A dense, vibrant background of various tropical plants, including palm fronds, monstera leaves, and other lush green foliage, creating a tropical atmosphere.

Tiki Time

Ben Coffelt, CSW

The background of the slide is a dense, repeating pattern of various tropical leaves in shades of green. The leaves include palm fronds, monstera leaves with characteristic holes, and other broad-leafed plants. The colors range from light lime green to deep forest green, creating a lush, naturalistic feel.

Key Questions

1. What was it?

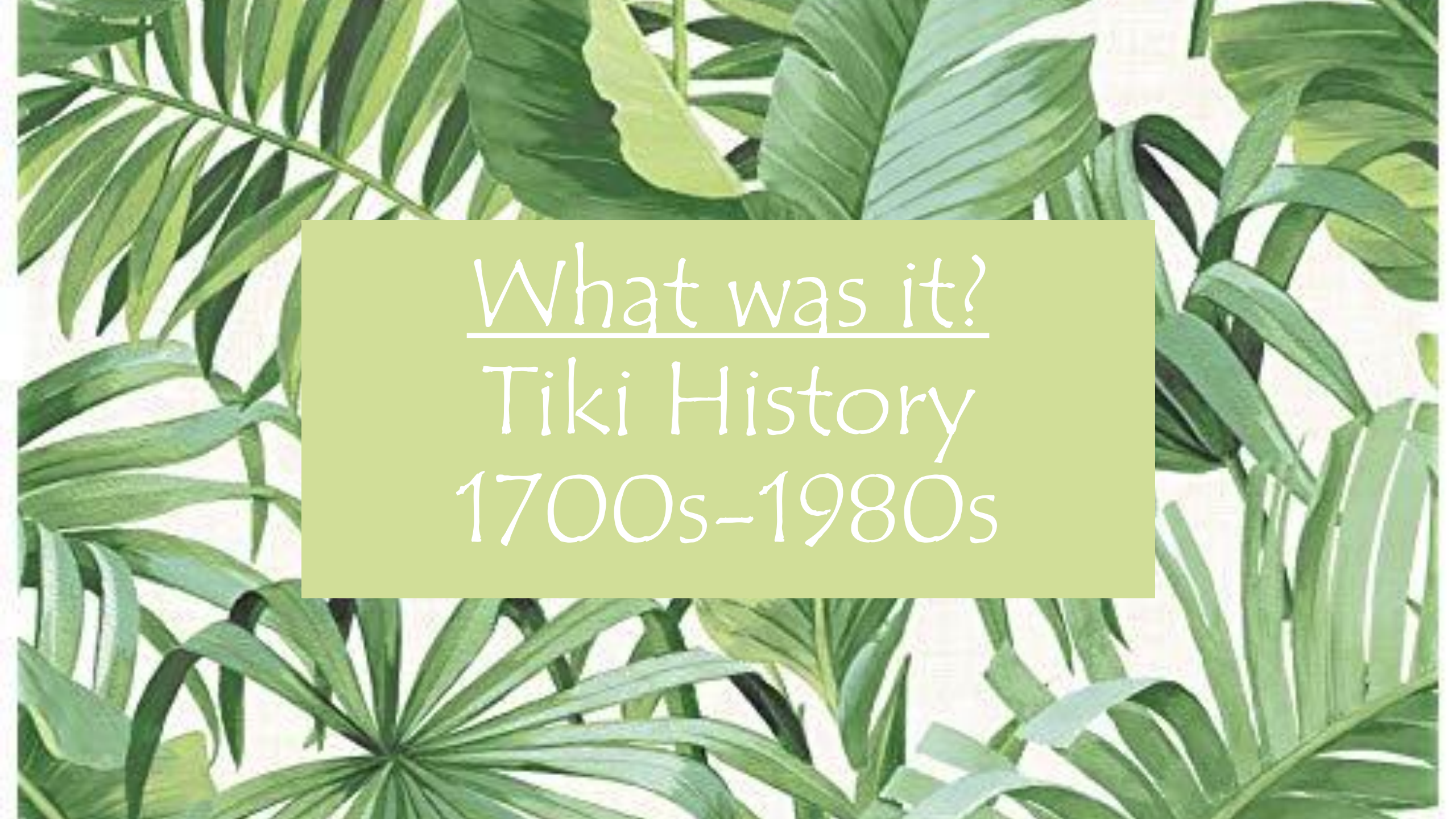
How and where did it start?

2. What is a Tiki drink? What are the components?

How are they constructed?

3. What is happening with Tiki today?

Why is it back? Why does it matter?

A dense background of various tropical plants, including palm fronds, monstera leaves, and other broad-leafed species, in shades of green.

What was it?
Tiki History
1700s-1980s



Rum

- Caribbean production dates back to the 17th century
- Made from sugar byproducts – cane juice, molasses, evaporated sugar, etc.
- Supported by, and contributed to, the Atlantic slave trade
- Most popular spirit in Americas through American Revolution
- Industry boomed during Prohibition
- Usually blended from pot still and continuous distillation

Glass #1

Foursquare Zinfandel Cask



- Blend of pot and column distilled rums
- Aged in ex-bourbon barrels for 11 years
- Finished in zinfandel barrels
- 86 proof
- Master Distiller, Richard Seale

Glass #2

Planter's Punch

Recipe

1/2oz lime juice
1oz simple syrup
1 1/2oz Navy Strength Rum
2oz water



Historic Background

A traditional 18th century Caribbean recipe. Similar to what British sailor's drank on ship. Made with fruit juices when available.

Early 20th Century

- Prohibition leads to profits for Caribbean distillers as American spirit production promptly ceased
- Fishing boats smuggled rum into ports on the east coast and New Orleans
- Americans traveled to the Caribbean, particularly Cuba, for vacations and fell in love with daiquiris, swizzles, and Planter's Punches.
- New, smoother styles of rum, such as Bacardi, were eagerly embraced by thirsty Americans.

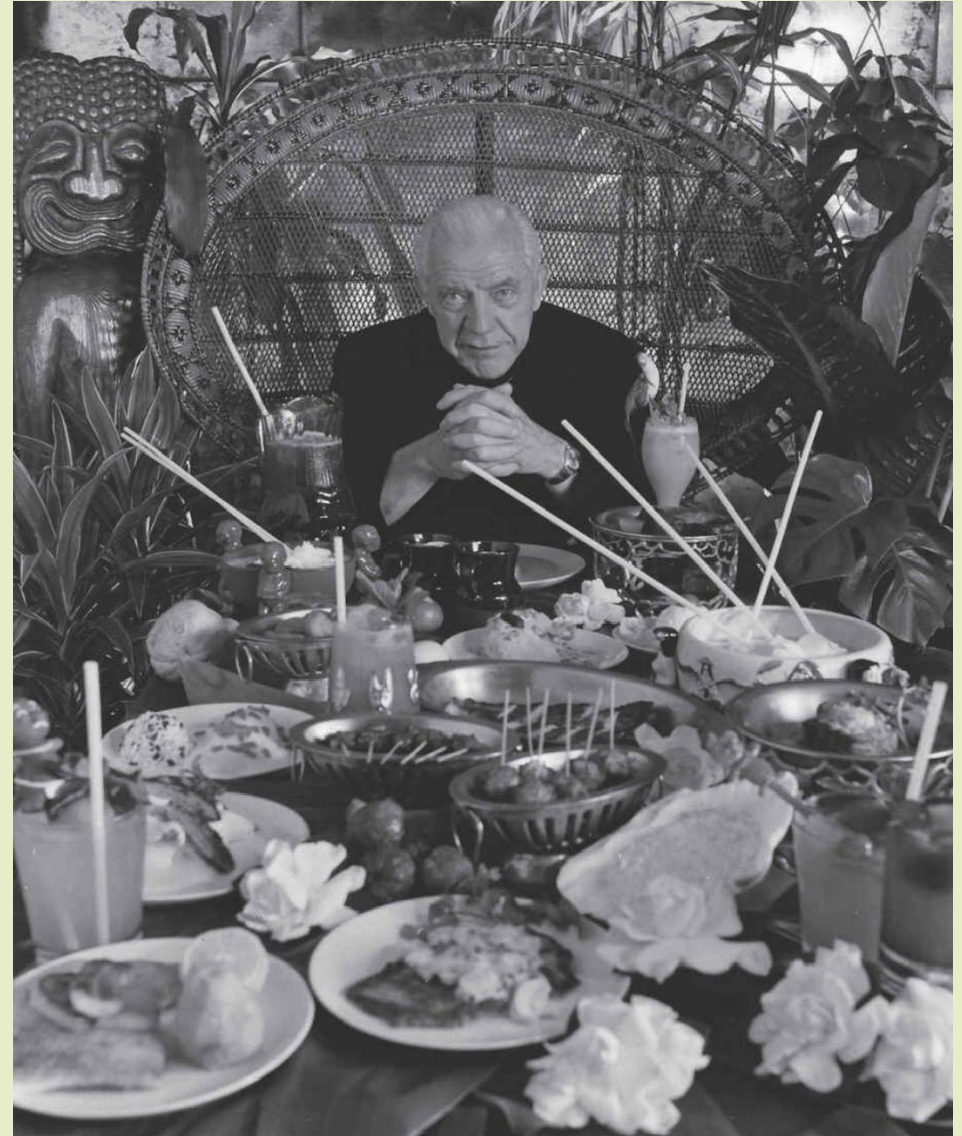
The Beachcomber - 1930s

- Ernest Gantt opened “Don Beachcomber’s” in Hollywood in 1933 (quickly changes his name to “Donn Beach”)
- May or may not have been a “rum runner” during prohibition
- Singlehandedly created Tiki cocktails as a style and concept
- Cultivated the theatrics and mystique of Tiki drinks
- Popularized Polynesian Pop as a style and bar experience
- “Donn Beach was the Alice Waters of rum.” – Wayne Curtis, rum historian



The Trader – 1940s

- Victor “Trader Vic” Bergeron first opened “Trader Vic’s” in Oakland, CA in 1944
- Expanded on The Beachcomber’s recipes with new flavors and syrups
- Established food as a major part of the Polynesian Pop/Tiki experience
- Developed the concept into an international chain that still exists today



Tiki Spreads – 1950s

- GIs returning from Pacific spread stories of Polynesia, led to more interest in Tiki bars/restaurants
- New Tiki chains emerge as well as Tiki palaces – Mai Kai, Tonga Room, etc.
- Mugs become a prominent part of the experience, often given away with drinks
- Exotica, a tropical themed subgenre of Jazz, takes off. Led by composers like Les, Baxter, Martin Denny and Arthur Lyman.
- Décor spread to homes and personal bars
- Books and films further popularized the aesthetic – Tales of the South Pacific, Gidget, etc.



Tiki Palaces



Mai-Kai – Fort Lauderdale
Opened 1956



Tonga Room & Hurricane Bar – San Francisco
Opened 1945

Tiki's Peak – 1960s



A background of various tropical plants, including palm fronds and broad-leafed species, in shades of green.

What is a Tiki drink?
The Blueprint

What comes to mind when you
hear the phrase “Tiki drinks?”
What do we expect to encounter?

The "Recipe"

One of sour,
Two of sweet,
Three of strong,
Four of weak

The Sour



Limes
Lemons

Grapefruit
Orange

The Sweet



Sugar

Orgeat

Passionfruit Syrup

Honey

Maple Syrup

Falernum

Grenadine

Coconut Cream

The Strong



Rum	Scotch	Applejack
Brandy	Bourbon	Tequila
Gin	Vodka	Pisco
Aquavit	Curacao	Misc. Liqueurs

The Weak



Pineapple Juice

Club Soda

Ginger Beer

Coffee

Water

Guava Juice

Papaya Juice

Mango Juice

Spice



Allspice (Pimento)

Cinnamon

Nutmeg

Bitters

Absinthe

Clove

Vanilla

Mint

Garnish



Orchids
Whole Spice
Fire
Swizzle sticks

Ice
Fronds
Bamboo
Mint

The Mug



The mug provides an opportunity for branding, marketing, and creativity, while reinforcing the whimsy and elements of tiki drinks and culture. Drinks served in bowls provide a communal experience, unlike any other.

Glass #3 *Zombie*

Recipe

¾oz lime juice
½oz "Don's Mix"
½oz falernum
1oz Lemon Hart 151
1½oz Bacardi 8 Year
1½oz Appleton 12 Year
1 dash Angostura
6 drops Herbsaint
1 tsp grenadine



Historic Background

The archetype of golden age tiki drinks, created by Donn Beach in 1934. Served at the 1939 World's Fair. Famously limited to two per customer on the original menu.

Glass #4

Mai Tai

Recipe

1oz lime juice

1/4oz orgeat

1/4oz simple syrup

1/2oz Pierre Ferrand Dry Curacao

1oz Appleton 12 Year

1oz Clement 10 Year Grande Reserve



Historic Background

Trader Vic's masterpiece! Created in 1944, this drink exemplifies Vic's additions to tiki cocktail culture.

Glass #5 *Jungle Bird*


Recipe

1/2oz lime juice
1/2oz simple syrup
4oz pineapple juice
3/4oz Campari
1 1/2oz Appleton 12 Year



Historic Background

Born in 1973 at the Aviary Bar inside the Kuala Lumpur Hilton. Introduces new and complex bitter flavors into tiki drinks.

The background of the slide is a dense, repeating pattern of various tropical leaves in shades of green. The leaves include palm fronds, monstera leaves with characteristic holes, and other broad-leafed plants. The pattern is set against a light, off-white background.

So...what happened?
1970s-1980s

Decline of Tiki



- Tiki went out of style during the 1970s
- Tiki viewed as old fashioned/establishment
- Imitators tried to cash in and provided a mediocre-to-bad version of Tiki drinks
- “Boat Drinks” in the 1980s became more popular – Pina Coladas, Lava Flow, etc. These were sweet and/or neon colored, made with artificial syrups and pre-packaged mixes.
- Majority of original era Tiki establishments closed. Only a handful remain
- Décor went from exotic to cheesy and tacky



Applebee's  @Applebees

My, my, my, it's our \$1 Mai Tai! Get yourself to the bar for our tiki-inspired rum cocktail with pineapple, passion fruit, orange, black cherry, and lime. [#NeighborhoodDrink](#)



 134

 743

 4,515



 Promoted

This is NOT a Tiki drink

A dense background of various tropical plants, including palm fronds, monstera leaves, and other broad-leafed species, in shades of green.

What's happening now?
Why does Tiki matter?

Tiki's Revival

- Throughout 1990s and early 2000s, hobbyists and collectors kept the Tiki torch burning
- Interest grew in mid-century history, trends, fashions, etc.
- Interest in craft cocktails, fueled resurgence of Tiki drinks
- Research led by Jeff "Beachbum" Berry introduced lost and forgotten cocktail recipes
- Websites and message boards like Critiki and Tiki Central provided community building
- Annual Tiki festivals and events grew larger and larger



Why does this matter?



- Tiki bar culture is the first expression of a craft cocktail movement.
- Year and year, younger consumers are showing more preference for spirits over wine.
- Rum sales are exploding as are Tiki bars and drinks.
- Contemporary Tiki bars can be found in almost every large city
- Most restaurants that aren't Tiki themed, still offer one or two tiki drinks.
- Tiki as a cocktail category allows for the ability to celebrate tradition and encourages creativity.

Glass #6

Islay Painkiller

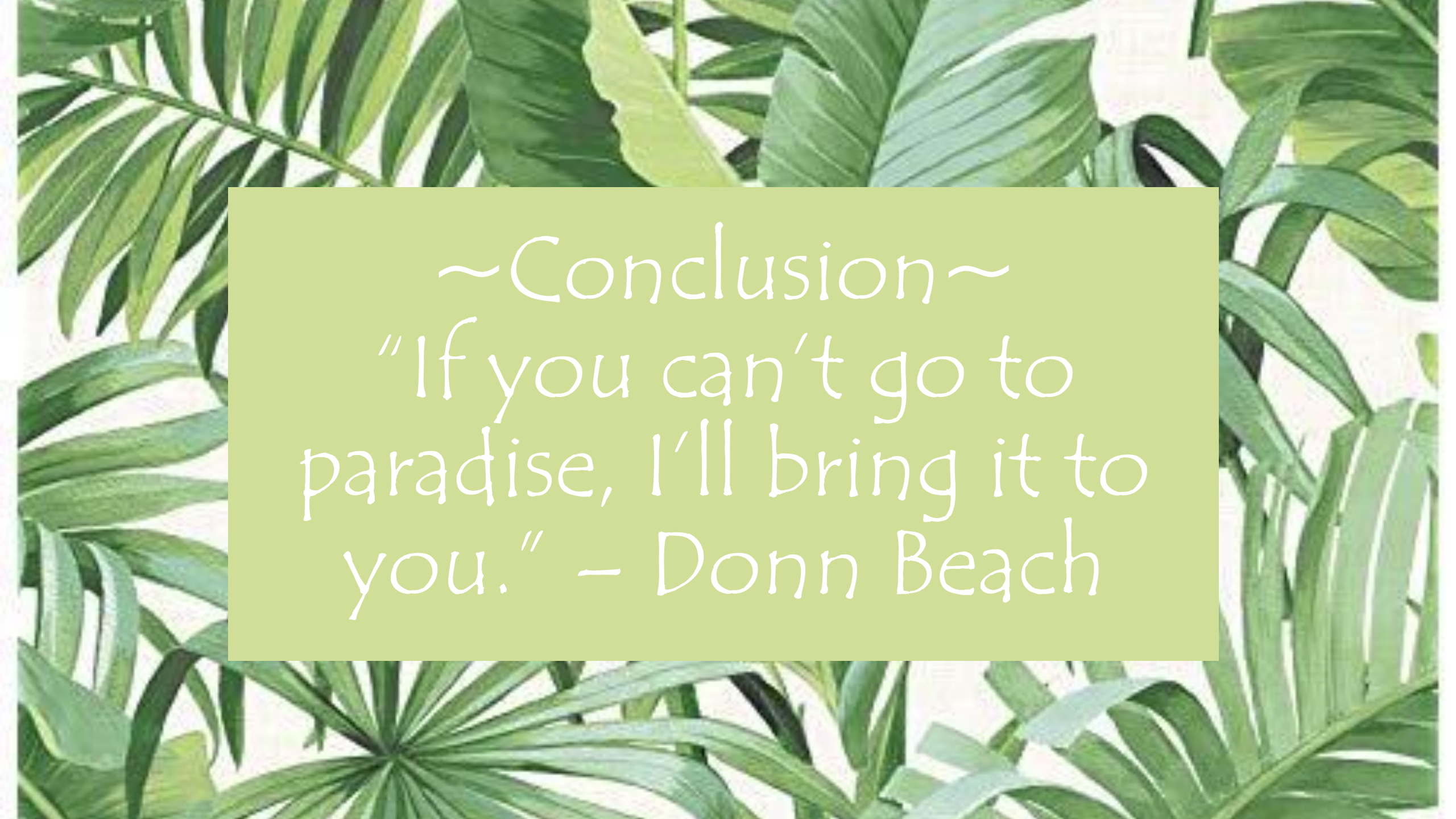
Recipe

1oz coconut cream
1oz orange juice
3oz pineapple juice
1oz Pusser's
1½oz Laphroaig 10 Year
dusting of fresh grated nutmeg



Historic Background

The original Painkiller was created in the British Virgin Islands in 1971 at the Soggy Dollar Bar. This modern take uses scotch to add a smoky counterbalance to the sweetness of the coconut. Perfect for a tropical day at the beach or a chilly night in Scotland.

A background of various tropical plants, including palm fronds and large, heart-shaped leaves, in shades of green.

~Conclusion~
"If you can't go to
paradise, I'll bring it to
you." – Donn Beach

Defining Tiki

"America's love affair with Polynesian Pop style was the Mauna Loa of cultural fads, a volcanic eruption that lasted forty years." - Jeff "Beachbum" Berry

Tiki was a total pop cultural movement. It was a bar and cocktail explosion that created styles of music, décor, books, films, and food. It was an atmospheric escape from the Depression and post-WWII America. It is a lifestyle!

Defining the Drink

"Dedicated to those merry souls who make drinking a pleasure; who achieve contentedness long before capacity; and who, whenever they drink, prove able to carry it, enjoy it and remain ladies and gentlemen."

– Trader Vic

A Tiki drink can be something old or something new. It should have a diverse base of ingredients but always have balance. It should taste great, it should be fun, it should be an experience for the drinker.

Defining Tiki Today

"From the galleons of the high seas, to the taverns of Colonial America, to the taverns of Colonial America, to the cocktail lounges of far-distant ports-of-call – over three hundred years of history in a glass." – Smuggler's Cove

Tiki still offers escapism today. It's still an opportunity to have an exciting, over-the-top drink. It's a tradition for modern mixology to celebrate and build upon. It's the chance for us, as drinkers, to engage in a historical tradition that spans centuries. And frankly, it's just fun.

A background of various tropical plants, including palm fronds and broad-leafed plants, in shades of green.

*Mahalo nui loa!
Aloha!*