

VOL. XXXII
No. 182

No. 2
2005

THE MINIATURE BOTTLE COLLECTOR



\$3.00

THE mini club bottle



The Mini Bottle Club is THE Club if you are a collector of any form of miniature drink bottles, or associated go withs.

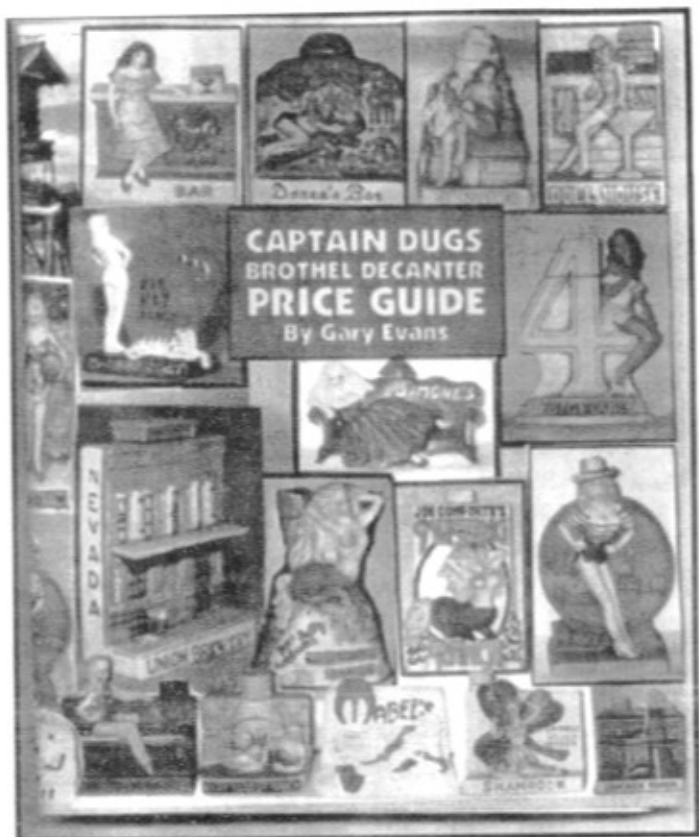
Club members receive a bi-monthly club magazine, which features all the latest news on what is available, plus articles on water jugs, ceramics, figurals, competitions, special offers and a club auction.

Membership details are available from the Membership Secretary:-
Mr David Hamilton, 47 Burradon Road, Burradon, Cramlington,
Northumberland NE23 7NF

minibottleclub@aol.com

Further information is available from the club website:

www.theminibottleclub.com



Front & back cover in color, inside black and white. Book has very interesting stories about Dug Pickering, original owner and creator of Dug's bottles, as well as the history of the Nevada brothels the bottles are modeled after. This book is a must for all collectors of the brothel series bottles.

**The Captain Dugs Brothel Decanter Price Guide
by Gary Evans, March 2004**

Price : \$13.00 U.S.
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Our Cover:

This time we have two bottles on the cover for you; however, both of them come from the same manufacturer. In the Czech Republic, these bottles were produced by Kuba-MBC which previously has been profiled in these pages. The bottle on the left was a limited edition of 150 made specifically for the recent MMBC show. On the right an even more limited edition of only 100 bottles to celebrate the 4th Anniversary of the "501 Dollar Pub", a club located in the Moscow suburb of Protvino. See what you missed by not going to the show this year!

FROM THE EDITOR:

Spring has certainly more than sprung and summer is almost upon us. Remember to stop and check out those liquor stores on your travels. I was recently in Denver and stopped at several large stores. Didn't find a thing different from what is available here in California until I stopped at the last store in Lone Tree, Colorado. The selection wasn't too great but there in the vodka section was Colorado Vodka. Unfortunately they only had a few available, but if your travels take you through that area, take a few minutes from driving and your collection may benefit from it!

Spring, of course, is also the time of the Midwest Miniature Bottle Show each year. Again this year everyone had a great time and probably came away with more bottles than they ever dreamed they'd find. This was also true at the other show held this year.

Oh, you didn't know about that one? Well, you had to travel a bit further than St. Louis. In fact, you had to go to Lima, Peru. Back in early February, a hotel in Lima was the site of a show which attracted collectors from both South and North America. Collectors from Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and Columbia traded and sold to one another as well as to several from the U.S. and Mexico. I don't know if they have all come together as a club or if it was just a loosely knit group of collectors, but everyone I've talked to said it was a marvelous time. And, they're going to do it again next year!

If you're like most people who read magazines, you sort of leafed through it before you actually read anything. This means you've no doubt already seen the eight page catalog which is featured in the middle of the magazine. Normally a few bottles would have been featured, but this was such a great catalog that I thought you'd all like to see it in its entirety. Not every bottle shown is available in miniature; however, most are. They are specifically made for tourists by the Ouzounis Company in Athens. No internet site is listed but they do have a fax number by which you can contact them.

Along with some very interesting articles by John Sullivan on vodka and Mike Olson (note: Mike, stay off the gambling ships) on his whiskies, there is another article I need to particularly point out. This is the one on rare malt scotches by Tony Natelli. This is one of the last articles Tony wrote before his very untimely death several years ago. It was recently unearthed while I was cleaning out a cabinet. So we are all the richer for one more article from Tony.

Finally, I need to mention the recent deaths of three long time collectors that many of you know from the St. Louis show. These are Bill Cole of Grandville, Michigan; Jan Gentry of Indianapolis, Indiana; and, Wayne McKinney of Tyler, Texas. Our hobby is diminished by their passing and our sympathies go out to their families.

That's it for now. Remember to place your free ad on our website (www.bottlecollecting.com) and, as always, keep thinking small!

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WHAT'S NEW



We're back once again with another baker's dozen of new bottles. This time though every one of them is available here in the U.S...you just have to watch for them.

Let's begin with the four plastic ones, three of which are pretty common bottles. These are the George Dickel No. 12 Tennessee Whisky (hey, what happened to the "e"?), Cask & Cream Chocolate Temptation (bring on the vanilla ice cream, please), and the Prichard's Sweet Georgia Belle

Peach Mango Rum Liqueur. This last one is a hoot, isn't it. A couple of issues back we showed you Prichard's Rum and now this is their second mini offering. Produced in Tennessee, it was found there in Knoxville earlier this year.

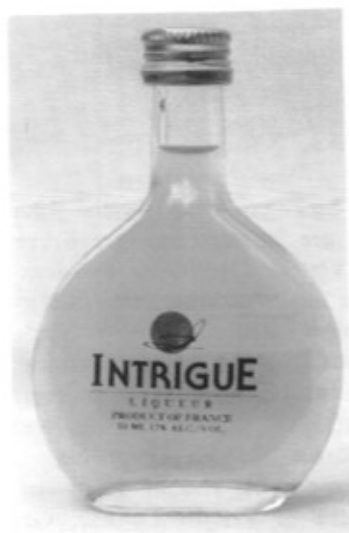
The last of the plastic bottles is the Pusser's British Navy Rum. This brand has been around for quite a few years now but never in this little bottle. It's an exact replica of the larger bottle and is even nicely embossed. Guess that is

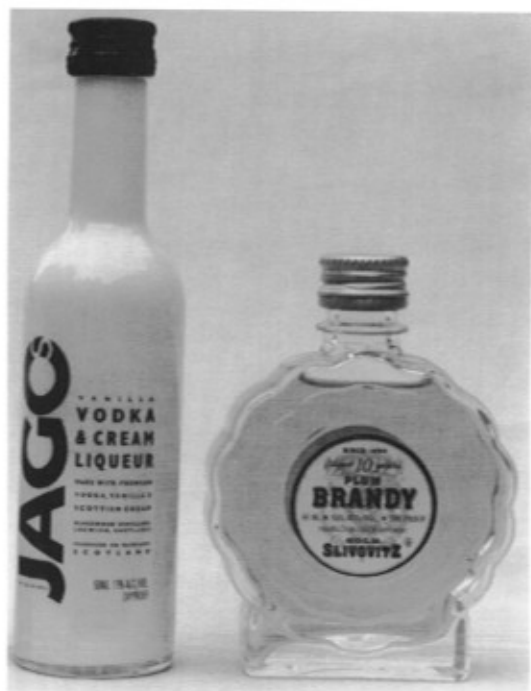


one expensive plastic mold. So why has it only been reported as being seen in Tucson, Arizona?

Let's move on to some liqueurs now. The Starbucks Coffee Liqueur was issued back in February and it's now pretty much all around the U.S. If you like coffee liqueurs, this one is for you as it's a very bitter coffee flavor. In any case, it's in a glass bottle which evidently was made specially for Starbucks.

The set of three schnapps bottles came from Michigan and are rather delightful in their own macabre





way. Since you can't see the colors, they are respectively green, red, and violet. The Viper features a snake on the label, the Sting a scorpion, and Poison a spider. Naturally where do most schnapps come from...Germany, of course!

Intrigue was found here in California and according to someone who should know is a mixture of Frapin Cognac, Grey Goose Vodka and citrus juice. Of course those two brand names aren't found on the bottle, but.... It's a nice little French bottle.

Something else which utilizes vodka is the Jago Vodka and Cream Liqueur. This is being produced in England by the same folks who are bringing you a vodka and a gin (both shown earlier). The recipe for this one is from one of the two people who was responsible for Bailey's Irish Cream. It was found in San Francisco.

The Slivovitz Plum Brandy is a product of the Jellinek Company in the Czech Republic. This brand has been around for decades but is now being issued in this very nice



little decanter-type bottle. It was found in California.

Now in my opinion two of the best were saved for last. These are the two whiskies: Michter's Single Barrel Straight Rye Whiskey at 42.4% alc/vol and the Pendleton's ("Let 'em Buck" - their slogan) 10 year old Canadian Whisky. As you

can note, the Michter's comes in a standard glass bottle (but with a very nice label) and the Pendleton has its own bottle. The Rye was found in New York State while the Pendleton appeared in Southern California.

So keep alert on your visits to your favorite stores!

TEQUILA



There are an even dozen new ones for you to look at this time. And, unfortunately, two-thirds of them are only going to be found in Mexico. So let's begin with the one third which are sold in the U.S.

Possibly the most well known name in tequila is Jose Cuervo. This Tradicional Reposado is a

brand (and label) which has been known for decades. Since this is a new version, it should be shown. The other U.S. bottles were found in Texas and this is the set of El Reformador: blanco, reposado, and anejo. Shall we say it isn't exactly a group to go front and center on your shelves.





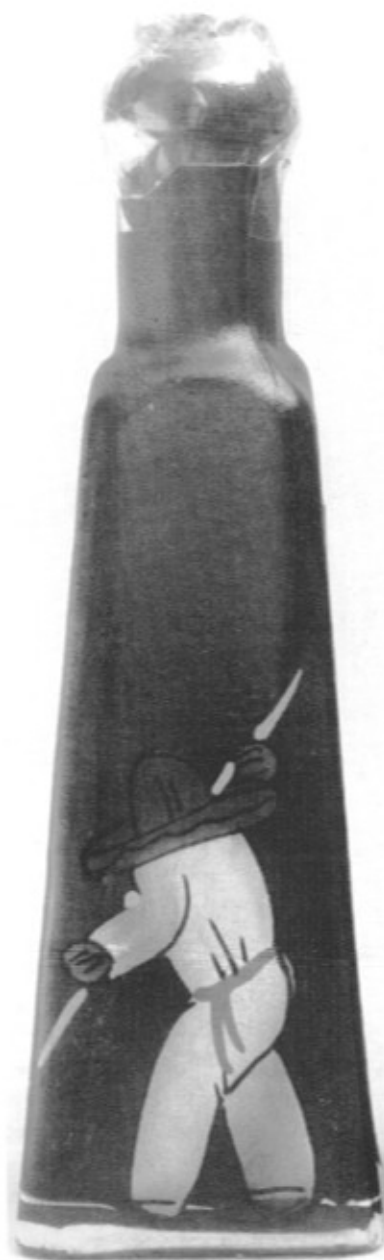
Now we come to the more interesting ones. The short Puente Viejo anejo is a bottle shown previously but not with the aged contents. This is a highly embossed, well made little bottle.

The Efecto pair of blanco and reposado are obviously hand made bottles as you can tell if you look closely at the height of the pair. Of course, you've already figured out that they are made to fit together. As with the other bottles sold in Mexico, they are 38% alc/vol.

Now we come to the Cristeros. This is frankly a company which realized some time ago that there was a lot of money to be made in making specialty bottles. The remaining five are all hand made

and probably done only for collectors. The tall pair of bottles actually come in four different colors (and with another label which we'll highlight next issue). The set of three short blown glass bottles all feature a blown glass piece in the base of the bottle. From left to right they are the sailfish, agave cactus, and turtle. How many more of these might there be?

Finally a note of warning. Bottles such as the Efecto and tall Cristeros appear to have copy paper labels and not true printed ones. Keep these bottles out of the sun and the labels will last much longer. In sunlight the labels could fade to nothing in 3-5 years!



ABSINTHE



Good grief, we now have eleven more new absinthes to show you...and some new information. The bottles this time run the gamut from mediocre to the I've-just-got-to-get-that-one. So let's begin with the least inspired right up to those please-where-do-I-get-them.

The plastic "disease" seems to be everywhere and absinthes are no exception. The Serpis is indeed plastic and has one of those labels which scream out that they are a Pernod wannabe. It's from Spain (55% and 50ml) and they ought to know better.

The three which are also in the picture with the Serpis are all

products of Baumgartner. They are Fee Verte's Elixier at 70%, Fee Verte at 70%, and Drachenberger at a lowly 30%. Incidentally, you're going to see that Fee Verte in a lot of ways. It means "green fairy". All three of these are from Germany.

Now we're getting to a little better class of bottle. The 3cl L Emercier pair (in green and pale blue) are from France and have contents at 45% and 72% respectively. (Remember, that 72% is 144 proof.)

Next we have Fruko-Schulz in a very nice bottle and label from the Czech Republic. This is a 4cl bottle at 60%. Our last one in this group





is the Huguet at 68% in a 0,04l bottle from Germany.

In our last group, there is one very good bottle and label and two spectacularly good ones. The Deniset is from France and it's one of the more mild absinthes on the market at 45% (forget about that 30% one). The bottle itself is 50ml and quite a nice piece of glass.

The shorter of the two remaining bottles is Camargo with the green fairy again on the bottle. It is a 50ml and the contents or 54% or 108 proof. This is from Brazil and produced by a company that normally only issues cachaca. The taller bottle is most assuredly leaving the best for last. This lovely tall bottle with the incredible green

fairly label is Grune Fee from Austria. It's only 50% in a 0,04l bottle, but that wonderful label puts it at the top of the class!

Now, that little bit of information promised earlier. Be careful bringing back absinthe minis in your travels. They are completely illegal in the U.S. Yes, thanks to those old Puritanical folks in the government, the ban on absinthe is still in effect. It doesn't matter whether or not you get "high" or "stoned" from absinthe (and you don't), it's just that some people think you might and those old moralists can't stand even the thought of that!

Philips House



Those of you who collect figural house bottles now have another one to look for. This is a replica of the Philips Building in Amsterdam. It was produced some time ago by Goedewaagen in multi-colored delft or poly delft as it is sometimes known. It has been seen with what were various contents as the bottle

has only been found empty.

Now, let's see...you only have to find all 85 KLM houses (plus variations and extras), 6 castles, a variety of other houses, 4 sets of six each in both blue and multi-colored delft and then you'll have most of the Dutch houses. That's not too much to ask for, is it?

RARE MALTS

by Tony Natelli



Three brands today with six of the seven miniatures being rare in the extreme.

The three ROYAL BRACKLA bottles all contain 60 year old malt scotch. The first was found in Japan and produced for the 60th birthday of a director of the James Buchanan Company. The other two came from the same Royal Brackla cask for a private bottling in 1991 for company executives, dignitaries, etc. Very few miniatures were produced. Royal Brackla is rarely seen by itself but as the first label shows is a major part of the makeup of Black and White Scotch.

CLYNELISH is a famous malt on its own and is also an integral

part of the Johnny Walker Gold Label Blend. This miniature is a real "one-off" as a very few were produced as "legal tender" for a remote Scottish village's (town of Embo) once a year celebration of their "Day of Independence". The Clynelish Distillery is located in nearby Brora and this 12 year old malt has become the official "spirit of free Embo". A rare miniature, indeed.

Royal Brackla and Clynelish are owned by United Distillers who control most of the scotch market and whose brands include malts such as Cardhu, Lagavuklin, Mortlach, etc. as well as such world renowned blends as Dewars,



Johnny Walker, Bells, White Horse, John Begg, and many, many others whose miniatures, past and present, are familiar to collectors worldwide.

MACALLAN is another brand very popular with collectors. Many variations were shown in MBC #92 and #93 but these three, especially bottles two and three, are for more scarce and sought. Number one was sold in Japan and turns up from time to time, but the other two are "top of the deck" by any standards. Both are distillery samples. The second was produced in 1994 from a 1967 distillation while our final bottle is a 26 year old probably produced a little bit earlier.



--T.N.--

Mount Gay



One of the premier rums of the world is Mount Gay found in Barbados. The distillery is just a short taxi ride from downtown Bridgeport or from the harbor area. There you may take a guided tour which ends with some very nice tastings. And, you can go to the gift shop. After looking at all the rum cakes, coffee mugs, tee shirts, etc., you'll naturally

gravitate to the rums.

This boxed set was recently made available and as far as is known is the only way you can get the Premium White Rum and the Sugar Cane Brandy. You'll note there are two of the Extra Old bottles so we can hope that one day there will be a fifth different rum so that the set will have no duplicates.

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BLUE ΠΝΕΙΣ DECOR N° 290
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MAIDENS DECOR
N° 280 BRANDY



MAIDENS DECOR BLUE N° 280
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180

ΚΑΣΕΤΙΝΑ Ν° 22, 201, 24
3 ΦΙΑΛΕΣ ΟΥΖΟ



190

ΚΑΣΕΤΙΝΑ Ν° 61, 5, 10
3 ΦΙΑΛΕΣ ΟΥΖΟ



100

GREEK MYTHOLOGY Ν° 100
ΟΥΖΟ



4A

GOLDEN AGE Ν° 4A
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OUZOUNIS SOUVENIRS OUZO



10 LINTHOS N° 10
OUZO - BRANDY



61 MAIDENS N° 61
OUZO - BRANDY



22 SPATHAKI N° 22
OUZO - BRANDY



OUZOUNIS WORLD'S N° 1



OUZOUNIS WORLD'S N° 1
in miniature hand made
ouzo bottles for collectors

7 SPECIAL KAZETINA N° 7
7 ΘΙΑΛΕΣ ΤΟΝ 50 ML



18 ΣΕΤ ΑΘΗΝΑ ΚΑΖΕΤΙΝΑ N° 18
3 ΘΙΑΛΕΣ ΟΥΖΟ



13 ΣΕΤ CAPITAL ΚΑΖΕΤΙΝΑ N° 13
3 ΘΙΑΛΕΣ ΟΥΖΟ



200 ΣΙΡΤΑΚΙ N° 200
ΟΥΖΟ



47 B' MAIDENS DECOR N° 47
OUZO



10 LIKITHOS BLUE N° 10
OUZO



22 SPATHAKI BLUE N° 22
OUZO



61 MAIDENS BLUE N° 61
OUZO



46 LIKITHOS CERAMICO DECOR N° 46
BRANDY








17 MAIDENS DECOR N° 17
OUZO



17 MAIDENS DECOR N° 17
BRANDY

					
20 AKROPOLIS N° 20 OUZO	24 XIFAKI N° 24 OUZO	5 COLONA N° 5 OUZO	16 REVOLUTION N° 16 OUZO	15 TSOLIAS N° 15 OUZO	100 GREEK MYTHOLOGY N° 100 OZO



				
21 SPATHAKI N° 21 OUZO	21 SPATHAKI BLUE N° 21 OUZO	201 SIRTAKI N° 201 OUZO - BLUE	21 SPATHAKI N° 21 OUZO	21 SPATHAKI N° 21 BRANDY



47A A SIRTAKI DECOR N° 47A
OUZO



500 IONIAN - PARTHENON
N° 500 OUZO



2 LINTHOS N° 2
OUZO



500A IONIAN METAMO N° 500
OUZO



270 MAIDENS 4IME N° 270
OUZO



280 MAIDENS BLUE N° 270
OUZO



270 MAIDENS GLASS N° 270
BRANDY



270 MAIDENS GLASS N° 270
OUZO



23

ACROPOL N° 23
MONO OYOZO



1C

KAPTEFALA N° 1C
6 ΦΙΑΛΙΝ ΜΙΝΙ, ΜΙΝΙ ΟΥΖΟ, ΒΡΑΝΔΥ



251

KAZETINA N° 251
SPECIAL BRANDY



250

KAZETINA N° 250
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Nassau Royale



And I thought I'd seen it all in the bottle world! You're looking at a very unusual twosome. Many of you who have seen this character before are thinking that this is a new ceramic just slightly different from all the others. Well, you're right on the one point, but not on the other. This is not a ceramic figural bottle. This is a PLASTIC

figural bottle. And evidently the labor costs must be such in the Bahamas that they can't bother to fill the bottle. So you buy the plastic figural and there is a little piece of paper inside which tells you to empty the contents of the glass bottle into it. Duh, would you have ever thought of that?

MELO'S MINIS

MIKE OLSON



One of the true ironies of collecting for me is how I have added bottles to my collection. I have chased some bottles for years before acquiring them. Quite a few are still alluding me, but I guess that is what collecting is all about.

The other side of the coin is when the first time I have seen or heard of a bottle is when I actually acquired it. Once in a while this has happened at the same time. A number of years ago I purchased a lot of old California whiskeys. One of the bottles was a Lucky 7 which I had seen and wanted very badly.

Another was the Red Robin which I had never seen and is one of the all time great mini bottles. One of the good sources for a "want list" is the editor's 101 Rare Whiskey Flasks. This book is loaded with Brown-Forman variations which almost nobody has...but we'll get to that later.

The first bottle is in the book and I coveted it for years. It is HELLO WORLD Straight Whiskey from Glenmore Distilleries of Owensboro, KY. It has a gold and red label with white and black. I had never seen nor heard of bottle



number two which is PENN STATE Whiskey A Blend from Tom Walker Inc. Pittsburgh, PA. It has a tan label printed in orange and black. The next two are from Brown-Forman of Louisville in KY. The CEDARIDGE is in the book and has a tan label printed in blue. I had never seen the FOX MOUNTAIN which has a silver foil label printed in black.

I missed the PAUL JONES flat in one of the old mail auctions. I am not sure how rare it is, but I have only seen a couple. It has a May 7, 1947 tax stamp. The K & L





Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey came out of the big 1989 whiskey auction. I thought I might have paid a little too much for it, but it's another bottle you almost never see.

The **BOURBON TIME** Kentucky Straight Bourbon Whiskey is from the Baltimore Liquor Co. and is another of the off-the-wall minis from the 1950's/'60's. It has a black label printed in gold, white and red and is the only one I have ever seen. I chased the square **KENTUCKY BEAU** for over 20 years and finally found it at the St. Louis bottle show

for \$4. What's unusual is that the flat variation of this brand is fairly common. The last bottle is **OLD SALT** Straight Whisky from the Salt Diter Co. of Syracuse, New York. It has a white label printed in gold, black and green. This might have been a Liqueur bottle, but that's another story.

Finally, I just acquired a Royal Springs Bourbon which was on my want list. It was in a box of junk I bid on and I didn't even know it was there until I unpacked them. Lucky me!

Until next time.....M E L O.....

A Visit To Boozeville



We've all seen the S & V clown carrying the woman aka Pagliacci. However, how many have seen this fellow carrying his flowers? Possibly we shouldn't call him a clown as he has no clown makeup on. He just has a wonderful head of red hair, a black robe with yellow trim and white buttons, AND a face straight out of a Dali nightmare.

Even with all that, he stands in a place of pride in my collection as I cannot help but snicker every time I look at him. He's certainly a Boozeville denizen who gives me a smile, but after seeing him I'm reminded of the fact that most children are initially afraid of clowns!

VODKA

by JOHN SULLIVAN



Many people have asked me as I have traveled around to explain to them about what vodka is. So I decided to write an article to try to explain a little about vodka.

Vodka is one of the world's most under appreciated spirits. Vodka is truly a drink enjoyed by drinkers around the world. It is misunderstood by most people who think of vodka as a spirit to be

mixed with something else, as in a Bloody Mary or a Screwdriver. Good vodka is to be appreciated as much as good sipping whisky is to be appreciated. Vodka is a purer form of alcohol than its other spirit cousins. It's odorless and it does not leave a trace of alcohol on the breath.

Vodka is produced in a variety of ways in different countries



around the world. Its origins can be traced to Northern Europe, Russia, and Poland. Vodka was originally produced to accompany the traditional spicy and salted foods of the area.

What is vodka? Vodka is basically a neutral spirit distilled from grain or potatoes. It differs from familiar products such as aquavit or schnapps because those spirits take the neutral spirit and mix it with herbs and flavors and then distill it. Vodka is a pure spirit where the flavorings are added after the final distillation. Historically, vodka was being distilled well before the word came into general use. Vodka is a diminutive of the word "Voda" meaning water. For a long time vodka was described by many other

names, especially "vino" which means wine. The word vodka is important because it marks a linguistic and thus a cultural distinction from the many other words like aquavit, uisge beatha, and eau di vie that derived from the original Latin word for a distilled spirit called aqua vitae.

Throughout history, vodka has been the subject of an ongoing battle between those who are looking for purity and those looking for positive qualities in their vodka. The difference between the two can be dramatic. A commercially produced vodka where the emphasis is on purity may have only 30 milligrams of flavoring for every liter of spirit, while whereas the figure for whisky or cognac can be up to 2,500

milligrams per liter.

Originally, vodka was made in pots. This was before the stills were invented. The pots caused a high level of "fusel oils" to be present in the spirit. These were impurities and they added a foul smell to the spirit...and also gave it a bad taste. These foul smells and bad tastes could be disguised by the addition of herbs, spices, fruits and honey to the spirit. As the pot still came into being, it gave the distillers another alternative and that was to redistill or "rectify" the spirit. This eliminated some or most of the foul smells and bad tastes but it also removed any of the good things as well. So the addition of fruits, honeys, and herbs continued even after the pot still was still introduced.

In the late 18th century, it was discovered that charcoal not only removed many of the impurities from the spirit but also added its own warmth and smokiness. You will find today that many famous vodkas use the charcoal filter process. Ultimately, the difference between vodkas is determined by three factors: 1) The raw material that is used; 2) The water used; and, (3) The techniques and methods used in filtration. Each major distiller claims to have a secret and better method for making his vodka. The more filtrations that a product has, the less impurities it has.

Vodka can be produced from a wide variety of raw materials such as barley, rye, wheat, beetroot, onion, carrot, apple, pumpkin, bread, chocolate, sugar, rice and

even grapes. However, the most common are wheat and rye as well as potatoes. It is usually a case of what is most readily available in any given area that determines what is used. That is why Russia and Scandinavia use wheat while Poland uses rye and potatoes. Vietnamese vodka is made from rice while the French have produced a vodka call Ciroc that uses grapes (Ed. Note: And don't forget "3" which uses soybeans.)

FLAVORED VODKAS

Intense competition in today's vodka market has put the onus on distillers to develop their own line of flavors to gain new customers and increase market share. That raises the question of what is an authentic flavoring as opposed to a commercial "gimmick"?

The history of flavoring vodka goes back hundreds of years to before the invention of the pot still. Early distillers were unable to rectify spirits to remove the impurities which created unpleasant flavors and aromas. They tried instead, to conceal them by adding aromatic herbs and by using honey as a sweetener. From this early beginning of practical measures, we have now grown to a market of specialty flavored vodkas.

The usual criteria for authenticity are tradition and use of indigenous ingredients. That being the case, the highest pedigree would be awarded to the Polish vodka, Zubrowka. This famous vodka dates from around the 16th



century and uses bison grass as a flavor enhancer. This grass, called Zubowka in Polish, is unique to the Bialowieza Forest where the European bison roam and feed on Zubrowka. Another interesting flavored vodka is Okhotnichaya or Russian Hunter vodka. This wonderful vodka contains port, orange, lemon, ginger, cloves, coffee, pepper, juniper and anise. While these are not all indigenous products, no one can doubt the

authenticity of this famous brand.

When judging a flavored vodka, the ultimate criterion should be whether or not the flavor is a success on the palate. Flavors like pineapple and cranberry are being developed in response to consumer demand.

Poland and Russia are two of the leading countries with a wide range of flavored vodkas. They are using flavors made from juniper, honey, pepper, lemon,

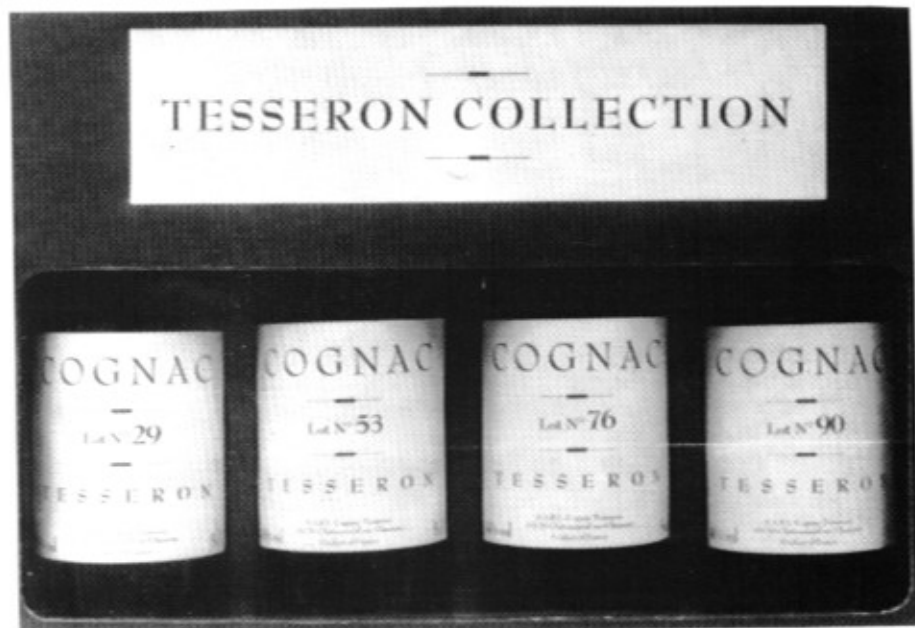


blackcurrant, and cherries. However, some of their methods of distilling these flavored vodkas differ. The Russian lemon vodka, Limonnaya, uses lemon peel while the Polish version, Cytrynowka, uses the lemon tree leaves as well as the peel. Similarly, both countries produce Starka, an aged vodka. The Poles blend uncertified rye spirit with a tiny amount of Malaga wine which is aged for a minimum of ten years in small oak casks. The

Russians combine grain spirits flavored with an infusion of apple and pear tree leaves with brandy and port.

Now so that you have some bottles to look at this time, I've pictured fourteen which are all now being sold somewhere in the U.S. Some are glass while others are plastic; some are straight vodka while others are flavored! So there you have it!! --J.S.--

cognac



You're looking at a very interesting set of four cognacs. It was sold at Harrod's in London before Christmas last year. The set was notable for its price, 25 pounds, which is \$49 at the current exchange rate, and also for its rarity. Tesserón is a very well known name in quality cognacs and will be found only at the more exclusive liquor stores. Recently the large bottles became available in the U.S.

Note that no dates are given on the bottles and that is because the Lot number of each bottle corresponds with the date of production. So as you can see, these miniatures cover sixty-one years with the oldest from 1929 to the youngest in 1990.

If the set is available in other areas, please let us know so that the information may be passed on to all the collectors who would like to add this set to their high end cognacs.

FROM JAPAN

by TAIZO SHIRATSUCHI



A



B



C

This time I would like to present to you some changes of the **SUNTORY HIBIKI** Blended Whisky miniatures.

Suntory Co. launched the **HIBIKI** in April 1989. A month earlier the miniature became available only as a sample (A). It is a 8.5cm tall dumpy bottle and 50ml at 43% alcohol. April 1989 was a special month for Japanese liquors because this month there began a

new Japanese Liquor Tax Law which repealed the classification system in this law. Both bottles have the same labels, but only the sample has the Japanese 'WHISKY SPECIAL CLASS' on the back label.

In 1990 Suntory changed the arms on the bottle from LION arms to HIBIKI arms. This new arms is designed from the Japanese letter HIBIKI (MBC #103). The miniature had the new arms (B).

HIBIKI 21yo was launched in 1994 and the miniature was



F



E



D

available as a sample (G). Then HIBIKI and 21yo new versions appeared in 1997. This time with a clear cap, Japanese word WHISKY on the bottom of the labels and no shoulder seal (C - H). Both labels in December of 2000 were changed slightly...no Japanese WHISKY and from MASTERFUL BLEND to HARMONIOUS BLEND (D-J).



G



H



J

Next (E) was issued with 17yo on the label. This wasn't meant to be an upgrade of the contents, merely to clearly state the age of maturity.

In May 2004 Suntory launched a new HIBIKI 17yo 50.5 and it is 11cm tall and round, not dumpy. This was a 50ml at 50.5% alcohol (F).

Until next time..... --T.S.--

THE Classification System of Japanese Liquor Tax

There was a classification system on the Japanese liquor tax law since 1943. The liquor tax was imposed by the grade of quality of each liquors, Sake, Syochu, Mirin and The others-Unsorted-(Whisky, Brandy, Spirits, Liqueur).

The Whisky was classified under three classes, Unsorted Liquor First Class (無類一級), Second Class (無類二級), Third Class (無類三級) at alcohol percent and the blending rate of Malt.

1953 they were changed Unsorted Liquor Special Class (無類特級; alcohol 43% over), First Class (無類一級; 40-42%) and Second Class (無類二級; 37-39%).

1962 The others -unsorted liquors- were divided into each sorts of liquors, Whisky (ウイスキー), Brandy (ブランデー), Spirits (スピリッツ), Liqueur (リキュール) and Wine (ワイン). for example Whisky Special Class (ウイスキー特級), Whisky First Class (ウイスキー一級) and Second (ウイスキー二級).

This classification system was repeal on April 1989 and now there is only a sort of liquor on the label, ウイスキー, ブランデー, スピリッツ, リキュール etc.

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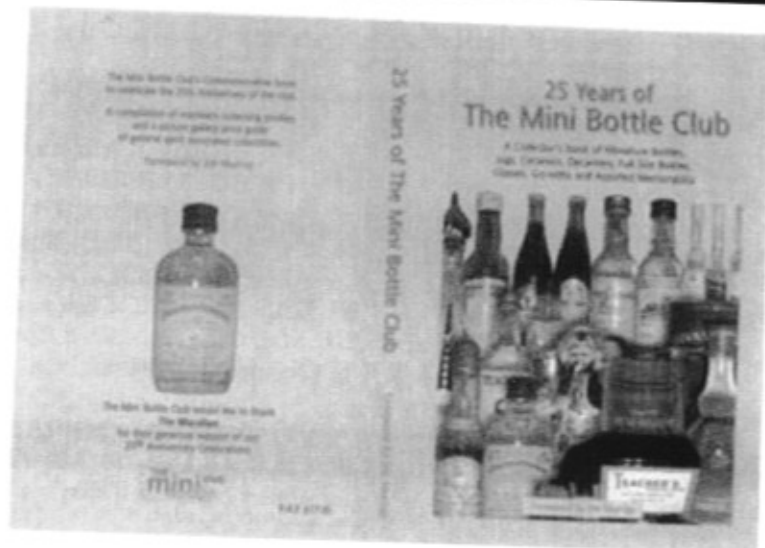
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