

GOLDEN AGE

Rum, perhaps more than any other spirit, has suffered from an image crisis. Stuart Peskett looks at how things have changed



Rewind a few years, and vodka and gin were in the ascendancy in style bars across the country. Cocktails such as the cosmopolitan were de rigueur, and vodka in particular was seen as the base spirit of choice for creative bartenders. Meanwhile, poor old rum had a rough image: a relic from the past century, with the odd pirate gag never too far away. But now, rum is beginning to shake off these connotations and is gaining the respect from bartenders – and more importantly, consumers – that it quite clearly deserves. And it should be said that while it's easy to poke fun at the maritime connections, these only exist because they played a crucial role in the history of rum itself.



mixers or in more complex cocktail recipes,' he says. 'It also forms the base ingredient for a number of classic cocktails, particularly the Cuba libre [rum and Coke] and the mojito.'

But author Dave Broom, whose book *Rum* has won just about every award going,



Senior trade-marketing manager Fraser McGuire, unsurprisingly, is assured and confident about the brand and puts its success down to its versatility: 'It's easy to serve in long or short drinks, with basic

to dark, rich and complex.

Kushal Gaya, director of Green Island, which produces a series of overproof and spiced rums from Mauritius, says it is only the Brits who have hang-ups on rum's navy

'People are astonished when they taste a Caribbean golden rum for the first time. There is a huge job to be done on education'
Dave Broom