

FOOD & WINE



BUTTERY SAUTÉED MUSHROOMS WITH FRESH HERBS P. 96

SEPTEMBER 2021

BACKSTORY

Tequila on The Rock(s)

"My favorite ways to drink Teremana? I'll go neat, I'll go ice, and then sometimes—if I'm on the go—I'll do a paper cup." —DWAYNE JOHNSON

IN MARCH 2020, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson's tequila brand was supposed to launch with a full-scale marketing campaign. But when the pandemic hit, Johnson decided to take a different approach. He started hosting "Teremana Tuesdays" on Instagram Live, addressing the isolation that everyone was feeling in the early days of the pandemic. He'd make margaritas, answer questions, and talk about silver linings amid a confusing time. "I did that every week and developed a real connection with the consumers," Johnson says. His unique style paid off. By the end of 2020, Teremana made record-breaking sales compared to any other spirit in its first year of business. While Teremana has been 10 years in the making, it wasn't until five years ago that Johnson connected with a family-owned distillery in the highlands of Jalisco, Mexico. Together, they built a new distillery exclusively for Teremana. "I wanted to make sure that I went into the venture with respect and reverence to the culture." While Johnson is focused on tequila (Teremana currently offers a blanco and a reposado, with an añejo launching in fall 2021), he alluded to plans for other spirits down the line. "I'll just say that in my house, we grew up with tequila and whiskey, and I've made a tequila." As for what to eat with Teremana, "It goes with everything," Johnson claims. But his all-time favorite pairing? Teremana on ice with warm chocolate chip cookies. —Nina Friend

BY THE NUMBERS

113

Distillations of Teremana Blanco that were created before Johnson was satisfied

300K

Cases of Teremana sold in 2020

1613

Teremana's unique NOM (Norma Oficial Mexicana), which indicates where Teremana is made

2

Words combined to make "Teremana"—a derivation of the Latin word "terra," or earth, and the Polynesian word "mana," meaning spiritual energy

6 to 8

Years it takes for the blue Weber agave used in Teremana to reach peak maturity

BURIED TREASURE

"TIJASI" is etched into the bottom of each Teremana bottle. Johnson created this word, pulling the first two letters of his three daughters' first names: Tiana, Jasmine, and Simone. "There's a legacy component to this," he says.

PHOTOGRAPHY: HIRAN GARCIA