THE RUM AUTHORITY MISSION

THE RUM AUTHORITY, with the support of Rum producers, is dedicated to presenting the latest pertinent data concerning Rum/Rhum/Ron in seminar form to trade, media and consumer audiences for the express purpose of promoting this culturally important international spirit category.

THE RUM AUTHORITY’s mission is to accurately and truthfully elevate and draw attention to rum’s historical influence, pedigree, versatility, distinction, and contemporary relevance.

More than whiskey, brandy, tequila, gin or vodka, rum is the world’s chameleon distillate. Over the last 400 hundred years of its modern history, rum has been a cherished libation, a medicinal elixir, a currency, a cooking and baking ingredient, a cause of human trafficking, a celebratory toast of signed agreements, a daily ration to sailors, a U.S. president’s inauguration tipple, a generator of economic boom, the spirituous foundation of numerous iconic cocktails, an inspiration to authors, poets, songwriters and playwrights, and a source of celebration, national pride, and exaltation.

Because of its independence and acknowledged credibility, THE RUM AUTHORITY, operated by Spirit Journal, Inc., does for rum what the individual rum brands cannot. THE RUM AUTHORITY addresses all these compelling facets, all these complex dimensions of rum with candor, clarity, and respect.

THE RUM AUTHORITY is the 21st century’s rum advocate.

www.therumauthority.com
F. Paul Pacult – 2015

Called “America’s foremost spirits authority” by Forbes.com, F. Paul Pacult has been the publisher/editor of F. Paul Pacult’s Spirit Journal since 1991. Today, F. Paul Pacult’s Spirit Journal is recognized as the premier independent source of spirits reviews and evaluations. He and his wife/partner Sue Woodley are also the creators of the groundbreaking, highly successful iWhiskey App.

Together, they direct THE RUM AUTHORITY advocacy initiative, sponsored by Spirit Journal, Inc. They are likewise founding members of the innovative beverage competition company Ultimate Beverage Challenge LLC.

Through Spirit Journal, Inc., Paul and Sue consult to the beverage alcohol industry’s largest and smallest “craft” companies. Since 1996 Paul has hosted Spirit Journal, Inc.’s celebrated Primary Liquids educational training program for mainstream and craft beverage and non-beverage companies throughout the United States, as well as Europe. Paul also hosts the tasting series in New York City, the Masters Series at Keens Steakhouse, now in its 18th year.

Paul is a founding member of the award-winning spirits and mixology training company Beverage Alcohol Resource LLC (BAR).


From 1982 to 2009, Paul contributed to scores of national and international publications, including Playboy, Wine & Spirits Magazine, Cheers, Connoisseur, MarketWatch. Travel & Leisure, Men’s Journal, Beverage Dynamics and many others. Most prominently, for 17 years he and Sue wrote about spirits, cocktails and wine for the New York Times Magazine, was the Delta Sky wine/spirits/cocktail columnist for 13 years and for 9 years was Wine Enthusiast Magazine’s spirits columnist/spirits tasting editor.
Sue produced and Paul co-hosted two nationally syndicated radio shows, The Happy Hour with Paul Pacult and Gary Regan (1996-1998) and Paul Pacult’s Good Life (1999). Paul has appeared in two landmark History Channel documentaries. For nearly a decade starting in 2000, he was judging director of the San Francisco World Spirits Competition.

Paul won the award for wine journalism excellence in 2001 from The Academy of Wine Communications. He is the only journalist worldwide to concurrently be a life member and Master of Keepers of the Quaich whisky society (Edinburgh, Scotland), a life member of Kentucky’s The Bourbon Hall of Fame, and a life member of France’s exclusive Compagnie des Mouquetaires d’Armagnac (Company of Armagnac Musketeers).

In September 2011, the Bureau National Interprofessional du Cognac (BNIC) in France honored Paul as the Cognac Personality of the Year 2011. In January 2012, he was awarded the Cheers Conference 2012 trophy for “Raising the Bar” in spirits education.

F. Paul Pacult’s Spirit Journal: Independent, Unbiased, Truthful
Since 1991, F. Paul Pacult’s Spirit Journal has been the most trusted newsletter on spirits, wine, and beer in America. Published quarterly, F. Paul Pacult’s Spirit Journal does not accept advertising and, as such, renders unbiased reviews and ratings that are considered the gold standard within the alcoholic beverage industry. To subscribe to F. Paul Pacult’s Spirit Journal, log on to:

I. All About Rum’s Base Material: Sugarcane

WHAT IT IS: Sugarcane, a.k.a., noble cane; genus, *saccharum officinarum*; family, *poaceae* – same botanical family as rice, sorghum, wheat, maize; Latin name and ranking assigned by Carl Linnaeus, Swedish botanist, zoologist, physician (1707-1778).

- Sugarcane features: tall, perennial grass that grows from 6’ – 20’ in towering stalks/reeds (called, culms) grown in internode sections; used cane (bagasse) is reused in the manufacture of fuel (ethanol), paper, cardboard; stringy, strong fibers from the reeds are made into thatch, mats, screens, pens, and splints for broken bones.

Cane reeds’ piths are comprised of 75% water/10-15% sugars/10-15% fibers, the source of bagasse; sugarcane juice contains the highest caloric count of any of the Earth’s plant compounds.
• Best environmental habitat for sugarcane: hot, humid sub-tropic and tropical zones (60–90 degrees F); grows best in sandy soil not suitable for trees; requires hot, humid climate in low elevations on flat or slightly sloping terrain and can tolerate occasional flooding; reeds grow at night; fields may be used in four-year segments of time before new cultivation is necessary; each stalk/reed can supply 7-10 harvests, if tended properly.

Place of origin: probably island of New Guinea, cultivated circa 6000 B.C.

Broader cultivation: Indus River Civilization of India & SE Asia: 1000 B.C.

• Early distillation: archeological site at Taxila, Pakistan shows clear evidence of commercial distillation facility using earthenware/terra cotta stills, circa 300-200 B.C.; stills had kettle chamber (liquid boils), vapor chamber (liquid turns gaseous), cooling chamber (vapors cool and condense back into purified liquid. Could the first commercial spirit have been rum? Since sugarcane was grown in this region, it is possible that rum, or a crude version of it, was civilization’s first distilled spirit.
Malay culture at roughly same time brewed a beverage called brum.

- Fun facts: One hectare (2.47 acres) of prime land yields up to 125 tonnes, or 275,500 pounds, of cane which then after refining produces 12 tonnes, or 26,448 pounds, of sugar which then accounts for 1,600 liters of blackstrap molasses that has a sugar content of between 55-60%.

Harvest occurs from 12-18 months from time of planting (always spring and autumn), with the cane exteriors turning yellowish/brown when ready for harvesting; they are chopped either by hand or machine as close to the ground as possible for the lower internodes of the reed provide the richest pith sugars.

Cane fields are often burned 24 hours before harvest to rid the fields of vermin (field mice, rats), hornets, snakes, boar.

Mixture of bagasse and molasses (Molascuit) is made into cattle feed.

India & Brazil today account for 50% of all cane sugar; China, Thailand and Pakistan are 3, 4 and 5 in production.

- 2015: Sugarcane is grown in 70+ nations throughout SW Europe, tropical Asia, Australia, Africa, South America, Mexico, SE U.S., Indian Subcontinent, West and East Indies.

India & Brazil today account for 50% of all cane sugar; China, Thailand and Pakistan are 3, 4 and 5 in production.

- India & sugarcane: Mention from Vedic Period in Manasollana (Book of the Happy State of Mind 1800 B.C.) includes a recipe for sugarcane beer; then also from Vedic Period are the drinks soma (aristocratic beverage of unknown materials) and sura, which was made from sugarcane and rice and given to warriors before battle.

Alexander the Great’s scribes wrote (326 B.C.) about “honey made without bees” during their Indian Subcontinent incursion in 4th century B.C.

95 A.D. book on trade in Mediterranean region describes “honey from reeds which is called sakchar”
Portuguese were first Europeans to grow sugarcane in Archipelago of the Azores and North Africa.

- First Uses for cultivated sugarcane:

  1) Recreational chewing after rind was removed;
  2) Utilized medicinally in ancient India in Ayurvedic remedies to treat skin problems and urinary tract infections but also to treat heart conditions, anemia, coughing, constipation, bronchitis, lower blood pressure;
  3) Pulped sugar paste used to pack and dress wounds;
  4) Ancient Egypt hair removal (paste of sugar + water + lemon juice mixture placed on skin then cloth added and ripped off to remove body hair);
  5) Preservative for meats and fruit.

Brown sugar varieties: Demerara, turbinado have more molasses left in them. Sugar beets also make sugar, which is utilized exclusively for the production of ethanol, not rum.
Molasses can be made from any substance that makes refined sugar, including sugarcane, sorghum, sugar beets, but the finest quality molasses comes from sugarcane.
Degrees of sugarcane molasses quality:

1) Grade A molasses Light (70% sugar/lower cane solids content) makes the best rum distillate
2) Medium Grade = Dark treacle/dark molasses (65% sugar/cane solids)
3) Lower Grade = Blackstrap (55-60% sugar/higher content of cane solids = more intense flavors) which is more bitter than Grade A

Takes 1.5 liters of molasses to make 1 liter of rum.

III New World Sugarcane Plantations 1500-1800

In 1493, Christopher Columbus brought sugarcane, sourced from the Canary Islands, on second voyage to West Indies. The plantings in Hispaniola were a great success. Columbus’s report back to Queen Isabella caused a firestorm of interest in Europe for the planting of sugarcane in the West Indies. Merchants and shippers envisioned tremendous potential profits and their prognostications were right.

Reportedly, the initial sugar shipments to Spain happened in 1516 from Hispaniola. The first colonists crushed the cane stalks to get the viscous juice (about 14% sugar) and either boiled it to produce a highly concentrated syrup or they simply let it evaporate under the blazing tropical sun. If the sugarcane was boiled, the gooey liquid was allowed to cool and that’s when sugars crystallized becoming a thick ultra-sweet liquid known as muscavado.

This practice, however, was an inefficient, labor-intensive method of getting much coveted sugar crystals and would remain so until the use of centrifuges which became the preferred mechanical manner of refining sugar. The resulting residual material, molasses, was unstable because the high sugar content would start to automatically ferment once wild yeasts invaded the molasses. Thus, a low-alcohol molasses “beer” became popular but it wasn’t until the mid-17th century when distillers got hold of it that molasses turned into what we now know as rum. These early libations were crude and deadly when consumed in large amounts.

Portuguese were the next Europeans to establish sugar plantations in Brazil in the 1520s. This provided big financial returns near Sao Vicente, but labor was hard to find. The slave trade began between Portuguese merchants and Arab slave traders in west Africa, starting the horrific slave trade era.
Britain, Spain, France, and the thirteen American colonies enlarged and expanded the so-called slave trade “Triangle” between Africa, the Caribbean and the New World as they established sugarcane and tobacco plantations mainly in West Indies, South America, Central America and eastern North America, all of which required enormous amounts of laborers.

Millions of unwilling African slaves (estimated at least 12 million) were kidnapped by Arab traders and western African tribal chiefs and shipped under fetid, unimaginably terrible conditions in the bowels of slave ships from Africa and India to the New World colonies from the 16th through the 19th centuries. Tens of thousands of women, men and children died en route and those who didn’t expire on the ships were exposed to inhuman conditions, racism at its most vile, and unspeakable brutality once they landed to work the fields of sugarcane, tobacco and cotton.

Some historians claim that the rum industry is the primary cause for international slave trade but that is not true since the slave trade in western Africa existed as early as the 1300s. This unholy, vicious industry was run by a ruthless alliance of Arab slave traders, European brokers and dominant African tribes, whose warriors preyed on weaker tribes for profit and territorial domination. What can be accurately stated is that the rapid growth of sugarcane plantations in New World, along with other crops like tobacco and cotton, accelerated the slave trade for three centuries and contributed to its propagation.

Europe’s insatiable yearning for sugar fueled the plantations success and expansion, as did the huge profits for growers, shippers, and suppliers.

Crude distillates made from sugar refining by-products start to appear in mid-16th century (1500s) Caribbean region, South America, Central America. The raw spirits, such as cachaco in Brazil, are fed to slaves to make them more docile. These unpalatable distillates were considered inferior libations and health hazards.
Plantation owners and their guests drank only fine French or Spanish brandy and wine, eschewing the crude rums made from their sugar refining leftovers. The rums were given to the slaves and inferior classes.

Size of the average sugar plantation in Caribbean region was 750 acres.

Sugar refining on the vast plantations created large amounts of waste, mostly in the form of molasses and bagasse. Something other than dumping had to be done with it and distilling provided a superb solution.

Keeping in mind that the colonial era in the New World was not known for its record keeping, by the mid-17th century (1600s) several distillers in various locations were busy boiling fermented sugarcane juice and/or fermented molasses. Soon, rum production throughout the Caribbean region became part and parcel of most sugarcane plantation regimens for the British in Barbados, the Dutch in northern South America (Guyanas), the French in Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Trinidad, even Louisiana, the Spanish in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica; and the Portuguese in Brazil.
One of the first written descriptions of rum comes from a visitor to Barbados in 1651 who reported, “The chiefe fueling they make in the Island [Barbados] is Rumbullion, alias Kill-Devill, and this is made of suggar cane distilled, a hott, hellish and terrible liquor.”

Because of the era’s distasteful sugarcane-based spirits, Kill-Devil became rum’s common, if highly derogatory, moniker during the 17th and 18th centuries, with the French calling it gueldive and the Dutch sneeringly referring to rum as keelduivel.

There is no conclusive proof of the term “rum” derivative, no matter what claims are made. It could be derived from rumbullion (a great tumult) or rumbustious (rowdy, feisty, pugilistic). In 1560s England, the adjective rum meant “fine, good, excellent, valuable”, and was said to be derived from the Romany rom, meaning “male husband”. By the 1770s, rum meant “odd, strange, bad” and the usage by rogues kept it under a definitive cloud through the 1800s.

IV. Navies, Pirates & Rum 1600-1970
Once rum started being produced in the Caribbean region, its consumption became de rigueur for the various 16th and 17th century navies – both regular and buccaneer varieties – that navigated the Caribbean Sea with regularity. Daily portions of rum were measured out by the liter, especially within the British Navy, to tranquilize the crewmembers as much as to mollify them for the harsh on-board living conditions. The navies of the region turned out to be some of the biggest customers of the plantation owners who produced rum.

The British Navy, in particular, was famous for its rum rations, which were traditionally doled out each morning by the ship purser. After Jamaica became a British territory in 1655 (from the Spanish), Navy rum rations replaced those of brandy, water or beer. Water and beer spoiled quickly in the tropical heat, but rum did not. By 1730, the official daily ration for the British Navy was precisely 288 ml of rum (approximately one pint), which undiluted was roughly a stout and robust 80% alcohol. When mixed with beer or water or citrus fruit juices, it became a drink referred to by sailors as “grog”.

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The term “grog” became synonymous with the daily rum “tot” because of a British admiral named Vernon who ordered that each daily allowance “be mixed with the proportion of a quart of water to a half pint of rum...and let those that are good husband men receive extra lime juice and sugar that it be made more palatable to them.” Admiral Edward “Old Grog” Vernon was renowned for wearing a coarse-textured cloak referred to as a grogram, hence the reference.

Eventually, the daily ration became less and less, ending as one-eighth pint by the end of World War II. The British Navy rum ration custom officially came to an end on July 31, 1970 when the practice was outlawed. That day is known as Black Tot Day.

Pirates who terrorized the Caribbean waters during the 17th and 18th centuries consumed rum like water and used rum as currency to trade for other needed commodities, such as fabric, tobacco, gunpowder, medicines, weapons, and slaves. Notorious pirates, like Blackbeard, drank rum (in his case, sometimes mixed with gun powder) as a matter of ceremony. By some eyewitness accounts, Blackbeard was said to drink flaming steins of rum to impress his enemies. Interesting since Blackbeard was fully bearded.
Another famed pirate of the era, Sir Henry Morgan, lost his flagship in 1669 when inebriated crewmen (you guessed it, rum) accidentally started a fire in the powder magazine due to the alcoholic fumes. Ka-boom.

V. Rum in America: Colonial Times to 21st Century
The first pot-still in the New World was located on Staten Island in the Dutch colony known as New Amsterdam, circa 1640. Rum distilling became a major industry in New England by the late 1600s, especially in the bustling colonies of Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Between 1700-1750, Massachusetts boasted 63 rum distilleries and Rhode Island 30, with 22 in the city of Newport alone. Medford, Massachusetts served as the colonial rum “capital” due to the high quality of its Old Medford rum.

All New England rums were molasses-based distillates whose fermented worts were boiled in pot-stills, as were all rums prior to the 1850s when continuous distillation methods gained traction. As was cited earlier, the molasses that originated in the Caribbean island chains was a residual product of commercial sugar refining. There were huge amounts of Caribbean molasses available, keeping the shipping lanes filled with cargo vessels sailing from the West Indies to the colonial ports of New London, Boston, and Providence.

The enormous success of New England’s rum distilleries gave rise to other key regional industries, such as shipbuilding (to transport the molasses, slave labor and rum), logging and ironworks (to build the ships) and cooperage (to produce the barrels needed to both mature and ship the rums). Rum distilling, thus, developed into an economic pillar to the colonies up until the American War of Independence (1775-1783).

Rum production deflated during the Revolutionary War as warfare ravaged the work force and shipping lanes closed. Molasses became scarce since the British imposed a trade embargo on the colonists, which ran from the Caribbean to Maine. In the early 19th century, the U.S. Congress passed the Embargo Act that banned all trade with French and British territories, which further depressed the domestic rum market.
Consequently, American whiskey, produced from corn and rye from Maryland to the western territories of Kentucky and Tennessee filled the void left by rum. Rum virtually dropped off the radar screen for the remainder of the 19th century.

After the miseries of World War One (1914-1917), Prohibition (1920-1933), and the Great Depression (1929-1936), rum made a modest comeback during World War Two (1939-1945) as the Rum & Coke cocktail became one of the most popular adult drinks of the war years. It even inspired songs. Rum then surged forward even more in the 1950s and 1960s as the “Tiki Craze”, fueled in part by author James Michener’s best-selling novel *Tales of the South Pacific*, a fascination with Polynesia, and Hawaii becoming a state on August 21, 1959, swept across America’s big city bars from California to New York.

The proliferation of rum cocktails, like the Mai Tai, Daiquiri and Piña Colada, reestablished rum as a major spirits category in terms of case sales and public awareness. The downside of such a fad is that rum came to be viewed by the consuming public and bartenders in the second half of the 20th century as a frivolous beverage of dubious distinction.

**VI. Rum Production, Then & Now**

Rum, at its best in the 21st century, can be as nuanced, complex, and multilayered in character as the world’s other great spirits, like Scotch whisky, Cognac, Armagnac, Bourbon or 100% agave Tequila. Rum is the result of dozens of production decisions ranging from providence of material, exacting specifications for the molasses from which 90% of all rums are made, yeast strains, distillation method, selection of aging barrel, and, of course if required, the period of maturation. The smallest changes in any of these factors can result in a very different spirit.

Such attention to detail wasn’t always practiced in centuries past when the distilling technology due to scientific advances in biochemistry in particular did not yet exist. Prior to the 1850s, all rums were distilled in small (25-50 liters in the 17th century), labor-intensive, single batch pot-stills, sometimes constructed of wood, not copper.
Storage was likewise highly questionable especially in the tropics where bacteria, or prokaryotic microorganisms, and other detrimental things, like mold, could spoil fresh spirits in no time. The reason that rum's most common moniker for two and a half centuries was *kill-devil* was justified by how foul many rums there were prior to the 19th century. In the 1800s science discovered the principles of hygiene by uncovering the microscopic world and, consequently, fermentation, distillation, and maturation techniques dramatically improved.

The rum producer first creates the colorless spirit by deciding its weight, texture, palate focus, and customary profile. Many distillers prefer the English influence in rum production by creating heavy, viscous, concentrated rums that stylistically rival whiskey. The rums of Jamaica, Barbados, the Virgin Islands, Trinidad & Tobago are prime examples of this heartier style.

Producers in Cuba, Puerto Rico, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Dominican Republic, the Philippines, Panama, and Venezuela espouse the Spanish style by creating rums with more delicate features. They accomplish this by distilling away heavy alcohols, esters, and congeners in towering column stills, resulting in a spirit with ethereal finesse on par with great brandies.

Those of the French tradition on the islands of Haiti, Martinique, Guadeloupe, and Marie-Galante make a large portion of their rums from sugarcane juice, which produces grassy, vegetal rums of earthy distinction. Still other rum distillers choose to make both a heavy and a light style of rum that will both become components for the master blender to craft into spirits of their tradition.

Of course, even though rum is closely associated with the greater Caribbean region that includes northern South America and Central America, rum is produced in virtually every nation that grows sugarcane. Consequently, there are thriving rum industries in disparate places such as India, Mexico, the South Pacific, Mauritius, Hawaii, and the Philippines, making rum the most global of all spirits categories.

Today, rums are distilled in three varieties of stills, including multiple story-high column stills made of stainless steel, copper or aluminum, batch kettle stills, and copper pot-stills.
Pot-stills are the original types of onion-shaped distillation machines that can resemble kettles. What happens is this: a fermented liquid is boiled to create vapors of alcohol (alcohol boils at a lower temperature than water), which are then cooled to condense and re-liquefy. The resulting, colorless liquid is around 20%-26% alcohol after one distillation and up to 68-72% following a second distillation.

Sugarcane juice, cane syrup, and molasses-based spirits distilled in pot-stills are heavier in texture, aroma, and flavor than those distilled in batch kettles or column stills.

Prior to the mid-19th century, all rums were distilled in pot-stills. Pot-still distillation technology existed in rudimentary form in ancient civilizations, like China, India, Greece, and Egypt, but was utilized mostly to make cosmetics, medicines, and life-prolonging elixirs by alchemists, clerics, philosophers, and physicians.

Batch kettle stills are boxy contraptions made out of copper, stainless steel or wood and are responsible for sugarcane juice or molasses-based spirits that are considered medium-heavy in nature. Batch kettles are a hybrid design that combines elements of pot-still and column still technology.
While not as prevalent as pot-still distillation, batch kettle distillation plays a key role in the distilleries of several rum producers whose philosophy, vision, and custom revolve around the art of blending three varieties of spirits – light, medium, and heavy. These producers rely on batch kettles to provide a middle road type of spirit that acts as an epoxy for heavier and lighter styles.

The efficient, factory-like method of continuous distillation in tall (sometimes 50’ or more), metallic columns made of copper, stainless steel or aluminum allows producers the chance to distill enormous volumes of clean, crisp, ethereal 96% alcohol, made from sugarcane juice, cane syrup or molasses. The key to column stills are the interior, perforated plates, which are placed typically one and a half to two feet apart up and down the enclosed cylindrical columns. The plates act as purifiers for the gaseous vapors as they rise (hot air rises, of course) through the columns, leaving behind compounds that are considered impurities, such as esters, fusel oils, and congeners, on the metal grates.
As the vapors ascend through the grates of the stripped (first column) and rectifier (second column) columns, they naturally shed the oils and impurities as they separate from the heavier compounds, thereby making the alcohol content rise with greater purification.

The choice of distillation technique depends ultimately on tradition, economics, and creating the type of rum that is reflective of the environment and history of the location and country of origin.

As in the case of many of the world's great spirits categories, many rums are matured in oak barrels (often standard 53 to 59-gallon barrels) to further purify and mellow them before bottling. The legalities of maturation are left to each individual producing nation. There is no global mandate or governing body that regulates the production or maturation of rum.

The majority of rums made in English and Spanish-speaking nations are aged in barrels that previously had been used for aging Bourbon and Tennessee whiskey. French-based cultures prefer old Cognac barrels. Distillers age their spirit to the desired maturity, keeping in mind that evaporation levels ("Angel’s Share") in the tropics are 10%-12% per year. In cooler climates, such as Ireland and Scotland, evaporation levels run in the 2%-4% per year levels.
As the atmosphere warms in the aging warehouses, alcohol expands, invading the porous oak staves that are bound together by mettle hoops to create a watertight barrel. The alcohol contracts as the air then cools in the evening or in milder months. It is this transference from barrel interior to oak then back that makes the difference as the acids and polymers in the oak impact the aroma, flavor, and texture of the aging rum. Aging is all about wood surface contact.

Wide-grained American oak (Quercus alba) barrels originate from forests in the central U.S. states of Missouri, Indiana, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. Oak from Oregon’s forests (Quercus garryana) is also used, though to lesser extent from that of the American heartland. Tighter grained French oak (Quercus robur, Quercus petraea) comes from the specially designated primary forests of Limousin, Tronçais, Nevers, Alliers and Vosges.

And finally...

Rum is experiencing a true renaissance evolving into a spirit that pleases the palate of the contemporary consumer and bartender alike. Vanishing is the old standard practice of adding sugar and flavors to rum at bottling. Today the pure and refined spirit is bottled in its natural state with its wonderful complex and unique flavors found in each nosing and sip.
VII. THE RUM AUTHORITY Sensory Checklist

Rum Visuals:
1) Colorless or tinted (silver/pewter, yellow/gold, amber/topaz or tawny/mahogany)?
2) Appearance clear/clean or cloudy/murky/sediment?
3) If tinted, is appearance silver/pewter, yellow/gold, amber/topaz or tawny/mahogany?

Rum Aromatics:
2) Is aroma delicate, medium-strong or pungent/powerful?
3) Is aroma spicy? If so, is it like cooking* or baking spices**?
4) (*Cooking spices: thyme, rosemary, basil, cilantro, parsley, bay laurel, caraway, cardamom, poppy seed, coriander, ginger, juniper/pine/cedar, lemon-grass, anise, peppercorn, sarsaparilla, sassafras, elderflower, jasmine, saffron, eucalyptus.) (**Baking spices: cinnamon, nutmeg, clove, vanilla, allspice, mace, maple.)
5) If sweet, is aroma bittersweet (like cola, molasses), nutty (like toffee, nougat), sugary (like cake frosting), richly sweet (like honey, maple)?
6) Is aroma earthy (moss, lichen, forest, leafy, leathery), floral (rose petal, violet, honeysuckle, jasmine, orange blossom, grassy), fruity (pear, pineapple, grapefruit, orange, lemon) or mineral-like (metallic, steel, coin, steel wool, stony)?
7) Is aroma woody/resiny, reminiscent of sawdust, plank or pine needle?
8) Most important, is aroma integrated/harmonious and appealing, or not?

Rum Flavors:
2) Is flavor raw/harsh/fiery or smooth/clean/crisp at entry and on palate?
3) Does any flavor aspect, like alcohol, wood, acidity, spiciness, fruit, sugar/molasses, earthiness/grassiness, wood, dominate? Or, are flavor components integrated?