

# Drinks

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## INTERNATIONAL

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January 2010

**INSIDE  
THIS MONTH**



**DI DOZEN**

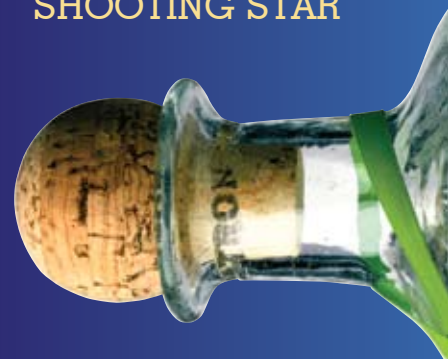
DI'S TOP BRANDS &  
COMPANIES OF 2009



**HOT BAR  
BRANDS**

WHAT'S HOT IN THE  
WORLD'S BEST BARS

**TEQUILA**  
SHOOTING STAR



# Drinks INTERNATIONAL

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## News

- 05 News
- 08 People and Events
- 10 Travel Retail
- 12 What's New

## Analysis

- 09 Global wine conference in Rioja  
Rebecca Gibb reports
- 14 Profile: Daniel Crebesse  
The UK Bartenders' Guild's president

## Features

- 16 Pre-mix Challenge  
Pre-mixed drinks come under scrutiny from our panel of expert judges
- 19 Hot Bar Brands  
We have polled bartenders around the world about their best-selling spirits brands and the "Hot" names topping the list for brand call
- 32 The DI Dozen  
Drinks International's traditional look back at what caught the eye during 2009
- 40 Tequila  
From shots to savouring, Ben McFarland assesses the maturing fortunes of tequila



## Last call

- 44 Bar Zone  
What's happening behind and in front of the speed rail
- 46 Departure Zone  
Gadgets galore, pin-up zone

## New year, new look

**H**opefully by now you have noticed that your favourite read has a new look. A new decade deserves a new look. It has been months in gestation but we are delighted with it. I hope you agree it is livelier and easier than ever to flick through and read. The DI website goes from strength to strength with ever more clicks and hits so, while you wait for your next issue, you can get the latest international news about the global alcoholic drinks industry from [drinksint.com](http://drinksint.com).

We kick off the year with something old and something new. Our traditional start of the year item is DI Dozen, in which the editorial team highlights and encapsulates what we believe are the most interesting launches, initiatives and new developments that occurred during 2009. We do not for one minute claim that DI Dozen is exhaustive. It is simply our own take on the year gone by.

Hot on the heels of our inaugural The World's 50 Best Bars survey, we publish our Hot Bar Brands survey. This reveals which are the best selling brands, according to bartenders around the world and, most crucially, which, based on their experiences, are the "hot" brands of the moment.

Again, these are not hard statistical facts but bartenders' perceptions of which brands are being called for by their customers at the bar. But perceptions are everything – or nearly. They may not be based on robust statistics, but we all know what they say about damned lies and statistics.

Anyway, these are "real" opinions, experiences, faithfully recorded from the people at the frontline of alcoholic beverages sales – where people select their drink and consume it in front of the survey respondent, giving instant feedback.

So, as we leave the 'noughties' behind us, one thing is for certain: after the last year, it can only get better. I like to think we're part of that process with Drinks International's new look. Read on.



Christian Davis *Editor*

# Whisky salutes Asia with new campaign

Chivas Brothers, the premium whisky and gin arm of Pernod Ricard, has unveiled an ad campaign for Scotch whisky Royal Salute, launching in China this month and rolling out through Asia.

The new campaign was developed by TBWA Singapore with a brief to update Royal Salute in a “dynamic and fast changing region”.

Neil Macdonald, brand director for Royal Salute, said: “Royal Salute is in a unique position as it is seen by prestige whisky drinkers to be the ultimate embodiment of timeless codes of royalty from both a western and oriental perspective.”



# Cellared confuses consumers

Fewer than one in five Canadian wine drinkers can recognise and correctly understand the term “Cellared in Canada”, according to a new poll of wine drinkers in the country.

The study, conducted by market research agency Wine Intelligence, also found that the majority – 64% – of Canadian wine drinkers don’t even recognise the term “Cellared in Canada” when they see it.

Of the 36% of Canadian consumers who are aware of the term, about half correctly state that a wine carrying the Cellared in Canada designation is made from a combination of Canadian and foreign grapes, or from all imported grapes (the definition in British Columbia), which have been blended and bottled in Canada.

Wine Intelligence surveyed some 1,000 regular wine drinkers in Canada during October and November 2009. The survey was conducted online and the study was funded entirely by the agency itself.



STORY BROKE ON DRINKSINT.COM 17/12/09

Photo: Shutterstock

## Scotch exports up 1.5% to 809 million bottles in 2009



The Scotch Whisky Association has announced that more than 807 million bottles of Scotch whisky were shipped abroad during the first nine months of 2009.

“The first quarter of last year was terrible,” said Campbell Evans, the SWA’s director of government & consumer affairs.

“The second and third quarters came back up to 2008 levels and the last quarter can only be better than the last quarter of 2008.

Christmas looked likely to be good, he told Drinks International.

Values were down 3.5% on the previous industry record in 2008, reaching £2.11 billion, the scotch industry’s second best export value performance, at the end of September.

The top three export markets by volume and value are France, the US and Spain.

## News In Brief

Industry stories from around the globe

**BACARDI** has announced an agreement with Illva Saronno for the US distribution rights to Tia Maria, expanding the Bacardi cordials and liqueurs portfolio, which includes Disaronno, Benedictine and Drambuie.

**THE DRINKWARE** charity is to receive a further £15 million (£5 million a year for three years) from the UK drinks industry to make it possible for Drinkaware to step up its activities as well as continuing to provide education for consumers.

**DIAGEO** has combined its marketing and innovation efforts in North America. The drinks company has appointed Peter McDonough, currently president North America innovation, to the role of president, chief marketing & innovation officer.

**SABMILLER**’s Ugandan subsidiary, Nile Breweries, is to build a US\$16 million malting plant following the success of its initiative to convert locally grown barley into brewing malt. Construction starts this month on an existing site in Jinja.



## Gin campaign looks inside

Bacardi's Bombay Sapphire gin has a new global advertising campaign, entitled *There's Something Inside*, to showcase the gin's qualities.

Bombay Sapphire's aromatic botanicals, including fruits, herbs and spices from exotic locations around the world, play a starring role in the global print campaign.

Photography of each botanical is featured alongside portraits of individuals from different creative fields.

The first two individuals to be featured in the campaign are British lawyer-turned-menswear-designer Duncan Quinn, and New York-based tabla player Suphala. Bombay Sapphire global marketing manager Raquel Faria said: "Bombay Sapphire wouldn't be Bombay Sapphire without its beautiful blue bottle. And the same can be said about its 10 botanical ingredients, which is why we are talking about each one of them in the campaign and inviting consumers to discover the taste of the spirit inside the iconic bottle."

The UK's chief medical officer, Liam Donaldson, has said children under 15 shouldn't even taste alcohol and 15 to 17-year-olds should only do so under parental supervision.

Commenting on the guidelines, Wine & Spirit Trade Association chief executive Jeremy Beadles said: "The role of parents is hugely important in instilling a responsible attitude to alcohol, especially as government research indicates that the majority of 11 to 15-year-olds who have tried alcohol are getting it from their parents or other family members.

"Retailers are taking every step possible to prevent underage sales. The Challenge 25 scheme, which requires anyone who looks under 25 to present proof of age if they wish to purchase alcohol, is driving down underage sales.

"The chief medical officer's views on minimum pricing are well known, but it would be totally wrong to suggest that pricing be used to address underage drinking when it is illegal for someone under 18 to purchase and possess alcohol."



Photo: Shutterstock

## Calistoga designated AVA status

Calistoga, in California's premium wine-growing Napa valley, has been officially designated an American Viticultural Area.

The US Department of Treasury's Alcohol Tax and Trade Bureau has approved the designation after years of representations.

Linda Reiff, executive director of Napa Valley Vintners, the association that represents 375 Napa wineries, said: "We could not have achieved this incredible victory for wine consumers and the wine industry had it not been for congressman Mike Thompson, who worked tirelessly to ensure truth-in-wine-labelling for consumers and intimately understands the need for forthright protection of wine's place of origin."

According to the association, there has been an increase in the number of wine producers using the Calistoga name falsely in their brand labelling.



**THE NATIONAL PUERTO RICAN COALITION (NPRC)** has launched a campaign to urge consumers to stop consuming Diageo products because of the company's plans to distil its Captain Morgan rum in the US Virgin Islands and not Puerto Rico.

**Foster's EMEA has appointed Cert Octavian its new distributor for three years from May 2010 with an additional two year option in a deal which could exceed £30 million. The portfolio comprises some 80 brands, including VB, Rosemount, Penfolds,**

Drinks Americas has sold \$50,000 of Trump super premium vodka to the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO), which has authorised the product. Drinks Americas said this order will open the Toronto market for the brand

**Cutty Sark scotch whisky has ended its UK distribution arrangement with Emporia Brands after two years. With immediate effect, UK distribution of Cutty Sark will be undertaken by Berry Bros & Rudd.**

### TOP 5 STORIES ON DRINKSINT.COM

1. WHO plans duty free liquor ban
2. GModelo sues Constellation
3. BerryBros regains Cutty Sark
4. Canadian wine confuses
5. Amorim luxury stoppers

# Appointments

Constellation Brands has promoted **Jay Wright** to president of Constellation Wines North America (CWNA), which includes Constellation Wines US and Vincor



Jay Wright

Canada. A native of Montreal, Wright was named executive vice president and chief commercial officer of CWUS in March, 2009. Prior to the post, he served as president of Vincor Canada for seven years.

The European Forum for Responsible Drinking (EFRD) has appointed a new chairman. **Guillaume de Guitaut** of Moët-Hennessy will take up the role for two years. De Guitaut has worked in the sector since 1995, when he started as Hennessy's legal & public affairs director, moving in 2001 to the position of global public affairs director for Moët-Hennessy, part of the LVMH Group.

He succeeds Elizabeth Crossick, director of government affairs & social responsibility at Brown-Forman.

Pernod Ricard UK has appointed two new channel directors for spirits and wine/champagne. **Nick Yates** has been named channel director, on-trade spirits, responsible for on-trade commercial spirit strategies across route to market, managed retail, independent



Nick Yates

and 'prestige' outlets. Yates, formally business unit controller, has 11 years of commercial experience at Pernod Ricard UK and will report to the company's newly appointed



Chris Ellis

commercial director for spirits, **Simon van Moppes**. **Chris Ellis** is to maintain his position as channel director, off-trade spirits, but with increased responsibility for the wholesale cash and carry channel. **Lee James** has been appointed to the role of channel director – wines, responsible for the company's wine and champagne sales activities across the convenience, specialist, wholesale cash and carry and on-trade sectors.



Lee James

Purity Vodka has promoted **Claes G Fick** to the position of chief executive officer. Fick joined the company in early 2009 as chief operating officer and the leader of Purity Vodka's global sales and marketing. Goran Bernhoff, chairman of Purity Vodka, said: "Claes has in-depth experience with international consumer products throughout Europe, Canada, Latin America and the US and, as we continue to grow, the brand will benefit from his extensive industry knowledge."

Bacardi Brown-Forman Brands has appointed **Ben Reed** to the BBFB Training Team in the UK for a contracted period. A former director of IPB, Reed

began his career at Sir Terence Conran's Mezzo bar and the Met Bar. His position with BBFB Training Team will see him involved in projects around the UK,



Ben Reed

including training across BBFB's spirits portfolio, which includes brands such as Bacardi rum, Jack Daniel's, Grey Goose, Woodford Reserve, Bombay Sapphire, and Martini.

Brintex has announced the appointment of **Jacqueline Snoeker** and **Oliver Thieme** as the two latest additions to the London International Wine Fair (LIWF) and Distil Advisory Board. Snoeker has been with the Ahold Group, an international group of supermarkets based in the US and Europe, since 1992. In 2003 she took on the role of senior wine buying manager of the Ahold Group. Thieme is managing director of the CWD Champagner und Wein Distributionsgesellschaft, part of the Hawesko Group – a specialist in mail order and premium wholesale.

**Simon Thorpe MW** has been appointed managing director of **Negociants UK**. Thorpe said: "Negociants UK represents wineries which encapsulate all that is great about the Australian wine industry." Most recently Thorpe worked at Constellation Europe as vice president, premium wine and wine development. Before this he was purchasing director at Western Wines.

## DIARY

### Salon des Vins deLoire

**February 1-3**  
Angers, France  
salondesvinsde Loire.com

### Vino 2010 Italian Wine Week

**February 2-6**  
New York  
italtrade.com

### Pinot Noir NZ

**February 1-4**  
Wellington, New Zealand  
pinotnoir2010.co.nz

### Prodexpo

**February 8-12**  
Moscow Expocentre  
prod-expo.ru

### IsraWinexpo

**February 9-11**  
Tel Aviv, Israel  
israeltrade.gov.il

### International Wine & Spirits Convention

**February 18-21**  
Cannes, France  
winemeetings-cannes.fr

### Pianeta Birra

**February 21-24**  
Rimini Fiera, Italy  
pianetabirra.it

### Duty Free Show of the Americas

**February 21-25**  
Orlando, Florida, US  
iaadfs.org

### Vinisud

**February 22-24**  
Montpellier, France  
vinisud.org

### Prowein

**March 21-23**  
Düsseldorf, Germany  
prowein.de

### Alimentaria

**March 22-26**  
Fira de Barcelona, Spain  
alimentaria-bcn.com

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# Back to the Winefuture

The wine industry get-together in Rioja last November had its downs and ups, as **Rebecca Gibb** reports



Caption to go here please  
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**H**opes were high for the Winefuture – the conference was a sell-out, the hotels of Logroño were full to bursting and flights into Bilbao were laden with wine industry types. Seminars and speakers promised much, but things got off to a bad start, with plenty of delegates unhappy about the content of many speeches.

However, those who did generate thought-provoking speeches included effusive Wine Library TV host Gary Vaynerchuk and Robert Parker, who tackled themes including the increasing power of the internet and social media, emerging markets and a shift towards alternative packaging.

Vaynerchuk, Ryan Opaz of Spanish and Portuguese wine blog Catavino and Tim Hanni MW saved day one from being a total washout with entertaining and stimulating speeches on the internet and the on-trade, but on day two the event finally kicked into gear, with wine writer Robert Joseph rightly announcing: “We have missed the thread of looking at the future.”

**MANY WINE PRODUCERS HAVE UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS ABOUT CHINA**

**DON ST PIERRE**  
ASC FINE WINES

## Tweet smell of success

While this was supposedly an international conference, there were no southern hemisphere speakers, despite New World wine producers representing 30% of the global wine market in 2008 (OIV). Many speeches sounded more like a promotional spot than a discussion about the future of the wine industry. Mel Dick of Southern Wine & Spirits took the opportunity to plug his company and he was certainly not the only one. If you wanted to know how many square feet of warehousing Southern has (7.1 million) then you would have left feeling satisfied, but ticket holders paying €783 would rightly have felt robbed.

The web has transformed the way people communicate and sell, but Robert Parker claimed the wine industry was still a “dinosaur” when it came to interacting with clients and this was its major challenge. He said Vaynerchuk had been “100% correct” in telling conference delegates they had been lazy at communicating with their drinkers.

Vaynerchuk urged producers to set up a Twitter account – a free and powerful marketing tool and a way to engage in a two-way conversation with consumers. Vaynerchuk said: “I don’t give a crap about Facebook and Twitter but I care about consumers.” He continued: “You should be embarrassed if you don’t recognise that this platform allows you to talk to them.”

And Parker in the closing seminar warned: “The wine industry needs to look at its clients and be interactive with them – give

them information on the internet and back labels.”

Many speakers raised the theme of consumer empowerment via the web and it looks likely we will see more online purchasing. Comparison sites such as wine-searcher.com and smooth.com bring greater price transparency across all the major markets, empowering the consumer more than ever before.

## Emerging issues

The emerging markets – particularly in the Far East – will play a major part in the future of the wine industry. But there were few delegates from Asia. Just 30 minutes of Winefuture’s two days were given over to the Far East, but it was a valuable half hour. Don St Pierre, chief executive of China-based ASC Fine Wines, told listeners: “China will be a fantastic market but it’s a hard slog. Many wine producers understand little about China and have unrealistic expectations.” Before the import market fulfils its promise, the quality of Chinese wines needs to improve, with smaller wineries forcing the larger producers to up their game.

It is more difficult to predict what the future holds in Russia, with the appointment of a government committee to consider the introduction of a state monopoly on alcohol in an effort to stamp out alcoholism. Dimitri Pinsky, founder of one of Russia’s biggest distributors, DP-Trade, told the conference: “The truth is from 2005 alcoholism has fallen to the lows of 1990 after Gorbachev’s anti-alcohol campaign in 1985 and 1986.”

He continued: “It [a state monopoly] looks artificial and suspiciously as though the volume of the alcohol market looks attractive [to the government] and is now worth nationalising.”

The Russian committee is due to report back in March 2010.

## Touching on the future

Changes in packaging featured heavily and the dominance of the 75cl glass bottle is certainly not assured. Bag-in-box, Tetra Pak and PET will play an increasing role. In Sweden, alternative packaging has already made major inroads: speaker Ulf Sjödin MW said only one in three bottles of wine are sold in 75cl glass bottles – the majority of sales in Sweden are spread across other formats. There were also forecasts of a further shift towards lightweighting and bulk shipping.

Seminars on topics from brand building to climate change, but, ultimately, many speakers failed to offer fresh insights. Some did generate thought-provoking ideas: writer Robert Joseph questioned the necessity for vintage dating; Dourthe chief executive Mathieu Chadronnier predicted a structural overhaul of Bordeaux.

But if the conference is held again, the future needs to be put into Winefuture. **DI**

# WHO plans global duty free liquor ban

**➔** The World Health Organisation (WHO) has shocked the duty free industry by proposing a global ban on duty free liquor sales, a business which was worth \$6.3bn last year.

The surprise proposal has been outlined in a strategy paper on possible ways to reduce alcohol consumption, published on December 3. The document will be discussed at a meeting of the WHO Executive Board, an inner group of health ministers from 34 leading countries, this month.

If approved, the proposal will be put to the WHO's annual general assembly in May. The 193 governments that make up the general assembly would then be encouraged to implement the strategy paper as policy.

The European Travel Retail Council (ETRC) secretary general Keith Spinks said he had been surprised to read the proposal to tax sales of alcohol to international travellers as it had not been in earlier drafts of the paper. He said it was highly likely the executive board would accept the proposal. "Top health officials won't be



thinking about the effect of this on our industry. It is almost certain it will go through the executive board," he added.

It is not the first time the WHO has had the duty free business in its sights. Since 2005 the organisation has been trying to ban duty free tobacco sales through its Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC). The FCTC has been ratified by 165 countries worldwide, but has yet to be implemented by any country.

Spinks said the proposal on liquor was different to the FCTC as it was not "binding". "It is going

to be up to each member country to decide whether to implement the proposal or not. My fear is that some countries will and some won't, leaving us in a big mess."

The ETRC is urging liquor suppliers, retailers and airports to lobby their governments and use political contacts to highlight the damaging effects of the proposal. "This is a huge, bloody issue," warned Spinks. "If this goes through, it will be a disaster for the industry."

According to industry analyst Generation, duty free liquor sales amounted to \$6.32bn in 2008, accounting for 17.2% of the total global liquor business.

## ETRC hails security breakthrough

**L**ong-standing rules on air travellers carrying liquids, aerosols and gels (LAGs) in hand luggage could be withdrawn following the European Union's Aviation Security Regulatory Committee (AVSEC) agreement to lift restrictions by April 2013.

And, after lobbying by the European Travel Retail Council (ETRC), the EU has also agreed to scrap LAGs restrictions on transfer passengers. From April 2011 passengers arriving at EU airports from third-party countries and transferring to other flights will be able to carry duty free liquids in their hand luggage without risk of confiscation.

Goods will still need to be sealed in a transparent, tamper-evident bag and a receipt proving the goods were bought in the past 36 months must also be shown.

The transfer issue has been a thorn in the

duty free industry's side since restrictions were first imposed at airports worldwide after a UK-based terrorist plot to blow up transatlantic jetliners was uncovered in 2006.

Many travellers unaware of the rules have had their duty free liquids confiscated by security staff when changing flights.

The agreement, which was reached by AVSEC in late November last year, must now be approved by the European Parliament, which has three months to object to the proposed solution.

"The ETRC has already engaged intensively with the Parliament on this issue," said an ETRC spokesman. "MEPs have been supportive of the ETRC's position and as such we anticipate that the Parliament will not prevent the adoption of the agreement reached by AVSEC."



## Travel retail exclusive from leading gin

**B**acardi Global Travel Retail Division (BGTRD) has launched a travel retail-exclusive Bombay Sapphire gift pack.

Bombay Sapphire Reign takes its inspiration from a cocktail glass designed for the gin brand by renowned Hungarian designer Eva Zeisel.

The new packs, which contain a 1-litre bottle of Bombay Sapphire and a cocktail recipe booklet, feature prismatic spheres, which magnify key messages such as the 10 botanicals used in the gin's production process.

It is the first time that the production technique used to create the 3-D dome effect has been used in drinks industry packaging.

The gift box recently won the Best Cartonboard Packaging Award at the annual UK Packaging Awards.

## In Brief

**✈** Flag carrier Finnair has introduced charges for alcoholic drinks for economy class passengers on its European flights.

**✈** Rémy Cointreau Global Travel Retail has launched Louis XIII Rare Cask at Singapore Changi airport. It is the first location to be offered one of the €10,000 ultra-rare cognacs (only 786 decanters are available).

**✈** Gebr Heinemann has opened a revamped 900sq m flagship departures store at Frankfurt airport. A key highlight of the shop is a wood-panelled Regionals Zone, which showcases local products, including German wines and spirits.

**✈** Diageo Global Travel and Middle East (GTME) has organised a Baileys Visibility Day at airport shops worldwide to promote the brand as a gift purchase. At more than 50 travel retail locations over 500,000 coloured bows were attached to bottles of Baileys and the three Baileys flavours.



**✈** World Duty Free's store at Heathrow Terminal 5 has been chosen as the exclusive launch location for a new Piper-Heidsieck gift presentation. Le Rituel par Christian Louboutin features a crystal stiletto shoe, which can be used as a Champagne flute, presented in a gift box with a bottle of Piper-Heidsieck. It is priced at £299.

# Diageo calls for Middle Eastern partnership



At the annual Middle Eastern Duty Free Association (MEDFA) conference in Dubai late last year Diageo Global Travel & Middle East (GTME) called on suppliers, airports and retailers to share the task of unlocking the region's untapped potential more fairly.

The Middle East is the world's fastest growing duty free market with sales growing nearly 21% in 2008 to reach \$2.46bn. The regional duty free liquor business is expanding fast too. Fuelled by transit passengers and ex-pat workers, liquor accounted for 4.5% of total sales in 2008 and became the leading product category for the region's biggest operator, Dubai Duty Free.

At MEDFA Diageo GTME managing director Phil Humphreys said the current regional duty free business model wasn't working. "Brand owners are having to take

too much of the financial risk, which is not tenable," he warned. "If we don't get it right soon, we are going to fail.

"There is massive untapped potential," he added. "Increasing footfall is the key to unlocking growth – only one in five passengers enters the liquor store. Key product activations are crucial. We have to surround passengers in a way never done before."

Other speakers echoed Humphreys' call to increase footfall and improve partnerships between key stakeholders in the business. There were also calls for airports to improve check-in and security procedures to lengthen the amount of time passengers had to browse the stores.

However, with attendance at last year's conference up 3% on 2008, delegates were told regional trading conditions were better than in other parts of the world.



Attendance at MEDFA was up 3% on 2008



Nearly all the whiskies in the store are available for sampling at the bar

## World of Whiskies raises the bar on sampling with high-tech store

**W**orld Duty Free (WDF) has improved the quality and breadth of its approach to sampling at its new high-tech World of Whiskies store at London Heathrow Terminal 4.

The strategy aims to open up the complex world of malt whiskies to a younger, affluent customer base. The most visible feature of the new approach is a tasting bar at the front of the 668sq ft shop, where passengers can use an electronic scanner to read bottle labels and transfer to a screen short films on subjects such as tasting notes, production processes and food pairing suggestions.

"The idea is that we pour a drink and people can spend as much time as they want at the bar," said Nigel Sands, WDF category buying manager, liquor. "All the bottles behind the tasting bar can be sampled, and our aim is to offer nearly all the whiskies in the store for sampling. Previously we just had a barrel in store with a few bottles on it."

WDF has also introduced branded whisky glasses for sampling instead of plastic cups. Space in and outside the store has been reserved to promote whiskies recommended by the shop's own staff, and WDF's own freelance whisky expert, Charles MacLean.

## SSP to expand rare wine bar concept

**G**lobal travel caterer Select Service Partner (SSP) has hailed the success of its premium airport wine bar concept, Wine & View, which opened at Helsinki airport last year.

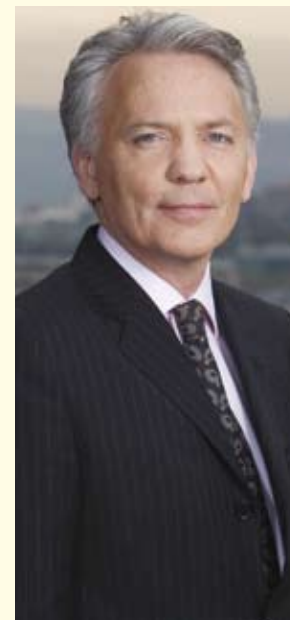
The open-plan bar, which can seat up to 60 people and looks out on to the airport's runway, stocks a regularly changing list of rare, collectible wines that are available to buy by the glass.

Wines sold there include Château Pétrus, Château d'Yquem and Château Cos d' Estournel.

SSP chief marketing officer Noel Toolan said the company was looking at introducing the Wine & View concept to other suitable hub airports, such as Paris Charles de Gaulle.

He said the bar met the increasing need of many travellers to treat themselves and to de-stress from the unpleasant experience of checking in and clearing security.

"Once people are through security, they want to eat well," he explained. "They think: 'I am going to spoil myself, I want that view, and I want to tell people I



Toolan: People want to spoil themselves airborne

had a glass of Château Lafite 1982 the other day at Helsinki airport and I feel good about myself."

SSP operates outlets at 142 countries worldwide and recorded a turnover of £1.4bn in 2008.



**NATUREO**

**BRAND OWNER:** Bodegas Torres

**PRICE:** £5.99, €5.95

**PRODUCED IN:** Spain

**SIZES:** 18.7cl, 37.5cl, 75cl

**ABV:** 0.5

**MARKETS:** Europe

**CONTACT:** export@torres.com

Spanish producer Torres has come up with just what we all need at this time of year – a de-alcoholised wine.

Made from Moscatel grapes, Torres uses a “rotating cone column” to extract the alcohol from Natureo. Also a glass contains between 15 and 20 calories, compared with 90 in a glass of full-strength wine.

The wine is pale yellow with notes of green apples, citrus and peaches.

**THE MANAGERS' CHOICE SINGLE CASK MALTS**

Diageo has unveiled six of the latest releases from its The Managers' Choice single cask malt scotch whisky range.

With the next tranche of bottlings due out in January, the six – Blair Athol, Dalwhinnie, Glen Spey, Inchgower, Royal Lochnagar and Talisker – are from the second and third of four batches in total, due to be fully rolled out by the middle of next year.

Details of the six whiskies tasted are as follows:

- Blair Athol, Highland, cask 5989 (bodega sherry European oak) – filled 10/11/95, bottled 18/2/09 @ 54.7% abv. 570 bottles, UK rrp £200
- Dalwhinnie, Highland, cask 431 (refill American oak) – filled 5/2/92, bottled 10/3/09 @ 51% abv. 270 bottles, £250
- Glen Spey, Speyside, cask 240 (new American oak) – filled 18/2/96, bottled 2/3/09 @ 52% abv. 276 bottles, £200
- Inchgower, Speyside, cask 7917 (bodega sherry European oak) – filled 7/10/93, bottled 14/5/09 @ 61.9% abv. 564 bottles, £200
- Royal Lochnagar, Highland, cask 837 (bodega sherry European oak) – filled 27/7/94, bottled 26/3/09 @ 59.3% abv. 564 bottles, £250
- Talisker, Isle of Skye, cask 9802 (bodega sherry European oak) – filled 7/12/94, bottled 2/3/09 @ 58.6% abv. 582 bottles, £300

WHISKY

SEE DRINKSINT.COM FOR THE FULL STORY

**ISLAY**

**SMOKEY JOE ISLAY MALT WHISKY**



**BRAND OWNER:** Angus Dundee Distillers

**PRICE:** UK £26.99, Europe €29.99

**MARKETS:** Western Europe, UK, US, selected Asian

**CONTACT:** angusdundee.co.uk

Angus Dundee Distillers' new Islay malt blend is bottled at 46% and non-chill filtered to preserve the full impact of aromatic components.

“Smokey Joe captures the true spirit of Islay and showers the senses with smoke and peaty impressions,” says the company's business development director, Duncan Baldwin.

Smokey Joe is the company's “first foray into Islay malts as our own bottling”, adds Baldwin.

A middleweight style in terms of flavour intensity, it joins single cask Islay bottlings in the Mackillop's Choice and Montgomerie's ranges in the company portfolio.

Distributed by Angus Dundee subsidiary The Leading Scotch Whisky Company, Smokey Joe is described as having: “Engaging smoke mixed with refined marine hints and citrus notes” on the nose; a palate of “smoke and peppery spice”; finishing with “lingering spice and peat”.

**THE BELVEDERE BAR**

**WHO:** Belvedere

**WHAT:** An online resource comprising cocktail recipes, mixing tips and a blog with frequent updates from Belvedere bartenders around the world.

**WHY:** Belvedere Bar allows you to select your preferred vodka, drink type and occasion to produce the desired cocktail. Recipes are taken one step further to include the skill level necessary to create each concoction, as well as the preferred glassware, occasion and recommendations on alternative cocktails the user may enjoy.

**MORE:** belvedere-vodka.com/bar

**ON-LINE**

**TAHBILK MARSANNE 2008**

**BRAND OWNER:** Tahbilk Winery

**PRICE:** £10/US\$15-17

**PRODUCED IN:** Nagambie Lakes region of Central Victoria, Australia

**MARKETS:** Global

**CONTACT:** Matt Herde mherde@tahbilk.com.au



Australian producer, Tahbilk Wines from the Nagambie lakes region of Central Victoria, has unveiled some new packaging for its core range of wines. Along with Marsanne the family-owned company also makes Riesling, Viognier, Chardonnay, Shiraz and Cabernet Sauvignon. New labels will be launched at the Australia Day Tastings in London & Edinburgh in February 2010.

The label was inspired by the original 1932 label, and gives a nod to Eric Stevens Purbrick, grandfather of current winemaker and chief executive Alister. Tahbilk claims to be the custodian of some of the oldest vineyards in Australia.

**PACKAGING**

**LIQUEUR**

**ELIXIER DIGESTIVE LIQUEUR**

**WHO:** The Bitter Truth

**WHAT:** Elixier is described as having its roots “in the traditions of both classic sweet vermouths and alpine digestive tonics”. Tasting notes include: herbal aromas of mint, myrrh, sage and gentian as well as rhubarb and lemon.

**WHY:** The drink can be served in a pre-dinner Manhattan or Negroni or after a rich meal to aid digestion.

**MORE:** The product is 30% abv and global distribution is handled by Haromex.

**CONTACT:** the-bitter-truth.com





## SPIRITS

### SELECTED BY BERRYS

Berry Bros & Rudd has introduced a selection of four spirits under its Selected by Berrys brand. The boxed set is priced at £140 but the bottles are available individually, priced between £30 and £55. Berrys said it is aimed at private customers who have an interest in spirits and want a quality "essential" drinks cabinet pack from a trusted, exclusive brand.

The selection is also aimed at trade customers who want to stock an exclusive, high quality selection of spirits for discerning drinkers.

The second Selected by Berrys brand comprises Berrys' Reserve Speyside Blended Malt (46% abv), Berrys' Islay Blended Malt (46% abv), Berrys' XO Caribbean Rum (46% abv from Trinidad and more than 10 years old) and Berrys' XO Cognac (42% abv).

**BRAND OWNER:** Berry Bros & Rudd  
**PRICE:** £140  
**SIZES:** 4 x 70cl  
**CONTACT:** edward.bates@bbr.com

### VENTISQUERO HERÚ PINOT NOIR 2007

**BRAND OWNER:** Viña Ventisquero  
**PRICE:** £19.99, US\$47, €35-40  
**MARKETS:** US, Europe, Brazil, Chile  
**CONTACT:** Américo Hernandez  
 +44 1342 318282

When it comes to Pinot Noir – the most enigmatic, potentially beguiling and most troublesome of grapes – Chile is as good as it gets if you're after value for money.

Ventisquero has introduced this cool climate wine from the Casablanca valley, which isn't cheap but is targeted at quality restaurants and quality specialist retailers. It must be good – just feel the weight of the bottle.



## PINOT NOIR

## ANNIVERSARY

### GOSSET 425TH ANNIVERSAIRE

**OWNER:** Champagne Gosset  
**PRICE:** UK rrp £85  
**CONTACT:** champagne-gosset.com



To mark the family-owned producer's 425th anniversary this year, Gosset has put together a limited edition blend made up of 12 grand cru and premier cru wines from the 2004 and 2002 vintages.

The 52% Chardonnay/48% Pinot Noir brut special cuvée is described as having a delicate, mineral style, with "hints of white jasmine, citrus and vine flowers" on the nose and "light notes of violet and pear in the mouth".

At the same time, the company has produced a limited edition, polished pewter bottle cooler. The wrap-around design – by Hervé Gambis – is open at the front to display the label, but contains a built-in reservoir for the ice or iced water.

Founded as a still wine producer in Aÿ in 1584, Champagne Gosset is the region's oldest established house.

## SMALL BOTTLE SPECIALIST WINE FOR 2

**BRAND OWNER:** Febvre, distributed by Paul Sapin  
**PRICE:** £3.99-£6.95, €2.50-€6.95  
**PACKAGED IN:** France  
**SIZES:** 50cl  
**MARKETS:** Europe, Asia, Canada



Paul Sapin, the Macon-based producer, in conjunction with Roger Harris Wines of the UK, has unveiled new wines for its 50cl Wine for 2 label.

The specialist in small bottle sizes and PET is now offering wines from Chile, South Africa, France, Italy and New Zealand.

New brands include: The Whistling Thorn Shiraz and Pinotage Rosé from South Africa; Ta Moko Sauvignon Blanc from New Zealand; a French Chardonnay and Merlot named Le Loup; Shy Albatross Cabernet Sauvignon and Sauvignon Blanc from Chile; Paulita Chilean Sauvignon Blanc and Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot; and Giuliana Italian Pinot Grigio.

Paul Sapin is also now supplying its existing Regenoak Australian Shiraz/Cabernet and Semillon/Chardonnay and its Vieilles Vignes Fleurie in 50cl. Prices range from £3.99 to £6.95 with the majority of wines priced between £4 and £5.

### HIGHLAND PARK EARL MAGNUS EDITION I

**BRAND OWNER:** Edrington  
**PRICE:** £85  
**CONTACT:** highlandpark.co.uk



The Orkney distiller has released a limited edition Highland Park which celebrates the life of Earl Magnus, an 11th-century Christian who is said to have shared the Orkney earldom with his treacherous cousin Haakon.

Magnus was killed by Haakon, hence the "treacherous", and it is said that miracles have occurred around his tomb now at Birsay.

The 15-year-old whisky is bottled at 52.6% and is said to taste of vanilla, a smokiness, milk chocolate and crystallised ginger.

## LIMITED EDITION

### INFORMATION

Products launched within the past two months are eligible for inclusion within this section. Please submit your products for consideration to: [christian.davis@drinksint.com](mailto:christian.davis@drinksint.com)

# Moving with **the times**

Lucy Britner talks to new UK Bartenders' Guild president **Daniel Crebesse** as he prepares to give the organisation a greater international focus

**G**OOD TIMES, BAD TIMES, TWO RECESSIONS, THE effects of the Gulf War, cocktail umbrellas and world-class bartending. Daniel Crebesse has seen it all. The Bordeaux-born bartender is Salvatore Calabrese's successor as president of the UK Bartenders' Guild (UKBG), finally realising the ambition he had when he joined the organisation 17 years ago. Having achieved this goal, he has set himself many others to ensure the future of the UK bartending community.

The 52-year-old started work in a very different era – one he refers to as the “golden age”. Crebesse says: “In 1985, I dropped my head waiter position to become a bar commis at the Intercontinental hotel in Mayfair. In the catering industry, you had to work split shifts – it wasn't so hectic in bars.”

It was there, under the mentorship of 35-year bar veteran Peter Burbridge, that Crebesse found his vocation.

“I was a rebel and Burbridge helped me find direction.

“It helped that people had money to spend in the 80s – it was the golden age. There weren't really any cocktail bars

so you either worked in hotel bars or wine bars.”

Customers have a certain expectation of hotel bartenders: they should be classically styled – clean-shaven and usually in a suit jacket with a bow tie or a buttonhole.

At Crebesse's current Kensington location – the Milestone hotel – he fulfils these expectations. But he's also the first to admit that the UKBG came under fire a few years ago for being “too classical”.

“Five to seven years ago, we were considered old-



**DIFFERENT STYLES OF DRINKS AND BARTENDING DON'T EXIST ON SUCH A SCALE AS THEY DO IN LONDON**

fashioned. But we have spent time improving our image and started working with trendy bars and building bridges with mixologists.

“We need younger bartenders. In the beginning, there was a classical side and a trendy side, but for the past six or seven years, we have been working together.”

So what exactly have these two sides joined forces to do? It's easy to be cynical about trade organisations – often it's unclear exactly who or what they represent and what they aim to achieve. But the UKBG is larger than just the UK bar scene. The organisation is one of 55 members of the International Bartenders' Association (IBA) and Crebesse wants to exploit this ready-made network. The organisation has also opened up competitions and events that used to be reserved only for members.

“I want to organise more international events – mostly in Europe – as well as drive membership in the UK,” says Crebesse. “Our reputation is better than it used to be with young bartenders.” The UKBG currently has 280-300 UK members and Crebesse hopes to raise this number to 500 during his three-year reign.

“I'd also like to create a fifth division in the UK. Currently it is divided into four regions – Scotland, the north, London and the south east. I want to create a division in the west, for places such as Bristol and Birmingham.”





## Flair for creativity

It's surprising that, with today's seemingly endless references to "the cocktail renaissance" and classic recipes, Crebesse believes the future of UK bartending is heading more towards flair. Perhaps this is the influence of a recently won title by a member of the UKBG, Gianluca Bosco, in an IBA competition in Berlin.

Crebesse says: "The next trend is difficult to predict. But I think a lot of young bartenders are heading in the direction of flair. They prefer a good show rather than a decent quality drink – rightly or wrongly."

Crebesse's UKBG colleague Michael Peron looks after the flair-tending aspect of the organisation, but Crebesse aims to get more involved and work with as many people as possible.

He insists that being a good bartender is not about being good at just one thing. "You've got to be a salesman, a showman, have great product knowledge... When a bartender changes jobs, a bar is his or her stage and it's up to them to make it their own. A great bartender has the whole package."

Crebesse is currently head bartender at the classically styled Milestone hotel

Although Crebesse is trying to set up a new division, he believes that London is the most exciting city for bartending both in the UK and the rest of the world.

"I've been to other cities – including New York – but the variety and different styles of drinks and bartending don't exist on such a scale as they do in London."

However, Crebesse warns that, too often, style can take precedence over substance – although he was too polite to cite examples.

"In the past few years, a lot of bars have opened and closed very quickly. This is because there has been too much emphasis, and money spent, on design. Then, when it comes to investing in training, there's no money left."

Training is Crebesse's passion and he says if he wasn't working as a bartender he would like to be a mentor – which is probably one of the qualities which made him the ideal candidate for the role of UKBG president.

He's pretty convincing when it comes to suggesting reasons why ambitious bartenders should give up £35 of their wage to join the UKBG.

"Forget classical, stiff or whatever. We are professional bartenders and the UKBG offers a range of activities to help you become better at your vocation.

"We have partnerships with most of the large drinks companies, we offer masterclasses, we organise four or five

cocktail competitions a year, we arrange trips to distilleries, wine regions and tasting events.

"We've been around since 1933, so we have a few years of professionalism under our belts. It's nice to have a sense of belonging."

Crebesse also hopes to build up the jobs aspect and forum side of the organisation's website. Though he says this is a little slow due to the current financial climate.

But, having remained a bartender through an earlier recession, he is not worried about this one.

"I remember in the early 1990s – at the start of the Gulf War – the Intercontinental had 450 bedrooms and suddenly occupancy dropped to around nine or 10. It hit hard."

Throughout his 24-year career as a bartender, Crebesse has fixed fine whiskies for big-tipping guests, created new cocktails from old recipes, sliced pineapple wedges, skewered cocktail cherries and even erected small, paper umbrellas for his customers.

But once upon a time, there was something this proud Frenchman just wouldn't do: "When I was young I would be shocked when a customer ordered an expensive Cognac and asked for it to be served with cola. Back then, we would refuse to serve them.

"But not now. The customer is paying. So these days, nothing shocks me." **DI**

CV

73-85

Working in various waiting roles at hotels around London, including the Swiss Centre and the Curzon hotel

85-91

**Bartender, progressing to assistant bar manager, at the Intercontinental, Mayfair. Joined UKBG**

92-98

Bar and lounge manager at the Selfridge hotel

98

**Returned to Intercontinental, Mayfair**

02-07

Launched the bar at the 5-star Sofitel, Pall Mall

07 –

**Head bartender at the Milestone hotel, Kensington**

09 –

President of the UKBG

# In the mix

The first annual Drinks International Pre-mixed Challenge attracted a wide range of innovative and high quality entries. Here are the results

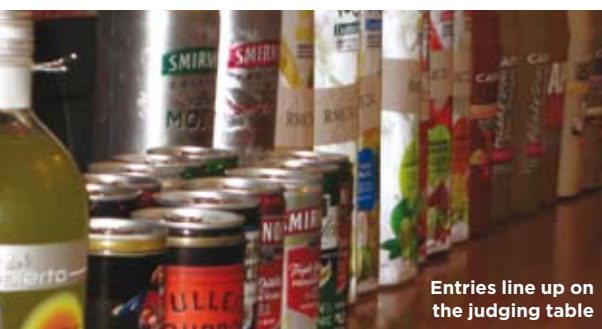
Drinks International's inaugural pre-mixed drinks challenge has revealed a high level of innovation in the ready-to-drink category. Judges included top bartenders, trainers, consultants and a Barwizard. Entrants had a choice of five categories in which to submit their drink, depending on how it is made. Categories ranged from original product combinations for non-traditional pre-mixed drinks to ready-made cocktails for drinks that are ready to serve. The results show an impressive eight gold medals, five silvers, five bronzes and five commendeds. **DI**





## Judges

**1.** Neil Lowrey from dynamic flair duo The Barwizards; **2.** Dan Wilks from Create Cocktails; **3.** Bartender trainer Leanne Davidson; **4.** Julian Shaw, director of bar consultancy the Gorgeous Group; **5.** Drinks International's news and website editor Lucy Britner.



Entries line up on the judging table



### Original/unique product combination

Brand owner	Brand	Medal
<b>Global Brands</b>	VK Vodka Pear	Gold

### Classic alcoholic drink and mixer combination

<b>Diageo</b>	Smirnoff Vodka & Schweppes Tonic	Gold
<b>Diageo</b>	J&B and Cola	Silver
<b>Diageo</b>	Bulleit Bourbon & Cola	Bronze
<b>Diageo</b>	Smirnoff Vodka & Ocean Spray Cranberry Juice	Bronze
<b>Diageo</b>	Smirnoff Vodka & Apple Juice Drink	Commended
<b>Diageo</b>	Gordon's Gin & Schweppes Tonic	Commended

### Ready-made cocktails

<b>Diageo</b>	Smirnoff Cosmopolitan	Gold
<b>VNC Cocktails</b>	Margarita	Gold
<b>VNC Cocktails</b>	Banana Daiquiri	Gold
<b>VNC Cocktails</b>	Feijoa & Apple	Gold
<b>VNC Cocktails</b>	Strawberry Daiquiri	Silver
<b>Cooperativa Agricola Pisquera Elqui</b>	Capel Toffee Cream Colada	Silver
<b>Global Brands</b>	VK Mojito Original	Bronze
<b>Diageo</b>	Cacique Mojito	Bronze
<b>Cooperativa Agricola pisquera Elqui</b>	Coctel Capel Pina Colada	Bronze
<b>Beam Global Spirits &amp; Wine</b>	Sauza Original Margarita	Commended
<b>West Eleven Cocktails</b>	Elderflower Collins	Commended
<b>Cooperativa Agricola Pisquera Elqui</b>	Capel Pisco Sour Doble Destilado	Commended

### Classic cocktail (user adds alcoholic drink)

<b>Funkin</b>	The Mojito	Gold
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### Design & packaging

<b>Diageo</b>	Smirnoff Cosmopolitan	Gold
<b>Diageo</b>	Captain Morgan Original Spiced Gold & Cola	Silver
<b>Diageo</b>	J&B and Cola	Silver

# HOT BAR BRANDS

# Bartender survey: the world's favourite brands

There's always a new cult favourite spirit among the style bar fraternity – bartenders love to be the first to offer the latest niche discovery. Yet consumers enjoy the comfort of the big-name brands they're most familiar with. But what is actually selling in the world's best bars? And what are the "hot" brands on everyone's lips?

In the following pages, **Tom Sandham** – former editor of *Class* magazine and founder of recently launched drinks portal *dwink.com* – examines the results of the inaugural Drinks International Hot Bar Brands survey, which gives a frontline view of what's selling now in the top bars around the world.



When it comes to brand recognition the bar scene is an aggressive battleground. The competition for earning respect from bar professionals is incredibly fierce and, as brand teams aim to communicate messages of authenticity as well as sustain that "sexy" image, they must cope with a testing balancing act.

Indeed, the premium bar playing field is a tough market for the brands. This is largely due to the passion and devotion of today's bar professional. In particular, bar tenders and managers indulge in an eternal quest for the innovative and the unusual to place behind the bar. A bartender takes pride in knowing a bit more than the consumer, and rightly so: it's their job to discover and work with the best spirits on the planet.

But what this Drinks International global poll of bar professionals reveals, almost inevitably, is that the consumer's tastes aren't yet so eclectic. As a result, you will find a host of very familiar names on the Hot Bar Brands survey you're about to dive into.

Writing this from the perspective of a drinks writer who spends a lot of time in London and has travelled to New York a few times more recently, it's fair to say these two drinking hubs offer an incredible diversity of options. But even in the world's leading drinks cities the response to the question of what sells most was unsurprising – and "mainstream".

Largely, then, it is the brands that have invested in long-term, concerted marketing campaigns that have risen to the top. That's not to say the liquid isn't quality, and certainly those questioned didn't doubt consumers go for products they trust. But from a personal point of view it was also nice to see a few more unusual names making their presence felt.

Overall then, the survey is a comprehensive piece of research and an enlightening one. Drinks International scoured the globe for responses and, with as many as 300 bar professionals in 50 countries reporting back, it's safe to say that it's an authentic review of how the brands featured in the lists are doing.

We hope you agree and enjoy the insight. Feedback as ever is encouraged and we look forward to repeating the survey next year, so keep your eyes peeled if you want to have your say next time.

## About the survey

When the team at Drinks International set about determining the approach to a survey such as this, they started with the premise that it's the professionals at the heart of the industry who are best placed to rate the world's most successful brands.

In order to achieve a representative sample of this group, a sample frame was created, comprising mainly those who own and manage the elite of world bars, as well as bar experts and writers. Research was conducted by Leslie Henry Marketing Research and the Hill Taylor Partnership operating under the Market Research Society (UK) code of conduct.

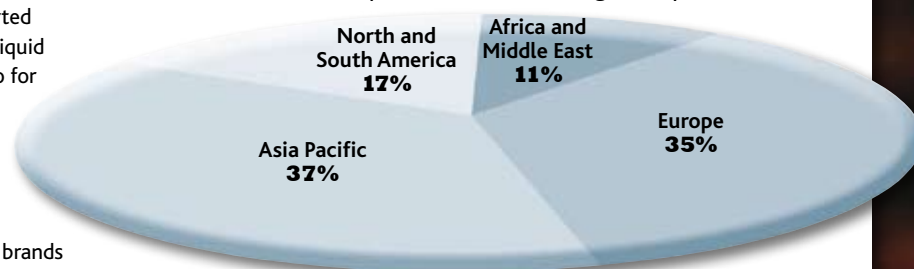
List building involved more than 120 different data sources: websites, guide books and Drinks International lists. To qualify for inclusion in the sample frame, bars had to be mentioned as among the best in their region in at least two reputable data sources. The 286 establishments that responded to the survey represent some 10% of all the elite bars in the world – a figure that's described by Leslie Henry as: "Truly representative of this elite group."

As part of the survey, all bars were contacted via email, with a telephone follow-up. Bar respondents were asked, category by category, which brand in their opinion was "hot" – that is, increasing in sales or popularity/brand call at the bar. They were then asked, again by category, which brand was their best selling product.

**Tom Sandham**

## This was a truly international survey:

50 countries were represented, with the regional split as follows:



# Traditional high achiever



## Johnnie Walker rules both charts but younger choice makes headway into the hot ten

In the dark spirits stakes, whisky producers might be keeping an eye on rum as it raises a challenge in some parts of the western world.

But when you hear from producers that a country such as Taiwan is emerging as the second largest market in the world for Johnnie Walker, you are reminded that whisky is massive in South East Asia.

And Johnnie Walker is undoubtedly the brand that's achieving most – the product has become a status symbol in this part of the world, and that it places in positions one and two on both Hot and Best Selling lists is evidence of that.

But then, if a bar professional were asked to take a guess, few would suggest a different leader.

What's interesting on the list then, is the addition of a couple of others, not

least Monkey Shoulder.

Up until quite recently whisky has struggled with some bartenders – there is a conservative air attached and, while that works for a customer's reputation when buying, it lacks a bit when you're trying to communicate your brand message with a 19-year-old behind the stick.

Monkey Shoulder is trying to bridge the gap between whisky and the

younger bar professionals and its presence on the Hot list suggests it is getting somewhere.

There aren't many surprises anywhere else here, although the fact that Ardbeg is creeping into the top 10 sales list implies that bar professionals who have embraced the whisky category, and have long been singing Ardbeg's praises, are having an influence on customer choice.

### HOT SCOTCH BRANDS

- 1 Johnnie Walker Black Label
- 2 Johnnie Walker (other)
- 3 Chivas Regal
- 4 Glenfiddich
- 5 Ardbeg
- 6 The Macallan
- 7 Glenmorangie
- 8 Monkey Shoulder
- 9 Famous Grouse
- 10 J&B

### BEST SELLING SCOTCH

- 1 Johnnie Walker Black Label
- 2 Johnnie Walker (other)
- 3 Chivas Regal
- 4 Dewar's
- 5 Famous Grouse
- 6 J&B
- 7 Glenfiddich
- 8 Bell's
- 9 Glenmorangie
- 10 Ardbeg

### HOT OTHER WHISKIES BRANDS

- 1 Jack Daniel's Tennessee
- 2 Jameson Irish
- 3 Maker's Mark Bourbon
- 4 Canadian Club
- 5 Suntory Hibiki Japanese
- 6 Wild Turkey Bourbon
- 7 Crown Royal Canadian
- 8 Four Roses Bourbon
- 9 Knob Creek Bourbon
- 10 Pappy Van Winkle Bourbon

### BEST SELLING OTHER WHISKIES

- 1 Jack Daniel's Tennessee
- 2 Jameson Irish
- 3 Maker's Mark Bourbon
- 4 Canadian Club
- 5 Jim Beam Bourbon
- 6 Buffalo Trace Bourbon
- 7 Bulleit Bourbon
- 8 Crown Royal Canadian
- 9 Heaven Hill Bourbon
- 10 Elijah Craig Bourbon

# Jack takes top plaudits

## But awareness of Japanese whiskies grows and niche brands make inroads into the realm of the big spenders

No surprises here – Jack Daniel's tops both lists and emphasises the dominance of the brand, not just as a whiskey but across spirits categories in general. As brand calls go, "a Jack and cola please" is uttered more times than "where are the toilets?".

It's interesting to see some of the other brands that made it on, Hibiki being evidence that the awareness of Japanese whiskies is growing. Meanwhile, Pappy Van Winkle is a

refreshing addition on a list dominated by brands with a bit of money to spend on marketing.

Even so, nothing can take the glory away from Jack, to the pleasure of former bartender and bar operator Nidal Ramini, who is now American whiskey ambassador at Bacardi Brown-Forman in the UK. "Jack Daniel's popularity the world over is down to two major factors," he says. "The incredible work that the global marketing teams have done with the brand; taking it out of the alcohol bracket and into that elite club of 'iconic brands'. And consumers obviously react well to the brand truths in terms of the

family nature of the product, combined with the rock 'n' roll status Jack Daniel's has."



# Vodka rules

**Battle for brand dominance as major players invest heavily in premium style brands**



**N**o matter how much you glad-eye that backbar mirror, the response is always going to be: "Vodka is the fairest of them all." Nothing can budge it from its global dominance – Diageo calculates sales of vodka priced above US\$8 to be 100 million cases, with the really cheap stuff representing a further 300 million cases.

Consequently, the battle for "hot brand" was fought fiercely and Grey Goose came out on top. While the Goose doesn't list as number one in sales, its success in the "brand call" war can come as no surprise. That Belvedere is second emphasises the efforts both have made over the past 12 months when it comes to marketing. And they have successfully positioned themselves as luxury items, with both competing in the bottle-to-table stakes.

Absolut remains the number one Best Selling brand though, and comes in third on the Hot list. The brand made a huge impact when it came to marketing and, like Goose and Belvedere, the bottle design has been capturing consumers' imaginations for some time.

Explaining why the brand continues to

captivate the market, Absolut vice president global marketing Anna Malmhake says: "It's crucial that our vodka constantly strives to be a meaningful voice in contemporary culture. For example, always knowing how people like to go out, what they want to talk about when they go out, and how they like to socialise. Added to that we continue to launch meaningful, innovative products, and to give people the kind of communication that gets them engaged."

"But to me bars and, more importantly, bartenders are a key source of inspiration and learning. Almost everything I know about drinks, I have learnt from bartenders. We have found that Absolut seems to work well in any bar where people care about what they drink: they want the best tasting cocktails, creative drink mixing and a stylish environment. So in short, mostly modern, high-end bars."

## HOT VODKA BRANDS

- 1 Grey Goose
- 2 Belvedere
- 3 Absolut
- 4 42 Below
- 5 Smirnoff
- 6 Ketel One
- 7 Wyborowa
- 8 Finlandia
- 9 Russian Standard
- 10 Stolichnaya

## BEST SELLING VODKA

- 1 Absolut
- 2 Grey Goose
- 3 Smirnoff
- 4 Wyborowa
- 5 Belvedere
- 6 42 Below
- 7 Finlandia
- 8 Russian Standard
- 9 Stolichnaya
- 10 Ketel One



## HOT GIN BRANDS

- 1 Bombay Sapphire
- 2 Tanqueray
- 3 Hendrick's
- 4 Gordon's
- 5 Beefeater
- 6 Plymouth
- 7 Martin Miller's
- 8 Hayman's
- 9 Blackwood's
- 10 South Gin

## BEST SELLING GIN

- 1 Bombay Sapphire
- 2 Gordon's
- 3 Tanqueray
- 4 Beefeater
- 5 Plymouth
- 6 Hendrick's
- 7 Seagram's
- 8 Gilbey's
- 9 Martin Miller's
- 10 Whitley Neill

# Jewel in gin's crown

**Impressive newcomer creeps up on Bombay Sapphire**

**A**lthough it's Bacardi Brown-Forman's Bombay Sapphire that tops the tree in both polls, it could be argued the success story here is Hendrick's Gin.

Placing at an amazing number three on the Hot list, the brand has played a strong hand since hitting the market, pitching itself as the "unusual" choice to emphasise the addition of a cucumber botanical.

But it is the brand's alignment with the industry that is particularly impressive, and potentially the reason for its growing popularity. Indeed the team at William Grant & Sons has realised the potential of consumer conversion through the backing of front-of-bar staff.

Bombay Sapphire, meanwhile, is the epitome of successful packaging design.



That it tops both polls is continuing evidence that the consumer is drawn to beauty on the backbar.

Overall this category is hugely popular with bar professionals, largely because bartenders can suggest it as a spirit that won't intimidate the mass of vodka consuming customers, and because the botanicals make it more interesting to play with.

Desmond Payne, master distiller at Beefeater agrees: "With new gins popping up and adding to the eclectic variety of well established brands such as Beefeater and Plymouth, it is a great time to be a master distiller."

"The increased interest offers me the best of both worlds. I am responsible for maintaining the reputation of the world's best-selling premium gin by keeping to James Burrough's original recipe as well as being able to add my own influence by creating Beefeater 24."

# Ultra-premium tequila on rise

## HOT TEQUILA BRANDS

- 1 Patrón
- 2 Jose Cuervo
- 3 Don Julio
- 4 Sauza
- 5 1800
- 6 Herradura
- 7 Olmeca
- 8 Partida
- 9 Sierra
- 10 Salsa Blanca

## BEST SELLING TEQUILA

- 1 Jose Cuervo
- 2 Patrón
- 3 Sauza
- 4 Olmeca
- 5 Herradura
- 6 Don Julio
- 7 1800
- 8 Cazadores
- 9 Ocho
- 10 Salsa



Consumers are finally beginning to appreciate tequila as a high-quality, versatile spirit

For tequila, the US is the most significant market outside Mexico so it comes as no surprise to see it's the American owned brand Patrón that dominates proceedings here. The outlook for the category overall is positive. The increased availability of the agave plant has helped to fuel a growing connoisseur market for super- and ultra-premium aged tequilas in Mexico and the US. Meanwhile, the investment from Beam Global into the Sauza brand and Brown-Forman's acquisition of Herradura at the beginning of 2007 showed the major players have serious intent.

John McDonnell, Patrón's

chief operating officer, says: "Not many years ago, it would have been difficult to compile a list of tequilas available on a global scale. Fueling that growth is the popularity and acceptance of the ultra-premium set of the category.

"Consumers today have begun to realise and appreciate that high-quality ultra-premium tequila such as Patrón is a sophisticated, flavourful and versatile luxury spirit – far from the old perceptions of what tequila used to be."

Jason Nussbaum, Patrón's international brand manager, adds: "We've grown our global distribution bottle by bottle, taking great care along the way to educate and familiarise bartenders and bar owners about Patrón's unique position in the ultra-premium white spirits category. It's gratifying to know that drinks professionals around the world have discovered Patrón and rated it highest on the list."



# The golden ones

Diversity is attracting consumers to the globally growing rum category

A rum boom has been predicted for some time and the past two years have seen the final realisation of this dream. The vast expenditure of West Indies Rum & Spirits Producers' Association over the past 12 months has had a particularly significant impact and the category is sure to continue its rise.

Consumers have been woken up to the diversity in the category thanks to the marketing spend of some of the golden rum brands, and evidence of their increasing stakes in the consumer bar market is the listing of Havana Club and Appleton in this poll. Indeed apart from the top spot, the goldens seem to be taking most plaudits.

But Bacardi continues to sit on top of the rum tree, and as one of the few spirits in the world that has earned true brand call status, it deserves its place there.

While it's easy to be cynical about a brand with a big spend, Bacardi has actually offered plenty of support to the premium end of the bar industry this year, particularly bartenders. Enrique Comas, global brand manager and

sixth generation Bacardi family member, is confident that this approach will help sustain the rum's success.

"As a category rum combines the fun of the drinking experience with a serious drinking message and a strong heritage backbone.

"The Mojito and Daiquiri are introducing consumers to the classic style of drink, but the

rise of Tiki culture is reminding them that rum is about fun as well. Our future is based on conversations with the industry, communicating our message to the top bartenders and engaging with them on cocktail culture. We've done a lot of this over the year and rolled out a programme of support globally. We believe it is this support that is crucial to a brand's success."

## HOT RUM BRANDS

- 1 Bacardi
- 2 Havana Club
- 3 Appleton Estate
- 4 Captain Morgan
- 5 Mount Gay
- 6 Ron Zacapa
- 7 Matusalem
- 8 El Dorado
- 9 10 Cane
- 10 English Harbour

## BEST SELLING RUM

- 1 Bacardi
- 2 Havana Club
- 3 Appleton Estate
- 4 Captain Morgan
- 5 Bundaberg
- 6 Mount Gay
- 7 Myers
- 8 Pampero
- 9 Pyrat
- 10 Santa Teresa



# Moving towards modernity

In order to revive fortunes in the bars, some brands are starting to target younger consumers

## HOT COGNAC/BRANDY BRANDS

- 1 Hennessy
- 2 Rémy Martin
- 3 Martell
- 4 Courvoisier
- 5 Hine
- 6 Delamain
- 7 Camus
- 8 Klipdrift (South Africa)
- 9 KWV (South Africa)
- 10 D'Orville (France)

## BEST SELLING COGNAC/BRANDY

- 1 Hennessy
- 2 Rémy Martin
- 3 Martell
- 4 Courvoisier
- 5 Klipdrift (South Africa)
- 6 KWV (South Africa)
- 7 Camus
- 8 Hine
- 9 St-Rémy (France)
- 10 Delamain

While this is an esteemed category, and one that consumers embrace when they show off their financial guns at the bar, in terms of sales in bars it's a rare winner.

As recently revealed by Jon Cowley, manager at Milk & Honey London (the number one bar in Drinks International's The World's 50 Best Bars survey), it's not a margins hero. Indeed, the offering at that particular, world-leading bar is scant, simply because customers rarely demand it.

Courvoisier may have taken note, hence a marketing drive in recent years to express the brand's versatility in the on-trade. The house has proclaimed its Exclusif expression as perfect for blending in cocktails and it is undoubtedly a pitch for the younger customer.

The order of the big four cognac houses atop these tables reflects exactly their relative positions in terms of total sales volumes. That said, Martell looks to be going for the luxury end, pushing its Cordon Bleu more than anything else and disassociating itself with the end of the market where it has historically enjoyed most of its success.

Hennessy's top placing reminds us that,



whichever way you slice cognac, the category enjoys its success through association with image and heritage, and few houses can claim such universal stakes on luxury items than one owned by LVMH.

Klipdrift is the top non-cognac and a refreshing addition to the list. South African brandy is rapidly gaining a reputation and, with the global showcase of a football World Cup to enjoy later this year, this Distell brand could be one that rises further in prominence.



# It's all about Baileys

But bar-friendly newcomers rise and shots retain their popularity

## HOT LIQUEURS BRANDS

- 1 Baileys
- 2 St-Germain Elderflower
- 3 Grand Marnier
- 4 Jägermeister
- 5 Amaretto Disaronno
- 6 Luxardo Sambuca
- 7 Bols
- 8 Chambord
- 9 Midori
- 10 Cointreau

## BEST SELLING LIQUEURS

- 1 Baileys
- 2 Amaretto Disaronno
- 3 Jägermeister
- 4 Cointreau
- 5 Grand Marnier
- 6 Midori
- 7 Luxardo Sambuca
- 8 St-Germain Elderflower
- 9 Chambord
- 10 Joseph Cartron

No great surprises here. Baileys has become synonymous with Christmas in many countries and while it does feature on cocktail lists, its major marketing drive will have eased off. But that alone could not explain its dominance in the on-trade and it is undoubtedly the brand's popularity in the take-home trade that has rubbed off on bars.

More bar-friendly is St-Germain – the elderflower offering is a relative newcomer in this category and a niche product that has earned its reputation through the cocktail sector. Its position in the Hot table is evidence again that a bartender's influence is key.

Meanwhile the presence in the tables of the likes of Jägermeister and Luxardo Sambuca is evidence that drinking shots in bars is still alive and well, despite concerted efforts to drive the responsible drinking message.

# Hot to handle

Packaging tends to split consumers and bartenders, but some brands straddle the divide

**W**hen it comes to customer versus bartender, packaging and handling are perhaps the most divisive areas of a spirit brand's design.

For the customer, a pretty bottle is like the cover of a novel and, while professionals are taught to judge a product by what's on the inside as well as out, most customers will still ask for the drink that's appealing to the eye.

Of course, this doesn't always favour the bartender, who will have their own opinions on what is either most rewarding on the palate, or is easiest to use when making a drink.

The debate over style and substance is not exactly "never the twain shall meet" – indeed, many of the pretty bottles in this Drinks International survey contain a quality liquor.

But the bar professionals are certainly

resolute in the products they prefer to handle.

Jim Meehan, who runs the now globally renowned Please Don't Tell in New York, says: "Out of those listed, I'd say Havana Club is a favourite. First, because we can't get our hands on it legally here [in the US]; and second, because you can pour it comfortably from the neck (as liquor bottles are traditionally poured into a mixing glass) or from the base if you're working without a pour spout.

"While I love Tanqueray, Ketel One and Wyborowa, the shape of the bottles makes them difficult to pour from the neck.

"Bottles with a long neck and wide body, such as Maker's Mark, Jack Daniel's and Cuervo, are great to work with in the well, where you can readily grab them from the neck and pour through a spout, but less elegant to work with when you pour them gripping the body."

## BARTENDER CHOICE: WHICH HAS THE COOLEST PACKAGING?

- 1 Belvedere Vodka
- 2 Grey Goose Vodka
- 3 Absolut Vodka
- 4 St-Germain Elderflower Liqueur
- 5 Hendrick's Gin
- 6 Bombay Sapphire Gin
- 7 Patrón Tequila
- 8 Hennessy Cognac
- 9 Tanqueray No. Ten Gin
- 10 U'Luvka Vodka
- 11 42 Below Vodka
- 12 Beefeater 24 Gin
- 13 Crown Royal Canadian Whisky
- 14 Campari
- 15 Chambord Black Raspberry Liqueur
- 16 Chivas Regal Scotch Whisky
- 17 Elements 8 Rum
- 18 Galliano Liqueur
- 19 Havana Club rum
- 20 Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey

## BARTENDER CHOICE: WHICH IS YOUR FAVOURITE BOTTLE TO HANDLE WHEN WORKING BEHIND THE BAR?

- |                        |                                    |
|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1 Bacardi Rum          | 11 Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey |
| 2 Havana Club Rum      | 12 Ketel One Vodka                 |
| 3 Grey Goose Vodka     | 13 Malibu                          |
| 4 Absolut Vodka        | 14 Skyy Vodka                      |
| 5 Wyborowa Vodka       | 15 Chivas Regal Scotch Whisky      |
| 6 42 Below Vodka       | 16 Jameson Irish Whiskey           |
| 7 Stolichnaya Vodka    | 17 Jose Cuervo Tequila             |
| 8 Smirnoff Black Vodka | 18 Appleton Estate Rum             |
| 9 Tanqueray Gin        | 19 Bombay Sapphire Gin             |
| 10 Galliano Liqueur    | 20 Maker's Mark Bourbon            |



# Vodka takes dominant role

Gin creeps up the table as bartenders embrace its fashionability

## OVERALL WINNING BRANDS

- 1 Grey Goose Vodka
- 2 Belvedere Vodka
- 3 Absolut Vodka
- 4 Havana Club Rum
- 5 Hendrick's Gin
- 6 Bacardi Rum
- 7 Bombay Sapphire Gin
- 8 Smirnoff Vodka
- 9 Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey
- 10 Patrón Tequila

## OVERALL BEST SELLING

- 1 Absolut Vodka
- 2 Grey Goose Vodka
- 3 Smirnoff Vodka
- 4 Belvedere Vodka
- 5 Bombay Sapphire Gin
- 6 Havana Club Rum
- 7 Wyborowa Vodka
- 8 42 Below Vodka
- 9 Finlandia Vodka
- 10 Johnnie Walker Scotch Whisky



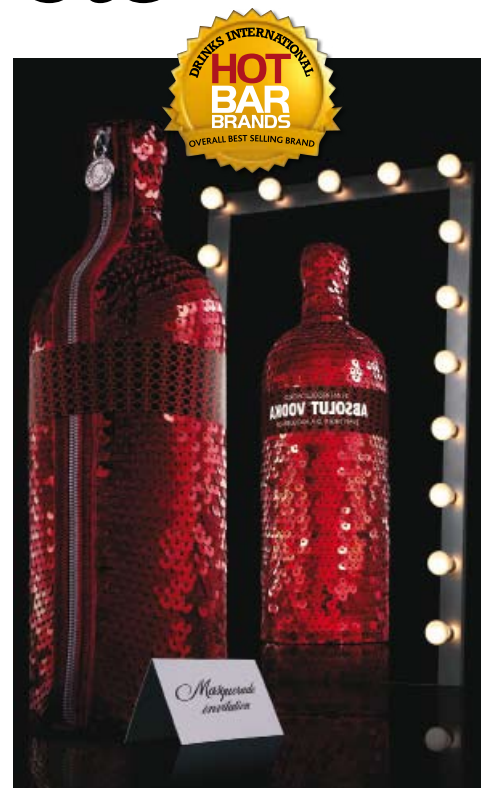
Go back to the spiel about vodka earlier in this survey (see p24) and now look at this list. Point made perhaps, since here we find the top three is owned by the vodka category, while the overall Best Selling list is dominated by seven premium vodka brands.

That a whisky makes it on to the top 10 of Best Selling is perhaps more interesting and suggests that all the South East Asian hype about the demand for the drink is well placed. And that Patrón is making it on to the Hot list is evidence that the incredible marketing aggression of the brand is paying off.

Meanwhile, gin is creeping up the ladder on both tables. In London and New York gin is en vogue with the bartenders, and the fashion is being embraced in other parts of Europe.

World famous cocktail archivist David Wondrich recently worked with Bols in Amsterdam to launch its new Genever brand. Harking back to genever's pivotal role in cocktail history, this helped to renew a general interest in genever and the gin category in general.

We expect the botanically endowed tippie to climb higher over the next 12 months as customers search for more depth to their spirit experience.



# Best selling classic cocktails

Mojitos start to see popularity slip but still lead by a wide margin

And so to the end point. In the style bar world, whether spirits are Hot or top of the Best Selling list, their destiny is as the driving force behind the bartender's art: the cocktail.

Survey respondents were asked to name the best selling cocktails in their establishment. Mojitos rule the roost, but are declining in popularity

slightly compared with a year ago. Martinis are up, Cosmopolitans are down.

The table shows the proportion of responding bars where each of the named cocktails was the most popular choice.

Recent conversations with bartenders reveal that most are actually rather frustrated with the constant request for a Mojito. Indeed, Chris Edwardes, the man

who set up the world famous Atlantic Bar in London and who now runs the multi award-winning Blanch House hotel in Brighton, described the Mojito as the "bane of bartenders everywhere".

Aside from the moderate hassle of mixing the things, the constant customer request for Mojitos stifles creativity for bartenders. Even so, the public gets what the public wants and so it comes as no surprise to see it topping this particular chart.

Nor is the high placing of the Long Island Iced Tea a surprise. While many see the drink as a bit of a relic in the current cocktail climate, it remains the strongest drink on the list in terms of alcoholic ingredients, and serves as evidence that people still want as much bang as they can get for their buck.

Classic cocktails dominate otherwise. London and New York are the leading cocktail destinations, and the bartender's eternal quest to create the perfect Martini is aided by its role in popular culture, as James Bond maintains his own love for the drink.

Keep abreast of trends in bars and cocktails with Drinks International monthly and see what 2010's round-up brings to the party.



## PROPORTION OF BARS MOST POPULAR CHOICE

	At the present time	12 months ago
Mojito	44.4%	52.3%
Martini	18.3%	10.3%
Cosmopolitan	6.7%	14.4%
Long Island Iced Tea	5%	2.9%
Manhattan	5%	4%
Vodka Martini	4.4%	1.1%
Margarita	3.9%	3.5%
Daiquiri	2.8%	1.1%
Singapore Sling	2.2%	1.7%
Dirty Martini	2.2%	n/a
Caparina	1.7%	2.9%
Old Fashioned	1.7%	2.9%
Whisky Sour	1.7%	2.9%

**DI** DOZEN  
2009

Pick of the

**Year**

**Drinks International** presents its annual round-up of top tipples, highlighting the 12 companies and brands that the team believe deserve special mention for their prominence in 2009



## Rum Bacardi

There was no resting on its laurels for the world's biggest white rum brand – Bacardi has made a real effort to reconnect with its once-Cuban roots.

The brand's 2009 Daiquiri campaign in the US and the UK focused on trade training and education. In the US, Bacardi placed particular emphasis on the importance of hand-shaking the drink. And the UK saw the launch of the Dominos & Daiquiris Tour, hosted by UK rum ambassador Ian Burrell.

The brand also took the opportunity to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Bacardi daiquiri travelling from its birthplace in Cuba to bars around the world.

The Bacardi Superior Rum Limited Edition heritage bottle is inspired by the original design created in 1909 and used by the early cocktail pioneers.

The \$50 rum is bottled at the same strength it was 100 years ago – 89 proof – and is available around the world.

In October, the privately owned company unveiled its Spirit of Bacardi advertising campaign, with the first execution called *Island*, showcasing a group of spirited adults (21+) who escape their ordinary day by boat and build their own island.

The campaign is centred around getting friends together and creating memorable experiences. It broke in the US, Puerto Rico and Germany, then The Netherlands and Canada. Other markets will follow.

## Gin Oxley

The blurb for the launch of Bacardi's cold-distilled gin brand read like a Hollywood movie trailer – eight years in the making, 38 attempts to perfect the 14-botanical mix, launched simultaneously in the UK and the US... But there's no denying that the product is pretty special.

The bespoke still produces 120 bottles per batch (240 bottles per day). A major advantage of cold distillation is that there are no heads or tails – so less wastage than traditional distillation methods. On the downside, the process is costly – just how much global marketing manager Raquel Faria wouldn't say, but to consumers it's £48/\$50 a bottle.

Another advantage of cold distillation is that it allows for the use of fresh fruit – in this case grapefruits, oranges and lemons.

While the drink meets the EU criteria defining London Gin, Faria explained why the label reads: Oxley Classic English Dry Gin. "We chose to label it English because we didn't want consumers to presume it was like other London Dry gins."

The gin is produced at Thames Distillery in Clapham, London.



## Tequila Patrón

When it comes to tequila, it is hard to look beyond Patrón in 2009. The premium brand keeps going from strength to strength, irrespective of economic downturns, credit crashes or recessions.

In the past year, it has reported a new distribution partner in Mexico (albeit its part-owner, Bacardi); distribution in six Canadian airports – Toronto, Montreal, Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa and Vancouver, the latter being the entry point for the forthcoming winter Olympics; and three major airlines – United, USAirways through Miami-based Duty Free World, and Virgin Atlantic via Tourvest Duty Free.

Reported to be the biggest spending liquor



To keep the brand in front of people, the company commissioned a survey into “regifting” – the practice of passing on an unwanted gift to someone else. In time for the Thanksgiving holiday in the US, the report claimed that 68% of respondents said they passed on unwanted

gifts to somebody else – often co-workers. The hook is that Patrón is the “ultimate gift” so its catchline was *Eliminate Regifting*. You have to admit it’s cute.

Also owner of Ultimat vodka and Pyrat Caribbean rum, 90% of Patrón Spirits International’s revenue is generated in the US. It is reported to spend approximately US\$50 million on advertising the tequila, more than any other liquor brand in the US.

brand in the US, Patrón has ousted some major household names from some prominently positioned billboards in New York city.

In these difficult times, chief operating officer John McDonnell claims to have increased the marketing spend and managed to maintain Patrón’s ultra-premium price position. No mean feat.

## Whisky Ballantine's

Ballantine's has certainly gone one step beyond in the past 12 months as Chivas Brothers has developed sponsorship and marketing opportunities across its range of aged, blended whiskies.

Portfolio leader Ballantine's Finest had its on-trade presence enhanced with an innovative self-illuminating bottle.

The initiative is part of the *Listen to Your Beat* campaign, which has been rolling out across bars and nightclubs in 35 key markets.

On to Ballantine's 12 Year Old. The *Beyond* project is part of the company's overall *Leave An Impression* campaign.

The ads consist of a number of trompe l'oeils (tricks of the eye) and the campaign includes several original serves and cocktail ideas, such as Ballantine's 12 gazpacho, a smoothie and a cappuccino.

Ballantine's launched a limited edition golf pack for its super-premium 17 Year Old blend to tie in with the brand's commitment to the sport.

The new pack, available from this month in key markets in Asia, tells the unique story of the 17th hole birdie challenge at The Ballantine's Championship.

To strengthen its presence around the sport, Chivas Brothers has also signed up Ryder Cup golfer Graeme McDowell as global brand ambassador for Ballantine's whisky.

Enough? Not quite... Italy's Molinari brothers are probably still celebrating after being awarded a rare bottle of Ballantine's 30 Year Old scotch whisky for their win at the Omega Mission Hills World Cup of Golf in Shenzhen last November.



## Beer BrewDog

It's probably easier to say what the Scottish brewer hasn't launched this year, but, as we haven't got all day, here's a few of its most notable newbies.

In July, BrewDog launched Tokyo, what was then, it said, the UK's strongest beer at 18.2% abv. The oak-aged imperial stout was produced in a run of 3,000 limited edition 33cl bottles.

The brewery originally caused enough of a stir when it launched Tokyo at 12% in 2008. The 18.2% relaunch was said to have been undertaken to enhance the flavour, depth and character of the beer.

You can guess what happened next – anyone would think they planned it...

By September 2009, the Scottish Parliament and UK industry watchdog the Portman Group were expressing their discomfort about the product – BrewDog reckons they even tried to ban it. The brewery's response? To create

another beer called Nanny State – at 1.1% abv.

Through Nanny State, BrewDog founders James Watt and Martin Dickie wanted to prove their commitment to making beers at any abv.

Anyway, the abv yo-yo didn't stop there. After their controversial 18.2% Tokyo beer sold out in only three days, November saw Watt and Dickie attempt a new record by creating what they think is the strongest beer in the world. Weighing in at 32%, Tactical Nuclear Penguin beats the previous record of 31% held by German beer brand Schorschbraer.

Only 500 bottles will be available.

According to Watt, the beer is about pushing boundaries; taking innovation in beer to a whole new level and putting Scotland firmly on the map for progressive craft beers.



## Company to watch Stock Spirits

During 2009, this company proved itself a force to be reckoned with when, in June, the company overtook CEDC to become Poland's largest spirits producer.

When Polmos Lublin and Stock merged in 2007, the company was selling 26 million litres of vodka a year. Group operations director Ian Croxford predicted that, by the end of 2009, this figure would be 90-95 million litres.

The company has made central Europe its home turf and, while the majority of large drinks companies look to the BRIC and other Asian countries to drive sales, Stock has spent 2009 buying businesses in Croatia and Bosnia. Chief executive Chris Heath says the company's plan is to acquire and integrate new businesses and fill gaps in its portfolio.

That's not the only way Stock has expanded its business – the company hasn't stopped launching products all year. Following Orzel's successful launch Stateside in summer 2008, the company is sending its 1906 vodka there this month.

Back in Poland, premium vodka Stock Prestige is hot off the still and so is bison grass and apple vodka in the Wodka Zoladkowa Gorzka range and the lemon vodka Lubelska Cytrynowka.

Also in Poland Stock is test-launching a range of Italian wines called Villa Julia.

You can bet this synopsis is just the tip of the Stock Spirits iceberg.





## Liqueur Drambuie

It has been a busy year for the Drambuie Liqueur Company. In June the new

management team unveiled the new-look bottle. Chief executive Phil Parnell and marketing director Miranda Rennie did their homework and realised that, while Drambuie remains a “must-stock” liqueur, the category as a whole is a bit of a dust gatherer and if you want to be an international premium spirit brand, you have to move on and reposition.

So the new bottle shape was intended to catch the eye of 25 to 35-year-olds who are currently Jack Daniel’s drinkers – being a whisky-based liqueur, Drambuie is one of the few that has a significant number of male imbibers.

Inevitably, to get new consumers to reappraise the tippie of Bonnie Prince Charlie, circa 1745, some more contemporary ingredients were suggested for mixing – fresh lime, ginger and, of course, cranberry.

Not content to sit back, the team unveiled a new variant unashamedly aimed at the travel retail/duty free and gifting sector. The Royal Legacy of 1745 comes in at £125, €159, US\$229 for 70/75cl and was unveiled at TFWA Cannes.

Still boasting the fleeing prince’s “secret recipe” at its heart, it claims a hand-picked selection of malt whiskies cask infused with a small batch production.

To seal the deal, Royal Legacy comes in an embossed decanter and each presentation box will be authenticated with the bottling date, bottle number and signature of the Drambuie master blender.

A significant attempt at realigning a well-known brand, the new look Drambuie looks suitably solid and worthy



of attention and trial. Legacy

is a creditable attempt to reposition

Drambuie away from sweet and sticky liqueurs and place it as a serious brand, worthy of serious consideration, among the top line whiskies and cognacs.

Time will tell whether the stewards of Bonnie Prince Charlie’s legacy, bequeathed by his loyal comrades, have a strategy more successful than that of the prince’s Jacobite uprising back in 1745.



## On-trade & cocktail initiative Hendrick's

William Grant & Sons worked tirelessly during 2009 to ensure its gin brand is loved by bartenders all over the world.

From original ideas, serving suggestions, cocktail competitions and rewards for bartenders who big up their brand, Hendrick’s has laid on a curiously spectacular series of events.

Stateside in February, bartenders were challenged to script “laughable lines and carefully balanced cocktails” in the Hendrick’s Limerick & Cocktail Competition.

The final was held at The Edison, Downtown, where notorious mixologists, poets and bon vivants judged limericks and cocktails in eight cities before crowning winner Peter Vestinos from Chicago.

Back in the UK, 17 key Hendrick’s bars were treated to a tea party, Hendrick’s style.

The brand provided the bars with tea sets in which to make bespoke Hendrick’s cocktails, including its Tea Time Martini and the Chelsea Rose.

Then came a treat for gin fans – the Hendrick’s Horseless Carriage. To create the culinary and liquid treat, Hendrick’s teamed up with jelly moulders Bompas & Parr.

This wasn’t the first time Hendrick’s partnered the jelly duo – in April, the pair created an inhalable gin and tonic in London.

Then December saw the roll out of the Fantastic & Ridiculous Tuesday of the Unusual Rose and Cucumber Society at venues including Ruby in Copenhagen and Le Bon Lion in Hamburg.

Event antics included a hot gin punch and a funeral for the glacé cherry.

Bonkers.



## Vodka Belvedere 1X

With the plethora of vodka brands sloshing around – some distilled a mind-boggling number of times and filtered through everything from diamonds to platinum – it’s a challenge to narrow it down to one that stands out.

The brand that caught our eye was Moët Hennessy’s Belvedere variant 1X, or One-X to punters. This Polish vodka, aimed exclusively at nightclubs and expensive members’ clubs, is available in a standard 70cl bottle (or 75cl if you are in the US) and as a magnum (1.5 litre).

The packaging is striking. It looks like an outtake from a horror movie, but there is nothing horrific about the taste. Said to be infused with ginseng, guarana, açai, ginger, jasmine, eucalyptus, cinnamon, black cherry and sweet almond, it reads more like a health food potion but actually tastes quite nice.

The packaging is the result of a

collaboration with graffitist André Saraiva. He is supposed to have drawn inspiration from his graffiti, which has “graced the streets of Paris” since the late 1980s. The glossy black Belvedere bottle is “tagged” in electric pink and sports a reinvention of Belvedere’s trademark palace and trees.

The vodka and rum division of Moët Hennessy says Belvedere 1X is best served neat and frozen with a grapefruit twist, to elevate the citrus and sweet spice characteristics of the vodka. In long drinks, 1X is said to work well with bitter mixers, such as grapefruit juice or tonic water, which enhance the fresh and botanical nature of the vodka.

Launched into the US, Canada, UK, France, Singapore and Australia, with an abv of 50% and a recommended UK retail price to match, it is unashamedly aimed at the luxury sector.



## Packaging Scapa 16 Year Old single malt scotch whisky

The Scapa 16 Year Old bottling was officially launched in December 2008, but rose to the fore in 2009. As well as a silver medal at the 2009 San Francisco World Spirits Competition, Scapa 16 struck double gold at our own International Spirits Challenge awards, in the Tasting and Design & Packaging categories.

Chivas Brothers, Pernod Ricard’s scotch whisky and premium gin arm, acquired the Orkney island distillery in 2005, immediately building up the stock portfolio and instigating a cask management policy involving the exclusive use of first fill American oak casks.

While the company admits to some “patchy production over recent years”, the results put Chivas Bros in a position to move from Scapa’s traditional 14 Year Old bottling to this new 16 Year Old – and a presentation was called for to reflect the change in style and ethos.

Nude Brand Creation was commissioned to develop the packaging, based on Scapa’s island provenance and distinctive style – unusually for an island malt it is made using unpeated barley malt, making it soft and accessible, with

subtle hints of heather and fresh peat.

“The objective was to imbue the identity and presentation with elements evocative of the source and style of the whisky,” the company states, citing the key elements of “safe haven, maritime heritage, simplicity, evocative craftsmanship”.

Indeed, the tall, elegantly tapered bottle succeeds in conveying a maritime feel, with the shift from the traditional khaki and brown colour scheme of the former 14 Year Old bottling to the new light cream and silvery blues. The lettering of the brand name also reflects the shape of the sailing yacht motif on the presentation carton, adding a suggestion of dynamic movement and effectively establishing the link to the sea.

While the company has repositioned Scapa in terms of price to about £50 to reflect its scarcity and increased age statement, Chivas Bros is confident that its Orkney expression can hold its own, saying: “Scapa 16 Year Old now challenges both island malts and single malts categories, positioning itself in line with its 17 and 18 Year Old peers.”



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## Champagne Lanson

Since it became part of the Boizel Chanoine group in 2006, Champagne Lanson has become much more prominent in promoting its traditional house style. Lanson's USP is as the only large-scale producer among the champagne Grandes Marques to produce its non-vintage cuvée without the use of malolactic fermentation – the process by which the harder, appley-green malic acid is converted into plumper lactic acid.

This was well illustrated at a late November tasting in London of older vintages, going back from 1996 to '76. In each case, to varying degrees, a core identity of apple and lemon flavours defined the champagne's character.

In a busy year, other activity in the UK (which accounts for two-thirds of Lanson exports) included a Valentine's Day limited edition of Lanson Rosé. At the back end of the year, a new six-bottle "party pack" for Lanson Black Label came complete with a red and black branded ice bucket, timed for the festive season and showcasing the company's increasingly used, red Maltese cross icon.

Travel retail was not forgotten, with the launch of individual bottle coolers for Black Label, Rosé

and Ivory Label into World Duty Free shops in November.

In the field of events, Lanson renewed its sponsorship of the annual Wimbledon tennis tournament and signed a deal to become an official sponsor and exclusive supplier of the O2 Arena in south east London.

But most significant have been Lanson's preparations for its 250th anniversary in 2010. First was the June launch of a celebratory cuvée: Lanson Extra Age Brut. The blend is "a recreation of the style of champagne produced by Lanson during the 19th century" and is suitable for long ageing. Based on wines from the 1999, 2002 and 2003 vintages, it's a 60/40 blend of Pinot Noir and Chardonnay from Grand Cru and Premier Cru vineyards in Verzenay, Bouzy, Chouilly, Avize, Oger and Vertus.

The end of the year saw the publication of the *Champagne Lanson Little Black Book of Champagne*. This gives a comprehensive run through the history, geography and technical aspects of champagne production, as well as a sprinkling of anecdotes and legends and, of course, the nuts and bolts of what makes Lanson stand out from the crowd.

The *Little Black Book* will be distributed in



the on-trade and used in consumer promotions throughout 2010.

"We have an initial run of 10,000 but we hope to build that to 250,000 in 18 months' time," Paul Beavis, Lanson's managing director in the UK, told Drinks International. "It's very much part of a five year plan."

## Research Viña Casa Silva Micro-Terroir Project

While many wine producers batted down the hatches to survive the storm of 2009, one in Chile completed three years of painstaking research into the reasons why seemingly similar neighbouring plots of vineyard can produce consistently different wines from year to year.

Managing director of family-owned Viña Casa Silva, Mario Pablo Silva, said: "We wanted to go a step further, to identify and understand the 'DNA' of individual land parcels."

Mario Pablo's father, Mario Silva, set up in Colchagua in 1997 and pioneered the Los Lingues region, helping to establish it as a top terroir for growing Carmenère.

The company says it is: "Engaged in a continual quest to produce the best possible wines... and is committed to investing whatever is necessary to understand how to maximise the natural potential of the land."

With government funding to ease the total US\$350,000 cost, Casa Silva and professor Yerko Moreno, director of the grape and wine research centre at Chile's University of Talca, worked to produce a "blueprint of the optimum elements required for a micro-terroir plot to produce the best quality Carmenère, Cabernet Sauvignon, Syrah, Viognier and Petit Verdot".

The research team identified 90 individual terroir

plots and carried out in-depth soil profiling, looking into rooting distribution and particularly characteristics of selected Carmenère blocks, along with water holding capacity, canopy density and bunch exposure levels.

Some of the most significant findings concerned Carmenère: it performs best in greater soil depth and the best wines come from blocks that have lower variability in maturity. Traditional wisdom has been that Carmenère needs longer ripening time on the vine to reduce the high acidity and "green" flavour notes that can dominate the wines. But Moreno's research revealed soil moisture and vine management are more important, particularly in reducing the levels of pirazines that cause the green flavours (as in capsicum or asparagus).

As a result Casa Silva is harvesting Carmenère as much as a month earlier than some of its neighbours, but Moreno pointed out there was still "tremendous variability according to clonal selection". He added they don't wish to completely eliminate the typical green pepper characters of Carmenère: "Otherwise it wouldn't be Carmenère."

The findings of Casa Silva's research will, the company says, have implications for winegrowers across the world. "Chile has to learn a lot about Carmenère," said Moreno. "This is our chance to give something very special to the wine industry."





# Silver and gold MUST

**With global drinks giants catching on to the opportunities for tequila, Ben McFarland sees markets opening up as quality continues to improve**



## Know your type

### Tequila blanco (white or silver tequila)

Clear and unaged, this is the purest and most popular interpretation of tequila, showcasing unabridged agave flavours. While most blancos are released after a short period of marrying, some can be aged for up to two months then filtered.

### Tequila joven (gold tequila)

Either unaged tequila to which colouring and flavouring is added to soften the taste and give it different characteristics, or the result of blending white tequila with other aged or extra-aged tequilas.

### Tequila reposado (aged tequila)

Tequila aged for at least two months in oak or Encino oak. The tequila takes on colour and flavour from the wood.

### Tequila añejo (extra-aged tequila)

Aged in barrels not larger than 600 litres for at least a year. The effect of the wood on the colour, taste and aroma is more pronounced.

Tequila extra añejo (ultra-aged tequila) Same as añejo but matured and mellowed in oak for at least three years.



## THE DAMAGE MIXTO HAS DONE TEQUILA'S REPUTATION IS NOT FORGIVABLE

PHIL WARD  
MAYAHUEL

**I**N JALISCO, A NORTH WEST province of Mexico, boys dream of becoming either a mariachi or a jimador. With sweat pouring from my brow, blood seeping from my shins and a pathetic-looking pina sitting forlornly at my feet, I can't help thinking I'd be better suited to strumming little guitars in tight, spangly trousers and daft hats.

Jimadors are the chaps who harvest the agave plants used to produce tequila. With the work rate of a shire horse on speed and the swordsmanship of a Samurai, they can bring in around a hundred pinas a day using only a coa de jima – a long wooden pole with a steel disk at the end. It's like a frighteningly sharp pizza cutter, just longer.

Witnessing a jimador wield a coa de jima is a wonder; first digging deep into the red, volcanic earth to uproot the blue agave plant then, in a skilful and dexterous blur of steel and muscle, freeing the agave of its sprawling aqua-green, razor sharp leaves until all that remains is the pina – the enormous heart of the agave plant.

When carried out by a jimador, the process is all over in a matter of minutes, the finished pina a smooth, rounded sphere, all neat and tidy. In lesser hands, however, the coa de jima turns into a weapon of mass derision. Over the course of 20 minutes, a plant that has taken seven years to reach maturity has been crudely reduced to a mess; a mangled, misshapen mess. The jimadors are laughing.

A few years ago, one doubts they would have seen the funny side. Back in the early noughties, pinas were a possession significantly more prized than they are now. The 300 million agave plants, spread across 176,000 acres of baked red soil, were under siege from TMA (Tristeza y Muerte de Agave), a blight that devastated the yield, sent prices soaring and forced some producers to cut corners in the production process. At the peak of the agave shortage, producers were paying farmers around 18 pesos per kilo. With the plantations that surround the burgeoning town of Tequila now abundant in healthy agave, pinas are currently being sold for just two pesos per kilo and driving a global tequila market that finds itself in the finest of fettle.

Between 1995 and 2008, volume sales of tequila have almost tripled from 104.3 million to 309.1 million litres, according to the

Distilled Spirits Council of the US, with expansion exacerbated by the entrance of some major global investors. While Diageo and Pernod Ricard have continued to throw their substantial weight behind the Jose Cuervo and Olmeca brands respectively, Brown-Forman paid \$776m for Herradura in 2007 to sit alongside El Jimador in its portfolio. Beam Global threw its sombrero into the ring in 2005 with the purchase of the well-established Sauza tequila house from Pernod Ricard which, in turn, had acquired it from Allied Domecq. Then there's Patron, the Grey Goose of the tequila industry, which, despite a dearth of heritage and history, yet armed with an enormous fistful of marketing spend, has established itself as a major premium-positioned tequila in the all-important American market.

As the dust has settled on the acquisition trail, increased investment in infrastructure has followed and significant strides have been taken to improve the consistency and quality of both the agave and tequilas. Both this and the aforementioned increased availability of agave has further invigorated the market-wide shift from lesser-rated mixto tequila (which only has to be made from a minimum of 51% agave sugars) towards 100% agave tequila distilled using nothing but sugars sourced from agave. In 1995, only 15.6 million of the 104.3 million litres of tequila produced were classified as 100% agave tequila yet ► p42

Tequila bars are increasingly popular, particularly in the US

# Tequila



in 2007, global volume sales of 100% agave tequila overtook those of mixto for the very first time and it now commands a 52% share of the tequila market.

As a result, the focal point of global growth is firmly in the top end of the tequila market, which, during 2008, according to the Distilled Spirits Council of the US, saw profit grow by 11.3% while tequila in general expanded by only 3%. It's here where producers are fighting for share of throat with an increasing number of reposado and añejo tequilas.

These dapper drops, designed for sipping and savouring rather than shooting, are rubbing shoulders with cognacs and whiskies in the world's top style bars. Embraced by bartenders for their depth of flavour, heritage and their versatility, these 100% agave expressions are a world away from the roguish Mexican moonshine thrown down the neck on a Saturday night and thrown up again on a Sunday morning.

However, tequila's "down-in-one" days are by no means a thing of the past. It may be carving a convincing niche as a quality cocktail component and it may be synonymous with drinks such as the Margarita and the Paloma, but the lion's share of the world's tequila is still slammed from shot glasses rather than sipped from snifters.

While producers may not want tequila to be handcuffed to hedonism, high times and hangovers, it still wants to hold hands as its party persona provides plenty of profit. Diageo, for example, has recently embarked on an £850,000 UK initiative called Tequila Face, which plays on the different facial reactions people have after drinking a shot of its Jose Cuervo tequila. Few outside the expensive, super-premium echelon of the tequila market are completely distancing themselves from the spirit's rabble-rousing roots. **DI**



## New York, New York

In the top-end bars of Manhattan and New York, tequila continues to be the spirit that's blazing the trendiest of trails. PDT (Please Don't Tell) is a subterranean speakeasy with the most surreptitious and surreal of entrances – a telephone box in a nondescript hotdog joint on the East Side. It may sound gimmicky but it's rightly rated as one of the finest cocktail establishments in New York and several of its creative cocktails showcase tequila.

"What's amazing about tequila is its versatility," said Sean Hoard, a PDT bartender. "Reposado and añejo tequilas are more than capable of stepping into the shoes of Islay whisky or American whiskey and we often use tequilas in a Manhattan or an Old Fashioned.

"Anejos boast huge complexity and the quality of distillates these days is quite incredible. It's got similar terroir to a fine wine, it's got heritage and it's got an awesome story to tell. While some drinkers still regard it as a spirit that should be thrown back, we've got time to explain that there's more to it and we're seeing more people beginning to call specific tequilas."

Not far away from PDT is Mayahuel, New York's newest tequila bar. Phil Ward, Mayahuel's beverage director, has compiled a dazzling yet discerning selection of tequilas picked on palate rather than price tags. "The biggest lie in the spirits industry is that more expensive equals better," he says. "We are here to try to break that myth. The two finest quality tequilas on my back bar are arguably

Siete Leguas and El Tesoro, both about \$30-\$40 a bottle. Paying over about \$50-\$60 a bottle is borderline foolishness.

"What makes a good tequila is good agave, clay ovens, slow cooking, good water, natural yeast, the lack of over-ageing, unpretentious gimmicky packaging and an honest price," he adds. "There are some non-100% agave tequilas that are drinkable, but the damage that mixto tequila has done to tequila's reputation isn't forgivable in my book."

Ward compares the complexity of terroir to that of Scotch whisky and attributes tequila's renaissance to a heightened interest in quality cocktails such as the Oaxaca Old Fashioned. "With the increase in cocktail traffic comes curiosity about the components that make great cocktails – of which tequila is one," he says. "It's very versatile and no other spirit embraces both spice and savoury with the same success as tequila. It's delicious with Mexican food."

When faced with drinkers weighed down by tequila's historical baggage, Mayahuel's bartenders invite them to do the "tequila challenge", making them a tequila cocktail they will enjoy or buying them something else if they don't. "Cocktails are the perfect vehicle to introduce, or in some cases reintroduce, a person to a spirit and the test hasn't failed yet," says Ward. "It frees their mind of the garbage they drank in college and rids them of the delusion they didn't like tequila."

## Tequila territories

With a tequila market worth in excess of \$4 billion, America remains by far the largest market outside of Mexico. According to the Tequila Regulatory Council, nearly 80% of all tequila exports are dispatched to the States and, with the Hispanic influence growing both in and beyond the border states, there's little sign of America's significance waning.

As well as being the biggest market, it's the most mature, with growth shaping the top end where tequilas retail at \$30-\$35 or more.

Europe, meanwhile, remains an area of opportunity. While 17m litres made it across the pond in 2008, Europe hasn't significantly grown its 12% share of exports. Germany is the largest European market, representing 31% of all euro exports, followed by Spain (20%), France (16%), Greece (8%) and the UK (7%).

In recent years, however, the Consejo Regulador del Tequila (CRT) has recruited a number of national ambassadors and embarked on high-profile trade and consumer initiatives to raise awareness and debunk myths that have hampered progress – namely that not all tequila tastes the same, it doesn't have a worm etc...

## WIDE COURVOISIER SEA

Blür bassist and food fanatic Alex James found himself floating on a giant Courvoisier punch bowl, with nothing but a slice of orange for support. Thankfully he didn't fall in, or the alcoholic architecture, by Bompas & Parr, would have had to close down



## BUDVAR GOES GASTRO

Budweiser Budvar has launched a new label design in Germany to align the lager with German gastronomy. The Czech brand launched the new label – Club Flasche – at Hamburg club Thomas Read.

According to Budvar: “The bottle’s overall design is adjusted to better correspond with the environment of German stylish brand-name restaurants, where lager is sold.”



## MINT CONDITIONS

Buffalo Trace Kentucky bourbon has come up with two ways to refresh the classic Mint Julep – a POS kit for pubs and bars and a bottle-based infusion.

The free POS kit from UK distributor Hi-Spirits includes six stainless steel branded Buffalo Trace Mint Julep cups, poster, table talkers, bar runner and ‘how-to’. The company says trials have shown “the straight-from-the-fridge serve drives sales of Buffalo Trace and increases customer interest in bourbon as a category”.

Hi-Spirits suggests: “To turn a straight bourbon into a Mint Julep, just pack a bottle of Buffalo Trace with fresh mint and add 125ml sugar syrup. After a shake of the bottle it takes about two hours for the mint flavour to infuse into the bourbon. The Buffalo Trace Mint Julep can be served over ice from the back bar, or straight from the fridge, and turned into a long drink with a splash of soda”.

The POS kits can be obtained in the UK from +44 (0)1932 252100.



## BRITNER'S BEERS

DI's Lucy Britner shares her passion for a pint

Now, I don't need to preach about the dangers of illicit alcohol, but drinking beer made illegally in Africa seems like a much bigger risk than the mild tummy ache you might get from dad's dodgy homebrew. The truth is, many people just can't afford the real stuff, leading to illicit sales, alcohol poisoning and even death.

But it turns out there is an answer, as outlined by Diageo. The company's efforts in Kenya point not only to another way of dealing with the dangers of bootleg alcohol but also to an important message about several governments' plans to continue increasing duty on drink in an attempt to prevent excessive drinking.

At a beer briefing in December at Diageo's now closed London headquarters, the company revealed that, five years ago, it struck a deal with the government in Kenya to produce a beer with extremely low duty that could

rival illicit alcohol on price. Senator Keg was launched in 2004 and, following an initial duty tax reduction, the government axed tax altogether. The beer is now Diageo's joint third largest seller in Africa (with Tusker), after Guinness and Malta Guinness.

Diageo says: “Senator Keg has helped to significantly reduce incidences of alcohol poisoning.”

Senator Keg beer costs around KES20 (US\$0.26) and it is sold in 33cl plastic mugs at hand pumps around Kenya.

Africa as a continent makes up 39% of Diageo's £2bn total net beer sales and the company said the Senator Keg model would suit other African countries.

When the likes of Russia plan to introduce a minimum price on vodka, in an attempt to prevent excessive consumption, you have to wonder if this isn't going to push up consumption of illegal alcohol.



Photo: Shutterstock

FIVE YEARS AGO DIAGEO STRUCK A DEAL WITH THE GOVERNMENT IN KENYA TO PRODUCE A BEER TO RIVAL ILLICIT ALCOHOL ON PRICE



## CLASSIC TWIST

### H BY HINE MOJITO

La Bodeguita del Medio in Havana is credited with popularising the original version of the Mojito, although some believe that Constantino Ribalagua of The Floridita made the first one. Here's Hine cognac's take on the rum classic.

- 50ml H by Hine VSOP
- 8 large leaves of fresh mint
- 15ml fresh lime juice

- 2 tsp caster sugar
- 10ml sugar syrup
- 2 dashes Angostura aromatic bitters (optional)

#### → Fever Tree ginger ale

Muddle the sugar syrup, sugar and lime juice in the shaker.

Place the mint leaves on your palm and give them a couple of vigorous smacks to release the oils. Add these to the shaker along with all the remaining ingredients, except the ginger ale, and shake with ice. Strain the mixture over cracked ice into a highball glass, top up with Fever Tree ginger ale and garnish with a sprig of mint.



## UK BARTENDERS MAKE THEIR MARK

The UK winner of the Maker's Mark Mix Off cocktail competition has been announced. Top marks were awarded to Andrea Montague, from Callooh Callay in Shoreditch, who impressed the judges with her Julep, Old Fashioned and her own cocktail, Making Derby Pie/First Marks, which comprised Maker's Mark, plum sake and walnut and dark cacao liqueurs. Bartenders competed in their respective cities to win a trip to Kentucky where the final was held in the famous Pendennis Club. The finalists who joined Andrea were Kyle Gibson of Blanch House in Brighton, William Leonard from Madam Geisha in Brighton, Terri Brotherston of Bramble in Edinburgh and James Coston from Jakes Bar & Grill in Leeds.



The boys shake it up at Drinks International's recent International Spirits Challenge awards

## TV DUO IN FIRST BAR VENTURE

A flair phenomenon spawned on UK TV show Britain's Got Talent has opened a 'gastrobar' in Littleborough, Lancashire, in England's north-west.

Neil Lowrey and Neil Garner, aka the Barwizards, have invested around £250,000 in the 48-cover freehold, called Barwizards Lounge.

The format includes a large drinks list with more than 30 cocktails. Staff were trained for three weeks prior to the launch and had to pass a series of tests.

Lowrey said: "At the moment, the staff don't flair because it's important they get the drinks right first."

"Neil and I take to the bar on Friday and Saturday evenings to give the customers a show."

The food menu features local produce and twists that fit in with the Barwizards concept – instead of beer batter, fish is coated in Moscow Mule batter, for example.

Best selling cocktails include Pineapple Chilli Margarita.

"It's about building trust with customers and getting everyone to enjoy great cocktails."

Lowrey and Garner hope to open four similar bars and a hotel in the next five years.

## BLACK LEGEND WINS ROYAL BACKING FOR MONACO OPENING

Billed as "the ultimate supper club", the Black Legend has opened in millionaires' playground Monaco.

The "ultra-chic restaurant, lounge and disco" opposite the prestigious yacht club was opened by Prince Albert of Monaco on a first night featuring legendary groups the Supremes and

Martha and the Vandellas to reinforce the club's affinity with the spirit of Motown.

Created by Antoine Chevanne, chief executive of Groupe Floirat, the Black Legend features views over the harbour while its décor harks back to 1970s Manhattan with a mix of vintage and modern furniture.

A sneak peek inside the Black Legend



Photo: Shutterstock



# New stoppers that pop their cork for spirits

Cork producer Amorim goes to the top of the stops for its recent launch of a collection of luxury stoppers, designed for premium spirits.

The Topseries R includes Prestige, Elegance, Premium and Classic Value and is now available for 'hundreds' of different product lines.

The Prestige range uses materials including Swarovski crystal. The Elegance range includes a

whole natural cork topped with materials such as ceramics and wood.

Premium bar stoppers can be customised with logos and shapes.

"Thanks to new technology we can look at cutting-edge fashion and create a tailor-made collection for the luxury and premium sectors," said Carlos de Jesus, Amorim's director of marketing & communication.



## CALENDAR GIRLS GO WILD TURKEY FOR HONEY



Here come the girls... and the Wild Turkeys.

The Campari-owned bourbon has unveiled its inaugural American Honey 2010 calendar featuring – surprise, surprise – some of the country's "most beautiful women" alongside bottles of new liqueur Wild Turkey American Honey.

Andrea Conzonato, chief marketing officer, Skyy Spirits, said: "These American Honey models are fun-loving and energetic, approachable and exciting – just like Wild Turkey's American Honey liqueur."

The calendar also features some serving suggestions for the liqueur – A Bee Sting with one part honey and one part Wild Turkey and Lemon Honey, with lemonade.

Handily, it also tells you the date.

## Keep the sparkle for longer

Gadget alert: fancy a glass of Dom Perignon, but without the bottle?

New from Vintellect, the Perlage System is claimed to be the world's first Champagne preservation system.

Here comes the science bit: the gadget uses CO<sub>2</sub> to provide a

"preservation quality that is virtually indistinguishable from a freshly opened bottle".

Moët & Chandon liked it so much, it signed up its Dom P for an exclusive version of the unit.

More information from the website [vintellect.co.uk/perlage](http://vintellect.co.uk/perlage).

## Match made in online heaven

Do you often get your Speysides in a twist? Spend hours mulling over malts and pondering peats?

Now there's no need. Just ask the Malt Matcher – a new online tool which aims to demystify brands, regions, flavours and age statements.

If you want to know more and you didn't give up whisky in your list of New Year resolutions, visit [maltmatcher.com](http://maltmatcher.com) or download a free iPhone app from the iTunes store at [apple.com](http://apple.com).



**"UNFORTUNATELY NO PHOTOS OF THE PREZ DRINKING PANNIER BUT WE DID MANAGE TO GO THROUGH ABOUT 400 BOTTLES IN THE VIP RECEPTION. PEACE INDEED."**

TERENCE KENNY FROM PANNIER CHAMPAGNE ON PRESIDENT OBAMA'S APPEARANCE AT THE NOBEL FESTIVITIES.

THE LAST WORD

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 ROW PRICE 1 year \$299.00 2 year \$599.00 3 year \$899.00

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William Reed BUSINESS MEDIA

Agile Media Ltd

Drinks International (ISSN 0012-625X) is published monthly by Agile Media Ltd and distributed in the USA by SPP, 75 Aberdeen road, Emigsville, PA 17318 – 0437. Periodicals postage paid at Emigsville PA. Postmaster; send address changes to Drinks International PO Box 437 Emigsville PA 17318 – 0437. Published under licence from William Reed Business Media, Broadfield Park, Crawley, West Sussex RH11 9RT 01293 613400