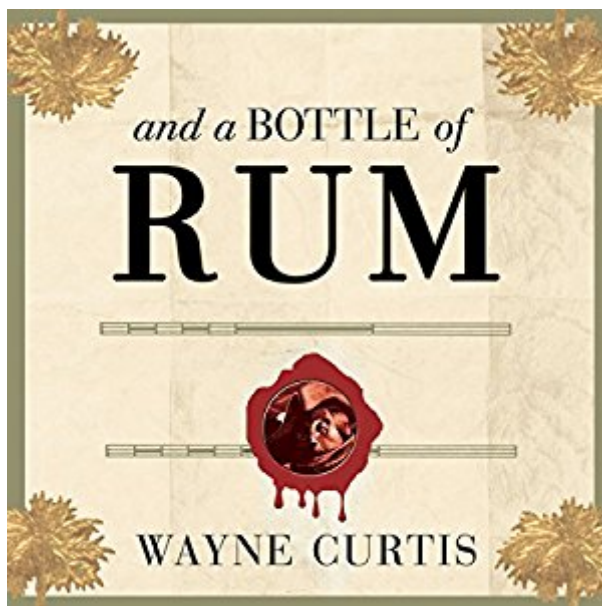


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And A Bottle Of Rum: A History Of The New World In Ten Cocktails



Synopsis

And a Bottle of Rum tells the raucously entertaining story of America as seen through the bottom of a drinking glass. With a chapter for each of 10 cocktails, Wayne Curtis reveals that the homely spirit once distilled from the industrial waste of the exploding sugar trade has managed to infiltrate every stratum of New World society. Curtis takes us from the taverns of the American colonies - where rum delivered both a cheap wallop and cash for the Revolution - to the plundering pirate ships off the coast of Central America, to the watering holes of pre-Castro Cuba, and to the kitsch-laden tiki bars of 1950s America. Here are sugar barons and their armies conquering the Caribbean, Paul Revere stopping for a nip during his famous ride, Prohibitionists marching against "demon rum", Hemingway fattening his liver with Havana daiquiris, and today's bartenders reviving old favorites like Planter's Punch. Awash with local color and wry humor, And a Bottle of Rum is an affectionate toast to this most American of liquors, a chameleon spirit that has been constantly reinvented over the centuries by tavern keepers, bootleggers, lounge lizards, and marketing gurus.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

An extremely interesting read. I very much enjoyed the author's use of anecdote to convey history in a more entertaining way than just giving facts and figures. However, I will say that a lot of the anecdotes seemed to be based more on the authors imagination than actual history. Sentences about the historical figures' thoughts and feelings are almost undoubtedly Mr. Curtis's own interpretation and not backed in research. In several instances, the reader gets the sense that Mr.

Curtis is conveniently using these kinds of historical liberties to skew perceptions and alter the gravity of the quantitative source material (whether to make the fact more or less significant). Overall, it is an entertaining and informative read. I highly suggest this book.

Love the book! The history of Rum and cocktails made for a very interesting read. Wayne has great way of telling the stories with a rum sense of humor. He's just a few bottles short of being pirate. The rum drinkers will understand it well. The only downside of reading this book is your going to want to try most of the drink recipes listed in the book. Cheers!

Definitely one of my favorite nonfiction books - fun read, entertaining writing style, great details. The drink recipes are a bonus XD

A very enjoyable book, though for me, it started a little slowly. But after a chapter or two, I was hooked. As the subtitle suggests, author Curtis doesn't just present a history of rum, though this is covered in admirable detail, but interweaves the story of rum with the concomitant history of the U.S., the West Indies, and even Europe to some degree, from the 17th century onward. Mr. Curtis is adept at describing the connections between the spirits trade, patriotism, slavery, and other seemingly disparate topics, while correcting myths and dubious assertions. Readers are treated to the alcoholic origins of many curious customs and expressions, such as "at loggerheads." Students of history, philology and/or libations will likely find "And a Bottle of Rum" quite to their taste.

I don't drink very often, but when I do I like to have a well-prepared Cuba Libre or something else that uses rum. I knew that one of the first real factories in what-was-to-become the United States was a rum distillery, but this terrific book is full of all kinds of interesting stories about rum and its connections to our culture. The story of how the rum-and-Coke came to be was especially interesting: I didn't know that rum was kind of a second-rate spirit for most of its life. I think this book will be appreciated by anyone interested in the nation's cultural history.

It's not often that one book can manage to be all three: funny, fascinating, and informative. In fact, this book makes me think that we really don't understand early American history all that well, although our knowledge is growing daily. For example, why did Columbus wind up in the Caribbean, not in Virginia? Columbus was, of course, the pioneer, but the trans-Atlantic route became a Known Thing in short order: leave Europe and sail SOUTH to African waters, then cross the Atlantic in the

tropical latitudes (winding up in the Caribbean). For the trip home, sail your loaded boat north to the area of Virginia, and then cross back to Europe. It was a rectangular journey. As the trade developed, ships would load up with goodies for the New World, head south to Africa (and maybe load some slaves, alas!), sail over to the Caribbean, unload slaves, load rum, and then sell the rum in North America (probably for tobacco), and then home, loaded to the gills with lumber and tobacco. Follow the Gulf Stream, and stray no more! But we mustn't overlook that one tiny detail: load up with rum in the Caribbean, and carry it north to the future USA. Rum quickly became America's favorite drink: cheap, and intoxicating. But where did it come from? Well, rum was the unlooked-for child of the sugar industry, which created some of the largest fortunes of its times. This book recounts an amazing, funny story of King George III, out for a ride in his gorgeous carriage with its glorious outriders --- who was almost run off the road by a much larger and more splendid carriage. "Who was that man?!" spluttered the King, only to be informed that it was a multi-millionaire sugar trader. The King whirled around to his Minister, and said, "Take a note! Investigate taxes on sugar!" These ultra-rich Englishmen finally convinced Parliament to pass the Sugar Act --- to protect their massive incomes --- and this was the first time Americans actually got the British Government to change something. Massive cheating and smuggling forced the British to lower the tax to a mere penny --- and Americans learned that they had some power in the world. When Parliament passed the noxious Stamp Act, the result was the Boston Tea Party, and we all know where THAT led! But who woulda guessed that rum (!) played such an important role in American independence? That's just a taste of the stuff in this wonderful book. If you're interested in history, I can't recommend anything higher (no that's not a pun!) Cheers!

Second purchase. Loved the read...house guest took it home to finish it...never got it back. This may have been the first book I've owned where I've highlighted sentences and phrases just by how they made me feel, so that I could go back to them and conjure up another grin, grimace, gasp, or guffaw.

History should always be told this way, with humor and with an obvious context. Really it's a social history of North America, examined through the context of social gathering places. That is, ones that serve alcohol. Or actually, ones that serve rum in particular. The rises and falls of the rum industry, which sometimes corresponded with other alcohol and sometimes were in complete opposition, turns out to be fascinating. Learned a lot, and had fun doing it.

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