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Georgeâ€™s Rants & Raves: AviÃ³n Silver Tequila by George Brozowski

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Thank goodness for the not so idle rich. I can assume that with that one statement I have probably alienated half of you, confused half of you, and pleased the remaining half. Yes, thatâ€™s right - three halves make a whole in my twisted version of reality. Why not? If three rights make a left, then anything is possible. But I digress. If it wasnâ€™t for the fabulously wealthy, our palates would suffer immensely.

Lately, I have been receiving hootch that seems to have one thing in common no matter if itâ€™s Tequila, Rum, Gin or even Gewurztraminer. And itâ€™s not that they are all pretty damn good; they are all made by the same type of person, a self made millionaire or billionaire who has decided to retire from the profession that made him/her wealthy and follow their taste buds into a hobby that will make them happy and us a happy beneficiary.

I happen to have up close and personal knowledge of these guys and gals having lived in the Napa Valley, and Sonoma and Mendocino counties. I even spent one totally tipsy year living in a beautiful vineyard on the Russian River. These gentlemen farmers and distillers are all former Silicon Valley Startup Savants, Investment Bankers, Stock Brokers and even a sprinkling of Sharks and Swindlers. They all have one thing in common, though; they all want to produce the finest beer, liquor and wine in the world. And some of them are actually succeeding.

Case in point is Ken Austin, the founder of Tequila Avion. Hereâ€™s a guy who was in senior management at E&J Gallo and Price Waterhouse that eventually ended up as Senior VP at Seagrams and then founded Marquis Jet. And after all that, it turns out all he really wanted to do was drink Tequila, a man after my own heart. Well, Ken wasnâ€™t satisfied with the 2,000 or so Tequilas already out there, so he decided to take matters into his own hands. Like any good businessman, he stared out by doing a competitive analysis and sampled the competition, all 2,000 of them. OMG that must have been one helluva weekend! Not finding any he really liked or could remember he set out to make his own.

He uses only the finest Blue Weber Agave from the highest regions of Jalisco, Mexico and that altitude stresses the plant which in turn gives it more depth and character. These are then slow roasted in brick ovens under low temperatures. And all of this work is performed by Vestal Virgins who, as every student of ancient Rome knows, are priestesses of Vesta, the Goddess of the Hearth, which is in fact a brick oven. OK, OK maybe that last bit was over the top, but if it were really true, it would make for one heck of a marketing hook. At the end of the process, they do a proprietary â€œultra slow filtrationâ€• through activated carbon.

Well, letâ€™s get to it then. I pour a snifter and discover that it has a very clean nose with little or no alcohol up front like lesser blancos/silvers. It could be that super slow filtration at work. The nose is full of fragrant roasted agave up front. This is the first time I have ever been able to discern â€œroastedâ€• agave in any Tequila. Iâ€™ll bet this is the work of those Vestal Virgins! That is then followed by subtle hints of vanilla and faint citrus ending in a pineapple up note, very mellow and very inviting.

It lays in the mouth quietly like a Ninja assassin preparing to strike unseen in the dark. As I swallow, the mouth feel is warm and syrupy and sweet agave creeps forward and then backs off again leaving restrained citrus so vague as to be unrecognizable. The finish is pleasantly smooth, and if this were in fact a ninja attack, the assassin would be singing Roberta Flackâ€™s â€œKilling me Softlyâ€• finish rapidly transforms into spicy pepper that is balanced and mighty tasty, but then again I like spicy food. Curiously, it leaves the roof of my mouth a bit numb, which is very interesting and

entertaining. This is mighty fine Tequila and a bargain at $45.00 Rumor has it that they also make a Reposado and Anejo but since they didnâ€™t send me a sample I canâ€™t tell you what it would taste like

By George Brozowski

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George Brozowski - About Author:
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