

TURNING IDEAS INTO DOUGH

# Bakers Rack<sup>TM</sup> Online

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF RETAIL BAKERS OF AMERICA

JANUARY, 2012

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Baker's Rack Online*! As a member of the Retail Bakers of America, you'll receive our official publication every month filled with fresh ideas, great advice, the latest trends, issues and challenges, and much more!



## IN THIS ISSUE

- Standard Rate Review
- ATB is a Huge Success
- Retail: Sell What Sells
- The Goodness of Agave Nectar
- Succeeding in the "Real World"
- A First Time Attendee's View
- A Certification Judge's Insight
- From the RBA President

### Piñas: The Goodness of Agave Nectar

by Dr. Klaus Tenbergen  
Program Director, Culinology® and Assistant Professor, Dept. of Food Science and Nutrition at California State University, Fresno

by Priscila Santiago  
Graduate from the Tecnológico de Monterrey, México, where she obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Food Industry Engineering



The Agave plants, a succulent, are well known for their water storage ability in their leaves, can easily adapt to arid climates. Agave nectar can be used for many applications, and may vary in color and taste profile. The nectar functionality is similar to granulated sugar, while the nectar helps retaining moisture and extending shelf-life. Agave nectar has a much lower glycemic index than granulated

## ADVERTISEMENTS



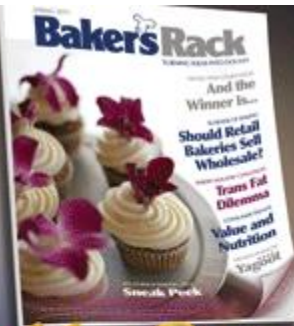
sugar.

Agave plants have a large rosette of thick leaves, which grow from the short solid stem; the leaves usually end in sharp points and with a spiny edge. Agaves are also known as the century plant as they grow up to 30 years. However the agave plant dies after flowering, which happens once during the agaves life cycle. Agave plants must mature between 7 to 8 years before they get harvested. Once harvested, the leaves of the plant are removed from the heart of the agave, leaving just the piña (3). Piña translates into "pineapple" obviously due to similar shape with the fruit. A piña generally weights between 60 - 80 kg (130-175 lbs.).

There are around 200 kinds of different species of agave; but the specie used in tequila is Agave tequilana Weber Azul, which is mainly cultivated in the town of Tequila, located in the State of Jalisco, Mexico. Mexican laws state that tequila can be produced only in the state of Jalisco and limited regions in the states of Guanajuato, Michoacán, Nayarit, and Tamaulipas. Mexico has claimed the exclusive international right to the word "tequila", threatening legal actions against manufacturers in other countries.

The cooking process inside the traditional oven takes between 50-72 hours at moderate heat (140 to 185°F / 60-85°C). At the end of the cooking process the piñas have changed their original white /green color to a rusty orange/dark brown. Juices which are released during the cooking process are collected from the bottom of the oven. This process is done in a similar manner as distillation. The first couple of hours of juice will be drained because it contains all the impurities and waxes of the plant; and again at the end of the process the juices must be discarded.

The purpose of cooking the agave piñas at these temperature ranges is to break down the long starch molecules present in the agave piña to smaller fermentable sugar molecules. However if the temperature is too high, the fermentable sugars will caramelize creating a bitter flavor and turn the piña nectar into a burnt-like color; while lower temperature will not create the breakdown of the starch molecules into fermentable sugar molecules desired to make nectar.



*Now Online!*

ALL THINGS  
**BAKING**  
2012

**More  
Readers.  
More  
Results.**

**More  
Readers.  
More  
Results.**