



*Wine Enthusiast have named Plantation
Jamaica 2001 one of the 8 top
rated rums of the summer!*

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Kara Newman

8 Top-Rated Summer Rums



This month's reviews cover rums made in Jamaica and Barbados. The countries produce different—but equally delicious—styles.

In general, Jamaican rum is distilled from sugar-cane molasses and is usually (though not always) pungent and full-bodied. Quite a few exhibit a funkiness in the aroma known as “hogo,” which comes from the fermented raw sugar-cane juice. This is considered a desirable quality. It's odd but amazing: if you enjoy rancio in your Cognac, consider seeking out hogo in your rum.

Ever since British Royal Navy sailors received their first rum rations during the British assault on Jamaica in 1655, Jamaica's rum history has intertwined with naval rum. It seems fitting that a couple of high-proof “Navy strength” rums are reviewed below.

Barbadian rum has an equally rich history; the West Indian island claims to have first invented rum. Many of these rums are aged in former Bourbon barrels, adding layers of vanilla and spice flavors to the caramel-like base.

How to use these rums? While they surely work solo in daiquiris and other tropical libations, many tiki drinks layer on multiple rums to add complexity. In the Tiki Reviver cocktail from author Jeff “Beachbum” Berry, gold Barbados rum (like Cockspur) and dark Jamaican rum (like Appleton) are combined to ambrosial effect. Grab a bottle of each, and give this recipe a try:

- 1 ounce fresh lime juice
- 1 ounce nutmeg syrup (simple syrup simmered with several crushed whole nutmeg pods)
- 1 ounce gold Barbados rum
- 1¼ ounces dark Jamaican rum
- 1 teaspoon apricot brandy

Pour all the ingredients into a shaker. Shake well with plenty of ice cubes, then pour unstrained into a tiki mug or a tall glass. If necessary, add more ice to fill. Top with a pinch of freshly ground nutmeg.

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94 Old Reserve 2001 Plantation Rum Jamaica

(Jamaica; Deutsch Family Wines & Spirits, White Plains, NY). This honey-hued rum is richly aromatic, suggesting creamy caramel and baking spice, with just a hint of banana in the background. On the palate, look for lots of spicy fireworks upfront—black pepper, hot cinnamon, clove—followed by a gentle fade of brown sugar and butterscotch. Mix for a mind-blowing mai tai.

abv: 42% **Price:** \$45