

18 Rums For Under \$50 That Punch Above Their Weight

Whether you're a Daiquiri fan or want to learn to sip rum neat, these are the bottles to add to your home bar.

By [Brian Freedman](#)

Published on February 7, 2023

- Share
- Tweet
- Pin
- Email



PHOTO: BRUGAL 1888

Rum remains one of the great values in the world of spirits. Sure, you can spend a lot on limited-edition or extra-long-aged expressions, but for \$50 and less, there's an abundance of fantastic options, whether you're looking for a bottle to sip on its own or to incorporate into cocktails. The 18 standouts below, listed alphabetically and including both rum and rhum agricole (which, unlike most rum on the market, is distilled from fermented sugarcane juice, as opposed to molasses; there is a French AOC for Rhum Agricole from Martinique, but agricole-style rhums are produced elsewhere, too). We haven't

included spiced rums here because they're an entirely different category and deserve to be tasted and covered on their own. These 18 run the gamut from the familiar to the more obscure. All of them represent serious value for the money.

Barceló Imperial Ron Dominicano

Overtly nutty — toffee-coated peanuts, toasted almonds — and with a sweet hit of molasses, this Dominican rum drips with nougat, milk chocolate, cafe mocha, and a hint of plums.

Botran Reserva Superior No. 12 Ron de Guatemala



BOTRAN RUM

Fresh and bright with orange oils, this is a mouth-watering, sweetly spicy rum that's kissed with cinnamon and allspice, as well as roasted red and yellow apples. A core of honey-coated walnuts runs down the center. Its production is overseen by three women — master blender and aging facility manager Magda López; master blender and head of manufacturing and Blends Yasmín Chapetón; and Blend Researcher and Coordinator Leslie Taracena. Their whole certified sustainable lineup is excellent, and this one, at right around \$30, is a steal.

Brugal 1888 Doblemente Añejado



BRUGAL 1888

Fresh and rich at the same time, this Dominican treat is easily recognizable by its net-adorned bottle. The liquid inside is also noteworthy: Cinnamon-spiced molasses, dried fruit-flecked biscotti, and sugar-butter cookies linger through the lengthy finish.

Clément Rhum Vieux Agricole VSOP

There's an unexpected wild herb note to this rum, which is carried on a taut, energetic frame that simmers with savory minerality. The orange pith and kumquat flavors ring on the finish alongside pepper-spiced chocolate, but this is really defined by its non-fruit characteristics. It's an idiosyncratic and fascinating rum, and can be found for less than \$40.

Copalli Single Estate White Rum



COPALLI RUM

This is a beautifully crafted spirit made from heirloom, organic sugar cane juice that was fermented before being both pot and column distilled and then blended. It's a remarkably complex white rum with creamy tropical fruit notes of mashed mangoes and guavas joined by almond butter, warm butter, and white strawberries (especially on the finish). This is savory-sweet, silky, and terrifically balanced.

Damoiseau Rhum Vieux VSOP

Aged for no less than four years on Guadeloupe, this is a relatively delicate rhum whose wild spice notes are dominated by flamed citrus peel, cedar, and leather aromas and flavors. Warm honey and vanilla-like toastiness roll in on the finish and lend each sip just enough subtle sweetness to balance out the more savory flavors.

Diplomático Reserva Exclusiva

This is a sweet, dense, molasses-rich rum that's just as appealing to sip on its own as it is alongside cheesecake or a big bowl of vanilla ice cream. Flavors of caramel frappe, bananas foster, and rum baba are generous and velvet-textured throughout, and the grace note of toasted coconut on the finish is fantastic.

Don Papa Small Batch Rum

Produced in the Philippines and recently acquired by Diageo for more than a quarter of a billion dollars, this is vanilla- and fruit-forward, and effusive with flavors of lemon and strawberry Starburst candies, as well as a hit of condensed coconut milk. It's unabashedly sweeter in style.

Flor de Caña 12-Year-Old Centenario Single Estate Rum

Silky and subtle, this mellow yet still assertive rum finds its footing on the spicier end of the spectrum, with black peppercorns and licorice, star anise, and walnuts that anchor hints of dried figs, apple fritters, and a barely perceptible dusting of Nilla wafers.

Havana Club Añejo Clásico Puerto Rican Rum

Not to be confused with the Cuban rum of the same name, this blend brings together rums that were aged for as long as three years, and then for a final three months following blending. It's a no-brainer for cocktails, and the spice notes alongside dried pineapples, caramel-coated white raisins, and Mrs. Butterworth's candies make it particularly useful in a Rum [Old Fashioned](#).

Mount Gay Black Barrel Barbados Rum

This mellow, silky sipper is flecked with lightly toasted coconut shreds, caramelized bananas, butterscotch drizzled on dates, and cafe mocha. It's an easy-to-enjoy neat pour and an excellent addition to cocktails.

Papa's Pilar 24 Dark Rum

An upfront wave of cinnamon-apricot financier and pancakes slathered in maple syrup is cut through by a pulse of white licorice and caraway seeds, lending this a fascinating interplay of sweet and savory. Suggestions of chamomile and peppermint linger through the candied-citrus finish. This is crafted from a solera of rums from the Dominican Republic, Barbados, Venezuela, Panama, and Florida.

Plantation Double-Barrel Rum



MAISON FERRAND

From Fiji, this rings in at under \$30, and its effusive clove- and nutmeg-spiced dried papaya flavors, combined with brown sugar caramel, pineapple upside-down cake, and dried white figs, make it an absolute steal. And the aging process is fascinating: It's first rested in bourbon barrels in Fiji, then sent to France to finish in French oak before being bottled.

Rhum Barbancourt 4 Year

This well-known expression, the "Three Star," is an excellent one from Haiti. It's defined by its savory notes, the heather, green peppercorns, and earthiness serving as assertive counterpoints to hints of maple fudge, fennel seeds, and white raisins.

Rhum J.M. Rhum Vieux Agricole VSOP

Martinique's Rhum J.M. is a standard-bearer in the world of Rhum Agricole, and it's no wonder: This expression is silky and savory, with pronounced and lingering flavors of deeply roasted bell peppers and sun-warmed hay, which dance alongside nutmeg, papaya, and a dusting of cocoa powder.

Ron Abuelo 12 Year Old Gran Reserva

Panama's largest rum producer crafts a wide range of expressions, including the standout XV cask-finishing series. In the under-\$50 range, however, this 12-year-old gem is hard to beat, its sweet notes of brown sugar, cinnamon, toasted vanilla, and dark caramel-enrobed candied orange slices countered by a thrum of earthiness that vibrates away in the background.

Ron Zacapa Centenario Sistema 23 Solera Gran Reserva

Flavors of maple syrup, devil's food cake, caramelized pineapples, and toffee peanuts coat the palate in a velvety wave. The balance between the solera aging, which has lent this serious layers of mature complexity, and the upfront generosity of the dried fruit, warm honey, sweet spice, and aged cigar-tobacco, make this a standout.

Santa Teresa 1796 Solera Rum

With a mineral and peppery frame, the molasses, white and black raisins, and cigar tobacco notes are highlighted from start to finish in this Venezuelan rum. It's a bit more assertively spicy (alongside generous sweetness) than some of the other soleras on this list, which makes it a fascinating option.

Was this page helpful?