



And a Bottle of Rum: A History of the New World in Ten Cocktails

Wayne Curtis

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One spirit, Ten cocktails, and Four Centuries of American History

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 ten cocktails—from the grog sailors drank on the high seas in the 1700s to the mojitos of modern club hoppers—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. In an age of microbrewed beer and single-malt whiskeys, rum—once the swill of the common man—has found its way into the tasting rooms of the most discriminating drinkers.

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. Complete with cocktail recipes for would-be epicurean time-travelers, this is history at its most intoxicating.

From the Hardcover edition.

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