

AMERICAN CUT

THE MAGAZINE



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AMERICAN CUT

A True Intersection of Cuisine, Service, Style, and Design

With John Meadow and Curt Huegel

“American Cut TriBeCa is LDV Hospitality’s 21st restaurant opening. But it might as well have been our first—and certainly our most important—when you consider the effort and sheer passion that went into making the magic happen. We all had a singular vision from concept and design to cuisine. When every detail aligns, it gives you the opportunity to create something really special. And that’s exactly what happened here.” —John Meadow

We are thrilled to have opened up American Cut in TriBeCa—a partnership between LDV Hospitality and Chef Marc Forgione—especially given the phenomenal reception we received in Atlantic City. Last year, American Cut at Revel was named one of the top 20 steakhouses in the country by *Travel + Leisure*, and was a Hospitality Design Award finalist for best-designed fine-dining restaurant in *Hospitality Designer* magazine.

As a company, we’ve done a lot of work outside of New York City in recent years, but at the end of the day we pride ourselves on being independent New York City restaurateurs. So it’s a dream come true to come back to the city to create a flagship New American steak restaurant, not only because we had the same drive and passion to create our best restaurant, but also because TriBeCa is a really exciting

neighborhood in which we had never built before and of which we are now humbled to be a part.

TriBeCa very much exudes the sensibility of something classically New York and yet totally cutting-edge and relevant to a modern lifestyle—which is the American Cut concept in a nutshell. Located just seven blocks away from the Freedom Tower and all that exciting downtown activity, and with Chef Forgione’s restaurant right around the corner, we couldn’t have found a better setting for the first American Cut in New York City. It really defines this brand. We created an accessible and relevant restaurant for the area that continues to foster the kind of environment that makes downtown so special: not stuffy and awkward but comfortable, fun, and sexy, with fantastic food attractive to an eclectic

crowd from uptown bankers to Williamsburg hipsters. Only in a place like TriBeCa can we cultivate the right mix of diners that ultimately makes a restaurant so special.

Not to mention the space itself, which really personifies TriBeCa. Originally the Hotel Bar Butter factory, the building has industrial roots, like so much of the neighborhood, that show in the architectural bones of its exposed brick and archways. American Cut takes design cues ranging from classic rock ‘n’ roll to art deco, and it is that contradiction, that mix of gritty yet elegant New York, that makes the city so special. No neighborhood in New York is a better example of this than TriBeCa.

With this new restaurant, we’ve taken different ingredients—new, old, grit, elegance—that together speak the same kind of language,



and the result is a very defined experience. The foundation of the building came with that industrial grit that is very much a part of American Cut. Chris Sheffield's design juxtaposes this against an elegant feel. The combination is similar to Chef Forgione's dynamic as a uniquely balanced individual: a down-to-earth New Yorker rocking a mohawk who can speak eloquently about food and has a highly refined culinary palate.

American Cut should be seen as a destination, whether it's for a casual drink after work on a Wednesday or closing dinner on a weekend night. There are four distinct areas in the restaurant. Given its size, the bar is destined to become a social destination unto itself. With Chris Sheffield's design of symmetrical lines and the way the tables are laid out, in addition

to the bones of the place, the main dining room feels like a new version of a power dining room. Also on the main floor, a private dining room that seats up to 20 allows for a super intimate dining experience. And then we were lucky enough to have this unique downstairs space in which we could create something completely different, from the finishes to the bar that makes it a little less formal. This space speaks to a certain customer, those who enjoy the fluidity of seeing where the night will take them. Again, it will be driven by the people who frequent it and will evolve into its own—but think fun, mysterious, a little darker, and less formal.

While there's a design language that suggests the notion of the New American steak restaurant, there are obvious roots on the

culinary side. The steakhouse concept is tried and true: it's been out there for well over 100 years and is very much a part of the social fabric of New York, if not America as a whole. On the opposite end of the dining spectrum is the über sex-driven steakhouse, where the focus definitely is not on the food. With American Cut, we address an opportunity to provide a dynamic, colorful, sexy, energetic dining experience—a steak dining experience as envisioned by a Michelin-starred Iron Chef. So you get the best of both worlds: the appeal of the steakhouse, of large groups of people, the communal American-style dinner party environment, yet hosted by someone classically trained in France and with a culinary pedigree. The New American steak restaurant—*New American* because the design and menu

“A lot of things really fell into place for the right reasons around American Cut in TriBeCa. It’s not easy to find space in New York City, and yet we found a space with tons of character in a great neighborhood in which Chef Forgione already had solid roots. Add to that Chris Sheffield’s ability to evolve the design of the original American Cut, and it really came together organically.” —Curt Huegel



couldn’t be more American, like the original steakhouse concept but new and relevant to 2013, and a *steak restaurant* because it offers a more evolved, indulgent experience.

This is not about being the most fancy place to dine; but by applying his specific culinary language, Chef Forgione ensures it is nothing less than fantastic. The classics endure and are on the menu, tweaked but not to suggest an artistic agenda. The American Cut menu does not define who Marc Forgione is—it defines what the New American steak restaurant is.

Given that the steakhouse has so much history here in New York City, I can’t think of a better concept that personifies who we are as a social city in 2013. This is New York food done in a quintessential, iconic neighborhood.

“Some people go too far trying to reinvent things for the sake of reinventing them, but Marc Forgione has done a great job of taking old-guard steakhouse items and adding a twist, without losing the original essence of the dish or cocktail or salad. Instead of confusing them, it’s a pleasant surprise for the guests.”

—Curt Huegel

It’s exciting because we are in the throes of an educated culinary time; but, regardless, the New York steakhouse will always be the original New York restaurant.

And American Cut, as its name suggests, brings with it that whiff of nostalgic Americana on a general level, regardless of where it goes next. From the contemporary and clean black-and-gold logo to the core of its design components, American Cut’s heritage can resonate anywhere in this country. But here, this is our launchpad to build the concept into one of the most visible restaurants in the LDV portfolio. And where else could we have dreamed to do this as true and real to the original idea than in TriBeCa!

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A MODERN INTERPRETATION OF TIMELESS DESIGN



If every property has its story, Chris Sheffield's mission is to tell that story in three-dimensional detail. Founder of SLDesign in 2005, Sheffield has created dining destinations for many of the best-known restaurant companies worldwide. He worked with the LDV Group in Atlantic City and now brings his hospitality design expertise into play at the new American Cut in TriBeCa. Here, old-school design elements are celebrated within a stylized, modern version of art deco to create a timeless and cohesive atmosphere.

When you look across the board at classic American steakhouses, there's something magical about the fact that they have been in existence for as long as they have, with generation after generation drawn to the authenticity of that experience. So what's in that DNA that we can draw on to create a space that has a contemporary sensibility in design and service and yet goes beyond whatever the next trend is?

I don't know if there is any other city that has a better collection of historic art deco buildings than New York. So the idea of starting with deco as a design inspiration for American Cut makes a lot of sense. There is a decadence that we associate with the period that applies

to some of the things we did here, but it's not trendy. We tried to connect more strongly to deco stylistic elements, modernizing them to make the space feel contemporary while keeping a sense of history. Clearly, a lot of classic steakhouse recipes were developed during the same time in New York, and these recipes find their way onto our menu. So it's an interesting touchstone period for all of us. This sense of timelessness and a comfort that I think people have with deco design allows diners to feel connected rather than challenged by the environment.

While there are similarities between what we are doing here and what we do at American Cut in Atlantic City, we wanted to

acknowledge where we are, and it's hard to imagine a public space in TriBeCa without visualizing exposed brick, wood beams, and steel. It's part of the architectural vocabulary that people associate with the area. So even though American Cut is a stylized, modern version of art deco, we still wanted to celebrate that environmental context, instead of covering it up and pretending it doesn't exist.

There is exposed brick in the bar in the main dining room. The exposed brick has been treated in the lower-level space, but you still have its texture as well as large copper ceilings that have a visible, beautiful two-inch wooden joist framing the floor.



The flooring is similar to that found in Atlantic City, celebrating the interplay of multiple-scale geometries. A big stone grid defines the bar, which bleeds into the charcoal-stained, wide-plank dining room floor that in turn bleeds into a smaller geometric pattern on a custom carpet in the private dining room on the first floor. Likewise, the tables and chairs are largely the same as at Revel: charcoal gray chairs; beautiful rosewood-veneer tables with brass trim; cognac-colored leather upholstery that contrasts with the black and gray tones; and, flanked by table lamps, a large communal table in the center that seats 10. The dining room primarily comprises fixed banquette seating with some larger ones in the corner to accommodate groups of six. The private dining room showcases an exceptional, one-of-a-kind walnut burl dining table, eight feet in diameter, that expands to seat up to 16.

By placing new ornamental brass and bronze metalwork and other deco-inspired elements especially on the first floor, we were able

to create a juxtaposition with the existing contextual elements. Beginning with the bar itself, the perimeter is defined by a backlit metal mesh that floats over and around it like a decorative fixture. It has classic deco geometry. It is lit with marquee lights that acknowledge the shape of the lamp and are consistent with the period.

From a design standpoint, American Cut is somewhat unique in its connection to art deco, which is an architectural vernacular that does not get explored very often in restaurants. It gave us a great opportunity to take some of that classic geometry and modernize it without recreating the period.

There are custom brass and bronze chevron screens in both the main dining room and the bar dining area that have a dimensionality as well as an interesting play of positive and negative space. Again, these are inspired by classic art deco forms, brand new and shiny with a little patina to add enough sophistication to make them look authentic.

Another strong art deco connection are the eight dramatic, seven-foot, three-tiered octagonal milk-white and brass chandeliers in the main dining room. Again, not reproductions, but certainly these custom fabrications are inspired by the era.

Similar to Atlantic City, the restaurant experience really does start at the entry, where you walk through a corridor of wine that leads you into the hostess and bar area. Lining each side are 3,000 bottles of red wine stored in custom glass cases; and since all of this wine has to come out of these cases, it amplifies the theater of this hustle and bustle that I believe is an essential part of the classic



steakhouse's DNA. LDV provides that kind of captain's level of service, where all your needs are seamlessly taken care of in an understated way. Marc makes the food exceptional and authentic, and now you have the theater part to make the experience interesting.

In addition to glass vitrines, which open up the dining room by allowing you to see into it from the bar space, on one side of the dining room is a screen whose transparency allows you to look into the service areas, so that you get the interaction of the food service. Since the kitchen is located on the lower level, we didn't have the opportunity to do a big exhibition kitchen as we have done in Atlantic City; instead, this screen allows you to see the back and forth of the servers and staff. There is something inspiring about the environment that I believe makes it a place where people want to be—different from creating a buzz factor using the latest and greatest, which eventually fades when the next trend comes along.

The timelessness of what we have here—the blend of history with contemporary stylistic elements—translates well into a market like New York, and also in places like Atlantic City and beyond. It really is the perfect model for the new American steak restaurant: doing something that is based in a uniquely American architecture and a unique American cuisine. And that connection, between the food and the service and the overall concept, allows it to work well in almost any marketplace.

Being able to work with Marc Forgione from the beginning not just on the fundamentals of the kitchen but also on the service flow and direction of the menu, tapping into his personality, gave the project incredible cohesiveness. And I believe this is what makes a successful restaurant.

The best spaces are the ones you walk into and fall in love with because they don't feel designed. That's a hard thing to achieve, but I think American Cut does that because every single detail in here contributes to the

greater whole. I don't want someone to walk away with a specific recollection of one or two design elements; I want them to feel as though everything worked without necessarily being able to put their finger on the things that made the experience interesting. For one guest it might be the chandeliers, another might salivate over the dining table in the private dining room, the ornamental metal work, or the decorative screens. Sure, there are pieces on which we focused a lot of time and attention but, more important, the overall experience has to have an authenticity to it.

It really is the perfect model for the new American steak restaurant: doing something that is based in a uniquely American architecture and cuisine.



WHATEVER'S COMFORTABLE™



THE NEW AMERICAN STEAK RESTAURANT

With Marc Forgione

The American steakhouse is a New York tradition that dates back to the 1930s. But left unchecked over time, any concept can become rooted in mediocrity. At American Cut, Chef Forgione has dug deep to bring the steakhouse back to its original glory, inspired by those classic recipes that made the concept so popular in the first place.



On the menu, you'll find a Caesar salad with a dressing that doesn't include anchovies, just like the original recipe circa 1920s from Hotel Caesar's in Tijuana. We also chop it tableside like they used to back then. We use whole garlic confit pieces, a perfectly soft-boiled egg, really good Parmesan, crisp lettuce, and paper-thin croutons—all of the same elements done with extra care and an eye to technique.

We're not reinventing the wheel here, just taking the steakhouse concept back to where it was. American Cut is our interpretation of the modern-day steakhouse while keeping in mind its rich history—especially in New York City, where cuts like the New York strip steak and the porterhouse were created. We even have a porterhouse section on the menu with pork, lamb, and veal selections. It's a fun way to eat other cuts beside the chop that you see in most places. And we have an ode to the New York classic pastrami on rye, with a bone-in steak strip featuring a unique pastrami spice blend that I created with Lior Lev Sercarz from La Boîte à Epice.

I did a fair share of research on the history of steak and steakhouses in the city, and one of the fundamental points I took away from it all is that you have to start with pristine ingredients, which I believe a lot of restaurants have lost sight of. In my opinion, there are very few New York steakhouses that do everything well, from appetizers and sides to the main attraction: the steak. And that is what we really strived for at Revel and now in TriBeCa. Ultimately, I think New Yorkers will enjoy coming to American Cut for its steakhouse soul, but at the end of the day, beyond that, it simply offers a really great dining experience with or without a steak on your plate.

Standout signature dishes will continue to be our seafood tower with hot and cold elements: chili lobster, BBQ-baked and raw oysters, shrimp cocktail, and tuna tartar. It's like having a combination of five or six appetizers in one dish, and it comes to the table in these very impressive, custom-made stainless steel trees. We also offer a spice-rubbed tuna with a fantastic olive oil from Calabria, beautiful hand-selected diver sea scallops from Maine, and a sustainably raised salmon for a version

of my dad's cedar-plank salmon dish. Our Tomahawk rib-eye chop features a little more smoke, our shrimp cocktail will definitely excite you with bold flavors courtesy of my Batch 22 Bloody Mary mix, and our spinach is made to order.

TriBeCa has been my home now for five years. I know the neighborhood, the people, and the businesses. It's not by accident that it is attracting some incredible chefs who are really going to add to the area and make it one of the hottest dining destinations in the city in the next few years. And with the Freedom Tower going up, Citigroup moving in, and all the other companies that are finding a home in TriBeCa, doing a steak restaurant in particular just made a lot of sense.

While the atmosphere we create is similar to American Cut at Revel, decor elements had to fit the shell of the building with which we were given to work. Instead of hiding the beautiful brick archways and wood-beam ceilings, we combined elements from Atlantic City with Old World New York, much the same as we do on the menu.

SHRIMP COCKTAIL, HORSERADISH, LEMON

Chef Marc Forgione

Serves 4



FOR THE PICKLED HORSERADISH

1 1/4 cups freshly grated horseradish
1/2 cup cider vinegar

Combine the horseradish and cider vinegar in a jar. Place the jar in the refrigerator for at least overnight.

FOR THE COCKTAIL SAUCE

(makes approximately 1 quart)

1 1/4 cups ketchup
1 1/4 cups Batch 22 Bloody Mary Mix (available at chefmarcforigione.com)
1 1/4 cups horseradish, freshly grated
2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
1 small jalapeño, brunoised
Juice from 1 lemon
1 1/4 tablespoons Dijon mustard
Salt and pepper

Combine all ingredients and season to taste with salt and pepper.

FOR THE COURT BOUILLON

1 Spanish onion
1 carrot
2 celery stalks
1/4 fennel bulb
1 1/2 lemons
1/2 bottle white wine
1 1/2 tsp fennel seed
1 1/2 tsp black pepper
1/4 tsp chili flake
1/2 cup salt
24 Florida Gulf Pink Shrimp, size 12 to 14

Combine all ingredients except the shrimp and bring to a boil. Add 1 gallon of cold water and bring to a boil again. Turn off the heat and let stand for 10 minutes. Strain the liquid, discarding the solids.

Bring the court bouillon to a boil in a large pot. Turn down the heat so the liquid is at a simmer, then add 24 whole shrimp and poach for 2 minutes. Remove pot from heat and cover. Let stand for 7 minutes. Drain shrimp from the liquid and place in the refrigerator until chilled. Remove shells and devein.

GARNISH

Mustard oil
4 lemon halves, socked
Pickled horseradish

ASSEMBLE THE DISH

When ready to serve, place shrimp in a mixing bowl. Add 3 cups of cocktail sauce and coat the shrimp with the sauce. Divide the shrimp among 4 serving bowls. Add a couple of splashes of mustard oil over the top of each. Serve with 1/2 lemon in a sock and the pickled horseradish on the side.

28-DAY, DRY-AGED PRIME CREEKSTONE FARMS TOMAHAWK CHOP, CHIMICHURRI

Chef Marc Forgione

Serves 2



FOR THE CHIMICHURRI SAUCE

3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
3 tbsp minced shallots
1 tbsp red pepper flakes
1 tbsp minced garlic
Kosher salt
1/4 cup sherry vinegar

MAKE THE CHIMICHURRI SAUCE

In a medium bowl, mix together the olive oil, parsley, cilantro, shallots, pepper flakes, garlic, and salt.
Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to 1 day.
Right before serving, add the sherry vinegar. (Vinegar, if allowed to rest too long, will ruin the bright green color of the sauce.)

FOR THE TOMAHAWK

One 40-oz dry-aged tomahawk chop, about 2 1/2 inches thick
Kosher salt
Freshly ground black pepper
Canola oil
4 oz (8 tbsp) unsalted butter
1 head garlic, halved horizontally
6 sprigs fresh thyme

MAKE THE TOMAHAWK

Preheat oven to 350°F and position rack in the middle of the oven. Pat the steak dry and season liberally with salt and pepper on both sides. Let the steak come to room temperature before cooking.

In a large ovenproof sauté pan set over high heat, warm enough oil to cover the bottom of the pan just before it starts to smoke. Add the steak and sear for 1 minute.

Reduce heat to medium-high and cook the steak, without moving it, for about 4 minutes. Check the bottom of the steak to see if it is charred to your liking, and flip to the other side and cook for another 1 to 2 minutes.

Transfer to a baking sheet and cook in the oven for about 10 minutes for medium rare.

Return the steak to the pan, and over medium heat add the butter, garlic, and thyme. Increase heat to high and baste steak for about 2 minutes (if the butter starts to burn, lower the heat and add a bit of oil to the pan to reduce the overall temperature of the butter).

Transfer the steak to a plate and let it rest for 10 minutes before serving. Reserve the brown steak butter in the pan. When ready to serve, slice the steak across the grain.

ASSEMBLE THE DISH

1. Divide the sliced steak between 2 warmed plates and sprinkle flaky sea salt on top.
2. Spoon chimichurri on top of the steak, drizzle with reserved butter, and sprinkle with smoked salt and black pepper. Serve with more chimichurri on the side.

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FOR THE CARAMEL POPCORN

1 bag no-butter microwave popcorn
1/2 cup light corn syrup
1 1/4 cup sugar
2 tbsp butter
1/4 tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt
1 tsp vanilla

MAKE THE CARAMEL POPCORN

Pop popcorn, remove all kernels, and set aside in a large bowl. Cook water, corn syrup, sugar, and butter, stirring occasionally until the mixture reaches a light golden color. Turn off heat then add baking soda, salt, and vanilla. Stir to combine. Add mixture to popcorn, stirring to coat evenly. Allow to cool slightly and pull pieces apart.

FOR THE PEANUT BRITTLE

3/4 cup + 3 tbsp sugar
2 tbsp light corn syrup
2 tbsp butter
1/4 cup water
1/4 tsp baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp vanilla extract
3/4 cup peanuts, toasted

MAKE THE PEANUT BRITTLE

Cook sugars, butter, and water until a light to medium amber color, stirring occasionally. Turn off heat and stir in baking soda, salt, and vanilla. Add peanuts and stir to combine. Pour onto an oiled sheet tray and spread thin. Once cooled, break into pieces.

Best served with vanilla ice cream.

TURNING UP THE BEAT

Music is a big part of what gives American Cut its underlying gritty edge. Here, Chef Marc Forgione hands over the musical reins to Groovy Lou, who also created playlists for American Cut at Revel.



“I give music a great deal of attention at all my restaurants because it is a critical component of setting the right kind of mood, whether you want people to hear rock ’n’ roll and relax a little bit or hear hip-hop and chill,” explains Chef Forgione. “At American Cut, the music selection is very much a reflection of the restaurant itself, where old school meets new school and where you’ll hear everything from Led Zeppelin all the way to Jay-Z.”

PLAYLIST

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| 1. Riding with the King
Eric Clapton and B.B. King | 9. I'm on Fire
Bruce Springsteen | 18. Gold on the Ceiling
The Black Keys | 27. Stay With Me
Faces |
| 2. Dance to the Music
Sly & The Family Stone | 10. Brown Sugar
The Rolling Stones | 19. Stairway to Heaven
Led Zeppelin | 28. Superstition
Stevie Wonder |
| 3. Evil Woman
Electric Light Orchestra | 11. Piano Man
Billy Joel | 20. Hurricane
Bob Dylan | 29. Happy
The Rolling Stones |
| 4. Brown Eyed Girl
Van Morrison | 12. Honky Tonk Women
The Rolling Stones | 21. Family Affair
Sly & The Family Stone | 30. You Really Got Me
The Kinks |
| 5. Sympathy for the Devil
The Rolling Stones | 13. Lonely Boy
The Black Keys | 22. Jessica
The Allman Brothers Band | 31. Layla
Derek and the Dominos |
| 6. Don't Bring Me Down
Electric Light Orchestra | 14. Everyday People
Sly & The Family Stone | 23. Death to My Hometown
Bruce Springsteen | 32. Fire
The Jimi Hendrix Experience |
| 7. Stone Free
The Jimi Hendrix Experience | 15. Glory Days
Bruce Springsteen | 24. Piece of My Heart
Janis Joplin | 33. Lola
The Kinks |
| 8. Start Me Up
The Rolling Stones | 16. Howlin' For You
The Black Keys | 25. Under Pressure
Queen and David Bowie | |
| | 17. Summer in the City
The Lovin' Spoonful | 26. Born in the U.S.A.
Bruce Springsteen | |

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SEASONAL COCKTAIL

THE UCCELLO ROSSO

1.5 oz Mount Gay Black Barrel Rum

1 oz Aperol

0.5 oz Cointreau

0.5 oz fresh-squeezed lemon

Shake all ingredients over ice and strain into a martini glass. Garnish with an orange twist.



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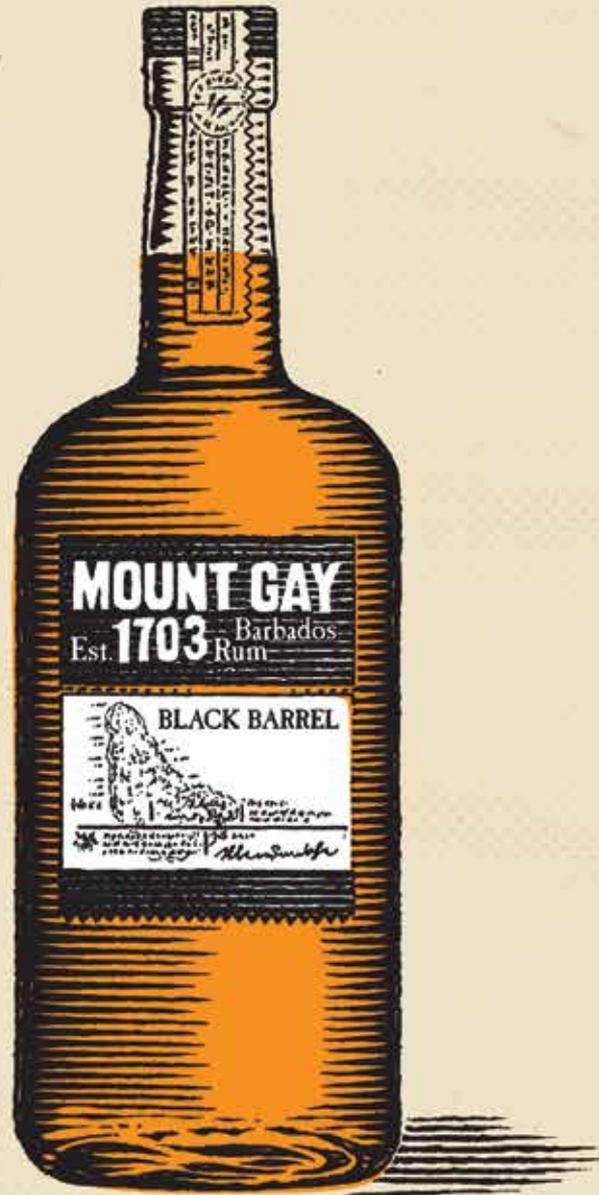


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