

How two new Cavendish tobaccos were invented.

Another step into the tobacco world with two new experiences in pipe tobacco. These are Katerini Oriental and Nicotiana Rustica; both tobaccos have been processed into Cavendish tobacco, which has never been done before.

It all started with my visit to Jamestown Settlement (Virginia), where I learned that the Powhatan people in that area of Virginia had smoked Rustica. Back home, I came up with the idea to make pipe tobacco using Nicotiana Rustica, and the result was HH Rustica. Talking to a historian at the Jamestown settlement, I learned that the English settlers, after harvest, stacked the tobacco on the field to dry, just like they have done with grain back in England. However, they forgot the higher temperature and humidity in Virginia. The result was that the tobacco in the field was rotten and was of no use to pipe smokers. This mistake led to two changes in the world of smoking. First, the settlers started to hang the tobacco under a roof, which was the start of air-drying tobacco. Second, I remembered when I was told the story that it was a Cavendish process that had been going on for too long. I couldn't use the information then, so it was stored in the back of my brain until recently.

I can assure you that it is rare to get your hands on new sorts of pipe tobacco and use them for the first time ever. And especially when you reach my age, you imagine that you have seen everything, but real life surprises you time after time, so keep your mind open.

As always, my mind was thinking about which direction to take new blends significantly and how they could differ from current blends. One evening, sitting on the couch watching an episode of Star Trek, I saw the spaceship Enterprise on the deep, black background of the universe. Looking at the black of the cosmos, my brain connected to what I had been told in Jamestown about the tobacco drying in the field. As trivial as it sounds, the beauty lies in the simple idea. Settlers drying Rustica tobacco and a Cavendish process that went too far gave me a new idea. Why not expose Nicotiana Rustica to the unique Cavendish process and try to make deep black tobacco? The next idea came right away: why not try the Cavendish process with Katerini Oriental? Both contain natural sugar, so the prerequisites were in order. The Cavendish process makes the original tobacco slightly milder, and since Rustica is a strong tobacco, it shouldn't hurt; Katerini was tried as Perique with some fascinating tasting notes, so what's not to like?

My goddess of happiness turned out to be Jeremy Mckenna, CEO of Sutliff Tobacco. After I explained my idea to Jeremy, he was equally excited and offered to make the two new Cavendish tobaccos. It's always special when two tobacco brains think the same thoughts. It's not so common, but it happens. Jeremy and his craftsmen performed miracles, and the result was no less than impressive. At the same time, the two Cavendish tobaccos were utterly new types of tobacco that no pipe smoker had ever tasted.

Mixing these tobaccos was done with awe; just trying completely new flavors was out of this world. However, one thing didn't change; it was still trial and error until the blend was as it should be. These new tobaccos have been used in some of my new Viking Collection line of tobaccos, and I hope you will enjoy these new blends; they are unique individuals with their very own flavor profiles.

The Viking Collection – a series that celebrates pipe smoking by showing innovation isn't a thing of the past; there is still new land to find behind the horizon.

Happy smoke
Per G. Jensen