

cigar aficionado

THE GOOD LIFE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

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**EDITORS'
PICKS**

**25 BEST
CIGARS
OF THE YEAR**

**MORE
CONFESSIONS
OF A WEEKEND
GOLFER**

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CARS**

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cigars

168 TASTING

Our tasting panel tackles 74 cigars, and finds several outstanding smokes.

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The creator of the Don Lino brand recounts the rise, fall and rebirth of the marque.

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Joe Bastianich, co-owner of Babbo, Del Posto and many more acclaimed eateries, discusses his passion for great cigars.

194 JAMES SUCKLING'S CIGAR DIARY

Our European editor gets a little woozy as he samples one of Cuba's new, strong cigars.



For much more on cigars, see our comprehensive coverage of the best cigars of the year, beginning on page 58.

New Releases

New cigars have become a vital part of the cigar industry. Every summer, nearly every cigarmaker of note unveils new offerings at the Retail Tobacco Dealers of America trade show. Here are a few of the latest notable releases, which should be in cigar stores across the United States now.

Arturo Fuente Don Carlos Edición de Aniversario

A limited-production smoke celebrating 30 years of Tabacalera A. Fuente's Don Carlos brand.

Augusto Reyes Nativo

The Reyes family of the Dominican Republic releases its first brand bearing its name.

Camacho Liberty Serie 2006

The rarest of Camacho's lines.

C.A.O. Vision

The groundbreaking packaging on this Dominican *puro* looks like a laptop computer. Delayed, it should be on the market in January.

Chateau Real

A non-flavored cigar from Drew Estate, makers of Acid.

Cohiba Black

This Dominican cigar sports a broadleaf wrapper, and is the first maduro Cohiba.

Cohiba 40th Anniversary

Cuba's celebratory smoke comes in an Elie Bleu humidor of 40 cigars and sells for 15,000 euros (\$18,000). Only 4,000 cigars were made.

DaVinci

A bargain brand from Altadis U.S.A. made in Nicaragua.

Diamond Crown Maximus Stanford's 90th

Made to celebrate the late Stanford Newman's 90th birthday.

Dona Flor Reserva Especial

A Brazilian *puro* made in limited quantities.

Dunhill Signed Range

This reincarnation of the Dunhill brand, made by Torani Cigars Inc. for British American Tobaccos, hit the market in December.

Felipe Power Habano

A celebratory smoke from Philip Wynne to commemorate his 15 years in business.

Fonseca Cubano Limitado

One of Manuel Quesada's strongest smokes.

Joya de Nicaragua Antaño 1970 Magnum 660

A cigar answering the demand for both fat and strong cigars.

La Tradition Perdomo Reserve Limited Golf Edition

A cigar aimed at golfers from Perdomo.

Litto Gomez Small Batch No. 1

A small-production cigar named after great Bourbon.

Maxx

A unique line from Alec Bradley: each size retails for \$5.

Oliva Master Blends 3

Oliva Cigar's most expensive line is rebled with each incarnation.

Partagas 160 Signature Series

General Cigar's second release of cigars made with Cameroon wrapper from 1977 to 1981.

Saint Luis Rey Serie G

A line extension featuring extra-fat, dark cigars.

Zino Davidoff 100th Anniversary

Three cigars made to honor the late founder of the Davidoff brand.

Economy-Priced Cigars with First-Class Ratings

Whether we're in an economic recession or in an upswing, everyone likes to save a buck. Cigar smokers are no exception, although true aficionados rarely sacrifice quality for money. Luckily, they don't have to. Quality tobacco and the ingenuity of master blenders have given frugal connoisseurs a variety of cigars to choose from this year. We scoured our database for cigars scoring no lower than 88 points with a suggested retail price of no higher than \$4. The result was 21 cigars—that's three fewer than last year, but more than twice as many scored 90 points or higher. Two qualifying cigars are not listed here—the Saint Luis Rey Belicoso and Oliva Grand Cameroon Robusto—because they made it into the Top 25 Cigars of the Year. (The makers of the Oliva Grand Cameroon brand changed its name to Oliva Serie G Cameroon since its initial rating.) • Brands such as the Honduran Saint Luis Rey are no stranger to this best buy list. Newcomers such as the Honduran Quintero and the rebledended Don Tomás Clasico are welcomed additions. The scores in the list below first appeared in CIGAR AFICIONADO or *Cigar Insider* throughout 2006.

—Gregory Mottola

92 Oliva Grand Cameroon Belicoso

Nicaragua • 5" by 52 • \$3.00

91 Saint Luis Rey Reserva Especial Churchill

Honduras • 7" by 52 • \$3.65

90 Alec Bradley Trilogy Authentic Corojo Churchill

Honduras • 7" by 50 • \$3.95

90 Gispert Maduro Churchill

Honduras • 7" by 54 • \$3.75

90 Oliva Grand Cameroon Churchill

Nicaragua • 7" by 50 • \$3.00

90 Oliva Grand Cameroon Corona Grande

Nicaragua • 6" by 46 • \$3.00

90 Quintero Maduro Robusto

Honduras • 5" by 54 • \$4.00

89 Joya de Nicaragua Celebración Consul

Nicaragua • 4 1/2" 52 • \$3.95

89 La Aroma de Cuba Corona

Honduras • 5 1/2" by 44 • \$3.85

89 Ramon Allones Gustoso

Dom. Rep. • 5" by 50 • \$3.90

88 A. Turrent Corona

Mexico • 5 1/2" by 44 • \$3.50

88 Aurora Sublime

Dom. Rep. • 5" by 38 • \$3.60

88 Don Tomás Clasico Robusto

Honduras • 5 1/2" by 50 • \$3.10

88 El Rico Habano Habano Club

Dom. Rep. • 4 7/8" by 48 • \$4.00

88 Gran Habano Corojo No. 5 Rothchild

Honduras • 4 1/2" by 50 • \$3.35

88 Hoyo de Monterrey Largo Elegante Maduro

Honduras • 7" by 36 • \$2.20

88 La Flor Dominicana 2000 Series No. 3

Dom. Rep. • 4 3/4" by 40 • \$3.40

88 Padrón Londres

Nicaragua • 5 1/2" by 42 • \$2.50

88 Quintero Corona

Honduras • 5 1/8" by 45 • \$3.75

88 Quintero Robusto

Honduras • 5" by 54 • \$4.00

88 Saint Luis Rey Reserva Especial Maduro Rothchilde

Honduras • 5" by 54 • \$2.90

TOP CIGAR PICKS

SHOPPING LIST

FEBRUARY 2007

100-POINT SCALE

CLASSIC: 95-100

OUTSTANDING: 90-94

VERY GOOD TO EXCELLENT: 80-89

AVERAGE TO GOOD

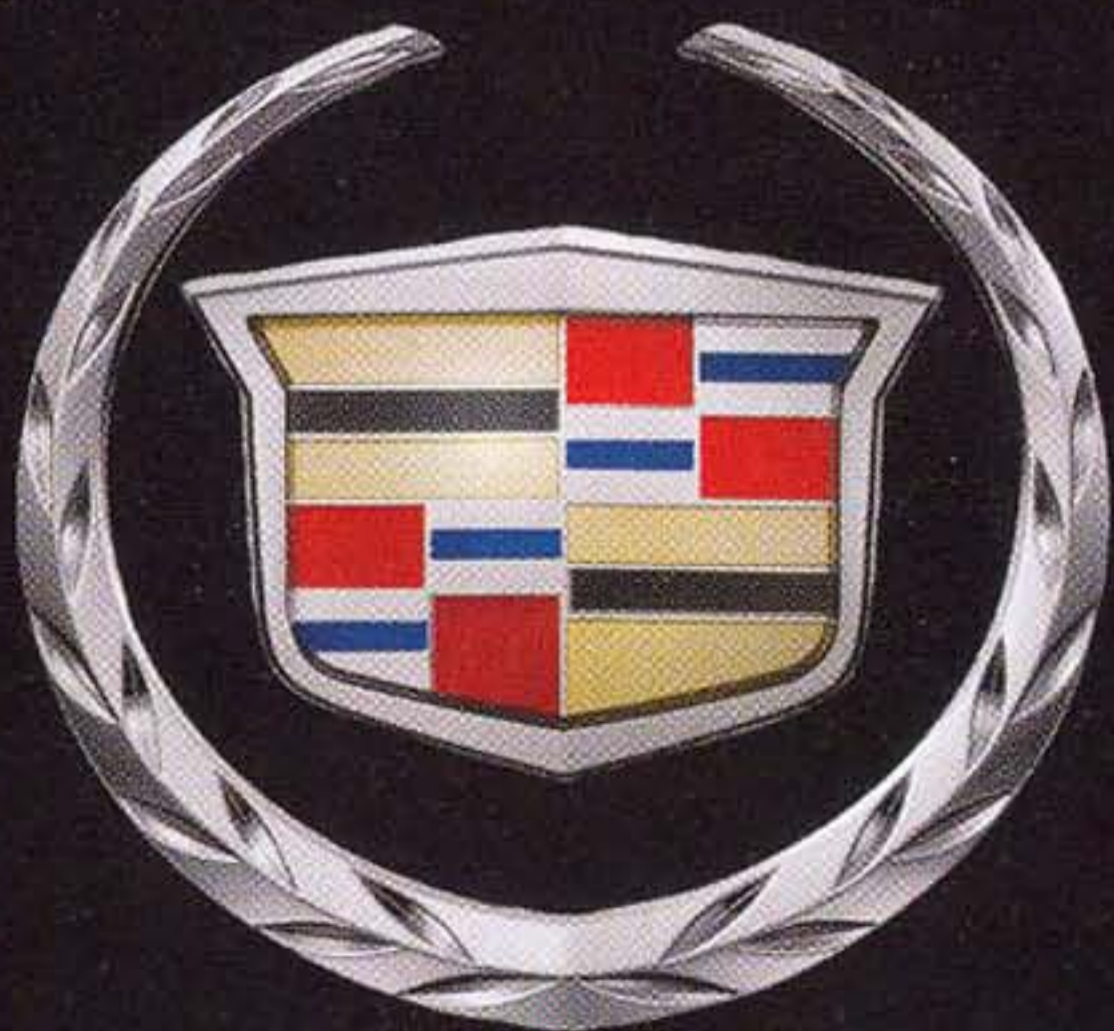
COMMERCIAL QUALITY: 70-79

DON'T WASTE YOUR MONEY: 0-70

NOT AVAILABLE: n/a

Prices shown reflect the suggested retail price.

THIS MONTH'S TOP CIGAR PICKS BROUGHT
TO YOU BY:



Top Corona Gordas



89

OLIVA SERIE 0 DOUBLE TORO

Nicaragua

U.S.: \$6.00

11

Oliva Serie G Cameroon Robusto

The price of this cigar seems impossibly low. Oliva Cigar Co. has been making cigars for 11 years, and its early struggles in the post-cigar-boom world forced the company to create exceptional values. This Cameroon-cloaked robusto is one of the company's best. The toothy African leaf pairs well with the sublime Nicaraguan tobaccos that make up the filler blend and binder. As part of a

redesign of all of the company's brands, the cigar was originally rated as the Oliva Grand Cameroon, but is now known as the Oliva Serie G Cameroon. The price was raised a modest 15 cents but the blend remains the same, Cuban-seed Nicaraguan tobaccos mixed with Cameroon wrapper. The box-pressed robusto, which measures 4 1/2 by 50, is elegant and sweet, with nice balance.

MADE BY: Oliva Cigar Co.

FACTORY LOCATION: Nicaragua

WRAPPER: Cameroon

BINDER: Nicaragua

FILLER: Nicaragua

PRICE: \$3.15

2006 PRODUCTION: 45,000 cigars

RATING: 91