

BRAZILIAN MEGA PACK

\$35/mês



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9 BEST RUMS UNDER \$30: HOLIDAY 2016

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(illustration: Elizabeth Reyes)

You know who knows best which bottles to buy for holiday gifting? The people who pour and sell drinks—that’s who. For 2016, we asked dozens of top bartending and spirits industry professionals to tell us which bottles they love and why.

Heads up: The numerical order below is not organized by importance or quality. It’s a list, not a ranking. Prices are averages and can vary state to state.

1. CAÑA BRAVA (\$25)



“A true carta blanca from Panama. Great texture, with grassy and mineral notes. The best rum for classic rum cocktails like Daiquiris, Mojitos and Airmails.”—Ramon Garcia, lead bartender at Alchemist Bar & Lounge

2. DIPLOMÁTICO AÑEJO (\$19)



“Great mixing rum from Venezuela. For the price point, I haven’t really found another.”—Zach Lynch, bar manager at [The Ice Plant](#) and brand ambassador at [St. Augustine Distillery Co.](#)

3. ENGLISH HARBOUR 5 YEAR (\$27)



“It’s a little tannic but ultimately just smooth, rich, sweet and easy.”—Zac Overman, mixologist at Rob Roy and head bartender at Sitka & Spruce Bar

4. EL DORADO 12 YEAR (\$30)



“El Dorado 12 Year simply shouldn’t exist. Only in the rum market can one find a 12-year-old spirit for \$30 a bottle. It has the depth and richness of a black rum but through aging and not artifices and food colorings.”—David Moo, owner of Quarter Bar

5. HAMILTON JAMAICAN POT STILL GOLD (\$25)



“Heavy on flavor and low on pretense. Ed Hamilton always sources terrific juice. This is a punch rum through and through.”—Neal Bodenheimer, mixologist at and co-owner of [Cure](#) and co-owner of [Cane & Table](#) and [Café Henri](#)

6. PLANTATION BARBADOS 5 YEAR (\$23)



“All the tropical fruit mellowed out with glorious baking spices. Rich and full, this unbelievably cheap rum works in all manner of mixed drinks or just on its own.”—Joaquín Simó, partner and bartender at [Pouring Ribbons](#)

7. QUEEN CHARLOTTE'S RESERVE CAROLINA (\$30)



“Who knew that you could get amazing rum out of North Carolina! Aged for one year in virgin American oak barrels, this is a pleasure to sip straight or to mix. Delicious.”—Bob Peters, head mixologist at [The Punch Room](#) in The Ritz-Carlton, Charlotte

8. RON DEL BARRILITO 3 STARS (\$28)



“This is my favorite rum to shake into a Daiquiri. It’s got body, richness and a hint of sweetness. It’s a great value rum for cocktails.”—Karin Stanley, co-owner of Dutch Kills and bartender at Little Branch and Suffolk Arms

9. EL DORADO 3 YEAR (\$15)



“Aged and filtered, this rum has the complexity and character you’d expect in something that costs twice the price.”—Michael J. Neff, bar director at [Holiday Cocktail Lounge](#)