



MEDIA CONTACT:
Rebecca Rader
206.973.1743
r_rader@winebow.com

BANKS 5 ISLAND RUM BESTOWED BEST NEW PRODUCT AT 2011 TALES OF THE COCKTAIL® 5TH ANNUAL SPIRITED AWARDS™

One of 18 to Win Coveted Award

NEW YORK—July 28, 2011—Less than one year since launching in the United States, Banks 5 Island Rum captured the prestigious Riedel Crystal Award for Best New Product, validating the brand's exceptional quality in a competitive category. The award marks Banks 5 Island rum's fifth noteworthy industry accolade.

Tales of the Cocktail is the world's premier cocktail festival, bringing together the most respected minds in mixology for five days of cocktails, cuisine and culture. Presented annually at Tales of the Cocktail, the Spirited Awards™ honor the very best of the cocktail industry. Winners are selected by a group of esteemed judges from the cocktail industry. All mixologists, bars, authors and spirits brands considered for the award must be nominated.

Ann Tuennerman, Founder of Tales of the Cocktail festival, promises, "If you're wondering where the cocktail industry is headed, The Spirited Award recipients are a good place to start."

Since its release in August 2010, the excitement towards Banks 5 Island blended rum as a premium white rum has quickly gathered momentum internationally, driving distribution from the United States to seven key European markets and New Zealand. Rum is the 4th largest spirits category in the world and the United States ranks the second rum market by volume.

Legendary botanist and explorer, Joseph Banks, who sailed on the Endeavour with Captain Cook, inspired Banks award-winning blend. From the Caribbean to the East Indies, Banks 5 Island rum is crafted from 21 of the world's best rums. Each island brings a unique character to the blend. The result is a smooth, dry, flavorful white rum with complexity, character and depth that is excellent to drink straight and can enhance any cocktail. In complexity and character, Banks 5 Island rum is the first premium white rum of its kind. For more information, visit banksrum.com.

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