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## Forget gin and whisky... why 2022 is all about rum

What will the year ahead bring for purveyors of fine wines and spirits?

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Sommeliers, wine growers and merchants are all contemplating 2022 and hoping it will not be as tricky as 2021 which brought difficult growing seasons for many wine regions and a plague of shipping problems for almost everyone. For drinkers everywhere, though, there is, as ever, much to look forward to - particularly when it comes to well-crafted rums. Here are a few of the trends and highlights coming your way.



## Fine rum

Both whisky and gin have had more than a moment in the spotlight. Now interest is rising in artisan rums, in which provenance and terroir are taken as seriously as they are in wine. One example is the trio of new releases from the Renegade Rum Distillery on the Caribbean island of Grenada. The three sipping rums have been made so that you can taste and appreciate the differences in production methods (column still vs pot still, for instance) and between the varieties of sugar cane (Cane or Lacalome Red here) used to make the spirits.

## 67 Pall Mall



67 Pall Mall is one of the most popular wine destinations in London

67 Pall Mall has gone from strength to strength during the pandemic. The private members club for oenophiles now has a branch in Singapore and a newly-opened pop-up in Verbier and continues to host must-attend events at the original London HQ. A highlight of its 2022 calendar is the Bolgheri Anteprema (en primeur) tasting on 24th February, the first ever such event to be held outside Bolgheri, a region that has established a strong following amongst collectors since being awarded its DOC in 1983. Situated in Tuscany, very close to the coast, Bolgheri generally produces red wines based on cabernet (sauvignon or franc) with merlot and sometimes also syrah, petit verdot

and/or sangiovese and 40 of these wines will be available to taste at the walkround event at 67 Pall Mall. Tickets cost £35.

## Burgundy whites



2021 was an unusually short vintage | CREDIT: Getty

The 2020 wines are now [January] being offered en primeur but 2021 was a short vintage and with producers feeling the pinch of having far fewer full barrels in the cellar this is likely to have an impact on prices and availability of the 2020s. “The worst I heard was a St Aubin producer who would normally make 40 barrels and has made four [in 2021],” says Jason Haynes of Flint Wines. And how are the 2020s? Burgundy expert and resident Jasper Morris says, “Even though the growing season might not have suggested it, it’s turned out to be a really textbook vintage in the whites.”

## Sustainability

Wine growers work closely with the land and are more mindful than ever that it needs to be looked after. You might not notice it, but the wine in your glass is increasingly likely to be produced according to sustainable principles. Producers are even taking a good, hard look at traditional packaging: a debate at Wine Paris Vinexpo Paris 2022, an international wine trade fair is (somewhat provocatively) titled “Is it the end for glass bottles?”



## No-alcohol drinks

Zero alcohol is the biggest trend in drink right now and has been for three or four years, and restaurants are set to tantalise our palates with ever more imaginative no and low drinks. There has been a wave of zero alcohol spirit substitutes; drinks like Jukes Cordialities made from cider vinegar and fruits; low-alcohol beers and some very successful no-alcohol takes on Italian bitters. But low and no is branching out; low and no is going ever more epicurean. Saicho has just launched the first sparkling tea in its new rare tea series. Saicho Eight Immortals is a rare Dan Cong oolong tea Phoenix Mountain in China and more rare teas are planned for 2022. Meanwhile more and more restaurants will be offering carefully developed 'soft pairings' menus, like the one at Māos in East London where seasonal 'living juices' flavoured, for example, with lychee, myrtle branch and Japanese quince, are prepared to match the food.

Coates & Seely Brut NV

## Boutique English sparkling wines

Once people relied on big brands to do the quality talking. Those aren't going away but there's a move towards pouring English sparkling wines or champagnes that are less well-known so feel more hand-picked. Picking a champagne or sparkling wine that isn't the best known there is is increasingly seen as a sign of confidence in your own style, not as a failure to lay on the glitz. So expect to see more own-label sparkling wines on restaurant

menus and a greater variety of champagnes and English sparkling wines when dining in private homes. As part of this trend, English sparkling wine will also grow. If you're after a new house sparkling wine how about trying The Grange Classic NV (Haynes, Hanson & Clark, £204/case of six) or Coates & Seely Brut NV (Lea & Sandeman, £185.70/case of six).

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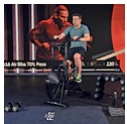
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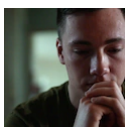
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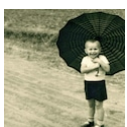
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