



From Guinness Punch to Front End Lifter, Jamaica enjoys a liquid — and libidinous — Irish legacy.



C.W. GRIFFIN/MIAMI HERALD STAFF

CREAMY SHAKE: The author, Dinkinish O'Connor, holds an Irish Moss.

KISS ME I'M JAMAICAN!

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In Jamaica, Irish moss has magical powers. Old timers say the seaweed can raise a dead libido. New schoolers say it can do everything from condition hair to shrink goiters.

But even nonbelievers admit that when mixed with condensed milk, allspice, cinnamon, vanilla and other ingredients in an eponymous drink, Irish moss is delicious. And its 4,000-mile journey from the Emerald Isle to the West Indies is as curious as dark-skinned, freckled Jamaicans with names like Mullings, Kennedy and O'Connor.

The Irish arrived in Jamaica in the mid 1600s, many as bonded servants to British colonists, filling Jamaica's gene pool with a love for Irish moss and

Guinness Stout. Both play starring roles in some of Jamaica's most auspicious drinks — Irish Moss, Guinness Punch and Front End Lifter (pronounced "front hend liftah")

"When I wrote that piece on the black Irish of Jamaica 10 years ago, I never imagined it would still have legs," e-mailed Rob Mullally, an Irishman who lived in Kildare, Portland, Jamaica, for 20 years.

Mullally is author of "One Love: The Black Irish of Jamaica," a three-part series at thewildgeese.com that references Irish icons in Jamaica.

Hoisting a Front End Lifter or drinking Guinness Stout warm has libido-boosting powers, says Gregory Campbell, a Spanish Town, Jamaica, transplant to South Florida.

•TURN TO IRISH DRINKS, 2E

THE CHEESE CONNECTION

Artisan cheese gets its very own festival

BY NANCY ANCRUM
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Enough of us likely have seen and sampled the brie and the blues, the goats and the gorgonzolas, bufalas and the burratas to know that those thin, waxy orange slices of, basically, congealed milk stuck between two sheets of plastic are *not* the height and depth of the art of cheese.

And Justo Vera-Ayestaran of Miami Lakes knows a lot more than that. After years of research, travel, study — and eating, eating, eating — Vera has created The Cheese Connection — an international artisan cheese festival in Miami. The event this weekend at the Miami Airport Convention Center highlights the craftsmanship of producers who are making small-batch, hand-made cheeses.

More than 340 artisan cheese makers from 45 countries are scheduled to participate. In addition, there will be tastings, workshops and chefs' demonstrations for the cheese curious.

"Cheese is the new wine," Vera says. "There have always been wine lovers, but it was not always so popular that you could find wines in Walgreen's or Winn-

•TURN TO CHEESE, 4E

COCINA

A raw memoir, manifesto from a hands-on chef



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Gabrielle Hamilton, the chef-owner of Prune, a tiny East Village restaurant in Manhattan, has become the accidental muse for the culinary intelligentsia with her memoir, *Blood, Bone, and Butter: The Inadvertent Education of a Reluctant Chef* (Random, \$26).

"Bad boy" Anthony Bourdain, who stumbled into fame with his own irreverent tell-all, calls it "the best memoir by a chef ever." Mario Batali wants to "apply for the dishwasher job at Prune." And *The New York Times* gave the book and author rapturous and extensive coverage.

In its third printing before its official publication

•TURN TO COCINA, 4E



HER STORY:
Gabielle Hamilton, author and chef-owner of Prune.

THEATER

Time to grow up, guys

BY CHRISTINE DOLEN
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The infusion of creativity flowing from graduates of New World School of the Arts into the larger South Florida theater community gets another surge this week with the Alliance Theatre Lab's world premiere of *Brothers Beckett* by David Sirois.

Sirois, who earned his bachelor's degree from New World in 2008, is the play's author and a performer. Also in the cast are Mark Della Ventura (New World 2009), David Dearstyne and Shira Abergel (New World 2010), and Kaitlyn O'Neill (a 2009 University of Miami grad).

An award-winning writer of short plays, Sirois has crafted an edgy, full-length comedy about a pair of post-collegiate brothers who can't quite make the leap into adulthood. Living as roommates (and sleeping in bunk beds, no less), aspiring playwright Kevin (Dearstyne) and the jobless-by-choice Brad (Sirois) have a workable if rather messy living arrangement until Kevin's decision to propose to his long-distance