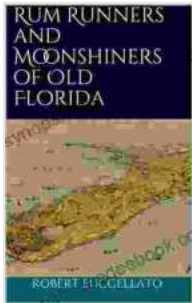


The Enthralling Saga of Rum Runners and Moonshiners in Old Florida



Rum Runners and Moonshiners of Old Florida

by Robert Buccellato

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

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Florida's rich history is steeped in tales of daring rum runners and moonshiners who defied Prohibition and shaped the state's culture. During the 1920s, when the consumption, production, and sale of alcohol were banned by the Volstead Act, these individuals embarked on a thrilling and often dangerous journey to keep the spirits flowing.

Rum Runners: Outsmarting the Coast Guard

With its long coastline, numerous islands, and proximity to Cuba and the Bahamas, Florida became a hub for rum-running operations. Rum runners, using a variety of vessels from speedboats to schooners, smuggled alcohol across state and federal borders.

To outsmart the Coast Guard, rum runners employed clever tactics. They used secret coves and inlets, navigated dangerous waters at night, and even resorted to bribing officials. Some even disguised their boats as fishing vessels or cargo ships.



Moonshiners: Crafting Tangy Spirits

While rum runners imported alcohol from distant shores, moonshiners crafted their own potent spirits within the state's boundaries. They set up distilleries in secluded swamps, forests, and remote mountains, away from the prying eyes of law enforcement.

Moonshiners used a variety of grains, such as corn, rye, and wheat, to produce their liquor. The resulting moonshine, often called "white lightning"

or "corn liquor," was known for its high alcohol content and fiery taste.



Moonshiners set up stills in remote locations to craft their illicit spirits.

Iconic Figures: The Legends of Rum Runners and Moonshiners

Florida's rum-running and moonshine era produced a colorful cast of characters who became legends in their own right.

- **Bill McCoy:** Known as the "Rum King," McCoy controlled a vast rum-running empire that spanned the Caribbean and Florida.

- **Jacob "Jake" Carter:** A notorious moonshiner, Carter's moonshine operation was said to be the largest in Florida.
- **Matilda "Tilda" Tumlin:** A female moonshiner, Tumlin's moonshine was reputed to be some of the finest in the state.

Speakeasies: The Secret Watering Holes

To quench the thirst of those seeking alcohol, speakeasies emerged across Florida. These clandestine establishments, often hidden behind false fronts or in basements, provided an opportunity to indulge in illegal libations.

Speakeasies were decorated in lavish style, offering live music, dancing, and other forms of entertainment. Despite their illicit nature, speakeasies became popular gathering places for society's elite and ordinary citizens alike.



The End of an Era

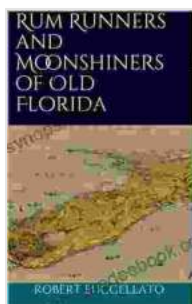
The Prohibition era came to an end in 1933 with the repeal of the Volstead Act. The once-thriving rum-running and moonshining operations gradually declined as alcohol became legal again.

However, the legacy of rum runners and moonshiners continues to fascinate and inspire. Their daring escapades and ingenious methods have become a part of Florida's folklore, and their stories continue to be told and retold.

The era of rum runners and moonshiners in old Florida was a time of lawlessness, adventure, and rebellious spirits. These individuals, while

breaking the law, played a significant role in shaping the state's culture and leaving an enduring mark on its history.

Today, visitors to Florida can explore historical sites, museums, and distilleries that showcase the state's rich rum-running and moonshine past. The legacy of these individuals continues to live on, reminding us of a time when alcohol was forbidden but the thirst for adventure never diminished.



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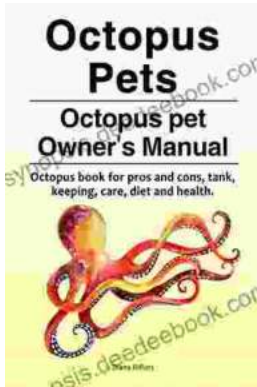
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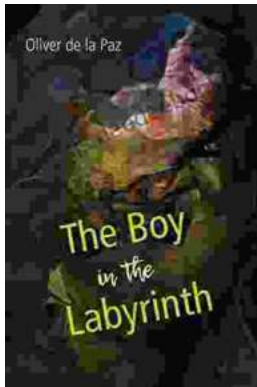
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