

Cigar Insider

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FEATURED CIGAR

ILLUSIONE

68

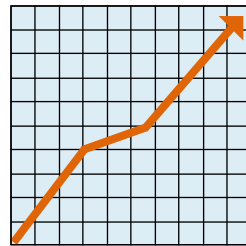
HONDURAS ■ PRICE: \$5.00 ■ BODY: Full

For a full tasting, see page two

92 POINTS

BEST CIGARS THIS ISSUE

Illusione 68	Honduras	92
Illusione CG:4	Honduras	92
Illusione 4/2G	Honduras	91
Illusione 888	Honduras	91
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Five Tied At	Various	90



STRONG CIGAR SALES TIMES ARE GOOD IN THE CIGAR INDUSTRY,

according to our latest poll of top cigar retailers across the United States. Seventy-six percent of those surveyed said sales rose in 2007, with an average sales increase of more than 13 percent. For more, see page four.

INSIDER EXCLUSIVE: THE HOTTEST CIGAR BRANDS IN AMERICA



FUENTE FUENTE OPUSX



PADRÓN 1964 ANNIVERSARY SERIES



ASHTON VSG

FOR THE THIRD YEAR RUNNING, the Fuente Fuente OpusX is the hottest brand in America as ranked by our exclusive *Cigar Insider* survey of top tobacconists. Close behind, in second place, is the Padrón 1964 Anniversary Series brand, followed by the Ashton Virgin Sun Grown. We also had a few newcomers make our list. Our detailed coverage begins on page four.

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TASTING REPORT
ILLUSIONE**VERTICAL BRAND TASTING****Country:** Honduras**Maker:** Fernandez y Fernandez**Distributor:** PreSan Industries Inc.**Filler:** Nicaragua**Binder:** Nicaragua**Wrapper:** Nicaragua**Purchase Date:** June 2007**68****92 POINTS** ■ 4" x 44 ■ \$5.00 ■ HUMIDOR SELECTION

A dark, oily little cigar made with a generous amount of strong tobacco. Every puff is rich with earth, coffee and chocolate flavors, and a long spicy finish.

Body: Full**CG:4****92 POINTS** ■ 5 5/8" x 46 ■ \$6.55 ■ HUMIDOR SELECTION

Rolled in an alluringly dark wrapper, this cigar folds rich layers of sweet leather, nut and cocoa flavors into the palate, complemented by coffee and spice notes.

Body: Medium to Full**4/2G****91 POINTS** ■ 7 1/2" x 49 ■ \$8.35 ■ HUMIDOR SELECTION

This dark, attractive cigar gives off a rich cocoa aroma as it burns. There are significant earth, leather and spice flavors accentuated by very strong tobacco notes.

Body: Full**888****91 POINTS** ■ 6 3/4" x 48 ■ \$7.15 ■ HUMIDOR SELECTION

Gorgeous and dark with a near perfect draw. It delivers loads of rich coffee, roasted nut and cedar flavors. The wheaty finish carries wisps of leather and caramel.

Body: Full**M7****91 POINTS** ■ 6 1/2" x 58 ■ \$14.95 ■ HUMIDOR SELECTION

A beautiful diadema with a lush wrapper and model construction. It is spicy in both aroma and flavor. Complex caramel and woody notes also emerge.

Body: Medium to Full**2****90 POINTS** ■ 5 1/4" x 52 ■ \$7.50

Richly hued, this torpedo shows an abundance of spice, leather, cedar and tobacco notes. The finish is nutty with a sweet snap.

Body: Medium to Full**88****90 POINTS** ■ 5" x 52 ■ \$6.65

Well made with a chocolately complexion. Although the burn on this cigar is slightly uneven, it shows a rich balance of wood, earth and spice. The finish is nutty.

Body: Medium to Full**F9****90 POINTS** ■ 6 1/4" x 44 ■ \$6.15

A dark cigar with an oily wrapper. Its core of profound tobacco flavor is framed by leather, spice and licorice notes. The finish is slightly sweet.

Body: Medium to Full**1****89 POINTS** ■ 9 1/4" x 48 ■ \$15.30

Draped in an oily leaf, this "A" size draws and burns well. It starts on a meaty note with some cedar and wood flavor. Some dry and floral notes emerge as well.

Body: Medium to Full

BRAND SUMMARY: The Honduran-made Illusione brand, owned by Dion Giolito, comes from the Fernandez y Fernandez factory, which is a subsidiary of Tabacalera Tropical. These cigars are powerful to say the very least, but are also balanced, flavorful and impeccably constructed. This was an impressive debut, with only one cigar out of nine scoring less than 90 points.

Average Rating: 90.7 points**100 POINT SCALE**

95-100: Classic ■ 90-94: Outstanding ■ 80-89: Very good to excellent ■ 70-79: Average to good commercial quality
 BELOW 70: Don't waste your money ■ N/A: Not Available *Note: Prices are manufacturers' suggested retail, before taxes.*