On a Tropical Rum Trail
Touring three Caribbean islands, sip by sip, and taking in tales of blood, sweat and sugar cane.

BY BAD DROPPING

"Care to kiss the ground?"

The question came, with a slightly peevish edge, from Norman Murray, lead singer and lead guide in the rural parish of St. Elizabeth, Jamaica.

A rum maker. A kind of poet. And, some said, a man of mystery—"Norman's a mystery," his own sons acknowledge. Murray, after all, is from the remote, hilly parish in the heart of Jamaica's Blue Mountains, where he was born in 1968 and spends most of his time. He rarely travels far from his home, and he is known to be a man of few words. But when he does speak, he speaks with passion and conviction, and his words carry weight.

Murray's rum is made from the juice of the sugar cane, which is fermented and distilled in small batches. He uses traditional methods to create a product that is rich in flavor and aroma, and he is proud of the history and tradition that his rum represents.

"Care to kiss the ground?" he asked, playfully.

I nodded, and Murray led me through the lush, green fields that stretch out for miles around his property. We walked along the rows of sugar cane, the leaves rustling in the breeze, and I could feel the warmth of the sun on my skin.

"Care to kiss the ground?"

I nodded again, and Murray smiled. "You're welcome to try," he said. "But remember, it's a sacred place."

I took a deep breath, and then pressed my lips to the cool, damp earth. It was a moment of connection with the land, and a reminder of the timeless cycles of nature. And as I stepped back, I knew that I would never forget the feeling of the ground beneath my feet, or the words of the man who called it his home.
On a Tropical Rum Trail

I began my meanderings in St. Albans, the capital of the Windward Estates. This sleepy little town, perched on the slopes of a volcano, was once a bustling center of sugar cane production. As I walked the streets, I couldn’t help but notice the remnants of its colonial past—old buildings and decayed storefronts that told a story of a bygone era.

I then made my way to the historic town of Soufrière, where the famous boiling lake is located. The lake’s hot springs have been a source of healing for centuries, and today, many visitors come to experience the unique therapeutic effects of the water.

As I continued my journey, I arrived at the tropical island of Martinique. Here, I discovered the famous Domaine St. James, a lush and beautiful plantation that has been producing fine rums for generations. The tour guide, a friendly local, described the process of making rum in meticulous detail, from harvesting the sugarcane to the final distillation.

The plantation was surrounded by lush greenery, and the scent of exotic flowers filled the air. We walked through the picturesque fields, where the sun shone brightly, and the sound of birds chirping filled the air. It was a truly memorable experience.

Moving on from Martinique, I crossed to the neighboring island of Guadeloupe, where the famous Bardas plantation is located. The plantation is surrounded by towering coconut trees and lush vegetation, creating a tropical paradise.

I arrived at the plantation, where I was welcomed by the friendly staff. They showed me around the grounds, explaining the various stages of rum production. We walked through the fields of sugarcane, where the plants swayed gently in the breeze, and then made our way to the distillery, where the rum is carefully distilled and aged.

The tour guide, a knowledgeable local, explained the different types of rums produced on the plantation, from spiced rums to premium blends. It was fascinating to learn about the history and culture of rum making in this tropical paradise.

As the tour came to an end, I was filled with a sense of admiration for the hard work and dedication that goes into producing such a delicious beverage. The rum I tasted at the end of the tour was a testament to the skill and craftsmanship of the plantation workers.

In conclusion, my journey on a Tropical Rum Trail was an exciting and educational experience. I learned so much about the history and culture of rum making in the Caribbean, and I can’t wait to return and explore more of these wonderful islands.
There's nothing industrial about our run.

In the end, it's a matter of taste. Dis-

illusioned with the commercial, I had

become a confirmed ruralist. I live in a

rural area, and I find the countryside

more appealing than the city. I enjoy the

calm and quiet of the countryside, and I

prefer to live there than in a busy city.

But I'm not immune to the beauty of the

city. I love the excitement and energy of

the urban environment. But I find that

when I'm in the city, I'm constantly

thinking about escape—about getting

back to nature. I find that the natural

world is more fulfilling than the

urban environment.

There are many things that I love

about the countryside. The air is fresh,

the water is clear, and the soil is fertile.

But I also love the city. The energy

of the urban environment is exciting,

and I find that the city is a place where

I can express myself. I enjoy the

excitement of the city, and I find that

the city is a place where I can

achieve my goals.