

Mezcal: A New Artificial Paradise in the Annals of Science

Mezcal, the ancient Mexican spirit, is experiencing a resurgence in popularity. But what exactly is it, and how is it made? Here's a comprehensive guide to mezcal, from its history and production methods to its unique flavor profile and ritualistic significance.



MESCAL: A New Artificial Paradise (Annels of Science)

by Havelock Ellis

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History of Mezcal

Mezcal has been produced in Mexico for centuries. The word "mezcal" comes from the Nahuatl word "mexcalli," which means "oven-cooked agave." The first mezcals were likely made by indigenous peoples in the Oaxaca region of Mexico. By the 16th century, mezcal was being produced commercially and exported to other parts of the world.

Mezcal's popularity declined in the 19th century, as tequila became the more popular Mexican spirit. However, in recent years, mezcal has seen a resurgence in popularity, both in Mexico and abroad. This is due in part to the growing interest in craft spirits and the unique flavor profile of mezcal.

Production of Mezcal

Mezcal is made from the heart of the agave plant. The agave plant is a succulent that grows in the arid regions of Mexico. The heart of the agave plant is called the "piña." The piña is roasted in an oven, which caramelizes the sugars and gives mezcal its characteristic smoky flavor.

After the piña is roasted, it is crushed and fermented. The fermentation process can take anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. Once the fermentation is complete, the mezcal is distilled. Mezcal can be distilled one or two times. Single-distilled mezcal is called "mezcal joven" or "mezcal ordinario." Double-distilled mezcal is called "mezcal reposado" or "mezcal añejo." Reposado mezcal is aged in oak barrels for at least two months, while añejo mezcal is aged for at least one year.

Flavor Profile of Mezcal

Mezcal has a unique flavor profile that is characterized by its smokiness, earthiness, and sweetness. The smokiness comes from the roasting of the agave piña, while the earthiness comes from the fermentation process. The sweetness comes from the sugars in the agave plant.

The flavor of mezcal can vary depending on the type of agave used, the roasting process, and the fermentation and distillation methods. Mezcal made from wild agave plants tends to be more smoky and earthy, while

mezcal made from cultivated agave plants tends to be more sweet and fruity.

Ritualistic Significance of Mezcal

Mezcal has a long history of ritualistic use in Mexican culture. Mezcal is often used in shamanic ceremonies and other traditional rituals. It is believed that mezcal can help to connect with the spirit world and to facilitate spiritual growth.

Mezcal is also used as a traditional medicine. It is used to treat a variety of ailments, including stomach problems, headaches, and fatigue. Mezcal is also believed to have aphrodisiac properties.

Mezcal is a unique and complex spirit that is experiencing a resurgence in popularity. Its smoky, earthy, and sweet flavor profile, as well as its ritualistic significance, make it a fascinating and rewarding spirit to explore.



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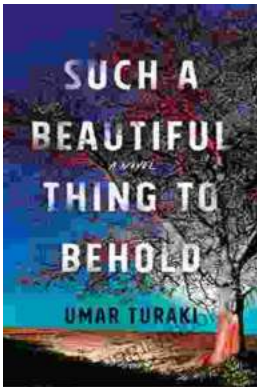
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