



I am missing the clinks of the glasses, listening to blues, meeting friends!! My routine took a complete turn like many others. Now it is more about the virtual world and online things, may it be ZOOM, MEET, WhatsApp, FB Messenger or Skype. So here is saying cheers to my amazing readers of Wine & Spirits Club Of India once again on our completion of the fourth anniversary and raising a toast to 16100 plus members from 103 countries across the globe.

In this edition I have covered a unique story of this amazing happy couple from London, who relocated to a small mountain village close to Beirut in Lebanon to fulfill their dream and gave birth to "Chateau Belle-Vue". The next story is about BOOTZ Rum which loudly spoke about "Be Vocal about Local" much before the statement became political, and how "Kyndal Group" of India pushed the thought of this biggest rum drinking country's consumers towards premiumization OF RUM.

So shine your best glasses, pour a drink and read on!
From the Editor's Desk

Little Else[®] by Mike Payne



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Chateau Belle-Vue, Lebanon - An expression of dreams, responsibilities, risk and success of the wine couple Naji and Jill Boutros.



My husband left his country at age 18, fleeing civil war. Before we married in 1990, he opened up to me about his desire to one day go back and help in his village, should the right moment present itself. I consented, committing to support him honor his personal vow. Nine years (and four children) later, we left our comfortable London home to raise our family (and thousands of grape vines) in a small mountain village sixteen kilometers from Beirut.

We joked that we moved in and the population instantly doubled, which wasn't too far from the truth. Locals had been slow to return in the aftermath of war, so we faced two immediate tasks: encouraging displaced villagers to reattach themselves to the land of their ancestors, and protecting ancient vineyards from unregulated construction and development.



In April 2000, we planted the site of Hotel Belle-Vue, Naji's great-grandfather's hotel built in the 1860s which had been obliterated in 1983. Even the stones used in its construction had been looted. But the land was still fertile. When expat families learned that Naji was planting vines again, they quickly stepped up to offer us use of their ancestral lands. This is how we grew. When a family needed to sell, we bought—but our preference was to keep the land in the hands of its original owners whenever possible.

Twenty years later, we dry-farm 60 acres of high-altitude vines, with annual production levels hovering around 25,000 bottles. The recipe is simple—farm as naturally as possible, allowing the spectacular quality of Bhamdoun's glorious fruit to shine through. We use no chemicals in our vineyards, relying on summer sun and plentiful winter precipitation to nourish our vines. Even in the winery, we exclusively ferment using only natural yeasts found on the skin of the grapes. This is how nature intended it, and everything we hoped we'd be able to achieve all those years ago.



Yes, it is a massive responsibility. Our success represents the viability of the village, its identity and the livelihood of many local families. The wines we produce have garnered outsized attention across the globe. That Chateau Belle-Vue wines grace the wine lists of Michelin star restaurants in the US and UK reflects their authenticity and character, along with our careful custodianship. We are extremely fortunate to farm in ideal conditions for wine grapes, year after year.



Wine as an export industry has incredible potential for Lebanon. Though the country's economic future might feel tenuous at the moment, the historical business model followed by Lebanon's wine growers since the Roman Empire always has presumed high export levels. Lebanese growers enjoy the benefits of reliable climatic conditions which allow predictable growing seasons year upon year. Long summer days with virtually no rain at all ensure consistent climate for quality fruit from a variety of different wine growing appellations across the country.

Wine tourism represents another growing market. At Chateau Belle-Vue, centrally located just 16 km up the mountain from Beirut, the addition of a restaurant terrace, boutique hotel and wedding venue changed the way we could host visitors from around the country and abroad. Wine tours originating on the property pair seamlessly with cultural tourism to provide first time visitors to Lebanon with a personal experience of wine, people, history and culture.

I hope other wineries are preparing themselves to ride out possible instability in a similarly proactive way. At Chateau Belle-Vue, we are first and foremost custodians of the fertile valley where leafy terraced vineyards lace the mountainside. Lebanon's unbelievable climate and fertile land continue to work in our favor. We'll have amazing fruit again this harvest, as proven over the last two decades. Lebanon's wine scene is more exciting every year. Come and experience it for yourself!

Bootz Rum is instrumental in premiumizing the experience in the biggest rum drinking country in the globe.



Endorsed by some of the best bartenders in the country, Bootz Dark Jamaica Rum was launched in India in December '19 and winning hearts ever since. Established in 1650 in the Netherlands, more than three centuries of craftsmanship, passion and experience join each other perfectly in the Bootz Dark Jamaica Rum. Bootz Rum is a delectable connoisseur's delight- blended with the infamous Jamaica Rum spirit. It is not just a process, making a perfect rum blend is an art which involves choosing the finest sugarcane, extracting the molasses from the juice and turning it into sugarcane wine which is then distilled in state of the art pot stills to create rum.

Bootz Rum is an instant charmer with its warm golden hue and it cascades down a glass ever so smoothly. It teases the olfactory with its complex yet sweet and fruity aroma and teases the palate with its caramel dark and moderately full bodied exuberance. While the rum is great to sip over ice, it is also a huge hit as a base for a lot of mighty cocktails. Packed in a premium gift canister, the label tells a playfully engaging strange and curious story. A vision of a vintage newspaper set in Jamaica in the late 1600's is brought to life -Stippled illustrations, whimsical copy and letterpress inspired typography created a unique and premium aesthetic appeal.



The most premium IMFL rum in its category, Bootz seeks to make its way into the heart of rum drinkers across key markets. The core of Bootz is its imported Jamaica rum spirit, which reflects in its delicate blend, perfect for easy drinking in any season.

Bootz Rum retails in Delhi at Rs. 520 for a 750 ml bottle.