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## Louis XIII and Highland Park

VINEXPO AMERICAS 2004 - Remy & People, Spirits and Cocktails. Discussion and tasting of Louis XIII cognac and Highland Park Scotch.

VINEXPO AMERICAS 2004 ([www.vinexpo.com](http://www.vinexpo.com)) held in June in Chicago, Illinois USA, provided a great forum to taste, learn and listen about wine, spirits and products. Due to the size of the event and the time element, I selected one product line to focus on, Remy Cointreau, SA ([www.remy-cointreau.com](http://www.remy-cointreau.com)). They have so many great products and brands, but one area that may be overlooked are the people of Remy Cointreau. Jason M. Bowden holds the title of Ambassador, and he has a single product that he represents, Louis XIII de Remy Martin. I had the opportunity to interview Mr. Bowden. Representing the Grande Champagne Cognac, or Louis XIII, as it is known by true aficionados, has its unique characteristics and challenges. Mr. Bowden is quick to point out that this is not just a spirit, but "It's a Moment." You must experience the moment, no compromise, just like Louis XIII has done, by not compromising the way the product has been produced since 1874. Yes, there has been innovation along the way, for example in packaging, picking and machinery, but there is no compromise in the way it is handled, distilled, and harvested from only one region by workers who produce a product that will not be drunk in their lifetime. This is a Cognac with an average age of 70 years in every bottle, which translates, for the recently released 1998 vintage, into grapes harvested in 1898 through 1952. You taste a piece of history with every sip of this exquisite Cognac. Mr. Bowden travels the world to promote the unique characteristics of Louis XIII, while promoting the bit of history within every bottle. Mr. Bowden truly epitomizes all of what Louis XIII stands for, he seizes every moment he has with people, and he is a no compromise ambassador who understands the power of passion that Louis XIII brings to people who savor this unique product. One person, one moment, one vision & Louis XIII de Remy Martin.

Moving on from Cognac, I had the pleasure to listen Mr. Gerry Tosh speak about the unique characteristics of Highland Park, a single malt Scotch from the Island of Orkney, represented by Remy Amerique. This is a very distinct Scotch which elicits a smoky flavor that dances on your tongue with a nice smooth finish. Like Louis XIII, Highland Park has not compromised their product and they still produce it the same way they did in 1798. From the labor intensive floor malting, to kilning peat using 9000 year old peat, through mashing, fermentation, distillation and on to the "selection process" where only a third of the production is accepted, Highland Park has maintained an uncompromised production process. Mr. Tosh weaved a bit of history into the tale of Highland Park, painting a picture of a rough Orkney environment, the passionate people, a distinct production process, and an attention to detail. I had the privilege to taste 4 excellent Scotches, 12, 18, 21 and 25 year old single malts. Each had a unique nose, a very distinct palate and a different finish. My favorite was the 25 year old, but unfortunately this is not available to the public; lucky me for attending this seminar.

I drank Louis XIII neat, I drank Highland Park with a splash, and now I was listening to the master of cocktails, Mr. Allen Katz, speak on the art of "mixing a cocktail." The cocktail was an innovation during the height of the innovation explosion 1849-1919 (airplanes, zippers, safety razors and the cocktail). The first Manhattan made was in 1874 with bitters the key ingredient to a great cocktail. Mr. Katz spoke about, and demonstrated, how the cocktail has evolved over time with the creation of new products such as flavored Cognac from Remy. Keeping with the 3-5 ingredients per cocktail, Mr. Katz created cocktails using the new flavored Cognacs from Remy called RemyRed, which come in 3 flavors, Red Berry Infusion, Strawberry Kiwi and Red Grape Berry. We ended the session with an outstanding RemyRed Martini using the Red Berry Infusion.

Each representative is reticent, though outstanding spokespersons, allowing for the brand to be the focus.

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