

Banks XM / VXO Rum

Tasting Notes

XM 10 years old

Nose: Rich and generous, with orange liqueur, home-made gingerbread, banana fritters, hints of treacle and pancakes with golden syrup. Some more tropical fruits appear (kiwifruit, grapefruit, pineapple). Pronounced Demerara sugar aromas. Pink marshmallows and aged Calvados.

Palate: Pretty full-bodied. Lovely heavy-but-silky texture supporting a perfectly-knit collage of the aromas from the nose. Creamy, with sweet banana, oranges and vanilla complimented by lively citrus and spices.

Finish: A slow dance of brown sugar, dried ginger and nutmeg, with creamy toffee and baked apple pie bringing up the tail.

Comment: Another triumph of balance from XM, whose master blenders clearly know what they're about. Exceptional complexity administered with a seemingly effortless grace.

XM 5 years old

Nose: Candied orange peel, brown sugar, buttery oak. Crystallised ginger, creamy, toasty vanilla and sugared almonds. Quite fruity, with baked banana, raisins and hints of blackcurrant jelly developing.

Palate: Medium-bodied. More than a hint of spices (clove, dried ginger), apple pie, raisins and plenty of citrus (grapefruit, orange) underpinned by the sweet vanilla and baked banana from the nose.

Finish: Warm and quite lasting, with lively spices and the fruit and vanilla fading slowly.

Comment: An exuberant golden Demerara, feisty without being over-bearing. Well-developed for its age. The key here is the balance - this is very easy to drink.



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XM 12 years old

Nose: Full and intense: Immediately obvious that this is quite serious stuff. Big, creamy oak vanilla, some toasty notes, honeycomb, raisins, gingersnaps and dry wood.

Palate: Big hit of varnished oak, like church pews. Then aged orange liqueur, treacle tart, cheesecake base, hints of tinned mango, pecan pie, dark chocolate shavings and milky coffee.

Finish: Very, very long, with the oak persisting amid pecan pie, vanilla ice cream, candied orange peel, chocolate liqueur, mocha and raisins.

Comment: Pretty epic stuff. The sheer density of fruit and spices just holds out against the epic oak.

VXO

Nose: Toffee, vanilla (pod & ice cream), over-ripe banana, raisiny fruit cake.

Palate: Medium-bodied, with chocolate orange, caramel, ginger snaps, banana, the juice from tinned pineapples, and the fruit cake from the nose. Very pure sugar character.

Finish: Natural caramel, sugary milky coffee, sweet ginger. The fruit cake flavours linger, with clove, rum 'n' raisin ice cream, marmalade.

Comment: A deliciously fruity rum, sweet without ever becoming cloying.



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