



DISCOVER
THE FLAVOURS
OF THE
ANCIENT
BORDERLANDS
OF POLAND

JR Potocki

THE POLISH BORDERLANDS

In 1569, Polish King Sigismund II Jagiello signed the Union of Lublin, formally uniting the Grand Duchy of Lithuania with the kingdom of Poland, creating Europe's largest country, stretching from the Baltic to the shores of the Black Sea.

However, the Polish Commonwealth would soon face an expansionist Muscovy to the East, a bellicose Sweden to the North, Turks and their Tatar allies to the South and Prussians and Austrians on their western flank.

For over two centuries, the Poles would hold these multiple enemies at bay, famously coming to the rescue of a besieged Vienna in 1683. Among them, the Potockis, who commanded armies and fought many epic battles, which would be later recounted by Henryk Sienkiewicz - a Nobel Literature prize winner - in his famous trilogy.

By the end of the eighteenth century though, Poland was no more, vanquished by its neighbours and its own internal weaknesses. Yet Polish presence would endure across these territories, including my family's, until its demise following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and finally the Treaty of Yalta in 1945.

The Borderlands, or 'Kresy' in Polish, are the vast expanses where Polish history was written; mostly on the battlefield but also in daily contact with a vast array of cultures and people.

I thus created the **Vodkas of the Borderlands**, each telling a different story by encapsulating the flavour and carrying the name of these now long forgotten eastern provinces, which nonetheless continue to discreetly linger in our language and culture. **Every drink is an invitation to rediscover time and space, so follow me in this journey through the Borderlands of Poland.**

Jan-Roman Potocki, Warsaw November 11th 2016



FINDING COURLAND CUMIN



Courland is the ancient name for the misty flat wetlands of lakes, marshes and rivers that forms much of the Baltic coastline of modern-day Latvia. The Duchy of Courland was under Polish overlordship throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

History: Cumin liqueur became particularly popular during the nineteenth century and was originally manufactured in the small town of Alasz in Courland. It was simply known by this name in the Russian Empire or as 'Kümmel' in Germany. Our distillery at Łańcut also produced a version of this liqueur.

Botanicals: Caraway seeds (*lat. carum carvi*), commonly known as cumin, were originally imported from Central Asia and India. Cumin is prized for its flavour all around the Baltic and can be found in breads, cured meats, cheese and of course, in spirits.

Production: Today, Courland Cumin is carefully flavoured with macerated cumin seeds to fully render the distinctive and powerful aroma of the traditionally made liqueurs. Yet, being a vodka, Courland Cumin is only minimally sweetened and delicately enhanced with dill and fennel seeds, as well as orange peel.



SERVING COURLAND CUMIN



With its accessible character and delightful flavours, Courland Cumin makes an ideal partner to a variety of foods.

Tasting Notes: Courland Cumin is a smooth, rich and aromatic vodka. The bouquet yields notes of herbs and citrus, the body is light to medium with a clean restrained palate.

Food Pairing: The gentle, aromatic flavours of Courland Cumin are a natural accompaniment to Nordic seafood such as herring, eel or salmon. The combination of an aromatic cumin base and clean citrus nose pair well with most desserts, especially chocolate or egg-based ones.

Natural Remedy: Cumin has long been prized as a natural carminative and an ancient remedy for stomach ailments. Its aroma stimulates the salivary glands and its essential oils improve digestion. Courland Cumin makes for an ideal digestif after a hearty meal.

Serving Suggestion: Courland Cumin can be served chilled in shots or at room temperature in grappa glasses.



MIXING COURLAND CUMIN

As rainbows rise from the mists and the sky begins to transform into a glorious long summer sunset over the Baltic, take time to relax with friends and share the warm evening with a refreshingly aromatic Courland Cumin cocktail.

COURLAND SMASH

Glass: Jam jar or Collins.

Ice: Cubed, topped with crushed.

Garnish: Mint sprig and cucumber slice.

Method: Muddle cucumber first, add the rest of the ingredients, shake well in glass.

Ingredients: 40ml Potocki Courland Cumin; 20ml Lemon Juice; 10ml Simple Syrup (1:1 ratio); 15ml Elderflower Syrup; 3 Slices of cucumber; 6 mint leaves.

Notes: Refreshing long drink with original taste of cumin. Enjoyable all year round. Affordable ingredients.

Author: Bram Bertelsen, Warsaw.

CUMIN SOUR

Glass: Rock.

Ice: Cubed.

Garnish: Orange zest.

Method: Dry shake for maximum froth.

Ingredients: 50ml Potocki Courland Cumin; 25ml Lemon juice; 25ml Simple syrup (1:1 ratio); 1 Egg white.

Notes: Excellent variation of the Andean classic. This refreshing cocktail really puts the cumin in focus.

Author: Bram Bertelsen, Warsaw.

We encourage our clients to send us original recipes. The best ones will be added to our recommended cocktail selection and their authors acknowledged.

FINDING ANTONINY HOUNDBERRY



The low-lying rich plains of Wolhynia are irrigated by the rivers flowing out of the great Pripet Marshlands to the north east. The black soil yields wheat, sunflower and sugar beet in abundance as well as wild rosemary, hops and asparagus. Rich pastures, with lakes shaded by great forests were famed for raising livestock, particularly horses.

History: I named it after my great grand-father's legendary estate and stud farm in Wolhynia, where houndberry bushes abounded. In 1917, as Poland fought to regain its independence, the 2nd Uhlan Regiment was formed at Antoniny and fully mounted with our horses. Antoniny thus took its place in our country's history before being engulfed in the flames of the Bolshevik revolution. This dramatic last chapter is described in Zofia Kossak Szczucka's novel, 'The Blaze'.

Botanicals: Houndberry, also known as dogwood or cornelian cherry, (*lat. cornus mas*), is a wild late summer fruit, typical of Poland's eastern borderlands, prized for its invigorating properties. Antoniny Houndberry is subtly enhanced with blackthorn berries, also used in the production of sloe gin.

Production: Antoniny Houndberry's ingredients are infused in pure grain alcohol and left to mature for a couple of months before bottling. The final vodka is sweetened naturally by its ingredients, thus yielding a characteristically dry flavour.



SERVING ANTONINY HOUNDBERRY



Antoniny Houndberry boasts a full-flavoured style, with deep, strong and fruity undertones. Served with meals, it naturally complements richer foods, but also provides an unusual and invigorating digestif.

Tasting Notes: Antoniny Houndberry is a rich and powerfully flavoured vodka, slightly astringent with a plum-like after taste, somewhat reminiscent of Port. Its taste builds on the palate and lingers on, inviting further exploration.

Food Pairing: Deliberately unsweetened, Antoniny Houndberry is an excellent companion to cured ham and aged hard cheese, such as Manchego or Parmiggiano. It will also pair well with flavourful meats such as pork belly or game. Antoniny Houndberry's fruity yet astringent notes will perfectly balance out with softer vanilla ice cream, custard, meringue as well as wintry deserts such as cooked apples or pears.

Natural Remedy: Fresh houndberries are naturally acidic and contain an extremely high concentration of minerals, vitamin C and also phytoncides. They thus boast excellent restorative, appetite building properties but also anti-bacterial potential. Houndberry has thus traditionally been used to fight anaemia and scorbout, but also as a natural cure to prevent colds. Drink a shot of Antoniny Houndberry for strength!

Serving Suggestion: Antoniny Houndberry should be served at room temperature in grappa glasses, with a single cube of ice.



MIXING ANTONINY HOUNDBERRY

Antoniny Houndberry has the colour and the flavours of autumn, its warm rich heart is the perfect counterpoint to the colder months of the year, or parts of the world. Mixed in cocktails, Antoniny Houndberry will best express itself in rich, sweet combinations. The Houndberry Flip is a true gem.

HOUNDBERRY FLIP

Glass: Small coupe.

Ice: None.

Garnish: Grated Nutmeg (not powdered).

Method: Shaken and double strained (with ice).

Ingredients: 25ml Potocki Antoniny Houndberry; 25ml Ruby Port; 25ml Simple syrup (1:1 ratio); 1 Egg yolk.

Notes: Excellent dessert cocktail, easily inserted in an autumn/winter dinner menu. This delicious cocktail highlights the unique flavour of the Houndberry. It will just look and taste right for the Christmas holidays and the winter season.

Author: Bram Bertelsen, Warsaw.

THE POLISH RIDER

Glass: Martini or Small Coupe.

Ice: Cubed for stirring.

Garnish: Maraschino cherry with stem or pick (arrow shaped ideally).

Method: Stir.

Ingredients: 25 ml Potocki Wodka; 15 ml Potocki Antoniny Houndberry; 5 ml Benedictine liqueur.

Notes: Named after a famous Rembrandt painting (Frick Collection NYC). A classic drink, balanced but dry. The garnish provides all the necessary sweetness if eaten first.

Author: Bram Bertelsen, Warsaw.

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FINDING LITHUANIAN TALLGRASS



When Lithuania united with Poland in 1569, most of its territory was densely forested and home to wolves, bears, lynx, moose, deer and bison. Winter wolf hunts were in fact common on Lithuanian landed estates until 1939. Some of this pristine environment survived to this day in the forest of Białowieża, now a World Heritage site, covering 140,000 ha of primeval forest, which straddles Poland and Bielorrussia.

History: In the sixteenth century, Sigismund I Jagiełło, Grand Duke of Lithuania and King of Poland, created a royal hunting reserve in the forests of Białowieża, thus protecting Polish bison for posterity. Tallgrass thrives in its cool and shaded meadows, hence its popular name of 'bison' grass. It has been used to flavour vodka by Polish and Lithuanian nobility for centuries, and in the 1920s and 1930s, our family distillery in Łańcut produced a 'bison' vodka.

Botanicals: Its aromatic properties confer Lithuanian Tallgrass (*lat. hierochloe odorata*) a subtle sweet taste and a particularly fragrant aroma. In fact dried stems of tallgrass have traditionally been used in religious ceremonies, across many cultures. Hence *hierochloe odorata* translates from Latin as 'fragrant holy grass'.

Production: Today, Lithuanian Tallgrass is produced by carefully macerating dried, hand picked blades for maximum flavour. A hint of spice enhances its naturally sweet aroma.



Hierochloe odorata



SERVING LITHUANIAN TALLGRASS



Naturally light, sweet and aromatic, Lithuanian Tallgrass tastes as good as it smells, making it a very versatile and enjoyable drink as well as cocktail ingredient.

Tasting Notes: Lithuanian Tallgrass develops a fresh and vivacious vegetal aroma, reminiscent of spring forest undergrowth, before revealing voluptuous and creamy notes of vanilla. The finish is suitably spicy.

Food Pairing: Lithuanian Tallgrass tastes as good as it smells. Its grassy notes are well suited to accompany white fish served with a rich sauce, hollandaise or beurre blanc. It is also a natural companion to apple or pear, however served.

Natural remedy: The smoke of burning sweet grass was inhaled to treat colds, and keep insects at bay. With its naturally soothing fragrance Tallgrass had also been used to as a stuffing for pillows and mattresses. *Hierochloe odorata* also contains coumarin, which naturally thins the blood.

Serving Suggestion: Lithuanian Tallgrass should be served at room temperature with savoury dishes, or chilled in a shot glass with desserts.



MIXING LITHUANIAN TALLGRASS

Lithuanian Tallgrass is best paired with the apple - no pun intended – and any variation around this duo will have great chances of success. Lithuanian Tallgrass's flavour is also intense enough to combine well with all citrus fruits.

TALLGRASS COLLINS

Glass: Collins.

Ice: Cubed.

Garnish: Mint sprig and apple.

Method: Shaken and double strained (with ice).

Ingredients: 50ml Potocki Tallgrass; 50ml Apple juice; 25ml Lemon Juice; 25ml Simple syrup (1:1 ratio).

Notes: Soda water adds life, and dilutes flavour to the right level of intensity. Apple and tallgrass are a classic and tested combination. Potocki tallgrass intense flavour combines very well with lemon and sugar.

Author: *Bram Bertelsen, Warsaw.*

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Available Worldwide from Potocki Spirits (Europe) Ltd

Contact: info@potockivodka.com

PACKAGING

Case: 6 x 500 ml, 39%, 6.84 kg gross

Layer: 29 cases

Pallet 80 x 120 x 170 cm : 5 layers, 145 cases

LABELLING

Barcode bottle:

Courland Cumin: 5 060156 270080

Antoniny Houndberry: 5 060156 270073

Lithuanian Tallgrass: 5 060156 270141

Barcode case:

6 x 500 ml Courland Cumin: 5 060156 270110

6 x 500 ml Antoniny Houndberry: 5 060156 270127

6 x 500 ml Lithuanian Tallgrass: 5 060156 270165

Contains no allergens (albumin, casein, nuts)