

Grand slam home rums

Pusser's John Paul Jones (West Indies)

A decanter honoring U.S. Navy hero John Paul Jones houses this blend of 5- to 6-year-old rums from several islands. The broad base of this 1-liter bottle evolved to ensure stability at sea. Its production is as historic: wooden pot-stills are used for much of the distillation process.

Price: \$90
Rating: 8.8

Santa Teresa 1796 (Venezuela)

The franchise player of the Santa Teresa line, the 1796 begins with a sensual fruit nose. The palate is surprisingly balanced, considering the rums inside are aged between four to 35 years.

Price: \$40
Rating: 9.4

El Dorado 21 (Guyana)

This silky spirit is out-classed only by its 25-year-old brother that retails for \$250 – and both are as difficult to find as the city for which they were named. For those without George Steinbrenner's wallet, the 15-year is worth drafting.

Price: \$80
Rating: 9.2



SELECT BOTTLES: WINE LIBRARY



British Royal Navy Imperial Rum (Jamaica)

Above right: A mainstay of the British Navy for 300 years, the final rations of this historic rum are reserved for royal functions, such as the wedding of Prince Andrew, and important naval events. Originally created for His Majesty's forces, it is packaged as a 4.54 liter jug encased inside hand-woven wicker baskets designed for safe transport at sea. Without question, the Babe Ruth of rum.

Price: \$3,500+ Rating: 9.9

Field of dreams features all-star lineup, international flavor

Unlike a trade-name protected spirit such as Scotch, which must be distilled in Scotland, rums are free agents produced all over the globe. Not only do our nine starters hail from diverse locales, they also have different backgrounds: from their beginnings as molasses or sugar cane to their unique (and oftentimes secret) methods of distillation. What they have in common is they're all superstars.

We assembled our dream team at FirstEnergy Park, home of the Lakewood BlueClaws, and gave 'em a run around the bases. Our talented squad is mostly 750 mL bottles (unless noted), and each was rated on a 10-point scale. We'd encourage you to hold the Coke when sampling these major leaguers and enjoy them neat or on the rocks. Remember: If you serve it, they will come.

SELECTIONS BY EVANGELOS MIHELIS & HARRIS SIEGEL PHOTOGRAPHY BY BOB BIELK

Prichard's Fine Rum (United States)

From whiskey territory comes a rum that plays the game as well as the old-timers. Distilled in Tennessee, it has a palate reminiscent of a bourbon. You even may forget you're drinking a rum.

Price: \$40
Rating: 9

Pyrat Cask 1623 (Anguilla)

First you journey through the cedar chest, past the gold medallion depicting the Zen deity Hoti, and finally through the hand-blown glass. Only then can you sample the intensely sweet, fruit palate that results from blending rums aged eight to 40 years. A post-game treat best enjoyed with your teammates.

Price: \$250
Rating: 9.7

Cruzan Estate Single Barrel (U.S. Virgin Islands)

If you're under a salary cap, then this is the player for your bullpen. This full-bodied offering from St. Croix has a fruit aroma with hints of bananas, tangerines and mangos.

Price: \$25
Rating: 8.8

Gosling's Old Rum (Bermuda)

Our cleanup hitter is a dark, rich rum with vanilla and butterscotch notes. Add a splash of Grand Marnier, and it's dessert.

Price: \$70
Rating: 9.2



Ron Zacapa Centenario XO (Guatemala)

Front row, right (700 mL): An older sibling of Centenario 23, a well-regarded utility player, this 25-year-old has a fudge and tobacco nose that gives way to hints of nuts, cotton candy and baked apple. A true Hall of Famer!

Price: \$200 Rating: 9.5