# Article Side

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

Article published on July 18th 2012 | Food

First and foremost, let me set to rest the rampant rumor that Tanteo Tequila is Tila Tequilaâ€™s older brother. Even though Tila is rumored to be fond of Tanteo Tequila they are not related in any way, shape or form.

Upon opening the box and getting my initial glimpse, the bottles are the first clue that this tequila might just be something special. They are tall unlike most of the squat tequila bottles and clear with slight imperfections and bubbles in the glass implying that they are custom fabricated. The labels have an aged, old world look. They would definitely draw the eye sitting on a retail shelf. There are three bottles of flavor infused Tanteo Tequila: Jalapeno, Tropical Fruit and Cocoa.

Why in the world would anyone name a super-premium tequila â€œTanteoâ€•? How would two guys, like Founder and CEO Jonathan Rojewski and award winning graphic artist Lincoln Mayne, who co-designed the intriguing bottle, come up with this name? The name Tanteo literally translates as testing out or sizing up but I have the feeling that its slang interpretation of â€œscoring sexuallyâ€• is probably closer to the truth. I would love to share a bottle of this Tequila with those two and hear that story!!

As I opened the first bottle, my nose was assailed by the aromas of jalapenos. But I mean this in a good way, similar to the mÃ©lange of pepper aromas that greet you when you walk down the aisle in a grocery store where all the fresh peppers are displayed out in the open. It was fresh and fruity not chemical or artificial. That first impression of fruit forward was backed immediately by the distinct smell of distilled agave, 100% Weber Blue Agave to be precise, and then the two moved back and forth, front to back presenting an alternating profile until they finally blended and settled down in harmony in my snifter and in my nose.

Snifter, you scoff snifter â€“ of course snifter! Fine tequila is reverently treated like fine cognac, as they deliver an equal amount of enjoyment, a distinct nose and a flavorful mouth. Besides, they are both equally and strictly regulated. Tequila production is regulated by the Consejo Regulador del Tequila and cognac by Appellation dâ€™origine contrÃ´lÃ©e. Both demand the final product be of certain fruit grown in a limited and particular geographic area and produced in a very specified manner. Asparagus distilled in New Jersey wonâ€™t make the cut as Tequila, but it might pass for Vodka. The ban on flavor infused tequila was just recently lifted in 2006, which allowed the legal creation of these Tanteo Tequilas.

After all that, I finally took my first sip: crisp, tangy, clean with distinct Jalapeno fruit taste while on the palate but as it began the journey down the throat it changed. Not unlike a stripper removing a demure dress to reveal a hot, sultry outfit underneath. It became very peppery with a quick and pleasant eruption of heat settling down to a pleasant tingling memory on the taste buds. Unlike many other tequilas, the mouth memory is not of acrid alcohol but fresh cut fruity peppers. After swallowing, as I breathed in and out, I could swear I had just bitten into a jalapeno pepper and not drunk tequila.

The second and third sips settled down and the initial fire of the first sip gave way to smoldering warmth punctuated by a brightness and tingle in the mouth until all that remained was the flavor of fresh fruit. Itâ€™s quite a nice overall effect and experience and one that invites repeating.

Next, I opened the Tropical Tequila. I fully expected a nose at least as fruity as the Jalapeno if not more so. I unfortunately could not immediately discern any particular fruit. However, I appreciated

the Tequila bouquet which was rich and creamy with a very slight acidic high note that teased for a taste. I waited. After it sat in the snifter for a while the alcohol settled out of the mix and a scent of lime and salt finally came to the front. I waited. I was finally rewarded with a very, very subtle, completely laid back nuance of tropical fruit. This nose is very subtle with barely a hint of even the jalapeno.

I could wait no longer. I took a sip. It lay warm and creamy on my tongue and the more I swirled it in my closed mouth, the more it released its hidden flavor but not so much as to provide me with an â€œAHA!â€• moment when I could taste this, that, or another fruit. It provided just the vaguest notion that fruit had at some time crossed its path. It wasnâ€™t as peppery as the Jalapeno but still provided that super-premium mouth feel. It went down warm and immediately settled into a pleasant sensation that lasted quite a few minutes. When that warmth subsided, there was the vaguest impression that fruit had blown a kiss in its direction at some point in its life. Throwing caution to the wind, I took a large sip, and after I swallowed, I could finally taste warm hints of mango. Their literature states I should also be able to discern guanabana. Its flavor is described as a â€œcombination of strawberry and pineapple with sour citrus flavor notes contrasting with an underlying creamy flavor reminiscent of coconut or bananaâ€•. Yeah right!! All I got was the â€œcreamyâ€• and the rest of it was make believe t this mouth. At least it didnâ€™t taste like chicken. Still it was quite good. If you take your time with this tropical tequila, you just might coax its fruitiness to show itself.

On to the Cocoa. The first thing I noticed was its tan color. While the Jalapeno was the palest of pale â€“ barely green and the Tropical Fruit was not clear but the held the vaguest hint of creaminess, the Cocoa was a very faint fawn, an almost transparent taupe, barely buff, a translucent tan the color of ancient faded brown stained glass that gives everything viewed through it a brownish-golden glow. Very interesting!

The nose was up front but gentle. It was definitely reminiscent of milk chocolate and caramel, sweet but not sugary â€“ a notch up from subtle â€“ but still smooth warm and inviting. I would have loved to have taken a bite out of something that smelled this good but settled for a sip instead. The mouth feel and taste followed lock step behind the nose. What I had smelled I tasted. The marriage of the nose and mouth is a very rare quality in a wine, a scotch or even a cognac as one usually goes in one direction while the other chooses a complimentary path. Donâ€™t get me wrong, Iâ€™m not saying th bad but this was much better. While I held it in my mouth it was delicately warm, creamy and reminded me of imported European milk chocolate melting in my mouth. As I swallowed, the peppery Jalapeno snuck out from its hiding place and reminded me that this was indeed Tequila. The back of my mouth and throat awoke from its chocolate induced stupor and a pleasant, warm tingle took over and lingered a while. That was worth doing again! This could be a pleasant change of pace from port after dinner and that notion was confirmed when I paired it with a slice of cheese.

I must admit Iâ€™m a bit of a purist and believe premium wines and liquors should be enjoyed pure and simple for the wonderful and expensive things they are. I make mixed drinks and cocktails with lesser quality alcohol. I did give in and made a few cocktails with this Tequila and they were of course marvelous but as I drank them I kept thinking I could be using something that cost half to two-thirds as much. That being said I must admit that I made martinis with them all and they were perfect and showcased the quality of the Tequila. I make mine shaken not stirred, just like James Bond but in this case with nothing else added, except a lime garnish. All three flavors get a serious thumbs up!

By George Brozowski

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Article Keywords:
Tanteo Tequila, flavor infused Tequila, Tanteo Tequila Jalapeno, Tanteo Tequila Tropical Fruit, Tanteo Tequila Cocoa, Tanteo, Tequila, Jalapeno, Tropical Fruit, Cocoa

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