Encyclopedia > Rum

Rum is a distilled beverage made from sugarcane by-products such as molasses and sugarcane juice by a process of fermentation and distillation. The distillate, a clear liquid, is then usually aged in oak and other barrels. The majority of rum production occurs in and around the Caribbean and along the Demerara River, Guyana in South America, though there are rum producers in places such as Australia, Fiji, India, Reunion Island, Mauritius, and elsewhere around the world.

Rum is produced in a variety of styles. Light rums are commonly used in cocktails, while golden and dark rums are appropriate for use in cooking as well as cocktails. Premium brands of rum are also available that are made to be consumed neat or on the rocks.

Rum plays a part in the culture of most islands of the West Indies, and has famous associations with the British Royal Navy and piracy. Rum has also served as a popular medium of exchange that helped to promote slavery along with providing economic instigation for Australia’s Rum Rebellion and the American Revolution.[2]

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Etymology

The origin of the word rum is unclear. A common claim is that the name was derived from rumbullion meaning "a great tumult or uproar".[3] Another claim is that the name is from the large drinking glasses used by Dutch seamen known as rummers, from the Dutch word roemer, a drinking glass.[2] Other options include contractions of the words saccharum, Latin for sugar, or arôme, French for aroma. Regardless of the original source, the name was already in common use by May 1657 when the General Court of Massachusetts made illegal the sale of strong liquor "whether knowne by the name of rumme, strong water, wine, brandy, etc., etc.".[4]

In current usage, the name used for a rum is often based on the rum's place of origin. For rums from Spanish-speaking locales the word ron is used. A ron añejo indicates a rum that has been significantly aged and is often used for premium products. Rhum is the term used for rums from French-speaking locales, while rhum vieux is an aged French rum that meets several other requirements.

Some of the many other names for rum are Nelson's Blood, Kill-Devil, Demon Water, Pirate's Drink, Navy Neaters, and Barbados water.[2] A version of rum from Newfoundland is referred to by the name Scrumpy, while some low-grade West Indies rums are called tails.[citation needed]

History
Origins

The precursors to rum date back to antiquity. Development of fermented drinks produced from sugarcane juice is believed to have first occurred either in ancient India or China, and spread from there. An example of such an early drink is brum. Produced by the Malay people, brum dates back thousands of years. Marco Polo also recorded a 14th-century account of a “very good wine of sugar” that was offered to him in what is modern-day Iran.

The first distillation of rum took place on the sugarcane plantations of the Caribbean in the 17th century. Plantation slaves first discovered that molasses, a by-product of the sugar refining process, could be fermented into alcohol. Later, distillation of these alcoholic by-products concentrated the alcohol and removed impurities, producing the first true rums. Tradition suggests that rum first originated on the island of Barbados. Regardless of its initial source, early Caribbean rums were not known for high quality. A 1651 document from Barbados stated, “The chief fuddling they make in the island is Rumbullion, alias Kill-Divil, and this is made of sugar canes distilled, a hot, hellish, and terrible liquor.”

Colonial America

After rum's development in the Caribbean, the drink's popularity spread to Colonial America. To support the demand for the drink, the first rum distillery in the colonies was set up in 1654 on present-day Staten Island, New York. The manufacture of rum became early Colonial New England's largest and most prosperous industry. Although New England became a distilling center (due to the superior technical, metalworking and cooperage (barrel making) skills and abundant lumber), the rum produced there was lighter, more like whiskey, and lacked the character and aroma of the West Indies product. Though cheaper, anyone who could afford it much preferred the Caribbean product. Rhode Island rum even joined gold as an accepted currency in Europe for a period of time. Estimates of rum consumption in the American colonies before the American Revolutionary War had every man, woman, or child drinking an average of 3 Imperial gallons (13.5 liters) of rum each year.

To support this demand for the molasses to produce rum, along with the increasing demand for sugar in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries, a labour source to work the sugar plantations in the Caribbean was needed. A triangular trade was established between Africa, the Caribbean, and the colonies to help support this need. The exchange of slaves, molasses, and rum was quite profitable, and the disruption to the trade caused by the Sugar Act in 1764 may have even helped cause the American Revolution.

The popularity of rum continued after the American Revolution with George Washington insisting on a barrel of Barbados rum at his 1789 inauguration. Eventually the restrictions on rum from the British islands of the Caribbean combined with the development of American whiskey led to a decline in the drink's popularity.

Naval rum

Rum's association with piracy began with English privateer trading on the valuable commodity. As some of the privateers became pirates and buccaneers, their fondness for rum remained, the association between the two only being strengthened by literary works such as Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island.

The association of rum with the British Royal Navy began in 1655 when the British fleet captured the island of Jamaica. With the availability of domestically produced rum, the British changed the daily ration of liquor given to seamen from French brandy to rum. While the ration was originally given neat, or mixed with lime juice, the practice of watering down the rum began around 1740. To help minimize the effect of the alcohol on his sailors, Admiral Edward Vernon directed that the rum ration be watered down before being issued, a mixture which became known as grog. While it is widely believed that the term grog was coined at this time in honor of the grog cloak Admiral Vernon wore in rough weather, the term has been demonstrated to predate his famous orders with probable origins in the West Indies, perhaps of African etymology (see Grog). The Royal Navy continued to give its sailors a daily rum ration, known as a “tot,” until the practice was abolished after July 31, 1970.

A story involving naval rum is that following his victory at the Battle of Trafalgar, Horatio Nelson's body was preserved in a cask of rum to allow transport back to England. Upon arrival, however, the cask was opened and found to be empty of rum. The pickled body was removed and, upon inspection, it was discovered that the sailors had drilled a hole in the bottom of the cask and drank all the rum, in the process drinking Nelson's blood. Thus, this tale serves as a basis for the term "Tapping the Admiral" being used to describe drinking the daily rum ration. The details of the story are disputed, with some historians claiming the term originated instead from a toast to Admiral Nelson.

Colonial Australia

See Also: Rum Rebellion

Rum became an important trade good in the early period of the colony of New South Wales. The value of rum was based upon the lack of coinage among the population of the colony, and due to the drink's ability to allow its consumer to temporarily forget about the lack of creature comforts available in the new colony. The value of rum was such that convict settlers could be induced to work the lands owned by officers of the New South Wales Corps. Due to rum's popularity among the settlers, the colony gained a reputation for drunkenness even though their alcohol consumption was less than levels commonly consumed in England at the time.

When William Bligh became governor of the colony in 1806, he attempted to remedy the perceived
The grades and variations used to describe rum depend on the location that a rum was produced. Grades

Dark Rum. In the legal minimum is at only 5 percent, but the taste of Rumverschnitt is still very similar to genuine caramel coloring beverage is made of genuine dark rum (often from Jamaica), in domestic rum) in the Czech Republic and 86 per cent proof in West Africa, and particularly in mezcalt, a spirit similar to rum that is produced in Brazil. In West Africa, and particularly in Liberia, cane juice (also known as Liberian rum or simply CJ within Liberia itself), is a cheap, strong spirit distilled from sugar cane, which can be as strong as 86 per cent proof.

Regional Variations

Within the Caribbean, each island or production area has a unique style. For the most part, these styles can be grouped by the language that is traditionally spoken. Due to the overwhelming influence of Puerto Rican rum, most rum consumed in the United States is produced in the Spanish-speaking style.

- **Spanish-speaking** islands traditionally produce light rums with a fairly clean taste. Rums from Cuba, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Colombia and Venezuela are typical of this style.
- **English-speaking** islands and countries are known for darker rums with a fuller taste that retains a greater amount of the underlying molasses flavor. Rums from Barbados, Bermuda, Belize, the Demerara region of Guyana, and Jamaica are typical of this style.
- **French-speaking** islands are best known for their agricultural rums (rum agricole). These rums, being produced exclusively from sugar cane juice, retain a greater amount of the original flavor of the sugar cane and are generally more expensive than molasses-based rums. Rums from Haiti, Guadeloupe, Marie-Galante and Martinique are typical of this style.

Cachaca is a spirit similar to rum that is produced in Brazil. Seco, from Panama, is also a spirit similar to rum, but also similar to vodka, since it is triple distilled. The Indonesian spirit Batavia Arrack, or Arrak, is a spirit similar to rum that includes rice in its production. Mexico produces a number of brands of light and dark rum, as well as other less expensive flavored and unflavored sugar cane-based liquors, such as aguardiente de caña and charandas. In some cases cane liquor is flavored with mezcal to produce a pseudo-tequila-like drink.

A spirit known as Aquardente, distilled from molasses infused with anise, with additional sugarcane juice added after distillation, is produced in Central America and northern South America.

In West Africa, a similar spirit made from sugar beet is known as zuzemák (from tuzemský rum, domestic rum) in the Czech Republic and Kobba Libre on the Åland Islands.

In Germany, a cheap substitute of dark rum is called Rum-Verschnitt (literally: cut rum). This distilled beverage is made of genuine dark rum (often from Jamaica), rectified spirit, and water. Very often, caramel coloring is used, too. The relative amount of genuine rum it contains can be quite low since the legal minimum is at only 5 percent, but the taste of Rumverschnitt is still very similar to genuine dark rum. In Austria, a similar rum called Inländerum or domestic rum is available.

Grades

The grades and variations used to describe rum depend on the location that a rum was produced. Despite these variations the following terms are frequently used to describe various types of rum:

- **Light Rums**, also referred to as light, silver, and white rums. In general, light rum has very little flavor aside from a general sweetness, and serves accordingly as a base for cocktails. Light rums are sometimes filtered after aging to remove any color.
- **Gold Rums**, also called amber rums, are medium-bodied rums which are generally aged. These gain their dark color from aging in wooden barrels (usually the charred white oak barrels that are the byproduct of Bourbon Whiskey).
Rum with a combination of

Rum may also be used as a base in the manufacture of Painkiller. In addition to these well-known cocktails, a number of local specialties utilize rum. Examples of these inventions such as the Mai Tai and the Zombie, are significantly darker, while many cheaper brands are made from inexpensive white rums and darkened with artificial caramel color.

Dark Rum, also known as black rum, classes as a grade darker than gold rum. It is generally aged longer, in heavily charred barrels. Dark rum has a much stronger flavor than either light or gold rum, and hints of spices can be detected, along with a strong molasses or caramel overtone. It is used to provide substance in rum drinks, as well as color. In addition to uses in mixed drinks, dark rum is the type of rum most commonly used in cooking.

Flavored Rum: Some manufacturers have begun to sell rums which they have infused with flavors of fruits such as mango, orange, citrus, coconut, and limke which is a lime rum found in Sweden. These serve to flavor similarly themed tropical drinks which generally comprise less than 40% alcohol, and are also often drunk neat or on the rocks.

Overproof Rum is rum which is much higher than the standard 40% alcohol. Most of these rums bear greater than 75%, in fact, and preparations of 151 to 160 proof occur commonly.

Premium Rum: As with other sipping spirits, such as Cognac and Scotch, a market exists for premium and super-premium rums. These are generally boutique brands which sell very aged and carefully produced rums. They have more character and flavor than their "mixing" counterparts, and are generally consumed without the addition of other ingredients.

Production methodology

Unlike some other spirits, such as Cognac and Scotch, rum has no defined production methods. Instead, rum production is based on traditional styles that vary between locations and distillers.

Fermentation

Most rum produced is made from molasses. Within the Caribbean, much of this molasses is from Brazil. A notable exception is the French-speaking islands where sugarcane juice is the preferred base ingredient.

Yeast and water are added to the base ingredient to start the fermentation process. While some rum producers allow wild yeast to perform the fermentation, most use specific strains of yeast to help provide a consistent taste and predictable fermentation time. Dunder, the yeast-rich foam from previous fermentations, is the traditional yeast source in Jamaica. "The yeast employed will determine the final taste and aroma profile," says Jamaican master blender Joy Spence. Distillers that make lighter rums, such as Bacardi, prefer to use faster-working yeasts. Use of slower-working yeasts causes more esters to accumulate during fermentation, allowing for a fuller-tasting rum.

Distillation

As with all other aspects of rum production, there is no standard method used for distillation. While some producers work in batches using pot stills, most rum production is done using column still distillation. Pot still output contains more congeners than the output from column stills and thus produces a fuller-tasting rum.

Aging and blending

Many countries require that rum be aged for at least one year. This aging is commonly performed in used bourbon casks but may also be performed in stainless steel tanks or other types of wooden casks. Due to the tropical climate common to most rum-producing areas, rum matures at a much faster rate than is typical for Scotch or Cognac. An indication of this faster rate is the angel's share, or amount of product lost to evaporation. While products aged in France or Scotland see about 2% loss each year, rum producers may see as much as 10%. After aging, rum is normally blended to ensure a consistent flavor. As part of this blending process, light rums may be filtered to remove any color gained during aging. For darker rums, caramel may be added to the rum to adjust the color of the final product.

In cuisine

Besides rum punch, cocktails such as the Cuba Libre and Daiquiri have well-known stories of their invention in the Caribbean. Tiki culture in the US helped expand rum's horizons with inventions such as the Mai Tai and Zombie. Other well-known cocktails containing rum include the Piña Colada, a drink made popular by Rupert Holmes' song "Escape (The Piña Colada Song)" and the Mojito. Cold-weather drinks made with rum include the Rum toddy and Hot Buttered Rum. In addition to these well-known cocktails, a number of local specialties utilize rum. Examples of these local drinks include Bermuda's Dark and Stormy (Gosling's Black Seal rum with ginger beer), and the Painkiller from the British Virgin Islands.

Rum may also be used as a base in the manufacture of liqueurs. Spiced Rum is made by infusing rum with a combination of spices. Another combination is jarepette, a mixture of rum and black tea.
Rum may also be used in a number of cooked dishes. It may be used as a flavoring agent in items such as rum balls or rum cakes. Rum is commonly used to macerate fruit used in intuňtaktaines and is also used in marinades for some Caribbean dishes. Rum is also used in the preparation of bananas foster and some hard sauces.

**Ti Punch** is short for "petit punch", little punch. This is a very traditional drink in the French-speaking region of the Caribbean.

### See also
- List of rum producers
- List of Puerto Rican rums
- List of cocktails
- Bay rum
- Rum-running
- Rum row
- Cachaca
- American Whiskey Trail
- Secco Ferranano

### Brands
- 10 Cane
- Admiral Nelson's
- Angostura
- Appleton Estate
- Bacardi
- Bamboo Rum
- Bacoelo
- Bayu
- Barbancourt
- Beeneleigh
- Bermudez
- Bounty Rum
- Braddah Kimo's Maui Rum
- Brinley Gold Rum
- Brukal
- Buncabar
- Cockspur
- Caroni
- Caney
- Captain Morgan
- Carapajo
- Cavalier
- Centenario
- Coronation Khukuri XXX Rum
- Cortez, Ron Cortez, Panamá
- Coruba
- Cruzan
- Cubanay
- Diplomatico
- Don Lorenzo
- Don Q
- El Dorado
- English Harbour Rum
- Estelar
- Flor de Caña
- Ghostship
- Goodwill
- Gosling's (Black Seal, Family Reserve)
- Green Island
- Guantanamera
- Havana Club
- Honey Rum
- Hochoy
- Island Pride
- Jolly Roger
- Lemon Hart
- Lamb's Rum
- Macuro
- Malibu Rum
- Mathuros Rum, Kingdom of Thailand
- Matusalem
- McDowell's No.1 Celebration Rum
- Militia
- Mount Gay
- Montilla
- Myers
- Newfoundland Scrach
- New Grove Oak Aged Rum
- New Grove Plantation Rum
- Ocumare
- Old Monk
- Old Sam's
- One Barrell
- Panama Jack Spiced Rum
- Plantation Rum
- Pussers
- Pyrat
- RedRum
- Ronrico
- Ron Cortez
- Ron Diaz
- Ron Pampero
- Ron Viejo de Caldas
- Ron Zacapa Centenario
- Royal Reserve
- Rum Nation
- Santa Teresa
- Santiago De Cuba
- Sailor Jerry
- Silver Kiss Rum
- Shroh
- Tanduay
- Varela Rum,151 proof, Panamá
- VooDoo Spiced Rum
- Wray and Nephews
- Zaya

### Notes
2. ^ Blue, p. 72–73
3. ^ Blue p. 73
5. ^ Blue p. 72
6. ^ Blue p. 70
7. ^ Blue p. 74
9. ^ Blue p. 76
10. ^ Tannahill p. 295
11. ^ Tannahill p. 296
13. ^ Pack p. 15
14. ^ Pack p. 77
15. ^ Tannahill p. 273
16. ^ Pack p. 123
17. ^ Blue p. 78
18. ^ Clarke p. 26
19. ^ Clarke p. 29
21. ^ Blue p. 89
22. ^ Blue p. 81–82
23. ^ Cooper p. 60
25. ^ [l]
References


Further reading


External links

Wikiquote has a collection of quotations related to:

Rum

History & Information

Rum History

Ministry of Rum

Reviews

- El Machete's Rum Reviews
- RND Rum Reviews
- Scottes' Rum Pages
- Bilgemunky's Rum Reviews
- Captain Jimbo's Rum Project
- Refined Vices

Alcoholic beverages

- Alcohol
- Alcohol consumption and health
- Alcohol advertising
- Alcohol abuse
- Ethanol
- Drinking culture

Production

- Beer (Beer variations)
- Wine (Wine variations)
- Cider (Cider variations)
- Rice wine (Rice wine variations)
- Other: Fermented beverages
- Basi
- Chicha
- Huangjiu
- Kumis
- Kvass
- Mead
- Pulque
- Sahti
- Gouqi jiu

Fermented beverages

- Agave: Tequila, Mezcal
- Almond: Amaretto
- Anise: Absinthe, Arak
- Ouzo
- Rakı
- Pastis
- Sambuca
- Sassolino
- Apple: Applejack, Calvados
- Barley: Scotch whisky, Irish whisky
- Japanese whisky: Cashew
- Fennel: Coconut
- Arrack
- Malibu
- Fruit: Bouka, Brandy, Kirchwasser
- Limoncello
- Pisco
- Palinka
- Rakia
- Schnapps
- Grape: Cognac, Armagnac
- Honey: Bärenjäger, Krupnik

Distilled beverages

- Maize (corn): Bourbon whisky, Corn whiskey, Tennessee whiskey
- Plum: Slivovitz, Tuïc
- Pomace: Grappa, Onisio, Zkavia, Tsikoudia, Tsipouro
- Cinnamon: Tentura
- Potato: Vodka, Aquavit, Brennvin, Snaps
- Sorghum: Baijiu (Koalang)
- Rice: Rice baijiu, Soju, Awamori, Sake
- Rye: Rye whiskey
- Sugarcane/Molasses: Rum
- Cachaca, Aquardente, Falernum, Guaro, Seco
- Harranas
- Thana
- Clarin
- Various cereals: Shōchū, Gin, Vodka, Whisky
- Canadian whisky
- Jenever
- Moonshine

Mixed drinks

- Beer cocktails
- Cocktails
- Flaming beverages
- Shooters
- Wine cocktails
- Mulled wine

Results from FactBites:
Rum is a distilled beverage made from sugarcane by-products such as molasses and sugarcane juice by a process of fermentation and distillation.

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The value of rum was based upon the lack of coinage among the population of the colony, and due to the drink's ability to allow its consumer to temporarily forget about the lack of creature comforts available in the new colony.

Rum (disambiguation) is a spirit made from sugarcane by-products such as molasses or sugar cane juice.

Hence Sultanate of Rum, a Seljuk sultanate (conquered on Byzantium, the 'second Rome') from 1077 to 1307; later the Ottoman Rüm Province, in northern Anatolia.

Rüm (or Rum or Rhum), a Scottish island.