

BROWN FEDORA BOOKS PRESENTS:

HAVANA, VERMONT

How to grow tobacco and roll your own cigars in any climate

A Brown Fedora Pamphlet

Nothing can compare with the pleasure of sitting and smoking a cigar that you have raised yourself from seed.

Well, sex does, sex compares, maybe even surpasses.

Oh, and of course a really good plate of *fettuccini alfredo*. That compares.

So let's just say that only a **few** things can compare with the pleasure of...

...well, then there's listening to a great song being sung by someone with a really good pair of lungs. That compares. Oh, and seeing your team win it in bottom of the ninth with a walk-off, inside-the-park triple.

Okay, okay, so: **Many** things can compare with...

...yes, and watching "The Big Lebowski" for the fortieth time. And beer, served headache cold.

Let's face it, **almost anything** is better than sitting and smoking a cigar that you've raised yourself from seed.

But that's no reason you shouldn't do it. It's much easier to do than people imagine, and this pamphlet will show you how. It does not matter if you live on the beaches of the Dominican Republic or in the snows of Siberia, that homegrown stogie is potentially at your fingertips. The bozo in the picture above has been growing tobacco and rolling his own Perfectos in the climates of northern New England for many years. If he can do it, anybody can. These pages will lead you through the process (even if you're a dullard—which is quite possible, since you've been wasting your time reading this far). The six steps of cigar production are: Planting, Growing, Harvesting, Drying, Rolling, and Enjoying.



1. PLANTING

In March, order a packet of seeds (something like Havana 608's) from somewhere like **The Sustainable Seed Company**. While you're waiting for them to arrive, eat two dozen eggs. Scrambled with *Frank's Hot Sauce* is best, but any recipe will do.



The day before your seeds arrive, fill each compartment of the emptied egg carton with potting soil. Soak the dirt and let things drain overnight.

Each seed is tiny, the size of the prickly end of a pin. Sprinkle 3 or 4 on each mound. **Do not cover with dirt.** Place the carton on your sunniest windowsill, maybe under a grow light, until your television meaty-urologist tells you there is no longer a danger of frost outside. (Resist writing into the TV station mentioning he doesn't look all that meaty and he doesn't sound like a qualified urologist.)



Keep the seeds moistened with gentle sprays of water. **Caution:** Pouring water on directly will wash the seeds away, and using a fire-hose

could ruin your carpeting.

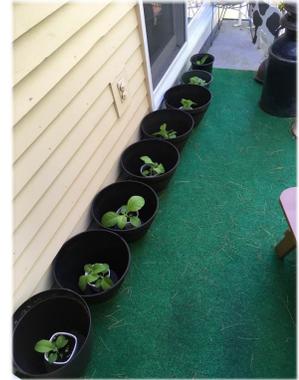
Warm, wet and comfortable, in a few days, the seeds will begin to sprout.

Run and tell your spouse, who won't care.



2. GROWING

On a nice spring day, transplant the tobacco outside, two-foot apart if you have a garden, in twelve-inch planters if you just have a patio. In a single flower pot if you are serving time in a federal prison cell.



With sun and moisture, tobacco plants grow like weeds, only much faster than that...



WARNING: Do not view the movie "Little Shop of Horrors" during the growing season, it will only fill you with unrealistic fears and phobias. Also avoid using pesticides, duh.



3. HARVESTING

As your growing season nears its end, you will notice your huge tobacco leaves are taking on a yellow-turning-to-brown coloration.

Time to collect your harvest.



As you pick, feel free to sweat profusely and sing mournful work ballads such as "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen."

If need be, invite some friends over to help.



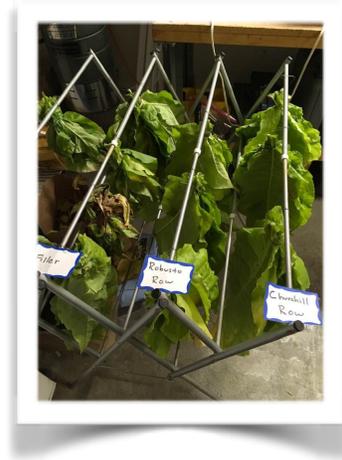
4. CURING AND DRYING

Alert everybody in your household that the garage, or guest room, or hall closet, will now be referred to as “The Curing Barn.”

“Borrow” the drying rack from the laundry room.

Hang your picked leaves individually to allow air flow to pass through. A small fan may be situated to help the process.

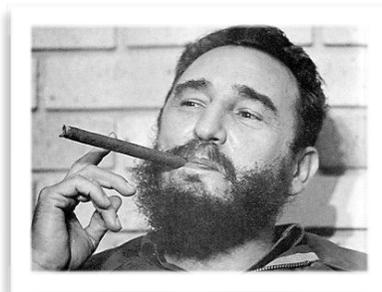
You might be asking: What is the difference between “curing” and “drying”? “Curing” is a term that cigar makers made up so that they could charge more for their cigars.



Allow your leaves to dry until they are entirely brown.

Remove them tenderly, for they might now be quite brittle.

Footnote: Many world leaders have enjoyed smoking cigars:



5. ROLLING

Purchase a ragged straw hat from a second hand store. Start talking with a phony Hispanic accent. Insist that at all times you be addressed as “*El Torcedor.*”

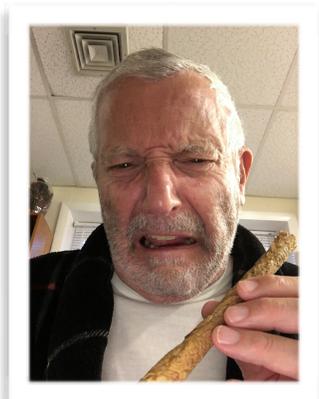


This is the only part of the process that requires a bit of skill and care.

1. Remove the center vein from a bunch of your smaller leaves. This becomes the cigar's **filler**.
2. Spray a larger leaf with water to make it pliable. Remove the center vein with a razor blade or pizza cutter. Each half-leaf becomes the cigar's **binder**.
3. Roll the binder **tightly** around a handful of filler. This step will take some practice, experimentation, and healthy doses of aromatic failure.
4. Repeat the rolling with another half leaf, trying to leave this **wrapper** smooth, tight, and attractive (almost impossible, see ugly examples below).
5. Seal the wrapper with a tiny dab of paste made from flour and water, like the weird kid used to eat in grammar school.



6. ENJOYING



Keep in mind that your final product may well be un-smokeable. The U.S. Surgeon General has warned the public that these smokes could cause mild to moderate convulsions. Small fires could spring up halfway down the cigar as it is smoked. Gently pat the flame out and puff on. Out of curiosity, friends might ask for one, but no one will ever ask for a second.

So try to get rid of as many of the little turds as possible. Use them as birthday gifts for people you are not fond of, or as Secret Santa's (although the search for the perpetrator will lead directly back to you), or leave a few on strangers' doorsteps in lieu of flaming bags of dog feces. Ring the bell, run away.

If all else fails, set one end of the cigar on fire and suck deeply on the other end.

As you sit and relax amidst the acrid smoke, pondering how you have taken this process from first seed to final smolder, you might be tempted to now count yourself among the world's population of respected and accomplished cigar manufacturers.

Such an act would certainly indicate you to be self-delusional.

