

Bartales

Best of

N. 33 | AUGUST 2021

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REPORT / UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT
STAR TEQUILA

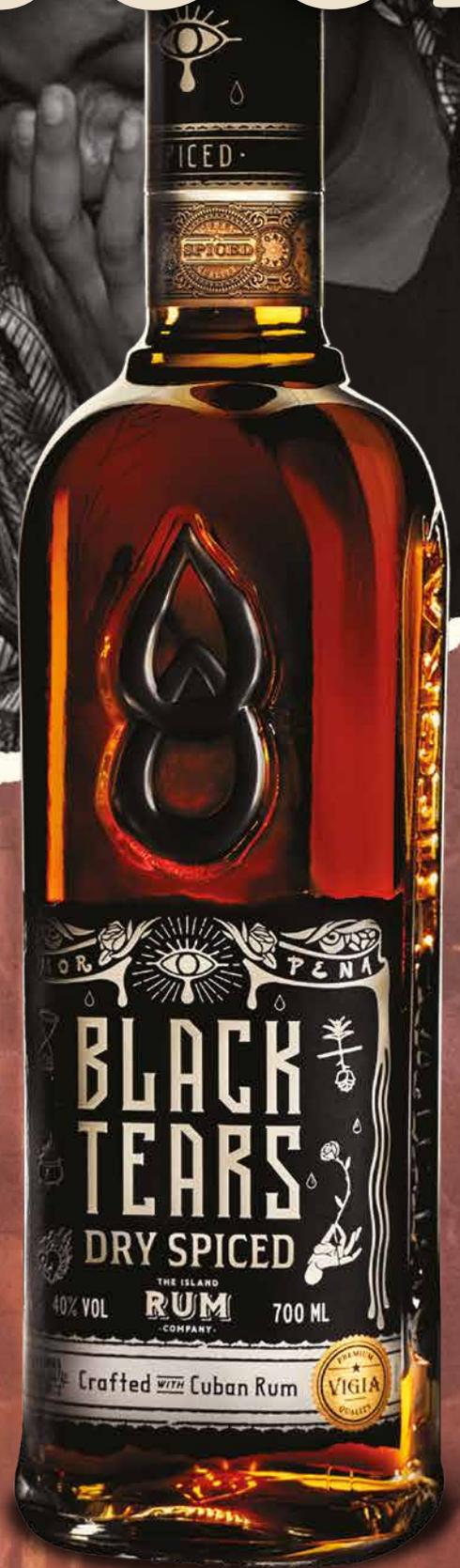
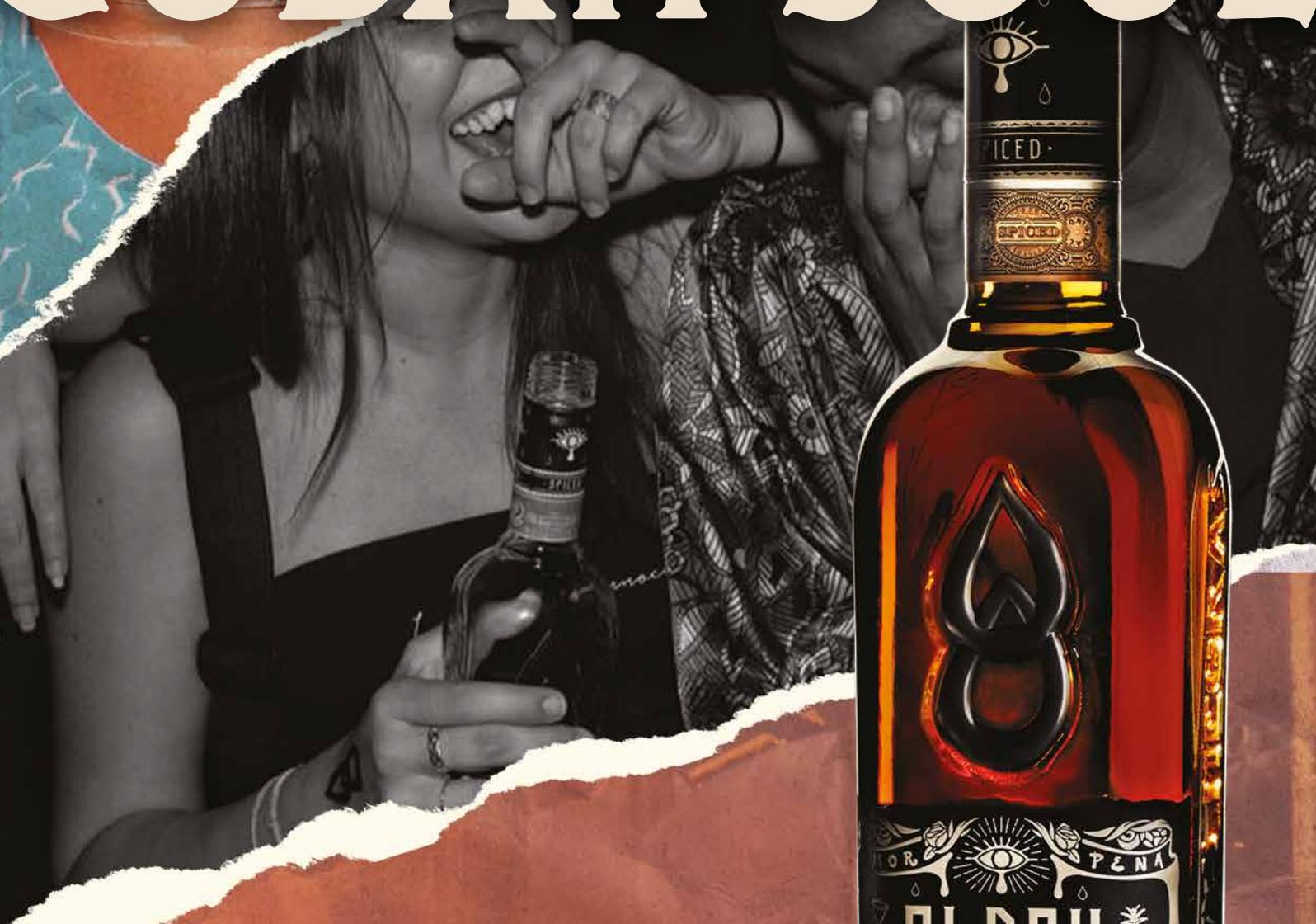


HOT SPIRIT / AROMAS FROM THE EAST
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LESS ALCOHOL, MORE FLAVOUR

There's no doubt: what we had identified as a trend is now a hard and fast reality: low alcohol. Like a mantra that favours the rebirth of flavour, of enjoying our time together, of splitting and sharing, mixing cocktails is increasingly coming to terms with the law of low alcohol content. And "careful drinking" (which in addition to alcohol content, also looks at the calories) refers, as pay back, to the triumph of flavour. Translated: the search for new botanicals, new techniques (I am thinking of non-alcoholic spirits), the rediscovery of unsuspected spices and ancient flavours. The growing success of Indian gin is no coincidence, then. A "revolution" that started in Goa and that takes advantage of its opportunities, not so much regarding a growing country's demographics and new social classes' approach to mixed drinks, as its selection of rare botanicals. The Himalayan ones mixed with local juniper and traditional spices. If it is true that luck favours the bold, the desire to experiment becomes the winner. Flavour wins. Who would have thought that the Espresso Martini, a liquid icon from the fabulous 90s, could once again be the trendiest cocktail, one of the most requested? In the United States it is extremely popular, says the New York Times. Dick Bradsell's invention would (re)conquer the coolest bars in the Big Apple after storming its way through (in kit form) during the pandemic. And here in Italy? For our low alcohol summer, I would focus on a classic shaken coffee. Which, in the end, is its younger brother.

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BarTales
Best of

N. 33 | AUGUST 2021

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Registrazione. n. 35 del 8/7/2013 Tribunale di Napoli

www.bartales.it

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STAR TEQUILA

Ad hoc advertising campaigns and the influence of social media have primed agave spirits for success
Thanks to Hollywood

BY ALESSANDRO PALANCA

Agave spirits seem to have an undisputed appeal with celebrities, be they actors, sports champions, singers and other big names among the stars. Most of the world's tequila is consumed in the United States and Mexico (where it is produced). Its image has evolved from

that of a quick shot to a meditative spirit and its rate of consumption is ever on the rise. This is the result of a series of choices and trends that have placed tequila under the spotlight: premiumisation of its brands, an image-based culture and widespread well-being.

Premiumisation of tequila is a process



that started at the end of the 1980s with Patrón, launched by John Paul Dejoria. Already well-established within the luxury sector, Dejoria knew how to sell and position luxury products. He applied his skills to his brand of tequila, educating consumers on how to fully appreciate blue agave and aged tequilas. The rise of social media and product placement helped bring tequila to the forefront of celebrity lifestyles. Supported by the influence of public figures and targeted marketing campaigns between 2018 and 2019, tequila saw a 31.7% rise in volume (source: IWSR).

The trend of health and wellness grew together with knowing about the origin of products, and authentic and traditional methods of tequila production won over

consumers.

Many have created their own brand of tequila, others have preferred to buy company shares, such as Sex and the City star, Chris Noth, co-owner of The Cutting Room club in New York, who bought a majority share in Tequila Ambhar in August 2018.

In some cases, objections have been raised against marketing operations that, according to some, aim to commercially exploit Mexican identity and that does not consider the deep roots that agave has in the culture of the people and its commercial sustainability. What follows is a look at certain brands whose success is firmly connected to the charisma and influence that those who inspired and created them hold.

Shaking perspectives



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CASAMIGOS
ABOVE,
GEORGE
CLOONEY AND
RANDE
GERBER.

CASAMIGOS

Born to be enjoyed amongst a few close friends at their homes, hence the name Casamigos, this tequila quickly became a constant at social events and on the stages of the jet set all over the world. Casamigos Tequila is the agave spirit produced by three friends: actor George Clooney, his business partner, Rande Gerber, and construction magnate Michael Meldman. A few years ago, the three were in Mexico to view the progress being made on the construction of their homes (among many) which were being built next to each other in Cabo San Lucas in the Mexican state of Baja California. If Clooney is well known, not everyone knows that the Gerber is an ex-model, an accomplished entrepreneur with interests in the restaurant sector and the husband of famous former model Cindy Crawford.

As long-time tequila enthusiasts, the three tasted many brands together in search of a tequila that they regarded as the best, smooth and balanced, and that did not require ice, salt and lemon. It was almost inevitable that one day they would decide to create their own perfect tequila, a game among the rich who can make all or almost all their dreams come true. They turned to a distillery in the Mexican state of Jalisco to start producing a tequila according to their directions.

According to legend surrounding the Casamigos brand, it took 800 test bottles produced between 2011 and 2013 to achieve the best tasting result. The recipe has a strong artisanal imprint. The blue agave is cooked for three days and then made to ferment for 80 hours, which is certainly more than the industrial standard. The Blanco variant rests for two months in stainless steel con-



ainers, while Reposado ages for seven months in oak casks. The decision to sell Tequila Casamigos was made because of the great appreciation that friends of Meldman, Clooney and Gerber had for the spirit.

The face and fame of Clooney, and a flavour that was immediately enjoyed by American palates, have led the brand to rise among the ranks of the most popular and most sold spirits in the USA and then Canada. Casamigos also made the headlines because of the price that Diageo paid to acquire it in 2017 – around \$1 billion.

The bottles of Casamigos, still produced in small quantities of Blanco, Reposado and Añejo, are all numbered and autographed by Clooney and Gerber. Mezcal is now also being produced together with the range of tequilas.

In producing Casamigos, 100% Blue Weber agaves between 7 and 9 years of age are used from the rich clayey soil of the Jalisco Highlands. The agave piñas (hearts) are roasted in traditional brick ovens for 72 hours and fermentation lasts around 80 hours.

CASAMIGOS AÑEJO

Aging: 14 months in American white oak barrels

Appearance: Rich caramel

Nose: Smooth notes of caramel and vanilla

Palate: Perfect balance between the sweetness of the agaves and hints of spices and oak

ABV: 40%

CASAMIGOS REPOSADO

Aging: Seven months in American white oak barrels

Appearance: Golden honey

Nose: Caramel and cocoa

Palate: Notes of dried fruit and spiced oak with a hint of sweet agave

ABV: 40%

CASAMIGOS BLANCO

Aging: Two months of aging in stainless steel

Appearance: Crystal clear

Nose: Citrus and sweet agave

Palate: Fruity with notes of vanilla and grapefruit

ABV: 40%



CASA NOBLE

Singer Carlos Santana has been involved in Casa Noble since 2011. This famous Mexican distillery founded in 1776 has been managed by the Hermosillo family for seven generations. Carlos Santana is personally invested in it as part of the board of directors and it seems that one of the reasons for the famous singer's interest in the tequila is his Mexican roots as he was born in Autlán de Navarro in the state of Jalisco.

Under the guidance of master tequilero José Hermosillo, Casa Noble takes charge of the entire supply chain directly, from the organic farming of the blue agaves to their harvesting, to the fermentation, distillation and finally aging. Among the multi-award-winning brand's special production features is its triple distillation, as opposed to the usual double distillation, and aging that takes place in French white oak casks from the famous Taransaud Tonnellerie, personally selected by the founder of the brand, Jose "Pepe" Hermsillo.

The Casa Noble Santana Single Barrel collection is a 5-year-old extra añejo tequi-



la. It is a small batch presented in very elegant ceramic bottles that the artist has signed by hand. The excellence of the raw material used by Casa Noble is certified by USDA Organic, which verifies that it was produced according to the strictest organic standards. Proceeds from the sale of this special release went to the Milagro Foundation, which Carlos Santana and his family founded to assist disadvantaged children.

CASA NOBLE SANTANA SINGLE BARREL

The agave hearts are cooked in stone ovens and then placed in a screw mill to be crushed. The screw mill speeds up the tahona process. It does not break down as many fibres as a roller mill, so it resembles the tahona method more closely but speeds up the process. Fermentation takes place in steel vats, while distillation is carried out in a pot still. Casa Noble Single Barrel Santana Select releases hints of citron and spices, with a touch of citrus in the finish. ABV: 40%

CASA NOBLES
ABOVE, CARLOS SANTANA.



LOS SANTO
TOP LEFT GUY
FIERI AND
SAMMY HAGAR.

LOS SANTOS

Sammy Hagar, former singer of Van Halen, was ahead of the game when he founded Cabo Wabo Tequila in the 1990s, a brand that was later sold to the Campari group. Hagar is also the founder of Sammy's Beach Bar Rum and the Sammy's Beach Bar & Grill chain.

In April 2019, Hagar partnered with chef Guy Fieri to create Tequila Santo Fino Blanco, the second spirit of the Los Santo brand, which already included Santo Puro

Mezquila, the first and only mixture of tequila and mezcal in the world, which was also another one of Hagar's ideas.

In his new adventure in the spirit world, Hagar called Juan Eduardo Nuñez to his side, a third-generation master distiller, who had already worked with him to create Cabo Wabo Tequila and Santo Puro Mezquila. Their objective was to create an excellent blanco tequila. The result is Santo Fino Blanco, a tequila with a classic style.

Nuñez hand picks the agaves in the famous Jalisco Highlands and creates his spirits at the historic El Viejito distillery founded in 1937 and awarded Mexico's National Quality Award. Santo Fino Blanco is a smooth and balanced tequila with a notable flavour. Full and complex notes in taste are complimented by earthy, white pepper and citrus aromas. Delicate spices and floral flavours add to the intensity of the agave. ABV 40%.



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CINCORO

In 2016, former NBA star Michael Jordan joined Jeanie Buss, owner of the Los Angeles Lakers, Wes Edens, co-owner of the Milwaukee Bucks, Wycliffe Grousbeck and Emilia Fazzalari, husband and wife co-owners of the Boston Celtics, to develop a brand known as Cincoro Tequila, which was then launched in September 2019.

The five met on Jordan's invitation to dinner. Besides sport, they discovered that they all had a common passion for tequila. That night an idea was born to create a tequila that "could transcend the category", as described by Emilia Fazzalari. The name "Cincoro" comes from the Spanish word "cinco", or five, representing its number of founders, and "oro" (gold), indicating the excellent quality of the product. This tequila is made from select blue agaves from the Highlands, as well as partly from the Lowlands in the state of Jalisco.

The packaging has been very carefully designed. The bottle is inspired by agave leaves, with five facets to represent the five owners and the crown stopper inverts the shape of the bottle. The range includes a number of variants: Blanco, Reposado (aged 8-10 months), Añejo (24-28 months) and Extra Añejo (40-44 months).

Currently Cincoro tequila is distributed in a dozen of states in the USA, but is due to be launched internationally. Cincoro Extra Añejo is a limited-edition tequila. The agaves are cooked partly in stone ovens and partly in an autoclave, then chopped with a roller mill and fermented in steel vats. The spirit is aged in ex-Bourbon casks used and imported from Kentucky. On the nose there are slight hints of wood,



CINCORO
ABOVE, A
PHOTO OF THE
TEAM.

spices and cooked agave, followed by intense oak, dried fruit and caramel. On the palate is sweet agave, caramel, white chocolate, coffee and light vanilla. ABV 40%. The finish is complex, extra long and similar to a prized cognac: with toasted oak, dried fruit, spices and agave.



818 TEQUILA
RIGHT, KENDALL
JENNER.

818 TEQUILA

Behind this brand is model and entrepreneur Kendall Jenner, joining the long list of celebrities who have ventured into the tequila industry. In addition to being the star of creative director Matthew Williams' global campaign for Givenchy, she is one of the biggest Instagirls of all time and a social media icon with 152 million followers. Kendall Jenner announced her brand, 818 Tequila, on Instagram, which has already been awarded at the World Tequila Awards and the International Wine & Spirits Competition, among others.

"For almost four years I've been on a journey to create the best-tasting tequila. After dozens of blind taste tests, trips to our distillery, entering into world tasting competitions anonymously and winning,

I think we've done it!" said the model. 818 Tequila gets its name from the postal code of Calabasas in Los Angeles.

This range includes three variants: 818 Blanco, 818 Reposado and 818 Añejo. The notes on the award given for Best Reposado Tequila in the world at the 2020 World Tequila Awards describe it as "an earthy nose which hints at pecan pie, sweet potato and caramel". Nevertheless, there were some indignant reactions on social media towards the model. Many accused Kendall of almost making the agave culture her own, while its importance in Mexico goes beyond tequila. In addition, there is a grammatical error on the label, since in Spanish the degree of aging should follow the word 'tequila' and should not be placed before it.

DELEON

“Tequila was the first drink that I ever had when I saved up and took my girlfriend on my first trip to Cancún, Mexico,” rapper Sean “Diddy” Combs said in an interview with Vogue.

DeLeón Tequila was launched in 2009 and then bought in 2014 by a joint venture between Sean Combs and the biggest liquor company in the world, Diageo, and introduced in the world of music. It is no coincidence that DeLeón Tequila is one of the favourite brands among top rap and R&B artists, from DJ Khaled to André 3000. This tequila is produced with 100% Blue Weber agaves from the region of Los Altos in Jalisco.

DeLeón Blanco has a subtle taste profile with a whisper of sweet agave, citrus, warm spices and smooth vanilla on the finish. On the palate it opens up with a rich complexity driven by notes of coconut and fresh citrus, with a hint of lime. The finish brings out spices and vanilla with great smoothness. DeLeón Reposado is aged in American oak and then finished in French oak. It has a balanced profile, with vanilla, dried fruit, and a hint of spice on the finish, with a complex and rich personality. On the nose it has inviting aromas of cinnamon and butterscotch, on the palate, soft hints of oak, caramel, spices and dried fruit. The finish brings vanilla and cloves. DeLeón Añejo is also aged for over a year, first in American oak and then in French oak casks. It has an indulgent profile with rich caramel, agave, oak and dried fruit which combine for a delicate and silky vanilla finish. All DeLeón tequilas have an ABV of 40%.

Recently Diddy partnered with other famous brands such as Ryan Reynolds’ Aviation Gin and David Beckham’s Haig Whis-



DELEON
ABOVE, SEAN
"DIDDY"
COMBS.

ky to create a Super Cocktail during the Super Bowl final. After mixing and tasting a cocktail made with all three spirits, the three celebrities decided to call it quits but not before donating \$1 million to the American bartender community that has been affected by the pandemic.

TEREMANA

SMALL BATCH TEQUILA



TEREMANA

ABOVE,
BOTTLES FROM
THE TEREMANA
COLLECTION.
INSTAGRAM/@
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TEREMANA

One of the biggest launches of a tequila brand owned by a celebrity was by Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson. The actor built his marketing strategy for Teremana Tequila around sustainability and spirituality, connecting with the psyche of his Millennial target market.

While the Covid-19 was spreading across the world, the initial plans for its worldwide launch were brought to a halt and had to change. So, Johnson made use of his popular social media accounts to bring Teremana to market. For example, on Instagram, where he has the third highest number of followers in the world, Johnson personally introduced his fans to how to enjoy his favourite drink in videos where he drinks with his mother or while making cocktails live.

The former wrestler, now actor, introduced his tequila in 2019, in one of the

biggest launches in the history of the spirits business. “In less than one year we’re on track to sell 300,000 cases and ship roughly 400,000 cases of Teremana in our first year of business,” the actor wrote on Instagram before adding, “For context, Clooney sold his Casamigos tequila brand at roughly 175,000 cases.”

Made with 100% Blue Weber agave, slow roasted in traditional brick ovens for three days and distilled in handmade copper pot stills, this Blanco tequila has been praised by many for its refreshing citrusy and peppery notes, which complement the earthy, herbal agave. And true to his fitness background, Johnson decided that Teremana tequila should also come with a nutrition label. Teremana means “spirit of the earth”, and the range also includes a reposado variant. ABV 40%.

Alessandro Palanca

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INDIAN SPIRIT

In the home of the gin and tonic, the rise of new distillates. An exotic and trendy way of drinking

BY FABIO BACCHI



India is a very dynamic market for spirits given its substantial local consumption. Indian whisky, brandy and rum are rising the ranks of the most consumed brands in the world, albeit locally, as opposed to gin which in India seemed to be non-existent or just about.

The gin craze, which has taken over the world and that continues to be very dynamic, had not caught on in this bound-

less country. Until five years ago, that is, when local brands came onto the scene carving our vital space for themselves and attracting attention. Those within the industry are attempting to define what an Indian gin is. Its peculiarities are found in experimentation with unique botanicals.

The road was opened in 2017 by Anand Virmani of NAO Spirits & Beverages, located in Goa, who helped to kick



off the birth of this distillate with the launch of the first Indian craft gins: Hapusa and Greater Than. India is no doubt an influential country when it comes to food and beverage; with a cuisine that is renowned and enjoyed all over the world, its tea, the largest availability of spices in the world, Indian whiskies that have now made themselves known to the sophisticated world of whisky lovers, and not least, the fact that as a country, it is regarded as the cradle of the gin and tonic, which was born during the colonial era.

Could India ignore the call of gin? Of course not. This drink was the tool that

the British colonialists and troops used to counter the endemic problem of malaria. The only cure was quinine diluted in water and then in gin. All this has reached us today, becoming one of the pillars of mixing and the cocktail culture.

Economic analysts have examined the increase in popularity of gin in India and have come to certain conclusions. The country offers huge opportunity – the growth of its urban population and change in demographics have generated an increase in disposable income and a change in spending pattern that is concentrated in the cities.

Another factor that has facilitated



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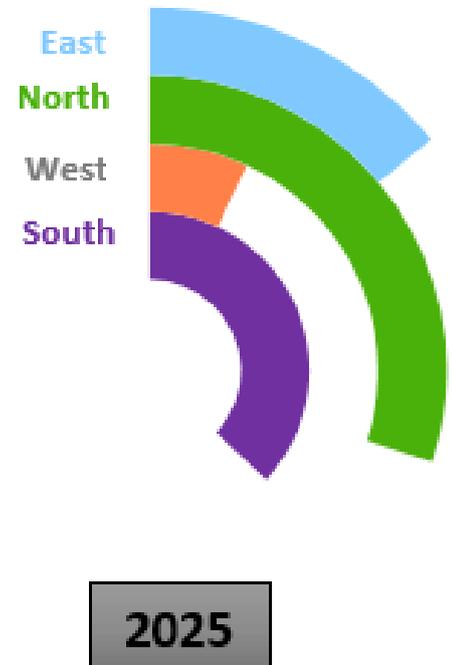
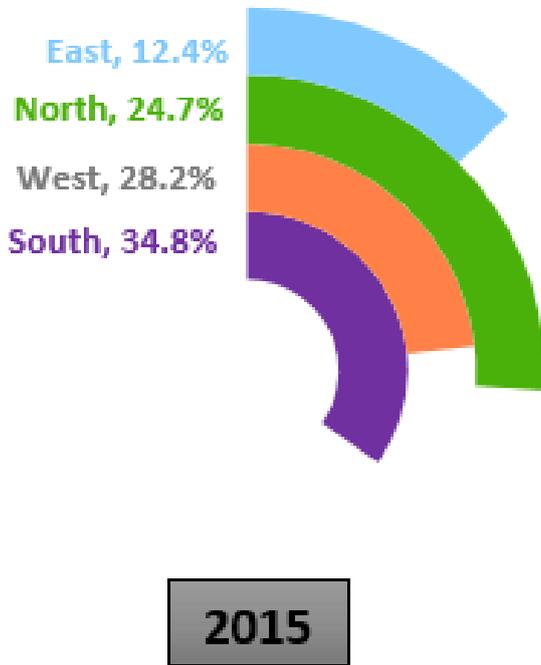
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India Gin Market Share, by Region 2015 & 2025 (%)



this process is a new social trend that sees an increase in alcohol consumption among women and of gin among the younger population. To this is added the growing importance of the bar and cocktail culture in urban areas and interest towards new trends in eating and drinking. These factors have created an increase in demand, especially for white spirits – more than enough elements to increase market growth of Indian gin over the next few years.

Currently the Indian gin market is segmented based on the type of product – premium & luxury and economy. It is estimated that the economy segment will make up the maximum share of the overall gin market, both in terms of volume and value.

From a legislative point of view, India has a federal system with laws that vary

from state to state, and with these, rules about alcohol too. In segmenting the Indian market by region, i.e. North, South, East and West, southern India makes up more than 1/3 of the market in terms of volume, followed by the western region, and significant growth will take place in the east over the coming years.

With botanical elements typical of the Himalayas, which could justify the use of the play on words “Peak Gin”, Indian gin today is a growing category, with a series of brands that combine local juniper with local specialities.

Goa is the region where this production revolution started. We decided to take a dive into the Indian gin scene, imagining that in the near future certain brands - all born in the last four years - might become known and loved by the foreign market, too.



GREATER THAN - NAO SPIRITS

When Anand Virmani and Vaibhav Singh founded Perch Wine & Coffee Bar in New Delhi, they were on the search for new and interesting gins to restock their bar. In 2015 they realised that India had been excluded from the worldwide Gin-naissance. In the country where gin and tonic was born, there was no gin to represent the region. The gap in the category on the Indian market convinced them to create NAO Spirits and produce their first gin. They sourced a copper still and after about three years of tests, they created their Greater Than London Dry Gin. In Hindi, “nao” means “boat” and the word was used to symbolise the union of contemporary spirits with an Indian character. The birth of Greater Than in 2017 was the turning point for the local gin scene.

The ingredients of this London Dry Gin have local and international roots. Such as juniper and citrus fruit from Macedonia and Spain, while the fennel, corian-





der and ginger come from the regions of Goa and New Delhi. Other botanicals are lemon grass, iris root, camomile, orange peel and angelica.

On the nose, Greater Than Gin presents with a complexity where clean juniper and lemon peel emerge. On the palate it is dry with hints of citrus and a pinch of ginger on the finish, giving it a certain spiciness.

Produced in the region of New Delhi. ABV 42.8%.

HAPUSA HIMALAYAN DRY GIN - NAO SPIRITS

Straight after the launch of Greater Than, the Nao Spirits team shifted their attention to a more premium gin, a step that represents a further evolution within Indian gin. The term “hapusa” means “juniper” in Sanskrit. If for Greater Than



a Balkan juniper was chosen, in this case we have a strong local imprint. Hapusa juniper comes from the Himalayan region where it is handpicked on the slopes of the mountains.

The botanicals also include turmeric, mango, coriander seeds, ginger, lemon, cardamom and almonds. Among the floral notes, sweet spices and green leaves emerge. The finish is full of citron, other citrus fruits and hot spices, is long and persistent, and has a light earthy hint on the palate. Hapusa is also produced in the region of New Delhi with a copper still.

Hapusa was the first gin with a strong Indian identity to be sold abroad. ABV 43%.



STRANGER & SONS - THIRD EYE DISTILLERY

The third Indian gin to arrive on the market was Stranger & Sons, launched in 2018 by Third Eye Distillery in Goa, where it is produced. Goa is a particularly fertile and lush region due to the quantity of spices that are grown there. The business

was co-founded by Sakshi Saigal with her cousin Vidur Gupta, and husband Rahul Mehra, who is also co-founder of the Gateway Brewing Co. and SVAMI tonic waters and cocktail mixers.

The many quirks and eccentricities of all Indian generations play a role in local daily life. This was the inspiration that led to the name “Stranger”, since, as the founders say, “we believe that India is wonderfully strange”.

To start their adventure, the founders attended distillation courses in the Netherlands, bought a distiller and started experimenting. With ingredients taken from all over the country, some grown on their own land surrounding the distillery, Stranger & Sons sparkles with a healthy dose of juniper, together with a pinch of black pepper, nutmeg, mace, coriander seeds, angelica, liquorice, cassia and citrus peels. The latter are a mix of local botanicals such as the Indian bergamot, Nimbu, and Nagpur and Gondhoraj oranges.

Stranger & Sons gin has a bright and citrusy character and is often used in Gimlet and Gibson cocktails, which the founders are very fond of.

With robust and generous flavours, Stranger & Sons is defined as a three-dimensional gin. The citrus fruit lends freshness, the local pepper, the coriander and the mace give it a very spicy heart, while the liquorice, cassia and the nutmeg give it a sweet and warm finish. The small batch distillation makes it smooth and delicate, allowing all these strong spices to blend in harmony.

The gin rests for five months before being bottled. On the label is an image of a mythical animal with three eyes, which gives the name to the distillery. ABV 42.8%.



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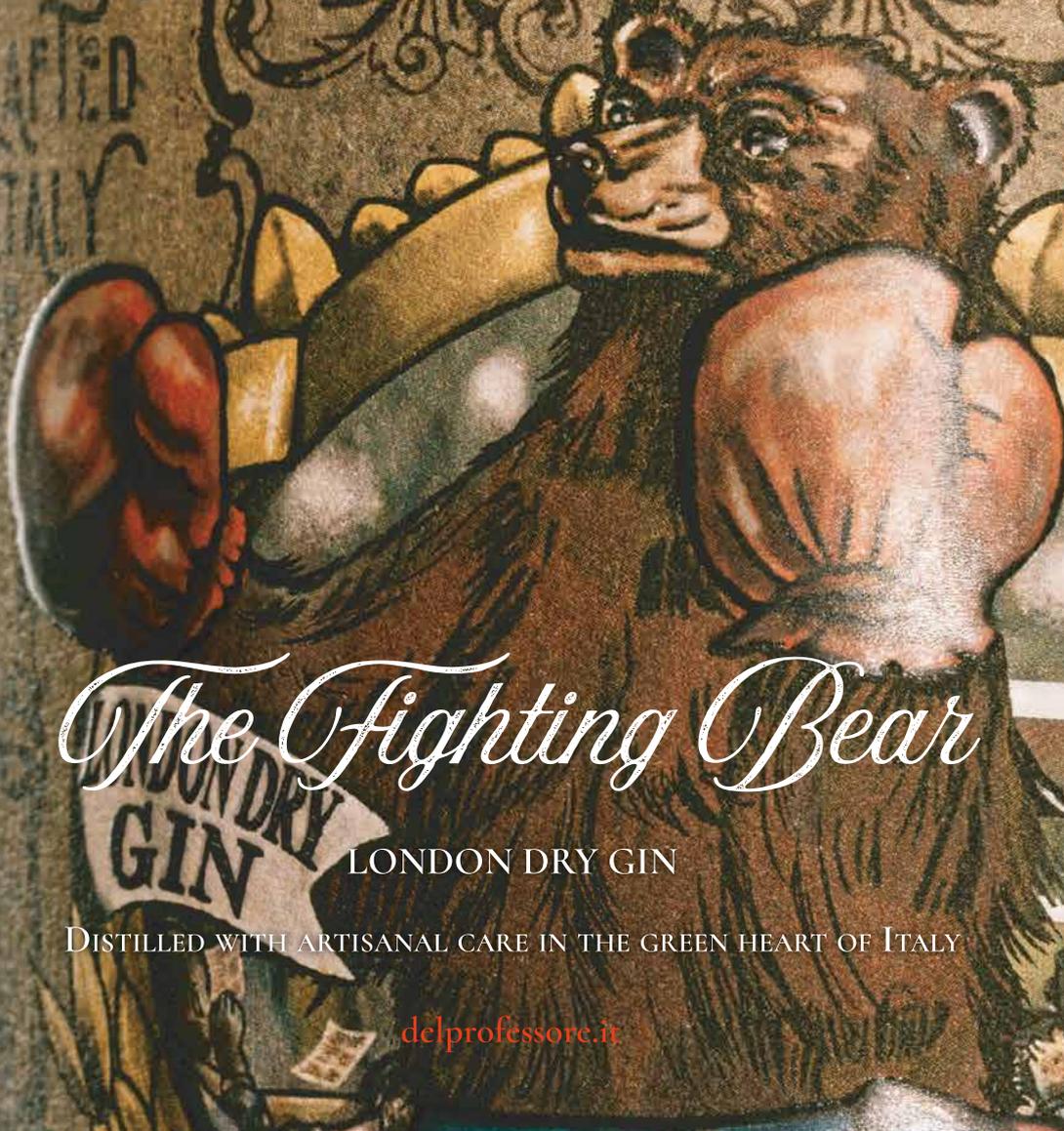
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DRINK RESPONSIBLY

JAISALMER GIN – RADICO KHAITAN LTD

Jaisalmer Indian Craft Gin is inspired by the imperial age of the Maharajas of Rajasthan, of which the city of Jaisalmer, sometimes called the Golden City because of its yellow sandstone, was a part. Jaisalmer Gin is produced by Radico Khaitan Ltd, once known as Rampur Distillery founded in 1943. Radico Khaitan is also one of the oldest producers of whisky in India.

The base of this gin is a neutral, triple distilled spirit made of rice and grain, redistilled in a traditional copper still.

Launched internationally at the end of 2018, the spirit was presented in India at the end of 2019. The elegant black bottle is enriched with golden motifs. The logo shows a buck holding a Jaisalmer Fort – a glistening symbol of royalty – between its horns.

Derived from an ancient Indian knowledge of herbs, the classic flavour of the juniper berries is combined with the freshness of hand-picked Indian botanicals.

Of the 11 plant elements used in distillation, seven come from the four corners of India. The coriander and vetiver, a complex spice with intriguing peppery hints, are grown in fields around Jaisalmer in the north of India. The sweet orange peel, which complements the citrus and floral tones of the gin, comes from central India. Then there are cubeb berries and lemon grass, Darjeeling green tea leaves from eastern India and lemon peel from western India. Other botanicals include angelica roots, liquorice and caraway seeds lending a spicy, slightly anise-tinged flavour to the gin.

ABV 43%.





SAMSARA

This gin was created by Aditya Aggarwal, former student of UCLA in California and then a management consultant for PricewaterhouseCoopers. After returning to India, he had a sense of the potential of gin on the local scene, which was starting to emerge from the shadows of other spirits. And so, he decided to give his idea of having a brand of gin a go. Aggarwal embarked on a series of trips to distilleries in Goa, Haryana and Punjab and then in the United Kingdom to learn as much as possible about distillation processes. Obtained using the classic London Dry method, Samsara Gin uses eleven botanicals including organic hemp seeds, rose petals, vetiver, green cardamom and juniper berries.

Samsara is a floral and citrusy gin, with a hint of spicy earthiness. The main ingredient, juniper, comes from Macedonia, but the other botanicals, such as the Indian



blood oranges, cassia bark, angelica root and rose petals, are procured from local producers.

The distinct flavour of Samsara Gin can be attributed to the hemp, one of the eleven botanicals used. ABV 43%.

GIN GIN

An idea of 24-year-old Shubham Khanna, Gin Gin includes nine botanicals that are vapour infused and include hemp, Himalayan juniper, coriander, lavender, rosemary, caraway seeds, cinnamon, lemon grass and butterfly pea flowers. “I want Gin Gin to be a gateway spirit for the entire category. In this regard, adding hemp as a botanical would help pique a consumer’s curiosity,” says Shubham Khanna.

The founder explained that his initial intention was to create a gin to be enjoyed with friends. After travelling to New York to study the production process, Khanna created 40 recipes over two years before getting his desired result, not without the financial support of his parents. From his thirteenth recipe onwards, Khanna began to be drawn towards hemp, which contains no THC, and chose to use it as one of the ingredients.

“Hemp has a savoury and oily taste that’s unlike any other gin out there. Moreover, it’s also a lifestyle choice for a new generation that relates with hemp,” Khanna says. The butterfly pea flowers were chosen because they “cut the hemp’s oiliness.”

The column still used is made in India. The name Gin Gin was inspired by the Italian words for cheers “Cin Cin” that are said during a toast. In exchange for their help, Khanna’s parents asked their son for a batch of Gin Gin for their enjoyment. ABV 40%.





TERAI - CRAFT SPIRIT COMPANY

Terai is an artisanal London Dry style gin produced by Shekar Swarup's India Craft Spirit Company. The result is an attractive product whose design is inspired by temple architecture. On the label, botanicals are represented in the design of old Indian coins and each cap is hand-made in the traditional Indian

artisan style of Channapatna. This is a gin that plays with Indian flavours in a way that does not take them for granted. Singapore Proof & Co were brought in as partners and to evaluate the final recipe. Terai is the name of a fertile swamp that runs along the slopes of the Himalayas.

The Swarup family has a history of farming in the region dating back to the 1700s and opened one of the first distilleries in India in 1958. Terai Dry Gin is their contribution to the new era of distillation in India.

This modern interpretation of a traditional London Dry Gin includes 11 botanicals: juniper berries, tulsi (holy basil), coriander, fennel, lemon peel, orange peel, lavender, rose, almond, angelica and iris root. Many come from the largest spice market in Asia, Khari Baoli in New Delhi. Terai's base spirit is made from rice in a nearby distillery owned by the Swarup family. The mix of botanicals gives the gin a spicy profile that is bold and dry, while the tulsi, a characteristic botanical, and the more floral elements add freshness and liveliness.

ABV 42.8%.



TICKLE GIN - ADINCO DISTILLERIES

From the producers of the famous Cabo coconut rum comes Tickle Gin, a dry gin from the state of Goa. Solomon Diniz, head of Adinco and from the fourth generation of a family of distillers, imagined this project in 2009, but at the time there was no market for the product. The name Tickle is dedicated to ladies.

Himalayan juniper, orange peel, cardamom, cinnamon, coriander seeds, cloves and even black pepper grown in the factory plantation of Adinco Distilleries. The juniper dominates the palate followed by notes of pepper and cardamom. The botanicals are processed using the cold extraction method at temperatures close to zero, which helps to maintain the aromatic characteristics and infuses the spirit with a certain freshness.

Its botanicals include juniper, black pepper, cardamom, cinnamon, coriander, orange peels and cloves, creating a classic type of flavour.

The company consulted with a Russian master distiller. An advanced filtration



technology to get clarity and a special filter for getting shine round up the production process of creating Tickle Gin.

ABV 42.8%.



PUMORI - FULLARTON DISTILLERIES

Made by the producers of Woodburns Whisky, Pumori Gin takes its name from Mount Pumori, known as the son of Everest, which lies only 8km west. Its juniper comes from this region.

Pumori is produced in 200l batches at Fullarton Distilleries located in the woodlands of Candepar in Goa. Twelve botanicals from the Indian subcontinent form its body of aromas.

The New Western style gin shines with Himalayan juniper, orange peel, lemon peel, cardamom, coriander seeds, liquorice, nutmeg, rosemary, anise, cinnamon, almond and vanilla. "The gin highlights the taste of Indian culture through a single liquid," states Aman Thadani, founder and creator of Pumori. On the nose, the gin has a bouquet of juniper infused with hints of citrus. Its flavour is rounded off with a touch of freshness added by the cardamom and liquorice root on the palate. The finish is magnificently completed by a pleasant union of vanilla and almonds. ABV 40%.



JIN JIJI - HIGH ROAD SPIRITS

This gin uses cashew nuts, an ingredient synonymous with Goa. Jin Jiji uses juniper sourced from the Himalayas and distills its spirit with other Indian botanicals such as tulsi and camomile in a copper pot still. "Jiji" is a word that derives from the Hindi, "jijivisha", to describe a passion for life. A mixture of wild Himalayan juniper and Bulgarian juniper is combined with tulsi, a scented leaf used in Indian Ayurveda and is often considered by Hindus as the earthly manifestation of the goddess Tulsi. Coriander seeds, black tea, angelica and iris roots and camomile are also added. Distilled in Goa in a copper pot still. ABV 43%.

Fabio Bacchi

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FREEZER



Spritz Calabro

6 cl Amaro del Capo Red Hot Edition
1 cl lime juice
5 cl tonic water "Miracle 1638"
5 cl Prosecco DOC brut "Mangilli"
Ice, a lemon zest, a chilli.



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DAWN OF A NEW DAY

Scottish land and a sea breeze create a legendary whisky reborn with three treasured single malts

BY **SARA DE MARCO** – TOGETHER WITH **FABIO BACCHI**

There is a village in Scotland, located in eastern Sutherland in the Northern Highlands, which gave its name to one of the most legendary Scottish distilleries: Brora. A place rich in nature and beauty, full of resources that have been utilised by the inhabitants for hundreds of years, transforming the small village into an industrial area.

Among the excellences of these areas is the iconic Brora, a whisky that tells the story of the environment in which it was

born, with the scents of the sea breeze and the Scottish land. The history of this distillery begins with George Granville Leveson-Gower, Duke of Sutherland, and his wife Elizabeth, when in 1819 they built the Clynelish distillery a couple of miles from the village of Brora.

Many writers and experts have tried to put together the origins of what would become an icon in the world of malted whisky, however, in addition to the corporate ups and downs in management of





BRORA
LEFT, AN AERIAL
VIEW OF THE
VILLAGE OF
BRORA.

the distillery, historical and social factors also influenced production, making it difficult to accurately trace its history.

Between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the lords, who owned the land in Scotland, decided to brutally drive the peasants from their land to exploit the territory in every possible commercial way. Between pastures, forests, tourism, salt and brick production, there was no longer any space for farmers' houses, which were burned. Many died from the cold, others from starvation, some emigrated to America, while others were relocated to the coastal areas of Scotland. Here the Duke of Sutherland provided them with jobs and housing in order to continue collecting rent and exploit their labour. The main activities in those areas were fishing of herring, cereal farming, coal mining and working in distilleries.

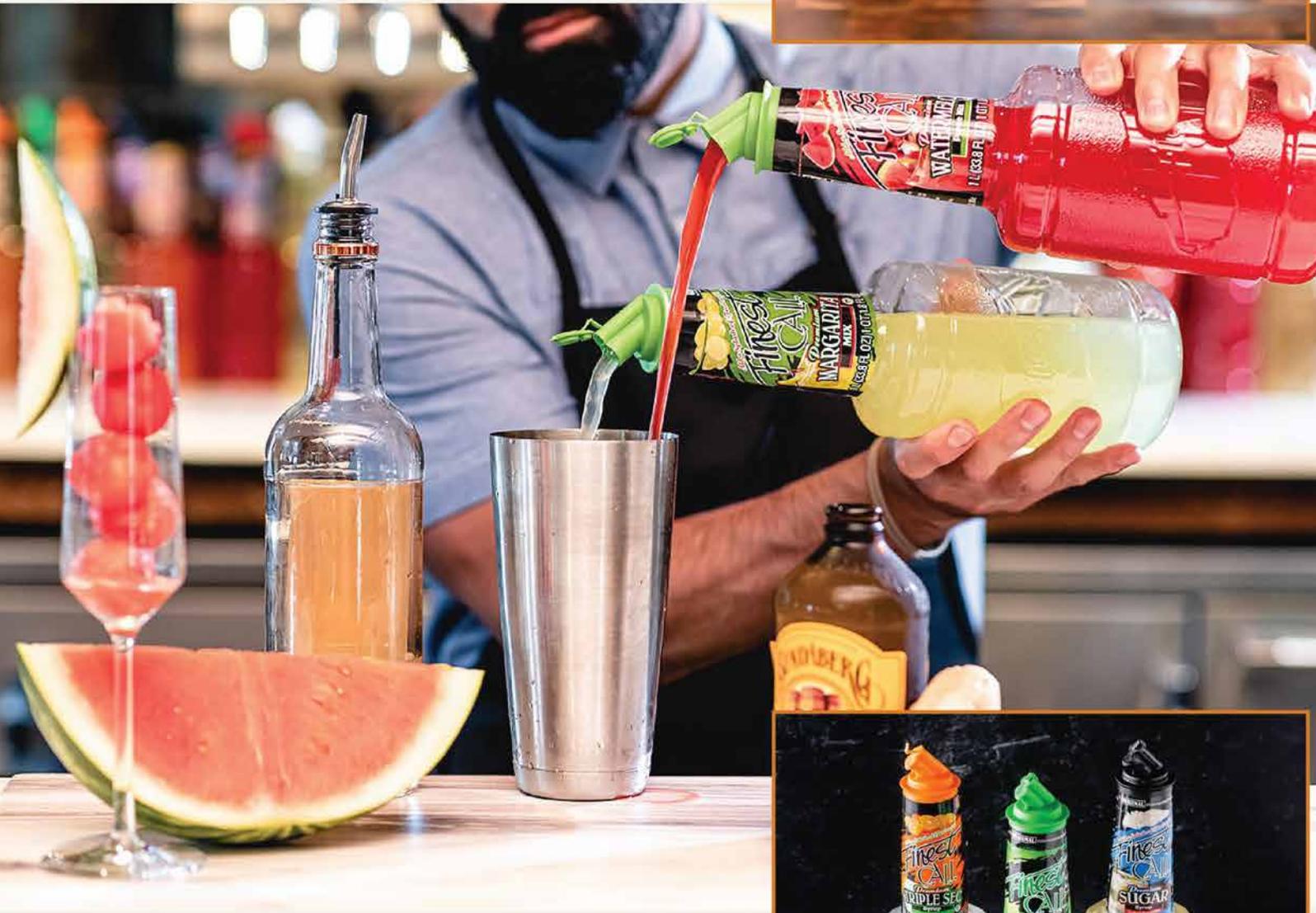
The area was conducive to producing whisky: fertile soil, abundant water resources, coal to use as fuel and plenty available labour. The duke therefore had a distillery built there, which is also known as the "Clearance" Distillery. This term was coined when many landowners did not consider the traditional livestock farming practised by small farmers to be suitable anymore. They were forcibly and violently evicted (i.e. 'cleared') so that their properties could be used for more profitable work. Among these was also whisky production. So, the Clynesh Distillery was born. Contrary to prediction, though, the first few years of the distillery were neither glorious nor profitable.

In 1825 James Harper took over Clynesh and his tenure lasted just under a decade. Harper's failure was probably due to a series of factors playing against



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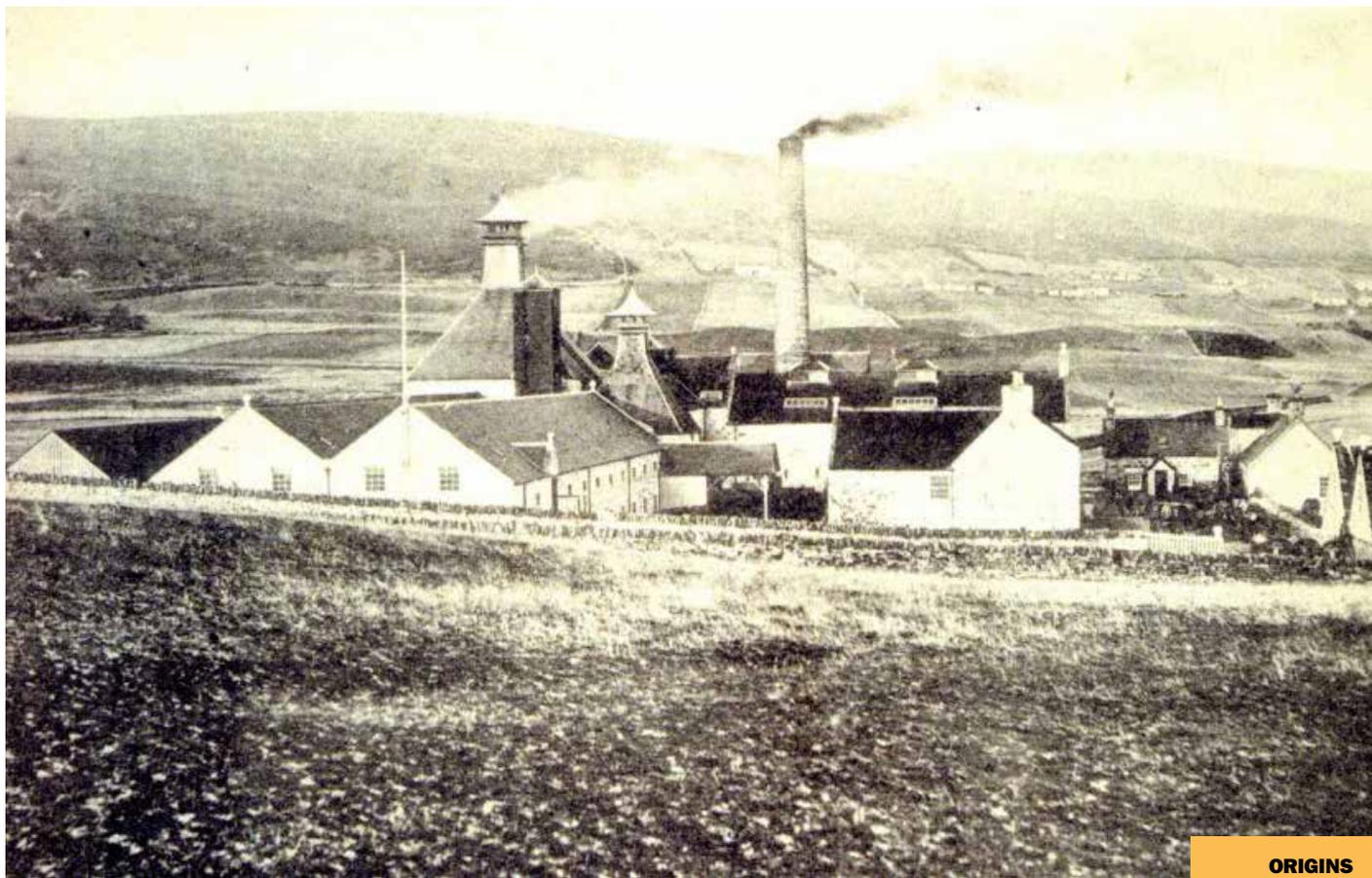
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DRINK RESPONSIBLY



ORIGINS
ABOVE, THE
CLYNELISH
DISTILLERY IN
1905.

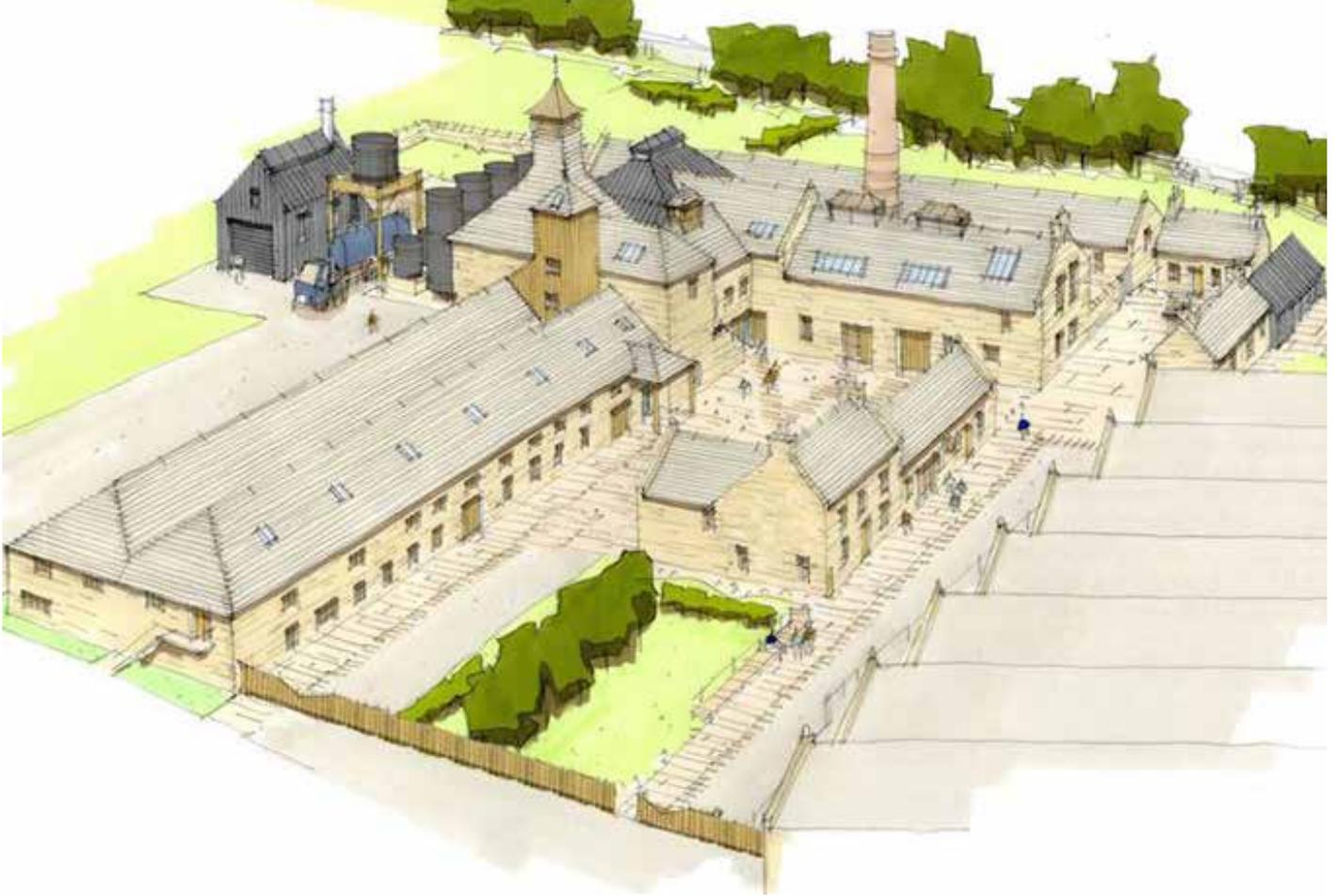
him, including: the poor quality of the coal, which was not enough to keep the fires of the two stills going, low production capacity of only 10,000 gallons per year and very high duties to be paid to the duke.

In 1834 the license was passed on to Andrew Ross until, in 1846, George Lawson & Sons took over the distillery. Lawson made significant structural and financial changes. He focused on selling the product to private customers, which ensured that the distillery remained successful for 40 years. An important testimony of the time is that of Alfred Bernard, a British historian who, after visiting the company, mentioned it in his book “The Whisky Distilleries”, highlighting its excellent operation and the features of the product.

After the acclaimed success of Ge-

orge Lawson, for unknown reasons, the license was sold to James Ainslie & Company in 1896, a Scotch whisky manufacturer, together with John Risk as business partner. The idea was to encourage production by going back to wholesaling. For this reason, a warehouse for the products, a conveyor belt and a steam system were built alongside the Pelton turbine that supplied the distillery with energy. Production continued for a number of decades.

From a business point of view the distillery underwent a lot of change. Ownership continued to change hands and from 1900 onwards, Clynelish’s story became even more troubled. Despite being bought by large groups, in March 1931 the economic depression forced Clynelish to close, only to be reopened seven years later. The arrival of electricity in 1960



In 1967, a new Clynelish distillery was built next to the old one, which would later resume distilling under the name Brora. The old Clynelish was closed in May 1968 and the new one started producing. But something unexpected happened. Due to adverse weather conditions that year, there was a sharp decrease in production on Islay, whose peated whiskies were very important for Johnnie Walker blending. To make up for this shortage, DCL, today known as Diageo, decided to make use of the old Clynelish once again.

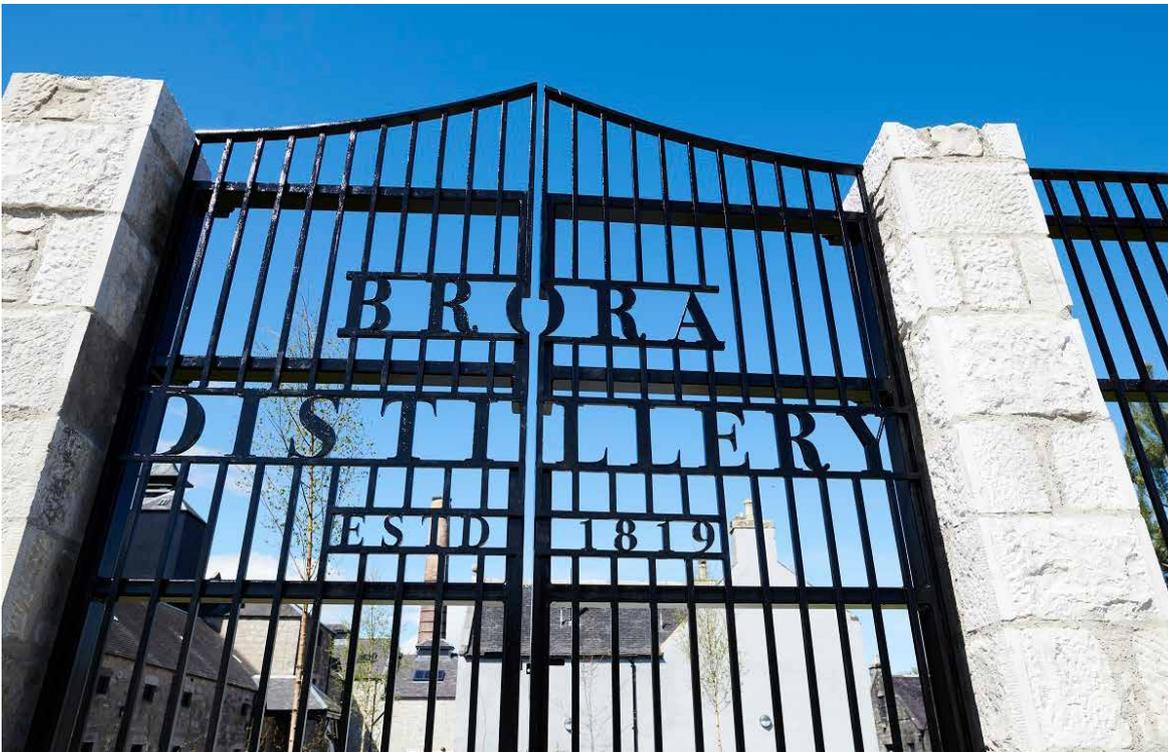
It was 1969 and the distillery renamed Brora would continue to operate until 1983, the year it closed due to the great worldwide whisky crisis. That is why the first examples of the word “Brora” found on casks date back to 1969. Clynelish production continued.

Between 1984 and the 2000s, Brora bottles continued to appear on the market, which over time became increasingly rare, sought-after and valuable. Over

meant that coal was no longer used and production was expanded with the installation of six stills. The water used was that of the Clynelish Burn, the river that had always been used in production.

BRORA

AT THE TOP, A DRAWING OF THE BRORA DISTILLERY. ABOVE, A MAP OF THE REGION.



recent years, Brora became a “ghost distillery”, fuelling the legend among whisky lovers the world over. No one ever thought that Brora could come back to life until, in 2017, Diageo announced it would reopen in 2020.

Diageo has invested £35 million in its programme to restore Brora and Port

Ellen, the group’s other iconic distillery on the island of Islay. History tells us that nothing has come easy for Brora, and in fact it had to face a final obstacle: Covid-19 which postponed its reopening to 19 May 2021.

The new building is a faithful reconstruction of the one closed in 1983 and



the two original copper stills have been restored by skilled craftsmen. The main difference consists in the new technologies used that are eco-friendly and energy renewable, thanks to the installation of biomass heating systems.

Today the Brora revival is led by master distiller Stewart Bowman, a local, whose father was part of the last generation who worked in the distillery.

Stewart personally managed the reopening of the distillery and filled the first Brora barrel 38 years after the distillery last closed. The intention is that traditional production techniques will make it possible to replicate the original style of the whisky. Diageo expects to produce approximately 800,000 litres of whisky per year. The distillery will welcome visiting guests who, by taking part in guided



PEOPLE
 ABOVE,
 MASTER
 DISTILLER,
 STEWART
 BOWMAN. LEFT,
 THE TRIPTYCH
 SINGLE MALT
 SCOTCH
 WHISKY
 COLLECTION.



tours, will retrace the history of Brora, the production methods and taste the products. A destination not to be missed by whisky lovers.

Time plays a crucial role in production and after more than 200 years of history we will probably have to wait a few more decades to have the new Brora products on the market. To celebrate its reopening, Brora presented a special release

consisting of three extremely rare single malts, worth £30,000, a truly special release with only 300 sets available.

Brora Triptych Collection Single Malt Scotch Whisky, aged between 38 and 48 years, is a triad of liquid relics that intend to highlight the three most representative eras of the Brora distillery.

Sara De Marco
(together with Fabio Bacchi)

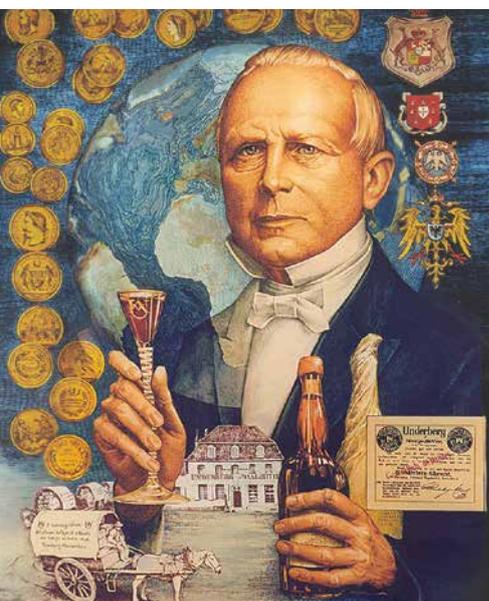
175 YEARS OF UNDERBERG



“Welcome to the relaxing world of what is probably the most famous bitter of these times, Rheinberg’s Underberg.” A bold statement originating 175 years ago when Hubert Underberg founded “H. Underberg-Albrecht” and married his wife Catharina Albrecht on the same day. That moment marked

the birth of the new herbal digestive and a long tradition. Hubert Underberg selected what he considered the best herbs from 43 countries for the recipe and developed the secret “semper idem” process, still used today.

In 1949, Emil Underberg introduced the single-portion bottle wrapped in straw-paper, for which Underberg would become



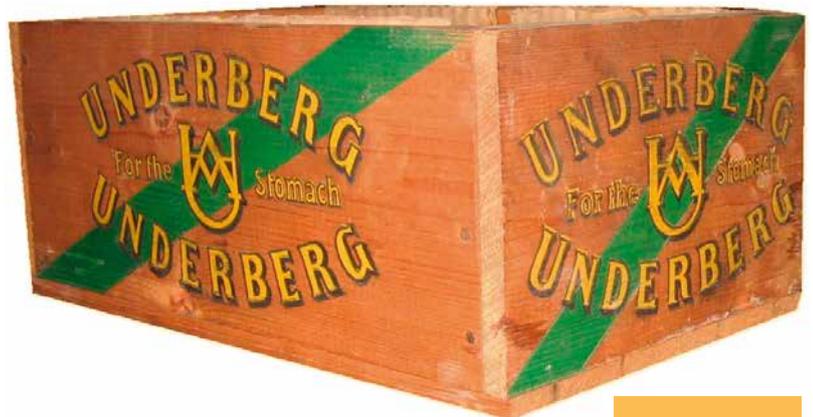


known all over the world together with the exceptional quality of the product and the long tradition of the company, now in its sixth generation. Today Underberg is one of the oldest family-owned businesses in Germany, an iconic brand celebrating its 175th anniversary.

Over recent decades, Underberg has become an international company that produces and distributes not only the historic brand, but also other brands such as Grasovka, Pitú and Asbach. Natural, “made in Rheinberg” and faithful to the principle of *semper idem*, the Underberg recipe has remained unchanged for 175 years.

Utmost importance has always been placed on quality when selecting the plants and herbs, which will continue to be the case into the future.

The very delicate extraction process ensures that the precious herbaceous essences are not lost during production, allowing the bitter to retain its natural fla-



1953

UNDERBERG
ON THE
BOTTOM OF THE
OPENING PAGE,
FROM THE LEFT:
HUBERT
UNDERBERG,
EMIL
UNDERBERG
AND HUBERT
UNDERBERG.
ON THESE
PAGES, SOME
HISTORIC
PHOTOS.



your. Underberg is GMO-free, vegan, gluten-free and kosher. The recipe contains no additives, consists only of herbs, alcohol and water and is still only known to five people.

Underberg is still produced in the historic headquarters of Underberg-Straße in Rheinberg. Here the digestive matures in oak barrels before being bottled in handy single-portion wrapped in straw-paper to

protect it from light and other environmental factors.

To celebrate its anniversary, Underberg has produced a range of promotional items and bolder new packaging in line with Emil Underberg's motto: "Everything can be done better!" The new package design combines tradition and a modern touch where "Pop art meets German romanticism". The look is fresh, bright and



refined. The anniversary design maintains the charm that has won over generations of consumers and will not fail to draw new ones.

The new design is inspired by 1846, the year Underberg was founded, bearing the slogan “Heroes around the time 1846”, chosen as a tribute to the work of historical figures such as Charles Dickens, Gustave Eiffel or Alexander von Humboldt, who

were active in the same year. They are all represented on the celebratory packaging.

A real innovation is the Underberg Cooling Box: a cooler box designed to hold 12 single-portion bottles of Underberg. Its design is based on “cool” images of snowy and frozen landscapes, together with the tagline: «BITTER BETTER. COOL». The Cooling Box will be available in Germany and internationally from July until



mid-October.

Despite the difficulties and challenges caused by the Covid-19 pandemic for numerous sectors of society and the economy, Underberg has seen strong sales growth in recent months. With its new anniversary offering, Underberg wants

to inspire even more customers to enjoy what is arguably the most famous bitter in the world. Especially in times of great uncertainty, people increasingly turn to honest and traditional brands that have stood the test of time and successfully weathered numerous crises.

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1821
Girolamo Luxardo

A WORLD OF FRUIT

Today there are global cocktail pre-mix and ingredient businesses that manufacture products of very high quality. For 30 years, American Beverage Marketers (ABM) has focused exclusively on producing and supplying alcohol-free ingredients used in preparing long drinks, cocktails and low-alcohol beverages, both for professional bartending and home use.

Based in New Albany, Indiana (USA), the company has been a leader in its category for the past 30 years, ever since it took over the retail brand Master of

Mixes in 1991.

In a factory originally 10,000 square meters in size, and now measuring 60,000, with 8 high-tech bottling lines and 22 tanks of 1,000 gallons each, the entire production process is managed with no outsourcing: from development of its fruit-based recipes to the packaging. Strengthened by established experience in the sector, the company continues to shape and develop new consumer trends while keeping focused on its speciality – the use of products from the Real Infused Syrups range for various culinary



applications is such an example.

At a time when bars and kitchens are drawing ever closer, chefs discovered Reàl by watching mixologists and now use it to create sauces, condiments, desserts and appetisers. Coco Reàl is a coconut cream launched in 2006 that was eagerly received by bartenders from the outset. The traditional coconut cream jar was replaced by an ergonomic and convenient squeeze bottle. Today the Reàl range includes 18 variants.

The Finest Call range was launched in 1995, and in 2010 it was already available in more than 100 countries around the world; today it includes about 70 different flavours including purees, syrups and pre-mixes. To obtain a product with the required quality standards, ABM has developed strong synergy and relationships with fruit producers. The production cycles of fresh fruit are managed together with farmers who are selected by farming region and product quality – factors which, furthermore, must ensure that supply volumes remain stable. At ABM this phase is the responsibility of technical director, Isolde Aubuchon, who looks all over the world when choosing raw materials.

A cornerstone of the company's mission is applying and developing the best production and eco-friendly processes to ensure highest environmental sustainability. All packaging, bottles, ingredient containers, caps and labels undergo a constant process of improvement and innovation to ensure maximum recyclability.

ABM pays close attention to the market to pick up on cyclical changes in consumer tastes in more or less evident ways. The almost unlimited variety of fruit



growing all over the world is a source of inspiration and an attempt to bring the consumer closer to experimenting with new, exciting flavours they previously were unfamiliar with. Therefore, a particular fruit or a variety of fruit could potentially be the next big thing in a market where it is unknown.

For example, the Kent mango grown in the United States and Mexico is quite well-known there. However, the Alphonso variety, grown in various areas of India and Sri Lanka, is a mango of superior quality in colour and texture, aroma and flavour, which provides extraordinary sensations on the palate. Despite be-

Rum Malecon

EL SABOR ALTÍSIMO

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Producto original de Panamá.

 @rummalecon





ing more expensive, ABM decided to focus on using the Alphonso mango because it is considered the best variety in the world. The result has been better uptake by US consumers of Alphonso mango-based ABM products compared to competitors who use the Kent mango.

The same applies to Mexican limes (Key lime), strawberries from California (Albion, Ventana and Camorosa), bananas from Ecuador (Cavendish banana). The fruits' aroma and delicate balance are perfectly maintained using low temperature pasteurisation. ABM is rightly

proud to have narrowed the gap that existed between product longevity and quality. During bottling, the product is subjected to a process that extends its shelf life.

ABM was the first company in the sector to introduce "Nitrogen Purge" technology, where liquid nitrogen expels 99.99% of the oxygen during the bottling process. Nitrogen expands up to 700 times its original volume and forces the oxygen out, creating a completely inert and safe environment, eliminating oxidation between the product and the cap.



Secondly, it has been observed that many consumers tend to prefer low-alcohol drinks, be they sweet, savoury, bitter or cocktails. Traditionally, US consumers choose drinks with a higher alcohol content than the European market, which prefers drinks with moderate alcohol content. Since the mid-2000s, the trend of US consumers has shifted slightly towards lower alcohol consumption, favouring beverages such as bitters, for example. Understanding these changes helps the company know how to guide its offering.

Another aspect taken into account is the trend towards increasingly healthier

drinks, which is why ABM uses only natural ingredients, without artificial colourants or flavours, and no GMOs.

William Hinkebein, Marketing Vice President of the company, is proud to say that the winning formula is the constant use of fresh fruit for all products, which are also vegan. Over the past 14-15 months, the global pandemic has forced restaurants, bars, hotels and cruise liners to close. This has led to an increase in home use, where consumers have tried their hand at preparing drinks at home.

The best-selling retail range of cocktail ingredients is Master of Mixes, which has



TEAM
ABOVE, THE
SALES AND
MARKETING
TEAM (PHOTO
TAKEN
PRE-COVID).

grown thanks to large-scale distribution around the world.

Master of Mixes is now available in many European markets. In regions of the world where alcohol is not largely consumed, non-alcoholic cocktails, such as Virgin Coladas and Daiquiris, are on the rise.

Constantly in touch with international bartending, ABM has established relationships in this sector where it finds colleagues, partners, and friends. These relationships are concretely fostered in the form of financial support to training centres and professional associations, including the International Bartenders

Association (IBA) and national subsidiaries on all continents. It also provides important support to organisations that help workers in the bar/restaurant sector who find themselves in financial difficulty. An example is its support of CORE, which stands for 'Children Of Restaurant Employees'. This is a US-based group that accepts donations to provide support to workers in need of financial help.

The search for new products is constant but the offering is limited to a few variants per year.

Today ABM boasts over 300 products that are used all over the world, totalling 1.7 million cocktails made daily.

THE FIRST NATURAL RED APERITIF IS BORN: AMERICANO ROSSO BY LIQUORI DELLE SIRENE



Liquori delle Sirene has launched a new product that is inspired by the Venetian tradition of aperitifs and a love for nature that the business has inherited over generations. The company's philosophy has always been based on natural and artisanal production processes, avoiding any chemical additives.

Americano Rosso is born from combining the white wines of the Lake Garda region and single macerations of various botanicals. Among them gentian stands out which, with its bitter notes, creates a wine blend that is "Amaricato", or "made bitter". The tradition of the "Americano" as a bitter wine (not the cocktail) has distant roots and is tied to Piedmont. The aromas of the botanicals are extracted by maceration with alcohol and water, a feature that Americano Rosso has in common with the other products in the Sirene range: Bitter, Canto Amaro and its various cocktail bitters.



Macerations are done individually to allow each plant to best express its aromas and flavours. Extraction time and the amount of alcohol differ for each botanical. For example, rhizomes (rhubarb roots) need longer times than orange flowers, which are more delicate. The production process continues with the blending of herbs, the addition of sugar and filtration. This last step is essential to eliminate suspended particles and is, at the same time, very delicate because, to be correctly balanced, it must not remove the aroma.

The depleted residues from pressing are used for biomass combustion to generate clean energy. The product is vegan friendly, like all the company's products, and the company's attention to environmental sustainability is also shown in its use of recycled labels.

Elisa Carta, creator of Liquori delle Sirene and corporate alchemist narrates:



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SHALL WE MIX?

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LIQUEURS

ON THESE PAGES, SOME PHOTOS OF THE PRODUCTS AND ELISA CARTA.



“My grandmother Carlina, the first family alchemist, taught me everything she knew about herbs and working with them; she used to make a kind of vermouth

which she flavoured with herbs and spices. She added bitter plants and called it in her own way “Vin Americà” (wine with bitter scents). This is where the idea of



recreating that type of drink came from, a little sweet and a little bitter and obviously natural, also in terms of its colour, like all the Liquori delle Sirene products.”

After extensive research, the first “Americano Rosso naturale” aperitif

(natural red Americano) was born. The innovative feature of this product is its natural colour obtained from hibiscus and bee balm flowers, as well as red potato juice.

There is no “And anything” on the label



– no added chemicals and no artificial or natural aromas: just single plants that are macerated separately and wine from the Garda area.

The plants used come from the area, such as lemons and gentian roots col-



lected on Monte Baldo, close to the lake; some botanicals such as bitter orange and hibiscus come from other areas of Italy.

The 17% alcohol content and the percentage of wine (75%) align Americano Rosso with the vermouth family. However, its reference category is that of flavoured wines and not vermouths because the bitter plants are not *Artemisia absinthium* (wormwood), but gentian.

Upon sensory evaluation, Americano Rosso is a beautiful bright carmine colour. On the nose are aromas of candied fruit and orange peel. On the palate there are clear hints of vanilla, pink pepper, coriander, rose and finally the bitter notes of gentian stand out. The rounded flavour ends with a clean and persistent finish.

Ideal when enjoyed neat on the rocks or paired with white spirits, such as gin





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The purple nectar, to drink blended

drink responsibly



or mezcal, for a deliciously natural red cocktail. It is the perfect substitute for vermouth and wonderful when topped with soda for a low-alcohol drink.

The new product already boasts prestigious prizes: Silver Medal IWCS 2020, Silver Medal San Francisco World Competition.

RECIPES AMERICANO ROSSO SIRENE

Recipes by Vincenzo Losappio – Zenzero – Barletta

FLOUNDER

INGREDIENTS

- 40ml Americano Rosso Sirene
- 40ml Tabar gin
- Alpex tonic water

Method: build. Glass: Old Fashioned. Garnish: mint leaf.

TRITONE

INGREDIENTS

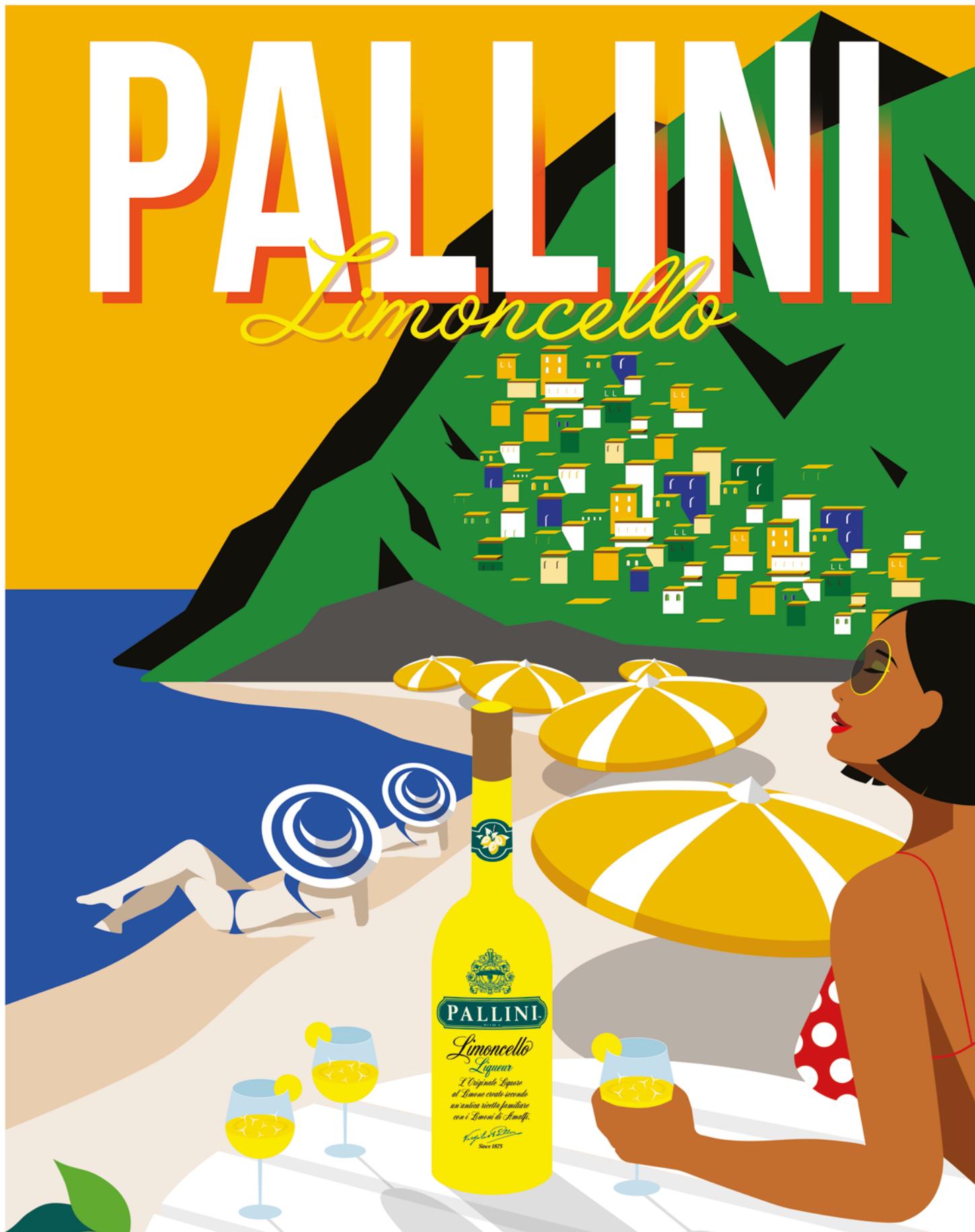
- 30ml Catskill Most Righteous Bourbon Whiskey
- 5ml Laphroaig 10 yo Scotch Whisky
- 30ml Americano Rosso Sirene
- 5ml Amaro del Ciclista
- 10ml lemongrass / Sichuan pepper cordial

Method: stir & strain. Glass: vintage coupette. Garnish: shiso leaf.



PALLINI

Limoncello



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