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## BREAKING DOWN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEZCAL AND TEQUILA

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Erstwhile Arroqueño, Alipús San Juan, Bozal Tepeztate and Luminar Joven / Photo by Jens Johnson

From citrusy and bright to dark and brooding, to laden with chocolate mole and laced with mesquite, this spirit category can have an almost unbelievable range of descriptors. And further flavor combinations can be even more startling: roasted meat, rubber and petrol; lychee, rosewater and bubble gum.

Such is the magical mystery of mezcal.

Mezcal is Mexico's most traditional agave spirit, and perhaps its most nontraditional in terms of the drinking experience. It can surprise and delight with its extreme range, and it can show terroir like few spirits can.

For years, it was pigeonholed as "smoky," an easy way to differentiate its flavors from Tequila, which is also distilled from agave. But in reality, mezcal is so much more.

## 3 BADGE BEVERAGE CORPORATION

**Bozal Tepeztate (Mexico; 3 Badge Beverage, Sonoma, CA); 91 points.**

The fruity aroma entwines ripe pineapple and bell pepper. The notably silky palate opens with a pronounced petrol note, which fades to mellower tropical fruit and finishes with plenty of peppery sting.

**BOZAL / TEPEZTATE**