

Created by: Debra C. Argen
Sagatiba Cachaca

I first "discovered" cachaça, the national spirit of Brazil made with fresh sugar cane juice, many years ago when I lived there, and since then, I am always on the lookout for outstanding new cachaças. My latest cachaça discovery is [Sagatiba Cachaca](#) manufactured in the state of São Paulo, Brazil.



When I find a product that interests me, I like to go to the source and learn all that I can about it, so while I was in Brazil in January 2008, I made a visit to the Sagatiba offices in São Paulo and had an interesting conversation with Master Distiller, Nahor Gustavo, who grew up in the cachaça business, and it was definitely an education not only on Sagatiba Cachaca, but also on cachaça in general.

Sagatiba produces two types of cachaça, (pronounced kah-sha-suh), Pura (white, unaged) and Velha (aged), and after much research, Sagatiba decided to use a multi-distillation process for the Sagatiba Pura to elicit a lighter aroma, enhance its mixability, and go beyond the traditional Caipirinha, (pronounced kai-per-eeen-ya), although this is a delectable drink made with muddled limes, sugar, and cachaça.

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When the subject came up of the trend in Europe of making caipirinhas with turbinado sugar instead of white sugar, Nahor Gustavo and I both agreed with a resounding, "No." Brazilians make the Caipirinha using white sugar that dissolves easily, whereas turbinado sugar does not fully dissolve, leaves a grainy residue behind, and also imparts a slight beige color to the cocktail. If you want to make authentic Caipirinhas only use white sugar.

To provide a little background on the making of cachaça, it should be noted that although cachaça may be new to various parts of the world, Brazil has been making cachaça since the mid-1500s, and I say that it is high time for more people to start experiencing and appreciating this excellent spirit.

There are over 2000 varieties of sugar cane that grow in Brazil from the north to the south of the country, and to produce the best cachaça it is important to find the right variety for your region. Sagatiba produces cachaça for 8 months from April until November. From December until March there is a lot of rain in their sugar cane region, so plant growth goes into leaves, and does not produce sucrose. To produce cachaça, the sucrose level must be high indicating that the sugar cane is healthy.

Sugar cane must be crushed within 24 hours of cutting or it will start to ferment on its own. The juice is then filtered, and since the juice has between 13 - 20% sucrose, and the yeast is natural, it must be stabilized to the same level. The sugar cane juice combined with the yeast creates a sour mash that ferments between 18 - 24 hours, which is quicker fermentation than many other spirits. The fermented sugar cane juice is called "wine" and has 7.5 - 8% ABV.

The next step in the process is distillation, using a column still for Pura, and a pot still for Velha. The majority of cachaça is made in a column still and distilled only once. Sagatiba utilizes a multi-distillation process, checking the batch every 15 minutes, until they reach their desired result.

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Sagatiba Velha is made in small batches in a pot still, which provides for better aroma and chemical reaction, and utilizes a blending process. Sagatiba uses American Oak ex-bourbon barrels to age their cachaça because Brazilians like the vanilla that the American Oak imparts, and they also use some French Oak barrels.

Cachaça has an alcohol by volume (ABV) between 38 - 48%; in the past it could be up to 54%, although laws now state that only aguardente can be over 48%. Brazil produces 1.3 billion liters of cachaça and export 2% of its production.

Sagatiba Pura Cachaça, 38% ABV, has a sweet yet light nose of fresh cane, and nice viscosity. Sagatiba Velha, 38% ABV, has hints of vanilla and oak notes on the nose, vanilla on the palate, and a sweet, creamy, smooth, and balanced richness.

Sagatiba Pura Cachaça is a wonderful ingredient for a wide variety of cocktails, and the exotic, colorful, and fragrant flowers of Brazil was my inspiration for Luxury Experience's cocktail, Dona Flor, which combines Sagatiba Pura Cachaça with the tropical taste of hibiscus flower juice, rose jelly, lime juice, and champagne. With spring on the horizon, this elegant pink-hued cocktail served in a champagne glass, would be perfect as an aperitif for a brunch, ladies luncheon, bridal shower, wedding reception, or a romantic dinner. Imagine how beautiful a silver tray laden with Dona Flor cocktails would look at your next party.



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Luxury Experience's Dona Flor

For 1 cocktail

1

Ounce

Champagne

1

Ounce

Rose Jelly

$\frac{3}{4}$

Ounce

Hibiscus Flower Juice (made with 1 part Jamaica Concentrate, 1 part sugar, and 12 parts water)

$\frac{1}{4}$

Ounce

Lime Juice, freshly squeezed

1

Ounce

Sagatiba Pura Cachaça

$\frac{1}{4}$

Ounce

Grand Marnier

Edible flower to garnish

Chill champagne glass. Pour champagne into the glass. In a shaker can with 4 ice cubes, add Sagatiba Pura Cachaça, hibiscus flower concentrate, rose jelly, and lime juice, and shake hard until metal can is frosty. Carefully strain into the champagne glass. Garnish champagne glass with an edible flower.

Luxury Experience's Estrela Beleza "Beautiful Star" combines Sagatiba Pura Cachaça, Galliano Liqueur, and Tonic Water, and is garnished with Carambola "stars."

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Luxury Experience's Estrela Beleza "Beautiful Star"

For 1 cocktail

1 ½

Ounces

Sagatiba Pura Cachaça

½

Ounce

Galliano Liqueur

2

Ounces

Tonic Water

2 Carambola slices for garnish

Add Sagatiba Pura Cachaça and Galliano Liqueur to a mixing glass with ice, stir to combine, strain, and pour over fresh ice in a rocks glass, top with tonic water. Place a carambola "star" in the drink and garnish with a carambola star on the rim of the glass.

Sagatiba Velha Cachaça Esplênida is an excellent aged cachaça with a rich golden hue, that is perfect served neat, chilled from the freezer, or served over ice. Although aged cachaça is not usually used in cocktails, the Sagatiba Velha Cachaça Esplênida has interesting notes of vanilla on the nose, and subtle notes of vanilla and spice on the palate that work beautifully in a cocktail. Based on that idea, I created Luxury Experience's The Elder Statesman, which pairs Sagatiba Velha Cachaça Esplênida, elderflower liqueur, and freshly squeezed lime juice for a sophisticated cocktail.

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Luxury Experience's The Elder Statesman

2.25

Ounces

Sagatiba Velha Cachaça Esplênida

1.5

Ounces

St. Germain (elderflower liqueur)

0.25

Ounce

Lime Juice, freshly squeezed

In a cocktail shaker, add 4 ice cubes, Sagatiba Velho, St. Germaine, and lime juice and shake hard. Pour into chilled martini glass. Garnish with lime twist.

Sagatiba Pura Cachaça is also a flavorful addition to culinary recipes, which was the inspiration behind Luxury Experience's Caipirinha Mousse.



Luxury Experience's Caipirinha Mousse

8

Ounces

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Lime Juice, freshly squeezed (approximately 6 limes)

Zest, finely grated from 3 limes

$\frac{3}{4}$

Cup

Sugar

6

Ounces

Sagatiba Pura Cachaça

6

Ounces

Water

2

Packages

Unflavored Gelatin

8

Ounces

Whipping Cream

1

Can (14 oz)

Condensed Milk

Add sugar and gelatin to a bowl. Bring the water to a boil, pour over the sugar and gelatin, and stir to dissolve. Add the lime juice and cachaça, and pour the mixture into a blender, and liquefy. Pour into demitasse cups or dessert cups. Chill mousse in refrigerator for several hours until firm. Garnish with a small wedge of lime.



Luxury Experience Magazine has been on the lookout for Sagatiba Cachaça sightings during our travels around the world, and one of our recent sightings was in Itamambuca, Brazil in January 2008 where we

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found Carlão Serra making caipirinhas using Sagatiba Pura Cachaça for his friends, accompanied by Brazilian music.

Sagatiba Cachaça was also sighted, and sampled of course, at the Heathrow Airport in London in the Duty Free Shop in November 2007, where shoppers were also enjoying caipirinhas only this time without Brazilian music. Speaking with the head barman at the [Kulm Hotel St. Moritz](#) in Switzerland in February 2008, I learned that he had spotted Sagatiba Cachaça in Rimini, Italy. Where will you spot Sagatiba Cachaça?



Sagatiba is imported by Sagatiba USA.

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