

Habanos

NEWSLETTER

EXCLUSIVELY PRESENTED BY

KALIMAN CARIBE

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Premium Cigars&Tobacco Blagoevgrad has now moved in the newly opened trade center Largo Mall (2 Todor Alexandrov Str.), ground floor. The modern building is in the city's center. For all the cigar lovers the spacious boutique has a bar that should offer to the selected cigar a variety of drinks in the refreshing atmosphere and garden in Cuban style. Working hours 8:00-22:00, every day, M. +359886663014.



CIGAR AFICIONADO

THE 25 BEST CIGARS OF 2013

The smoke has cleared and the ashes have settled. After puffing the way through an entire year of taste tests, the editorial team of Cigar Aficionado has chosen the Top 25 Cigars of 2013. The team has smoked more than 700 cigars to get to the 25 that made this list, and the process was a thorough one.

They have reviewed the list of cigars that had scored at least 91 points in Cigar Aficionado or Cigar Insider blind taste

tests throughout the year. Then culled that list to 45 cigars, eliminating those no longer on the market and considering only the highest-scoring cigars from each brand. (If a Cohiba Robusto, for example, scored 93 points and a Cohiba Esplendido scored 91, the team promoted the Robusto to final consideration and eliminated the Esplendido.) What has left has been a list of 45 standout cigars. Their tasting coordinator then has repurchased each of those ci-

gars at retail. He has removed all of their identifying bands and has replaced them with numbered labels to conceal their identity. These have been passed out to the tasting panel at Cigar Aficionado.

At the conclusion of that taste test, 13 cigars had rated high enough to be considered candidates for Cigar of the Year. The tasting coordinator once again has stripped those cigars of their identifying bands, created a new

code and redistributed the 13 cigars for a final blind taste test conducted by editor and publisher Marvin R. Shanken, executive editor Gordon Mott and senior editor David Savona. That final battle has left them with a clear winner.

The Top 25 list contains cigars from a host of countries, with a wide range of flavors and prices. They are a superb group. The team trust you will enjoy smoking them as much as they did.

THE NUMBER 1 OF THE 25 BEST CIGARS OF THE YEAR 2013 IS

MONTECRISTO N2



The undisputed king of torpedoes is the Montecristo N2. The stately smoke with the pointy tip is known the world over and ranks as one of the best-selling cigars in the Cuban cigar portfolio. And unlike some things that sell well, Monte 2s combine commercial success with critical acclaim. The Cigar Aficionado team have rated Montecristo N2s dozens of times in own blind tastings. The first time has been more than 20 years ago, when they have given it a score of

94 points. This score of 96 is the highest rating they have ever bestowed on the cigar in a blind taste test.

Recent production Monte 2s are extraordinary, teeming with rich but not overwhelming flavors of leather, such sweet spices as cinnamon and nutmeg and the cigar's trademark tangy wood note. They have enough flavor and power to satisfy those who smoke cigars on a regular basis without overwhelming those who puff less frequently.

The Montecristo N2 is anything but new. The cigar is one of the original sizes of the Montecristo brand, which was created in Cuba by Alonso Menendez in 1935 and became the best-known of all the cigars rolled at Menendez, Garcia y Cia., the biggest cigar company in pre-Castro Cuba.

The Count of Monte Cristo, the 1844 work of French novelist Alexandre Dumas that culminates in a dramatic sword fight, is believed to have inspired the name. Today, the

Montecristo box features swords crossed in a triangular pattern, and the band has a majestic fleur-de-lis, a symbol of the French monarchy, in its center. While Montecristo N2s smoke beautifully in their youth, they also make superb aging cigars for those with the patience. The team has smoked Montecristos that have been stored for 10 to 50 years in a humidor, and they only get better over time. The Montecristo N2 is a classic, and Cigar Aficionado's best cigar of 2013.

KALIMAN CARIBE

Exclusive distributor of Habanos S.A. for Bulgaria, Macedonia, Albania, Armenia

HABANOS WORLD

XVI HABANOS FESTIVAL A WEEK FULL OF CUBAN SPIRIT AND PASSIONS

THE SALES OF GRUPO HABANOS, WHICH THIS YEAR CELEBRATES ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY, HAVE EXPERIENCED A SIGNIFICANT GROWTH OF OVER 8% IN 2013

The XVI Habanos Festival, the long-awaited annual meeting of lovers of the best tobacco in the world, held 24-28 February 2014. People from more than 80 countries, including 300 journalists and photographers, travel every year to Cuba to learn more about the origins of the Habano and enjoy a full activity programme that includes exclusive evenings. Hoyo de Monterrey,

Partagas, Trinidad and H. Upmann are the brands that took centre stage at the sixteenth edition of the Festival. Attendees at the Festival were able to enjoy an exclusive first experience of their new vitolas, as well as the rest of Habanos launches for 2014, which usually includes the prestigious Cohiba and Montecristo brands.

NOCHE DE BIENVENIDA MONDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2014



Club Habana was the stage for the Welcoming Evening where the Hoyo de Monterrey and Partagas brands were announced with their new vitolas, providing this year attendees with an exquisite setting in which to enjoy their new cigars: Le Hoyo de San Juan and Partagas Serie D N6. Hoyo de Monterrey has renovated its historical Le Hoyo Series with a thick vitola of intermediate length (ring gauge 54 x 150 mm long), which only uses Seco and Ligero leaves from San Juan y Martinez. This provides the Le Hoyo de San Juan with the consistency and intensity characteristic of the leaves growing in that zone, while keeping the brand's elegant flavour. As for Partagas, it has enriched its Series with a new vitola that maintains the character of the brand's flavour in a surprising size creating the Partagas Serie D N6 (ring gauge 50 x 90 mm long), a Habano that can be smoked in around 15 minutes. Over the course of the evening, an incredible Mapping was shown for guests to enjoy as well as a synchronised swimming show and the best Cuban music. The legendary band Los Van-Van, led by Juan Formell, performed for the first time in a Habanos Festival, and provided the greatest ending to unforgettable evening.

NOCHE DE TRINIDAD WEDNESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2014



On Wednesday 26th February a celebration in honour of the Trinidad brand was held in the Museum of Fine Arts in Havana. The new Trinidad Vigia vitola, which retains the exclusive brand flavour in an innovative heavy ring gauge size, and the new Cohiba Edicion Limitada 2014 were tasted during a gastronomic feast prepared by the famous dutch chef Ron Blaauw - the holder of two Michelin stars - and sommelier Cuno Van't Hoff.



GALA DINNER FRIDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2014



The XVI Habanos Festival came to a close on Friday 28th February with the traditional Gala Evening, in which the first H. Upmann Reserva was presented: Upmann N2 Reserva Cosecha 2010. Made with leaves from the Vuelta Abajo 2010 harvest, carefully selected and aged for at least 3 years, the cigars of this Reserva have been made Totalmente a mano con Tripa Larga - Totally hand made, Long Filler. Over the evening, the Habanos 2013 Awards took place with awards in three main categories - Production, Communication, and Business — being presented whilst the evening finished in style with the world renowned Grand Humidors Auction.



As with every year, the funds raised from the auction of these true masterpieces are used to support the Cuban Public Health System. Famous artists performed in this event, including musician Edesio

Alejandro who was nominated to the 2010 Latin Grammy Awards, and one of the greatest Cuban singers, Adriano Rodriguez, the winner of the Cuban National Music Award in 2013.

HABANOS WORLD

INNOVATIVE ACTIVITIES



The programme of the XVI Habanos Festival included new activities of interest for the audience.

Belgian and Cuban beers are this year beverages chosen for the Alliance with selected Habanos. The Belgian sommelier and beer expert, Ben Vinken, lead this event, which included some of the most prestigious beers in the world: the Belgian beers Duvel, Leffe Brown, Malheur Brut Reserve and Chimay Grande Reserve, and the Cuban Bucanero.

The first contest to get the longest ash - an innovative, surprising event - was held on Thursday 27th February.

That same day, at 15.30h, the Festival included the pairing of Vodkas and Habanos, where the prestigious Absolut Vodka was tasted with Montecristo Edmundo, considered one of the Habanos' benchmarks.

The Habanos Moments' event took place after this activity, on Thursday February 27th at 16.30. The Habano Punch Double Coronas was tasted with diverse and outstanding chocolates and drinks such as: Whisky Glenmorangie 10 Years Old, Cognac Hennessy VS, Chivas Regal 12 Years Old, Chivas Regal 18 Years Old, Heinek-en beer, Varadero Supremo, Ron Isla del Tesoro, Licor Pazo Pondal, Brandy Torres 15, Licor Bols Chocolate 17, and Celebrations Sparkling chocolate selection.

This Festival included interesting conferences on Habanos such as: „170 years of H. Upmann“ in which Mr. Raul Martell examined the history of this German-born brand and „Tobacco, cinema, and great stories“, by Mr. Rigoberto Lopez - both taking place on Wednesday 26th February; on Thursday 27th February, Mr. Vladimir Andino and Mr. Felipe Milanus talked about „Elements that have an influence in the combustion of Habanos“; finally, the talk „Habanos Vintage“ by Mr. Simon Chase, after which an aged Habano was tasted, took place on Friday 28th February.



GRUPO HABANOS 2013 FINANCIAL RESULTS

2014 is the 20th anniversary of the creation of Habanos s.a. and the XVI Habanos Festival celebrated this anniversary to promote the marketing of Habanos all over the world. The creation of this new company entailed a modernisation that has served as a platform for the expansion of the presence of Habanos through a network of exclusive distributors on all five continents.

In 2013 Grupo Habanos, that markets worldwide all its exclusive the 27 Habanos brands, all of which are made Totalmente a Mano - Totally hand made, had a turnover of 447 million dollars. This amounts to a growth - taking the constant exchange rate into account - of over 8%. This is a positive

trend that shows the company's strength as a global leader despite the difficult economic and legal environment.

Walfrido Hernandez Mesa, Co-president of Habanos s.a., said that "the experience acquired over these 20 years, as well as our excellent collaboration with the industry and agriculture, are the basis to continue to grow in the future in leadership of totally hand made cigars".

As for Luis Sanchez-Harguindey, Co-president of Habanos s.a., he stated that "our strategy, which focuses on offering an exclusive, high-quality product to Habano lovers, is the most suitable way to strengthen

our global leadership, consolidating sales and profitability in mature markets and expanding our culture and sales in countries with the potential for development".

Ana Lopez, Marketing Director at Habanos s.a., said that one of the main achievements of the company in its 20 years of life was "the consolidation of the company's position as a leader in the Premium cigar market on the basis of a solid marketing strategy based on product innovation, specialised distribution to final consumers, and communication, where the Habanos Festival - created in 1999 - has played a key role".

The global leaders in sales are the Cohiba, Montecristo and Romeo Y Julieta brands.

HABANOS WORLD

XVI FESTIVAL DE LA HABANO THROUGH THE EYES OF DR. GEORGI MAXIMOV



I went to Cuba in a cool early morning of February. After about 12 hours of travel I arrived at the airport „Jose Marti“ in Havana to participate in the „XVI Festival de la Habano“. The capital of Cuba welcomed me bathed in warm sunshine, and the faces of the Cubans were so. The time was not enough to see all the beauty of Havana, with colorful streets and grand boulevards such as the coastal „Malecon“. The Cuban capital is decorated with typical colonial architecture and is filled with attractions such as the Old Town, Capitol, the legendary bars La Bodega del medio and Floredita, where the famous writer Ernest Hemingway had his Mojito and Daiquiri. The pearl of the midnight Havana is the legendary cabaret bar „Tropicana“, founded in 1939. Cubans are warm people who meet every guest friendly. The girls are smiling, with graceful bodies and exotic looks, appreciating each worthy complement. I liked the atmosphere and hu-

mid tropical climate of the „Island of Freedom“.

From the rich program of the Festival I could select only the details that made me most impressed.

The Festival of Cuban cigar began a contest for sommeliers. Renowned experts combined the best tobacco in the world with an appropriate drink or food. The evening „La noche de Bienvenida“ took place at the elegant and stylish „Club Havana“, to the old marina „Marina Hemingway“. The atmosphere was fine and feeling great.

On the second day we visited the tobacco plantations in Pinar del Rio in Vuelta Abajo. We saw how the tobacco leaves are processed, stored, selected and allocated before taking the way to the rolling factories.

In the morning of the third day of the Festival the organizers

had prepared a master training in cigar hand-rolling „Totalmente a mano“. For me this evening will be remembered because I had the unique opportunity to meet, talk with and to discuss various topics with Juan Martin Guevara - brother of the legendary historical figure and a great revolutionary, Dr. Ernesto „Che“ Guevara.

During the fourth day we visited the factory of one of the oldest Cuban cigars „H. Upmann“, and then the factory of „La Corona“ cigars. Got familiar with the art of the cigar rollers that were creating a masterpiece — the Cuban cigar, by taking good care of perfectly carefully grown to-



bacco leaves. I leave it to your imagination to guess whether the ladies working in the factory gently rub each cigar in their thighs before they put it in the cigar box. In the afternoon was held the long-awaited contest for the longest cigar ash.

All participants received an H. Upmann Monarcas, length 178 mm. A Cuban lady won the contest with an ash that was measured of 169 mm in length, with her cigar remained only of 9 mm. The most impressive for me was the combination of Montecristo Edmundo cigar with the most favorite cocktail of the Russian Tsar Nicholas II - a glass of vodka Absolut Elyx, to which is added slice of lime, sprinkled top with ground Cuban coffee and brown sugar from Cuban sugar cane.

„XVI Festival de la Habano“ finalized with traditional fairy gala in PabExpo. The music idol Tom Jones opened the event with a memorable version of „Besame Mucho“. All guests had the opportunity to taste rare culinary delicacies including Caribbean lobster in mango sauce, a selection of fine wines, Champagne Taittinger Brut, Cuban coffee, aged Cuban rum and careful selection of Cuban cigars.

The trip to Cuba was a feast for the senses, surrounded by the scent of unique cigars and aged rum. The Festival is not just a pleasure, but schooling for the real connoisseur of cigars and the exotic being. I returned but my heart remained in Cuba, where one day I will go again. I invite you to join me!

CASTRO AND LANCEROS



In the early 60s one of the Fidel Castro's bodyguards gave him a cigar, made by a friend of his. El Comendante en Jefe liked the cigar so much that offered to its creator and tersedor master Eduardo Rivera to begin production in limited quantities. In 1968, the cigar gets its official name „Cohiba“ and

Lanceros is the first official representative of the brand with dimensions 192 mm and ring 38 (cigar gallery Laguito N1 and name of the vitola Lanceros). Cohiba is a word that the native Indians Taino used to welcome Christopher Columbus of this Caribbean island in 1492. „Coiba“, „Cuaba“, „Cuoba“ were words of praise that the Indian tribe pronounced during their rituals, while smoking bundle of dried tobacco leaves.

Originally Cohiba was a protocol cigar in three sizes - „Lancero“, „Corona Especial“ and „Panetela“ and is intended for Castro and other senior officials, as well as diplomatic gifts. Queen Elizabeth II, Leonid Brezhnev, Saddam Hussein, the Spanish King Juan Carlos and other heads of state



Queen Elizabeth II



King Juan Carlos

has received them. The brand quickly gained an exceptional reputation for a first-class product and became known to cigars connoisseurs worldwide, but only since 1982 has been introduced for wider consumption.