

PLAYBOY

ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN

SEPTEMBER 1995 • \$4.95

**FANTASTIC
FALL PREVIEW
ISSUE**

**HOT STUFF
FOR A COOL
SEASON**

**DREW'S
SEXY MOM**

**JAID
BARRYMORE**

**PLAYBOY
NFL PREVIEW**

**THE NO. 1
PRESEASON
FORECAST**

**KIMBERLEY
CONRAD
HEFNER**

**MORE
GORGEOUS
THAN EVER**

**CINDY
CRAWFORD
INTERVIEW**

**LOVE, SEX,
MODELS
AND MONEY**

**20 QUESTIONS
A WAKE-UP
CALL WITH
SANDRA
BULLOCK**

Austria Sch 89
Finland Fmk 39
France Fr 35
Germany DM 14.90
Italy Lit 11000
Norway NOK 59 inkl. MVA
Spain Pta 995
Sweden SEK 59 inkl. MOMS
Switzerland SwF 9.50
U.K. £2.95



the coolest new
spirits are premium
vodkas and
tequilas

Drink By Don Birnam

White ights

VODKA AND TEQUILA are stepping up in the world. The newest ones—described by the liquor industry as “superpremiums”—should be savored rather than knocked back. This trend to smoother and subtler spirits began a few years ago as drinkers discovered the complex pleasures of single-malt scotches and single-barrel bourbons. Stolichnaya has entered the premium vodka market with Stolichnaya Cristall, which is named for the crystalline purity of the spirit, achieved through a double-distillation process more thorough than that used for most other vodkas. Stoli has also contributed to the category of flavored vodkas with such brands as Stolichnaya Ohranj, which is double-distilled, enhanced with orange zest, juice and pulp and then filtered to leave behind a hint of citrus flavor. Served ice-cold, as an aperitif, Ohranj is a great way to begin an evening, as are two other flavored vodkas, Finlandia Arctic Cranberry and Absolut Kurant.

Smirnoff, the world's largest producer of vodka, has introduced a superpremium brand, Smirnoff Black, based on a pre-Soviet process used by Vladimir Smirnoff to create the czar's own vodka. Smirnoff Black, which comes in a beautiful, slender bottle bearing the double-headed-eagle crest of the Romanov family, is made in small batches from choice Russian grains and is slowly triple-distilled in copper stills, then filtered through Siberian silver birch charcoal. The whole process is performed in Moscow. (Most other Smirnoff vodkas are distilled in the U.S.)

Another Russian vodka, Star of Russia, is distilled five times to remove impurities and give the spirit a pleasant aroma. It is then treated to some heavy-duty filtering. The result is a crystal-clear vodka that has a cult following thanks to its unique distillation process and limited availability.

Royalty Vodka is a new spirit from Holland pu-

rified by what is called “reverse osmosis installation.” (Water is pushed through a membrane so fine that only pure water molecules can pass through.) Another excellent Dutch product, Ketel One, derives its name from a pot still that dates back to the early days of the Nolet Distillery, founded in 1691 in the town of Schiedam. Each morning the “ketel” is fired up and a triple-distillation process begins to produce vodka. The master distiller discards the first 100 gallons (considered too harsh) and the last 100 gallons (considered too weak), reserving only the “heart” of the distillation for Ketel One. The vodka is left to rest for six weeks in underground tile-lined tanks and is then filtered through charcoal, resulting in an exceptionally pure spirit.

Sky Vodka is the creation of Maurice Kanbar, an American inventor who loves vodka but hates hangovers. By putting the spirit through a “four column” distillation process, Kanbar claims he has been able to remove most of the congeners—by-products that may cause headaches. After distillation, the spirit goes through a three-step filtration process, resulting in a silky vodka.

Tequila, too, is having its reputation upgraded. Largely, it's drunk as a head-shaking powerhouse spirit best muted in margaritas. Now, with the introduction of an array of superpremium tequilas in the U.S., the true excellence and diversity of the liquor is finally being appreciated. What many drinkers don't realize is that most of the popular tequilas imported into this country consist of only 51 percent of spirits distilled from the fermented blue agave grown in the state of Jalisco. The other 49 percent may, by Mexican law, be made from sugarcane and use artificial coloring. Such blends are fine for margaritas, but only the finest tequilas are made from pure blue agave.

The use of the best blue agave and careful distillation in small batches determines the richness and flavor of a great tequila, *(continued on page 166)*

generally includes calisthenics, rope-jumping, shadowboxing, punching-bag routines and light sparring with an instructor using focus pads (you hit the pads he's holding, and he doesn't hit back).

With boxercise, you'll work up a sweat, and there's no better way to relieve the pressure of a rotten day at the office than by bashing a punching bag. Here's where to go: Crunch Fitness and Equinox Fitness Center in New York City, Bodies in Motion in Pasadena and Jamnastics in Chicago.

For a greater challenge, look for Solo Spar, an electronic sparring and training device that arrived in clubs recently. The \$25,000 Solo Spar consists of a 9'x9' boxing ring with a heavy bag suspended from an overhead mechanism that imitates a boxer's movements as it bobs and weaves across the canvas. Solo Spar doesn't punch back, but it moves quickly—even cornering you at times—so you have to be fast on your feet. Inventor Richard Murphy says “a seven-minute round with my machine is as challenging as 30 minutes of aerobics.” Plus it can be programmed to move like the pros, so you can take on a Solo Spar version of Mike Tyson and live to tell about it.

At home, try the much simpler Aerobox bag kit (\$80), which includes a heavy bag, support bar (you secure the bar in a doorway, hang up the bag and pound away), gloves, jump rope and video. For a classic home setup, Everlast offers a

“gentleman's gym” set with professional-quality gloves, jump rope, heavy bag and speed bag (\$630).

FROM THE FEET UP

If you think these new forms of indoor exercise are inventive, you'll be equally impressed with the latest lineup of athletic shoes. Nike's new Ndestrukt collection, for example, includes a cross-trainer called the Air Tuff (\$85) that was developed with input from U.S. national ski teams. Thanks to a special molded fabric woven into the shoe's midsole, the Air Tuff can take five times the stress of shoes made of other synthetic materials. L.A. Gear's low- and mid-top Razorback cross-trainers (\$65 and \$70) use Flak, a bulletproof substance used in police vests, to cushion the heels. The Converse Psycho Comp (\$75) is a cross-trainer with enhanced stability and shock absorption. And Avia's low- and mid-top Scorpion cross-trainers (\$70 and \$75) incorporate advanced cantilever technology—a horseshoe-shaped pad of rubber around the back of the sole helps disperse shock outward while increasing stability. For shoes that improve traction on indoor courts, try Adidas' Equipment Instinct low- and mid-top shoes (\$80 and \$85), featuring rubber mounds on the soles, or Wilson's low- and mid-top Spykes (\$50 and \$55), which grip the court with 175 grabbing surfaces.



White Nights

(continued from page 112)

while aging in oak barrels provides a maturity and mellowness to the spirit. Called *añejos*, these tequilas (aged at least one year) take on flavor and color from the barrels, adding distinctive qualities to each producer's offering. “In Mexico they would never think of putting an *añejo* in a margarita,” says Lucinda Hutson, author of the comprehensive new book *Tequila!* “They enjoy it at the end of a meal, as you would a fine cognac.”

Herradura was one of the first producers to import a 100 percent blue agave to the U.S. At about \$30 a bottle, Herradura Añejo has been a benchmark for superpremiums, in both quality and price. Another early entry in the American market was Sauza's Conmemorativo, with its light golden color and lovely smoothness, and Tres Generaciones, an *añejo* with exceptional richness. Many tequila connoisseurs believe that Sauza's Hornitos brand—a lesser-aged *reposado* (two months to a year in the barrel)—is the perfect balance of robust tradition and new finesse.

Jose Cuervo markets several upscale tequilas in limited quantities. Its Tradicional is a 100 percent blue agave *reposado* with a pepperlike bite balanced by a hint of oak. Cuervo 1800 is a blend of *reposados* and *añejos*, with a smoky flavor.

Tequila Imports in Austin, Texas offers four exceptional 100-percent blue agave tequilas. Porfidio Silver Label Agave is surprisingly smooth for a non-aged tequila. It and Porfidio Añejo Agave are both sold in hand-numbered grappa-type bottles. The *añejo* is aged two years in American oak barrels. Porfidio Extra Aged Añejo is a blue agave blended from a mixture of tequilas aged up to six years. It's sold in a hand-painted ceramic crock that's been signed by the artist. Porfidio Single Barrel Añejo is a limited production blue agave that is marketed in handblown glass bottles with a royal palm cactus design inside. Each bottle comes corked so that it can be used to store oil (or whatever) after you have finished the tequila—which is superb.

Centinela is an exceptionally smooth blue agave tequila that's been produced by the same family-owned distillery since 1894. Blanco, *reposado* and *añejo* spirits are produced and the company doesn't use any artificial colors or sweeteners in its tequilas. El Dorado Importers in Santa Fe brings Centinela into the U.S.

The double-distilled Dos Reales Añejo—which Cuervo calls an “ultrapremium”—shows its age gracefully in its amber color and complex flavors. This year, to mark the company's 200th anniversary, there will be a limited release of a three-year-old *añejo* called La Reserva de la Familia de Jose Cuervo that is corked



Mike Evers

“I'm taking you downtown. Dinner, a movie, and then, who knows?”

and wax-sealed and placed in a hand-painted wooden box. Only 4000 of the 1.75-liter bottles will be introduced to the U.S. in 1995, and, despite a \$150 price, it's a good bet they'll sell fast. This tequila is impressive, with a flavor reminiscent of sherry and cognac. Yet it still retains the fruitiness of the blue agave.

Also look for an *añejo* from a small distillery named Patrón. This tequila comes in a handblown, numbered glass decanter. The spirit spends at least two years in wood, from which it derives its amber color and toasty hints of vanilla sweetness.

But if any tequila can claim a kind of cult status, it would be Chinaco. Produced by a great-grandson of a former president of Mexico and named after the legendary guerrillas who fought to free Mexico from European dominance, Chinaco is as famous as it is elusive. (In 1990 a shipment of Chinaco destined for southern California was hijacked, and production ceased at the distillery. By

1993 Chinaco was being bottled again.) Currently the silver Chinaco (unaged) and the *reposado* (aged in barrels for eight months) can be found in the U.S. in limited supply. The highly regarded *añejo* will be available by the end of this year.

The importers of Chinaco have also just brought in El Tesoro de Don Felipe, a blue agave tequila made at a 50-year-old distillery in Mexico's Los Altos mountains. No water is added to Tesoro—a process others use to dilute the tequila—so it retains a robustness from the quality of the agave and the Kentucky bourbon barrels in which the spirit is aged for two to three years before blending.

Such spirits, whose antecedents once were little more than the perfect ingredients for such drinks as screwdrivers and margaritas, are now being prized by serious sippers. *Salud!*



disc heads

(continued from page 130)

million-dollar budgets.

"We didn't start this for money," says Carrella, who worked for Macromedia in Silicon Valley before coming up to San Francisco. "Otherwise we wouldn't have quit our \$70,000-a-year jobs to eat macaroni and make no salary for a year."

Huffman concurs: "If this weren't my job I would have to work to get the money to pay for the machines to support this habit."

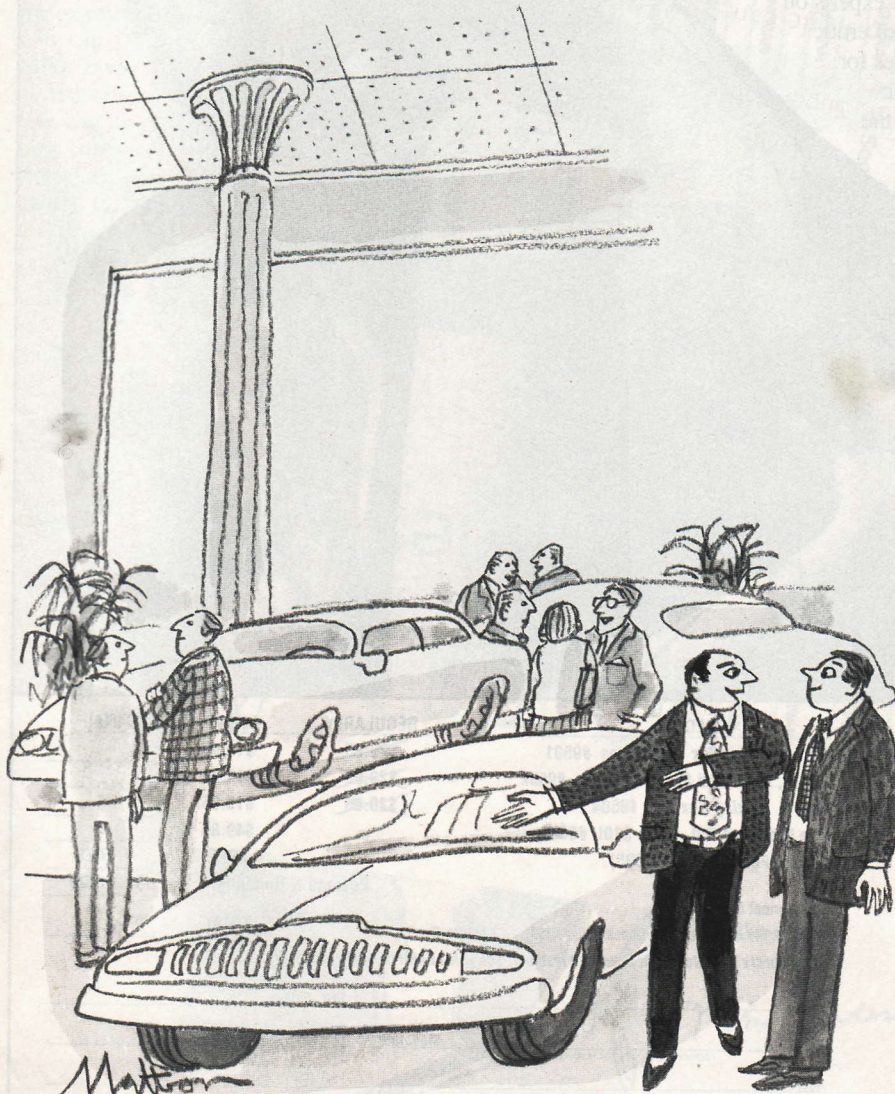
Marc Canter has been known to refer to himself as the "godfather of multimedia." Mention his name among a group of multimedia developers and watch the glances carom around the room. "You either love him or you hate him" goes the refrain, though something tells you that the breakdown is not exactly 50-50. He is the founder of Macromind, the company that became Macromedia, which created the software that makes multimedia possible. He has also started another company, Canter Technology, which recently shipped its first product, Meet Mediaband.

There must be other people in the industry as opinionated as Canter, but none seem to blare at quite the same volume. He projects such an image that by the time he sat me down in front of his basement computer, I was prepared to witness a stirring vision of the future.

Canter whirls me through the two presentations that make up the debut disc. The first, entitled "Undo Me," is a point-and-click interactive music video based on the question of what romance would be like if our lives were equipped with an "undo" function key. The second is a world-beat tribal-dance party, in which the viewer adds sonic layers to an endless, throbbing beat by clicking on symbols, words and images as they fly across the screen. The graphics are slick, the interfaces are new and appealing—and the content is as fatuous as the worst of the shovelware (boring material loaded onto badly produced discs) that Canter maligns.

When I ask him if he would enjoy messing around with these discs himself, Canter passes off the question. "Would you or I spend 15 hours a day playing Nintendo? Maybe not, but there are millions of kids out there who do."

Once again, it all comes down to content; the medium itself isn't enough. That's the problem with multimedia these days: Despite the enormous amount of hype that surrounds it, the results have been disappointing, aesthetically and commercially. *Myst* and *Doom*, among the most popular CD-ROMs ever released, have made modest piles of money for their makers, but



"Think of the dual air bags as giant breasts ready to pop out and comfort you in your time of need."