

Tiki Lovers Rum Reviews

By Eric Twardzik
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If carnivores can order pizzas specifically made with meat lovers in mind, there's no good reason why a Tiki enthusiast shouldn't be able to procure rums blended specifically for use in [Zombies](#) or [Suffering Bastards](#). Thankfully, this potential inequity has been righted by the good people behind Germany's The Bitter Truth, who have applied their obsessive attention to detail and history to create a line of [Tiki Lovers rums](#).

The three rums that compose the line-up—a Dark Rum, a White Rum, and a Pineapple Rum—may sound simple on paper, but they prove anything but in detail. Each is a blend of rums pulled from such diverse and lauded makers as the Foursquare Distillery in Barbados and Jamaica's Hampden Estate, plus a smattering of other sources and regions including Trinidad and Guyana.

Obviously, the full-flavored and high-proof rums that make up the line are intended for use in Tiki cocktails, and considering their very affordable price, you shouldn't think twice about pouring one into a [Mai Tai](#) or a [Fog Cutter](#). But each packs enough complexity to reward solo sipping on its own.

Tiki Lovers Dark Rum

This rum is composed chiefly of an unaged pot-distilled rum from Jamaica's Hampden Estate and a rum aged between two and three years by [Foursquare Distillery in Barbados](#), plus a smaller amount of column-distilled rums produced in Guyana and Trinidad, and a three-and-a-half-year-old Trinidadian rum. Together, this blended quintet weighs in at 114 proof.

The nose is initially dominated by big, bold notes of overripe banana, followed by vanilla bean and crème brûlée. There's a funky and vegetal element of hogo in there too—no surprise, considering Hampden Estate's contribution—but it sits below those sweeter notes instead of stealing the show.

The palate kicks off sweet, rich, and round with flavors of vanilla and spiced molasses cake. A green vegetal note shoots up at the center, as the spirit grows hotter on the palate and starts to dry out. The back of the palate gets hot—but not as hot as you'd expect from a 114-proof spirit—with flavors of raisin bread, warming spices, sweet prune juice, and sugar-coated nuts. It ends on a satisfyingly dry note that's laced with baking spices and nutty sweetness.

Yes, [Tiki Lovers Dark Rum](#) is an absolute fire-on-all-cylinders battleship of a rum that can punch above even the fruitiest of juices and spiciest of syrups, but the pleasing complexities of its flavor profile make it a fine-tuned instrument rather than a blunt object.

★★★

Stats:

— 57% ABV

— \$29.99

Tiki Lovers White Rum

To make [Tiki Lovers White Rum](#), unaged pot-stilled rums sourced from Jamaica's Monymusk and Worthy Park distilleries were married with a Trinidad rum aged up to five years in bourbon barrels (whose color was stripped through charcoal filtration) and a column-distilled Trinidad rum.

Its nose is light, sweet, and chock-full of tropical fruits including pineapple, banana, orange, guava, and kiwi, plus a subtle undercurrent of funky vegetal sweetness. The rum is light in body and starts with sweet, crisp notes of lime, kiwi, and orange citrus on the palate. Its center turns to cooked pineapple, which is followed by the first sign of heat from what has so far been a mild ride from a 100-proof spirit. Once that short but measured wave of heat passes through, it's played off in a long finish that features tart and astringent citrus flavors that lean heavily on charred grapefruit. This is a rum that is light in body, yet absolutely packed with bright, tart tropical fruit flavors as well as delicious, darkly sweet notes of cooked fruit.

★★★

Stats:

— 50% ABV

— \$29.99

Tiki Lovers Pineapple Rum

The word “classic” isn’t often associated with flavored rum, but in the case of [Tiki Lovers Pineapple Rum](#) its use is warranted. The rum is intended to evoke a practice from the past, in which Caribbean distillers would macerate pineapples in high-proof sugar cane spirit. To create the throwback, Tiki Lovers relies on unfermented juice pressed out of South American pineapples. This natural extract is then stripped of its water content to prevent it from acting as a diluting agent, and added to a blend that includes aged and unaged pot-stilled Jamaican rums from Hampden Estate and Worthy Park, a three-year-old Barbados rum from Foursquare aged in ex-bourbon barrels, and young column-distilled [rums from Guyana](#) and Trinidad. Once added, the pineapple extract rests in the blend for several weeks to allow the flavors to mix.

From the moment the bottle is open, you can smell pineapple from a foot away. But it would be a mistake to simply mark down “pineapple” as an aromatic note and move on. There are layers of pineapple on the nose to sift through: You’ve got juicy, fresh-sliced pineapple, roasted charred pineapple, and the sweet pineapple juice you’d find at the bottom of a can.

The multi-dimensional exploration of pineapple continues on the palate, which starts mellow and sweet with fresh pineapple and a bit of kiwi. It grows richer and rounder at the center, where we are re-introduced to that caramelized pineapple note alongside vanilla and a burst of baking spices. It grows darker and more tart toward the back, as the heat levels turn up slightly just as the sweet pineapple flavors return with a more astringent and acidic quality. The finish is lightly spiced with a rich current of vanilla, spice, and tart pineapple.

A common criticism of any flavored spirit is that the flavored element exists as a one-note phenomenon that crowds out the rest of the experience. That’s certainly not the case with this flavored spirit, which delivers on the promised pineapple, but acts as a one-sip encapsulation of every possible way you might consume pineapple throughout your life. That Proustian approach to pineapple makes it more than worthy of being sipped by itself.

★★★

Stats:

— 50% ABV

— \$29.99