

## **Kelly Railean in Good Spirits with Texas Rum Distillery**

League City, Texas – Many people would die for a job selling wine and champagne to the most prestigious restaurants, hotels and clubs in Houston. So why did Kelly Railean quit her exciting, secure and lets face it pretty cool job of 10 years? I will tell you why, because the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission's (TABC) "tied house" laws did not allow her to keep her job as a wine distributor and obtain a license to manufacture alcohol.

In 2006, Kelly Railean co-founded Railean Distillers, LLC (Railean Distillers). Her goal was not to open a boutique winery or even a micro-brewery, there are plenty of those around, but to start up the first Texas rum distillery. With a solid business plan in hand, she was able to get just enough funding for the construction and startup of the first state-of-the-art rum distillery in the state of Texas. Today the Railean family owned and operated distillery is located along the shores of Galveston Bay in San Leon, Texas (approximately 30 miles southeast of Houston). They produce both white and dark rum spirits of superior quality.



Kelly Railean, President  
Railean Distillers, LLC

They begin by fermenting pure Grade-A, unsulfured, cane molasses with yeast manufactured specifically for small batch rum production. The Master Distiller then utilizes an imported Bavarian Holstein copper pot still to perform multiple distillations in order to craft an ultra-pure cane spirit. RAILEAN Rum is distributed throughout the state of Texas and is available in most retail liquor stores. The focus now is building the RAILEAN brand on-premise (restaurants, bars, etc.). This is where Kelly can really leverage her 10 years experience as an on-premise wine sales representative.

Mrs. Railean knew from the beginning that starting up a distillery would not be easy. She knew that the spirits industry was a well-developed market with established market leaders often dominated by a single brand (i.e. Bacardi). She was also aware that brand recognition and low cost manufacturing created barriers to entry into the rum market. Even so, Kelly could see how the rum market was evolving much like the boutique wineries and micro-brews. The rum market was starting to show signs of new categories, brands, and line extensions that would surely invigorate the rum business by cultivating a small, growing and increasingly sophisticated consumer segment for new, specialty and often more expensive rum.

Two years after Kelly co-founded Railean Distillers, the Rum is flying off the shelves. Customers as well as restaurant and bar manager are embracing RAILEAN Rum.

“Railean rum consistently beats the competition in blind tastings and is perfect for the rum drinker willing to pay a little bit more for a premium local handcrafted spirit said Kelly Railean, President of Railean Distillers, LLC. Our biggest hurdle is getting over the perception that Texas rum cannot be this smooth and that it cannot be this good, if it’s not from the islands.”

“It is definitely a challenge keeping up with the regulations, operations, sales, marketing, promotions, finances, distribution, etc...Despite the hard road ahead and the hard work to finally get the company to this point, I have no regrets. In fact, I am happier than ever.