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Can baijiu, China's sorghum firewater, go global?

白酒--中国的高粱烈性酒,能走向世界吗?

Baijiu—a broad family of grain-based spirits selling for anything between a few dollars and a few thousand dollars per bottle—is the most-drunk spirit on earth. But this is only by dint of its popularity in China.

白酒是以谷物为主要原料的一大类烈酒的统称,每瓶售价在几美元到几千美元之间不等,它是世界上被喝得最多的烈酒品类,但这只能归功于中国人对它的青睐。

Over the years Europeans and Americans have grown to love vodka, a once-obscure Russian gut-rot, and tequila, a Mexican drink made from spiky plants. But Chinese liquor firms have made few inroads globally.

这些年来, 欧美人逐渐喜欢上伏特加和龙舌兰酒, 前者是一种曾经很不起眼的俄罗斯廉价烈酒, 后者则是由带刺的植物制成的一种墨西哥酒, 但是中国的酒企在全球范围内几乎没有取得什么进展。

For a long time China's big baijiu-makers were not that interested in foreign sales. Since China began opening its economy to the outside world in the late 1970s, the distillers have mostly been preoccupied with meeting domestic demand. Only recently have China's thousands of baijiu-makers begun stepping up efforts to develop foreign markets. 在很长的一段时间里,中国大型的白酒酿造商无意于在海外销售。自从中国在 1970 年代后期开始对外开放经济,烈酒生产商们主要忙于满足国内需求。直到最近,中国的数千家白酒酿造商才开始加大努力开发国外市场。

In addition to exporting their best-known brands, baijiu-makers have been creating new drinks specifically to be sold abroad. In 2016 Red Star, the maker of Erguotou, a cheap baijiu ubiquitous in Beijing, launched a spirit in Europe called Nuwa. Last year Luzhou Laojiao, a storied distiller in Sichuan, a south-western province, released a baijiu in America named Ming River.

白酒酿造商除了出口他们最知名的白酒品牌之外,也研制了专门在国外销售的新酒种。北京随处可见的一款平价白酒——二锅头的酿造商红星股份有限公司于 2016 年在欧洲推出了一种名叫女娲的烈酒。位于中国西南四川省的家喻户晓的蒸馏酒公司泸州老窖,去年在美国推出了一款叫明江的白酒。

Baijiu companies are aware that they increasingly have to compete in their home market with Western drinks such as gin, whisky and wine. Many have concluded, perhaps correctly, that making their brands look and feel international to Chinese drinkers will help them hold their own against these fashionable foreign tipples.

白酒公司意识到它们在国内市场越发激烈地和洋酒进行竞争,例如金酒、威士忌和葡萄酒。许 多白酒公司得出的结论也许是正确的:在中国消费者看来,让自己的品牌显得国际化,将有助于它们在这些新潮的国外洋酒面前保持竞争力。

----- 文章来源 / 经济学人

重点词汇

sorghum/'sɔːr.gəm/

n. 高粱

firewater/'faIərwɔːtər/

n. 烈酒

spirit/'spIrIt/

n. 精神,心灵;烈酒

• 英文释义: a strong alcoholic drink

• 同义词: firewater

by dint of

凭借,通过

• 同义词: by means of

• 例句:He succeeded by dint of hard work.

• 例句:He succeeded by dint of working hard.

obscure/əbˈskjʊr/

adj. 默默无闻的,鲜为人知的

• 例句: For some obscure reason, the song became very popular.

• 相关短语: Jude the Obscure (《无名的裘德》)

• 相关词汇: once-obscure

gut-rot/'gnt,rpt/

n. 廉价劣质酒; 伤胃酒

• 相关词汇: gut (n. 肠道,消化道)

• 相关词汇: rot (v. 腐烂)

• 英文释义: strong cheap low-quality alcohol

• 同义词:rotgut

spiky/'spaɪki/

adj. 有尖刺的

• 词性拓展: spike (n. 尖刺)

• 文化补充:图为 agave 龙舌兰植物

make inroads

取得进展;产生效果;开拓市场

• 英文释义: to start to have a direct and noticeable effect

• 例句: Xiaomi has made significant inroads in Indian mobile market.

distiller/dI'stIlər/

n. 烈酒生产者, 烈酒生产商

• 词性拓展: distill (v. 蒸馏)

• 词根词缀:-er (...的人)

step up

增加强度

• 近义词: increase

• 搭配短语: step up one's pace

• 搭配短语: step up the pressure on sth.

ubiquitous/jux'b1kw1təs/

adj. 普遍存在的,似乎无处不在的

• 搭配短语:ubiquitous Wi-Fi signals

• 例句: Plastics are ubiquitous even in the deep ocean.

storied/'stairid/

adj. 经常提及的;有名的

• 英文释义: celebrated or famous in history or story

• 搭配短语:a storied institution

• 近义词: famous

• 词义辨析: storied, famous

storied 的近义词是 famous ,但它与 famous 的不同之处在于:storied 隐含着出名是需要一定时间沉淀的,而不是一夜成名或一时风尚。用 storied 来形容泸州老窖,体现了这个品牌的历史感。

hold one's own

(与...) 同样成功, (与...) 相匹敌

- 英文释义: to be as successful as other people or things in a situation
- 例句:She can hold her own in any argument.
- 搭配短语: hold one's own against

tipple/'tipl/

n. 常喝的酒

- 英文释义: an alcoholic drink that you drink regularly
- 例句:James Bond's favorite tipple is dry martini.