

Drinks

www.drinksint.com

INTERNATIONAL

The No.1 choice for global drinks buyers



Mas La Plana.
Legend in black

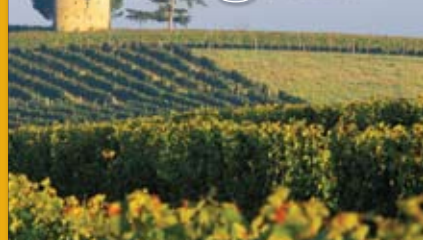


April 2010

INSIDE THIS MONTH

700 YEARS

Armagnac



Drinks
INTERNATIONAL
www.drinksint.com

A CELEBRATION OF FRANCE'S OLDEST SPIRIT

700 YEARS IN A
16-PAGE SUPPLEMENT



GIN

BOTANICAL
EXTRAVAGANZA

NEW ZEALAND

LEADER ON
THE GREEN



Drinks INTERNATIONAL

Agile Media Ltd, Gateway Place, 42a East Park,
Crawley, West Sussex RH10 6AS

Direct Line: +44(0) 1293 590049

Fax: +44(0) 1293 474010

18

Duty calls

Drinkers in the UK have been having to come to terms with a further 36p on a bottle of spirits (US\$0.53, €0.40), 10p on a bottle of wine (\$0.14, €0.11), and 2p on a pint/half litre of draught beer.

It is widely acknowledged that the UK pays some of the highest duties on alcoholic beverages in the world, plus it is one of the most competitive markets due to the muscle and sheer buying power of the multiple retailers. Notionally, the latter should be good news for consumers but arguably it isn't necessarily.

The UK, along with Spain, Greece and Ireland, are the invalids of Europe. The worst hit by the global economic downturn, each country is facing huge, seemingly insurmountable, debts.

Drinkers, smokers and the better-off are easy targets for an under-the-cosh Chancellor of the Exchequer. Can't blame him in a way. Spirits, wines and beers are "affordable luxuries" and cigarettes kill you.

Nevertheless, there is the old economic law of diminishing returns. Most, if not all, treasuries and finance ministries, make millions, if not billions, out of taxes on alcohol. There is good reason to price out tobacco, but drinks are not harmful (in moderation) and if you price it up, people not only drink less, they drink poor, even bad, stuff. Fact. So less money in the government coffers.

Penalise drinkers at your peril. With a general election looming in the UK, it is going to be interesting to see how the new government goes about lowering the country's towering debts.

Christian Davis *Editor*



23



27



News

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

Analysis

- 9 Beer
The major multinational brewers have got it all wrong, claims Tony Jennings of Budweiser Budvar
- 10 China
There are at least 23 million wine drinkers in China, according to Wine Intelligence. Graham Holter reports

Features

- 18 Best Bars in Italy
Drinks International lists the best bars as nominated by bartenders themselves, and Tom Sandham gives the low down

Supplement

Armagnac

We celebrate at least 700 years of Armagnac, France's oldest spirit, with a 16 page supplement. David Longfield edits

23 US Whiskey

For years American whiskey was just about the big brands. Now suddenly it has changed. Dominic Roskrow reports

27 Gin

Gin sexy? You'd better believe it. Is there a more dynamic spirits sector? Lucy Britner provides the latest news

32 Beer

Craft beers have made the category interesting again. Ben MacFarland reports

36 New Zealand

This green and pleasant land is establishing its eco-friendly credentials, according to Jo Burzynska

Last call

56 Bar Zone

Lucy Britner looks at the on-premise/on-trade sector

42 Departure Zone

Christian Davis makes for an easy read

Gallo restructures after perfect storm

Gallo has restructured its Europe, Middle East & Africa division, rationalising its range to five core brands, following the economic crisis last year

George Marsden, Gallo's outgoing vice-president and general manager EMEA (since replaced by Bill Roberts), told a briefing in London that, as a result of the global economic crisis – which he described as a “perfect storm” – plus the UK government's tax increases, Gallo had been forced to restructure and simplify the business.

“This (the UK wine trade) is not a sustainable business. Suppliers, distributors and retailers are going out of business,” he said.

“The UK tax increases are driving value out of the category. We cannot invest because it has all gone on duty.”

The amount the government takes from a 9-litre case of wine had gone from £16.02 in 2007 to £19.26 now and was due to rise to £20.72 this year.

“We have got to a tipping point,” said Marsden. “We have told the government it can expect declining tax revenues (from the drinks industry) if it keeps increasing the duty.”

Marsden said the company had cut out ranges

and tiers of ranges and is now focusing on five core brands – Gallo Family Vineyards, Turning Leaf, Barefoot, Redwood Creek and Carlo Rossi.

He said while volumes had shrunk, sales of the core brands were rising.

Gallo's key export markets are the UK, Germany, Poland, the Netherlands and Africa and the Middle East. Marsden described growth in Africa as “explosive” with Nigeria leading the way

Marsden also announced Gallo was entering the South Africa market with Barefoot, Gallo Family Vineyards and E&J brandy. The first container has just gone out.

He said the election of Barack Obama as president had made South Africans receptive to American products.

He also singled out the rosé category as crucial to continued growth of wine consumption. The sector has gone from 5% of the wine category to 13% (12 million cases).

Gallo has two of the three leading rosé brands, its White Grenache and White Zinfandel.

A new idea being floated is a wine cocktail – Gallo Family Vineyards White Grenache with ginger ale. *See over: UK budget*

ProWein 2010 is a record breaker

The organisers of ProWein are claiming new record figures for both exhibitors and visitors at the 2010 exhibition

The German wine and spirits trade exhibition attracted more than 3,300 exhibitors and organisers Messe Dusseldorf said 36,000 visitors visited the show, which closed on March 23.

Messe Dusseldorf claimed one in three of the visitors came from abroad. There were more visitors from eastern Europe as well as Asia, particularly from China and Japan. Two-thirds of visitors stated that they were executives.

The exhibition covered approximately 76,000sq m of the exhibition halls.

The next ProWein takes place from March 27-29, 2011.

● The organiser of Vinexpo, the largest international wine and spirits trade exhibition in the world, has announced the dates of its next show in 2011.

The exhibition will take place in Bordeaux from Sunday 19 to Thursday June 23 2011.

Next year's exhibition will be Vinexpo's 30th



anniversary. The organisers are expecting 50,000 visitors and 2,400 exhibitors.

Champagne unveils lighter bottle

The champagne generic body, CIVC, has announced the launch of a lighter-weight champagne bottle.

Reducing the weight of a standard 75cl glass champagne bottle from 900g to 835g will cut the region's carbon dioxide output by 8,000 tonnes a year, predicts the Comité Champagne.

Speaking at the annual Champagne Bureau tasting in Whitehall, London, CIVC head of viticulture Laurent Panigai said the advantages of the new bottle include: “No significant change in shape; proven pressure resistance; no change required for cellar

equipment; quick to implement; and a 1% reduction in greenhouse gases.”

Producers already have the first bottles of the 2009 production lying in their cellars, and consumers will see the finished article in the latter part of 2012, following the standard period of bottle maturation for Brut non-vintage styles.

International sales director for Champagne Canard-Duchêne, Alexis Petit-Gats, said: “We will begin with our classic range including NV and Rosé, before introducing the new bottles for Vintages and other styles.”

News In Brief

Industry stories from around the globe

CARLSBERG UK has launched a low-calorie, low-alcohol fruit spritzer called “Eve”, aimed at women. The 3.1% abv, 100% natural drink is being launched into the on-trade following a trial in Manchester last year and success in other markets around the world.

Quality wines that represent the Südburgenland districts of Oberwart, Güssing and Jennersdorf can be marketed under the **EISENBERG DAC** from September. Eisenberg wines must be made only from Blaufränkisch grapes.

CHAMPAGNE LANSON is to put disgorgement dates on the back labels of all 75cl bottles of Lanson Black, Rosé and Ivory Label NV imported into the UK.

MORE @ WWW.DRINKSINT.COM

French cooperative **MONT TAUCH** is to place the Winegrowers for Sustainable Development logo on bottles of Fitou sold in the UK. The trademark guarantees winery business development goes hand-in-hand with a degree of responsibility for the environment and any social or community impact.

British chancellor continues to target alcoholic drinks

The UK's Chancellor of the Exchequer has again hit alcoholic drinks with a 2% above inflation price rise on beer, wines and spirits, with 10% going on cider.

Alistair Darling has confirmed that duties on beers, wines and spirits will go ahead with a tax escalator which automatically increases tax on alcohol by two percentage points above inflation.

He added that there was a "long-standing anomaly" with the duty on cider and in September the categories would be redefined with stronger cider being taxed more heavily.

The Wine & Spirit Trade Association said the budget rise means taxes on wine and spirits have risen by more than 25% and 20% respectively since March 2008.

The effect of the tax is:

10p on a 75cl bottle of wine

36p on a 70cl bottle of spirits

2p on a pint of beer

WSTA chief executive Jeremy Beadles said:

"This budget means higher prices for consumers and more misery in a sector that ought to be part of Britain's economic recovery."

Scotch Whisky Association chief executive Gavin Hewitt said: "He has hit Scotch at home and set a bad example for duty regimes in our export markets.

"The decision is worsened by the announcement that the above-inflation rises will continue for an extra two years to 2015."

Henry Chevallier, chair of the National Association of Cider Makers (NACM) said: "We knew we were being singled out. This dramatic increase could well reverse the growth we have generated in recent years.

Peter Darbyshire, managing director of major UK wine supplier PLB, said: "This budget, aside from being highly damaging to cider producers, has left us in limbo.

"The only slight blessing is that there has been no talk of a minimum price on alcohol which I hope is because he has listened to the WSTA's argument.

"There is a potential transfer of purchase to neighbouring countries, especially if the exchange rate recovers (admittedly an unlikely eventuality)," said Darbyshire.

Absolut vodka has teamed up with hip-hop artist Jay-Z to produce a 14-minute documentary. The film features exclusive access to Jay-Z in the days and moments leading up to, and after, his legendary September 11 (2009) benefit concert at Madison Square Garden, which was part of the Absolut Concert series.



ALCOPOPS, or RTDs, are still the most promoted alcohol products across UK supermarkets, according to a survey by mysupermarket.co.uk. The research also said drinking at home was set to grow faster than drinking in pubs and clubs, with sales forecast to rise to £12.3bn by the end of 2010.

FIRST CAPE wine is launching a lower-alcohol (5.5% abv) extension. The Café Collection was launched three years ago as a 10% abv range, but is being reintroduced in response to research by the supplier which shows a growing demand for lighter, less alcoholic styles from recognised brand names.

HEINEKEN and DIAGEO have opened a new super-brewery in South Africa. The Sedibeng Brewery, south of Johannesburg, is owned 75% by Heineken with Diageo holding a 25% stake. It was built at a total cost of R3,5-billion (approximately €344 million).

MARTELL has opened the Martell Experience Boutique in Hong Kong International Airport. The focal point will be the Martell Discovery Table, where consumers can experience the brand's "sensory universe" through the tasting notes for each of Martell's different cognacs.

PERNOD RICARD UK is set to unveil the next stage in its 'True Character' campaign with the launch of a 'Taste' programme for Jacob's Creek in the UK. The campaign will include an online navigational taste tool, on-pack activity and a consumer promotion - all designed to challenge consumer perceptions of 'taste'.



Spain's Gran Orden welcomes Caballeros

Spain's Gran Orden de Caballeros del Vino invested its two latest members at its 26th annual ceremony in London, early March.

UK Master of Wine Sarah Jane Evans and Pablo Alvarez, managing director of iconic Duero producer Vega-Sicilia, joined the existing 61 members of the exclusive Caballeros club.

The Gran Orden was founded in 1984 to recognise people in the UK wine trade who had shown "exceptional endeavour" in promoting Spanish wines. The body was expanded in 1989 to include members from the industry in Spain who have made similar efforts on the world scene.

One of only four women members, Evans is a well known UK wine writer. She lived in Madrid prior to studying Classics at university, and has written a book on Spanish cuisine.

Born and educated in Bilbao, Pablo Alvarez joined the family business in 1980 and is said to have "changed Vega-Sicilia from top to bottom in order that it remained the same".

Appointments

Mast-Jägermeister has announced that **Jack Blecker**, executive board member international sales and marketing, has asked the company's supervisory board to relieve him of his executive duties with effect from August 31, for personal reasons. Supervisory board chairman, Walter Sandvoss, said: "It is largely because of Mr. Blecker's efforts that Jägermeister is now represented in 80 countries."

Australian wine exporter Beelgara has appointed **Jaap Sonnemans** its new European market manager. Sonnemans joins Beelgara after 18 months as global brand manager for Lisa McGuigan's Tempus Two Winery. He has experience in sales and marketing in the European Wine market, having worked for BRL Hardy in The Netherlands (2001-2003) then Hardy's importer and distributor, Groupe LFE (2003-2008), as marketing manager.

Rémy Cointreau Global Travel Retail has announced the appointment of three people to its marketing team. **Pauline Moniez** joined in January as trade marketing manager with responsibility for the Russian Standard Vodka brand, which has been distributed in international duty free and travel retail by Rémy Cointreau GTR since October 2009. **Noémie Losfelt** joined in February as trade marketing manager (Europe east & north), with responsibility for Germany, Switzerland, Russia, Turkey and eastern Europe. She was a wine and spirits assistant product manager in Champagne Krug's

marketing team. **Laetitia Letellier** joins the team as trade marketing manager (Europe west & south), with responsibility spreading from the UK to Benelux, France, Spain and Italy.

Tesco has made **Claire Lorains** a wine category manager, replacing **Andrew Carpenter**, who has gone to health and beauty. Lorains, who joined Tesco in 2002, was senior buying manager for household.



Chalié Richards managing director **Bob Rishworth** has become chairman of the Halewood International wine division,



which claims to be the UK's oldest wine merchant. Rishworth will focus on corporate and industry issues and represent Halewood on the boards of the Gin & Vodka Association and

the Wine & Spirit Trade Association. A director of sales for Chalié Richards is to be appointed and there will be the introduction of additional sales resource.

J Wray & Nephew UK has strengthened its sales and marketing teams. **Lynsey Savage** has been appointed junior brand manager and will be working on the company's full strength (37.5%) Koko Kanu coconut rum brand, as well as a

liqueur line which is being launched this month. Before joining JW&N, she worked for Drambuie. **Greg Allen** also joins the company with responsibility for the south of England, with particular emphasis on the on trade. He was previously with The Russian Vodka House where he helped launch the 'Sputnik' premium Russian vodka brand.

The Glenglassaugh Distillery Company has appointed **Ronnie Routledge** its new customer account manager. The distillery restarted production in December 2008, and Routledge's responsibility includes developing Glenglassaugh's existing importer, distributor, wholesaler and retailer relationships and growing new business.

Brenda Funk has been appointed sales account manager at Demptos Glass in Fairfield, California. She will be responsible for the day-to-day sales function and new account development with wineries throughout the region for Demptos Glass. The company is a major supplier of bottles and other forms of packaging to the US wine industry.

Maule winery, VIA Wines, has appointed US oenologist

Larry Levin to work as a consultant with VIA's head winemaker, Rafael Tirado, on the Chilcas brand. Levin will also



participate in the Oveja Negra Lost Barrel icon wine tasting panel.

DIARY

Brasil Cachaça/Expovinis

April 27-29
São Paulo, Brazil
exponor.com.br

Fine Wine Congress

April 28-30
Ribera del Duero, Spain
finewine2010.com

TFWA Asia Pacific

May 9-13
Suntec, Singapore
tfwa.com

LIWF, Distil

May 18-20
London, Excel
londonwinefair.com

SIAL China

May 19-21
Shanghai
sialchina.com

International Malbec Days

May 21-23
Cahors, France
malbecdays.com

Vinexpo Asia Pacific

May 25-27
Hong Kong
Vinexpo.com

VieVinum

May 29-31
Vienna Hofburg, Austria
mac-hoffmann.com

Interwine China

May 30-Jun 1
Guangzhou Poly Expo Center
interwine.org

Alimentaria Mexico

June 1-3
Mexico City
alimentaria-mexico.com

Topwine China

June 1-3
Beijing World Trade Centre
topwinechina.com

Editor Christian Davis

+44 (0)1293 590047
christian.davis@drinksint.com

Deputy Editor David Longfield

+44 (0)1293 590045
david.longfield@drinksint.com

News & Website Editor Lucy Britner

+44 (0)1293 590046
lucy.britner@drinksint.com

Travel Retail Correspondent

Joe Bates

Production Editor Jaq Bayles

+44 (0)1293 590048
jaq.bayles@drinksint.com

Designer Neal Honney

Advertisement Manager Justin Smith

+44 (0)1293 590041
justin.smith@drinksint.com

Senior Sales Executive

Carmen Poel Francesch
+44 (0)1293 590042 carmen.poel@drinksint.com

Sales Executive Renata Stefanovic

+44 (0)1293 590043
renata.stefanovic@drinksint.com

Events Admin +44 (0)1293 590050

Monica Tapias/Nikayla Langley
firstname.surname@drinksint.com

Event Sales Executive Jo Morley

+44 (0)1293 590044
jo.morley@drinksint.com

Accounts Annette O'Connell

+44 (0)1293 590051
annette.oconnell@agilemedia.co.uk

Publisher

Russell Dodd
+44 (0)1293 590052
russell.dodd@drinksint.com



Drinks International, Gateway Place,
42a East Park, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 6AS
United Kingdom Tel: +44 (0)1293 590040

Where the future has begun

Wine Intelligence research in partnership with Inter Rhône has cast some much-needed light on the 23 million Chinese consumers who already enjoy imported wine – and the millions who will shortly be joining them.

Graham Holter reports

Asia is the future.” Vinexpo chief executive Robert Beynat’s declaration, at a recent press briefing in London, was unequivocal. There is, he predicted, a “revolution” coming in the global wine economy. But was it really a prediction, or simply a reflection of something that is already happening in the international marketplace?

The wine industry’s centre of gravity, at least from a sales perspective, has been edging ever eastwards for some time. North America, particularly the US, is poised for more growth, but the recession has taken away a little of its momentum, as consumers trade down or even abstain.

Europe is a mature market, with little hope of absorbing its own wine surplus, let alone the world’s. New markets are beginning to emerge in South America and Africa (Angola is

Portugal’s top export destination, for the record). But if your target consumer is urban, newly affluent and eager to acquire some western social habits, your focus inevitably turns to Asia.

With due respect to India, Japan and Korea, China is the Asian market which deserves the greatest attention, and not simply because of its sheer scale and its status as an economic superpower.

Wine drinking is already well established: recent data places it eighth in the league table of wine-drinking nations, with a market size of 72 million cases.

This already puts it ahead of the Russian Federation and Australia, and with an annual growth rate of 18.5% it may not be too long before it eclipses Spain.

The number of consumers in China who can afford to buy imported wine on a regular basis currently stands at around 23 million, according to Wine Intelligence’s China Landscape report, published in February 2010. Within five years, this figure is projected to increase to 34 million; by 2025, it will be more like 80 million.

“We can all agree that China – and Asia in general – represents a colossal opportunity for sales growth over the next 20 to 30 years,” says Richard Halstead, Wine Intelligence’s chief operating officer and project manager for the China report.

He adds: “We can be pretty certain that demand for wine will grow exponentially in the next decade with the increasing wealth among Chinese urban professionals. The question is: whose wine will they be drinking?”

Brice Eymard, market research manager at Inter Rhône, says: “We think the wine market in China is now sufficiently developed to shift gear and to give attention to consumers. Our strategic plan is to increase our investment in this market. It is therefore paramount to understand what consumers’ needs are in China.

“Yet the closer we get to the market, the more we see that we still have a lot of work to do, both in terms of distribution and product positioning, to really engage with Chinese consumers.”

Making inroads

Some western brands have already made inroads. Castel Freres, Jacob’s Creek, Concha y Toro and Val d’Orbieu are among the trailblazers, though generally speaking brand recognition is low.

Shutterstock

The importance of imports

Middle-class wine drinkers in China who can afford to buy imported wines currently make up only about 2% of the adult population – around 23 million people.

Among these wine drinkers, there is a significant bias towards males. Wine Intelligence’s research found that 63% are men and 37% women.

Twenty-three per cent of these consumers drink imported wine at least once a week,

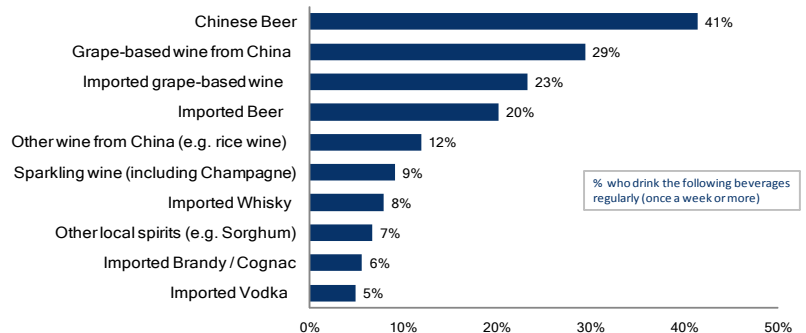
with 57% enjoying new styles of wine on a regular basis. Eighty-eight per cent believe that drinking wine is good for their health – to the extent that many drink a small glass of it just before bed, to ward off everything from colds to wrinkles.

It has been calculated by management consultants AT Kearney that, on average, wine consumption among Chinese adults remains at just 40cl per person per year.



Shutterstock

Alcoholic drinks repertoire
Base: all Chinese upper-middle class wine drinkers, n=1,028



Source: Wine Intelligence, Vinitrac® China, December '09, n=1,028 Chinese upper-middle class wine drinkers

WE STILL HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO, BOTH IN TERMS OF DISTRIBUTION AND PRODUCT POSITIONING, TO REALLY ENGAGE WITH CHINESE CONSUMERS

BRICE EYMARD
INTER RHÔNE

These wines have achieved almost all their success to date with red styles: indeed, white wines are mostly unknown in China. This may change as consumers become more educated (and they are offered more choice) but for now the Chinese prefer wines in their country's lucky colour.

According to research undertaken for Wine Intelligence's China report, Chinese wine consumers have markedly different purchasing cues to those of drinkers in more established markets. Aside from price considerations (and the decision, almost invariably, to select a red wine) Chinese wine lovers place the greatest emphasis on country of origin, followed by region.

Interestingly, grape varieties are some way down the list of influencing factors. Before Chinese consumers worry about whether they are buying a Pinot Noir or a Zinfandel, they are more likely to have considered the wine's label, the awards it has won, and assessed the traditional look of the packaging as a whole.

Producers could help their causes a great deal by understanding what motivates Chinese consumers when they buy their wine from their local supermarket. Wine Intelligence research reveals some confusion in the wine aisles, which can often be alleviated with the imaginative use of logos on packaging – and labels which actually speak to Chinese consumers in their own language.

Distribution channels in China are not always as clear cut and easily navigated as they are in more developed markets. This, for some, is all part of the challenge: Australia's Bruce Tyrrell is

one of the producers who revels in the excitement of the "Wild West" atmosphere.

But there are hazards, and most exporters to China seem to have at least one story of missing stock and even missing distributors. Brand protection can also be an issue. In February this year, it was reported that 400,000 counterfeit bottles of Fitou were in circulation: the fraudsters had produced fake Mont Tauch labels in an attempt to cash in on the French brand's success. "It is very difficult to work in China," lamented a spokesman for the co-operative.

Difficult, perhaps: but few would dispute that China represents a bigger opportunity for wine exports than any other market on earth. There are all kinds of challenges to be met, some of them easier to conquer than others. But exporters who are serious about the market could do a lot worse than focusing their attention on consumers themselves.

"The Chinese middle class is growing at a phenomenal rate," says Halstead at Wine Intelligence, "and the wine industry is virtually being gifted a ready-made audience interested in its products. It's an opportunity that's almost certainly unprecedented in the history of the wine trade, and it's now a question of which wine producers are brave enough, and thinking sufficiently long term, to take full advantage.

"Given China's long history of wine consumption, maybe it's misleading to talk about a 'revolution'. But what we can say is that China is likely to be dominating the thoughts of the global wine trade for the foreseeable future."

DI

Domestic production to increase

More than 90% of the wine sold in China is domestically produced – a proportion which is expected to decrease as more consumers get the bug for imported alternatives.

Foreign wine is a symbol of cultural sophistication, or respect for guests, or even romance. In domestic settings, large family gatherings or for informal dining, Chinese wine drinkers have no problem at all with their local product.

One female respondent in Shanghai summarised: "For business occasions, wine should be imported.

Unless the event involves government officials."

Among upper-middle class wine drinkers – the social group which was targeted in the Wine Intelligence research – around eight in 10 say they've drunk wine from China in the past six months. A similar proportion say they've drunk French wine in that time period.

It should be borne in mind that China also hopes to become a significant exporter of wine in its own right. According to figures quoted in the *People's Daily*, production grew by 22% in

2009, to 812m litres. "The year 2010 can be a golden opportunity for China's wine exports as less expensive wine products are becoming more favoured by the international consumer as a result of the global economic downturn," said Wang Yancai, president of the China Alcoholic Drinks Industry Association.

It has been calculated by management consultants AT Kearney that, on average, wine consumption among Chinese adults remains at just 40cl per person per year.

Duty free liquids cause Schiphol scare



Amsterdam Schiphol airport stepped up security last month after Dutch TV journalists successfully managed to smuggle bottles of liquid on flights bound for Washington and London.

In the course of the undercover investigation by Dutch TV station SBS, reporters were able to refill bottles bought at a duty free store, reseal them, then smuggle them back into the shop.

The same bottles were then taken to the checkout and placed in sealed plastic bags by shop staff. The bottles were then left unchecked by gate security staff before the reporters finally boarded their respective flights.

The sting was made easier because of Schiphol's unusual layout – it is the only major European airport to have security checks for a large proportion of its flights at the gate (after passengers have visited the main shopping area).

The airport's response to the investigation has been to introduce a number of enhanced security measures, including security patrols in the duty free stores and regular checks on liquids bought from the shops. Shops selling only a small amount of fluids will stop doing so.

Security at Schiphol has been under intense media scrutiny since last December when a Nigerian student flew from there to Detroit with explosives hidden in his underwear. He allegedly tried to blow himself up shortly before landing, but was foiled by crew and passengers.

Arrivals liquor store to make Vegas debut

↘ Las Vegas McCarran international airport looks set to make history by opening the country's first duty paid arrivals liquor store after local state authorities agreed to the proposal in February.

Arrivals shops (both duty paid and duty free) that sell liquor are a common sight at other airports around the world, but the US airport duty free business is highly regulated, which affects passengers, most notably in the gate delivery system used for purchases in departures duty free.

The new arrivals store at McCarran is to be in the airport's baggage claim area. It will sell wine, spirits and beer for off-airport consumption only.

McCarran international airport manager commercial/business development Scott Kichline said the



Viva Las Vegas!

shop could generate annual sales of \$3-5m. "As far as we can tell, this is a first for the domestic arrivals area of a US airport. We are looking at a contract term of between five and

seven years," he added.

The duty free liquor concession at McCarran is currently held by Swiss travel retailer The Nuance Group.

Duty free drive underway for Stock

Eastern European spirits producer Stock Spirits Group has embarked on a drive to increase its travel retail and duty free business.

Stock Spirits – the producer of Fernet Stock, the Czech Republic's best-selling spirit brand – Stock Brandy and Czysta de Luxe, Poland's most popular vodka – was taken over by US investment management firm Oaktree Capital Management in 2007.

"Duty free was completely neglected by [the company's] previous management," admitted chief executive Chris Heath. "We see this channel as having huge potential for us. We recruited former DFS buyer Peter Blatch, who knows this market well, about a year ago and we are already seeing results."

He added that duty free and travel retail sales were up 50% last year over 2008. The company's brands are available at 50 European airports and Heath revealed the company was in talks with leading international operators

about further listings.

"Our strategy is to make really good products and sell them at an affordable price. We are not selling it cheap, but offering something good for the consumer and the people in the channel. We can make some money, our customers can make some money, and the consumers can get something good quality at a reasonable price.

"We recognise that most of our brands have direct competitors on the shelf, but what we can offer duty free buyers is heritage behind some of our brands that perhaps other brands don't have; the flexibility to offer special packs for individual customers, and we usually compete very favourably on margin versus some of our competitors."

Heath also stressed the company's new product development programme, which saw the launch of a new super-premium version of Stock brandy, Stock XO, earlier this year, and will see the imminent launch of a limited edition Czech single malt whisky called Hammerhead.



In Brief

✈ Campari International global travel retail manager Virginie Marquet has left the company following an internal restructure. The company's duty free and travel retail activities are now led by Christophe Schaille, who is also regional director for Western Europe.

✈ French liqueur producer By Necker has appointed family-owned firm Deveurop to handle its Girl and Black éka brands in Europe, Asia, Africa, Central and South America, and global duty free. Deveurop already distributes Parliament vodka, XL Wines and Varadero rum.

✈ Glenrothes has gained listings in Sunrise Duty Free's stores at Shanghai and Beijing international airports. The single malt whisky brand, which is owned by Berry Bros. & Rudd is also available at China's Shenzhen and Zhuhai airports.

✈ US airport wine bar/store chain Vino Volo has opened a new satellite location at Philadelphia airport's Gate B9. The company already has two bars in different areas of the airport.

✈ Bacardi Global Travel Retail Division has hailed the results of a Grey Goose promotion at Beirut Duty Free's departures store at Rafic Hariri international airport, which ran from December last year to the end of January 2010. Sales of Grey Goose in the first month of the promotion, which included a gift with purchase and in-store cocktail-making demonstrations, increased by more than 120%.

✈ The Patrón Spirits Company has gained a duty free listing with British Airways on all the airline's long-haul flights, priced at £26 per bottle.

European travel retail delivers 'solid' returns for Diageo in 2009

↘ Diageo Global Travel and Middle East (GTME) has reported a "solid" performance in Europe last year despite challenging market conditions.

The division revealed that Greece and Spain were the two duty free and travel retail European markets worst hit in 2009 due in large part to the countries' dire economic problems. Fewer British travellers and the weakness of sterling versus the euro had also been significant regional challenges.

However, there was an upside to the weak pound with continental European travellers taking advantage of the exchange rate and spending more at UK airport stores.

European travel retail locations, which performed better than average in 2009, included airports dominated by business traffic such as Frankfurt and Zurich.

"The conditions [in Europe] will remain challenging," said Diageo GTME Europe marketing manager Louise Jobson.

"However, there are clear signs in both the economic area and in traffic levels that the worst of the storm has passed."

According to Jobson, poor store penetration continued to be a problem across the region. "People are simply not stepping into the stores as often as they used to. We've worked very hard to counter this trend by placing

great emphasis on ways to "interrupt" the journey through the lounge. For example, we shared with Irish specialist confectioner Lir in the category's biggest concourse activation ever seen at Dublin airport.

"Supported by the forward thinking of the airport authority we were able to create a highly engaging experience and draw people into the store to investigate the offer further.

"This emphasis on concourse engagement promises to be a hugely positive influence for the liquor category this year and we are working very hard to engage retailers and landlords in sharing the approach with us."



Flying start for online wine

Hong Kong International airport liquor concessionaire Sky Connection has reported its new online wine club has got off to a promising start.

The club went live on the airport operator's website, freeduty.com.hk, last November and has already attracted "hundreds" of members, according to the retailer. Membership benefits include exclusive wine offers, prize draws and free home delivery to Hong Kong.

The wine selection offered online boasts many of Bordeaux's finest names, such as Château Haut-Brion, Château Margaux, Château Lafite, as well as a range of cheaper New World wines. Examples of specific fine

wines stocked include Château Margaux 1986 at HK\$7,800, Château Lafite 1982 at HK\$38,000 and Château Haut-Brion 1989 at HK\$18,000.

Sky Connection buying & merchandising director Simon Au said the company had launched the club in response to stiffer downtown competition following the Hong Kong government's decision to scrap taxes on wine in 2008. "A lot of businesses, some with little previous experience in wine retailing such as the English language newspaper *South China Morning Post*, are getting on the wine bandwagon. We view the increased competition and heightened local interest in wine as an opportunity for Sky Connection to show its expertise and develop an extra channel of product distribution.

"We are confident that, with our size and unique market position and [store] network at all air, sea and land terminals we can cater to all levels of the market," Au added. "We have the ability to improve and expand our product portfolio constantly to bring the best products available to our members online."



Nuance stages vodka festival at Sydney airport



The Nuance Group launched a major vodka promotion at its Sydney airport stores last month.

The VodkaFest initiative showcased brands such as Absolut, 42 Below, Smirnoff, Wyborowa, Finlandia, Russian Standard, Ketel One and Grey Goose, which were all available for sampling. Mixologists hosted cocktail-making demonstrations in-store based on a weekly theme such as 'flavoured vodka',

'Russian vodka', 'non-European vodka' and 'luxury vodka'.

The promotion, which followed a successful WhiskyFest activation at the airport last December, also featured specific price deals such as two bottles of Absolut vodka for A\$52.

The VodkaFest promotion was staged at Nuance's 4,000sq m SYD Airport Tax & Duty Free shop, the largest duty free store in the southern hemisphere.

CAMPAIGN



KHORTYTSA VODKA

BRAND OWNER Khortytza distillery

PRICE €9.5

MARKETS Global, selected markets

CONTACT

tisjachnik.a@khortytza.com,
khortytza.com

Khortytza, the Ukrainian vodka producer, has launched an advertising campaign - The Taste of Absolute Purity. The campaign is said to focus on the vodka's refined, pure taste.

The company's production has been upgraded with the "organic filter" innovation. It retains the characteristics of Khortytza Island water in the vodka.

Packaging upgrades include the Silk Touch cap and the company says the label has become more sophisticated and elegant.

The company has its own distribution in its main market in Ukraine and Russia. There are plans to build a new distillery in Russia.

EXCLUSIVE



HIGHLAND PARK 1973

BRAND OWNER The Edrington Group

PRICE £600, US\$999, €750

MARKETS Global travel retail

CONTACT Maxxium Travel Retail
(In US, Remy Cointreau Travel Retail Americas)

Edrington has released four new Highland Park whiskies which are exclusive to travel retail. As well as the 1973, which has an abv of 50.6%, there is a 1998 (€46), 1994 (€65) and a 1990 (€99, all 40%).

Whisky maker Max McFarlane said Edrington was looking for the classic Highland Park profile of honey sweetness and aromatic peat among the maturing stocks of sherry seasoned casks.

The differences lie in the extent to which first-fill or refill European and American sherry oak casks were used. The 1973 is unchill-filtered and the colour is natural. The salient tasting notes are: "Assertive citrus notes, balanced by caramel, cinnamon and soft floral flavours. Slight oak tones are then swept aside by the late arrival of classic Highland Park spicy smokiness".

The packaging is inspired by Orkney's Norse heritage.



MESSAGE

VETRO

BRAND OWNER Bottle Green

PRICE £4.99

MARKETS UK only

CONTACT

sarah-thornton@bottlegreen.com

Bottle Green believes Vetro is the first wine-based drink (and possibly the first alcoholic drink) to openly

communicate the units of alcohol content by integrating the message into the main front of pack design.

It is made in Italy by Medici, a producer based in Reggio Emilia in northern Italy, best known for its Lambrusco.

Vetro comes in red, white and rosé styles.

Bottle Green has launched the innovative concept that embraces the UK government's Know Your Limits campaign in response to the ever-growing pressure for the drinks industry to promote responsible drinking.





FAIR TRADE

FAIR & SQUARE

BRAND OWNER Larex AB

PRICE €6-€6.50, SEK59-64

MARKETS Europe, initially Sweden

CONTACT

Nick Day, sales director UK & Europe:
+44 (0)1249 659290

Fair & Square is a new Fairtrade range produced by La Riojana cooperative, one of the largest cooperatives in Argentina and the world's largest producer of certified Fairtrade organic wine.

Fair & Square wines are packaged in 1-litre Tetra Prisma containers which are also 100% recyclable and made from renewable sources. Their compact, reduced packaging weight - with 90% less packaging than glass bottles - means they have a low carbon footprint. The wine is packaged in Germany.

The Fair & Square Red is a blend of Shiraz, Bonarda, Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec, grown by La Riojana cooperative in the La Rioja province, north west Argentina. It is described as rich, fruity and vibrant, part of which has spent three months in French oak (80%) and American oak (20%).

Fair & Square White is said to be made from a selection of premium quality selected and hand-picked grapes grown in the same region. It is a fresh, fruity and aromatic white wine made from Argentina's emblematic white grape variety Torrontés, 10% of which has spent three months in French oak.

BIG FOUR

GABRIEL MEFFRE SIGNATURE RHÔNE RANGE

BRAND OWNER Gabriel Meffre

PRICE £6.99-£14.99, €6.99-€14.99

MARKETS Europe

CONTACT

jane@guyandersonwines.co.uk

Rhône negociant Gabriel Meffre, best known for its La Chasse range, has launched four wines:

2008 Gabriel Meffre Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Saint-Théodoric (£/€14.99)

2007 Gabriel Meffre Gigondas, Sainte-Catherine (£/€11.99)

2008 Gabriel Meffre Vacqueyras, Saint-Mapalis (£/€8.99)

2009 Gabriel Meffre Plan de Dieu, Saint-Barthélemy (£/€6.99)

The company is now jointly owned by Eric Brousse and the Boisset family.



ROSE VINTAGES



DOM PERIGNON 2000 ROSÉ

BRAND OWNER Moët Hennessy

PRICE £280, €312, US\$420

MARKETS Global

Moët Hennessy has released two Dom Pérignon Rosé cuvées from the 2000 and 1990 vintages.

Dom Pérignon Rosé Vintage 2000 will be in selected top-end on-trade and prestige retailers, priced from £280 in the UK.

The Dom Pérignon Rosé Oenothèque 1990 is a different beast. Following continual requests from sommeliers and wine collectors, according to MH, it is the first time the company has released a rosé cuvee into its much vaunted Oenothèque Collection.

The 20-year-old limited release is ready to drink, and available on strict allocation to top UK restaurants and prestige retailers, priced £520.

Dom Pérignon ages its vintages in the cellar, at which point (generally seven years for blanc, 10 years for rosé) they are said to have reached their "first plenitude" and are released for consumption. A limited quantity of each vintage is reserved for further ageing, however, destined for release once they have reached their "second plenitude" after another 10 years or more, depending on the vintage.

Dom Pérignon chef de cave Richard Geoffroy describes Dom Pérignon Rosé as: "An extroverted wine that gives the Pinot Noir grape its due, almost to the point of contradiction, since the heart of the Dom Pérignon spirit is to achieve a perfect balance between white and black grapes. That is what makes it so tantalising."

THE BALVENIE SIGNATURE 12 YEAR OLD SINGLE MALT SCOTCH WHISKY 'BATCH THREE'

BRAND OWNER William Grant & Sons

PRICE £31.49, €45

MARKETS Europe, US and Canada

CONTACT William Grant & Sons:

+44 (0)20 8332 1188

Batch Three of The Balvenie Signature 12 Year Old malt scotch whisky has been released by William Grant & Sons.

The Signature range comprises marrying whiskies from first fill bourbon, refill bourbon and sherry casks.

The sherry casks give fruit and spice while bourbon yield vanilla oak and honey. The refill is said to impart delicate sweet notes and smoothness.



MALT

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

SPARKLER



BERBERANA BRUT CUVÉE ROSÉ

BRAND OWNER: United Wineries
PRICE: £9.99, €11
MARKETS: Europe
TRADE CONTACT:
 jcraig-wood@unitedwineries.com

United Wineries recently unveiled its new Berberana sparkling brut and rosé wines.

It claims the Spanish brand has grown 100% over the past three years.

Founded in 1877 in Rioja Alta by Miguel Berberana, United says it is the second largest wine brand in Spain, worth an estimated £24 million.

KEEP IT SWEET

MONT TAUCH SWEET WINE

BRAND OWNER Mont Tauch
PRICE £6.99 (50cl)
MARKETS UK
CONTACT
 aleray@mont-tauch.com

Mont Tauch, one of France's leading cooperatives, has launched a range of sweet wines.

The range comprises four wines: Mont Tauch Sweet Wine, 100% Grenache Noir (Maury); Mont Tauch Sweet Wine, 100% Maccabeu, (Maury); Mont Tauch Sweet Wine, 100% Muscat Petits Grains, (Muscat de Rivesaltes); Mont Tauch Sweet Wine, 100% Grenache Noir (Rivesaltes) - all 50cl.

All sourced from the Roussillon region in southern France, the range is aimed primarily at the UK market, wine drinkers in which appear to have acquired a taste for sweet, fortified wines.

They are from the appellations of Maury, Rivesaltes and Muscat de Rivesaltes



VODKA PUNCH

BURNETT'S FRUIT PUNCH FLAVORED VODKA

BRAND OWNER Heaven Hill Distilleries
PRICE £6.53, US\$9.99 (75cl)
MARKETS US
CONTACT
 jhafer@heavenhill.com

Fruit Punch is the 20th flavour in the series of Burnett's flavoured vodkas from Heaven Hills.

Burnett's other flavours are: blueberry, cherry, citrus, coconut, cranberry, espresso, grape, lime, mango, orange, peach, pink lemonade, pomegranate, raspberry, sour apple, strawberry, sweet tea, vanilla and watermelon.



FOR CONNOISSEURS

BOTTEGA RISERVA PRIVATA

BRAND OWNER Distilleria Bottega
PRICE €25, US\$33
MARKETS Global
CONTACT
 info@alexander.it

Bottega says it has created a new grappa for connoisseurs.

Aimed at mature 30 to 64-year-olds who eat out and buy from specialist wine shops and duty free, Riserva Privata (43% abv) is a selection of Amaroni, Cabernet and Prosecco grappas aged in small barriques, made of Slavonian, Limousin and American oaks. They have been kept in cellar for the past 10 years.

It is distilled at Bottega's base in Bibano, near Venice.





IN ASSOCIATION WITH

Focus on Italy

An Irish pub? Really? An Irish pub in Italy's top three? And in Rome no less. When I think of enjoying a drink while peering out across the Amalfi Coast, I do have to wonder who would argue an Irish boozier was the most appropriate.

At least the results for Italy prove this World's Best Bars survey simply can't be rigged, since the team at Drinks International would never have guessed a pub of this nature was one of the most popular with the Italian bar industry. But we're not here to judge, since the level of service skills from the Irish often supersedes even the most condescending of bar snobs, so congratulations all round. And I should say, the Irish pub wasn't number one – in fact an iconic mainstay of

the Italian bar scene proved to be the worthy winner, beating it comprehensively into second place.

Elsewhere there was an interesting mix of Italian styles, with "pub boozier" and classic hotel bar at each end of the spectrum and everything in between.

For me Italian bars evoke a sense of history and classic drinks, smart venues for serious drinks, but on this evidence there's plenty of room for grungy dive bars and modern mixing dens. In talking to the bar community there were plenty of suggestions that the new generation of bar professionals are seeking something different to the classic cocktail and hotel bars that made the country famous.

But even with an interest in practices such as molecular mixology, these bars are still firmly

committed to their cocktail heritage. There's no doubt Italy deserves its place among the bar strongholds of the world: kings of the aperitivo, the historical drinks context is fantastic. The country gave us the Negroni and Bellini after all and it will always earn our imbibing respect.

This track record continues to inspire the new breed of bartender, and long may it continue. The Italians have a special place in the hearts of all drinks fans and the very least the bars there can do is celebrate the country's special past. If they get to create modern drinking masterpieces while they're at it, then they deserve more than a pint of Guinness raised in their honour.

Tom Sandham, World's Best Bars editor



World bars: quest for the best

In the second of Drinks International's in-depth surveys, owners and managers of 50 elite bars in Italy were contacted directly by Leslie Henry Research Ltd to learn their choice of top bars and spirits.

This month's report covers the best bars within Italy as selected by this group of industry insiders.

1 HARRY'S BAR

San Marco 1323, Venice
cipriani.com

A worthy winner indeed, Harry's is one of the most iconic bars in the world and possibly the most iconic in the whole of Italy. Noted for the creation of the Bellini, the bar will stand the test of time for many years to come, but it's Harry's illustrious history and years of service thus far that earn it this status.

Aching with authenticity, the beautiful little venue is as unassuming as it was when it opened in 1931. Almost rustic in feel it's a no-nonsense bar with plenty of charm. The key to its success doesn't lie in the décor though, which looks almost untouched, but in the service and the drinks.

Opened in 1931 by Giuseppe Cipriani, owner of the famous Cipriani Hotel opposite, it took the name of Harry Pickering and established itself from the off when it enjoyed the patronage of names such as Noel Coward, Charlie Chaplin and Orson Welles. Along with Ernest Hemingway these people

ITALIAN WINNER



would be among the first to enjoy the Bellini, a simple mix of peach juice and champagne that became a mainstay and classic cocktail for the world.

For bar fans then, this remains one of the world's bar highlights and one that's essential to tick off the list for drinks enthusiasts.

The experts' view

I have seen trends move towards molecular mixology, taking drinks to the "lab". Our approach to modern mixing includes the use of exotic products such as carnivorous plants, spiders and flowers. But Italian customers still enjoy classic cocktails, and Martinis are the most popular – we have a menu with 101 different Martini cocktails.

In terms of spirits customers in Milan tend to go for popular rum, especially agricole but the high-end vodkas are also enjoying success and as a cocktail bar it's no surprise they request cocktails – wine and beer don't sell. And the general trend in Italian bars seems to be for more quiet



and comfortable places to relax and have a drink with ease, classic style.

Dario Comini, bartender, author and owner of Nottingham Forest bar, Milan

C urrently in Italy we are seeing a return to the classic. The most requested cocktails are Martini, Americano and Negroni. The "spritz" is also popular (sparkling wine, Aperol and soda with ice), but I think this is the year of vodka. The new premium vodkas are making a big impact. Italian grappas are also in fashion, especially the "mono vitigno" [single varietal].

We have also seen a surge in bars/restaurant/club and while it is not my

preference I actually like the Irish bars, you always need a place for a good pint.

Generally speaking though there is a high rate of turn over here so it is very hard to keep track of them all. But I like the bars inside the hotels. For me two of the best are the lounge at Westin Palace and the bar of the Park Hyatt, both in Milan.

Luca Coslovich, author and creator of www.cybartender.it and owner of the Pravda Café in Sanremo

T he most popular cocktails at the Caruso Bar are surely Bellini and Rossini but Martinis are a world apart – always trendy and always well requested.

The 'wellness drinks' are more requested these days, so low calories, low alcohol, antioxidants, high in vitamins and energetic. But drinking habits are very different: in northern Italy there is a great revival of Bitters like Campari and Aperol

served spritzed with Prosecco and soda with a wedge of orange.

While in the south, fruity low-alcohol drinks are the most popular. This year, we will probably continue the wave of light drinking with perhaps little extras that will not affect the alcohol of the cocktail but the curiosity of the people ...maybe spices like hot chili peppers, ginger or tea! **Tommaso Manis, head bartender at Hotel Caruso, Ravello, Amalfi Coast**

T he aperitif in Italy remains one of the most important drinking trends, it's social and relaxed and much appreciated by the Italian.

The Aperol Spritz is the most trendy aperitif right now, followed by Mojito, Negroni and Americano – Italy remains a traditional country so the great classics never disappear. On one side the traditional bars renovate their look but not their distinctive character. On the other side new concept bars are opening in Italy: the design café or library café, special bars in which consumers could live different shopping and drinking experiences. Something like Campari remains popular through its propositions in terms of cocktails and MILANO! And the Veneto region for the Aperol Spritz.

Jean Jacques Dubau, Campari Italia managing director



100% natural

funkin®

funkin CocktailMixers available in:
 Classic Mojito, Cosmopolitan,
 Pina Colada, Passion Fruit Margarita,
 Raspberry Mojito,
 Appletini, White Peach Bellini

funkin Purees available in:
 24 fantastic flavours

funkin Syrups available in:
 Grenadine, Sugar cane, Passion fruit

Just Add
Ice
 spirit
 & stir!

For more info please visit
www.funkin.co.uk

funkin

T: +44 (0)207 328 4440 F: +44 (0)207 328 4995 E: info@funkin.co.uk

2 FIDDLER'S ELBOW

Via dell'Olmata 43, Rome
thefiddlerselbow.com



4 SALOTTO 42

Piazza di Pietra, Rome
salotto42.it

Plenty of modern style in this venue, with more in the way of coffee being delivered during the day before coming alive for the cocktail crowd in the evening.

5 ZOE

Via Dei Renai 13, Florence

Chic crowd with great aperitivo and a selection of cocktails, this is one of the newer hangouts in Florence's San Niccolò district. A long bar lined with stools serves a healthy mix of cocktails and enjoys loyal patronage from the locals.

6 DRUNKEN SHIP

Piazza Campo de' Fiori 21, Rome

drunkenship.com

A bar in the "beer pong and dentist's chair" sense, this one is another pub for the Romans, so expect beer and knees-ups rather than Martinis and Negronis.

7 ANIMA

57 Via Santa Maria dell'Anima
Centro Storico, Rome

As much club as it is bar, this has become renowned for the DJs who frequent it, so expect disco drinks on a busy night.

8 DOLCE VITA

Piazza del Carmine, Florence
dolcevitaflorence.com

Popular for its aperitif drinks, this delivers a solid spritz and attracts plenty of beautiful people to enjoy it with.

9 JONATHAN'S ANGELS

Via della Fossa, 16 Rome

Near the Piazza Navona, this place embraces art as much as drink and, as well as adorning the walls, the theme seems to have infiltrated the furnishings. The restrooms here are particularly "artistic".

10 NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Viale Piave 1, Milan

nottinghamforest.com
One of the leading exponents of cocktail culture, this bar should arguably be positioned higher. With between 400 and 500 rums or whiskies and a devotion to modern mixology, this is a must-visit for bar professionals.

Professional verdict: Italian bartenders select the best bars in their region

If there has to be an Irish pub in the Top 3 of Italy's best then at least this is the most authentic. Italy's first Irish-owned and run pub opened its doors back in 1976 and is a small venue that really does deliver on authenticity – in a city of chic this one brings you right back to Irish shabby. It's only 10 minutes' walk from the Colosseum – perhaps more one of Rome's must-see venues – and with satellite TV for sports fans and darts to boot, you can't argue that this place does exactly what it says on the tin.

3 ALIEN

Via Velletri 13, Rome
aliendisco.eu

More club than bar, this place specialises in disco drinks and tunes. Alien has been a key nightspot for many years now and is evidence that the Italian drinking scene diversifies way beyond the classic hotel bar. The crowd is a cool chic clique, well dressed and mannered, if a little pretentious at times, and this has become one of those bars that it's important to be seen at. As a result it might not offer the cocktail repute of somewhere like Harry's, but a good modern buzz and the obvious support the industry has offered it in this poll makes it a laudable number three.





BEST OF THE REST

- **Cavalli Café**
Via L Camoens, Milan
- **Ai Canottieri**
Ponte Tre Archi 690
Cannaregio, Venice
- **Bulgari**
Bulgari Hotels & Resorts
Milano
Via Privata Fratelli Gabba
7/b, Milan
- **Diana Bar**
Sheraton Diana Majestic
Hotel Viale Piave 42,
Milan
- **Cafe Quadri**
Piazza San Marco 120,
Venice
- **American Bar**
Grande Albergo Sole
Hotel, Corso Vittorio
Emanuele 291, Palermo
- **Hosteleria Codroma**
Dorsoduro 2540, Ponte
del Soccorso, Venice
- **Colle Bereto**
Piazza degli Strozzi, 5/r,
50123, Florence
- **Zest Bar**
Es Hotel Via Filippo Turati
171 Via F Turati 171,
Rome
- **The House of Jazz**
Viale di Porta Ardeatina
55, Rome

Rising stars

Italy is a country rich in bar heritage, so it's worth identifying some of the more classic venues that have slipped the net on this occasion. Certainly few could argue that the Hotel Caruso in Salerno warrants a mention. A jaw-dropping setting, the cocktail bar has an almost panoramic first floor view of the coast that few hotel bars in the world could compete with. Meanwhile, they serve oven-baked pizzas at the poolside bar. Which is obviously great.

The Caruso owner, Orient Express Hotel group, has plenty of pedigree with hotel bars, the Splendido another worth a mention. Meanwhile the group recently acquired two new properties in Sicily: Grand Hotel Timeo and Hotel Villa Sant'Andrea, both in Taormina, so expect to hear more from them.

Hotel bars remain important in this country with The Lounge at Milan's Westin Palace and the Park Bar at the Park Hyatt both popular with the professionals responding to the World's Best Bars survey. As were the Stravinskij Bar at the Hotel de Russie in Rome and Atrium Bar at Four Seasons in Florence.

And for those who like to embrace the heritage in this country, then try the Regis Hotel in Rome, a beautiful tribute to Italy's imbibing history.

But there's also a trend to open modern and hip bars across the country, which

is healthy news for a developing cocktail culture. Bar Basso in Milan has managed to bridge both styles, firing out mixed drinks since 1967, and is still being run by the Stocchetto family that opened it.

Jean Jacques Dubau of Campari points to Noon in Milan, which he describes as a typical day and night trendy bar in which you could have great aperitifs and a delicious Italian breakfast as well.

And for more cutting edge, then visitors to Milan should always keep an eye on Nottingham Forest for its innovation in drinks.

In May Rome will see the opening of the Salotto Gianicolo, part of the Salotto stable that includes Salotto42 on the World's Best Bars list. It is rumored this venue will be an open bar with the best view over the city.



Few could argue that the Hotel Caruso in Salerno warrants a mention



American whiskey is on the brink of a revolution that could make it the most exciting category in the world. Dominic Roskrow reports

Innovation and category development are two things that aren't generally associated with Kentucky bourbon. But things are in the process of changing.

"Are these exciting times for bourbon? I'd say these are the most exciting times ever in the history of bourbon."

The speaker is Bernie Lubbers, whose title is whiskey professor for Beam Global, with special responsibility for the company's "small batch bourbon", including Knob Creek.

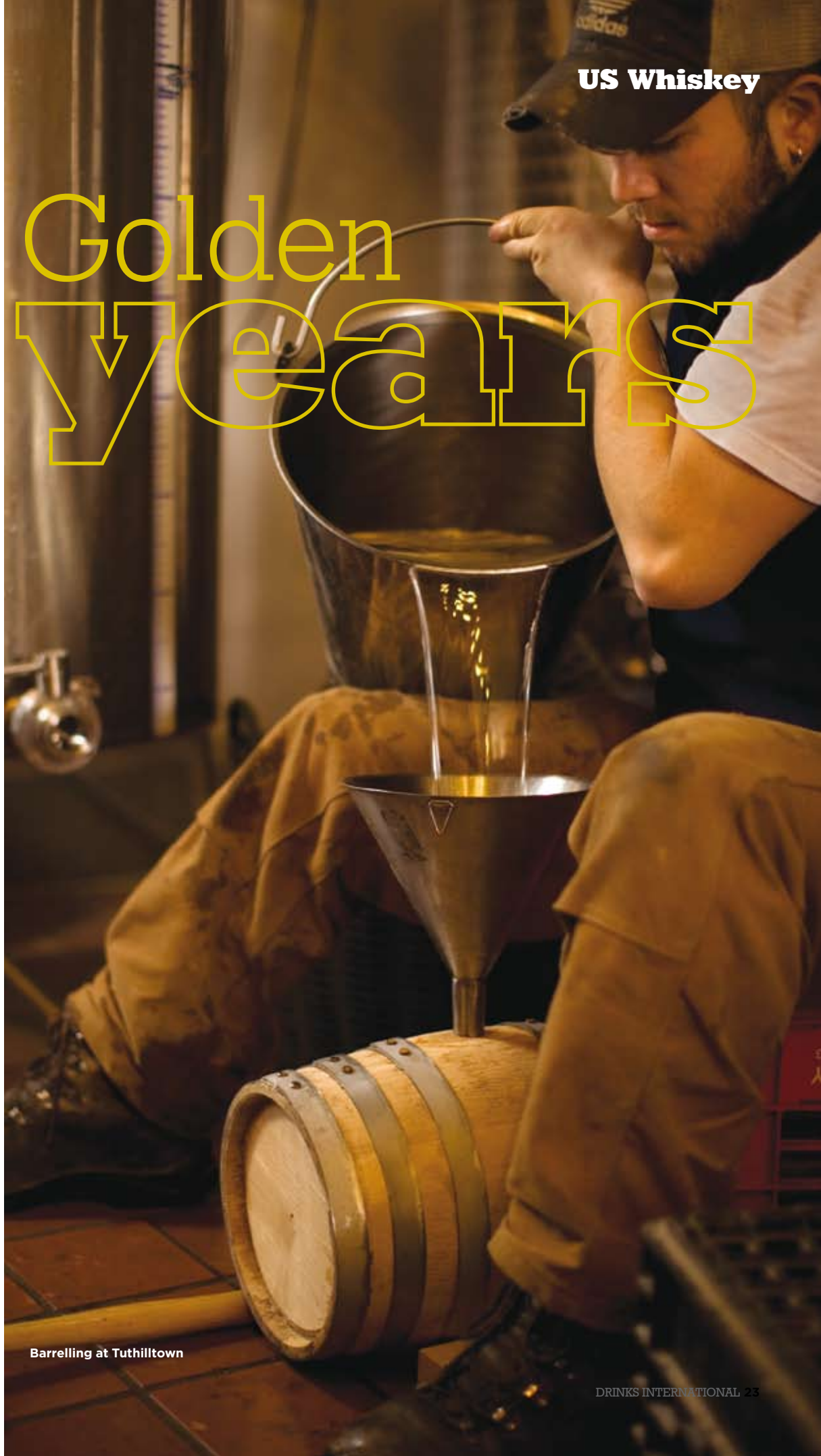
"It's not been this exciting since after Prohibition was repealed and Colonel Jim Beam looked at his son and nephews and said, 'boys it's time to get back to work'.

"More people than ever are interested in learning about and tasting bourbon," says Lubbers. "My dinners sell out quickly from New York to California. I think over the next three to five years people will be clamouring to learn more about bourbon. We are at the start of the golden years for the category, because the category's on fire, as it is for rye. The stars and the planets have aligned to give us this time for bourbon and American whiskey. It's up to each distiller to use this gift and not to waste it."

Air of excitement

Lubbers has boundless enthusiasm for his job, so perhaps his comments are a little over the top. But across Kentucky right now you will hear similar comments from anyone involved with the production or marketing of bourbon. ▶ p24

Golden years



Barrelling at Tuthilltown

US Whiskey

Over in Bardstown, to the south of Kentucky's largest city, Louisville, Heaven Hill Distillers produces a range of American whiskeys, including leading bourbons Evan Williams and Elijah Craig. Director of corporate communications Larry Kass is preparing for an exciting few months, which will see his brands given an increased promotional push across America, Europe and Asia. Undoubtedly, he says, the opportunities are there for American whiskey.

"Certainly here these are the most exciting times ever," says Kass. "And it's not just for bourbon but for American whiskey in general. The category, though it slowed a bit last year and most likely it will this one as well, continues to show overall growth, particularly in the under-penetrated international markets.

"Bourbon has a tremendous amount of headroom to grow into, particularly in export markets, and consumers are more excited than ever about limited editions, rare bottlings and so on."

Developing the theme, Kass continues: "And the prospects for the growth of the other straight whiskey categories such as corn, rye and wheat whiskeys is sky-high. We, for instance, were the only major producer which even bothered to make corn whiskey and then just a couple of days a year. But now, to a certain extent, the world has come round to us, and we have seen a new and energised consumer who wants to explore and discover. It is very exciting for us to be at the epicentre of it all."

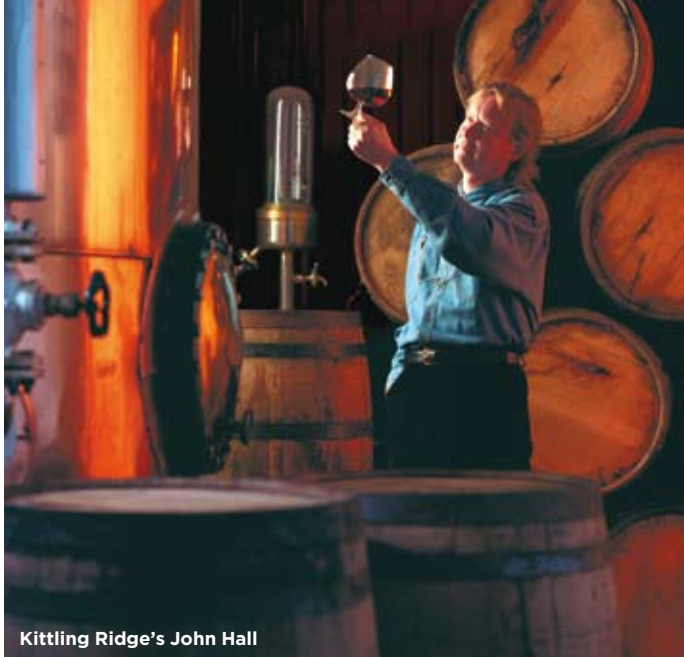
Revolutionary potential

So what happened? When did it all start going right for American whiskey in general, and Kentucky whiskey in particular?

The answer to that question lies in the speed at which the leading distillers of Kentucky proved themselves willing to innovate and experiment. You'll struggle to find many places where the words "Kentucky bourbon" and "innovation" appeared in the same sentence and, even as recently as two years ago, the category's main marketing strategy appeared to rely on history, tradition, and good ol' Southern heritage.

That's just not the case any more. In warehouses across the state there are casks of whiskey which have the potential to revolutionise the American whiskey category. Distillers are experimenting with cask charring and toasting levels; with casks made of maple, ash and hickory; and with spirit made with 100% malted rye and wheat, with white (sweet) corn and with single malted barley – Scottish-style whisky matured in fresh oak bourbon casks.

So widespread is the amount of innovation that



Kittling Ridge's John Hall

I'D SAY THESE ARE THE MOST EXCITING TIMES EVER IN THE HISTORY OF BOURBON

BERNIE LUBBERS
WHISKY PROFESSOR

it's quite possible that, over the coming months and years, premium bourbon will not only start to present a serious threat to categories such as cognac, but to Irish whiskey and even the premium end of the Scotch whisky market too.

Small-scale innovation

What has fuelled the experimentation and innovation is the rise of a new wave of small whiskey distilleries across the United States. Just as with beer a few years back, small microdistillers have been throwing away the rule book and trying out new ways of making whiskey.

Contrary to popular belief, bourbon can be made anywhere in the United States and, while it needs to mature for two years to be called "straight bourbon", it can be marketed as bourbon the minute it comes off the still. That's given the new distillers enough scope to take whiskey into new areas, and not just with bourbon.

Look hard enough and you'll find microdistillers making 100% malted rye and wheat whiskeys, and single malts, including heavily peated Islay-style ones.

Most such operations are too small and inconsequential to worry the big whiskey producers, but some have made an impact. In New York, Tuthilltown Distillery has launched a range of bourbon, corn and rye whiskeys under the name Hudson, and they're attracting a new generation of drinker in style bars across the city. The Anchor Brewing Company has won acclaim across the world for its Old Potrero whiskeys, and a new company called Dry Fly in Spokane has started picking up awards among whiskey enthusiasts and websites for its corn whiskey.

The reaction from the big companies to the

microdistillers is ambivalent. The standard view is that anything or anybody which helps to move focus away from other drinks categories and to American whiskey should be encouraged.

"We don't really view the microdistilleries as a challenge," says Harlen Wheatley, master distiller for Sazerac. "We view them as an asset by generating interest in the subject, which benefits us all.

"We have very similar visions, namely a passion for making good whiskey. We not only do our own microdistilling, we have an added dimension of large-scale production of century-old recipes.

We balance the innovation with legacy. While in innovation mode we explore the recipes and techniques to try to develop new styles and tastes but we always keep our namesake bourbons in the forefront and focus on their quality."

Although much of the innovative spirit has many months or even years before it will find its way to shops or bar shelves, some is just starting to make an impact. Sazerac has released a series of experimental bourbons, Heaven Hill bottled a bourbon under its Parker's Heritage Collection which was a mighty 27 years old – akin to a single malt whiskey aged for 60 years or more – and promises an even greater departure from the norm this year. Woodford

Reserve has now bottled four unique bourbons under its Masters Collection, and Four Roses will this year celebrate the 100th year of producing whiskey at its current distillery with the launch of a single barrel 17 year old bourbon this month.

Four Roses master distiller Jim Rutledge says that, while such bottlings are hard to get hold of, it's worth the effort to get them because drinkers are becoming increasingly aware



Bernie Lubbers





of what's available and having premium American whiskey will create interest.

"Bourbon connoisseurs are definitely up-to-date and very knowledgeable regarding premium bourbons and categories such as small batch and single barrel bottlings," he says. "The number of people who could be described as bourbon enthusiasts is growing dramatically and, as they talk with their friends about the latest premium releases, the impact has a snowball effect.

"The sharing of information over the internet, through blogs and so on, has had the effect of introducing new bourbons almost overnight. This is something that may have taken the producer months and months or even years to do themselves a few years ago through marketing and public relations agencies."

Tomorrow, the world...

There is clearly a distribution problem when it comes to the rare premium bourbons. A single barrel bottling means that, by definition, there will only be 300-500 bottles available in total and, while there is no definition as to how small "small batch" is, even Knob Creek, which is among the largest small batch releases, has run into supply problems.

In general, though, more bourbon is being targeted for the European and Asian markets, where demand has been growing at a rapid rate.

What all the major producers agree on is that in the past limited stock and the difficulty and expense of growing new markets has meant that much of the world outside America has not been developed as fully as it could have been. Now, though, with demand being created by enthusiasts in Europe, Asia and Japan, and the information about new releases readily available on the internet, there is a consensus that the time is right for development of the premium American whiskey market across the world.



Brown-Forman, owner of Woodford Reserve and category world leader Jack Daniel's, has already raised the profile of the upmarket Jack Daniel's Single Barrel. Maker's Mark, too, has earmarked 2010 as an important year for the development of the brand across Europe, particularly in the UK, France and Germany.

"For the first time we have sufficient stocks to serve some of the demand for Maker's Mark in other parts of the world," says Rob Samuels, director of global brand development for the brand. "We tend to find that Maker's Mark does well in urban areas and it's doing very well in London, Paris, Munich, Hamburg, Moscow. We have always been happy with slow and steady growth so we will be developing Maker's in those sort of places.

"Our approach is not to go so much for breadth but to focus on depth, to engage barmen and customers in the different ways of serving and drinking Maker's Mark and building an interest in the category in that way."

Maker's Mark and Jack Daniel's Single Barrel are at the populist end of the premium bourbon market and, while all the distillers are excited by the interest in the very rare and special releases, they're also aware that there is still a big job to do at the mainstream end of the market.

Heaven Hill's Larry Kass predicts that brands such as Evan Williams, Buffalo Trace, Woodford Reserve and Knob Creek will benefit from increased marketing in the coming months.

Beam Global has even resurrected an iconic name and brand to help it fight for market share. Old Crow, the brand originally launched by bourbon pioneer James Crow, has been reformulated and repackaged to compete directly with premium mainstream brand Evan Williams.

North of the border

It makes for an exciting and dynamic industry, and the increased activity hasn't gone unnoticed further north.

Canadian whiskey, much of it owned by the big American whiskey makers, has traditionally been a large market seemingly happy to rely on sales in America and

Canada and uninterested in development and progression. But here, too, a handful of distillers are developing new tastes for Canadian whiskey.

One of them is John Hall, the innovative distiller

at Kittling Ridge and the man responsible for Forty Creek, a whiskey which is earning plaudits across the world. He believes that Canadian whiskey might also benefit from the American whiskey revolution.

"Despite the prevailing attitude toward Canadian whiskey, it is the largest selling whiskey in North America," he says. "In fact you can add bourbon, scotch and Irish whiskeys together and Canadian outsells all of them combined.

"While Canadian whiskey was able to firmly establish itself during American Prohibition, I believe it has rested on its laurels as the largest segment for quite a few decades while bourbon, scotch and Irish

whiskeys have been courting the consumers. It is the lack of innovation and excitement that has created a neutral attitude toward Canadian whiskey.

"My experience suggests that people are very receptive to Canadian whiskeys provided they are bringing something to the party. In North America Forty Creek Whisky has been discovered by drinkers and is soaring in growth rate.

"While I cannot speak on behalf of the industry, I do know that the development of my Forty Creek whiskeys is certainly diversifying the

Canadian offering due to my personal quest to bring forward various taste expressions, using various barrel types such as sherry casks, port wood and bourbon barrels as well as grains, pot stills and various yeast strains."

Exponential potential

Now the challenge facing all producers is two-fold: to bring American whiskey to the market place, and to encourage drinkers to try it. As Larry Kass says though, the time is right and the inquisitive drinker is ready for the new wave of premium American whiskeys.

"I think this is clearly a situation where, as the tide rises all the boats get raised, particularly internationally," he says.

"When you are not in the United States and you ask for a whiskey, nearly always you get a Scotch. But as our president Max Shapira is quick to point out, if we can get just one or two out of every 100 of those people asking for American whiskey, then the prospects of exponential growth are unlimited."

It could well happen. Watch out cognac – the Americans are coming.



Heaven Hill's Larry Kass

Wild and wonderful

Gin is taking a new direction as excitement grows around the use of unusual botanicals
Lucy Britner reports

Shutterstock

Gin has come of age. The trade is opening consumers' eyes to premium gins and premium tonics and producers are moving forward with new and exotic botanicals. But as the category progresses, is it in danger of becoming oversaturated? Is the burst of new botanicals a threat to gin's predominantly juniper credentials?

Let's not be hasty. Gin's still got legs, and long ones at that. But at 48m cases worldwide it's a way off the size of vodka – Smirnoff alone accounts for 25m cases.

The cocktail boom has led to increased interest from consumers and greater innovation from producers, with hundreds of wild and wonderful

botanicals. In turn, that seems to be leading to a “back to basics” approach by other, smaller distillers. In the past 12 months, we have seen launches with botanicals such as heather, coconut, geranium, bog myrtle... But we have also seen launches with only six botanicals and gins created specifically to accompany tonic.

The small producers seem to be giving nods to the big guys for investing in the category – and vice-versa for experimentation and maintaining premium standards.

Scottish gin Caorunn was launched last July and its unique credentials include five “Celtic botanicals” – rowan berries (Caorunn in Gaelic), coul blush apple, heather, bog myrtle

and dandelion – along with a further six traditional gin botanicals.

Caorunn brand manager Ibolya Bakos says: “Real connoisseurs show increasing interest in new botanicals and new brands. I think any launch will contribute to the popularity and increase of the gin category.

“Gin is the new vodka – it has got a versatile flavour and great mixability.” Bakos is happy that gin is a long way off vodka in terms of over-saturation.

“In my opinion the gin sector is still far from the vodka one in volume and saturation. It is on the rise, it is getting more and more exciting. Innovations help the category.

“The perception of gin used to be of an old-fashioned, old man's drink. But thanks to the great **▶ p28**



Gin



Ian Hart makes Sacred Gin at his north London home



communication strategy and creativity of some big players this seems to be over and gin is rejuvenated. It is a dynamic sector now.”

Flowers being in fashion, G&J Greenall’s Bloom, which rolled out to Sweden, Denmark, Greece, Germany and Spain last year, also sings floral notes.

Master distiller Joanne Moore (née Simcock) says: “It took me about a year to create Bloom gin, our new super-premium gin featuring chamomile, honeysuckle and pomelo, which was an exciting journey that often kept me awake at night. Now we are working to build brand awareness for Bloom, and my mind is always developing new botanical combinations for unique gin experiences.”

Bombay Sapphire’s global marketing director Raquel Faria thinks Bombay Sapphire started the botanical revolution when it was launched in 1987.

She says: “Bombay Sapphire set the trend for using a number of very different botanicals from exotic



Ginposium

Chivas has just finished a round of gin symposiums in New York and LA. Industry legend Audrey Saunders was on hand to talk about how different gins affect different cocktails.

Beefeater and Plymouth brand director Simon Burley says: “It’s one of the few events where major spirits companies come together. We had more than 100 guests and the majority were mixologists.”

Beefeater master distiller Desmond Payne took to the stage along side Sean Harrison, master distiller of Plymouth. The pair talked about the history of the products as well as the flavour profiles before mixologists like Dan Warner and Chris Edwards took to the stage to demonstrate the cocktails.

“We’re hoping to roll the symposium out to Europe, though nothing has been confirmed yet,” adds Burley.

I AM ALWAYS CONSCIOUS NOT TO PUSH THE BOUNDARIES OF THE GIN DEFINITION TOO MUCH SO THAT WE LOSE OUR "JUNIPER" CHARACTER

JOANNE MOORE
G&J GREENALL



Salvatore Calabrese believes gin is taking an exciting new direction



locations around the world – for example, cubeb berries from Java and grains of paradise from West Africa which give the spirit its distinctive spicy, peppery notes – and we continue to approach gin-making in a different way to our competitors.

“We feel positive about launches which attract new consumers to the category but, unlike the novelty spirits in the marketplace, Bombay Sapphire has a recipe that stands the test of time.”

Hendrick’s also helped throw open the gates for innovation when the curious cucumber and rose petal gin hit the market in 2000. Its undeniable success paved the way for the use of unusual botanicals. It has certainly felt like that Stateside, with Ryan Magarian from Aviation gin’s term for less juniper-forward gins – New Western Dry.

Bartender supremo Salvatore Calabrese says: “There is definitely a move towards more unusual botanicals – look at the success of Beefeater 24. Not only botanicals are taking the limelight, there is also

the move towards other flavours, such as Hendrick’s with the cucumber. Gin used to be associated with the over-30s but I think with the new flavours it is appealing to the younger market. This new direction is exciting and opens up a big umbrella for the consumer.”

However, we must remember that unusual botanicals don’t necessarily equal less juniper-forward gins. Take Desmond Payne’s Beefeater 24, for example. The gin contains Chinese green tea and Japanese sencha tea but still enjoys dominant juniper. And Chivas Bros, the premium gin and Scotch whisky arm of Pernod Ricard, has done a clever job of marketing the brand’s London heritage and tradition alongside its new botanical dimension.

Unusual flavours

Coconut was perhaps the most unusual botanical to crop up during 2009. Bartenders Gerry Calabrese (Salvatore’s son) and Andy Pearson launched CP gin, in which coconut was a very prominent botanical. Either this was a step too far or the gin is waiting in the wings to explode on to the market. Either way, it seems to have disappeared for the time

being. Rumour has it it’ll be back in a couple of months. Press information for the gin started arriving at the end of July 2009, in time for its October launch.

One release reads: “Made ‘for bartenders by bartenders’, CP Gin is a new style of gin unlike any existing brand available on the market. Consisting of two main flavours, CP Gin is distilled with coconut and grapefruit and is uniquely smooth and rounded. A medley of natural and ethically sourced ingredients is also included, such as tarragon and ginger. Notably, juniper isn’t the dominant flavour in Calabrese and Pearson’s innovative gin.”

But if juniper isn’t the dominant flavour, is it still gin?

Talking about botanicals and not specifically CP, Joanne Moore from G&J Greenall says: “The definition of the word botanical is a collective term for any herb, spice, fruit, flower, seed, nut, etc, of which there are thousands of different varieties. This gives me endless opportunities to create new and exciting gins, although I am always conscious not to push the boundaries of the gin definition too much so that we lose our “juniper” character. For me, a ▶ p30

Gin



gin that has no association to the juniper note is not a gin but simply a flavoured vodka.”

Halewood International’s senior brand manager for Whitley Neill gin, Nigel Tarn, adds: “There has been a large number of new entries recently and the category did need some innovation and invention. I suppose what does worry me is that, while striving to eat into vodka’s share of the market, we don’t lose sight of what gin really is and its heritage and background – it still must have juniper as the predominant flavour. Some of the newer entries to the market just don’t seem to be adhering to that principle.”

It’s easy to see then, why the latest wave of launches has been about keeping things simple.

In November 2009, former Maxxium employee Martin Price and Charles Maxwell from Thames Distillers in Clapham, London, launched SW4 gin (the postcode of the distillery).

The first batch of “the gin designed to go with tonic” consisted of 500 cases of six and Price says the company has achieved decent listings in London and Edinburgh.

“I’m hoping to use my contacts to roll the gin out into popular European gin markets – Spain, for example,” says Price.

At £16.49 a bottle, the product is certainly accessible and although its available to the on-trade and for cocktails, too, Price says it’s important for consumers to be able to mix a good gin and tonic at home.

“When it comes to category sustainability, what SW4 is doing is important. The rise in popularity of gin cocktails is great but people aren’t always going to get the cocktail kit out when they get home. If gin’s their drink, 95% of the time they are going to fix themselves a gin & tonic.

“It’s important to enable people to enjoy a great gin flavour at home.”

The gin contains 12 botanicals in a secret blend. They include juniper, citrus, spices, cassia and orris root.

Then came No3. This is Berry Brothers & Rudd’s answer to what has seemingly become a complicated gin arena.

No3 is distilled at a family-owned distillery in Schiedam, Holland, according to Berry’s recipe. The company says: “With juniper at its heart, it unashamedly celebrates the integrity and character of traditional London Dry Gin.”

Berry’s feels the gin is true to the company’s 300-year history and heritage. The key on No3 Gin is inspired by the key to the parlour at No 3 St James, the room which guards the secrets and histories of the company.

Dr David Clutton – a Dr because he did a PhD on the flavour of gin – worked with the company to create the product.

Clutton says: “We were working on



Martin Price, creator of SW4 gin

No3 for about a year. Things were getting a bit complicated in the gin sector and we decided it was time to go back to basics.

“Juniper alone contains several hundred flavour compounds, so to optimise a complex recipe is difficult from the start.”

The botanicals are juniper from Italy, Spanish orange peel, grapefruit angelica root, Moroccan coriander seed and cardamom pods.

The gin is set to roll out Stateside and brand manager at Berry’s US distributor, Skyy Spirits, Eric Ariyoshi is confident US consumers are ready for the product. He says: “Many of the recent craft gins from the US are really a dramatic departure from the classic London Dry Gin in terms of taste profile.

“They mask the juniper and confuse the palate with so many botanicals that there is no balance to the gin. No3 is a return to a classic, balanced London dry gin that features only three fruits and three spices.”

Room for improvement

The moral of the story seems to be that, at the moment, there’s room enough for more gins and greater innovation. That might mean fewer or more botanicals, or new production methods such as Oxley’s cold distillation or the rise in craft distilling.

Ian Hart, who makes Sacred Gin at his home in north London and has been using cool distillation for a few years, puts it nicely: “Gin has been a bit of a quiet backwater in the past few decades – how things have changed.

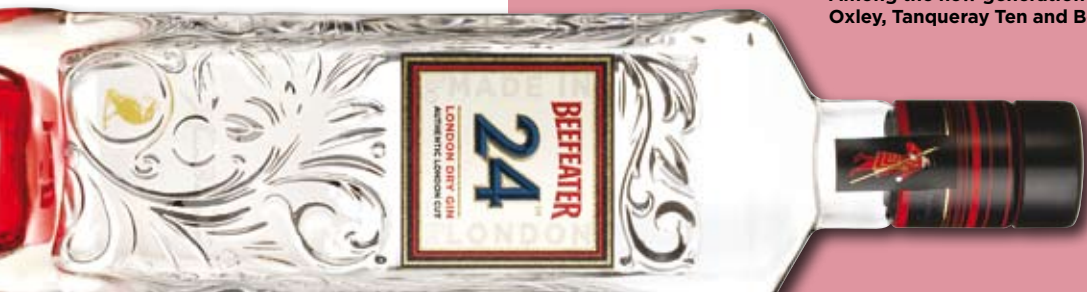
“Ultimately gin should have juniper (at least 50%) and after that citrus peel would seem to be pretty necessary, but in fact almost every plant/seed/fruit/root on the planet is a potential botanical.

“The possibilities are endless, and I would like to think this is only the beginning of a much more radical change in the way the gin/spirits market operates.”

Gin is the drinks industry’s new love. Let’s hope it doesn’t fade.



Among the new generation of gins are Oxley, Tanqueray Ten and Beefeater 24



Beer

Craft brewing is winning fans worldwide as drinkers are increasingly captivated by its quality and innovation, reports Ben MacFarland

The art of brewing

In the past two years, things have been rather frenzied in the global beer market. Since 2008, more than \$75bn has been spent on acquisitions, breweries have been swapping hands more often than a dog walker on a chilly morning and now the world's top four brewers (AB-InBev, SABMiller, Heineken and Carlsberg) account for more than half of the world's beer consumption. In 2003, the top 10 producers accounted for less than 45% of the world's volume sales.

Yet, while the hungry behemoth brewers have shrunk the beer universe even further, it would be an error to assume that supermarket beer aisles and bar chillers look the same the world over. While the likes of Budweiser, Corona and Heineken enjoy a certain amount of hegemony, the beer offering in Shanghai still looks very different to that in San Francisco. The global war for brewing volume and fridge/shelf space is being waged in the shape of local battles and regional skirmishes, each fought on different drinking terrain and using

different marketing weapons.

Having merrily skipped down the acquisition trail in recent years, all the major multinational players have presence in even the most parochial of beer markets. What's more, they've the capacity to reinvent or revamp brands outside their homelands.

For example, Tiger Beer, marketed as a premium brand in the UK, is a standard proposition in its Singapore homeland; Snow – the number one brand in China and challenging Bud Light as the world's biggest selling beer brand – is conspicuous by its absence in European markets, while Skol, the biggest in brand in Brazil and the world's fourth best-selling beer, is dismissed in the UK as an evolutionary throwback brand.

All the big brewers are adopting a portfolio approach, aware that the global market remains polarised, although decreasingly so, between mature territories such as Australasia, North America and western Europe and emerging markets such as Latin America and Asia-Pacific.

SABMiller is a case in point. While Grolsch, Peroni Nastro Azzurro and Pilsner Urquell lead the charge in more developed markets, it has adopted a more local approach in budding beer territories. It has built Poland's regional Tyskie brand into the country's leading mainstream beer; it's breathed life back into Romania's Timisoreana brand; and helped upgrade the entire mainstream category in South Africa, where it owns Castle, with the introduction of 430 million restyled returnable bottles.

"With more than 200 brands at our disposal, our ability to cover all price points and consumer needs, from economy to premium beers, allows us to benefit whichever way the market moves," said a SABMiller spokesperson. "As consumers in recent years have aspired to move up the price scale, we've met their demand for local and international premium brands. But we also benefit from our strong presence in the mainstream segment, where SABMiller brands are typically





number one or two in the market. The mainstream segment is generally where the greatest profits lie and we've invested heavily in recent years to build and maintain our leadership there."

Tricky times

Lest we forget, however, these are tricky trading times for the global brewers. In more traditional beer-drinking territories – be it Great Britain, Belgium or the States – sales are in decline and it's not just the recession – it's been a long-term drift that's roughly mirrored the demise in manufacturing.

No surprise then that the big brewery bean counters have their eyes firmly on India and China. Taken as a continent, Asia has overtaken Europe and America as the biggest beer-drinking region, while China has usurped the US as the world's biggest beer-drinking nation in terms of volume.

Thanks to the influx of foreign investment and driven by demand for a sweeter, less bitter tasting beer, the Chinese market has grown at an astonishing pace in recent years. Yet

dominated by a sweeter taste profile, it remains a fragmented market with a plethora of regional brands and, while Snow and Tsingtao do battle for pole position, no single brand dominates – a fact not lost on the giant global players.

"If you are one of the internationals you will have your sights fixed on India and China where there's been explosive growth," says Joe Laventure, sales director of Budvar UK. "Asia is a big place, with many different beer markets enjoying varying fortunes. In mature beer markets there, such as Japan, Singapore or Hong Kong, beer consumption is on the slide, a bit like in Europe."

However, Laventure is keen to stress this is not a negative trend. "With maturity, quality comes before quantity. A new generation of well-informed drinkers is growing up in the mature markets in all three continents who value excellence above price. For them drinking an international brand is not a sign of sophistication – drinking a craft brew is.

"If you are a craft brewer like Budvar you will see your core future in the mature beer markets such as Europe and the North Americas, carving up the market share being wrested from the retreating international brands."

Nowhere are craft brewers having more joy than in the States. While the mainstream light beer segment remains the most popular, accounting for more than 61% of total domestic beer volume sales in 2009 (Mintel), the fastest growing sector is that occupied by premium craft producers.

A genuine consumer backlash against the big and the bland has snowballed in the past few years and craft brewing has been transformed from a kooky pastime and hobby into a big, bona-fide player in the beer business.



Microbrewing is a worldwide phenomenon, as proved by these brands from the UK (Freedom), Spain (Alhambra) and Australia (Ambassador)

In 2009, while overall beer sales slumped by 2.2%, the craft brewing industry grew 7.2% in volume and 10.3% in value which, given the recession and the premium price point of craft beer, is quite remarkable. Offering unprecedented variety and eyebrow-raising innovation, craft beer now accounts for 4.3% of the entire US beer market by volume and 6.9% by dollars, with the retail value growing from \$6.32bn in 2008 to \$6.98 billion in 2009.

At 1,585, the number of breweries operating in America during 2009 is the highest since before Prohibition and, thanks to the three-tier distribution model, their bottles are well represented in retail stores and on-trade outlets. While the preferred packaging option remains the 12oz beer bottle for the vast majority of American craft brewers, an increasing number are taking cues from the wine industry and offering larger bottles designed to be drunk with food.



Boutique bandwagon

Such is the success of the smaller players, the likes of MillerCoors and AB-InBev have looked to clamber on the boutique beer bandwagon with "craft" brand extensions. In 1995, MillerCoors launched Blue Moon, a Belgian-style wheat beer and, such was its success, it now accounts for about 2% of the brewer's annual sales. In 2008, it became a \$125m brand yet it is now being challenged by Bud Light Golden Wheat, an AB-InBev-brewed wheat beer which was launched last autumn and is now rivaling sales of Blue Moon.

"In the past, American beer has been synonymous with watery, fizzy, yellow beer," said Greg Koch, founder of Stone Brewing in San Diego. "Thankfully, in the US today light lager beers are now only produced by a small handful of the 1,500+ American breweries. No other nation can rival America in terms of diversity and creative passion. Having successfully risen above the lowest common denominator forces of bland beer, the American craft beer culture is spreading around the world."

It's not just America where craft, boutique beer is stealing a march on the mainstream. In the UK, sales of British bottled ales – many of which are bottle-conditioned – grew by 6.3% in 2009 while, according to the Society



of Independent Brewers (SIBA), beer production by small brewers surpassed a million hectolitres for the first time ever, while three quarters of local brewers recorded growth in 2009 – with the average increase in turnover being 17%.

Other regions boasting thriving craft beer cultures include Australia, Denmark, Japan and Italy, where more than 150 microbreweries and brewpubs have formed a craft brewing union and aligned themselves closely with the country's Slow Food movement.

In more established beer-drinking nations such as Belgium and the Czech Republic, however, consumption is on the wane and, due to challenging economic conditions, an increasing number of drinkers are downgrading to economy brands and drinking at home more.

With global beer-drinking volumes shrinking and green concerns rising, attention has been turned to improving the allure, the cost and the environmental impact of beer bottles. As beer experiences a global shift from the on-trade to the off-premise market, the need for an attractive, ecologically and economically aware bottle is all the more acute.

There's been a major marketing metamorphosis in recent years, innovation has been rife with huge strides taken in both the aesthetic and environmental

approach to bottle design. In the past year or so, the focus has been on the latter with the core development in the bottled beer sector being light-weighting.

Ten years ago, a 27.5cl bottle would have weighed in excess of 300g while a 33cl bottle would have weighed even more. But today, the weight of a 27.5cl best-in-class bottle is now around 180g which, when you're talking about big brands and big

volumes, represents a significant saving in terms of not just glass but also the environmental impact of transportation and distribution.

Embossing is another design aspect driving innovation in the beer bottle market. While embossing has been around for years, advances in filling line technology have allowed brands to really push the boundaries of innovation in recent years and embossing is a useful marketing weapon in the premium end of the market.

Cans are also playing a small, yet growing, role in the premium packaged beer market. In the UK, Coors Light recently unveiled its new Cold Activated Can featuring a temperature sensitive Rocky Mountain logo that turns blue when the beer is chilled correctly.

In the US, meanwhile, more than 50 craft brewers, such as 21st Amendment in San Francisco and Caldera in Southern Oregon, have opted for metal cans and embarked on a mission to alter consumer perceptions and convince drinkers that canned beer can be unique, distinctive and part of a discerning niche market.



Top chef Rick Stein with Sharps' head brewer Stuart Howe

DI

Canada – a case study

Adin Wener, on-premise channel manager for Sleeman Breweries (Ontario and Atlantic Provinces)

What are the current trends shaping the premium bottled beer market in Canada?

The success story of 2009 was Bud Light Lime. There were stockouts across the country and it was one of the best executed launches in recent memories. The fact that it was "brewed" in the UK, in a clear bottle allowed owner Labatts to charge import pricing.

Why is the overall bottled beer market declining?

There are several reasons for this. The growth of the value sector; imports are starting to lose some steam (especially the established ones such as Heineken, Corona & Grolsch) and the growth of canned beer – across the board but especially in larger formats.

Has the recession affected the market?

The overall beer market is down. The "value" sector performed very strongly in 2009 as people traded down from mainstream beers to value or premium. Import beers also struggled for the first time in a decade as people traded to either premium or craft. Overall it was a tough year for the big two – Molson & Labatts – as their volumes were down and they control close to 90% of the beer market in Canada. The on-premise also had a

tough year as a wet summer in Ontario & Quebec and the introduction of tougher drink-driving laws, which led to a reduced trade and a decrease in volume. Coupled with rising costs, it resulted in outlets closing down.

What are people drinking in terms of beer style?

While mainstream lager brands such as Molson Canadian, Coors Light and Budweiser dominate the scene, Canadian beer drinkers are very well informed about various beer styles.

What's the state of the Canadian craft beer market?

Craft and premium bottled beers are increasing their share, micros are gaining more fridge space and consumers are paying a premium for these products. Craft beer is performing well across Canada but it is very regional. The lack of national retailers and therefore few national chains, it is tough for the smaller players to get national presence. If you are in a bar in Toronto it is rare not to see Steamwhistle in either draught or packaged while smaller brewers such as Beau's are carving out niches for themselves in Ottawa and Garrison is doing the same in Halifax. In the west Sleeman is very strong with its redesigned Okanagan Spring Brewery beers and again smaller players like Phillips are doing their own unique things on Vancouver Island.

Is there polarisation between mainstream and craft?

Yes and no. There is a healthy craft scene in Canada and several bars only stock import or craft beers. However, because of the health of brands such as Rickards & Keiths, I believe the line between mainstream and craft is very confused in this market. Obviously you have consumers at both ends who will only drink Bud or Blue and those who only drink their local craft, but the middle is becoming skewed. You also have mainstream brewers producing very good value brands – Pabst Blue Ribbon in Canada tastes totally different to the PBR in the States!

Are the big brewers trying to get a slice of the "craft" scene with their own products?

Molson recently purchased Granville Island Brewing (from Peller Estates). It's Canada's oldest craft brewer and well established in the West Coast beer scene. This follows its strategy of purchasing Creemore. It has been interesting to observe as they have chosen to leave the operations separate (breweries, sales force, etc) but do use the brands as part of a larger portfolio strategy. Molson also had done some great things with its Rickards brand – which in essence is a craft/full flavoured beer fighter. Rickards White is a steady performer across the board while Labatts has chosen to diversify its Alexander Keith's range and now alongside the IPA boasts Dark, Light, Red Amber and Stout.

New Zealand Wine

Jo Burzynska reports from New Zealand on the strides being made by the country's wine industry to establish sustainable production practices as the norm

Back to nature



Colin Wynne

Actor Elijah Wood stated in an interview: “There’s a real purity in New Zealand... It’s actually not an easy thing to find in our world any more. It’s a unique place because it is so far away from the rest of the world.” He was voicing a widely held vision of the country based on his time spent in its pristine landscapes during the making of the *Lord of the Rings* film.

Exploited to promote both the nation and its wine industry, this association with things clean and green has increasingly been put to the test – now more than ever, in the current environmental climate. Combined with New Zealand’s distance from most of its main export markets, and growing competition internally, this has added a sense of urgency to winegrowers stepping up to prove their green credentials.

Spearheading this movement has been the country’s independently audited industry-wide environmental

winegrowing management programme, Sustainable Winegrowing New Zealand (SWNZ), established 15 years ago. Historically well supported by the New Zealand wine industry, it saw its membership swell from 2007 when the country’s generic body, New Zealand Winegrowers, announced its aim to have 100% of the country’s wine industry fully certified by this or another independently audited sustainability, organic or biodynamic scheme by 2012.

As of the 2010 vintage, which was under way at time of writing, any winery without the appropriate accreditation will no longer be able to participate in the generic body’s international marketing programme.

“With 85% of vineyards now involved we are on track,” says Philip Gregan, chief executive of New Zealand Winegrowers, on the likelihood of hitting this ambitious target. However, he admits there are still some challenges ahead, “particularly with small vineyards and wineries that are sometimes scared by the time and

**TOUGHER
TIMES MAKE
ONE LOOK FOR
ALTERNATIVES**

**BART ARNST
CONSULTANT**

resources they think they may have to devote to a programme such as SWNZ”.

As with the French concept of *lutte raisonnée*, which seeks to reduce but not rule out synthetic herbicides and pesticides, SWNZ permits the use of soft chemicals, less aggressive if a vineyard provides an acceptable explanation for their use, which has led to some criticism that it doesn’t go far enough. However, the scope of the scheme has been widely welcomed and praised for helping to reduce the synthetic pesticides, herbicides and fungicides once used liberally within mainstream viticulture by breaking growers’ reliance on rigid spraying programmes.

There are now impressive figures to quantify SWNZ’s achievements, with a report published last year in the journal *New Zealand Plant Protection*, stating that the New Zealand wine sector had reduced its agrochemical loadings of insecticides by 72% and fungicides by 62%, largely as a result of a strategic move to properly researched and applied

The ‘Falcons for grapes’ initiative has been encouraging endangered native New Zealand falcons to breed in vineyards, where they provide bird control



sustainable winegrowing methods.

New Zealand Winegrowers' policy has also driven a number of research programmes, which has led to the development of products such as Botry-Zen and Armour-Zen for the natural control of one of the country's biggest fungal threats, botrytis, as well as the support of the 'Falcons for grapes' initiative that has been encouraging endangered native New Zealand falcons to breed in vineyards, where they provide bird control.

Poised for organics

New Zealand may currently be ahead of most other winegrowing nations when it comes to its sustainability policies, but in the area of organics it has been something of a slow starter. With only about 2% of its vineyards currently registered organic or "in conversion", New Zealand is well behind countries such as France, Spain and Italy, which have closer to 5% of their considerably larger area under vine managed organically.

For some years a handful of producers have been flying the organics flag locally, many of these embracing it primarily for reasons of quality. Due to the fact that, up until the bumper harvest of 2008, demand for New Zealand's wines regularly outstripped supply, there was previously little commercial incentive for others to join them.

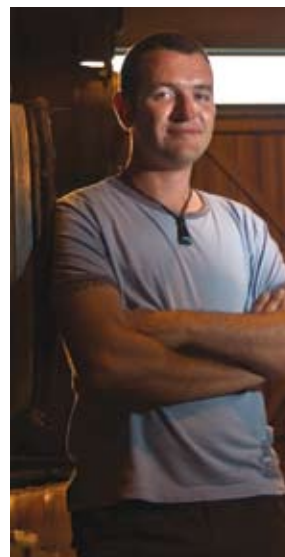
"Tougher times make one look for alternatives," states viticultural consultant Bart Arnst, who has played an important role in encouraging organics in Marlborough in particular. In a swelling sea of Sauvignon and pool of Pinot Noir, more wineries have been going organic to provide a point of difference in a competitive market. Arnst also credits the recent surge in interest to the worldwide trend for more environmentally sound products, which comes with a built-in connection with quality – particularly pertinent to a premium player like New Zealand.

A sizeable number of producers now appear poised to take the plunge into organics, many having put in the initial groundwork as members of SWNZ. This mounting interest was indicated by the high attendance at the country's first organic wine conference organised by Organic Winegrowers New Zealand last year.

Until now it has largely been the boutique wineries that have embraced organics, while the big companies

(Above) Amisfield Vineyard wetlands in Central Otago

(Below) Seresin Estate's Clive Dougall thinks organics could be problematic for machine-picked whites



watched from the wings. For Clive Dougall of organic and biodynamic Marlborough estate Seresin, organics could be problematic for "commercial-style, machine-picked whites such as Marlborough Sauvignon", which dominate the production of the larger companies. He considers it better suited to premium hand-picked production.

However, countering this is the planned release by Pernod Ricard-owned major label Montana of an organically certified mainstream Sauvignon Blanc from the 2010 vintage.

Bio minority

On an even smaller scale, but worth noting due to the calibre of its converts, is the expanding group of estates employing biodynamics. Stalwart of the system Millton has now been joined by respected names such as Felton Road, Seresin and Rippon and up-and-coming new players such as Pyramid Valley.

Just three estates currently have their vineyards certified by Demeter, the international certification body for biodynamic products,

New Zealand Wine

although far more are practising this agricultural philosophy. This is something David Wright of the Bio Dynamic Farming and Gardening Association in New Zealand attributes to the fact that, in waiting for Demeter to develop its international standard for wine processing, its New Zealand arm is currently unable to offer the winery certification that wine companies need if they are to sell their wines as Demeter products overseas.

Counting carbs

Another approach being adopted by New Zealand's wineries is towards carbon neutrality. Since Marlborough's maker of Grove Mill, the New Zealand Wine Company, became the world's first carbon neutral winery in 2006, six further New Zealand wineries are now accredited to the country's carbonZero scheme, including high-profile names such as Martinborough-based Dry River and new green crusaders Yealands Estate in Blenheim, Marlborough.

"It's just about being more careful of the environment regarding unnecessary impact in the day-to-day running of our company," says Dry River's Shayne Hammond. "The CarboNZero scheme is not about buying credits and feeling good, it's about measuring, understanding and reducing impact where possible."

The country already has a relatively low carbon count when it comes to its production, with 75% of its energy coming from renewable sources. Despite its distance to market, the carbon cost of transporting New Zealand's wine exports also stacks up considerably better than suggested by those that have attacked the country with the food miles argument, which has now been proven largely erroneous.

"A New Zealand bottle of wine travelling to Europe can actually have a much smaller footprint than a European wine," explains Paul Pujol of Prophet's Rock in Central Otago. "This is thanks to it travelling by water supported by ship with a huge volume of cargo and having minimum truck transport, which is one of the worst in this respect."

Speaking at New Zealand's recent Pinot Noir 2010 conference, at which sustainability formed one of the central themes, Craggy Range's Steve Smith MW went as far as to suggest that New

Zealand could even be a world leader when it came to the carbon costs of its transport.

"My rough figures suggest that for about 25 (NZ)cents a case," he claims, "we could fund a return of enough hectares of government-owned South Island high country to regenerating permanent indigenous native forests to make the transport of wine to our international markets carbon neutral."

Seeing the light

Numerous wineries are also seeking to cut the carbon footprint of their exports by using lighter bottles. "Packaging is by far the most significant emission source in the lifecycle emissions of a wine product," states Roger Kerrison of New Zealand wine industry sustainability consultants, Aura Sustainability.

"If you took the worst case scenario of wine bottled in imported Grand Burgundy bottles in New Zealand, which is then shipped to the UK, the packaging could contribute directly and indirectly to more than 50% of the footprint. Putting wine in lighter weight glass could shave around 15% off the carbon of the product."

One of the country's major bottle suppliers has launched a lighter option available from this new vintage, and is currently working on even lighter versions of the Grand Burgundy bottle used for most of the country's wines. Even more radical was the move of the country's largest privately owned estate, Yealands, whose quest to "become the world's most sustainable winery" led it to release its 2009 First Circle Marlborough Sauvignon in a PET bottle.

According to the winery, it is 89% lighter, generates 54% less greenhouse gas emissions and uses 19% less energy to produce than traditional 75cl glass bottles. Yealands is also confident that it has overcome issues of oxygen ingress over relatively short periods of time that have been associated with this material and have deterred other premium producers from adopting it in the past. Its bottles use DiamondClear technology that features "oxygen scavengers", which Yealands says should keep the wine in good condition for up to 18 months.

"I knew from the outset that the introduction of Marlborough Sauvignon Blanc in a PET would polarise opinion



Prophet's Rock's Paul Pujol explains that a New Zealand bottle of wine travelling to Europe can actually have a much smaller footprint than a European wine

— just look at the screwcap debate," comments the estate's owner, Peter Yealands. "However, the response has been great. Sure we have had the ill-informed detractors, but we have just run our third bottling of Full Circle showing uptake from the public has been strong." While the product is currently only available in NZ, the company reports significant interest from abroad that should see Full Circle being exported in the near future.

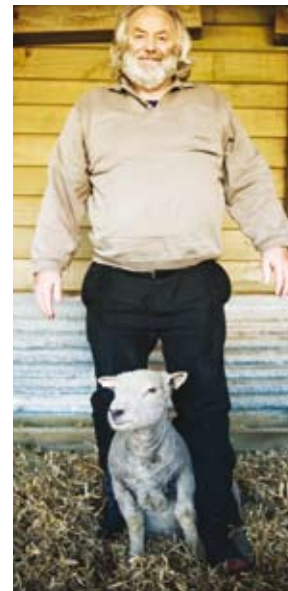
Bulk pros and cons

Another lower carbon option is bottling more wines in-market. Given its premium positioning this has not been an approach widely embraced by the country. But the current issue of oversupply that has seen its bulk sales leap from accounting for just 5% of its exports to now close to 25%, has made the practice far more widespread.

At New Zealand Winegrowers, Philip Gregan would rather that "all New Zealand wine was bottled in New Zealand". However, he acknowledges: "Certainly for some companies the issue of carbon footprint may come into the decision. However, in terms of risk to reputation this is something that companies need to think about when weighing up the pros and cons of the strategy."

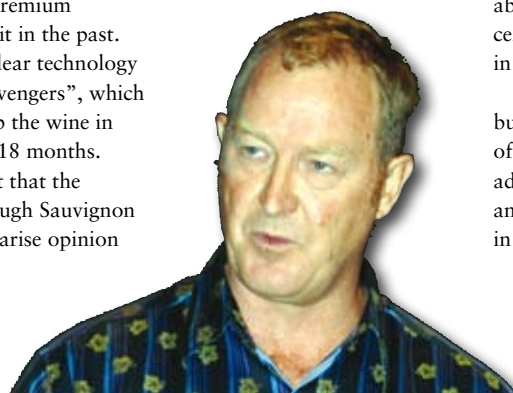
Concerns over the gap in the certification process for New Zealand wine bottled in other markets recently led New Zealand Winegrowers to enter into talks with the New Zealand government about the implementation of export certification processes for wines shipped in bulk and packaged off-shore.

Geographically isolated it may be, but New Zealand is certainly not out of touch when it comes to the need to address current environmental concerns and protect its purity, both in image and in reality.



Peter Yealands (above) is on a quest to make his winery the world's most sustainable

Steve Smith (below) suggests New Zealand could become a world leader in terms of transport carbon costs



FINO AND DANDY



London has its first sherry bar in Bar Pepito, King's Cross, serving sherries, tapas and "a little slice of Jerez". The bar is across the courtyard from its sister venue, Camino. It is described as a small Andalusian "bodega" and Jerez wine house. Gonzalez Byass helped with the project. The bar will initially open Wednesday to Saturday from 5pm.



CHOCOLATE HEAVEN

WIRSPA (the West Indian Rum & Spirits Producers Association) teamed up with Spanish chocolatier Ramon Morató to create rum and chocolate fusions at L'Atelier des Chefs, London.

Morató wowed the crowds with the likes of Cockspur Coconut 'n' Lime, Chairman's Reserve Frozen Truffles and Mount Gay Macaroons.

Most impressive were the Cockspur

Coconut 'n' Lime. Morató managed to fashion tiny coconuts out of chocolate, filled them with coconut cream and added a lime jelly.

The good people of WIRSPA are even prepared to tell you how to do the same - though having tested it in the DI kitchen, we can tell you that patience is a virtue and if you don't succeed, just eat the chocolate and drink the rum.

COCKSPUR COCONUT 'N' LIME

→ 70% dark chocolate couverture/cocoa powder.

Heat the dark chocolate at 30/31°C. Cover semi-circular flaxipan moulds with a fine layer of chocolate. Set aside to fill with coconut cream

→ 120ml Cockspur rum
→ 120ml water
→ sugar syrup (19ml water/19g sugar, mixed).

Mix the water and rum together. Add the sugar syrup and freeze.

Make flakes of granita.

Other ingredients

Lime jelly (available pre-made)
Coconut cream (pre-made)
Optional lime zest

Remove the half-ball of coconut from the mould and dip in cocoa powder to simulate the coconut shell. Layer the inside with coconut cream. Freeze. Fill the centre with lime jelly. Add the Cockspur Granita. Serve immediately.



BRITNER'S BEERS

DI's Lucy Britner shares her passion for a pint

If you're reading this before April 16 you've still got time to enter the International Beer Challenge.

In 2009, the IBC was taken over by *Drinks International*, with the aim of making the competition truly global.

We also decided to hold a consumer tasting event in 2009. The punters liked it so much that we're planning more dedicated consumer events and extensive PR to ensure medallists get the opportunity to tickle the palates of more drinkers.

Last year's improvements included additional tasting classes, introduction of medals and a standalone design and packaging category. As a result, entries shot up by 15% and we had a record number of international entries.

Among last year's trophy winning beers were Samuel Adams from the Boston Beer Company, Weihenstephan Brewery for its Hefeweissbier, Harvey & Son for Prince of Denmark and Redoak Framboise Froment from

Redoak Boutique Beer.

The excitement so far this year is centered around Italy, with the support of Italian beer association Unionbirrai.

The May judging panel will be bolstered by the addition of Italian brewer Matteo Milan.

Medals or commendations in 2009 were awarded to 63% of entrants, with 19% receiving gold.

Judging will take place on May 25 and 26 2010. To enter complete an entry form at internationalbeerchallenge.com

Important dates

Entry deadline - April 16 2010

Samples required - April 29 2010

Judging Day 1 - May 25 2010, White Horse, Parsons Green

Judging Day 2 - May 26 2010, White Horse, Parsons Green

Medallists announced - May 31 2010





ODDLY TASTY

Gabriel Boudier is to roll out a range of Loiseau liqueurs, which take their name from the late, great French chef Bernard Loiseau – a friend of Boudier boss Jean Battault

The products are already available in Germany, Switzerland, France, Greece, Spain and Japan and are now being rolled out in the UK.

On initial inspection, the liqueurs appear to have slightly wacky flavour combinations but, having tried them, *Drinks International* can report they are excellent.

The range includes morello cherry & chocolate, raspberry & thyme, sloe & elderberry, peach & hibiscus, strawberry & Tasmanian pepper, blackcurrant & gingerbread, pear & bay leaf and apple & Earl Grey tea.

Zoran Peric from Skylon restaurant bar in London's Royal Festival Hall devised some cocktails with the new liqueurs.

Here's our favourite: Earl Grey Emancipation.

EARL GREY EMANCIPATION

→ 20ml Cape North Vodka

→ 20ml Vodka infused with Earl Grey

→ 30ml Bernard Loiseau Liqueur de Pommes et Thé Earl Grey

Method: Stir with ice and strain into a Martini glass. Garnish with Lemon Peel.



Using the new Bernard Loiseau Liqueur de Pommes et Thé Earl Grey, this cocktail is a classy presentation



LOGI BARES ALL

Speyside whisky The Glenlivet is rolling out a Signature Tasting to help bartenders understand the drink.

It features a colour chart, a "peel and reveal" panel with distinct aromas such as "woody", "vanilla", "floral" and "spicy". Drinkers are encouraged to map their interpretation of the taste on a chart and compare it with the professional view – though international brand ambassador Ian 'Logi' Logan (left) is quick to point out that even the professionals don't agree on everything.

He presented tasting notes of the same whisky from Jim Murray and Michael Jackson, tasting a 10 Year Old malt for *Whisky Magazine*. Murray said: "Nose: toffee and fresh

figs. Palate: cream toffee, sprinkling of demerara. Finish: fettered spice, oak and matt and vanilla." Jackson said: "Nose: Perfumy, waxed fruits. Hard black chocolate, cedar. Palate: oily, syrupy, sweetish, Belgian toffee wafers, orange and cream pralines. Finish: sweet apricots, crème anglaise. Whiff of cigar smoke."

The moral? Don't be afraid to suggest tastes and smells.



BARTENDERS STAND TO SCOOP €10,000 CASH PRIZE IN CONTEST

What would you spend €10,000 on? A deposit on a house? A down payment on that pub you've had your eye on? Or the trip of a lifetime you'll remember when you're old and grey? For the entrants to the Pilsner Urquell Master Bartender programme the answer to that question needs some careful consideration as the Czech lager has just announced there is a €10,000 prize fund for its global winner.

The introduction of the prize fund is just one of the changes to the 2010 Pilsner Urquell Master Bartender Programme. The brand also announced that, along with its UK Master Bartender, who will attend the final and represent the UK in the Czech Republic, the licensee of the winning premises will also attend the awards ceremony, as well as visiting the brewery in Pilsen.

Gillian Loudon, trade marketing manager for Miller Brands said: "We are delighted to offer our customers the chance for one of their bartenders to win €10,000. We know there is some great talent in pubs and bars across the UK; people who strive for excellence, are professional in everything

they do and have a thirst for knowledge.

"In 2008, Danny Walker won the title while representing the UK, so I have no reason to doubt that a bartender from the UK could once again be crowned Pilsner Urquell Master Bartender of the Year and take home €10,000.

"The programme, which is open to selected draught stockists of Pilsner Urquell and is free to enter, tests bartenders' knowledge of the history of the Czech lager, the storage of the beer and the brand's exacting standards in pour and presentation."

The Top 10 bartenders who successfully complete the various assessments will attend the national final, which will be held in September, with the winner representing the UK in the world final in the Czech Republic. Last year, the UK was represented by Chris Milner from Browns Bar & Brasserie in Leeds.

If you are a Pilsner Urquell stockist and would like to know more about the Master Bartender Programme, contact the Programme Support Line on pilsnersupport@bmt.uk.com



Chudley cruises to become Bacardi's top bartender

Christopher Chudley of Royal Caribbean International has become Bacardi's Bartender of the Year, winning the title at the recent fifth Bacardi Cruise Competition, held at Fisher Island in Florida.

Using Bombay Sapphire gin, he scooped the coveted award with his Elderphire cocktail.

Category winners included Greger Lindberg of Viking Line (last year's overall winner) for his Bacardi-based Infinity cocktail. Alex Zubeldia of Costa Cruises won the Dewar's category with Slimmer. The Grey Goose cocktail was won by Dan Linley of the Holland America Line with his Tropical Breeze Martini and the Signature Cocktail, made with Grey Goose and Bacardi Razz flavoured rum, was Berrini from Renata Chedid for Carnival Cruise Lines.



Pure and simple?

Ukrainian vodka producer Khortyt's new advertising campaign is titled The Taste of Absolute Purity. Hmm...

The campaign is said to focus on the pure and refined taste of the vodka.

One wonders what certain other vodka brands think about it...

Star turn

Rémy Martin is an official supplier to the world famous Cannes Film Festival. To celebrate it has created a "VSOP Cannes", which comes in a one-litre bottle and is meant to reflect the legendary red carpet. It is available in the Aelia duty free store in Paris CDG and at other locations from early May.



BOOK SHELF

The Macallan Masters of Photography

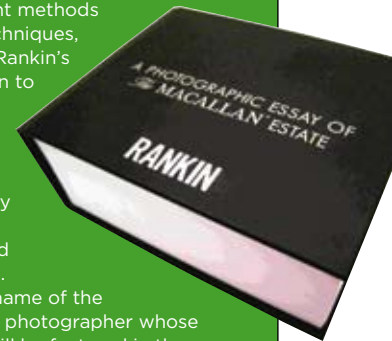
Photographer Rankin was commissioned by Edrington to create a limited edition series of photographs for the inaugural The Macallan Masters of Photography.

The book, Rankin: A Photographic Essay of The Macallan Estate, is the first in a series where photographers are encouraged to experiment with different methods and techniques, hence Rankin's decision to do his 1,000 shots of the distillery with a Polaroid camera.

The name of the second photographer whose work will be featured in the series is to be announced in June.

Published by: The Macallan, themacallan.com

Price: £40



LEARNED BEHAVIOUR?

A UK government survey among 2,282 adults in the hospitality and leisure industry revealed that more than a quarter claimed they had not learnt anything over the past year.

The Department For Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) carried out the research last month among adults aged 18+. It was weighted to represent the UK adult population.

It found that more than a quarter (26%) of those working in the hospitality, tourism and leisure

sector have not learnt a new activity or hobby, while just under one in 10 (8%) haven't read a book for pleasure during the past 12 months.

Thankfully, workers within the sector were enthusiastic about learning something new, with almost half (46%) saying they felt that learning a new skill or hobby would make them more confident at work.

Ben Fletcher, occupational and health psychologist at the University of Hertfordshire said: "Just under a

third of those working in the sector say they aren't interested in learning a new skill, so the big barriers are likely to be around access.

"People really grow from informal learning, both personally and professionally. This research reveals that we now need to take the next step - do something different and break the habit of inertia that prevents us from getting more from our lives and gives something back to society too."

THE LAST WORD

A GOOD BASE ALCOHOL IS LIKE A DECENT COAT STAND. YOU DON'T NOTICE IT'S THERE AND EVERYTHING HANGS ON IT PERFECTLY.

JEAN BATAULT

GABRIEL BOUDIER



READER SERVICES/SUBSCRIPTIONS PLEASE CONTACT: Drinks International, Subscriptions Department Tbl: +44 (0)20 8606 7533 E-mail: mandv.scott@ontimabiz.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

UK PRICE 1 year £107.00 **2 year** £214.00 **3 year** £321.00
EUROPE PRICE 1 year €129.00 **2 year** €258.00 **3 year** €384.00
ROW PRICE 1 year \$299.00 **2 year** \$599.00 **3 year** \$899.00

© Agile Media Ltd 2008 All rights reserved.

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