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Bayou® Rum Re-establishes Louisiana Sugar Cane Rum Tradition

History shapes Bayou Rum brand from recipe to visitor experience

LACASSINE, La.—Louisiana’s historic role as sugar cane rum producer has nearly been forgotten until now. As rum enthusiasts, brothers Trey and Tim Litel, and long-time friend Skip Cortese were drawn to creating the spirit. They realized very little rum was produced domestically. It seemed like a great opportunity as sugar cane, the primary ingredient is plentiful here. What they discovered along the way has not only shaped their recipe for Bayou Rum, it’s also driven them to create a culturally rich visitor center that celebrates the state’s historic role as a sugar cane producer *and* sugar cane rum producer.

“The history of sugar cane and sugar cane rum in Louisiana is fascinating. I guess you could say I became obsessed with this story since you have to dig deep to uncover our rum past,” Trey Litel said. He spent countless hours visiting libraries poring over centuries-old records, tracking down leads in museums, and developing friendships with sugar cane farmers, and sugar mill owners with deep roots in the business. “History tells us that rum was made here. We thought why not bring back this tradition, and wouldn’t our fellow Louisianans want to purchase superior quality rums made right here, Litel said. Sugar cane production started in Louisiana and the state is the second-largest producer. Bayou Rum represents an effort to reclaim an authentic part of our heritage.

“We uncovered old sugar house recipes, and gained so much knowledge that enables us to tell the story and to make even better rums today. From selecting the best equipment, mastering the art and science of distilling, establishing our recipes, and sourcing ingredients, we looked to the lessons of the past and have applied them to the consistent results, for example, that modern technology offers. Of course we also visited rum distilleries overseas and many bourbon and whiskey distilleries in the US, which only strengthened our desire to create a compelling cultural experience for our visitors,” Trey Litel said.

To their shared dream of making world class rums in Louisiana, Trey Litel brings twenty-five years of sales and marketing experience with ten years of rum industry experience, Tim Litel and Skip Cortese are successful entrepreneurs with engineering, operations and start-up managerial experience.

The Louisiana Spirits Distillery is now fully operational and will begin distributing its first two rums: Silver Bayou Rum and Spiced Bayou Rum throughout Louisiana by mid-July and the Visitor Center will open soon after. Set on 22 acres, the distillery also features a renovated historical 1903 farmhouse, ponds surrounded by Louisiana cypress trees, and a sugarcane field. For photos and more information, visit www.laspirits.net and bayourum.com. Republic National Distributing Company is the exclusive distribution partner for Louisiana.

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