at Appleton Estate is to offer rum drinkers a range of expressions no matter their level of familiarity and the possibilities are unlimited. Thanks to an incredible inventory of ageing rum stock made possible by a lengthy history in production, we’ve been able to release several very special rums over the past several years from the 21-year-old to the Appleton Estate 17-Year-Old Legend. At Appleton, we are privileged to have over 200,000 casks in our inventory, so we have a wealth of fantastic rum to select from.





Despite the major advancements and transformations of the past twenty years, the rum world is still highly fragmented. The niche of rum-aficionados is steadily growing, but most consumers still struggle to understand the differences between rum styles and productive traditions. Which are your strategies to tackle global outreach and product communication regarding the peculiarities of the Jamaican style (overproof, high esters, etc.)?

Education is extremely important and that is where I spend a lot of my time and energy - from traveling to our different markets around the world to leading virtual master classes and trainings. My main focus is always on the high quality standards at Appleton Estate, but we also ensure that we are teaching people how to really appreciate premium aged rums, whether through sipping neat or in cocktails. I personally really enjoy leading pairing seminars with chocolate or cheese as it helps people to identify the nuances and complexity in our rums. We are very proud of the different styles of Jamaican rum and enjoy bringing people in to this world.

We had a couple more questions that involved Appleton Estate's brand team as well.

**Has the rise of small craft and boutique distilleries led to a rediscovery of high-quality rums, or is it going to be a short-lived bubble? Are there some risks to be considered in the current rising inflation of expensive bottles on the market? How is the Jamaican market responding to these latest trends?**

We are very excited about the possibilities for premium aged rums. For us at Appleton, we've always believed our rums have the same high-quality standards and credentials of colleagues in other dark spirits categories so are glad to see aged rums catching up in terms of collectability and pricing. We're continuing to see increased demand for high priced bottlings both on the primary and secondary market, which reaffirms that the demand is there. Our recently launched Appleton Estate 17-Year-Old Legend is already trading at up to \$2500 a bottle on the secondary market so quality rums are certainly starting to gain more recognition.

**How has been Appleton Estate dealing with the consequences of the pandemics and the market disruptions caused by recent wars and weather disasters? What are the major challenges in the future of rum-making?**

One key challenge we are actively working on is to establish minimum standards for Jamaican rum through our Jamaican G.I. We believe this is an important step in helping a broader base of global consumers to understand the Jamaican rum category and reinforce the quality of the spirit for potential new rum consumers.





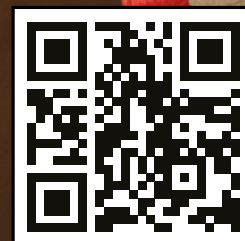
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# Toasting & Charring

*Why the curing of casks makes bourbon so good.*

by **Vincenzo Salvatore**

American bourbon has a long tradition that dates to the legendary first bottles made by the James E. Pepper Distillery in 1780 and to the name allegedly christened by Reverend Elijah Craig in 1789 after the Bourbon County of Kentucky. Despite Prohibition devastating the US bourbon industry, its rooted tradition survived clandestinely and made into modern era becoming a symbol of the American way of life.

In 1964 the US Congress declared bourbon a "distinctive product of the United States" and established a set of Federal regulations to preserve the integrity of its productive quality. Two of these regulations preserve what probably are the most distinctive features of authentic US bourbon: the mash bill requiring a minimum of 51% corn and aging the spirit only in charred American virgin oak containers.

Few cases aside, bourbons are not usually aged for an excessive amount of time: they can range from few months of aging to minimum two years for straight bourbon, then four years for bottle-in-bond, and few exceptions ranging past four years and even fewer above 10 years.

In the latter cases the aging technique must be adapted accordingly. Thus, bourbon is not primarily dependent on time to the extent that it is in Scotch Whisky. In bourbon making, the usage of cured casks has the intended purpose of regulating the contact between the

wood and the "white dog" (as the new makes is called in the bourbon industry) in a pre-determined amount of time to obtain certain results. This means that, in general, bourbon is mainly a product of the aging cask and not of the aging time. Over the years, bourbon distilleries have worked in a strict relationship with cooperages to develop the best solutions for their aging casks.

The current procedures dictate a standard toasting of wood and four levels of charring for the final cask. Toasting means that the wood used to make a cask must undergo first a hot steam treatment at 203 °F (95 °C) and then a 15-minutes stoving at 250 °F (120 °C) to get the staves ready for being coopered into a barrel shape. Charring is the proper procedure of flaming the inside of the cask for a certain amount of time to open the wood pores to improve spirit penetration and enhancing flavoring, as well as to get rid of unwanted sap and green tannins, and to create a charcoal surface that will act as a filter for cleaning the spirit from chemical impurities and giving a darker color in return.

The nature of the wood essence, American oak, and the toasting and charring will determine the molecular composition of what will interact with the bourbon. Among the most important elements we find hemicellulose, lignin, tannins, and lactones. Hemicellulose is a polysaccharide that undergoes the Maillard reaction when hea-



Toasting Levels

(Top picture less toast, bottom more)



ted above 140 °C: that is, the caramelization of superficial wood sugars that can later release aromas of nuts, butter, maple syrup, and caramel to the contained liquid. Lignin is an organic polymer that can help develop aromatic compounds either sweet and spicy or smoky and meaty, depending on the degree of burning: it is essential to develop the typical vanilla flavor of bourbons. Tannins are the most important polyphenolic compounds released by wood during aging: they produce a dry astringent mouthfeel, add color, and help removing the sulfur notes from the distilled new makes. Finally, lactones are the most responsive chemical compounds to the various levels of charring in eventually developing the many different spice flavors that pepper up bourbons. Oak lactones, in fact, are volatile at charring temperatures, so they can be both driven off and formed during charring: one form has a woody, earthy flavor, another is more vegetal. In bourbons, they often are present in a mixture of forms that develop flavors reminiscent of coconut, cinnamon, and nutmeg. Other compounds broke down during charring are furfurals, which can impart caramel, toasted, and sweet flavors, as well as cyclooctene, which can add maple, caramel, and licorice characteristics.

By understanding the way in which different temperature parameters help to create specific flavors, master coopers and distillers can now fine-tune the toasting process, achieving for light, medium, medium-plus, and heavy toasts – also known as alligator char in bourbon making, as the cask internal surface ends up reminding the skin of an alligator. It is not simply the length of time taken, but the intensity of the heat and the amount of time the peak temperature is maintained. Charring a barrel is a quite spectacular technique: a bright flame is skillfully dosed for a certain amount of time (15, 30, 35, and 55 seconds according to the approved Bourbon Char Levels) to obtain the desired effects. Charred casks exhaust their aging potential in a few years, as the cracked wood surfaced gets more quickly saturated by the spirit. Usually, after five years, a level 4 charred cask has given up to 85% of its potential. Most casks are, thus, sold well prior to their complete exhaustion as they can be repurposed for ex-bourbon aging a variety of other spirits that do not require virgin containers like Scotch whisky.

In general, bourbon makers favor char levels 3 and 4 to maximize the contrast between the typical smooth and sweet notes of corn-based spirits with the smoky, nutty, and vanilla extracted from the charred wood, like we can find a staple product like Wild Turkey 101 Bourbon. The lower levels of the charring scale, on the contrary, impacts less on the transformations of lactones and lignin, thus allowing to develop bourbons with a much more mellow and herbal profile. Such bourbons are quite rare, as the market favors the more intensely charred profiles, though distilleries like Michter and Deerhammer offer examples of level 1 and 2, respectively.

Charring Levels

(Top picture level 1, bottom level 4)



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# TASTE

"I only drink Champagne on two occasions,  
when I am in love and when I am not."

*Coco Chanel*





# Autumnal Malts

*The Seasonal Apex  
of the Beer Calendar.*

by **Vincenzo Salvatore**

Fall is by definition the beer season. Not by chance, the Bavarian homeland of German beer, Munich, has been hosting the Oktoberfest for more than two centuries, celebrating the change in weather as the perfect moment to enjoy beer and life with friends, family, and the community at large. While technological advancement made possible to brew and consume beer in any period of the year, there is still something unique to the passage from the hot summer weather to the cooler fall temperatures in how we relate to this favorite beverage. The change in weather, and mood, creates the perfect conditions for enjoying both darker, warmer, and earthier beers as well as it is still warm and light enough to enjoy funky seasonal variations – did somebody say pumpkin?! – and new crazy experiments with all sorts of fall gastronomical delicacies. Lately, consumption trends developed a true frenzy for the coming of fall, and its dedicated brew styles, with anticipation campaigns, contests, beer fairs, and of course the preparation to the Oktoberfest celebrations. Let's delve right into two of the most representative styles!

The first and foremost fall beer is the German Märzen. If you think that German beers are all the same – light blond lagers and rustic weizens – well, not only are you wrong, but you're also missing some of the best beers in the world. Back in the old days, Märzen beers were explicitly made in March in preparation for the Oktoberfest, before the arrival of warmer temperatures made difficult (and forbidden between the end of April and the end of September) to brew

beers in the country. In order to have a beer ready for consumption in six months, the Bavarian brewers developed a stronger, medium-bodied and honey-colored malted beer replete with caramel intensity and earthy undertones. A contemporary authentic version of that traditional beer is the Hacker-Pschorr Oktoberfest Märzen, a true Bavarian nectar of autumnal nuances and flavors. If in Europe the label Oktoberfestbier can be used only by Munich-made beers, the Märzen style flourished outside the boundaries of the Bavarian capital in a variety of interesting interpretations that led worldwide consumers to fall in love with it, regardless of the geographic origins. American Märzen used to be hoppier and drier, while east European ones were more diversified in malt roasting's and colors ranging from reddish to darkish tones, but lately there has been a back to the roots approach that favored the return of the classic Oktoberfest style in all markets. From the Californian Sierra Nevada and Firestone Walker to the Mid-western Great Lakes Brewing and Half Acre, US brewers ramped up to offer their own true-spirit Märzen version. Yet, Avery The Kaiser from Colorado is perhaps the most famous US Märzen, despite being a very different interpretation: it's as bold, eight percent ABV Imperial Oktoberfest beer brewed with Vienna and Munich malts as well as Bravo and Hallertau Hops. A memorable sip to celebrate the peaking of the fall foliage! The second paramount fall beer style made its fortune in the US and is now spreading all over the world: we're talking about the pumpkin ale. Spicing up things with the beloved orange gourd became a real staple of American

fall gastronomical culture, and seasonal pumpkin beers are at the forefront of this crazy mania that sees its culmination in Halloween celebrations at the end of October. Yet, brewers didn't sit on the success of simple pumpkin ales, with their sourish taste and refreshing orange colors, and started mixing up gourds with other fall-favorite spices like nutmeg, cinnamon, allspice and the like, obtaining what can be consider a perfect blast of autumnal character. Furthermore, beers like New Belgium Brewing Company Voodoo Ranger Atomic Pumpkin from Colorado and Southern Tier Brewing Company Pumpking from New York State escalated the pumpkin ale style to the Imperial rank in a triumph of robust fall vibes and intense nuclear blasts of pumpkin and other autumnal spices to keep the cooling temperature at bay. Meanwhile, in Europe, and especially in Italy, brewers rediscovered other typical autumnal delicacies like honey, chestnuts, and especially all sort of grapes, as we saw with the burgeoning trend of Italian Grape Ales over the past few years. Following the more artisanal approach of Belgian saison brewers, we can find wonderful Italian craft beers that showcase the full flavor of fall season like Piedmonts' chestnut ale Grado Plato Strada San Felice and pumpkin ale Baladin Zucca, as well as Veneto's Birrificio Monterosso Autunno, made with the long-forgotten fruit of jujube (also known as red or Chinese dates), and Birra dell'Eremo Genesi, a very complex IGA made like a trait d'union between a beer and a champagne. These beers will definitely keep you joyful and entertained during the cozy months of the best season of the year!





# Umami

*New or  
rediscovered taste?*

by **Giuseppe Mitolo**

What is umami? It is properly classified as fifth taste. The “discovery” of umami dates back to the beginning of the last century. In 1908, Dr. Kikunae Ikeda, a chemistry professor at the University of Tokyo, was the first person to isolate glutamic acid (the most important element responsible for the perception of umami) from the konbu seaweed. However, in 1825, Anthelme Brillant- Savarin, a French gourmet, classified this taste as “meat taste” or “osmasone” without isolating its source. Following the discovery of Dr. Ikeda, other researchers in 1913 also found that other nucleotides such as guanosine-5-monofosphate, the inosine-5-monofosphate and the adenine-5-monofosphate generate sensations which are similar to the ones generated by the glutamic acid.

Despite this scientific discovery, umami wasn’t recognized as one of the basic tastes until 1985 by the scientific community since it was determined to fulfill the following criteria: being different from the other basic tastes; being universal in common food; being identifiable on neurophysiological basis. The basis of the last two criteria has, and continues to be the points of contention based on how easily umami can be recognized. Explaining in words what is or how to recognize a primary taste without comparing it with a specific food is quite a challenge. Nevertheless, knowing the acid or the nucleotides which are mainly involved in umami perception, it was possible for the researchers to identify them in specific food items. These lab tests made it clear that the glutamate is the most abundant among the free amino acids within milk: in particular, the glutamic acid amount which is present in maternal milk is 53,7 mg/dl, compared to 1-2 mg/dl of cow milk. Dr. J. E. Steiner performed a study monitoring the facial expressions of newborns as a response to administration of bitter or acidic food (furrowed forehead, shaken head, closed eyes, etc.) and compared the former with the ones induced by glutamic acid enriched food. In fact the facial expressions towards the glutamic acid enriched foods have been found to be the same as those made during breast-feeding. The surprising paradox

of doctor Steiner’s research is based on the fact that umami seems to be the first of the tastes which we are exposed to once we are born, which we are able to detect, and that we forget when we grow up, and that we later on fight to identify (or to rediscover)! In addition to milk, many different foods can help in detecting umami.

The Italian Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, has a glutamate concentration which varies among 1200-1600 mg/100g (Emmenthal, to compare with, is below 307,5 mg/100g). Among the vegetables peas, tomatoes, asparaguses, broccoli are quite rich in glutamic acid and, generally speaking, in 5'-monofosfat groups. Mushrooms, moreover, depending on the type, include more or less glutamate: shiitake mushrooms, a typical ingredient of Chinese and Japanese cuisine, and in particular the dried ones, contain 1060 mg/100g, compared to 77 mg of Italian dried Porcini mushrooms. Meat and fish (in particular anchovie paste), in

a varied amount, also have quite a relevant amount of the acids and nucleotides which are responsible of the perception of this taste. Soy sauce, moreover, is a very rich in glutamate dressing. Among the three most important countries which produce soy sauce (Korea, China and Japan), the Korean one is the richest in glutamate, with 1260 mg/100g concentration, compared to 782 mg/100g of the Japanese one.

Now that we know what this is, let us try to understand how to better experience it. Umami, as all the tastes, is experienced in the mouth and in particular by the taste buds. Thanks to a 1994 research by Maruyama and Yamamuchi, we know more about the specific area on the tongue which is devoted to the perception of umami. Using a piece of paper soaked in an umami-rich liquid, they noted that the threadlike taste buds area (in the lateral segments of the rear part of the tongue) was the most sensitive region of the tongue.

During the same tests, the two researchers also noted that umami was not immediately perceived, but rather delayed in its effect, which could be perceived sometime after having the same in contact with the mouth or even after swallowing, this being the reason why many people associate it with aftertaste. This technical-scientific introduction is critical to better understand how umami could be named as a taste to rediscover by an adequate sensorial and palatal education. Glutamate or 5'-monofosfat group rich foods allow us to memorize this taste, to be later able to identify it also during smoke.

Over the last few years, there have been several cigar producers who, using appropriate techniques not fully disclosed, have made the traces of umami in the smoke more evident. Sometimes, however, it cannot be excluded that tobacco can restore this flavor even without technical interventions by the producers.







# 中国杂志

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## 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，有時是雙重（正面和背面），有時是圓形的，有時是圓形的，標籤應該給我們所有的信息，以了解更多的東西，而不僅僅是內容。它並不總是正確的，但一般的一些事情總是有效的。

雙重標本應將其名字命名為威士忌，這同樣適用於美國世界。相反，在蘇格蘭和世界其他地方，我們討論沒有“e”的威士忌：在蘇格蘭的情況下，名稱擴大了蘇格蘭威士忌，單一字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。公沒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。製片人選擇不說年齡，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，無夢夜也可以使用用水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酒中，這是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的裝瓶者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詞語，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。



# Blind Tasting



## 82 SPIRITS

- 82 Rum
- 94 Whisky

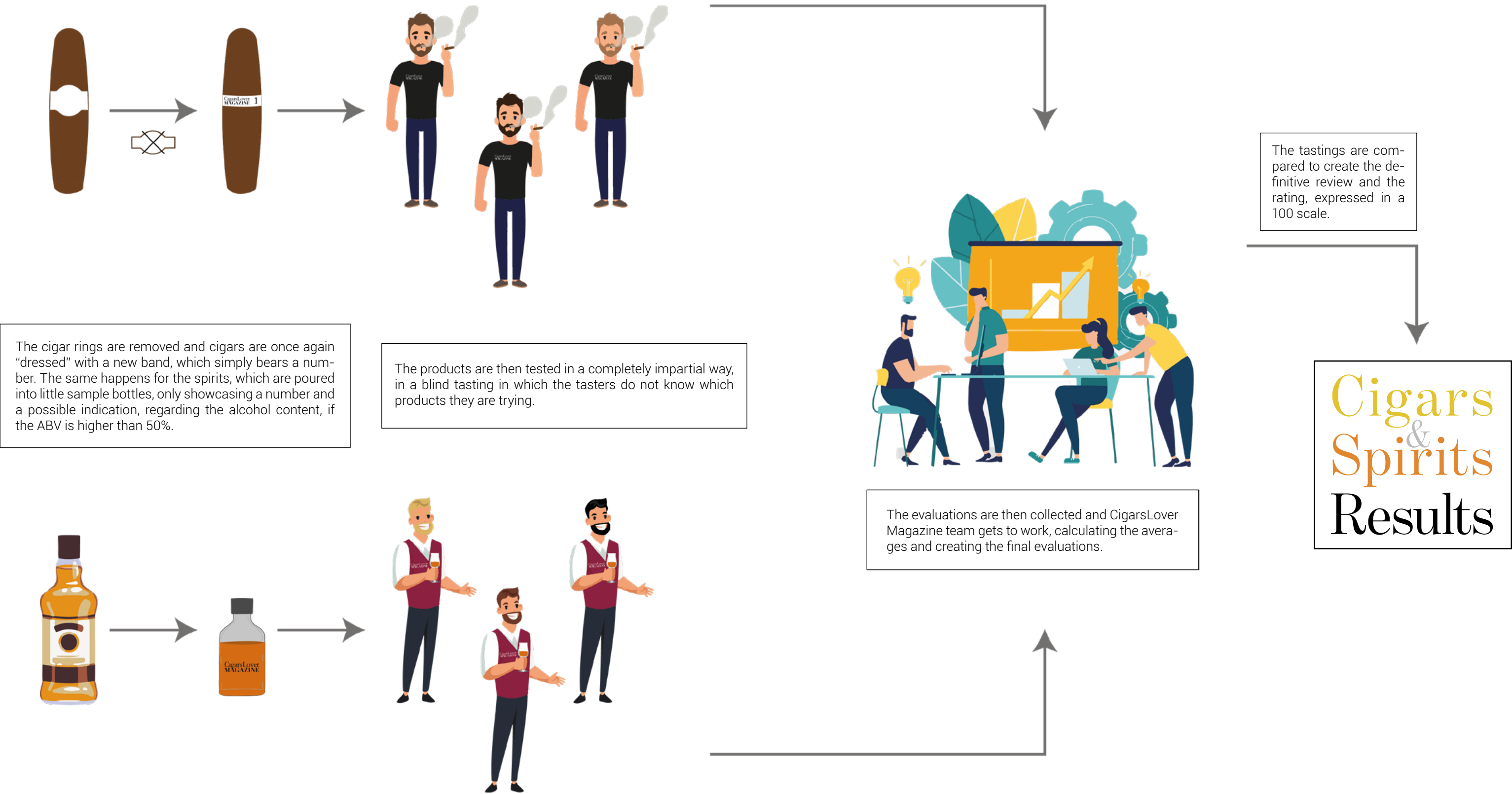
## 98 CIGARS

- 99 Corona Gorda
- 104 Robusto
- 108 Shorts
- 115 Toro





# HOW ARE THE BLIND TASTINGS MADE?







KAVALAN  
*Solist Fino Sherry*

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

— 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.

94

# 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.

APPLETON ESTATE®  
JAMAICA RUM





# Rum



APPLETON  
2002  
Hearts Collection

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Jamaica	63%   126	\$\$\$\$

— NOSE —

Brine, wood, and field flower freshness. Vegetal and balsamic nuances, cinnamon, and roasted coffee notes.

— PALATE —

Oily and warm. Wood, honey, roasted coffee, tropical fruits, and cinnamon.

— FINISH —

Long finish. Wood spices, roasted notes, and cinnamon.

Complex, with a deep and structured flavor profile.

93



CLEMENT  
VIEUX  
15 Year Old

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

— NOSE —

Rich scents of cherry, red fruits, caramel, vanilla, oak, and raisins. Licorice notes, enriched by wood spices.

— PALATE —

Vanilla, oak, red fruits, rancio, and white pepper. It is a little dry.

— FINISH —

Long. Red fruits, white pepper, and wood spices.

Rich and fulfilling. Deep and structured, with a meditative complexity.

93



SAINT JAMES  
Éphémères  
N°7

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	54.3%   108.6	\$\$\$

— NOSE —

Wood varnish, tropical fruits, with mango and pineapple. A nuance of orange peel. Cocoa beans.

— PALATE —

Smooth, with cocoa, wood spices, cinnamon, oak, red fruits (cherry in spirits) and some plum.

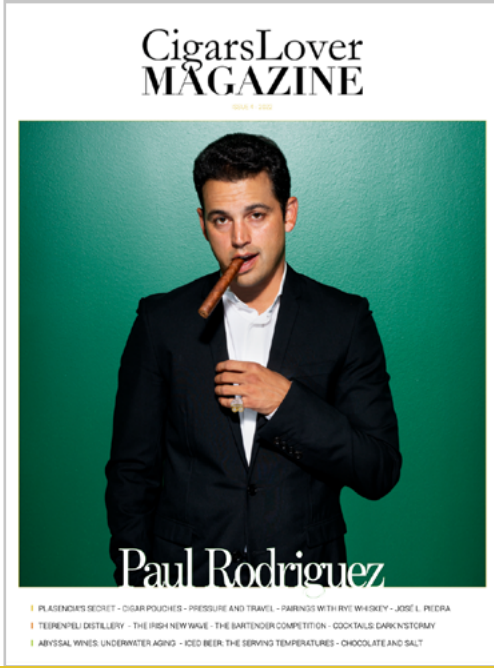
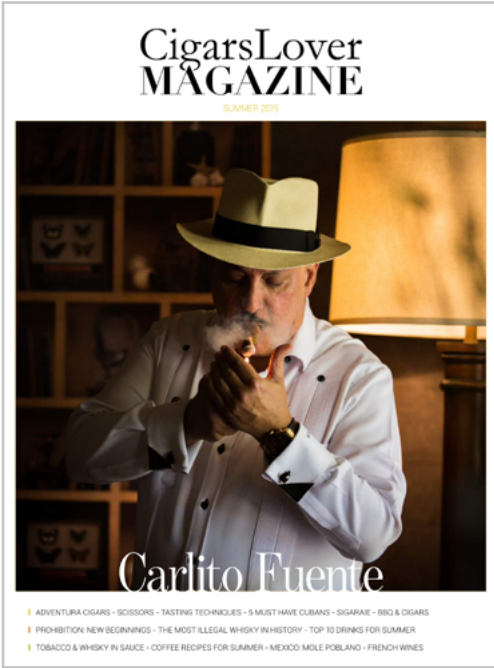
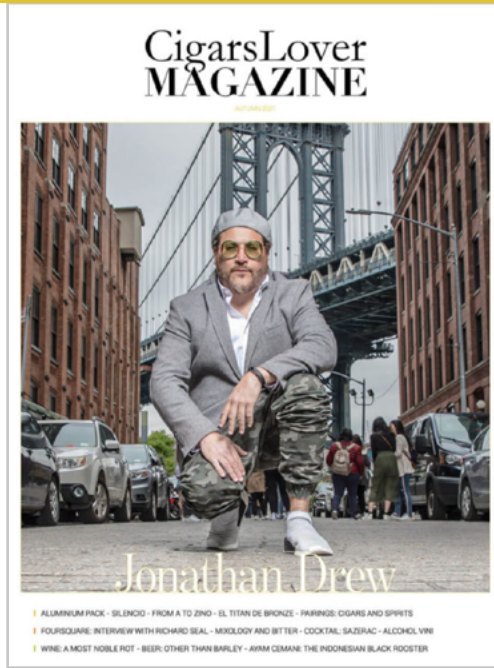
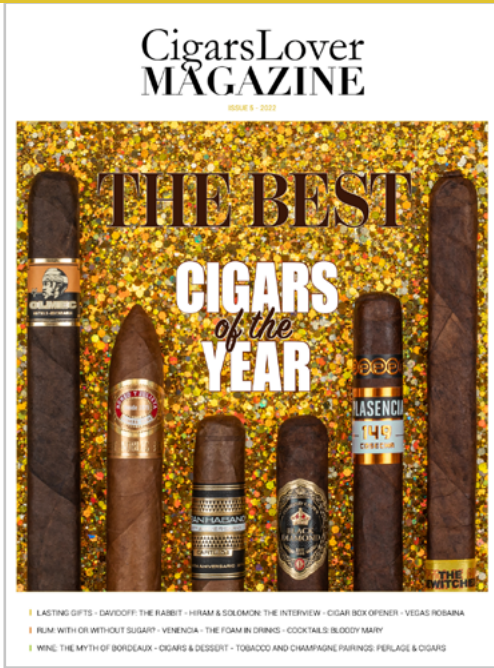
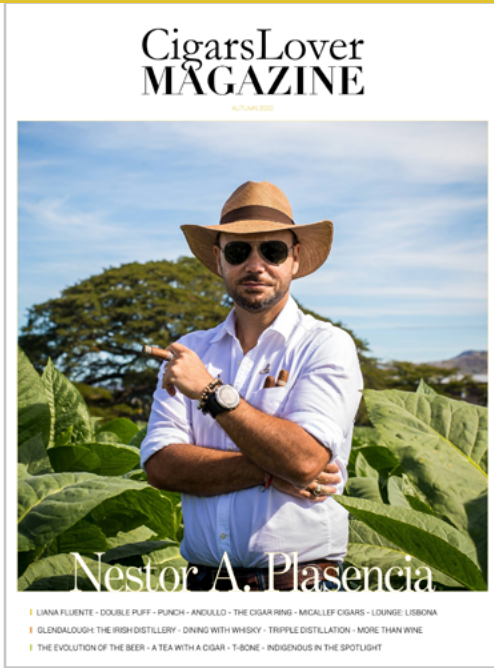
— FINISH —

The finish is long and peppery. Cocoa, and honey. Slightly dry.

Rich, intense, and boasting a nice structure. Satisfying.

93





# CIGARSLOVERS MAGAZINE

## DISCOVER ALL ISSUES



INTERACTIVE





MACNAIR'S  
*Panama  
7 Year Old*

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

— NOSE —  
Marzipan, almonds, honey, some fresh vegetal scents, yellow fruit and apple peel. Hints of coconut.

— PALATE —  
Round, with ripe fruits and honey. There are almonds, toffee, orange zest, marzipan.

— FINISH —  
Long finish, with spices and coffee.

Great structure and complexity. Intense and long-lasting persistence.

92



DEPAZ  
*Port Cask Finish*

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

— NOSE —  
Wood, a touch of varnish, vanilla, cocoa and ripe red fruit: cherry and black cherries. Balsamic aromas.

— PALATE —  
Fresh. Vegetalm with balsamic hints. Sultana, apricot and plums. Cocoa and spices, with leather and coffee.

— FINISH —  
Medium long. Sultanas and coffee.

Rich and boasting a wide flavor profile. It is intense and warm, with a nice depth to it.

91



PAPA ROUYO  
*Le Rejeton*

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

— NOSE —  
Sugar cane, brine, and a rich marron glace aroma, that is the true protagonist.

— PALATE —  
Straight and on the dry side. Sugar cane, mineral notes and intense peppery notes.

— FINISH —  
The finish is long, with a riot of pepper and chili pepper.

Complex, with an almost never-ending finish. Intense.

90



TROIS RIVIÈRES  
*Triple Millésime  
2001 2005 2011*

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

— NOSE —  
Scents of yellow fruits, vanilla pod, wood, and roasted aromas.

— PALATE —  
Mellow, with cocoa, wood, wood spices, a touch of white pepper, a hint of vanilla, and some roasted notes.

— FINISH —  
Medium long. Wood, a mix of exotic fruits, and wood spices.

Round and structured. It is a well-balanced rum, with a nice persistency.

89



A 1710  
*Soleil de Minuit*

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	46.4%   92.8	\$\$\$

— NOSE —  
Caramelized nuts, some wood spices, roasted nuances, and deep vegetal notes with balsamic hints.

— PALATE —  
Round, with wood spices, wood, cocoa, and a mix of fruits.

— FINISH —  
Medium. Wood spices, fruits, and marzipan.

Masterfully balanced and smooth, with a nice structure.

88



ABUELO  
*15 Años  
Sherry Cask Finish*

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

— NOSE —  
Scents of red fruits, together with vanilla and oak. Wood spices and a touch of fresh herbs.

— PALATE —  
Mellow and honeyed. Oak, vanilla, orange peel, and rancio.

— FINISH —  
Medium long. Vanilla, honey, rancio, and wood spices.

Smooth. Easy to appreciate and with a nice persistency.

88





TAKAMAKA  
 White

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

—NOSE—  
 Brine, mineral scents, vegetal and balsamic notes, followed by sugar cane.

—PALATE—  
 Rich notes of sugar cane, vegetal and mineral aromas.

FINISH  
 Medium finish. Molasses and balsamic aromas.

Powerful, but rather contained in terms of flavor profile.

87



NAGA  
 Reserve Full Proof

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Indonesia	62.3%   122.6	\$\$

—NOSE—  
 Rich wood, varnish, and nail polish, with some toffee, caramel and burnt sugar. Vanilla.

—PALATE—  
 Round, despite the high AVB. There is wood, vanilla, toffee, roasted notes of coffee.

—FINISH—  
 Medium-long finish. Wood, vanilla and toffee.

Rich, intense and explosive. To the nose it lacks complexity.

87



JUAN SANTOS  
 Antigua Reserva  
 21 Year Old

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

—NOSE—  
 Caramel scents, together with wood, a hint of varnish, and some roasted notes.

—PALATE—  
 Sugar cane, wood and now milk chocolate, accompanied with just a touch of wood spices.

—FINISH—  
 The finish is on the short side, with wood and milk chocolate.

Smooth and easy to enjoy. Not that deep or structured.

86



CHOOSE WHO TO BELIEVE.

A MIRACULOUS LIE

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

A BITTER TRUTH

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



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DRINK RESPONSIBLY



# Whisky



RESERVOIR  
*Grey Ghost 5 Year Old  
Bottled in Bond*

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

— NOSE —

Red fruits, with bitter sherry, oak, white pepper, a hint of vanilla, milk chocolate with raisins.

— PALATE —

Mellow. A little on the dry side. Oak, rich balsamic notes, with cardamon, chestnut honey and star anise.

— FINISH —

Medium long. Oak, wood spices and balsamic notes.

It boasts a nice complexity. The flavor profile is ample and structured.

92



GLENFARCLAS  
*30 Year Old*

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

— NOSE —

Candied fruits, with apricot and mango, honey, some wood spices, and then some sherry hints.

— PALATE —

Clean and smooth. Wood, sherry notes, a touch of candied fruits, almonds nuances,

— FINISH —

Medium long. Sherry and a balsamic touch.

Well balanced, deep and complex.

90



KAVALAN  
*Concertmaster  
Sherry Finish*

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Taiwan	40%   90	\$\$\$

— NOSE —

Sherry, yellow fruits, custard and vanilla. Unripe cherries and cranberries. A touch of lemon with its flowers.

— PALATE —

Warm and round. Grapefruit together with yellow and tropical fruit, with rich pineapple.

— FINISH —

Medium persistence. Some woody notes.

Fresh and rich. Easy to enjoy, due to a nicely balanced flavor profile.

90





THE WHISTLER  
7 Year Old  
Cask Strength

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Ireland	59%   108	\$\$

— NOSE —

Malt and cereals, accompanied by mandarin, salted caramel, and fresh notes of cloves. Grand Marnier.

— PALATE —

Intense and warm. Mandarin and cereals. The balsamic component is more marked. A pinch of walnut.

— FINISH —

The finish is long, with rich balsamic and mandarin notes.

Intense. The sip is warm and satisfying, with a long-lasting finish.

89



BOWMORE  
Aston Martin 10 Year  
Old Dark & Intense

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

— NOSE —

Vanilla, glazed bacon, oranges and a faint hint of tropical fruit. Raisins and caramel, with leather and tobacco.

— PALATE —

Tobacco with a salty edge. Gentle smoke. Chocolate and dark maple, with roasted nuts and a black pepper.

— FINISH —

Medium. Bittersweet with mineral notes. Then salty smoke and coffee.

It shows signs of products of much longer maturation.

89



BALVENIE  
21 Year Old  
PortWood

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	47.6%   95.2	\$\$\$\$

— NOSE —

Ripe tropical fruit, dates, acacia honey, candied fruit, seasoned wood and a hint of vanilla. Walnut.

— PALATE —

Smooth. Honey, hazelnut, and roasted notes. A veiled spiciness of the wood. Hints of ripe fruit.

— FINISH —

Medium-long persistence, with wood spices and sweet honeyed notes.

Structured and well-balanced aromatic. Deep flavor profile.

88



BENRIACH  
12 Years Old

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

— NOSE —

Fruity and fresh, with light citrusy notes together with cranberries, strawberry, wet sultanas. Vanilla.

— PALATE —

A mineral note, followed by sultanas and cherries. The lemon freshness is confirmed.

— FINISH —

Medium-short. Cherries and sultanas.

Balanced and fresh. It lacks a little in depth and complexity.

87



BLAUM BROS  
Straight Rye

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

— NOSE —

Vanilla, caramel and balsamic herbs. A very deep spiciness. Pecan and maple syrup.

— PALATE —

Maple syrup, pecan, honey, aa touch of spices, among which cinnamon stands out. Oak wood.

— FINISH —

Medium-long. Cinnamon and balsamic herbs. Oak and wild pepper.

Harmonious and with a nicely structured flavor profile.

87



LOCHLEA  
Our Barley

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

— NOSE —

Unripe apples, pears, barley and a straight sweetness. Sherried sensations. A minor vinous note.

— PALATE —

Spices and more fruit, a mix of yellow one with different levels of ripeness.

— FINISH —

Contained, and a little bitter. Not well integrated together.

A little unbalanced, with aromas that tend to overwhelm each other.

86





EGAN'S  
*Fortitude*

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Ireland	46%   92	\$

—NOSE—  
 Chocolate with marzipan, prunes and ripe cherries. Raspberry hard candies. Sultanas in alcohol.

—PALATE—  
 Cinnamon, with sherry notes that are fairly dominant, though less chocolate oriented and more fruity.

—FINISH—  
 Medium. Simple and more mono-dimensional.

It shows some flows, despite an interesting core. It lacks in complexity.

85



TORABHAIG  
*Allt Gleann*

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	46%   92	\$

—NOSE—  
 Mineral peat, a hint of liquorice and then smoky hints. After a few moments, vanilla.

—PALATE—  
 Mineral peat confirms itself and is the undisputed protagonist. Lemon zest and custard. A hint of ginger.

—FINISH—  
 The finish is medium, with peat, wood spices and ginger. Slightly dry.

Intense but it lacks in balance. The peat is a little overwhelming.

85



HUDSON  
*Manhattan Rye*

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

—NOSE—  
 Rich vanilla scents, together with young wood, wood varnish, and a fruity touch. Caramel.

—PALATE—  
 The wood varnish is the protagonist, followed by wood spices and a touch of cinnamon. A lot of vanilla.

—FINISH—  
 Medium. Young wood and wood spices. On the sweet side.

It lacks the aromatic depth and structure.

84

THE CHEDI  
 ANDERMATT, SWITZERLAND

2013  
 2023

A DECADE OF  
 MAKING THE  
 DIFFERENCE

# TASTE THE DIFFERENCE

  
 SWISS DELUXE HOTELS

GHM  
 A STYLE TO REMEMBER

 LEADING  
 HOTELS®



# 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.

# Corona Gorda







SIN COMPROMISO  
SELECCIÓN INTREPIDO

BROAD AND INTENSE

Black pepper, earth, and leather are the prominent flavors, joined by wood, and cocoa. The smoke becomes creamy. Coffee and herbal notes are added in the second half.

93



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	46x143mm (5 5/8")	\$ 16.5   € 15.9
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	ECUADOR	NICARAGUA, U.S.A.



LAMIRADA  
CONNECTICUT CORONA G.

NICE EVOLUTION

The cigar opens with leather, cedar wood, and peanuts, supported by a creamy undertone. The second half turns to white pepper aromas with vegetal and herbal nuances.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	46x143mm (5 5/8")	\$ 7.8   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



BANDOLERO  
SERIE A SAGACES

SMOOTH AND STRUCTURED

Hazelnut, wood, and espresso give way to the smoke. They are followed by balsamic herbs and black pepper. A subtle sweetness is present in the background throughout the smoke.

90



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	46x143mm (5 5/8")	\$ 12   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
N/A	N/A	N/A



CRUX  
DU CONNOISSEUR NO.4

A LITTLE STATIC. BALANCED.

It delivers nutty and earthy notes, together with vegetal and roasted coffee aromas. A little spiciness in the background.

87



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	46x143mm (5 5/8")	\$ 10   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	HONDURAS



SERINO  
TAINO CORONA GORDA

COMPLEX AND SMOOTH

Pepper, leather, and a subtle sweetness give way to the smoke, followed by wood and sourdough aromas. A nutty flavor, mainly hazelnut, is added in the second half.

90



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	46x152mm (6")	\$ 8.5   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



AROMA DE CUBA  
PASION CORONA GORDA

FLAVORFUL BUT LINEAR

Black pepper, hazelnut, and roasted espresso notes comprise the profile. While the flavor intensity is marked, there are no significant changes happening throughout the smoke.

87



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	46x143mm (5 5/8")	\$ 10.5   € 9.4
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



TATUAJE  
7TH TUXTLA

RICH BUT LINEAR

It delivers earthy notes, together walnut, accompanied by some vegetal aromas and a touch of black pepper. Hints of nutmeg in the finale.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	46x143mm (5 5/8")	\$ 9.5   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



DAUGHTER OF THE WIND  
PONY EXPRESS

INTENSE, BUT STATIC

It delivers woody notes, macis, vegetal aromas and a balsamic hint, the latter relegated to the background. Hints of roasted notes and tangerine in the aftertaste.

87



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	48x152mm (6")	\$ 17   € 18
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	COSTA RICA, NICARAGUA	DOMINICAN REP., PERU





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TESTED  
EVERY  
YEAR

FIND CIGARS



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OUR ORIGINS

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BY JRE TOBACCO



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LIBERTAD**

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Rauchen ist tödlich.  
Fumer tue.  
Il fumo uccide.



# Robusto



## EL GÜEGÜENSE ROBUSTO

DEEP AND STRUCTURED

Hazelnut, leather, and light spice give way to the smoke, supported by a creamy and sweet base. Herbal notes are added later, with the spices, mainly black pepper, growing in intensity.

92 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x140mm (7")	\$ 11.2   € 11.6
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



## HIRAM AND SOLOMON SHRINER ROBUSTO

BALANCED AND RICH

Pepper, hay, and sourdough bread notes give way to the smoke. Nuances of cereal are also perceptible in the background. The smoke becomes creamier from the second half on.

90 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x127mm (5")	\$ 11   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	INDONESIA	DOM REP., BRAZIL, NICARAGUA



## NAT CICCÒ ANIVERSARIO 1965 LIGA NO.4 ROBUSTO

COMPLEX AND INTENSE

Leather, earth, and cocoa make up the profile in the beginning. Later on, notes of coffee, black pepper, and a subtle sweetness join the profile. The spice becomes predominant towards the end.

90 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x127mm (5")	\$ 7.65   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



## DON LINO AFRICA DUMA

BOLD AND FLAVORFUL

The cigar opens with aromas of cinnamon, hazelnut, and a vegetal nuance. A zesty citrus note joins the profile in the second half, while the smoke becomes spicier towards the end.

90 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x127mm (5")	\$ 10   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	CAMEROON	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA





ARTISTA  
MIDNIGHT ROBUSTO

COMPLEX AND FULL

The cigar opens with ripe fruit, white pepper, and wood aromas, and leather and cream in the back-ground. Herbal and vegetal flavors come through in the second half as well.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x127mm (5")	\$ 10.2   € 10.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA, U.S.A.



KNUCKLE SANDWICH  
CONNECTICUT ROBUSTO J

SMOOTH AND BALANCED

Earthy and vegetal notes open the smoke. Then wood and roasted notes, recalling coffee beans.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x127mm (5")	\$ 12.5   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



HOYO DE MONTERREY  
EPICURE NO.2

ELEGANT

It develops notes of wood, honey, and nuts, underlined by a subtle sweetness. White pepper aromas are added, followed by hints of cocoa. A bitter note appears towards the end.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x124mm (4 7/8")	\$ -   € 15.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



VILLIGER 1888  
NICARAGUA ROBUSTO

STATIC

It delivers vegetal notes and earth, which alternated for the whole duration of the smoke. In the last part, the earthy component becomes pre-dominant.

87



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x127mm (5")	\$ 8   € 8.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA, U.S.A.

“If you can’t send money send tobacco”

-George Washington

“And Whiskey”

-Reservoir Distillery



THE INCOMPARABLE  
FLAVOURS OF NICARAGUA





# Shorts



## ZINO NICARAGUA SHORT TORPEDO

*REFINED AND BALANCED*

It opens up with touch of black pepper and earth. Then a touch of wood vegetal nuances. In the second half, balsamic herbs are added.

90 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	52x101mm (4")	\$ 6.2   € 6.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	HONDURAS	NICARAGUA



## OLIVA SERIE V NUB 460

*BOLD AND INTENSE*

Black pepper together with some vegetal hints. Then green wood and earth, followed by some cinnamon hints and a touch of citrus in the background

90 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	60x100mm (4")	\$ 9.2-   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



## PADRÓN FAMILY RESERVE NO.95 MADURO

*BOLD*

Black pepper, leather, and toasted coffee, with vegetal nuances. Then incense and earth, followed by balsamic hints.

89 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	60x121mm (4 3/4")	\$ 29.5   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



## GREAT WALL 132 LEGEND NO. 1

*COMPLEX AND REFINED*

The opening delivers gentle note of wood, together with roasted notes. A little on the dry side. Then honey, roasted notes and a vegetal hint, the latter in the background.

89 

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	52x138mm (5 3/8")	\$ 13.7   € 12.7
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
DOMINICAN REP.	INDONESIA	CHINA, DOMINICAN REP.





CAO  
CAMEROON PERFECTO

*BOLD AND DIRECT*

It develops aromas of earth, wood, black pepper and roasted coffee notes. There is also a touch of cocoa in some puffs.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	48x101mm (4")	\$ 5.8   € 5.7
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CAMEROON	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



VEGAFINA  
1998 VF44S

*INTENSE*

It exhibits earthy and peppery notes, enriched by a vegetal touch. In the background, there are white pepper and a hint of cinnamon. Piquant peaks.

87



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	54x140mm (5 ½")	\$ -   € 6.1
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	INDONESIA	COLOMBIA, DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



LOST & FOUND FOREVER  
FRESH ROTHSCHILD

*AROMATIC AND BALANCED*

Earth, wood, and white pepper are present in the first half. Leather and herbs are added in the second half, while the white pepper becomes spicier towards the end.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	48x101mm (4")	\$ 8   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
U.S.A.	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



L'ATELIER  
ROXY ORIGINAL

*SMOOTH*

It delivers notes of wood and earth, together with a touch of spices. In the second half, nutty notes join the flavor profile.

85



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x89mm (3 ½")	\$ 8   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



MAESTRANZA  
VISCONDE

*RICH AND BOLD*

It delivers barnyard, black pepper and earth, that alternates for the whole smoke.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	60x101mm (4")	\$ -   € 11
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
HONDURAS	COSTA RICA	NICARAGUA



MONTECRISTO  
MEDIA CORONA

*A LITTLE HARSH*

It delivers notes of earh, black pepper and roasted coffee beans. There is also a touch of wood. It becomes more spicy in the final part.

84



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	44x90 mm (3 ½")	\$ -   € 9.2
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



EL LOCO  
EL HUERFANO

*INTENSE*

It delivers notes of earth, walnut and piquant spices. In the second half, balsamic aromas complete the flavor profile.

87



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	42x101mm (4")	\$ -   € 13
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	MEXICO	MEXICO, NICARAGUA



BONGANI  
458

*A LITTLE HARSH*

It delivers a mix of earth and coffee, together with a balsamic hint. There is a slight bitterness perceivable in the second part of the smoke.

83

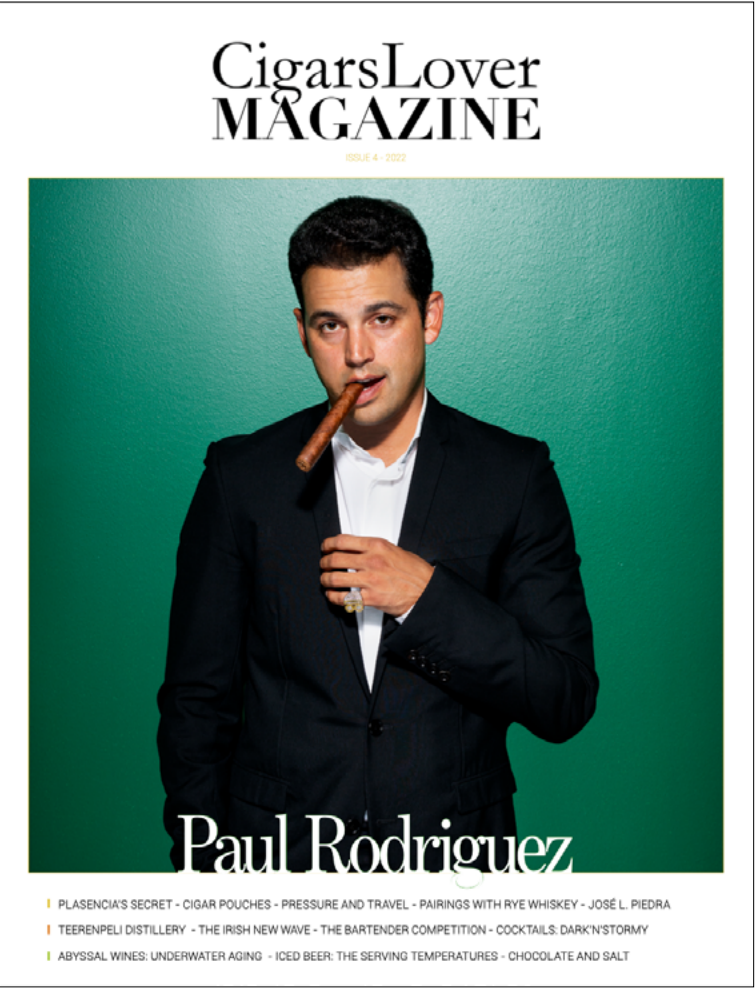


STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	58x101mm (4")	\$ 10.9   € 14.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CAMEROON	MOZAMBIQUE	MOZAMBIQUE, ZIMBABWE



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INTERACTIVE





# 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







ROOM 101  
14TH ANNIVERSARY

AROMATIC AND FULL

Black pepper, cocoa, and earth are joined by leather in the first half. A balsamic note is added in the second half, and the black pepper becomes the prominent flavor towards the finish.

92



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



DAVIDOFF NICARAGUA 10TH  
ANNIVERSARY LIMITED ED.

WELL BALANCED AND HARMONIOUS

It alternates earth, black pepper and aged wood, together with some wood resin. Then it turns to vegetal notes and balsamic aromas, recalling mint.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	56x152mm (6")	\$ 36   € 36
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



VALENTINO SIESTO  
BOX PRESSED MADURO TORO

BALANCED AND INTERESTING

The cigar opens with a combination of wood and cappuccino, with a floral nuance in the background. Aromas of mineral and cream, with a meaty sensation, join in the second half.

91



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x140mm (5 ½")	\$ 23.32   € 21
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



JOYA DE NICARAGUA  
CLASICO ORIGINAL TORO

BOLD AND HARMONIOUS

Black pepper, espresso, and sweet cream are the core flavors of the profile. They are supported by earth and wood in the first half, with hints of molasses joining in the second half.

89



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x152mm (6")	\$ 8.75   € 6.2
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



LARANJA  
RESERVA TORO

RICH AND BALANCED

It exhibits aromas of spices and black pepper, followed by wood and vegetal aromas. In the second half a balsamic component is added to the flavor profile.

91



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x152mm (6")	\$ 12.6   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
BRAZIL	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



WEST TAMPA RED  
TORO

BALANCED BUT LINEAR

Nuts, mainly hazelnut, and wood are present in the opening, joined later by black pepper and leather. An earthy aroma is added in the second half of the smoke.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x152mm (6")	\$ 10   € 10.5
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



ANASTASIA  
YELLOW LABEL OPERA

ROUND AND SMOOTH

It develops notes of black pepper, earth and milk chocolate. There is a little spiciness with some aromatic herbs, recalling oregano.

90



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	52x152mm (6")	\$ 26   € 20
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
N/A	N/A	N/A



CASA 1910 SOLDADERA  
EDITION TENIENTE ANGELA

LAYERED AND SMOOTH

Wood, coffee, and hazelnut are the core flavors of the profile, which are later on joined by a light white pepper note and hints of balsamic herbs towards the end.

88



STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x152m (6")	\$ 18   € -
WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
N/A	DOMINICAN REP., MEXICO	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



# Credits

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## **Back to Slims**

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## **Flor de Selva No. 15**

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## **A celebration of Prominence**

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## **Pairings**

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## **Kentucky Straight Bourbons & Tennessee Whiskies**

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## **Cigars & Spirits**

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## **Ferro China**

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## **Black or White?**

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## **Appleton Estate**

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## **Toasting & Charring**

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## **Autumnal Malts**

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## **Umami**

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## **Blind tasting - Spirits**

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## **Blind tasting - Cigars**

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