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## NAPA VALLEY CABERNET

>>> CALIFORNIA'S HISTORIC REDS

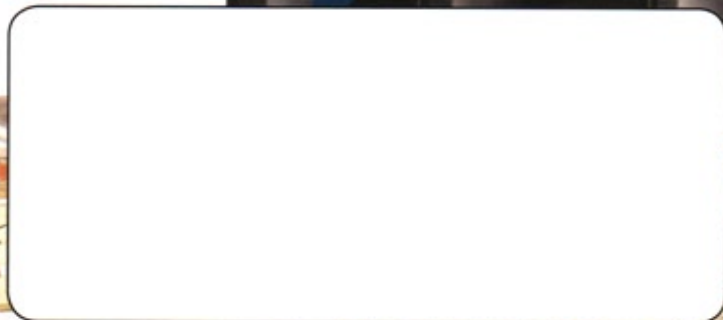
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# Prizes of the Caribbean

An island-by-island guide to the finest tropical rums and the most memorable resorts at which to enjoy them.

BY MIKE DeSIMONE AND JEFF JENSSEN

For over 300 years, rum, distilled from sugar cane and its by-product, molasses, has been the Caribbean's coveted spirit. Once a popular, if rustic, favorite of everyone from pirates to the Royal Navy, the rum of today includes high-end bottlings and a fanbase of serious spirits lovers. Whether mixed into innovative

cocktails or slowly sipped after dinner, it has broad-ranging appeal and diverse character.

Here is an island-hopping introduction to some of the region's choice rums, from mixable silver to superpremium añejo, and the resorts where true rum geeks can mix and sip to their hearts' content.



Mexico

Cuba

Belize

Jamaica

Honduras

Nicaragua

## Belize

Savor *Traveller's 1 Barrel Rum* while gently swaying in a hammock. Aromas of butterscotch, caramel and just a hint of maple syrup entice your nose before a smooth explosion of flavor in your mouth. It's great on its own or mixed into cocktails. Lodge at Francis Ford Coppola and his wife Ellie's *Turtle Inn* and enjoy one of their 25 individual thatched cottages on a white sand beach. Scuba divers, rejoice—a world-class natural reef is just a few fin kicks away. Five bars and restaurants delight the guests' senses with sumptuous Caribbean fare, while a beautiful seaside spa rejuvenates the spirit.



## Jamaica

*Appleton Estate 12 Year Aged Rum's* aromas of caramel, vanilla, candied orange peel and sweet almond set it apart. Try the *Reserve* and *Master Blender's Legacy Rums* as well. Rums have been made on the *Appleton Estate* for over 260 years, and the experience shows. The *GoldenEye Resort* is a renovation and expansion of Ian Fleming's private island residence. In 1952, Fleming wrote *Casino Royale*, the first book in the legendary James Bond series. He penned 13 Bond books in total—all written on site. *GoldenEye* is owned by Chris Blackwell, *Island Record's* founder, who produces the utterly delicious *Blackwell Rum*.





### Puerto Rico

*Bacardi 8* in a brandy snifter or on the rocks is a great way to appreciate one of Puerto Rico's best rums. Its aromas of nutmeg and vanilla will draw you deeper into the glass, where nuances of ginger, caramel and dried apricot dance on your palate. Aged for eight years in oak, it can rival a fine French Cognac. In 1830, Don Facundo Bacardi was credited as the first producer to purposely age rum in barrels to achieve a smooth texture. Or try Bacardi Gold, Select, Añejo, or Solera. Stay at *La Concha Resort*, just steps from the crashing waves, and savor a romantic dinner at *Perla*, a seashell-shaped restaurant surrounded by reflecting pools.



### St. Lucia

*Chairman's Reserve Spiced Rum*, St. Lucia's exotic offering, is excellent in a snifter or with your favorite mixer. Flavors of clove, cinnamon and all-spice—think fresh-baked Christmas cookies—play on your tongue. The must-stay on the island is the stunning *Jade Mountain Resort*, with 24 very private, three-walled suites, each with its own infinity pool. The fourth wall was omitted by Owner/Architect Nick Troubetzkoy to afford guests unparalleled views of the island's emblematic Gros Piton and Petit Piton mountains. You can also enjoy breathtaking scenery from the Jade Mountain Club restaurant, run by Chef Allen Susser, and the open-air Celestial Terrace—ideal for evening cocktails and stargazing.



Haiti

Dom. Rep.

Puerto Rico

St. Lucia

Barbados

### Dominican Republic

Sip *Brugal 1888* and linger over the smooth palate of candied orange peel and dried sultana raisins, or pour Ron Atlantico Private Cask over ice. Stay at the *Casa De Campo Resort*; your friends who golf will love playing a round or two on the legendary Teeth of the Dog course. Wine and food lovers will adore the Beach Club by Le Cirque restaurant on a private beach. Let the Maccioni family's Le Cirque-trained chefs spoil you with exquisitely executed classic cuisine presented with Caribbean touches, or grab a light lunch at *La Caña Restaurant & Lounge* by Il Circo.



South America

### Barbados

*Mount Gay Rum Extra Old*, a blend of rums aged 12–17 years, is rich in aromas of vanilla and caramelized bananas, and smooth and silky in the mouth. Rum connoisseurs will love the Mount Gay 1703 Old Cask Selection, while cocktail lovers should try the producer's Eclipse and Eclipse Silver, as their unique flavors shine through any mixer. Kick back at the *Fairmont Royal Pavilion* and sail, water ski, play tennis and snorkel—or choose to just lounge around on the resort's half-mile beach of pinkish-white sand. Dine at the open-air, white-tablecloth Palm Restaurant by night and the casual open-air Taboras Restaurant by day—it's all good.

