

THE
MINIATURE
BOTTLE
COLLECTOR

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Bottles & Extras

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Let's Talk

Welcome to Spring. Hope this issue gets to you faster than the last one. There were some printing problems and we want to fix one of those right now.

In Taizo Shiratsuchi's From Japan column, the text on the third page mysteriously disappeared. Here's what you should have read:

"...of Tomatin Distillery in Scotland and one of the biggest Shochu and Sake distillers in Japan). These are Jun 35, June 20, Jun Aleph and Legend.

"AWAMORI is a sort of Otsu-Rui Sochu and is distilled only in Okinawa. You can see three miniatures of Awamori: two Konpeki and Kura.

"Until next time...T.S."

This time we have fewer articles for you but a much longer look at some rums of the Caribbean. We think you'll approve. Our missing regulars will definitely be back next time.

Big news for us out here on the west coast is the Lilliputian Bottle Club show which will be in Reno at the Sands Regency Casino on Sept. 9th and 10th. Many people were hoping for Las Vegas, but quite frankly it's thought you'll enjoy Reno more. And what makes it more enjoyable particularly that weekend is that it's also the time of the hot air balloon races. And that is a sight to behold. See page one for their ad. For information about a sales table, call Jay Love at (310) 370-8993 between 6-10 pm Pacific time. Finally for those who like to "browse" early, they will have an early admission ticket this year too.

See you again in two months. Remember, keep thinking small.

— DMS —

THE MINIATURE BOTTLE COLLECTOR

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Editor / Publisher DAVID M. SMID

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Our Cover

The cover this time features two jugs or flagons. The names will be familiar but the bottles certainly won't be. When you talk of rare, these are it. Only six sets of these were produced as samples and they were never sold. Both are all white with black transfers or decals.

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Take another look. This is not the cookie jar we've been advertising these past two issues. All five hundred of those have been sold out...and if you'll check the Internet, you'll note that the price is going up! Okay, so what is this, you ask. Why it's the matching salt and pepper. As you might guess, the head is one piece while the body is the other.

1200 sets of these were produced and they've already proved as popular as the bear in the canoe and the bear in the teepee. You can secure your set by sending \$49.95 ppd to our address below. Now how many chances do you get to buy a Christmas gift this early in the year!

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WHAT'S NEW



There is a great deal new this time. In fact, we could say a plethora of goodies which may be found in various parts of the U.S. Only two bottles are not sold here but we thought you'd find them quite interesting, so let's begin with them.

They are both from India and are plastic and glass respectively. The former is the Gilbey's Green

Label Whisky while the latter is the Antiquity Premium Whisky. These are sold only in state in India. We have our traveling amassador, John Sullivan, to thank for these.

Now we go to those which are sold here in the U.S. Beginning with a true prize, we have Kentucky Pride Straight Bourbon Whiskey. The story on this (according to Jim Crawford) is that



it was produced as a sample in 1996 to promote sales of the large bottle. Interestingly enough, it only appeared in Eastern Tennessee in the last few months. It's a small batch bourbon which is reflected in the price.

From our east coast correspondant, Vic Visalli, we have the South African Van Der Hum Liqueur. This very nice glass bottle has been around for many years but only recently brought into the U.S. The liqueur itself has won many prizes and is quite delicious.

Two plastic bottles from back

east are the Lemon Head Liqueur (I find the label nicely droll) and the Irish Hackler Pottin (and that last word isn't pronounced anything like you'd think it would be). This is the "legendary" Irish "moonshine" which is now legally produced by at least two companies.

A trip to Minnesota once again yielded some finds. The nicest of these is The Queen of Vodka, a 100 ml bottle from Estonia. Strangely enough this is only available in two sizes: one liter and 100 ml.



The remainder of the bottles were all found here in Southern California and all are glass. The largest bottle is the 100 ml Lemoncello Liqueur from Italy. It's a corker with a hang tag label. (If you've never tried this stuff, put it in your freezer and drink almost frozen. It's refreshing and delightful.)

Mezzaluna Vodka is an extremely nice bottle which may be found in a good many markets now. As noted, this Italian vodka is "triple distilled and filtered four times through charcoal". The last five bottles are all tequilas. In fact, I think it's a race to see whether vodka or tequila can issue the most new bottles this year.

The set of three 30-30 are slightly different than the ones we should you a few issues back. These represent three grades of

tequila: blanco, reposado, and anejo. The bottles are nicely pebbled. Margaritaville comes in two variations if you will, light and dark. A nice flask with a colorful label.

Finally we come to my favorite, Tequila Chamucos. I don't have a Spanish language dictionary and my vocabulary doesn't include this word, but the creatures on the label look like vampire bats or something to that effect. I will find out though.

So there you have it for this time. Next issue a lot of super new bottles including two of the most gloriously looking creams I've ever seen: Awesome Orange Cream and Tequila Strawberry. The colors of the liqueurs in these two bottles surely can't be found on anyone's color chart.

MARKS & SPARKS



If that name means something to you, you're either a European or a confirmed Anglophile. Since the British love to abbreviate, the Marks and Spencer Department Stores are traditionally known as Marks and Sparks.

Each year at Christmas, the chain of stores in England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales (?), issues a goodly number of bottles which are either produced for Christmas giving or for collectors eager to snap up something new for their collection. 1999 was no exception. In fact, possibly more bottles were issued than is usual.



There were at least seven scotches, a vodka, a gin, a set of four brandy including a cognac and an armagnac, a port and one or two creams. We don't have all of them to show you; however, the majority are here.

If a bottle does not have a specific company name, then it

is issued with the M & S brand, St. Michael. Hence we have a Teith Mill Highland Single Malt Whisky but a St. Michael Vodka.

Almost every type of collectable bottle may be found in the yearly M & S lineup. How many do you have?



TREASURES OF THE PAST
by BUTCH JONES



I recently purchased these rum miniatures from a gentleman in Alexandria, Virginia. I don't collect rums, but I thought they were different and would make a great article. The gentleman traveled a lot and said that many of these were purchased in the Bahamas.

The first three are different flavored rums by Ron Ricardo. These were produced by Tod Hunter-Mitchell of Freeport, Bahamas. The first is a banana rum with a yellow label and a banana in the center. The second is a pineapple rum with an orange label. The third is coconut rum

and the label is a tan or beige. All three are 86 proof rums.

Next we have the most colorful label of the group. This is Old Brigand Barbados Rum. The label is multi-colored with a picture of a pirate in the center of an island. This five year old rum was produced by Albey Arthur.

The last rum is the oldest of the five. This is Brugal Ron Dominicano Carta Dorado Puerto Plata rum. This clear round bottle is embossed 1.6 oz.

Hope you enjoyed this quick look at some different rums.

-B.J.-

SAMPLES



Last time we "monkeyed" around and showed you three samples done for Lionstone back in the 1970's. This time we have three different versions of the hippo.

The hippos are actually three stages of a bottle. Note how the vegetation is seen in two of the pieces while only one of them has a place for the front label. Realize that none of these pieces was the final release bottle. Amazing how much effort went into the production of one miniature porcelain bottle.

SAMPLES



RODNIK DISTILLERIES

Samara, Russia

by JOHN SULLIVAN



Rodnik Distilleries in Samara produces several award winning vodkas. The most popular is their brand "Rodnik Vodka" (Spring Water).

Rodnik is one of the most valuable vodkas produced by the distillery. It is obtained from high quality grain alcohol, called "Extra", which they produce themselves, and from specially prepared water. Rodnik was awarded the 1st prize for Best

Vodka in the All Russian competitions in 1995 and 1997.

Another vodka they produce is called Gubernatorskya (Governors vodka). It is made the same way as Rodnik vodka, but has a special secret ingredient added which emphasizes its unique grain aroma and taste. It has also won many awards in Russia.

Samarskaya vodka (vodka from Samara) is made of "ecologically" pure grain alcohol and water. It



differs from the other brands from the Rodnik Distillery in that it has a special soft taste and aroma.

Kazachya vodka (vodka of the Cossacks) is a honey vodka. It differs from the others in its special aroma and honey taste. Since the 17th century, honey has been widely used as an additive to vodka. It emphasizes the refined taste and hardly perceptible aroma of flowering wild grass and fruit trees, which is what makes it popular with certain customers.

Samara Stoff vodka is made the traditional way with the grain alcohol Extra and water, but in a dried, fat free milk, which is what gives Samara Stoff its crystal clear brilliance, soft taste and special aroma.

A special, medicinal vodka is Rastoropsha (herb vodka). This drink contains the herb ratoropsha, which promotes blood

circulation in the body. It also helps to protect the liver from harmful influences, as the distiller says in its literature. This bitter drink was awarded the 1st Prize in its category in 1995 in the All Russian competition.

A rose by any other name. This certainly applies to the next brand from the Rodnik distillery, called Rodiola Rozovaya (Pink Rose Vodka). It is made in the same way as the traditional vodkas, but it has added to it, the root of the Rodiola Rose, called the Golden Root.

Another award winning vodka brand is the Novogodnyaya (New Year vodka). It is also prepared in the traditional way, but it adds special ingredients to give it a very unique taste and aroma. By adding juniper and cinnamon and some other secret additives, it creates an aroma that reminds me of a coniferous forest. Novogodnyaya won a 1st Prize in its category in the All Russian competition of 1997.

The last brand is called Triumfnaya vodka (Triumph vodka). This is a very special vodka, because in addition to using the familiar Extra quality grain alcohol, it uses a very special high purification alcohol called "Lux". Then, it adds glucose, sugar syrup, a viny acid and pure water. It is then refined by a special method to give it a very special taste (once again).

Rodnik has been exporting its famous products since 1966 and now exports to more than 50 countries around the world, including the United States, Canada, England, Germany, France, Italy, and Spain. They currently have three distilleries producing their brands. They are located in Samara, Novo-Buyan and Rozhdestvenno...all in Russia.
—J.S.—

RUMS of the Caribbean



Some time ago I had the idea of doing an entire issue devoted to rum. That ultimately turned out to be more difficult than I had thought. So this time you're going to see a lot of rums and then in an upcoming issue you'll see a great many more. All of these are going to come from a Caribbean island.

Many of the most common rums of the Caribbean won't be here because they've been seen a humongous amount of times. How

many more Bacardi bottles do you really need to see?

If we take things alphabetically, we begin with the Cavalier rums of Antigua. Nice labels on plastic bottles. Nothing special about the rums inside the bottles. Sort of a utilitarian light and dark rums. If you lived there or vacationed there, it would be very inexpensive rum to drink.

Next up is Curacao, the "C" in the A-B-C Dutch Antilles islands.





This island is very close to Venezuela and the South American continent. It's not a great place to produce rum. Usually the products of Senior Curacao are thought of in relation to this island. However, there is one local rum, **Don Pablo**, which is available in miniature size. It's a light rum with about the same taste as Bacardi. At least it's a glass bottle.

In our alphabet soup, we venture on to Grenada. Remember this tiny place? We sent the marines in quite a few years ago and established some tranquility. By way of thanks, Grenada is partially responsible for the 1999 Banana tariff "war".

In any case, two companies produce minis in Grenada. And all eight of the bottles are in plastic. **Westerhall** has a light rum...and then an even lighter rum. The labels obviously were designed by someone who did not go to art school.

Clarke's Court is the other company and it produces quite a variety of rums with a series of interesting labels. In proof they run all the way 52 proof for the Rum Punch to 138 proof for the Pure White Rum. And we must differentiate the Pure White Rum from the Kalypso White Rum for it is but a mere 135 proof. All of





these are produced by the Grenada Sugar Factory in St. Georges, Grenada.

Next we come to what I would consider the island which produces the best rum you can find. This is Martinique. In previous issues we've shown some from all of these companies, except for one. The bottles this time I believe are new.

The companies involved are J. Bally, Clement, Dillon, J. Dubois, La Mauny, and Tres Rivières. The finest rums are those which have the word "Agricole" on the label. These rums are still hand made and "babied" to give an extraordinary product.

Both J. Bally and Clement issue aged rums with Bally designating a specific year of production while Clement tells you how many years old the rum is. If you're a rum drinker, you can't surpass the rums of Martinique.

Finally our journey brings us to Nicaragua. This set of five Flor de Cana (Flower of the Cane) bottles have quite unassuming labels but very nice frosted glass bottles. For flavor, the Gran Reserva is the top of the line.

That's it for this visit. In the future we'll travel to other islands including a seldom seen rum from St. Kitts.



MELO'S MINIS

by MIKE OLSON



This is the last, but not least, showing of miniatures produced by Century Distilling. All the bottles shown are from the mid to late 1930's and have nice colorful labels. As far as I know, these are all the brands produced by this company, but I would not be surprised if there were others.

In any case, bottle number one is **Dr. Dick Straight Bourbon Whiskey**. This is probably the rarest of all the Century bottles and I have never seen a clear glass variation of this brand.

Next we have a pair of **Old Dover Bourbon Whiskeys**.

The amber glass variation of this brand is also fairly rare. The following three bottles are **Blue Ridge Straight Rye Whiskey**. As you can see, the amber variation has two different labels.

Finally we close with three **Fleet Street Rye Whiskeys**...again with two label variations.

This three part series has brought back a lot of fond memories of past collecting. Since bottle collecting has become so meager, I have started on a new hobby. You will never guess what it is!

Until next time. . . MELO. . .



PORFIDIO



It seems these days that there are an incredible number of tequilas currently available. We try to cover a good many of them in the **WHAT'S NEW** column; however, you can only do so many.

With this large number of tequilas there is one which stands out both in its excellent quality and in the container in which it is bottled. This is the Porfidio.

You're looking at an actual 50 ml

miniature, not the large bottle. This does have the blown glass cactus inside the bottle and is a very exacting replica of the large 750 ml bottle. The only problem is that you've got to hunt for it. Currently it only seems to be available in a few border towns and in tourist resort areas such as Cancun and Cozumel. It is worth the effort...and the money!

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WANTED: Still looking for those bottles with natives, sea captains, Napoleons, etc. Let me hear from you. Tony Nstelli, 3848 Coral Tree Circle #A14, Coconut Creek, FL 33073 or call (954) 972-2108 or fax (954) 972-1596.

WANTED: (TRADE OR BUY): I am desperately looking for any type of miniature liquor bottles made or bottled in UGANDA, SURINAM or ZAMBIA. I will pay top dollar, or trade multiple mini's for any mini bottles from either of these countries. I have over 140 countries available for trade. Contact Jim Crawford at (513) 467-9113 or e-mail me at shooter@fuse.net

FOR SALE: Miniature whiskey collection for sale. 500 bourbons, 350 blends, 200 Canadians, 100 ryes. Some pre-pros, mostly 1930's through the 1970's. Send \$10 for picture/list to Mr. Wilson Harrell, 936 Meyer Road, Newport News, VA 23608 or phone (757) 877-7152.

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