CigarsLover MAGAZINE

ISSUE 4 - 2024



Alec & Bradley

- DAVIDOFF: PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES - HIRAM & SOLOMON - THE EXPERT SMOKER - TISSUE PAPER OR CELLOPHANE
- MARS WHISKY: THE INTERVIEW - PAIRING CHOCOLATE & IRISH TROPICAL JAPANESE WHISKY - COCKTAIL: MAI TAI
- THE ABSOLUTE GREAT COMEBACK OF RED SPARKLING WINES - SUGARCANE JUICE: THE VERSATILE TROPICAL DRINK



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CigarsLover
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Editor's thoughts

Four stories of success.

The fourth issue of 2024 features quite a lot of interviews. We had the pleasure to talk with Alec and Bradley, who are not new to our pages but have a lot to tell us after the acquisition of their brand by the Scandinavian Tobacco Group in 2023. This year marks Hiram & Solomon's 10th anniversary, and what better time to touch base again with Fouad Kashouty and his wife, Romy? We also had the pleasure of talking with Momoko Kato, Manager at Hombo Shuzo Co., Ltd., the company behind the notorious Japanese whisky brand Mars.

In the following pages, you will find the last blind tasting of the year, which the 2024 Awards will follow in the fifth and final issue of this year. As usual, 24 among rums and whiskies and 40 cigars are rated, together with the 9 products paired.

#refineyourtaste



UNDERCROWN MADURO
The original Undercrown blended and created on the factory floor at La Gran Fabrica Drew Estate, Undercrown Maduro is made from a San Andres (Mexico) wrapper; Connecticut River Valley Stalk-Cut and Stalk-Cured Habano binder; and filler tobaccos of select Brazilian Mata Fina and Nicaraguan Cuban seed tobaccos. Medium-plus, Undercrown Maduro is a bold, deep and textured cigar that offers an earthy, rich and smooth taste profile with a natural sweetness.

Wrapper: San Andres (Mexico)
Binder: Connecticut River Valley Stalk-Cut Habano
Filler: Select Brazilian Mata Fina and Nicaraguan

UNDERCROWN SHADE
Undercrown Shade is a significant shift away from the dark, bold Undercrown Maduro to the more mellow, yet equally expressive flavor of the Connecticut Shade varietal. Featuring a regal Ecuadorian Connecticut wrapper, a luscious Sumatran binder and a filler blend of Dominican Criollo '98 and Nicaraguan Criollo '98 and Corojo '99 tobaccos, Undercrown Shade is medium-bodied and ultra-smooth offering notes of cream with lush hints of vanilla, caramel and pepper.

Wrapper: Ecuadorian Connecticut
Binder: Sumatran
Filler: Dominican and Nicaraguan



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SURGEON GENERAL WARNING:
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Celebrating a decade of dedication, Undercrown 10 narrates a deeply passionate and spiritual brand journey, which we've entitled "**All Dekk'd Out.**" From a truly humble and unanticipated beginning, the Undercrown frontmark has led a diverse squadron of new-wave cigar aficionados from all walks of life. Undercrown 10 is undeniably big and bold, yet subtly nuanced. Presenting a flavorful and complex smoking experience of Mexican Hot Chocolate, this expression transitions from earthy sweetness and waves of black pepper spice to notes of sun-dried cherries, raisins and cacao.

- **W: Mex. Otopan Negro Ultimo Corte**
- **B: Connecticut Broadleaf**
- **F: Nicaraguan**

2021
91
CIGAR AFICIONADO
RATING

UNDERCROWN
NUESTROS PUROS ✦ BY DREW ESTATE

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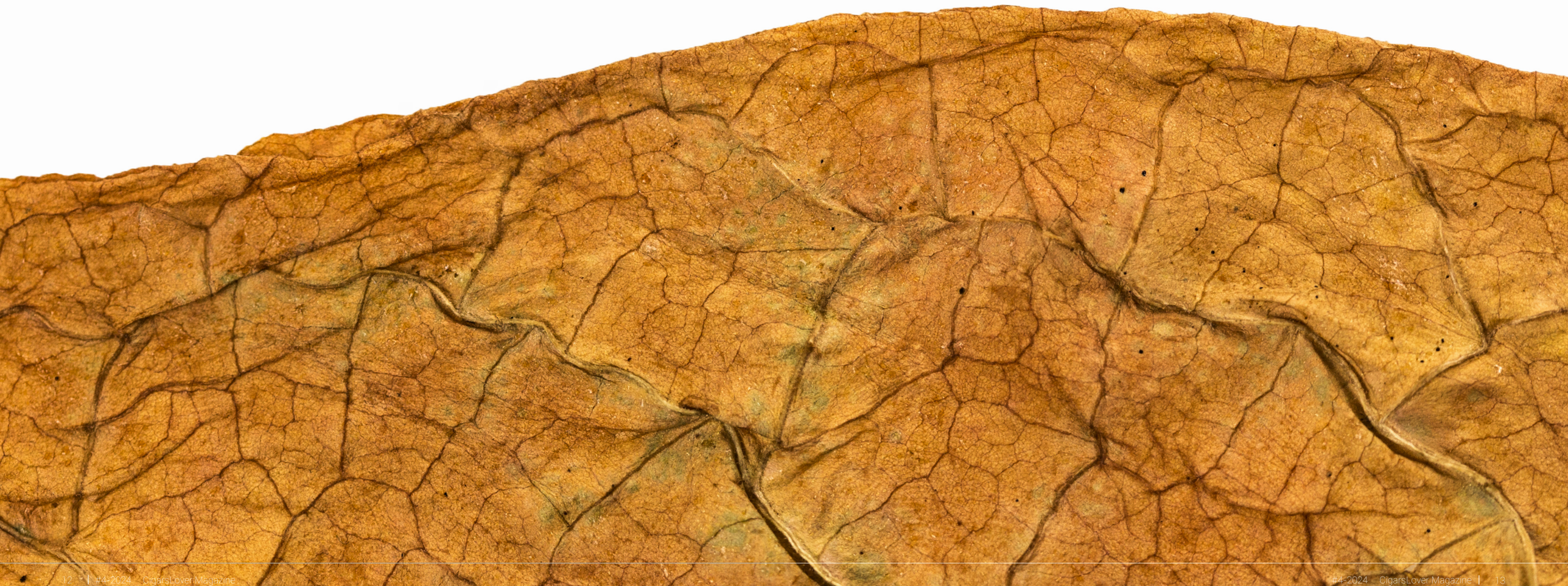
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CigarsLover
MAGAZINE

Thank you for TEN YEARS

CIGARS

"Cigars served me for precisely fifty years as protection and a weapon in the combat of life... I owe to the cigar a great intensification of my capacity to work and a facilitation of my self-control."
Sigmund Freud



INSPIRED BY NATURE:

THE HEXAGON

Plasencia **Alma Fuerte Sixto I** isn't just any cigar. It stands out with its unique hexagonal shape, drawing inspiration from the design of honeycomb cells crafted by bees. Much like the honeycomb, this natural shape allows for optimal storage and preservation of flavors. Wrapped in a Colorado Claro wrapper, the blend of aged tobaccos cultivated in top-quality soil results in a bold flavor profile.

This cigar pays homage to the ingenuity of nature's gardeners while delivering a rich and satisfying smoking experience.



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The next step

"Just like a book of family recipes, our blend book has some stories of its own."

by **Michel Arlia**

Alec Bradley Cigars has established itself as a well-known name in the cigar industry over the past 30 years. Throughout this time, we have had the opportunity to have insightful conversations with Alan Rubin, the founder of Alec Bradley, and his two sons, Alec and Bradley.

However, at the beginning of 2023, the brand surprised the cigar world by announcing that they had sold the company to the Scandinavian Tobacco Group (STG). Now that things have settled down, we've had the chance to speak with Alec and Bradley again to learn more about the recent developments at Alec Bradley.

Hi Alec and Bradley, it has been a while. How have you been?
Alec: I've been well, and it's been an exciting time for me personally and professionally.

Bradley: I'm having a great time working with STG, traveling across the US and Europe promoting the brand.

A lot has happened since our last conversation, the most significant being the Scandinavian Tobacco Group's acquisition of the brand. When did the decision to sell the brand come about, and what were

your initial thoughts?
Alec: The decision to sell the brand to STG was made by Alan, and we, of course, supported his decision.

How did your friends and family react to you guys planning to sell the brand?
Bradley: As Alec said, it was Alan's decision to sell the brand. As with any major acquisition in the cigar category, some people were surprised, others were not.

What expectations did you guys have going into this new phase of Alec Bradley Cigars?
Alec: I think I can speak for both of us when I say I wasn't sure what to expect. Neither of us have worked for such a large company before this. STG has kept their word at every step of the way. When they acquired the Alec Bradley cigar brand, they committed to keeping the blends the same and to using the same factories to make our cigars. This has not changed. They are focused on helping the brand reach its full potential. We've seen more access to tobacco and resources than before, which puts us in a great position to grow the brand. The future looks very bright.

What is your role with the brand now, and what does it entail?
Alec: I'm focused on developing innovative and strategic partnerships for Alec Bradley. You can think of me as being an ambassador for the brand outside the category. Interestingly, my role isn't consumer or trade-facing. I work to develop relationships with brands in categories that complement premium cigars. The Uncut Series is a great example of how I'm developing partnerships with American whiskey brands to create excitement for Alec Bradley in two categories – cigars AND spirits. I have a lot of passion for my role because it gives me the opportunity to build the narrative around the brand and to help more and more people discover Alec Bradley cigars. It's all about aligning Alec Bradley with complementary lifestyles and driving awareness for our brand among adult consumers who participate in those related lifestyles/activities. And while we're working on bringing these partnerships to life in the US, we have our sights set on applying partnerships, as appropriate, to international markets. This will help us to deepen the brand relevance for Alec Bradley in export markets.

Bradley: In my role as brand ambassador for Alec Bradley, I wear a lot of hats. A trail was blazed for me, and I feel a sense of responsibility and pride when it comes to being a steward of the Alec Bradley cigar brand. I want to continue on the path that my father created. I'm so glad I have the opportunity to continue the leg-



acy of the Alec Bradley cigar brand and in my role as brand ambassador, can help to grow the brand globally. My focus is on building connections with cigar smokers and our retail partners, both in the US and across the world, as the brand grows. At the same time, I'm working with the team at STG to build on our current portfolio while we honor the past. Everything we're doing in terms of making our award-winning cigars is the same as it always was – same tobaccos, same factories, same everything. I'm now working with the team at STG to come up with innovative new blends that honor the brand's past and move it forward with thoughtful innovation. When I say thoughtful innovation, I mean that we're not moving away from what makes Alec Bradley special, we're building on it. The resources that are available are far beyond what I could have imagined, and I'm enjoying being part of such a strong and experienced blending team.

A year has passed since the acquisition. How has the transition been for you all, and what has been happening behind the scenes?

Bradley: Since the acquisition, people have been asking about how Alec Bradley is changing under STG.



And my answer to them is that it is, and it isn't. What is changing is that we're getting this amazing brand into the hands of more smokers especially in export markets which is very exciting for us. In addition to our current partners, the family has grown to include the very talented STG blending team. What isn't changing is our blends, the tobaccos we use, and the people who make Alec Bradley cigars and work behind the scenes to support the brand. Basically, we're doing the same things as always did, just with more resources.

Since the change, you guys recently launched a new line called Safe Keepings. What is the story behind it, and how long have you been working on it?

Bradley: After we joined STG, we re-opened the Alec Bradley blend book when the time was right. Together with the team, we selected the first blend we wanted to roll out and we started this several months after the acquisition. We have so many more resources now, it's like a whole new way of blending. This release is an opportunity for us to honor the blend legacy of the Alec Bradley cigar brand while at the same time moving the brand forward.



While deep diving into the blend book of your father, Alan, were there any stories that came up with specific blends and why they didn't make it out of the prototype phase?
Bradley: Just like with a book of family recipes, our blend book has some stories of its own. We'll tell them when the time is right.

Bradley, with access to the resources of such a giant as STG, has your approach to blending changed?
Bradley: I'm now part of a larger, experienced team. It's invigorating to tap into such a wide variety of perspectives and insights when it comes to developing blends, and I'm enjoying the collaborative approach tremendously. Given our unmatched access to tobacco, we have the ability to be creative in the blends we develop. Together, as a blending team, we can push boundaries on limited edition releases while our core brand remains consistent. It's a great position to be in.

Looking ahead, what exciting things can we expect from the Alec Bradley brand in the future?
Alec: We approach cigar making with the smoker in mind. We're grateful for the opportunity for an Alec Bradley cigar to be a part of the best hour of a smoker's day, and we take this responsibility seriously. Our goal is to create memorable smoking experiences. And we do that by using the best tobaccos to create high-quality cigars with complex taste profiles that deliver some of the best smoking experiences in the world. We're not changing anything about what makes an Alec Bradley cigar special. We're building on it.

Bradley: As the Alec Bradley cigar brand evolves, our blend legacy will keep us grounded and true to our tradition of making award-winning cigars. We'll be thoughtful with the innovations we introduce so that our longtime fans and newcomers to the brand will have many reasons to engage with Alec Bradley cigars. We're also expanding our footprint both in the US and around the world. It's thrilling to think about the tremendous things that are on the horizon for the Alec Bradley cigar brand. I am very passionate about the legacy of the existing portfolio of Alec Bradley cigars, and I am excited to have the opportunity to harness the resources of STG to continue to build on that legacy. We'll do it through thoughtful innovation that's inspired by the blends that won Alec Bradley high praise. So, to put it into other words, we'll build on the existing portfolio in ways that honor the past- the continued use of proprietary tobaccos, the exploration of new tobaccos, and inspired packaging design. We're being very careful and considerate of the brand with new releases so smokers know they're getting an Alec Bradley product.

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The expert smoker

After years of smoking, an aficionado acquires a different profile from that of a normal consumer; changing his purchases, which typically become more selective.

by **Giuseppe Mitolo**



Experience is the level of knowledge that is acquired on certain topics through time spent engaging with said topic. In the workplace, the expert is a person who can boast a CV full of experiences, qualifications, previous activities and tasks. On the other hand, in the cigar sector, experience is something that is difficult to distinguish. There is an obligation to clarify a detail of no small importance: the discussion concerns the smoker, not those who work professionally in the world of tobacco to make cigars. It is therefore difficult to provide exhaustive answers to the questions “who is an expert smoker? When do you become one?" However, it is slightly easier to define what a cigar lover with long trails of smoke, and innumerable guillotines no longer as sharp as they once were, is looking for. To do this, however, we cannot avoid answering the previous questions, trying to generalize, and also taking inspiration from the different experiences of the individual members of Cigarslover Magazine team.

In cigar smoking, there are no degrees, titles or recognitions that can be used across the board for all producing and consuming countries to sanction the experience of a smoker. The premise is necessary if you think about the world of Cubans: courses like Academia Habanos or direct recognition from Habanos S.A., they are important and not negligible events, but they only concern Cuban production. Therefore an expert, recognized as such by Habanos S.A., may not know any other Caribbean production at all. For that reason, we need to identify possible parameters to register the field of our research: knowledge and time.

Knowledge is a bit like the sacred fire that animates every good cigar lover: understanding, experimenting, making mistakes, trying again, all without any preconceptions or prejudices. All this leads to making the first leap, the evolution from neophyte to attentive smoker. The attentive smoker is he or she who enjoys a cigar with curiosity and attention, knowing what he or she is smoking, trying to classify the smoke, in a more or less simple or structured way: good or not good, strong or less strong, aromas, sensations palatals, and so on.

All this, is obviously variable from person to person and has to be added to the other essential component of the experience: time. The more prolonged and attentive the knowledge component or, if you like, the "attentive smoker" phase is, the more smoking experience one acquires. Two important observations arise from here. The first: it is not enough to always smoke the same "five" cigars for twenty years, without asking anything, to be able to consider someone an expert smoker. The second: one can be the best of tasters, with an enormous knowledge of all tobacco and cigar matters, but without adequate time (quantifiable in years) to settle and experiment with the various products presented on the market, one cannot still be considered “expert”. It’s a bit like saying you have just obtained a driving license, but this does not automatically consecrate you as a skilled driver, since it is the time spent behind the wheel of the vehicle that exposes all the knowledge acquired to practice.

How long does it take to define this alleged "experience" in the cigar world? As mentioned, since it is necessary to generalize, Cigarslover Magazine team believes the process of consciously experimenting with smoking last approximately ten years. This is a reasonable period of time both to experiment with the various productions but also to directly experience how much the products can change over the course of a decade. Because smoking a cigar from ten years ago today is not the same experience as having smoked it ten years ago or over the course of this period. Furthermore, as most people already know, tobacco is a living element and this year's harvest is never the same as that of subsequent years, which is why, despite the commendable efforts of the master blenders, small variations in production can cause stay and rightly so.

Another variable, of considerable importance, should also be added to our discussion: the temporal contextualization of the knowledge path. Twenty years ago the current exchange of information via the internet and social networks was perhaps unimaginable and knowledge passed through books, magazines, cigar clubs and word of mouth between smokers. In this context, the search for truthful information was complex and necessarily required a longer time to deepen and broaden knowledge. Nowadays, there are quite a few webites, the smoker is no longer lost, but knows he can count on more fixed points in his search for competence;all this has shortened the period of time necessary for in-depth analysis and ex-

posure to how vast the world of cigars really is. The other side of the coin is how to find reliable sources. Twenty years ago, the smoker lit a cigar and recorded his tasting sensations and felt very lucky if a particular magazine published a review that could confirm or deny his smoking impressions. Today, however, one is more likely to encounter more and more tastings of that given cigar, greatly facilitating that "virtual comparison" experience. All this, without mentioning social networks, which favored the birth of real virtual squares, within which anyone could discuss each single topic (probably lowering the quality level of information, but this is a doubt about which we do not intend to dwell on it).

Well, we arrive at the central point of our contribution: what changes happen in the cigar lover when he has reached this impalpable level of "expert smoker"? First of all, having experimented, tried and tried more and more products, he or she becomes more and more demanding, forgiving less and less for production errors or defects. Furthermore, experience leads him or her to commensurate the smoking of a single product with its price: a cigar can provide a great smoke, but if it costs three times the price of another product, capable of transmitting the same emotions, the expert smoker will tend to direct your purchases very carefully. Secondly, experience and time make the aficionado less and less impressionable, less inclined to the fashion of constant novelties, elaborate packaging and branded gadgets. This, however, does not mean that his curiosity is extinguished, but that it becomes more measured and targeted towards products that could arouse his or her interest. In essence, the novelties do not generate, in smokers with years of experience behind them, that bulimic desire to try everything as soon as possible which often dwells in young smokers and on which today's market offer leverages.

At the same time, it is no coincidence that some brands have begun to experiment with new production frontiers, using completely new tobaccos for the cigar world or pursuing increasingly extreme aging or aging tobaccos with particular techniques. These are all choices intended for the entire reference market, but they do not ignore the knowledge of the existence of a segment of "expert" consumers who must be encouraged to purchase in a more stimulating way.

Finally, indulging in a bit of subtle humour, there are the more "geriatric" aspects, common to smokers who have put out many cigars behind them: the experience leads to becoming, just like the elderly, more nostalgic. We become, more or less consciously, melancholic towards the productions of the past, praising cigars produced years ago or no longer produced. This aspect involves a certain selectivity in purchases: the expert smoker will buy more cigars that give him a smoke in line with his tastes or products close to being discontinued, ensuring, at least on paper, further years of rewarding smoking. In conclusion, experience and time make the aficionado wiser, although this wisdom is often misunderstood as arrogance. Therefore, when you meet an older smoker, show him the patience you would reserve for an older gentleman. He or she will be grateful to you, perhaps even giving you a cigar "from the good old days".

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Pushing the boundaries

"Davidoff continues to push the boundaries of innovative functional design."

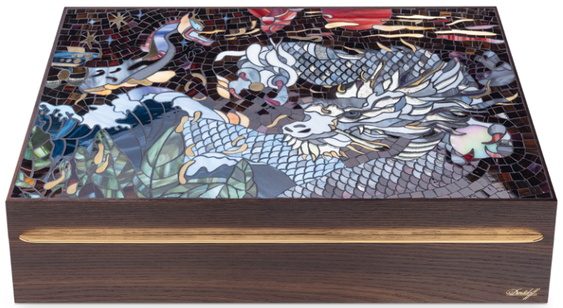
by **Zac Mitchers**

Zino Davidoff, the grand monsieur of cigars, has left behind an immense legacy. One of Zino Davidoff's significant contributions to the cigar world was developing and popularizing the modern cigar humidor. Understanding the importance of proper storage to maintain the quality and flavor of cigars over time, he designed humidors that not only ensured optimal humidity levels, which are crucial for preserving cigars but also were design masterpieces. Since then, Davidoff cigar humidors have been renowned for their elegance, craftsmanship, and superior functionality, reflecting the legacy and expertise of Zino Davidoff in the world of premium cigars.

Davidoff humidors have consistently set industry standards for innovation, combining traditional craftsmanship with cutting-edge technology to enhance the cigar storage experience. Over the years, the brand has introduced several advancements that have raised the bar for the functionality, aesthetics, and overall performance of humidors worldwide. Trendsetting Design: Humidors like their Masterpiece Humidors dedicated to the Chinese Zodiac, where Davidoff collaborated with artists such as pop art artist Boyarde Messenger and marquetry artist Rose Saneuil have set new standards for the industry and are more than just a humidor – they are art pieces of highest functional value.

High-Quality Materials: From the outset, Davidoff emphasized using premium materials and never shied away from innovative design ideas. The Urban Architecture Humidor blends wood with glass, thus meeting contemporary interior

Year of the Dragon Masterpiece Humidor



Boyarde Masterpiece Humidor



Urban Architecture Humidor



design trends with a piece that upgrades every room. Furthermore, the humidor offers aficionados an opportunity to showcase their cigars through its stylish glass lid. Davidoff's latest material innovation is the Monolith Humidor (previous page), carved from only one single piece of limestone and combining timeless elegance with rock-solid functionality. Even though it was only launched earlier this year, the desirable statement piece for up to 120 cigars has made waves in the cigar world.

Craftsmanship: Not only are the finest materials used, but the craftsmen and women behind every single humidor are masters of their field. Davidoff humidors are made in Europe, and while the materials and styles vary greatly, they are all the result of countless hours of expertise, an unwavering commitment to quality, and millimeter-precision work.

Standard-setting Humidification Systems: Davidoff introduced more sophisticated humidification systems over time, like the proprietary Davidoff De Luxe regulators. These systems often included features like adjustable humidity levels and automated moisture release, ensuring that the internal environment remained stable. Some models also featured refillable cartridges and advanced filtration systems to maintain optimal air quality.

Improved Air Circulation: Understanding the importance of consistent humidity distribution, Davidoff enhanced the design of their humidors to promote better air circulation. Innovations like specially designed ventilation systems and strategic placement of air channels ensure that every cigar receives uniform humidity regardless of its position within the humidor.

Usability: Davidoff acknowledges the needs of cigar aficionados for perfectly preserved cigars on the move. In 2017, the brand successfully launched a Travel Humidor that effortlessly combined function with style, allowing aficionados to take their precious cigars with them wherever they went. This year, Davidoff launched their reinvented high-quality Travel Humidor "Explorer". These portable solutions combine durability with the same level of humidity control found in a classic humidor. Innovations include crush-proof exteriors, smart trays (the wave design allows for flexible adjustability), airtight seals, and compact humidification systems. Each innovation reflects Davidoff's dedication to excellence and their understanding of the evolving needs of cigar aficionados worldwide.

Owning a Davidoff humidor is a testament to one's appreciation for the finer things in life. The brand's commitment to excellence and its rich history makes Davidoff humidors not just storage solutions but pieces of art that enhance the cigar-smoking experience. Each humidor embodies the philosophy of Zino Davidoff, who believed in enjoying life's pleasures with sophistication and elegance while ensuring the highest quality and functionality.

Davidoff

TIME BEAUTIFULLY FILLED

DESIGNED FOR AFICIONADOS ON THE MOVE



THE TRAVEL HUMIDOR EXPLORER

DISCOVER MORE

Tissue paper

Little attention is paid to cigars wrapped in this paper that is a more expensive choice than cellophane.

by **John Jeremy**



Advertising for a product has always been an effective tool for its presentation and promotion to the general public. It is even more so for the sale of cigars, where colors, motifs, characters, rings, and packaging are now designed to attract the smoker's attention among dozens of competitors.

One of these tools, which is given little importance, is the tissue paper that wraps some products. The types range from those that entirely envelop the cigar's body, to others that partially cover it, while others only entirely envelop the cigar's foot.

Someone has chosen to use it not only to protect the band and foot from accidental breakages but also as a true brand identification tool by printing the brand, line, or name of the individual reference directly on this paper. Does this choice have other advantages besides aesthetic promotion? To understand more, we asked several producers a few questions. First of all, It was surprising to discover that the production of a single cellophane wrapper costs more than the production of a piece of tissue to cover the same cigar.

In relation to the practical use (including in this item costs, time, and packaging of twhe cigars), the choice of wrapping a cigar in this particular paper is more expensive, also requiring greater skill of the workforce to wrap them instead of packing them in a cellophane.

Finally, all the producers we contacted agreed that cigars wrapped in cellophane guarantee greater shelf life in the short term because plastic is a more inert material than paper.

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Hiram & Solomon

"Persistence and, determination.

by **Michel Arlia**



Hiram & Solomon has experienced significant growth since its launch in 2014. With the company's 10th anniversary approaching, we recently caught up with founder and owner Fouad Kashouty and his wife Romy to discuss the latest developments.

The last time we spoke was in 2022. What has happened with you and the Hiram & Solomon brand in the last two years?

Hiram & Solomon Brand keeps evolving, growing, and creating new experiences for our valued customers. The challenges are significant, but our desire to succeed and the support of our Masonic Brethren, in particular, and our smokers, generally, keep us focusing on staying on top. As you know, reaching the top is hard, but the most challenging part is staying on top. Our company is getting bigger, and we are expanding our reach to different regions of the world. We are building a stronger team by hiring experienced people such as Mr. Benoit Bail-Danel, who now oversees our International department. We surely made an impact and continue to do so in the cigar industry, and the best part is that we are making a difference.

The company is celebrating its 10th year in the business. Did you ever imagine you would make it this far?

January 2025 will mark the 10-year anniversary of our existence as a cigar brand that proudly competes with the best of the best. As my wife Romy put it simply: "This baby cigar brand was born prematurely, and no one thought it would survive the rough and ragged road, but it started running, climbing, talking, and making everyone listen and watch our next move to imitate."



What does it take for a company to persevere over a long period of time?

One of my favorite quotes from John D. Rockefeller encapsulates this well, "I do not think there is any other quality so essential to success of any kind as the quality of perseverance. It overcomes almost everything, even nature." Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. But there are more, such as listening to the feedback from our customers and retailers, customer satisfaction, and innovation, flexibility, and the ability to adjust your sails according to the wind, planning, and cash flow.

Do you recall a specific moment in the past ten years when you realized the potential for the future of Hiram & Solomon?

Six months into our existence, I received an international call from the Congo in Africa, inquiring about our Brand and its availability to ship. That was the beginning of a dream, realizing the brand's potential, but it was also the scariest moment for us as we were not ready for it.

What are some of the most memorable moments of the past decade?

Every time a moment is labeled as the best memory ever, we realize that the next moment is even better. Every encounter and discussion with a brother or a sister of the leaf is a unique moment we cherish passionately. As a Freemasons-themed cigar brand, we have the support of most of the Grand Lodges of the world and, more specifically, the support of the Brethren who carry, show, and smoke our cigars with pride. In a recent meeting at a Masonic lodge in London, I was received with a long-standing ovation given only to high dignitaries as an appreciation for the way we represent Freemasonry to the world and the educating part of it. As I always say: “We did not invent the Freemasons, and we did not create the cigar, but we surely mastered combining both."

How will you be celebrating the brand's 10th anniversary? What can we look forward to?

The plans are underway to celebrate this milestone for the brand. A new cigar line is being prepared to commemorate the occasion and we believe it will be a cigar to remember.

Do you already have any plans for the next ten years that you can share?

No company or brand will survive without short and long-term planning. Our goal is to attract more investments into the company as we are growing fast and hire the most professionals to oversee the growth without losing sight of our original plan, which is giving back to the communities that we live in.



VF

LA ROMANA

TWO NEW RELEASES
ONE NEW LOOK

NEW VEGAFINA SERIE 2 SHORT MAGNUM

With the brand's new image, **VegaFina Serie 2** launches **Short Magnum**, a blend designed for aficionados seeking a stronger profile than VegaFina Classic.
Its Dominican blend offers notes of cedar, leather, and coffee. **A perfectly balanced smoke**.

VITOLA: Short Magnum
SIZE: 54 x 110 mm
BOX: 25 cigars



VF
LA ROMANA
SERIE 2



NEW VEGAFINA NICARAGUA TERRA

VegaFina introduces **Terra**, a tribute to the landscapes of Nicaragua.
This **100% Nicaraguan blend**, made with tobaccos from Jalapa and Estelí, stands out for its intense woody aroma and rich flavour, with a long-lasting sweet aftertaste.

VITOLA: Terra
SIZE: 48 x 140 mm
BOX: 25 cigars



VF
LA ROMANA
Nicaragua

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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PAIRING Cigars & Spirits



LIGA PRIVADA N.9 ROBUSTO

BOLD AND DEEP

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●●	$ 13 | € 14

DIMENSIONS
54x127mm (5")

COUNTRY
Nicaragua

Cigar of medium-high strength, with a broad and intense flavor profile, featuring marked cocoa, black pepper and aromatic herbs, which at times become balsamic. Good evolution. The great intensity of this Nicaraguan cigar allows to combine it with high ABV spirits, such as a creamy and soft Scotch and a woody, vanilla-centered Canadian.



SOBREMESA SOLITA TORO

COMPLEX AND HARMONIOUS

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●●	$ 15 | € 13

DIMENSIONS
52x152 mm (6")

COUNTRY
Nicaragua

Unique flavor profile, boasting great elegance and masterful balance. Incredibly creamy. It releases notes of cocoa, white pepper and spicy hints. Earth and aromatic herbs are added during the smoke, accompanied by balsamic notes in the finish. Searching for a complexity pairing, we accompany the smoke with two Scotches aged in a variety of woods.



VEGAFINA 1998 VF54

COMPLEX AND ROUND

STRENGTH	PRICE
●●●●	$ 10.3 | € 8.4

DIMENSIONS
54x155 mm (6 ⅛")

COUNTRY
Dominican Republic

Aromas of black pepper, walnut, wood and earth are present in the first half. Herbal and lemon zest notes are added in the second half. Powerful, yet round and somehow complex. The intensity and the character of this Dominican are bold enough to select two peaty spirits, a balanced and mellow Japanese release from Yoichi, centered on mineral and buttery notes, and a sherried Bowmore.



WOLFBURN
Langskip

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	58% - 116	$$

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	NAS	first-fill ex-bourbon

Rather intense spirit, of a certain satisfaction. On the nose, the fruity side consists of red apple and blackcurrant, with a present yet not dominant wood. Then butter biscuit and paradise cake (lemon and vanilla). The mouth is spicy, with caramel and vanilla. Excellent integration of the noses with cigar's dark chocolate that becomes very creamy and offers nuances of orange, refreshed by balsamic hints. Very inviting. The palate is equally well connected, with an increasing creaminess and the pleasant addition of caramel to the main chocolate character, with spices of great depth. Both products hold up well to the impact, without disappearing in the face of each other.

Pairing score	91

STALK & BARREL
Whisky

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Canada	60.2% - 120.4	$$

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	NAS	ex-Bourbon

Interesting and fragrant product, whose nose offers a very important vanilla dimension, with ripe white and yellow fruit (apple, lychee) and a light tangerine. The woody notes are intense, but not overwhelming. On the palate it is savory and spicy. The tangerine of the nose explodes in all its juiciness. Secondly, custard and vanilla with a good structure. The finish is quite clean. The pairing is much more dissonant: the cigar, more full-bodied and structured, reveals the youth of the distillate in the form of almost stained woody notes, while the vanilla becomes more artificial. Even on the palate the vegetal and almost bitter part of the Nicaraguan is amplified, without the sweetness of the whiskey being capable of balancing it.

Pairing score	85





ISLE OF HARRIS
The Hearach

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

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	NAS	ex-bourbon/Madeira

A rather complex, elegant whisky; despite the short aging, shows signs of fruity aromas and the peat is very well integrated. The minor floral honey note is excellent and very evocative. A delightful crossing of noses; the spirit gives off peach and honey, with a soft round peat which mixes well with the cocoa of the tobacco, with some woody toasted notes which are mellow. Dusty, sophisticated white pepper with apricots and custard. Palates are slightly less magic than the noses. Some signs of youth emerge from the whisky increasing the spicy character of the white pepper, making it wilder. Despite this, the creamy fruity character suites nicely the cocoa notes of the cigar, which keeps a darker tone in some puffs. Finish is rather long, mellow, enriching the herbal end of the Nicaraguan.

Pairing score	90



YOICHI
Single Malt

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Japan	45% - 90	$$

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	NAS	N/A

Easy to enjoy product, featuring rich notes of citrus fruit, followed by pear and some ginger notes in the finish. Lastly, marine hints with suave peaty and smoky notes are given off, completing the flavor profile. The noses are special; the spirit is not very fruity, somehow the sugar powder sweetness is just a touch on the woody touch of the tobacco, with the smoky sensation which is the leitmotiv without being stressed up too much. Sweet-salty mixed sensations on top of a dry, smoky lemon zest. Sophisticated. The intense mineral hints with olive water and lemon zest increases the earthiness of the cigar, which becomes dark and roasted, still keeping excellent complexity. Interestingly, reversing the order (smoke first, spirit after) provides some extra balance to the spirit's salty touch.

Pairing score	88

GLENALLACHIE
8 Year Old

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

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	8 Years Old	ex-sherry

A very interesting product with dual soul, battling between PX chocolate-cherries-raisins and a darker herbal undertone, with some acidic tones of wine. The virgin oak can also be perceived with some creamy banana and vanilla. The first approach makes clear the marriage intention: is going to be sexy and velvety, gourmand and intense, with rich synchronous cocoa and herbal notes, added with white pepper and hints of acidity. Very coherent similarity pairing, yet not a boring one. The palates boast cherries, dark cocoa, earthy undertones and several types of spices, for layers and layers of sensual spells. The finish is infinite and dense, sticky, dark and animal. A true well-crafted marriage, two similar souls born to be enjoyed together.

Pairing score	91



BOWMORE
10 Year Old Aston Martin

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

TYPE	AGE	CASK
Single Malt	10 Years Old	Oak Sherry & Hogshead

Duty free release showing signs of the character of the distillery with raisins, hints of tropical fruit and light peat. Palate is also nice, with several different quality sensations of chocolate, tobacco and leather on raisins and dark maple, with a minor salty touch. Really gentle smoke. A gentle touch, a drop of red berries jam on top of a leather glove, with some bold smoke and a fiery black pepper touch. Maybe the intensity of the whisky is a little shy compared to the intensity of the tobacco, especially from the second third. On the palate toasted, overcooked strawberry jam, with black pepper, intense smoke again and dark chocolate of good quality. The latter is quite long in the finale.

Pairing score	87



SPIRITS

"A man may acquire a taste for wine or brandy,
and so lose his love for water, but should we not pity him."
Henry David Thoreau

Mars Whisky

The Japanese brand with more than 100 years in distilling.

by **Mark Trumpet**



In 2023, the panelists of Spirit Lover Magazine had the opportunity of testing a sample of the Y.A. N.1, and each individual was blessed with an incredible array of complex tropical fruit and a gentle, yet present mineral character, which was truly inviting to a second sip (and a third, a forth and so on).

The natural consequence was to start digging into the story of a small, family-owned spirit maker, which is creating incredible releases using a very different aging site when compared to the standard "Taketsuru" lesson of aging in "cool and cold" places.

What is the history of Hombo Shuzo company and the heritage of the company?
Hombo Shuzo was established in 1872 as a producer of cotton and rapeseed oil. As a shochu; a local distilling spirits maker, we have over 100 years of experience. Its distilling technique and blending techniques are handed down from generation to generation.

Hombo Shuzo is mainly a shochu producer; why was whisky distillation initiated, and for which purposes?
Hombo Shuzo has the spirit of "Inheritance and Innovation" as a craft alcohol maker. When we succeeded in making a great shochu era, we decided to go further by challenging wine & whisky making; it was 1949. We never stopped challenging and pursuing since then.

What was the learning phase for distilling whisky in 1985, when Mars Shinshu (now Mars Komagatake since 2024) Distillery was opened?
In 1949, Hombo Shuzo was able to get the whisky license thanks to an unsung hero; Kiichiro Iwai. In 1960, we opened our first Single Malt Distillery in Yamanashi Prefecture just next to our winery. When the wine business became bigger, we decided to focus more on Single Malt and found an ideal land in Komagane where we have Mars Komagatake Distillery now.

Can you talk about the current status of the market for Japanese Whisky, and how this trend has impacted the way Japanese Whisky is created and perceived?
Currently over 120 distilleries are opened in Japan. More and more whisky distilleries are opening, and more than 200 distilleries are licensed. (Only 8 distilleries in 2008.) Because of the different standards of Japanese Whisky, some "fake whiskies" are becoming a big issue, which confuses the quality of Japanese Whisky. Whereas JSLMA; Japan Spirits



& Liquors Makers Association created the first standard of Japanese Whisky which started to be officialized in April 2024. Of course, Mars is one of the board members of JSLMA.

Hombo Shuzo company owns two distilleries, Mars Komagatake and Mars Tsunuki. What are the differences, and how is the spirit you are producing different in each of the two?

The theme of Mars Komagatake Distillery is Clean & Fruity and Deep & Energetic for Mars Tsunuki Distillery. Each has a completely different climate throughout the year, water, facilities, and people. Komagatake works as a tradition of Mars Whisky and Tsunuki plays a role as being experimental because of its new environment for whisky; hot & humid. (We learned whisky making based on the Taketsuru report, who went to Scotland; so we take a cool & cold environment as a typical climate for whisky. Actually, the unsung hero Kiichiro Iwai was the boss of Taketsuru and he is the one who sent Taketsuru to Scotland.)

Japan has perfected the art of blending, and many fantastic products from the country are blended; how do you see the difference between single malts and blends?
Both Single Malts & Blends are created by our blenders (a master blender, a blender from Komagatake, and a blender from Tsunuki). As Japan learned whisky making from Scotland, we try to make our blends as harmonized & complicated likewise the other Scots blends. Hombo Shuzo is reaching a new phase by creating 100 % Japanese Blended Malt Whisky only aged in Yakushima. It allows us to have a nice aspect of the 2 distilleries; Komagatake & Tsunuki.

Can you talk to us about THE Y.A. project and explain what is so special in Yakushima Island?
The theme of Mars THE Y.A. is "Tropical & Salty", and it is a blended malt whisky from Mars. 100 % from Komagatake & Tsunuki. So, we send the new pot down to Yakushima island; a UNESCO world heritage site since 1993. Yakushima is famous for being extremely humid and hot. It is said that it rains 35 days in a month: tropical. The climate affects its maturation and we believe that we have some influence from the sea breeze: saltiness.

As part of THE Y.A. project, we have seen three releases (2022, 2023, and 2024); what is the future of this line, and what can we expect?
We haven't decided on the future of this line. But this series will stay as special & limited releases. We keep pursuing to expression of the theme of "Tropical & Salty" as it is not easy to express this theme.

What is the future of Mars Whisky?
We will overcome the chaos of Japanese Whisky by using our strength of, 1- Having "2 Distilleries & 3 Aging Sites" 2- Being a craft & family-owned spirits, liqueur, and gin maker. 3- Keep pursuing the innovation.



DIPLOMÁTICO
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RESERVA EXCLUSIVA
PLANAS
RON ANTIGUO

Whisky and Chocolate: the basics

Chocolate and whisky share many characteristics and high proof spirits can be well enjoyed away from the meal table.

di **Simone Poggi**

Chocolate is probably the most important and the most discussed pairing with whiskey. When we started our journey of cigar and whiskey pairing, we found very few outside contributions on the complexity and difficulty tasting with tobacco, while on the contrary every respected whiskey expert and every blog has tried to express an opinion on enjoying this fantastic spirit with the (Maya) Food of the Gods.

We believe there are mainly three reasons associated to this pairing popularity.

First, the fatty structure of chocolate is capable of enveloping the mouth for the same to better "accept" the intense aggression of the alcohol, which in whisky is 40% or higher. This "primer" is one of the best strategies to make sure the sip sensations are more mellow and rounded compared to a "dry" sip, providing a more refined, silky texture which is characteristic of the best of the spirits.

Second, chocolate and whisky share many product characteristics; for both the human contribution transforms basic products such as fruits and grains into sophisticated, complex, epicurean pleasures of life. Many stories are told, complex recipes exist, recently different varieties and agronomical experiments have been tried.

Last, desserts and high ABV spirits can well be placed at the end of a formal dinner or, even better, can be enjoyed away from the meal table, in a more "relaxed" environment such as a sofa or a smoking lounge, a location where it is easier to enjoy very interesting pairing such as whisky and cheeses.

Among the several personalities who have written about whiskey and chocolate, I would like to mention a couple whom we found very interesting in terms of contribution. Martine Nouet is a very passionate food and spirit writer, born in France, who spent more than



16 years living in Islay (and now planning to go back to France). We loved her idea of sensory pairing. We found a rather old interview with Maitre Chocolatier Michel Richart who, on top of several other creations, several years ago deeply investigated the flavors of chocolate, creating a line evidently representing the main aroma of those chocolate bars, separating them into 7 different categories (spicy, herbal, balsamic, roasted, fruity, floral, citrus).

This subdivision would be the ideal starting point for a more analytical investigation, however we doubt an initial start of the pairing journey will include cardamom or mango flavored chocolate with the different peats of the various declinations of an Islay Scotch. Yet, it was very nice to hear them talking about "love" or "marriage" pairing.

Another exercise worth mentioning is the one of Iain Burnett, aka Highland Chocolatier, from Highland Perthshire, Scotland who, in his website, proposes several chocolate praline sets which are explicitly crafted to pair well with specific whiskies (e.g. a selection of Velvet Truffles and Pralines expertly chosen by the chef to pair perfectly with single malt whiskies from The Macallan including Macallan Amber, Macallan Gold, Macallan Sienna, and Macallan Ruby). The sets created by this awards winning expert are sold complete with pairing notes. We read the experience he proposed based on 4 Kilchoman whiskies, probably not the first ones we would select in terms of easiness of pairing.

We loved the complexity of the job of pairing highly aromatic and sophisticated pralines (lime, chilli, caramel, orange, clove and lemongrass are some of the aromas used in proposed Velvet Truffles), yet the most interesting aspect was the suggestion to go beyond the palatal part of the experience; though some chocolates are less aromatic to the nose compared to the normal whiskey experience, because of the difference in volatile aromatic compounds, it is very interesting



to investigate how the two products interact also from a nose perspective. We will try this approach.

Reading what is available in terms of pairing suggestions from experts, the impression we get is that this exercise has been mainly an analysis of the aromatic palette of both the products; though details and often well done, this has brought most of the writers to suggest similarity pairing. As we have done for cigars and whiskeys, we would like to go deeper in our analysis, as in most of the cases we have seen this as a limiting factor, a way to enhance the experience, yet restricted in providing new dimensions to our senses, when not even tiring.

Not necessarily, we want to follow the same identical aromas palette provided by the whiskey (e.g. to choose a lime aromatized chocolate for an Islay whisky which is providing a robust citrus profile with balsamic herbs and burnt herbs peat, a Caol Ila for example).

We are going to propose an integration, sometimes even a contrast pairing. This will result in the chocolate adding layers of complexity to the experience, not only enhancing and reinforcing the same aromas palette.

METHOD

1 . Pour the whiskey, no ice, no water.

2. Nose the whiskey and detail your tasting notes.

3. Melt in the mouth a small amount of chocolate, covering the entire surface.

4. Nose the whiskey again, taking notes of the aromas evolutions / changes.

5. Drink a small sip of the whiskey and compare the tasting notes with the ones taken from previous experiences, indicating evolutions / changes.

6. Drink another small sip of the whiskey to determine how long lasting the effects of chocolate on whiskey are, before the whiskey goes back to standard aroma profile (baseline).



Long live the Queen

CALDWELL CIGAR CO.

Irish, Tropical, and Japanese whiskeys pairing

Exploring pairing beyond Scotch and American whiskies can be very rewarding.

by **Simone Poggi**

The Worldwide whisky scene no longer ends with Scotch and American products, in recent years it has been very solidly increasing in featuring high quality products from different countries.

The very trendy Japanese products, which are very soon going to be regulated in a completely different way compared to the "wild" past, could be an interesting, yet unusual pairing with chocolate, especially considering their refined profile. On the other part of the spectrum the "tropical" spirits enjoy a high intensity of processed fruit, perfect for ultimate contrast pairing and exploring more bitter cocoas. Whiskeys from the Green Island are dichotomic: triple distilled are refined and delicate, while pot still products pack several types (and levels of intensity) of spices. Which will be the experience best stimulating our senses?

Irish, triple distilled (Yellow Dot, Teeling Single Malt, Glendalough Single Cask Madeira Finish) - these very refined, fruity and high spirits are well paired in assonance with delicate milk chocolate of floral influence. The sweetness needs to be taken into proper account, as in all similarity pairings the risk is to have a very high influence of specific components, the sugary sensation in this case. The quality of the chocolate is the main aspect to be under control in this situation, probably taking



into account the cocoa origin and selecting Madagascar cocoa. Madagascar produces cocoa beans with high acidity, with a refined floral, citrus, dried fruit and honey set of flavors which could be the best in this case.

Irish, pot still (Redbreast Lustau Edition, Busker Single Pot Still, Writers' Tears Copper Pot) - Irish, but with a spicy touch; this allows more intense pairing without losing the character of each of the products. We tried two types of pairing, quite successfully. The first is with 65-75% cocoa dark chocolate, possibly from Ecuador, resulting in a roasted, earthy background with nice spices on top. The other is more oriented to a mellower, creamier sensation to envelope the spicy sides of the pot still, especially on more aggressive spirits, and it is based on a milk chocolate of great quality.

Tropical Whiskeys (Kavalan Podium or Bourbon Cask, Amrut Single Malt, Yushan Sherry Cask) – excellently paired with dark chocolate, even at high bitterness levels, such as 80 or 90% cocoa. The processed, extra-ripe fruit is capable of resounding even with the dark, roasted profile of the chocolate, adding layers of complexity and roundness is never jeopardized. The sophisticated spicy content is still perceivable. Astringent sensations are at a minimum here. One can even try the risky exercise of pairing with chili pepper chocolate, a very sense-stimulating experience whose piquant hints can be quenched by the creaminess of the whisky. Just a minor tip: though Solist line by Kavalan is a true pleasure for taste buds, we would not recommend these high-intensity whiskeys with any chocolate, to avoid the overwhelming fatigue of the no-compromise experience.

Japanese Whiskeys (Mars Komagatake YA 2021, Akkeshi 2021, Amahagan Edition N.5, Nikka Taketsuru) these whiskies, either single malt or blends, share refined texture and complex bouquets, often oriented to fruits and flowers, with a tendency to be unpeated and delicate, with intensity well under control. Though their silky texture could marry well with dark chocolate as a completing factor, their complex and refined nuances may prove to be too gentle to stand in front of these high cocoa % chocolates. Our suggestion is to look for milk chocolate with sea salt crystals, as this will allow to prep the mouth for a great complexity whiskey, yet rounded and smooth, while the milky, creamy chocolate can be seen as a similitude pairing, increasing the palatal enjoyment.



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Mai Tai

A Timeless Tiki Classic

by **Mark Trumpet**

The Mai Tai is not just a drink; it symbolizes the exotic and represents the Tiki culture that swept through mid-20th century America and continues to enthrall cocktail enthusiasts today.

This iconic cocktail, originating from Polynesian-inspired bars, combines rich, complex flavors with a fascinating history, making it a perennial favorite.

The creation of the Mai Tai is steeped in rivalry and lore. The most widely accepted origin story credits Victor J. "Trader Vic" Bergeron. In 1944, at his Trader Vic's restaurant in Oakland, California, Vic crafted this now-famous concoction for friends visiting from Tahiti. Upon tasting it, one of them exclaimed, "Maita'i roa ae!" which translates to "Out of this world! The best!" Thus, the Mai Tai was born. However, Donn Beach, the founding father of Tiki culture and the mind behind Don the Beachcomber restaurants, contested this claim, asserting that he created the Mai Tai a decade earlier in the 1930s. Despite the ongoing debate, Trader Vic's version remains the more recognized and celebrated recipe.

The Mai Tai's rise in popularity coincided with America's fascination with the South Pacific, spurred by World War II servicemen returning from the region and the subsequent Hollywood portrayal of tropical paradises. Tiki bars, with their exotic decor and escapist ambiance, became social hubs, and the Mai Tai was the star attraction.

Over the years, the Mai Tai has undergone numerous adaptations. Some variations include adding pineapple juice or using different types of rum to alter the flavor profile. During the 1950s and 60s, as Tiki culture exploded in popularity, the Mai Tai became a canvas for bartenders to experiment with, leading to an array of versions. One notable adaptation is the Royal Hawaiian Mai Tai, which incorporates pineapple juice and grenadine, resulting in a sweeter, fruitier drink. Another is the Mai Tai Swizzle, a Caribbean-inspired twist that uses multiple types of rum and a dash of bitters, served in a tall glass with a swizzle stick.

In recent years, the craft cocktail movement has reignited interest in classic cocktails, and the Mai Tai has enjoyed a renaissance. Bartenders and enthusiasts are revisiting the original recipes, emphasizing quality ingredients and traditional techniques. This resurgence has led to a newfound appreciation for the artistry of the Mai Tai and its place in cocktail history. Craft cocktail bars often feature the Mai Tai, sometimes with a modern twist or a return to Trader Vic's original formulation. This renewed interest has also spurred a broader revival of Tiki culture, with new Tiki bars opening worldwide, celebrating the whimsical, escapist ethos that defined the original movement.

The Mai Tai's complex yet balanced flavor profile, rich history, and cultural significance make it a beloved drink that continues to captivate cocktail enthusiasts. Whether enjoyed in a vintage Tiki bar or crafted at home, the Mai Tai offers a sip of paradise, a taste of the exotic that transcends time and trends.

PREPARATION

Combine all ingredients in a shaker with ice. Shake vigorously and strain into a double old-fashioned glass filled with crushed ice. Garnish with a lime shell and a sprig of fresh mint.

ADVICE

For that authentic tiki vibe, garnish your Mai Tai with a sprig of fresh mint and a lime wedge. Gently smack the mint to release its aroma before placing it in the drink.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 oz aged rum (traditionally Jamaican rum)
- 3/4 oz fresh lime juice
- 1/2 oz orgeat syrup
- 1/2 oz orange curaçao
- 1/4 oz simple syrup

GLASS

Double rocks glass.

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TASTE

"I work until beer o'clock."
Stephen King



Red Sparkling Wines

One of the greatest comebacks in wine history.

by **Vincenzo Salvatore**



Famous in the 1970s and 80s only as sweet and bubbly wines, red sparkling wines were considered to be nothing more than low-alcohol easy-drinking solutions for casual drinkers.

After thirty years of oblivion and experimentations, the new trend of high-quality red sparkling wine, rigorously not sweet, opened a whole new horizon of possibilities for enjoying red wines in hot weather (not to mention how great they pair up with pizza!). The most famous red sparkling wine, at least in the US, was and still is the Italian Lambrusco from the Emilia region. Yet, there are a few other traditional red sparkling wines that are finally thriving again like Australian sparkling Shiraz and Rotsekt from German Spätburgunder and Austrian Zweigelt. Mind that we are talking about the fully red versions of these sparkling wines, not the rosé or blanc de noir, so prepare yourself for an incredible combination of bubbles and tannins!

Historically, red sparkling wines were used to salvage bad vintages, or unlucky vineyards, that had grown red grapes unsuited for making wines with a medium-term consumption date (let's say more than six months). In time, producers individuated the best grapes and soils for such a purpose and developed several styles of sparkling red wines suited for being chilled and paired with aperitifs, charcuteries, salads, and other light options. They were very much beloved in certain areas of northern Italy and southern Germany and Austria. As we said, the post-WW2 era saw the mass diffusion of cheap Lambrusco in the amabile version pretty much everywhere in the world, and especially in the US.

This major success lasted a couple of decades, and it also carried over a certain appreciation for the more smoothly refined Brachetto d'Aqui. However, eventually their brand presence evaporated into thin air when the biggest producers fell prey to a series of financial crises. Ironically, the new trend of red sparkling wines also sparkled (pun intended!) from the worldwide success of new, and very different, interpretations of Lambrusco coming from the area around Modena (famous for Ferrari and Osteria Francescana, among other things).

The most distinctive aspect of the new Lambrusco is the focus on quality over quantity. This is exemplified by the many versions made in the traditional method that are focused on producing beautiful swans instead of vast quantities of ugly ducklings. All three main varieties of Lambrusco – Sorbara, Grasparossa di Castevetro and Salamino di Santa Croce – have been modernized and













revamped following this new trend of gastronomical wines. As representative producers, we can respectively name Paltrinieri, Settecani, and Cantina di Carpi e Sorbara. Sorbara is now famous for giving distinctively elegant and sapid wines capable of competing with the most famous sparkling rosé, Grasparossa is the more structured and tangier of the lot, while Salamino is the fresher, light-bodied and more easy-going among them. Inevitably, such a productive turn has necessitated a drastic spike in prices, but it has also showed the huge potential of such a wine style for wine pairing with contemporary gastronomical cuisine. In any case, if we consider the generalized increase in prices of the whole sector, the price point of the best among these wines ($15-25) appears still convenient if compared with the most common white options like Champagne, Trento, Franciacorta, and Cava. Finally, the success of the traditional methods has also stimulated the improvement of the cheaper, but not less interesting, bottle-fermented and Charmat versions of these Lambruscos with plenty of excellent quality-value bottles around the $10 price point.

Australian sparkling Shiraz has perhaps less international glamour, but a similar productive history. Born as a sweet and low-alcohol wine, over the past few decades it started to complement the quality of the regular red brother. The most famous producers are Seppelt, who has been making sparkling shiraz ever since the 19th century, Bleasdale, Rockford, and Charles Melton. These are complex and structured wines, often with many years of sur-lees elevation, that offer the whole spectrum of a full-bodied shiraz, including tannins, along with all the features of a refined traditional method like creaminess, minerality, and tanginess. Their intense aroma sparks ripe blackberries, plums, black cherries, and often subtle earthy or spicy notes, dovetailing on vibrant red fruit flavors with a creamy texture, savory or meaty mouthfeel, and generally well-balanced by a refreshing acidity.

In both Germany and Austria, Rotsekt has been a staple style of local production ever since the 19th century. Yet, only over the past thirty years has there been a serious step up in the overall quality of the production by using the traditional method of refermentation. German producers, worldly renown for the Pinot Noirs coming from the regions of Ahr, Baden-Württemberg, Franken, Pfalz, and Rheingau, chose to explore the potential of traditional method Spätburgunder with extremely long elevations of 50 to 120 months, well beyond the borders of the rosé and blanc de noir versions. The most representative producers of Spätburgunder Rotsekt are Barth and Schoenleber, while few others specialize in different local varieties of red grapes like Lemberger and Dornfelder. These are typically vibrant wines with an elegant structure, striking a fine balance between bright fruitiness and crisp acidity: aromas of red berries (strawberries, raspberries, and cherries) and violets dominate, with a pleasing undertone of subtle spice, earthiness, forest floor, and faint tobacco or leather. In Austria, on the other hand, winemakers have focused on the Zweigelt grape to make high-quality sparkling wines using a traditional method. Prominent producers are Bründlmayer and Steininger who make wines developing aromas of fresh red berries (strawberries, cherries, raspberries), often with floral hints and subtle spicy notes, featuring bright red fruit flavors, sometimes with a touch of earthiness or spice.

Combining the depth and complexity of a red wine with the effervescence and vibrancy of a sparkling wine, red sparkling wines offer a unique and enjoyable food pairing experience, especially when traditional red wines would not be feasible due to warm temperatures. Let's think

about grilled meats, bbq, loaded pizza and rich pasta, as well as greasy charcuterie and creamy cheeses, and finally decadent chocolate cakes with plenty of cherries. As the trend continues to grow, more and more producers will offer different and surprising interpretations of this too-long forgotten, yet so versatile, wine style.



Sugarcane Juice

The tropical drink you can use for quite a lot of things.

by **Zac Mitchers**

If you're visiting a country that produces cigars or you are simply enjoying a trip in a tropical getaway destination, there is a popular juice you come across quite often. It is that of the sugarcane, made from the stalks of sugarcane plants. It is a refreshing drink containing numerous health benefits and nutritional properties. Extracted through a process that crushes the fibrous stalks to release the juice, it is enjoyed fresh and often served with a splash of lemon or ginger to enhance its flavor.

Nutritionally, sugarcane juice is rich in essential nutrients. It contains significant amounts of vitamins such as vitamin C and several B vitamins, including B1 (thiamine), B2 (riboflavin), and B3 (niacin). Additionally, it provides important minerals like calcium, magnesium, potassium, and iron. One of the most notable benefits of sugarcane juice is its ability to provide a quick energy boost.



Due to its high natural sugar content, it serves as an excellent source of instant energy, making it an ideal drink for rehydration and replenishment, especially in hot climates or after physical exertion (kind of like nature's version of American Gatorade). The sugars in sugarcane juice are easily absorbed by the body, providing a rapid energy surge without the crash associated with refined sugars. The antioxidants present in sugarcane juice offer additional health advantages.

To make it more versatile, the sugarcane juice can be "upgraded" in other forms. By mixing sugarcane juice with fresh lemon juice and a pinch of salt, you can create a refreshing lemonade. By combining sugarcane juice with herbal teas like mint, basil, or chamomile you can have a naturally sweetened herbal infusion. By mixing sugarcane juice with coconut water and a splash of lime, you can make a hydrating and energizing drink.

Another use can be for an aperitif or as an alcoholic drink, creating a fresh cocktail by adding an alcoholic beverage. These cocktails typically combine the natural sweetness and refreshing qualities of sugarcane juice with various spirits to create unique and flavorful drinks. The common ground is a touch of lime to boost the freshness even more. From here, you can add rum, tequila, or Cachaça to create a drink that can be an alternative version of many famous cocktails. The precious juice has other uses. It can be used as a sweetener and in marinades and sauces, as well, since it adds natural sweetness and can be reduced to a syrupy glaze.

And it's not over! It can even be used for skin and hair care, and it has a history linked to Ayurvedic practices. The next time you see somebody making sugarcane juice, you are probably going to look at it in a different way!

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LIGA
Long-Filler

Blind Tasting

90 **SPIRITS**

92 Rum
98 Whisky

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107 Corona
112 Lonsdale
115 Robusto
119 Toro



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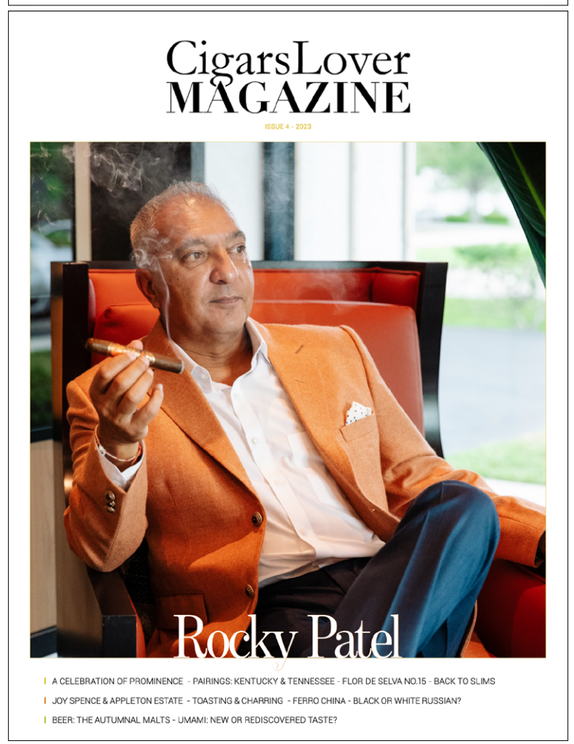








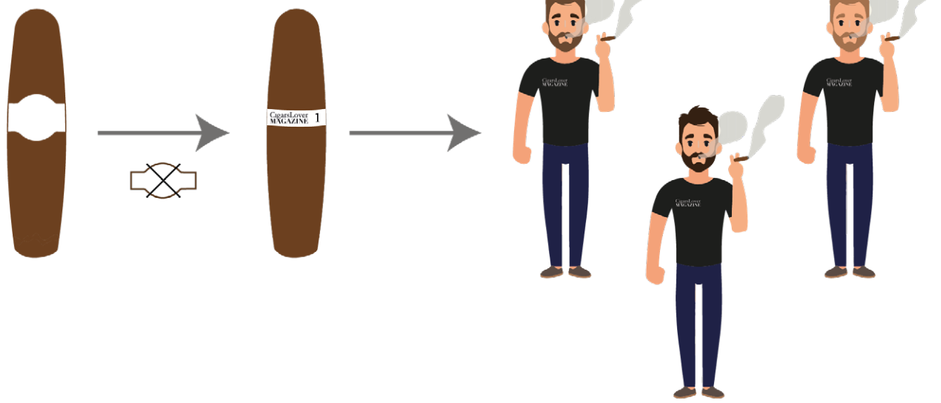




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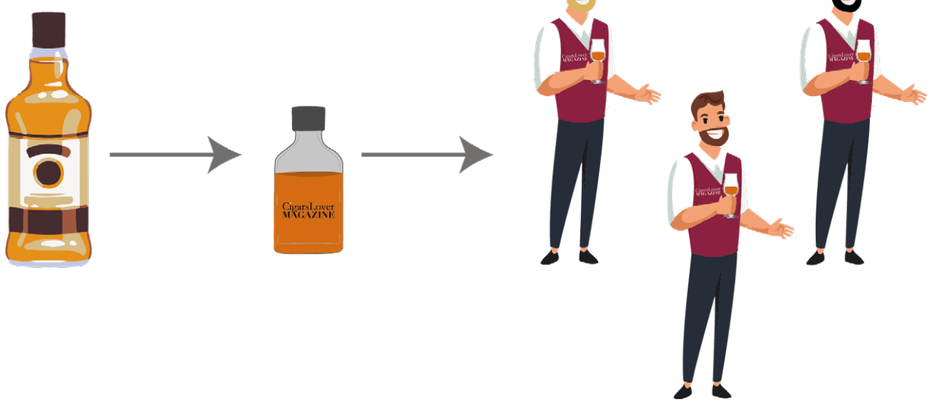
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HOW ARE THE BLIND TASTINGS MADE?



The cigar rings are removed and cigars are once again "dressed" with a new band, which simply bears a number. The same happens for the spirits, which are poured into little sample bottles, only showcasing a number and a possible indication, regarding the alcohol content, if the ABV is higher than 50%.

The products are then tested in a completely impartial way, in a blind tasting in which the tasters do not know which products they are trying.





The evaluations are then collected and CigarsLover Magazine team gets to work, calculating the averages and creating the final evaluations.

The tastings are compared to create the definitive review and the rating, expressed in a 100 scale.

Cigars & Spirits Results



1

KAVALAN
Solist Fino Sherry

2

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

3

— NOSE —

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

— PALATE —

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

4

— FINISH —

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

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

94

5

Legend

All the information in the blind tasting

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

1 Spirit image.

2 Name of the spirit reviewed.

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

3

• COUNTRY: where the spirit is made.

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

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

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

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



Rum





HAVANA CLUB
Vintage 2007

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Cuba	38% | 78	$$$$

—NOSE—

Rich vanila, coffee, honey and tropical fruits, complemented by subtly elegant woody notes.

—PALATE—

Smooth with a subtle sweetness of pear, fruit, spice and coffee, on a vein of spices and noble woodiness.

— FINISH —

Long. Roasted almods with smoky hints and loads of sweet spices.

A true masterpiece vintage for the most quintessential ron in the world.

96



J. BALLY
Brut de Fût 2004
17 Years Old

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	53.7% | 117.4	$$$

—NOSE—

Loads of spices, with nutmeg and roasted coffee and peanuts. Then macerated plum, stone fruit, peaches.

—PALATE—

Sumptuously tannic. A noble woodiness and tropical fruit, with a tangy walnut, coffee, and cocoa beans.

— FINISH —

Endless. Fruit, leather, spices, roasted nuts, coffee, cocoa and wood.

A true masterpiece that proudly represents Martinican Agricole rhum.

95



KARUKERA
235th
Anniversary

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Guadalupe	45% | 90	$$$

—NOSE—

Rich, replete with elegant notes of candied fruits, sandalwood, ripe flowers and wood spices.

—PALATE—

Warm and sweet, marked by sauternes echoes of dried apricots, canned peaches, and woody vanilla.

— FINISH —

Long and complex with roasted nuts, coconut chocolate, and noble wood.

An outstanding luscious interpretation of a very representative Agricole.

91



PÈRE LABAT
Ambassadeur

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Guadeloupe	43% | 86	$$$

— NOSE —

Gourmand vibes of cacao beans, jam fruit, prunes, and leather.

— PALATE —

Gluttonous flavors of vanilla, chocolate patisserie, crème brulè, and almond butter.

— FINISH —

Long. Hints of patisserie, orange zest, tropical fruit, and noble wood.

A masterful interpretation of Marie-Galant's spirit in a luxurious garment.

91



BIELLE
Marie-Galante 2011

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Guadalupe	45% | 90	$$$

— NOSE —

Ancient wood and leather, nuances of caramel and tropical fruits, topped by warm jam and honey.

— PALATE —

Wood, roasted caramelized pecan nuts and cacao-powdered coffee, with nutmeg and vanilla.

— FINISH —

Long. Tropical fruit, orange zest, crème brulé, roasted nuts, and noble wood.

It collects the identity of Bielle rhums in a elegant woody interpretation.

91



DEPAZ
Single Cask 2011
13 Years Old

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

— NOSE —

Fruity, with notes of figs, peaches and apricots as well as hints of licorice, chocolate and leather.

— PALATE —

Fruity and silky, quite warm, with an elegant woody astringency surrounded by tropical jam and roasted nuts.

— FINISH —

Long. Hints of fruit, leather, noble wood, and a balsamic touch.

An excellent cask from the spectacular 2011 harvest, chapeau!

90



HAMPDEN
The Younger 2018
5 Years Old

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Jamaica	47% | 94	$$$$

— NOSE —

Sappy artichoke, cane juice, ripe banana and pineapple. Then medicinal notes, pine resin and mustard seeds.

— PALATE —

Fresh. Citrous custard and plenty of vanilla. Then luscious cane syrup and tropical fruit of banana and pineapple.

— FINISH —

Long. Cane stem and ginger root, toffee and caramel echoes. Arabic gum.

A solid point of entry in the amazing world of Jamaican funky rums.

89



CLAIRIN
Vaval 2022

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Haiti	49.3% | 98.6	$

— NOSE —

Fresh and marine. Intense mint bushes, almost balsamic, then thyme, cucumber, brine, and visou.

— PALATE —

Warm, with peppermint, chili, lime zest, mangoes, and some thyme honey mellowing the mineral crispness.

— FINISH —

Medium-long. Honey and lemon, with mint and citrus.

It sharpens the distinctive character of Monsieur Vaval's creature.

89



SAINT JAMES
18 year old

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Martinique	43% | 86	$$$

— NOSE —

Woody and roasted notes, then macerated fruit, dried plum and raisin.

— PALATE —

Smooth and silky with elegant woody flavors, together with sweet spices and candied citrus.

— FINISH —

Medium-long, with hints of jam fruit, roasted nuts and spices.

A convincing showcase for a 18 years old to the distillery core range.

88



ISAUTIER
Mizunara Cask Finished

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Réunion	55% | 110	$

—NOSE—
Cane juice, cut grass, camphor, pine tree, and other botanicals. Visou, coconut water and white pepper.

—PALATE—
Medicinal notes, dill, cane juice, citrus, and fennel. Then white pepper, dried almonds, passion fruit, and toffee.

— FINISH —
Medium-short finish. Herbaceous, fruity and sugary.

A surprising combination of two very different styles.

87



LONGUETEAU
L'Hommage

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Guadalupe	45% | 90	$$

—NOSE—
Slightly caramelized and delicately smoky with plenty of jammy fruits and sweet spices.

—PALATE—
Smooth. Layers of woody spices and caramel, with herbals flavors pop out here and there.

— FINISH —
Medium-long, with some patisserie, crème brulé, and orange zest.

A soothing homage to lovely memories of warm family life.

86



PAPA ROUYO
Tanmpo

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Guadalupe	44.4% | 88.8	$$

—NOSE—
Delicate and mellow, with gourmet pastry subtly mixed together with spicy touches.

—PALATE—
Soft and easy-going with jam fruit and buttery pastry.

— FINISH —
Short finish. Caramel and toffee.

Overall, a rhum that exhibits a very sweet base. The flavor profile is not among the widest.

85

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Whisky





CHICHIBU ICHIRO'S MALT
On The Way 2024

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Japan	54% | 108	$$$$

—NOSE—

Fruity, with red and dark berries, ripe orchard, hints of mango and papaya. Toasted barley.

—PALATE—

Creamy, with hints of malted biscuits and again a rich fruity content, more on orchard then the nose.

— FINISH —

Quite long. It is very classy and elegant. Barley.

Excellent, complex and rewarding, boasting a long finish.

93



GLEN SCOTIA
25 Years Old

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	48% | 96	$$$$

—NOSE—

It delivers scents of vanilla, together with oak, some ripe red fruits and then hints of iodine.

—PALATE—

Sea breeze, red fruits, vanilla beans, and orange zest. There is a nice sweetness perceivable.

— FINISH —

Long. Iodine, orange zest, and ginger.

Complex and deep, with a structured flavor profile and a finish that lives up to expectations.

92



MICHTER'S
Shenk's 2024

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
U.S.A.	45.6% | 91.2	$$$

—NOSE—

Rich scents of toasted oak, vanilla beans, spices, and Crème brûlée. There is a deep fruit note as well.

—PALATE—

Smooth. Vegetal notes, resin, toasted oak, vanilla, and quite a few spices, with peppery hints.

— FINISH —

Long. Toasted oak, and vanilla, together with spices.

Deep, structured, and silky. A satisfying, rich whiskey.

91



KANOSUKE
Single Malt

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Japan	48% | 96	$$

—NOSE—
Scents of citrus are followed by honey and caramel. There is a touch of banana as well.

—PALATE—
Warm and round. Honey, ginger, wood, and some hints of smoke.

— FINISH —
Medium-long. Honey and smoke.

Well balanced, with a smooth and harmonious flavor profile.

89



THE BALVENIE
Curious Casks 14 Years Old American Bourbon

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	47.8% | 95.6	$$

—NOSE—
Honeyed. Fresh custard and banana, yellow apples and peaches compote. Light peat and earthy smoke.

—PALATE—
Apples and honeyed banana, almonds, intense smokiness, light spices, and a touch of minerality.

— FINISH —
Medium. Classy and malty, with orange peel.

Rather complex and multi-faceted product, a pleasure to drink.

88



LAPHROAIG
Elements L 1.0

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	58.6% | 119.2	$$$

—NOSE—
Sea breeze, smoky and peaty notes, some fruity hints and medicinal notes, together with beach bonfire.

—PALATE—
Warm. Smoky and peppery. Fruity notes, balsamic aromas, mainly cloves and then licorice.

— FINISH —
Medium. Smoky and peaty.

Balanced and easy to enjoy. The peat is not overwhelming.

88



PUNI
Arte 5

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Italy	48% | 96	$$

—NOSE—
Smoky and peaty scents, together with vanilla and oak. There is a slight fruitness to it.

—PALATE—
Toasted oak, gentle peat, leather and smoky hints. A touch of honey.

— FINISH —
Medium. Toasted oak together with gentle peat.

Easy to enjoy. The flavor profile is balanced and rich.

87



COMPASS BOX
Crimson Cask

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

—NOSE—
A mix of ripe red fruits, with rich plums, together with cardamom, clove and raisins. Hints of chocolate.

—PALATE—
Ripe fruits, raisins, oak, toffee and coffee beans. Honeyed base.

— FINISH —
Medium short. Oak and toffee.

Rich. The balance is on a razor edge, and the flavor profile is quite funky.

87



ISLE OF RAASAY
Chinkapin Oak

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	61.4% | 122.8	$$$

—NOSE—
Scents of ripe banana, vanilla, and green apple. A light buff of smoke. The alcohol is not completely silent.

—PALATE—
Earthy and peaty. Yellow ripe fruit, smoked malaga ice-cream. Some tannins, despite brown sugar notes.

— FINISH —
Medium. Some final astringency.

Interesting, yet some sharpness are evident, in part due to the high ABV.

87



AMRUT
Limited Edition 2024 Stout Beer Cask

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
India	50% | 100	$$$

—NOSE—
Scents of peppers, ground coffee beans, chocolate and vanilla. There are hints of toffee.

—PALATE—
Vanilla, toffee, and peppery spices. Chocolate is confirmed.

— FINISH —
Medium. Pepper and chocolate.

Intense and rich. The flavor profile is uncommon.

86



GLEN MORAY
Elgin Chardonnay Cask Finish

COUNTRY	ABV - PROOF	PRICE
Scotland	40% | 80	$

—NOSE—
Candied yellow fruits, pear, vanilla, cedar wood and cinnamon. A touch of nail polish.

—PALATE—
Sweet base. Notes of cedar wood, cinnamon, vanilla and yellow fruits.

— FINISH —
Short. Wood and vanilla.

It lacks in depth and is a little too woody and sweet.

83



WESTLAND
Solumn 2nd Edition

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

—NOSE—
Peat and smoke, together with vegetal notes, recalling a mix of rosemary and sage.

—PALATE—
Vegetal notes, toasted oak, vanilla, and a touch of smoke.

— FINISH —
Medium-short. Toasted wood and smoke.

The flavor profile delivers a nice intensity, but it lacks in depth.

83

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.













CIGARSLOVERS MAGAZINE
DISCOVER ALL ISSUES













PAGE
INTERACTIVE

Legend

All the information inside the blind tastings

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



ADVENTURA
Royal Return King's Gold Robusto

COMPLEX AND RICH

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

3 **95** 4

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	52x127mm (5")	$ 13.5 | € 13.5

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
U.S.A.	MEXICO	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA, U.S.A.

1 Cigar picture.

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

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

4 Flag identifying the country where the cigar is made.

Cuba · 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 millimiters 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





SANS PAREIL GREEN BELVEDERES

INTRICATE AND EVOLVING

Nuts, cream, and coffee give way to the smoke, followed by white pepper. A woody component is added in the second half, and the black pepper substitutes the white.

91

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	40x133mm (5 ¼")	$ 18 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
N/A	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



TABERNACLE HAVANA SEED CT NO. 142 CORONA

BALANCED AND BROAD

Coffee, earth, and walnut are joined by wood and balsamic herbs. The smoke is creamy with a subtle sweetness. Black pepper and leather are added in the second half.

90

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	46x133mm (5 ¼")	$ 10.9 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
U.S.A.	MEXICO	HONDURAS, NICARAGUA



GELLIS FAMILY CIGARS MAREVAS

COMPLEX AND STRUCTURED

A mix of sour cream, espresso, and hazelnut opens up the smoke, with vegetal nuances in the background. Black pepper and balsamic notes are added in the second half.

89

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	43x130mm (5 ⅛")	$ 11 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



FLOR DE COPAN MADURO CORONA

WELL BALANCED AND INTENSE

It delivers notes of wood and white pepper, together with piquant peaks. Then roasted notes are added, followed by earth and balsamic aromas.

89

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	40x136mm (5 ⅜")	$ - | € 6.4

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	HONDURAS	HONDURAS, NICARAGUA



ESCOBAR HABANO CORONA

BOLD AND ROUND

The cigar starts immediately with intense aromas of black pepper, earth, and wood. A cocoa sweetness is added later on, joined by leather towards the end.

89

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	42x127mm (5")	$ 12.7 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	HONDURAS, NICARAGUA



QUAI D'ORSAY CORONAS CLARO

DEFINED AND ROUND

Wood and white pepper are revealed in the opening of the cigar, joined later by cocoa. A mix of earth and hot spices appears in the second half of the smoke.

88

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	42x143mm (5 ⅝")	$ 14.6 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



PUNCH TRIUNFOS

RUSTIC

The cigar opens with nuts and cream, followed by white pepper and wood. A light bitterness appears in the second half, which unbalances the smoke.

86

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	42x130mm (5 ⅛")	$ - | € 13.9

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



LA GALERA IMPERIAL JADE CORONA

INTENSE BUT STATIC

It exhibits earth and vegetal notes, with a touch of spices, the latter mainly perceivable in the background. Advancing into the smoke, the vegetal aromas become protagonist.

84

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	60x152mm (6")	$ - | € 11.5

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CAMEROOON	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.

中国杂志

Available in:
ENGLISH
ITALIAN
CHINESE



SPIRITS

威士忌標籤

怎麼找出來
你喝的是什麼

Federico Bosco

所有威士忌飲用者經常進行激烈分析，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數據：標籤。

無論是大的還是小的，有時用玻璃挑剔，有時是雙面（正面和背面），有時完整的巴克，有時更簡潔，標籤傳說給我們許多的信息，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用的。

愛爾蘭生產將其瓶子命名為威士忌;這同樣適用於美國世界。相反，在蘇格蘭和亞洲其他地方，我們談論沒有"e"的威士忌;在蘇格蘭的情況下，名稱讓大了蘇格蘭語。單一麥芽蘇格蘭威士忌保證了單一釀酒廠的原產地。一些蘇格蘭釀酒廠增加了生產區域，以做調產品的地域性。

"歲月"之後經常出現的數字與產品的最低年齡有關。最低年齡因為，與釀暖不同桶的混合相比，最年輕的數字是指您的。示例：使用三個桶分別裝過8年，12年和29年的威士忌將顯示"8歲"字樣，無論舊桶的老化情況如何。

公司有責任報告其他桶的年齡，但這不是強制性的。有時，您可以找到沒有年齡的威士忌：沒有追憶，沒有陳假或假冒產品，它們是所謂的NAS（無年齡聲明），其中通用於最低3年表示的陳釀法則。製片人選擇不提年齡，這仍然是未知的；它將由我們的口味來驗證味道和愉悅。

在標籤上，始終報告酒精含量，必須至少為40%;在這個數字下我們不能設威士忌。如果等級更高，有時公司會報告"Cask Strength"（英國貝芽）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提取。然而，某發使您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，特別是如果前者備有一定的年齡。

"Un Chillfiltered"這個詞讓我們知道威士忌沒有被冷過濾，以及"沒有顏色"，或"沒有添加焦糖"（或其他類似的詞），解釋說沒有添加焦糖到以顏色。

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

桶的組合符合精確的標準：您可以將來自同一釀酒廠，不同釀酒廠，甚至蒙尊（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，沒有界線（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（參午前它被稱為Vatted），第三種情況是混合威士忌（或混合）。遇书Grain Whiskeys：這個術語是指用各種穀物生產的威士忌。在美國世界，我們經常遇到與盛行穀物相關的各種詞語，或者使用的唯一穀物（果膠威士忌，玉米威士忌）。

我們試圖解釋各種標籤上最常用的術語;沒有絕對的紀律，每個製酒商都發自己的事情，但是，遵循這些指導原則，在這個瘋閒而獨特的世界中，您將更容易自拔。



Lonsdale





JOYA DE NICARAGUA CINCO DE CINCO CORONA EXTRA

92

RICH AND INTENSE

It delivers earth, wood and a mix of spices, including white pepper and nutmeg. There is also a nuance of licorice. Then vegetal notes and a balsamic blast are added.

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	46x159mm (6 ¼")	$ 16 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



MATILDE LIMITED EXPOSURE NO. 2 LONSDALE

91

BROAD AND COMPLEX

Coffee, herbs, and nuts open up the smoke, joined by white pepper and wood aromas later on. The profile becomes spicier, with black pepper and chili, in the second half.

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	60x152mm (6")	$ 24 | € 39.5

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



NOMOS LONSDALE

89

EVOLVING AND INTENSE

The cigar reveals black pepper, leather, and wood in the first half. Cream and coffee nuances are added later on. Aromas of herbs and chili spice appear towards the end.

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	42x152mm (6")	$ 14.5 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CAMEROON	INDONESIA	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



HERRERA ESTELI LONSDALE DELUXE

89

BOLD AND SATISFYING

It delivers notes of earth and a riot of spices, with black pepper, incense, nutmeg, and later on, piquant flavors. In the final part, balsamic nuances are added.

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	44x152mm (6")	$ 10.95 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUAODR	HONDURAS	NICARAGUA



COHIBA SIGLO III

REFINED AND ELEGANT

It delivers notes of wood and white pepper, together with nutty aromas. There is a touch of ripe fruit, enriched by piquant spices. The base is sweet.

88

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	42x155mm (6 ⅛")	$ 52.5 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
CUBA	CUBA	CUBA



TATUAJE 20TH GRANDE MERVEILLE

LINEAR EVOLUTION

It exhibits notes of earth, black pepper and vegetal aromas. In the last part of the smoke, roasted coffee notes, together with a balsamic hint are added.

87

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	46x156mm (6 ⅛")	$ 13 | € 15

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



DAPPER DESVALIDO LONSDALE

WELL BALANCED BUT STATIC

It delivers notes of earth and spices, including black pepper and nutmeg. There is also a balsamic touch perceivable.

86

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	46x165mm (6 ½")	$ 12.8 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	U.S.A.	NICARAGUA



EL SEPTIMO NIGORI

SMOOTH BUT LINEAR

A mix of grassy, creamy, and nutty aromas five way to the smoke and make out the main flavor profile. A white pepper flavor appears in the second half.

85

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	46x152mm (6")	$ 12 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	ECUADOR	BRAZIL, ECUADOR, DOMINICAN REP.,- NICARAGUA

Robusto





LIGA PRIVADA NO. 9 ROBUSTO

COMPLEX AND BALANCED

The cigar opens with cinnamon, ripe fruit, and vegetal notes. Dark chocolate, earth and black pepper join the profile. The smoke is creamy throughout.

93

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x127mm (5")	$ 16.5 | € 19.3

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
U.S.A.	BRAZIL	NICARAGUA, HONDURAS



CROWNED HEADS CORONETA MAD. EARL

LAYERED AND SMOOTH

Sweet cocoa and leather give way to the smoke, followed by hazelnut and mineral notes. Balsamic aromas and coffee are added later on. The smoke becomes spicier towards the end.

92

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	52x127mm (5")	$ 12.95 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA, U.S.A.



EL PULPO ROBUSTO GRANDE BOX PRESSED

BOLD AND INTENSE

The cigar starts with intense aromas of leather, earth and black pepper. Cocoa and wood are added in the second half, next to a salty mineral notes.

91

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	56x127mm (5")	$ 15 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



FRATELLO CONCEALED CARRY 18TH AMENDMENT

BROAD AND FLAVORFUL

A mix of herbs, nuts, citrus, and cinnamon give way to the smoke. An espresso note joins further into the cigar. A spicy black pepper note appears towards the end.

90 N/A

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x140mm (5 ½")	$ 10 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
N/A	N/A	N/A



VALENTINO SIESTO HABANO ROBUSTO

BALANCED AND ROUND

The cigar opens with a mix of herbs, wood and black pepper, with a subtle sweetness in the background. Earthy and nutty aromas are added in the second half.

88

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x127mm (5")	$ 11 | € 13.9

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP.



VEGAFINA 1998 VF52

WELL BALANCED AND RICH

It delivers notes of wood and earth, together with some vegetal notes, the latter mainly in the background.

88

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x127mm (5")	$ 10.17 | € 14.9

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	INDONESIA	COSTA RICA, DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



AGANORSA LEAF ARSENIO ROBUSTO

FLAVORFUL BUT LINEAR

Once lit, the smoke reveals nuances of white pepper, nuts, and wood on a sweet base. Coffee and cream aromas are added later on. The finale turns balsamic.

88

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	54x1mm (5 ¼")	$ 15.99 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



SANCHO PANZA EXTRA CHIDO ROBUSTO

FULL-BODIED BUT LINEAR

The flavor profile is mainly made up of black pepper, earth and nutty aromas, with a hint of cocoa and balsamic herbs in the background.

88

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	50x127mm (5")	$ 8.79 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



ARTISTA FALU ROBUSTO BOX PRESSED

88

FULL AND POTENT

Black pepper, earth, and nuts are the main flavors, joined by nuances of leather. A creamy aroma is added later on. The smoke turns balsamic and spicy towards the finale.

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●●	54x127mm (5")	$ 10.2 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
N/A	INDONESIA	N/A



BOHEKIO COLORS ROBUSTO

86

INTENSE BUT HARSH

It delivers vegetal notes earth and black pepper, together with balsamic nuances; the latter become more and more predominant advancing in the smoke.

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	50x127mm (5")	$ 10 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
DOMINICAN REP.	HAITI	HAITI



FREUD CARLOS Y MARIA AMORIO ROBUSTO

84

CONTAINED FLAVOR PROFILE

It exhibits notes of wood and vegetal notes, together with spicy nuances.

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	50x127mm (5")	$ 19 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	INDONESIA	DOMINICAN REP., ECUADOR, NICARAGUA, N/A



PADILLA FINEST HOUR SUN GROWN ROBUSTO

83

LIMITED BALANCE AND HARMONY

It exhibits aromas of earth and leather, together with some vegetal notes, the latter a little on the bitter side.

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	52x127mm (5")	$ 7.5 | € 7

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA

Toro





MUESTRA DE SAKA KRAKATOA

DEEP AND COMPLEX

It delivers aromas of earth, roasted coffee beans, seasoned wood, white pepper and nutmeg nuances. Then vegetal and balsamic notes are added.

93

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	48x152mm (6")	$ 20.75 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA, U.S.A.



GILBERT DE MONTSALVAT 15 YEARS

SMOOTH AND COMPLEX

It delivers nutty notes, cocoa, earth and vegetal nuances, together with balsamic hints and a mix of green and black pepper.

92

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	58x140mm (5 ½")	$ - | € 13.8

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



601 LA BOMBA WARHEAD X

BALANCED AND COMPLEX

Aromas of toasted bread, herbs, and sweet cocoa give way to the smoke. A mix of nuts and wood appear in the second half, joined by leather and earth towards the end.

91

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	55x152mm (6")	$ 16 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



BLACK LABEL TRADING COMPANY ORTHODOX TORO

FLAVORFUL AND INTENSE

Black pepper, earth, leather and cocoa are the core notes of the flavor profile. Nuances of nuts, ripe fruit are present in the background. There is also a subtle sweetness present throughout.

90

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	54x155mm (6 ⅛")	$ 10.49 | € 8.8

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	ECUAODR	NICARAGUA



SANTIAGO VALLADARES EXCLUSIVO USA

EVOLUTIVE AND INTENSE

It exhibits earthy notes, roasted coffee, mushrooms, and black pepper, the latter in the background. Then green pepper, piquant nuances and balsamic aromas.

89

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	52x152mm (6")	$ 25 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUAODR	HONDURAS	HONDURAS



HIRAM & SOLOMON CORNER STONE

BALANCED AND RICH

It brings cedar wood notes to the palate, enriched by a mix of black and white pepper. There are some earthy and nutty aromas, with hints of cocoa.

89

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x152mm (6")	$ 16 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
INDONESIA	DOMINICAN REP.	DOMINICAN REP., BRAZIL, NICARAGUA



COHIBA SERIE M RESERVA ROJA 2024

WELL BALANCED AND REFINED

It delivers aromas of roasted coffee beans, together with earth and seasoned wood.

88

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●v	54x165mm (6 ½")	$ 29.99 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



KRISTOFF TRES COMPADRES TORO

BROAD BUT LINEAR

Nuts, pepper and wood make up the main flavors of the cigar. A balsamic note appears in the second half and the profile becomes spicy toward the finale.

87

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	54x159mm (6 ¼")	$ 10.5 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA



E.P. CARRILLO SUMATRA TORO

INTENSE AND BALANCED

It exhibits notes of earth, spices, camphor and vegetal hints, on a sweet base.

87

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x152mm (6")	$ 10 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	HONDURAS, NICARAGUA	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA



MATILDE SPECIAL RELEASE TORO

GOOD COMPLEXITY

It delivers notes of roasted nutty notes, coffee, earth, and cocoa beans. Then a mix of black pepper and piquant spices is added. The last third is less performing.

87

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●●	50x152mm (6")	$ 13.25 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
ECUADOR	NICARAGUA	DOMINICAN REP., NICARAGUA, PERU



TE AMO THE ORIGINAL SAN ANDRES TORO

INTENSE BUT STATIC

The cigar opens with black pepper, earth, leather and nuts, which are the prominent flavors throughout the smoke. The finale becomes spicy and slightly bitter.

86

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●●	52x152mm (6")	$ 11.22 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
MEXICO	MEXICO	MEXICO



AGING ROOM QUATTRO NICARAG. SONATA VIBRATO

CONTAINED FLAVOR PROFILE

It exhibits notes of earth, together with nutty aromas, mainly recalling hazelnut. In the second half, some wood nuances are added to the flavor profile.

84

STRENGTH	SIZE	PRICE
●●	54x152mm (6")	$ 13.24 | € -

WRAPPER	BINDER	FILLER
NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA	NICARAGUA

Credits

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