

In 2005, Beachbum Berry unearthed the original “lost” Zombie recipe, which called for three different Caribbean rums. Fourteen years later, Ed Hamilton was drinking, yes rum, with the Bum at his New Orleans bar when the conversation turned to the challenge of recreating the lost cocktails of the last century. Over the next two years they blended scores of rums with the goal of creating a blend that will reanimate your Zombie, fuel your Jet Pilot, and punch up your favorite Tiki Classics without the trouble of inventorying three different rums at home or at a bar.

This blend had to be more than an overproof slug of rum, but rather bring balance to the final drink through a skillful and subtle marriage of multiple, aged, Caribbean spirits.

Purists may point out that the original 1934 Zombie recipe of 1.5oz Puerto Rican gold rum, 1.5oz Jamaican dark rum and 1 oz of Demerara 151 adds up to more rum than the recipe below, which calls for a mere 2 oz of our 118 proof rum — and they’d be right! So what’s missing? Mostly, more water in the rum bottle. But more important than the liquid volume is the intensity of the rum flavors. And with the higher ABV of the Beachbum Zombie Blend, you get all that flavor at half the volume. (And at a fraction of the time, trouble and cost of mixing a Zombie with three different bottles.)

If you’re pouring 4 oz from one bottle, that bottle isn’t going to last very long, and you probably won’t last very long either. On the other hand, it’s nice to be able to enjoy another cocktail on those days when the zombie calls your name without turning into a zombie yourself.

HAMILTON BEACHBUM ZOMBIE

2 oz Beachbum Berry’s Zombie Rum Blend
¾ oz lime juice
½ oz each grapefruit juice, falernum, and cinnamon syrup
Dash (8 drops) each Pernod, grenadine and Angostura Bitters
Power blend with ¾ cup ice no more than 5 sec
Pour into a tall glass and add more ice to fill. Garnish with mint.

The Bum spent more than the last decade of the last century researching the recipes and secrets of the men and women who made and served the drinks that Donn Beach and Vic Bergeron made famous. He’s the author of six definitive books on tiki and has traveled the world educating bartenders and enthusiasts about this exciting era of drinking.

Ed Hamilton spent a couple of decades sailing the Caribbean, visiting the birthplaces of the Caribbean spirit and pursuing his passion for cane spirits. Since 1995 he has been sharing his research online and in books about his travels and the people who have spent their lives making some of the best spirits in the world.

