



Inuhele'26

# **(NEARLY) EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT RUM IN A MAI TAI IS WRONG**

**Kevin Crossman**  
Slides at [UltimateMaiTai.com](https://UltimateMaiTai.com)

# Kevin Crossman

Based in the San Francisco Bay Area

IT Manager by Day, Mai Tai Enthusiast at Night

Visited 140 different tiki since 2016

   @ultimatemaitai

 [www.ultimatemaitai.com](http://www.ultimatemaitai.com)





# Kevin Crossman

Original Search for the Ultimate Mai Tai website  
launched in 1998

Submitted reviews, essays, recipes

It was really hard to find a great Mai Tai



# WHY THE MAI TAI?

What is it and why should we care?







**“The Mai Tai  
is the perfect  
foil for a  
huge variety  
of rums”**

Martin Cate &  
Rebecca Cate,  
*Smuggler's Cove*

# Rum Production

Distillate source: Molasses or Sugar Cane Juice

Fermentation methods and length

Still type: Pot or Column

Cask types: Ex-Bourbon, American Oak, French Oak

Aging location and time: Tropical and Continental Aging

Single still/barrel or a blend of distillates

Additives, sugar, or color



Rum Type	Distillation	Source	Aging
Jamaica	Pot Still (or blend)	Molasses	Ex-Bourbon
Puerto Rico	Column Still	Molasses	Ex-Bourbon + filtered
Guyana	Pot/Column blend	Molasses	Ex-Bourbon + color
Martinique Agricole	Column Still	Cane Juice	French Oak
Hawaiian Agricole	Pot Still	Cane Juice	Unaged
Cachaça	Pot or Column Still	Cane Juice	Brazilian wood / Unaged

# RUM STYLES

A

17-Year Old Wray &  
Nephew Jamaica Rum

B

15-Year Old Wray &  
Nephew Jamaica Rum

C

15 or 8-Year Old Jamaica  
Rum + Martinique Rhum

D

Bacardi + Myers's

**Which  
Rum(s)  
Made the  
Mai Tai  
Famous?**



# IN THE BEGINNING

The 1944 Mai Tai



# THE SEARCH FOR THE ULTIMATE MAI TAI

Traveling the Bay Area and beyond to find the best Mai Tai in the world! Tiki, cocktails, and adventures by Kevin Crossman

[Home](#)[Mai Tais](#)[Features](#)[Tiki Travels](#)[Tiki Bar Ratings](#)[About](#)

## TRADER VIC'S HISTORY OF THE MAI TAI

Let's Set the Record Straight on the Mai Tai

by Victor J. Bergeron "Trader Vic"  
San Francisco, 1970

Earlier this year, a long time friend from Tahiti, Carrie Guild (now Mrs. Howard Wright), sent me a column from a Honolulu newspaper which once again has raised the argument over where the Mai Tai was born and who originated it.

I originated the Mai Tai and have put together a bit of the background on the evolution of this drink, which has earned worldwide identification and acceptance.

There has been a lot of conversation over the beginning of this drink. Many have claimed credit, including Harry Owens. The people who now own Trader Vic's in Honolulu (which at this time has no connection with the Trader Vic operations on the mainland) claimed it was originated in Tahiti .... This aggravates my ulcer completely. The drink was never introduced by me in Tahiti except informally through our good friends, Eastham and Carrie Guild.

In 1944, after success with several exotic rum drinks, I felt a new drink was needed. I thought about all the really successful drinks; martinis, manhattans, daiquiris .... All basically simple drinks.

I was at the service bar in my Oakland restaurant. I took down a bottle of 17-year old rum. It was J. Wray & Nephew from Jamaica; surprisingly golden in color, medium bodied, but with the rich pungent flavor particular to the Jamaican blends.

The flavor of this great rum wasn't meant to be overpowered with heavy additions of fruit juices and flavorings. I took a fresh lime, added some orange curacao from Holland, a dash of Rock Candy Syrup, and a dollop of French Orgeat, for its subtle almond flavor. A generous amount of shaved ice and vigorous shaking by hand produced the marriage I was after.

Half the lime shell went in for color ... I stuck in a branch of fresh mint and gave two of them to Ham and Carrie Guild, friends from Tahiti, who were there that night.

# SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Press Release, 1970





## 1944 Mai Tai

**The Original Formula  
by Trader Vic  
Bergeron, 1944**

2 ounces of 17-year-old J. Wray & Nephew Rum over shaved ice

½ ounce Holland DeKuyper Orange Curacao

½ ounce French Garnier Orgeat Syrup

¼ ounce Rock Candy Syrup

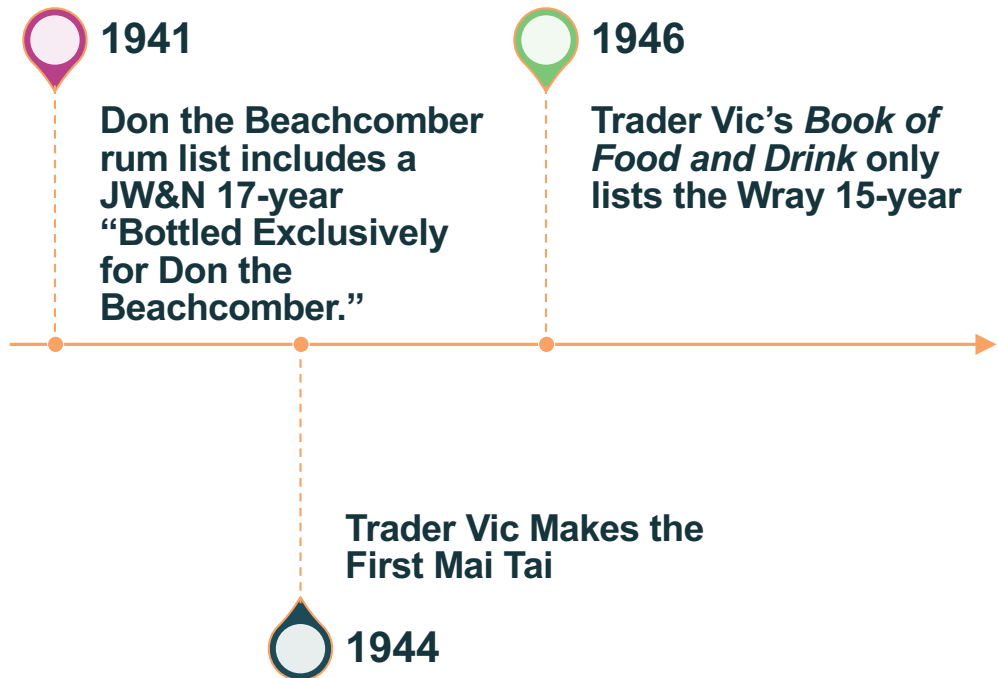
Add juice from one fresh Lime.



“Surprisingly golden in color, medium bodied, but with the rich pungent flavor particular to the Jamaican blends”

Photo from *Smuggler's Cove* by Martin Cate with Rebecca Cate. Used with permission.

# WRAY & NEPHEW 17





## The Brief Run of the Original 17

From Trader Vic:

“The success of the Mai Tai and its acceptance soon caused the 17-year-old rum to become unavailable, so it was substituted with the same fine rum with 15 years aging which maintained the outstanding quality.”

Only one year later Trader Vic's started using Wray & Nephew 15-year-old



**STRONG**—Benchcombers and wharf rats do not bandy when they splice the main brace, and the concoctions below have been their tradition for years and years.

PUKA PUNCH	1.00
<i>The Outrigger's best drink. Light rum, favoring liqueurs fresh lime, lemon and orange</i>	
BAMBOO PUNCH	1.00
<i>Our newest and one of the best</i>	
FOG CUTTER	1.00
<i>Light rum, brandy and favoring liqueurs Not a stuy drink, and it's tall</i>	
DR. FUNK OF TAHITI	1.00
<i>Tahiti's own Punch, made with dark Jamaica, Light Rum, with a dash of Fernet, combined with fruit juices. A terrific tall drink</i>	
EASTERN SOUR	1.00
<i>Whole fresh orange, and lemon, Bourbon, touch of abscond</i>	
TABU	1.25
<i>Served in a coconut cup. This cup is yours for a souvenir</i>	
KONA NIGHTINGALE	.85
<i>Named after the little braying jacksass in Honolulu—And it has a kick like one</i>	
KONA SWIZZLE	.85
<i>From the volcanic Kona coast of Hawaii</i>	
MAI TAI	1.25
<i>A blend of fine old Jamaican Rum and fresh lime makes this an excellent cooler</i>	
MARTINIQUE SWIZZLE	1.00
<i>The French in Martinique have developed a very palatable and tasty cocktail</i>	
MINT JULEP	1.25
<i>Favorites throughout the South. Fresh Mint, Sugar, Bourbon</i>	
OUTRIGGER'S OWN PUNCH	1.25
<i>Light and Dark Rum, orange and lemon. Simple but good</i>	
PINO PEPE	1.00
<i>Pineapple juice and blended liqueurs, make this a delicious potion—in a ceramic pineapple</i>	
RANGOON RUBY	1.00
<i>With the authority of a maharaja</i>	
OUTRIGGER SUNG	1.00
<i>Trader Vic has improved on the original Gin Sling</i>	
OUTRIGGER TIARE	1.25
<i>Pirates' gold in the form of Jamaica Rum punch bowl—tangs—colorful</i>	
PLANTER'S PUNCH	1.00
<i>"Queen of the Antilles"—Jamaica's own Punch</i>	
RAFFLES BAR GIN SUNG	1.25
<i>England's Booby Gin, Denmark's Cherry Heering and France's Benedictine</i>	
SCORPION (individual)	1.25
<i>The Outrigger's Jossans—with a fresh gardenia</i>	
SUFFERING BAR STEWARD	1.25
<i>Trader Vic has another name for it!</i>	



## THE RI

SPARE RIBS	
<i>Baby spare ribs marinated in our special</i>	
FRIED SHRIMP	
<i>Fresh Gulf Shrimps in a batter, fried</i>	
EGG ROLL	
<i>Crisp bean sprouts, tender bamboo shoot, Virginia ham, all rolled in a thin blank served in slices</i>	
KONA CRAB PUFF	
<i>Tasty bits of crab and cheese mixed with paste and fried crisp</i>	
STUFFED SHRIMP	
<i>Minced shrimp, toasted almonds, vegetables dipped in batter and fried in deep fat</i>	
BARBECUED PORK	
<i>Strips of pork, marinated in a special</i>	
OUTRIGGER SPECIAL	
<i>An Assortment of Fried Shrimp, Spare Ribs</i>	
HAM AND EGGS OUTRIGGER	
<i>Tender slice of sugar-cured ham, served with eggs fried in butter, bed spring potatoes</i>	
SANDWICHES—Tenderloin Steak	
<i>Chopped Sirloin</i>	

**LARGE**—A conglomeration of an ancient custom and tradition of the Polynesian communal drinking bowl.

OUTRIGGER RUM CUP (for 2)	1.75
SCORPION (for 4)	3.00
<i>Light rum and fruit juices in a communal bowl make this terrific</i>	
TIARE TAHITI (for 2)	1.85



HIGHBALLS & ST

## MAI TAI

*A blend of fine old Jamaican Rum and fresh lime makes this an excellent cooler*

1.25

“A blend of fine old Jamaican Rums and fresh Lime”

The Outrigger, Seattle (1952)



## Stretching the Supply

“Red Heart and Coruba were selected to be used in equal quantities along with the original 15-year-old to stretch the supply and maintain the character of the Mai Tai.”



# First Adjusted Mai Tai Formula

Early 1950s

1 oz 15-year old J. Wray Nephew Jamaican Rum

1 oz Coruba – or Red Heart Jamaican Rum

½ oz Trader Vic Formula Orgeat

½ oz Holland DeKuyper Orange Curacao

¼ oz Rock Candy Syrup

Juice from one fresh lime

Mix and serve as in the original formula.

## Nutty and Snappy

“This rum, though excellent, didn’t exactly match the end flavor of the original 17-year-old product. This desired nutty, and snappy flavor was added by the use of a Martinique rum.”



## **Second Adjusted Mai Tai Formula**

Mid 1950s

1 oz Trader Vic's Jamaican Rum (15 or 8 yr)

1 oz Martinique Rhum (St. James or Trader Vic's)

1 oz pre-mixed Curacao, Orgeat and Rock Candy Syrup

Juice from one fresh lime

Mix and serve as in the original formula.



# TRADER VIC'S MAI TAI RUM

70% Jamaican  
20% Martinique  
10% Virgin  
Island

86 proof, not too  
shabby



**Each of these  
exotic drinks took  
3 different rums...until**

## **Trader Vic Invented Rum Blends**

Great tropical cocktails can't be made with just one rum. It takes a skillful selection of several rums — blended in proportions that achieve a special marriage of flavors. But most people don't know a Jamaica rum from a Martinique — no less the fine points of mixing them.

Trader Vic knows. So he invented Trader Vic's Rum Blends: Mai Tai Rum and Navy Grog & Punch Rum. 3 great rums in each easy bottle — perfectly balanced for use in dozens of classic tropical drinks (like those served at Trader Vic's famous restaurants).

So, if you want the most ambrosial refreshment this side of a Polynesian lagoon... first get a glass with lots of ice; then just pour from a Trader Vic's Rum Blend and pour from a Trader Vic's exotic fruit mix. Stir. Sip. Smile. Oh, you'll smile, all right. (Now you're an expert.)



# TRADER VIC'S®

GOPR. 1959 BY TRADER VIC

## Mai Tai Rum

*A Blend*

A blend of the finest imported rums: Jamaican Rum, 70%; Martinique Rum, 20%; and Virgin Island Rum, 10%.

86 PROOF

PREPARED AND BOTTLED BY TRADER VIC'S PRODUCTS CO., SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

Photo courtesy of Trader Vic's Hospitality



# THE MAI TAI GOES HAWAIIIAN

A Split in the Evolutionary Line





## Trader Vic brings the Mai Tai to Hawaii in 1953

The Royal Hawaiian Hotel  
Moana Hotel

The Mai Tai was his  
favorite!

*Honolulu Star-Bulletin,*  
February 4, 1953

**THE OL' TRADER** is back in Ha-vhy-ee for his 25th expedition in nearly as many years . . . King of exotic



**Trader Vic**

concoctions, Vic Bergeron is the man behind the menehunes on the Royal's newly revised drink list . . . Trader Vic has never been a trader and he hasn't wandered much farther into Polynesia than Waikiki, but he's built Island paradises in San Francisco and Seattle and may be moving into Denver . . . An ex-partner runs the local Trader's, while Vic heads Trader Vic Enterprises and is consultant for several nighteries . . . His favorite drink is the Mai Tai, a heady concoction with a rum base. There's also the Kava Bowl, an exotic extrav-

aganza served in a king-size container with vandas floating on the surface . . . The bowl was supported by four menehunes . . . what's needed is someone handy to support the drinker. After two, you probably wear the bowl on your head . . . Vic says his job gives him heartburn about once a week.



Mrs. Edwin B. Hausfeld  
4727 Glenway Ave.  
Cincinnati 38, Ohio

Dear Hausfeld:

Your letter addressed to Jack Fischbeck of the Royal Hawaiian in Honolulu for reply. I am only too happy to send you the recipe for the Mai Tai as served here and at the Royal Hawaiian. Both Mr. Fischbeck and I are pleased that you have enjoyed this libation.

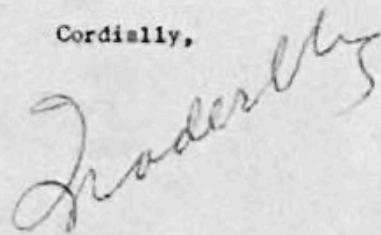
MAI TAI

Mix in 16 oz. tumbler with shaved ice:

Juice of one lime - drop half shell in glass  
Dash of Rock Candy Syrup  
Dash of Curacao  
Dash of Orgeat Syrup  
1½ oz. Trader Vic's Puerto Rican Rum  
¾ oz. Meyer's Planters Punch Rum

Stir and decorate with fresh mint.

Cordially,



VJB:s

## 1956 Mai Tai

Juice of One Lime - drop  
half lime shell in glass

Dash of Rock Candy  
Syrup

Dash of Curacao

Dash of Orgeat

1½ oz Trader Vic's Puerto  
Rican Rum

¾ oz Myers's Planters  
Punch Rum

Stir and decorate with  
fresh mint

Note: A "Dash" when referring to  
these ingredients is equal to ¼  
ounce, according to the 1972  
*Trader Vic's Bartender's Guide*  
Revised.

### And A Hawaiian Drink

And just to give you a taste of Hawaii, here's the recipe for Mai Tai, a rum drink given Mrs. Seidman by the bartender at the Royal Hawaiian . . . In fact he drew her a picture of it.

One ounce lemon juice.

One-half fresh lime.

One-third ounce rock candy syrup (a teaspoon of saccharin will do).

One-third ounce Orgeat syrup (obtainable at most liquor stores).

One-third ounce orange curacao.

One ounce Puerto Rican rum, light.

One ounce Jamaican rum, dark.

Decorate the glass with a stalk of sugar cane, a sprig or two of mint and a pineapple

1958

## Rum And Orchids

By STAN DELAPLANE

**"GIVE US A recipe for mai tai you mention in your Hawaii columns . . ."**

The Royal Hawaiian gives me this: "Jigger light rum, jigger dark Jamaica rum, juice of one lime (and drop half shell in the glass). Dash of Orgeat syrup, dash of rock candy syrup, dash of orange Curacao. Garnish with sprig of mint, sugar cane stick, pineapple stick and fill with shaved ice."

The Halekulani omits the rock candy syrup and floats the dark rum on top.

Tiki Bob Bryant at the Tahitian Lanai uses light Puerto Rican rum and Lemon Heart Demerra rum on top. All use a king-size, old-fashioned glass and float a vanda orchid on top.

The mai tai (it means "the best" in Tahitian) was invented by Trader Vic in his Oakland, Calif., restaurant. It is a top favorite in the Islands.

1961

In case you have wondered exactly what goes into some of those concoctions with the incredible names, the Moana graciously has come up with the answer.

Here's a collection of recipes that will make a great Christmas gift for the man who has everything, including the nerve to try these at home.

### Mai Tai

1½ ounces light rum

1½ ounces dark rum

Juice of 1 lime  
(leave ½ shell in glass)

Dash Orgeat syrup  
Dash Rock Candy  
syrup

Dash Orange  
Curacao

Garnish with a sprig of mint, sugar cane stick, and pineapple stick. Fill with shaved ice.

1968



# Ronrico Mai-Tai

- 1 jigger Ronrico White
- 1 jigger Myers's Jamaica Rum
- Juice of One Lime
- 1 dash Orgeat
- 1 dash Simple Syrup
- 1 dash Orange Curacao



## THE EXOTIC, IRRESISTIBLE RONRICO MAI-TAI. (DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME MAKING IT.)

Let one of those great Polynesian restaurants make it for you; they're experts. Let them make marvelously complicated Ronrico Scorpions, Babalus, Tonga Punches, Navy Grogs too. You, at home, can take Ronrico Rum and lead a simple life. Try this devastatingly dry rum with orange juice. (The Spanish Screwdriver.) With tomato juice. (The Bloody Maria ... "Maria is Mary set to music.")

With tonic. With cider. With cola. With tea. (How good is Ronrico Rum? Take tea and see.) And of course, in dry Daiquiris. (Even people who profess not to like liquor like the taste of Ronrico: dry, light, clear and fragrant.) Got the idea? Got the Rum?

RONRICO PUERTO RICAN RUM, 80 PROOF, WHITE OR GOLD LABEL. MYERS'S JAMAICA RUM, 97 PROOF, GENERAL WINE AND SPIRITS CO., NEW YORK 22

## RONRICO FROM PUERTO RICO: THE DRY RUM

1 ONE JIGGER RONRICO WHITE LABEL RUM 2 ONE JIGGER MYERS'S JAMAICA RUM 3 JUICE OF ONE LIME 4 ONE DASH ORGEAT 5 ONE DASH SIMPLE SUGAR SYRUP 6 ONE DASH ORANGE CURACAO 7 GARNISH WITH SPRIG OF MINT 8 SUGAR CANE STICK 9 PINEAPPLE STICK 10 MARASCHINO CHERRY 11 SHAVED ICE 12 ORCHID





Photo courtesy of Trader Vic's Hospitality



## GENERIC ORIGINAL HAWAIIAN MAI TAI RECIPE

1 oz Lime Juice  
1/3 oz Orgeat  
1/3 oz Rock Candy Syrup  
1/3 oz Orange Curacao  
1 1/2 oz Light Puerto Rican Rum  
1 1/2 oz Dark Jamaican Rum



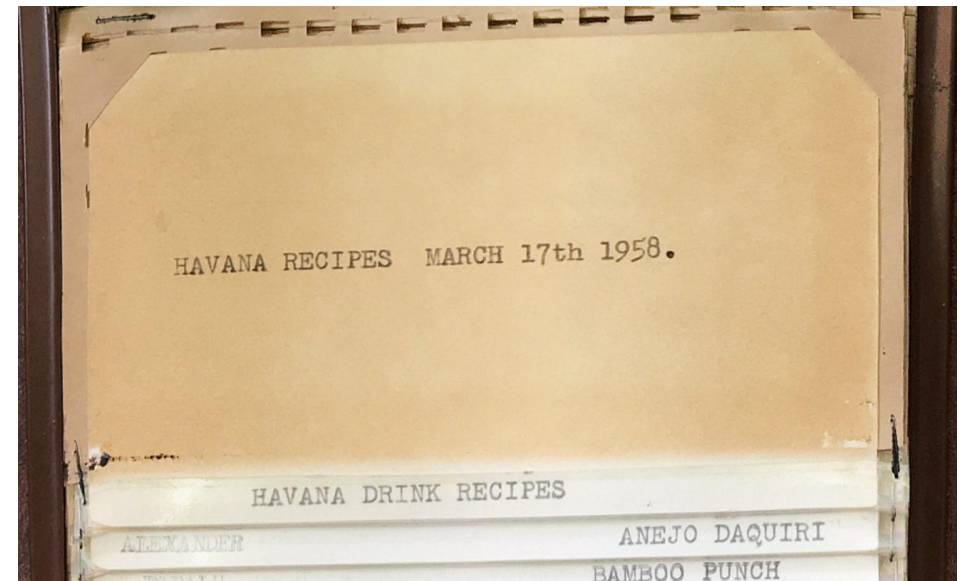
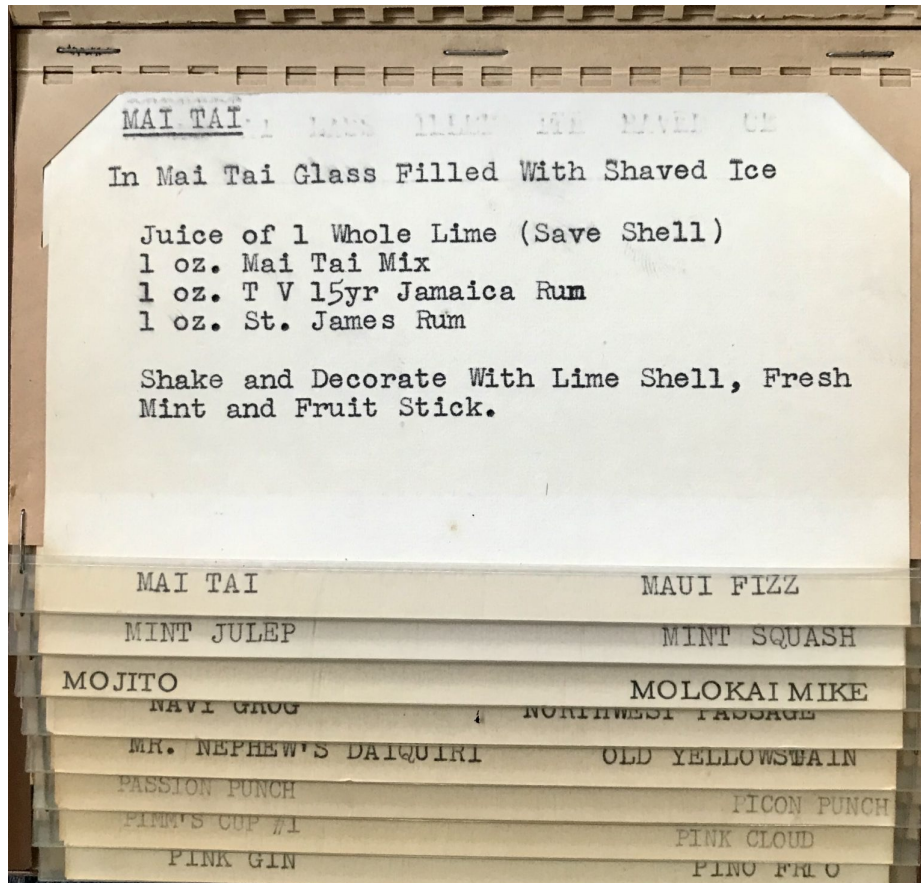
Photo credit: Kamaaina56 Flickr Collection



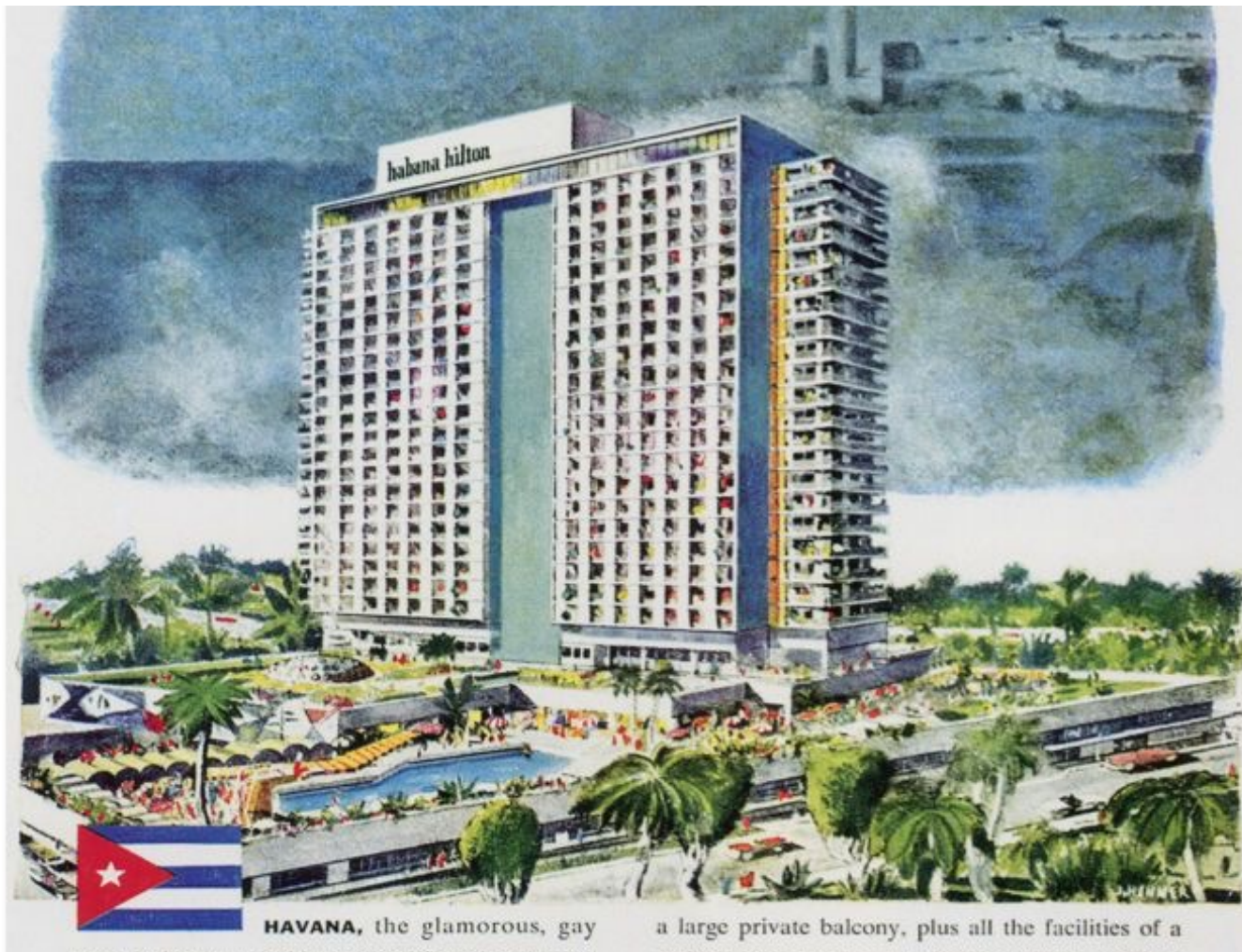
# CUBAN EVOLUTION







1958 Havana Trader Vic's Mai Tai



## 1958 Havana Mai Tai

In Mai Tai glass filled with shaved ice:

Juice of 1 Whole  
Lime (save shell)

1 oz Mai Tai Mix

1 oz Trader Vic's  
15yr Jamaica Rum

1 oz St. James Rum

Shake and decorate  
with Lime shell, fresh  
Mint, and Fruit stick.

Mai Tai Mix = 12 parts  
Curacao to 7 parts Orgeat



# MAI TAIS IN BOOKS

The recipe was never a secret





## ESQUIRE PARTY BOOK

### On a Polynesian Beach

If you're not too self-consciously authentic about which island the food comes from, a tropical spread is an easy and delicious way of summer-time entertaining. This menu is a composite of Hawaiian, Tahitian, Javanese, Chinese dishes—one of the best from each place we think. Serve it buffet-style if you would, which allows for judicious sampling of the variety of dishes. Make with the fruits, seashells, fish-nets, glass floats, flaming torches, low tables if you like, do it straight, by candle-light instead of moon-light. Each dish will serve 8, but if you serve them all your party could double that number.

## MENU

Zombies Coconut Chips Mai-Tai cocktail

Rumaki Gee Bo Gai Fish Fiji

Bongo Bongo soup

Island chicken Fufu Oriental Green pepper and steak

Fish curry Chutney Rice

Crackers Paké Noodles

Plantain pancake Island skewers

Flaming Mountain

For the cocktail hour:

#### Menu

ice of 1 lime  
teaspoon sugar  
ounce unsweetened pineapple juice  
ounce papaya nectar (canned)  
ounce apricot brandy  
ounce Puerto Rican white rum,  
36 proof  
ounces Puerto Rican gold rum,  
36 proof  
ounce Jamaican heavy-bodied rum,  
30 proof  
teaspoon heavy-bodied 151 proof  
rum  
powdered sugar  
mint sprig

Pineapple chunk  
Maraschino cherries  
Shake the fruit juices, sugar, brandy,  
and 3 first-named rums with cracked  
ice in a cocktail shaker. Without  
straining, pour into a 12 ounce  
Zombie glass, adding shaved ice  
nearly to the top. Bedeck with the  
mint, pineapple, and cherries.  
Carefully pour on a shallow float of  
the 151 proof rum. Sprinkle with  
the sugar and serve with straws.

#### Mai Tai Cocktail

In a large Old-fashioned glass half  
filled with cracked ice, put:

1/2 ounce fresh lime juice  
1/2 ounce orgeat  
1/2 ounce simple sugar syrup  
1/2 ounce orange Curacao  
1 1/2 ounces light rum  
1 1/2 ounces dark rum  
Stir gently, garnish with mint,  
pineapple stick, Maraschino cherry,  
and serve with straws. Or simply buy  
a jar of Trader Vic's Mai-Tai mix  
and follow directions.

#### Toasted Coconut Chips

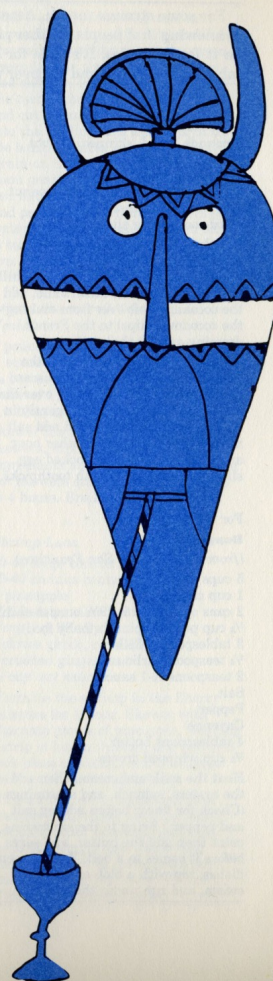
Of course, you can buy these; you can  
also make them. Simply crack, drain,  
and peel a fresh coconut. With a  
vegetable peeler, strip off as long  
pieces of the meat as you can.  
Arrange them on a flat pan and  
toast in a 300 degree oven until  
they're dry and slightly brown. Watch  
carefully after 5 minutes of baking.

*Rumaki*, our adored chicken-liver-  
water-chestnut-bacon appetizer is  
recipe already. It's a must for  
all island affairs, and a doll to cook  
outdoors, and serve there too. But  
consider also:

#### Gee Bow Gai

(from the Midtown Chinese  
Rathskeller, New York)

2 pounds raw chicken breast  
1 tablespoon dry Sherry  
2 tablespoons soy sauce  
1/2 teaspoon Chinese Spice (Heong  
Lao Fong)  
1 scallion finely chopped  
1 1/2 teaspoons sugar  
Cut chicken into pieces about 2  
inches by 1 inch. Marinate for 10  
minutes in the other ingredients.  
Remove and put each piece of chicken  
on a strip of cellophane about 5  
inches square. Fold to make a neat  
little oblong package with the ends  
tucked in. Deep fry in hot peanut oil  
for 2 minutes. Serve in the  
cellophane.



# Esquire Party Book (1965)

1/2 oz Lime Juice

1/2 oz Orgeat

1/2 oz Simple Syrup

1/2 oz Orange Curacao

1 1/2 oz Light Rum

1 1/2 oz Dark Rum

Stir gently, garnish with mint,  
pineapple stick, maraschino  
cherry.

"Or simply buy Trader Vic's Mai  
Tai Mix"

# 1970s Trader Vic's Recipe

Juice of 1 Lime

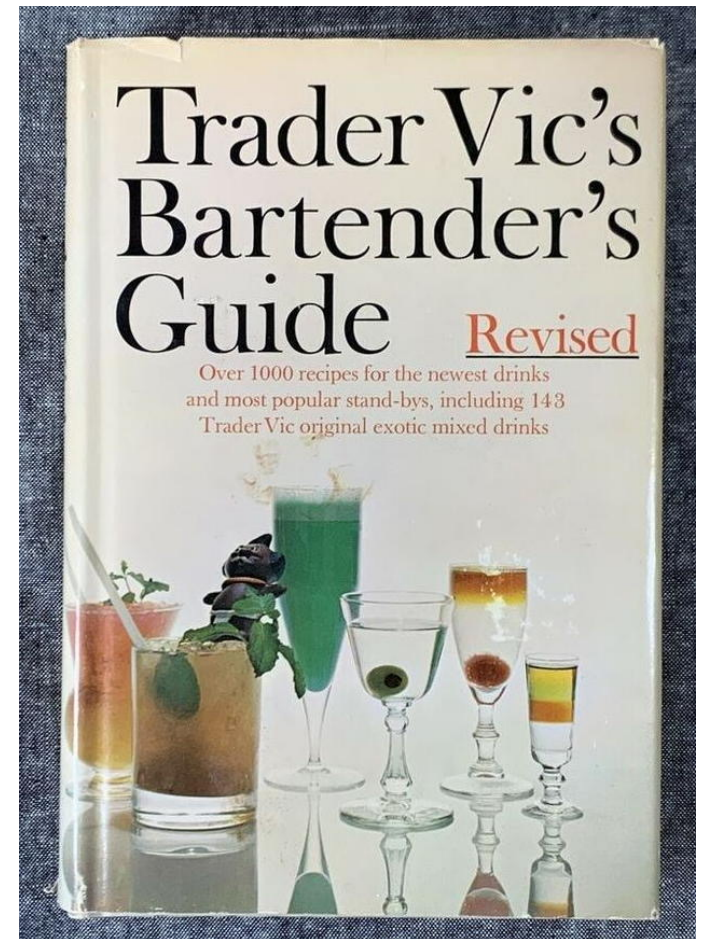
¼ oz Orgeat

¼ oz Rock Candy Syrup

½ oz Orange Curacao

2 oz Trader Vic's Mai Tai Rum

(or 1 oz Dark Jamaica rum / 1 oz Martinique Rhum)







## Jamaica Rum and Martinique Rhum Agricole

Common  
combination, thanks  
in part to references  
in books from Jeff  
“Beachbum” Berry.



# THE OLD WAY MAI TAI

Who knows what this is?





**"OLD WAY" MAI TAI FORMULA  
1997**

1 ounce Fine Jamaican Rum (15 or 8 year old)  
1 ounce Martinique Rum (St. James )  
1/2 ounce Orange Curacao  
1/2 ounce Orgeat Syrup  
juice from one fresh lime (about 3/4 ounce )

Mix and serve as in the original formula.

**THE ORIGINAL MAI TAI  
1944**

The rum which motivated the creation of the Mai Tai was a fine, golden, medium-bodied Jamaican from Kingston. Trader Vic added fresh lime juice, flavored and sweetened it with Orange Curacao from Holland and French Orgeat with its subtle flavor of almond.

The drink chilled nicely with a considerable amount of shaved ice so a large 15-ounce glass was selected to compliment the cooling and generous quality of the Mai Tai.

**THE ORIGINAL FORMULA**

2 ounces 17-year old J. Wray Nephew Jamaican rum  
1/2 ounce French Garnier Orgeat  
1/2 ounce Holland DeKuyper Orange Curacao  
1/4 ounce Trader Vic's Rock Candy Syrup  
juice from one fresh lime

Hand shake and garnish with half of the lime shell inside the drink and float a sprig of fresh mint at the edge of the glass.

The success of the Mai Tai and its acceptance soon caused the 17 year old rum to become unavailable, so it was substituted with the same fine rum with 15 years aging which maintained the outstanding quality.

**"OLD WAY" MAI TAI FORMULA  
1997**

1 ounce Fine Jamaican Rum (15 or 8 year old)  
1 ounce Martinique Rum (St. James )  
1/2 ounce Orange Curacao  
1/2 ounce Orgeat Syrup  
juice from one fresh lime (about 3/4 ounce )

Mix and serve as in the original formula.

**THIS IS THE FORMULA OF THE PRESENT DAY MAI TAI  
AT TRADER VIC'S RESTAURANTS  
1997**

2 ounces Fine Jamaican Rum  
4 ounces Trader Vic's Mai Tai Mix  
juice of one large lime

Mix and serve as in the original formula



Chronicle / Liz Hafalia

## Trader Vic's 2004

$\frac{3}{4}$  oz fresh lime  
juice  
(2 to 3 halved limes)

$\frac{3}{4}$  oz Leroux  
Orange Curacao

$\frac{3}{4}$  oz Trader Vic  
Formula Orgeat  
syrup

1 oz Coruba  
Jamaican rum

1 oz Lemon Hart  
Demerara Rum

*San Francisco Chronicle,*  
November 11, 2004





## Today: Trader Vic's Royal Amber Rum

Royal Amber Rum

Distilled in Puerto Rico

“A blend of Trader Vic's Gold and Trader Vic's Dark rums”

“A sweet molasses and dark rum scent greets the nose with molasses, caramel, and ruminant on the palate.”

Long Aged Jamaica Rum  
White Puerto Rican Rum  
+ Dark Jamaica Rum  
Martinique Rhum Industriel  
Aged Martinique Agricole  
Multi-Island Rum Blend  
Demerara Rum  
Virgin Islands Rum  
Aged/Black Puerto Rican Rum Blend

**What's the  
Rum in a  
Trader Vic's  
Mai Tai?**



# YOUR OWN RUM BLEND

“What one rum can’t do...”





## Trader Vic's Variants

A Mai Tai by any other name...

Substituting the standard Mai Tai rum yields a different cocktail

Mai Tai	Menehune Juice	Suffering Bastard
2 oz Aged Rum	2 oz Light Puerto Rican Rum	1 oz Light Puerto Rican Rum 2 oz Saint James Rhum



# Denizen Merchant's Reserve

Most famous one-bottle Mai Tai rum blend

Developed with Martin Cate to emulate the 2<sup>nd</sup> Adjusted Formula

Contains aged Jamaican Rum and Rhum Grand Arôme from Martinique

The Mai Tai rum at Smuggler's Cove and many other bars









# Rums of the Mai Tai: Make it Your Own

## Mentioned in the Presentation

Aged Jamaican Rum  
Dark Jamaican Rum  
Light Puerto Rican Rum  
Aged Rhum Agricole  
Martinique Rhum  
Demerara Rum  
Blended Rum

## Other Rums Used Frequently

Overproof Jamaican Rum  
Hawaiian Agricole  
Cachaça  
Haitian Rum and Clairin  
Philippine Rum

**Mix, Savor, Repeat**



## BLUE MAI TAI

1 oz Lime Juice

½ oz Orgeat (Latitude 29)

¼ oz Simple Syrup

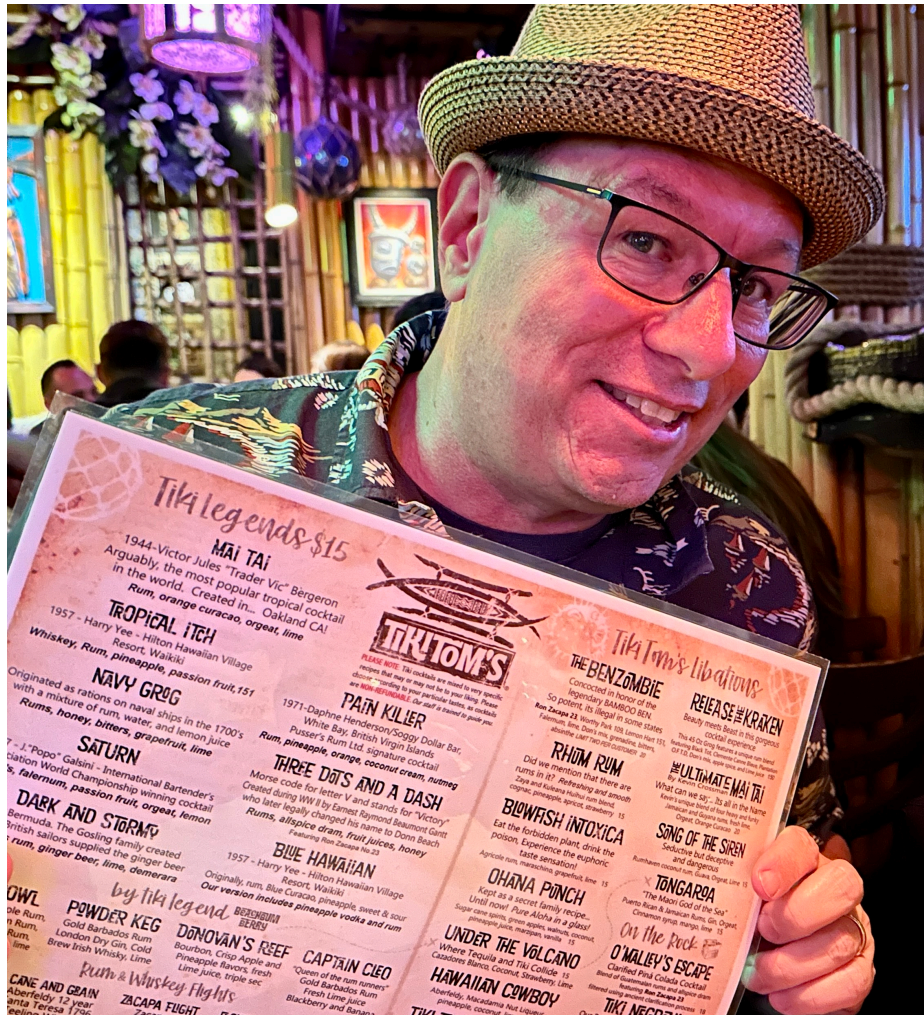
½ oz Giffard Curaçao Bleu

½ oz Aged White Rum

1 oz Overproof Jamaica Rum

Shake with crushed ice and  
garnish with mint.





# The Ultimate Mai Tai Rum Blend

Equal Parts (½ ounce each):

Appleton 12 Rare Casks  
Jamaica Rum

Smith & Cross Jamaican Rum

Planteray Xaymaca Special Dry  
Jamaican Rum

Planteray O.F.T.D. Rum

Try it at Tiki Tom's in Walnut Creek!



# CONCLUSION





# Drink What You Like

There's no right  
or wrong answer  
for the rum in a  
Mai Tai

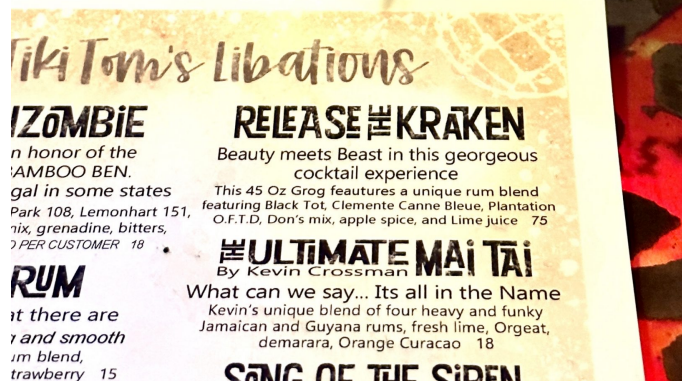


# QUESTIONS

Slides at [UltimateMaiTai.com](http://UltimateMaiTai.com)







## The Ultimate Mai Tai Recipe

1 oz Lime Juice

½ oz Orgeat (Latitude 29)

½ oz Orange Curacao (Ferrand or Clement)

¼ oz Demerara Syrup

½ oz Appleton 12 Jamaica Rum

½ oz Smith & Cross Jamaica Rum

½ oz Planteray Xaymaca Jamaica Rum

½ oz Planteray OFTD Rum

Shake with crushed ice



## Best Mai Tai Ever... for Me

The Kon-Tiki in Oakland

The last Ultimate Mai Tai by Terry Six

Always use "Please" and "Thank you"

Remember to work with your bartender and  
tip generously













## Top 10 Mai Tais

Beachbum Berry's Latitude 29

The Copper Room (Yucca Valley, CA)

Dr. Funk

Hale Pele

Inside Passage

Maunakea Mai Tai at Skull & Crown Trading Co.

Smuggler's Cove

San Francisco Mai Tai at Trader Vic's Emeryville

Sunken Harbor Club (Brooklyn)

Undertow

# RTD Mai Tais

**High End**  
(higher ABV)

Tip Tip Proof  
Proof Cocktail  
Co.

Small Hand  
Cocktails

Kō Hana

**Low End**  
(lower ABV)

Trader Vic's

Koloa

The rest in this  
class are terrible



[ultimatemaitai.com/about/rtd-mai-tai/](https://ultimatemaitai.com/about/rtd-mai-tai/)