



TRAVEL MARKETS INSIDER

Industry gatherings deliver benefits to travel retail

Just like South Florida is “the cruise capital of the world,” it is also now the home of three critically important industry events that are becoming more relevant to travel retail.

First, the traditional IAADFS Summit of the Americas taking place in West Palm Beach will welcome its largest number of exhibitors since beginning in its new location post-pandemic. More importantly, the Association has added cruise and supplier representatives as voting members of the Board for the first time in its 40+ year existence.

As IAADFS Chairman Rene Riedi says: “These appointments will bring a varied and in-depth knowledge of their sectors and the overall industry to IAADFS as we adapt to the ever-changing nature of our business.”

Just a few days before the Summit, in Miami, Seatrade Cruise Global, the largest annual global B2B gathering for the cruise industry that attracts more than 10,000 visitors a year, has added two special events that will appeal strongly to companies in the travel retail channel. For the first time, Seatrade is holding a full-day program dedicated specifically to onboard retail shopping (in partnership with *The Moodie Davitt Report*). And returning for a second year, this time in its own venue, Seatrade is hosting an expanded version of F&B@Sea – a show dedicated to the food & beverage part of the cruise business -- that will feature many leading spirits brands. *Travel Markets Insider* is thrilled



Heinemann Americas sets sail with spectacular shopping in 14 retail venues onboard Royal Caribbean's Icon of the Seas. Shown here: some of the high-end retail boutiques in Icon's Central Park neighborhood, a hub for live plants, restaurants and shops. See story on page 30.

to be a Media Partner at F&B@Sea.

In January, the city was also the site of the inaugural Cosmoprof North America Miami beauty show, whose immediate success underscored the need and hunger for a true beauty event in the region. Among the attendees were travel retail operators from Canada to South America. Rumor has it that next year's show will have a dedicated travel retail element.

This issue of *Travel Markets Insider* carries extensive coverage of all three events, and how they relate to duty free and travel retail in the region and globally.

Among some of the other highlights of this issue are the strides being made by U.S.

airports, most notably JFK, LaGuardia and Newark, which are in the midst of multi-billion dollar redevelopments that have resulted in accolades for design and customer service, along with record traffic. Our cruise coverage focuses on four new-builds and the spectacular shopping programs onboard. From South America, *TMI* looks at Argentine President Milei's first 100 days in office and how it has affected the duty free business. From our suppliers, we report on L'Oréal's newest division, and how digital tech is transforming liquor promotions.

All this and more, *Inside Insider*.
Lois Pasternak
Editor/Publisher

INSIDE INSIDER



Inaugural Cosmoprof North America Miami



L'Oreal fills the white space



How digital tech is transforming liquor promotions



It's a 10 creator Carolyn Aronson talks about entering travel retail



Core Plus Duty Free celebrates first year

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International visitors spend nearly \$20 billion on travel and tourism in the U.S. in January 2024

The U.S. National Travel and Tourism Office (NTTO) reports that international visitors spent nearly \$19.7 billion on travel to, and tourism-related activities within the United States in January 2024, an increase of more than 23% compared to January 2023 and the highest level of monthly spending since December 2019. In fact, monthly U.S. travel and tourism exports are within \$1.1 billion of their high-water mark set back in March 2018 when international visitors spent \$20.8 billion exploring the United States.

In contrast, Americans spent more than \$19.0 billion traveling abroad during January, yielding a balance of trade surplus of \$638 million. This is the seventh consecutive month during which the United States generated a balance of trade surplus for travel and tourism-related goods and services.

For all of 2023, international visitors spent nearly \$213.1 billion on U.S. travel and tourism-related goods and services, an increase of nearly 29% when compared to 2022. International visitors injected, on average, nearly \$584 million a day into the U.S. economy during 2023.

U.S. travel and tourism exports accounted for 23% of U.S. services exports during January 2024 and 7.7% of all U.S. exports, goods and services alike.

Travel Exports/Travel Spending

Purchases of travel and tourism-related goods and services by international visitors traveling in the United States totaled \$11.4 billion during January 2024 (compared to \$8.8 billion in January 2023), up 29% versus the previous year. These goods and services include food, lodging, recreation, gifts, entertainment, local

transportation in the United States, and other items incidental to foreign travel.

Travel receipts accounted for 58% of total U.S. travel and tourism exports in January 2024.

Passenger Fare Receipts

Fares received by U.S. carriers from international visitors totaled \$3.5 billion in January 2024 (compared to \$2.8 billion in the previous year), up 22% when compared to January 2023. These receipts represent expenditures by foreign residents on international flights provided by U.S. air carriers.

Passenger fare receipts accounted for 18% of total U.S. travel and tourism exports in January 2024.

ITA forecasts more than 15% increase of international visitors to the United States in 2024

The International Trade Administration's National Travel and Tourism Office (NTTO) forecasts that international visitation to the United States will increase to 77.7 million in 2024, up 10.4 million, or 15.4% from 67.3 million visitors in 2023.

International visitation to the U.S. will reach 85.2 million in 2025, surpassing pre-pandemic 2019 visitation of 79.4 million.

Additionally, NTTO forecasts that the U.S. is on track to reach 91 million visitors in 2026, exceeding the five-year goal of 90 million international visitors by 2027 set in the National Travel and Tourism Strategy.

Background:

International visitors from all countries to the United States continued to increase dramatically in 2023. According to the preliminary data released in February, total international visitation was up 32% from 2022 to 67.3 million arrivals. Of this total in 2023, overseas arrivals to the United States increased 31% to 31.5 million, while Canadian visitors climbed

nearly 50% and visitors from Mexico rose 16%.

As of 2023, total international visitation to the United States has rebounded to 85% of the pre-pandemic 2019 level, while total overseas visitation has reached 78% of its pre-pandemic counterpart.

Mixed recovery by country

Visitation to the United States from the top 12 source market countries included in the forecast has increased dramatically from 2020 to 2023. However, due to myriad socioeconomic factors, the pace of recovery has separated these countries into four groups. *...continued*

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Group 1 – Fully Recovered Countries (India and Canada). Both countries surpassed their pre-pandemic levels in 2023. Helped by a strong economy and international air transportation services, visitation from India has increased 425% since the pandemic in 2020 to 1.76 million in 2023, surpassing the 1.47 million in 2019.

Canadian visitors, including air and land arrivals to the United States, increased 344% from 2020 to 21.3 million in 2023, 3% higher than in 2019. This strongest recovery group will continue to grow in 2024, but the growth rate in 2024 will be more moderate than other major countries, according to the forecast.

Group 2 – European Countries (including the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Italy).

The United States has received a fast and solid growth in visitations from these traditional markets, with visitation achieving 80%-90% of their pre-pandemic levels in 2023. This strong recovery of travel basically reflected pent up demand driven by a vigorous desire to travel following the disruption in travel caused by the pandemic. Arrivals from these countries are expected to reach or surpass 2019 levels in 2025.

Group 3 – Countries 70%-80% recovered (including Mexico, Brazil, Australia, and South Korea)

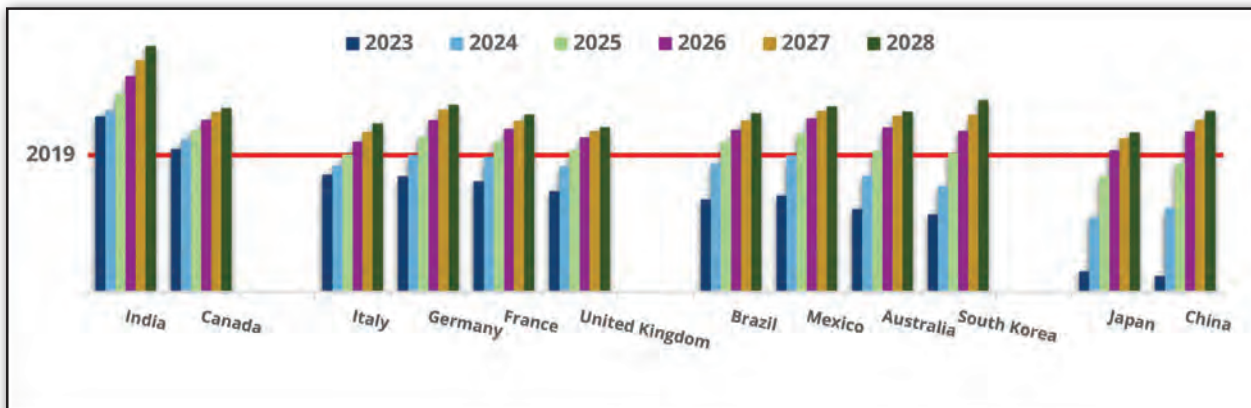
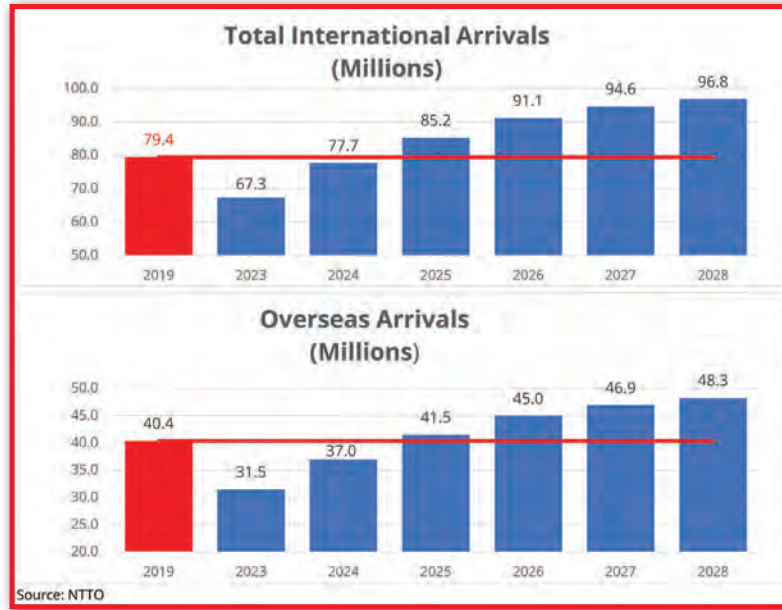
The higher propensity of spending driven by the stable economies and incomes of each of these countries largely stimulated their outbound travel

to the United States. Arrivals from these countries are expected to continue growing significantly in the next two years (increasing more than 20% in 2024 and more than 10% in 2025). Full recoveries will be seen in 2025 for these countries.

Group 4 – Japan and China: Although visitation from these two countries increased considerably in the past two years, the pace of growth was much lower than other top countries. In 2023, arrivals from these two countries were only back to around 40% of the 2019 level.

Possibly due to a decrease or stagnation in household income, as well as higher costs in travel, a slower recovery in Japanese travel to the United States has taken place.

China had the slowest recovery among the U.S. top 12 international inbound markets until 2023. The resumption of air transportation services between China and the United States will certainly improve the situation, says the NTTO. According to the forecast, both Japan and China will reach and exceed 2019 levels of visitation to the United States in 2026.



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DFWC 2023 KPI Monitor unveils shifts in shopping information sources

The Duty Free World Council has released a full-year comparison between 2023 and 2022, revealing marked changes in where global shoppers source their information about duty free shopping.

The full-year comparison details the traffic evolution across world regions as well as some of the main shopper behavior themes such as drivers and barriers to purchase, planning and purpose of purchase, touch points and staff interaction and impact. The KPI Monitor is produced by leading industry research agency mInd-set and published on a quarterly basis.

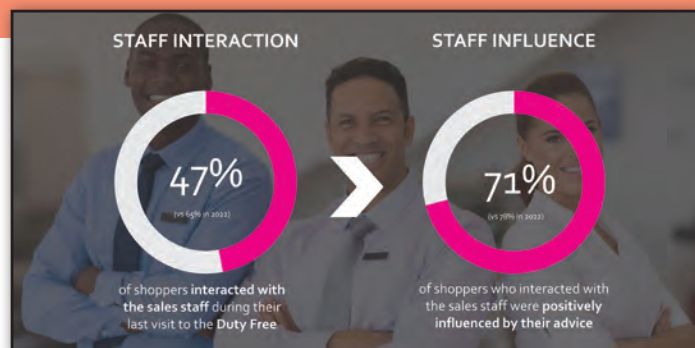
Notable changes in shopper behavior, according to the DFWC Monitor, are seen across all the touch points where consumers source their information about the duty- and tax-free shopping offer, as well as how shoppers engage with retail staff inside the stores.

DFWC President, Sarah Branquinho explained: “The quarterly DFWC KPI Monitor is an excellent tool to gauge how shopper behavior is evolving from one season to the next. The full-year analysis enables us to take a step back, assess longer-term trends, and identify opportunities for the industry to adapt to shopper behavior and consider different approaches to consumer marketing strategies.”

In 2023, less than half of global shoppers engaged with the sales staff inside duty- and tax-free stores according to the DFWC KPI Monitor, while in 2022, almost two-thirds of shoppers (65%) engaged with staff. The impact of staff engagement has also declined year on year, albeit less dramatically. 71% of shoppers said that staff interaction had positively influenced their decision to purchase in 2023, compared to 78% the previous year.

Branquinho continues, “Only one third of shoppers say they were exposed to touch points in 2023 compared to just less than half of shoppers the previous year which suggests the industry should reassess how we are communicating with travelers and seek to improve on generating awareness about the duty- and tax-free retail offer.”

The full-year DFWC Monitor also reveals that internet search, at 16%, was the most popular means of seeking information about the duty- and tax-free offer in 2023, up from 11% a year earlier. All other top



touch points saw a decline in the percentage of shoppers noticing information about the offer between 2022 and 2023. Billboard advertising saw a decline from 24% to 15% in 2023, brands' website fell from 19% to 12%, duty free retailers' websites plummeted from 21% to 11% and online advertising fell from 18% to 10%.

Peter Mohn, CEO and owner at mInd-set added: “The decline in engagement with touch points can be explained by the fact that the pandemic effect has now ended, and that people tend to go back to their pre-Covid behavior; this means they are doing less online research about the travel retail shopping offer. It may also be interpreted by the fact that the shoppers are less excited about traveling compared to immediately after the pandemic. There seems to be a trend towards normalization again.”

The overall purchase planning trend also declined between 2022 and 2023 according to the DFWC KPI monitor. In 2022, 79% of shoppers planned their purchases either specifically or with no particular brand or product in mind, with just over one in five purchasing on impulse. In 2023, just less than three-quarters of shoppers say they planned their duty free shopping purchases generally with 26% of shoppers purchasing on impulse.

The full-year DFWC KPI Monitor also reviews the changes in global air traffic, as well as the rankings for top airports and nationalities for international departures. The Asia Pacific region saw the most significant increase in international departures in 2023 compared to a year earlier. Border re-openings and the lifting of international travel restrictions across the region were implemented later in Asia Pacific compared to other world regions which had already seen significant traffic recovery in 2022. In 2023, traffic in Asia Pacific air traffic grew by 244% on 2022 figures, compared to the global average of 137%.

There was moderate change among the top ten airport rankings between 2022 and 2023. Dubai, London Heathrow, Paris Charles De Gaulle, and Amsterdam retained the top four positions. Singapore ascended from tenth to fifth position and Seoul Incheon Airport climbed into the top ten in seventh place, while Doha's Hamad International fell out of the top ten ranking. Frankfurt, Istanbul, Madrid, and JFK comprised the other top ten rankings with a slight change in order year to year. The top ten nationalities for international departures remained unchanged except for tenth placed Canada in 2022 yielding its position to South Korea in 2023.



Punta Cana Int'l Airport - Dominican Republic



Punta Cana Int'l Airport - Dominican Republic



Tocumen Int'l Airport - Panama



Miami Int'l Airport - Miami, FL



The Venetian - Macau



The Venetian - Macau



Miami Int'l Airport - Miami, FL



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Renderings of The New Terminal One at JFK, which is scheduled to open in 2026.

The New Terminal One at JFK launches Global Duty Free RFP

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ), The New Terminal One (NTO) and Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield (URW) Airports have announced the launch of the commercial program for the privately funded \$9.5 billion all-international terminal scheduled to open in 2026 as part of the \$19 billion transformation of John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) in New York.

The commercial vision will converge New York City favorites, global powerhouse brands, engaging guest experiences and thoughtful amenities under one spectacular roof.

When fully complete, the New Terminal One will be the largest terminal at JFK, with 23 gates and more than 300,000 square feet of retail, dining and lounge space over a total footprint of 2.4 million square feet.

Global Duty Free RFP Issued

As an important project milestone, URW Airports issued its first prime operator Request for Proposals (RFP) and is seeking an innovative and bold global duty free partner to achieve its vision and connect with the vibrant local maker and vendor community to feature local products. The tender is offered as a single package covering five outlets in the project's initial phase, with additional

space provided in future phases. As part of the RFP, the operator must include at least 30 percent airport concessions disadvantaged business enterprise (ACDBE) participation and incorporate a minimum of 5 percent of local business enterprise (LBE) product in their shop floor product mix, complementary to the overall merchandising plan.

URW Airports is committed to lowering barriers to entry and providing technical assistance and support to ensure The New Terminal One reflects the rich diversity of its communities, creates strong career paths for local students and workers, and fosters impactful partnerships with local organizations and programs including the Port Authority's Institute of Concessions (IOC).

The team is creating a dynamic offer of right-sized opportunities to provide flexible entry points for ACDBEs and LBEs that balance customer preferences and commercial objectives while growing the capacity of local businesses to help them reach their ultimate success.

International Shoppes is the current duty free concessionaire at Terminal 1.

Commercial Vision

The new experience will combine a curated mix of luxury brands, premium apparel, New York's signature global

cuisine and experiential categories. The collection is expected to include several first-to-airport market brands as well as a focus on unique products, food, and beverage sourced from local makers, purveyors, and farmers.

The state-of-the-art terminal design incorporates a range of emotions one feels while in New York — from the luxury excitement and vibrancy of the Met Gala to the charm of the city's neighborhood pockets and the lush nature of New York's parks. Passengers will get a taste of Queens through both cuisine and aesthetics, with all five boroughs represented throughout the terminal, says the tender announcement.

"The launch of the commercial program for the New Terminal One is an important milestone as we advance towards our scheduled opening in 2026," said Dr. Gerrard P. Bushell, president and CEO of The New Terminal One. "We are proud to partner with URW Airports to launch a world-class retail experience featuring global brands and local New York businesses, reflecting the dazzling array of offerings that our great city is known for. Our food and beverage selection will showcase a rich diversity of cuisines and flavors inspired by the tapestry of cultures that make up New York City, while driving real economic opportunities in our community for generations to come."

About John F. Kennedy International Airport's The New Terminal One

The New Terminal One is being built on sites now occupied by JFK's Terminal 1, the recently closed Terminal 2, and the former Terminal 3, where it will anchor the international airport's south side. Construction is taking place in phases. The first phase, including the new arrivals and departures halls and first set of 14 new gates, is expected to open in 2026.

At completion, which is anticipated in 2030, the New Terminal One will be 2.4 million square feet, making it the largest terminal at JFK and nearly the same size as LaGuardia Airport's two new terminals combined. NTO will be a state-of-the-art international-only terminal with 23 gates. Sustainably designed and future-focused, the terminal will feature expansive, naturally lit public spaces, cutting-edge technology and an array of amenities, all designed to enhance the customer experience and compete with some of the highest-rated airport terminals in the world.



Port Authority records busiest year ever at its three major airports

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey reports that 2023 marked the busiest year ever at its three major airports. The totals surpassed pre-pandemic highs as passengers took advantage of additional capacity and top-tier amenities at the remodeled facilities.

In 2023, a total of 144 million air passengers flew through John F. Kennedy International (JFK), LaGuardia (LGA), and Newark Liberty International (EWR) airports, according to initial estimates. The total was 3 percent above the previous record of 140 million passengers set in 2019.

The demand comes following years of redevelopment work at the agency's three major airports, transforming outdated air terminals into award-winning facilities.

This includes Newark Liberty's new Terminal A, which recently marked its first year in operation by welcoming the terminal's 15 millionth passenger and receiving a Prix Versailles Special Prize recognizing its distinctive exterior design.

At LaGuardia, the new world-class Terminal B opened in 2020 --and won

awards as best new airport terminal in the world, including the Prix Versailles from UNESCO and honors from Skytrax, which also gave the terminal the first 5-star rating in the nation -- and the new Terminal C followed in 2022.

Extensive, once-in-a-generation redevelopment work continues at JFK and EWR for new and upgraded terminals, ground transportation enhancements and road network overhauls.

Newark, LaGuardia, and JFK all set new domestic travel records in 2023, serving 35.3 million, 30.6 million, and 29.1 million domestic passengers, respectively.

Newark Liberty recorded the most significant jump. Newark's record 49.1 million passengers in 2023 was a six percent increase over its previous high set in 2019, as travelers took advantage of increased capacity offered by the new and larger Terminal A.

Newark Terminal A's 15 million passengers in its first year is more than the previous Terminal A served in any of the 50 years it was in operation. As a common-use terminal, its 33 gates are utilized by

multiple carriers to optimize efficiency. The new one million-square-foot terminal is 20% larger than the one it replaced.

LaGuardia's new high of 32.4 million passengers was a 4 percent jump from its previous record in 2019. The new Terminal B, fully opened in 2020, was built to handle more than double the capacity of its predecessor. Likewise, the new Terminal C, which opened in 2022, is 85 percent larger than the two terminals it replaced.

JFK's 2023 volume of 62.5 million was on par with its robust 2019 performance, with a further resurgence evident by year end: December marked the first month in which JFK's international passenger volume surpassed totals from the same month in 2019. Its 2.8 million international passenger total was a three percent increase over December 2019's figures.

In addition, December 2023 marked the busiest December ever for Port Authority airports. The three airports welcomed 12 million passengers over the month, an increase of over 70,000 from the previous December record set in 2019.

Extraordinary PANYNJ demand comes amid redevelopment of all three major airports

The Port Authority is in the midst of an unprecedented \$30 billion worth of airport redevelopment initiatives across New York and New Jersey.

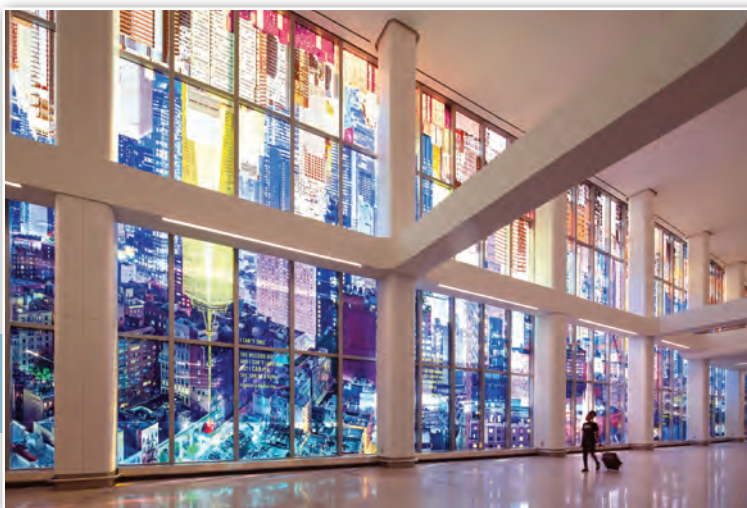
At Newark Liberty, the agency has embarked on a complete redevelopment that began with the brand-new Terminal A – the centerpiece of an airport-wide renaissance designed to establish the airport as a world-class gateway for the New Jersey and New York region. The Port Authority is also moving ahead on a full replacement of Newark’s AirTrain system, along with the EWR Station Access project to increase airport and public transit access for underserved Newark and Elizabeth communities. The next phase of the airport’s redevelopment will be guided by the work of a world-class airport master planner selected by the agency.

At JFK, the \$9.5 billion development of a state-of-the-art New Terminal One that will anchor the airport’s south side broke ground in September 2022. A new \$4.2 billion Terminal 6, which will connect seamlessly with Terminal 5 to create an anchor terminal on the airport’s north side, broke ground in February 2023. The \$1.5 billion expansion of Terminal 4, led by Delta Air Lines and JFK International Air Terminal (JFKIAT), is nearing completion. Additionally, the \$400 million expansion of Terminal 8, led by American Airlines, which operates the terminal, and British Airways, which relocated to Terminal 8 late last year, was completed in November 2022, with a new concessions program underway. Alongside the terminal work at JFK, the Port Authority is overhauling the airport’s roadway network and parking infrastructure to create more streamlined roadway navigation and a new state-of-the-art ground transportation center.

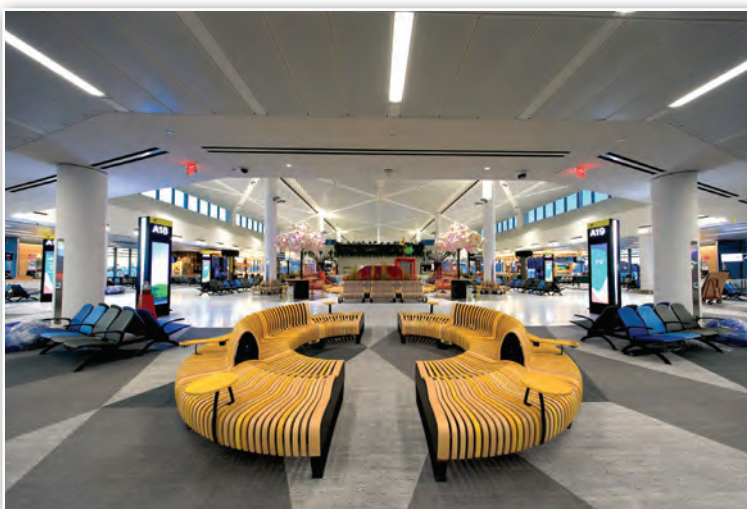
At LaGuardia, the comprehensive plan to construct a whole new airport has been substantially completed, with the full opening of Terminal B in 2020 and Delta Air Lines’ new Terminal C following suit in 2022. In the fall of 2023, the Atrium Conference and Business Center at LaGuardia opened. Since its opening, Terminal B has won awards as best new airport terminal in the world, including the Prix Versailles from UNESCO and honors from Skytrax, which also gave the terminal the first 5-star rating in the nation.

“We are driving the investment of \$30 billion of redevelopment work at our airports, and the results are in: a record-shattering 144 million passengers in 2023,” said Port Authority Chairman Kevin O’Toole. “These extraordinary numbers are a clear testament to the ambitious work we’ve undertaken to modernize our airports, giving passengers a streamlined, comfortable, and 21st century travel experience no matter which airport they choose.”

“As passengers continued returning to our airports, many for the first time in years, we are delighted to greet them with an entirely transformed experience from curb to gate,” said Port Authority Executive Director Rick Cotton. “Demand for air travel has not only returned but has surpassed pre-pandemic levels. We are delighted to provide new world-class facilities to this record-breaking number of travelers.”



The new Terminal B at LaGuardia was fully opened in 2020.



Newark’s new Terminal A, which just celebrated its first year in operation, welcomed more than 15 million passengers in 2023. Terminal A was given a prestigious five-star rating by Skytrax. Terminal A now joins LaGuardia Airport’s Terminal B as the only two airport terminals in North America awarded the highest rating by Skytrax.



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DEN Sets All-Time Passenger Traffic Record in 2023

Denver International Airport (DEN) set a new record last year, serving more than 70 million annual passengers in 2023. During the year, DEN's carriers served 77,837,917 passengers, a 12.3% increase over the 69,286,461 passengers served in 2022, the previous record.

"2023 was a year of extraordinary growth for DEN and I am proud of the airport team for the ways that we have adjusted our strategies, invested in new technologies and worked to meet the moment while also continuing to prepare for the future," said DEN CEO Phil Washington. "It is incumbent upon us to ensure the airport's infrastructure can continue to accommodate the growth we expect and that's why our Vision 100 strategic plan is focused on preparing the airport to serve 100 million annual passengers and serves as a blueprint to align DEN's decision-making and accountability."

In addition to 2023 ranking as DEN's busiest year ever, the airport's passenger traffic notched several notable milestones

during the year. Every single month set an all-time record in terms of passenger traffic volume. In addition, DEN recorded its five busiest months in history during the year.

2023 marked the first year in history for DEN to exceed four million annual international passengers: a total of 4,036,545 international passengers used the airport in 2023, an increase of 21.5% as compared to 2022. Each month was a new record, and July 2023 was the first month ever to record more than 400,000 international passengers. In total, international passengers accounted for 5.2% of DEN's traffic in 2023, up from the pre-pandemic level of 4.6% in 2019.

DEN's two largest carriers, United and Southwest, set all-time passenger records in 2023. United served more than 36 million passengers during the year and captured 46.8% of total DEN market share. Southwest captured 30.9% of total DEN market share on annual volume exceeding 24 million passengers. DEN's third-largest carrier, Frontier, served more than 7.5 million passengers during the

year, accounting for 9.6% of total market share and the carrier's highest volume since 2019.

Although 2023 now also ranks as DEN's busiest year ever in terms of origination and destination (O&D) traffic, the growth was just 0.1% over 2019, the previous busiest year for O&D passengers. Connecting passengers propelled DEN's extraordinary growth in 2023 on an increase of 35.7% as compared to 2019.

Total cargo volume at DEN in 2023 surpassed 680 million tons, a 5.9% decrease as compared to 2022 but a 1.4% increase as compared to 2019. In 2023, cargo volume on passenger carriers exceeded 2022 volume by 8.1% while volume on all-cargo carriers declined by 10%.

Through the first 10 months of the year, DEN ranked as the third-busiest airport in the U.S. and the fifth-busiest airport in the world, according to worldwide passenger traffic statistics from Airports Council International (ACI).

O'Hare, Midway Airports saw strong passenger growth in 2023

The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) released its annual passenger and operations data for 2023, showing steady year-over-year growth at O'Hare and Midway International Airports, with an unprecedented level of air service on the horizon for summer 2024.

Approximately 73.9 million passengers traveled through O'Hare last year, marking an 8.1% increase over 2022. Midway transported more than 22 million passengers in 2023, a 10.7% increase over the prior year.

Midway, which surpassed pre-pandemic passenger levels in the first half of 2023, closed the full year out with a 5.5% increase in passengers compared to 2019. Sustained passenger growth continues at O'Hare, which ended 2023 at 87.3% of its 2019 passenger total, marking a four-year high.

Unprecedented air service expected for summer 2024

O'Hare is expected to continue its robust passenger growth in 2024, with a strong summer travel season. The Terminal Area Forecast from the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) projects 41.5 million enplanements at O'Hare for 2024 and 44.1 million for 2025, compared to 42.2 million enplanements recorded in 2019. CDA data shows 36.6 million enplanements at O'Hare in 2023, up 7.3% over the prior year.

Enplanements count departing passengers only, while overall passenger figures include both arrivals and departures.

At the peak of the summer in July 2024, scheduled departing seats from O'Hare are expected to be off by just 3% from July 2019 levels. O'Hare will also serve 67 international destinations this July, up from 65 in July 2019.

Air service developments

United Airlines plans to offer some 175 routes to O'Hare this summer, more than any other airline—including 15 European routes, compared to nine in the summer of 2019. Published flight schedules from United show seat capacity for 2024 up 3% in July, 4% in August and 1% in September, compared to the same months in 2019.

Cathay Pacific will increase its Hong Kong service from three to five times per week starting March 31 which will improve access to Hong Kong, Mainland China and Southeast Asia.

United will also launch the first service from O'Hare to the new airport in Tulum, Mexico in April.

There are also new and expanded routes to Italy, Greece, and Canada, as well as nine new domestic routes to O'Hare from Frontier Airlines.

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Golden Anniversary: DFW Airport marks 50 years of service

On Jan. 13, 1974, Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (DFW) began operations as the newest and most modern commercial airport in the United States, heralding in a new chapter for modern aviation.

This Jan. 13, DFW recognized its 50th anniversary by beginning a year-long celebration that reflects on the airport's success, looks ahead to its exciting future and thanks the community for five decades of support.

In 1974, DFW was the largest airport ever constructed in the U.S. and twice the size of any before it. The airport began operations with nine airlines, and today is home to 28 airlines – including 16 international airlines – with service to 256 destinations around the world.

With an estimated 80 million passengers in 2023, DFW is now the second-busiest airport in the world. Its central location allows DFW customers to reach any major metropolitan area in North America within four hours. This has made DFW a critical piece of the expansive growth of Dallas, Fort Worth and the entire North Texas region.

DFW is American Airlines' largest hub with operations from the airport to nearly



DFW airfield, 1974, aerial view. Photo Courtesy DFW Media Department

every corner of the globe.

DFW has seen many historic moments during the past 50 years, including as the first U.S. airport to host the supersonic Concorde on Sept. 20, 1973, the first U.S. airport to host a visit by a NASA space shuttle on May 16, 1989, and the first American airport with the ability to land four aircraft at the same time.

The airport also has grown to become a major economic engine for the regional economy. DFW's contribution includes supporting an annual payroll of \$38 billion,

benefitting over 634,000 jobs. Visitors to DFW and the surrounding region generate \$24 billion in economic activity each year, resulting in more than \$5 billion in state and local taxes.

"All of us at DFW Airport carry the proud legacy that was started by the Dallas and Fort Worth leaders who saw the potential for a combined commercial airport for Dallas and Fort Worth that could grow and support the region well into the future," said Sean Donohue, DFW's Chief Executive Officer.

Hartsfield-Jackson sets new post-pandemic record

Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL) reports strong traffic growth as it served 104.7 million passengers in 2023, marking a substantial increase and surpassing post-pandemic levels. The increase reflects the airport's robust recovery from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and underscores the resurgence of domestic leisure travel.

Passenger numbers increased by 10.9 million over 2022, up 11.7%. ATL's highest passenger volume occurred in 2019, with over 110 million passengers traveling through the Airport. In 2023, aircraft operations grew by 7.1%, reaching a total of 775,818 takeoffs and landings.

Monthly figures for December 2023 underscored these positive trends with a 9.7% increase in passenger traffic and an 8.52% rise in aircraft operations compared to the previous December.

MIA reaches record passenger and cargo numbers, receives historic investments

Miami International Airport (MIA) reports record passenger and cargo traffic in 2023, as well as substantial investments in maintenance and capital improvements.

Audited reports confirm that MIA achieved its highest-ever annual passenger total, handling 52.3 million travelers in 2023, up by 3.2% over the previous year's record.

Notably, international travel experienced an exceptional 8.5% surge, reaching 23.2 million passengers. Domestic traffic, though down by half a percent, still accounted for 29.1 million travelers.

The stellar performance in passenger numbers was primarily fueled by American Airlines, MIA's hub carrier, which

contributed significantly by serving 31.4 million passengers in 2023.

American Airlines increased its year-over-year seat capacity by 10% during the winter 2023 schedule. MIA also welcomed service launches by carriers Volaris El Salvador, Norse Atlantic Airways, and Porter Airlines, expanding its portfolio to 96 passenger and cargo airlines - the highest among all U.S. airports.

Cargo operations at MIA registered a 1% growth to achieve a record-breaking 2.78 million tons. This accomplishment was driven by 2.2 million tons of international cargo and 548,976 tons of domestic shipments.

U.S. government awards nearly \$1 billion in grants to improve airports

On February 15, 2024, the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) announced that it is awarding \$970 million to 114 airports across the U.S., spanning 44 states and three territories. The funding comes from the Bipartisan Investing in America agenda, and launches projects that will improve passenger experience, accessibility, and sustainability while creating jobs.

Investments enhancing the passenger experience include new baggage systems, larger security checkpoints, increasing gate capacity, and modernizing aging infrastructure throughout terminals and ground transportation.

These investments further increase terminal sustainability and improve accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Nine grants will address the needs of aging air traffic control towers. These awards are on top of the nearly \$2 billion for airport terminals announced over the past two years. The vast majority

of these terminal projects are under construction.

Many grants contain an element that will build new or expanded terminal facilities.

Among them are:

\$35 million to Washington Dulles International Airport in Virginia to fund a portion of the construction of a 14-gate, 400,000 sq. ft. terminal building including connections to the Aerotrain and Metrorail.

\$20 million to Salt Lake City International Airport in Utah to fund a portion of the Concourse B terminal expansion that will include 16 gates.

\$27 million to Miami International Airport to fund a portion of the design phase for the modernization and redevelopment of MIA's Central Terminal and Concourses E and F.

Many grants contain an element that will improve the passenger experience by improving security screening areas, providing faster and more reliable baggage

systems, and increasing accessibility for passengers with disabilities. Among them are:

\$40 million to Chicago O'Hare International Airport: This award funds improvements to Terminal 3 to include increasing the central passenger corridor width, a reconfigured TSA check-point, new hold room, a new ADA compliant and family restroom, and updates to the baggage system.

\$26.6 million to Denver International: This award funds a portion of the baggage handling system replacement, including the control system. In addition, the new system will improve energy efficiency and increase capacity.

Other grants will increase access to other modes of transportation or improve roadways, refurbish their airport owned airport traffic control towers, increase terminal sustainability, and improve airport access in smaller communities.

Miami-Dade County launches "I AM MIA" customer campaign

On February 29, Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, Miami International Airport (MIA) Director and CEO Ralph Cutié, and key airport partners launched the "I AM MIA" campaign, a pivotal initiative designed to transform the customer experience at one of the busiest airports in the United States.

The comprehensive program aims to enhance the overall airport experience for passengers and MIA's workforce community of more than 37,000 employees, the largest economic engine in Miami-Dade County.

The "I AM MIA" campaign is a key element of MIA's ambitious Modernization in Action (M.I.A.) Plan, a transformative initiative marked by historic investments in maintenance and capital infrastructure projects.

This groundbreaking campaign will deploy dedicated Lightning Crew teams of highly trained employees to strategically patrol the terminal for maintenance issues in need of immediate attention.

Other Lightning Crew members will proactively address passenger inquiries and concerns, with the ultimate goal of significantly enhancing the overall customer experience at the airport.



Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava and MIA Director and CEO Ralph Cutié unveil the new I Am MIA logo.

Campaign highlights:

Customer-Centric Teams: Specially trained Lightning Crew teams will be strategically positioned throughout the terminals to assist passengers and address maintenance issues, fostering a more personalized and responsive experience.

Modernization in Action: Aligned with the M.I.A. Plan, the campaign is part of an extensive effort to enhance operational efficiency and customer experience. It is linked with MIA's commitment to infrastructure enhancements, including a new parking facility, terminal

redevelopment, restroom upgrades, new passenger boarding bridges, and renovated conveyance units, among other improvements. Through the Modernization in Action (M.I.A.) Plan, 126 passenger loading bridges, 203 public bathrooms, and 616 conveyance units (elevators, escalators, and moving walkways) are being renovated in phases over the next 5-7 years.

With a record-breaking 52.3 million travelers served last year, the "I AM MIA" campaign responds to the increased demand for both operational improvements and elevated customer care.



LaGuardia was among the honorees for best airports serving 25 to 40 passengers per year.

ACI's 2023 ASQ awards best airports for customer experience worldwide—as chosen by passengers

Nine airports across all regions have won Airports Council International's (ACI) ASQ Awards in all 5 departure categories. The awards indicate maximizing a pleasant experience at every stage of the airport journey.

The top-winning airports, by region, are: Africa: Casablanca Mohammed V International Airport; Asia-Pacific: Sultan Hasanuddin International Airport; Yogyakarta International Airport; Europe: Izmir Adnan Menderes Airport; Aeroporto di Roma-Fiumicino; Latin America: Guayaquil International Airport; Middle East: Salalah Airport; and North America: Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport; Gerald R. Ford International (Grand Rapids, Michigan).

Airports Council International's (ACI) World, in partnership with leading travel technology company Amadeus, created the Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Awards to rank the best airports for customer experience worldwide—as chosen by passengers.

Unlike other programs in the aviation industry, ASQ's approach is anchored in live research conducted through surveys administered directly to travelers at the airport, capturing their satisfaction

levels on the very day of travel. The ASQ Surveys cover over 30 performance indicators across key elements of the passenger's airport experience, giving the most complete picture of the passenger experience journey. This distinctive methodology is renowned for its robustness, enabling meaningful statistical inference and providing unparalleled insights into the passenger experience.

400 partners, global scope

ACI World Director General Luis Felipe de Oliveira said, "We are delighted that in 2023 the ASQ program surpassed 400 participating airports in a historical record—reflecting our members' commitment to placing the passenger first. Likewise, we thank the guests that dedicated their precious time by providing feedback in close to 600,000 surveys. The global growth of the program underscores the trust placed in its scientific and live approach, making ASQ the go-to standard for airport customer experience assessment in the aviation industry. The future success of airports hinges on the unwavering commitment to delivering a stellar customer experience at every touchpoint. In an era where passenger expectations are

evolving rapidly, excellence in customer service isn't just a goal; it's the key to ensuring airports remain not just gateways, but memorable destinations in themselves."

ASQ Awards highlights

In 2023, over half of the world's travelers passed through an ASQ airport, underscoring the program's credibility and influence in shaping the standards for exceptional airport services.

In 2023, 170 ASQ Awards were won by 90 airports around the world from 595,000 surveys collected,

Categories for departures include Best Airports by Size and Region, as well as Most Dedicated Staff, Easiest Airport Journey, Most Enjoyable Airport, and Cleanest Airport. For arrivals, the category is Top Airports Globally.

ACI World and Amadeus will celebrate the 2023 ASQ Awards winners and the ACI World Director General's Roll of Excellence inductees at the prestigious ASQ Awards Gala Dinner during the 2024 ACI World Customer Experience Summit and Exhibition, from September 23 to 26 in Atlanta.

ASC ASQ awards: The Americas

North America: This award recognizes airports with the top 20% overall satisfaction score by size and region at departure.

Under 2 million passengers per year

Fort McMurray International Airport (Fort McMurray, Canada)
Saskatoon John G. Diefenbaker International Airport (Saskatoon, Canada)

2 to 5 million passengers per year

Gerald R. Ford International Airport (Grand Rapids, United States of America)
Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport (Greer, United States of America)
Portland International Jetport (Portland, United States of America)

5 to 15 million passengers per year

Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International Airport (Cincinnati, United States of America)
Indianapolis International Airport

(Indianapolis, United States of America)
Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (New Orleans, United States of America)

15 to 25 million passengers per year

Dallas Love Field Airport (Dallas, United States of America)
Tampa International Airport (Tampa, United States of America)

25 to 40 million passengers per year

LaGuardia Airport (New York, United States of America)
Minneapolis/St Paul International Airport (Minneapolis, United States of America)

Over 40 million passengers per year

Dallas Fort Worth International Airport (Dallas, United States of America)
Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (Atlanta, United States of America)
Toronto Pearson International Airport (Toronto, Canada)

Latin America-Caribbean: This award recognizes airports with the top 20% overall satisfaction score by size and region at departure.

Under 2 million passengers per year

Guanacaste Airport (Liberia, Costa Rica)
Hermosillo International Airport (Hermosillo, Mexico)

2 to 5 million passengers per year

Guanajuato International Airport (Guanajuato, Mexico)
Guayaquil International Airport (Guayaquil, Ecuador)

5 to 15 million passengers per year

Los Cabos International Airport (Los Cabos, Mexico)
Punta Cana International Airport (Punta Cana, Dominican Republic)
Quito International Airport (Quito, Ecuador)



One of the most impressive wins in the 2023 ACI ASQ customer satisfaction award was that bestowed on New York's LaGuardia Airport, which won in its category of hubs serving 25 to 40 million passengers per year.

According to the March 12 issue of Metropolitan Airport News, LGA "soared from worst in class to best in class in a stunning reversal of fortunes for an airport that was once reviled and is now beloved by travelers." 2023 was the first full year that all new passenger facilities at LaGuardia were completed and in use... The airport earned an overall passenger satisfaction score of 4.24 out of 5, which was 20 percent higher than its score in 2018 when passengers rated LaGuardia as the worst airport in North America.

More kudos go to Toronto Pearson,

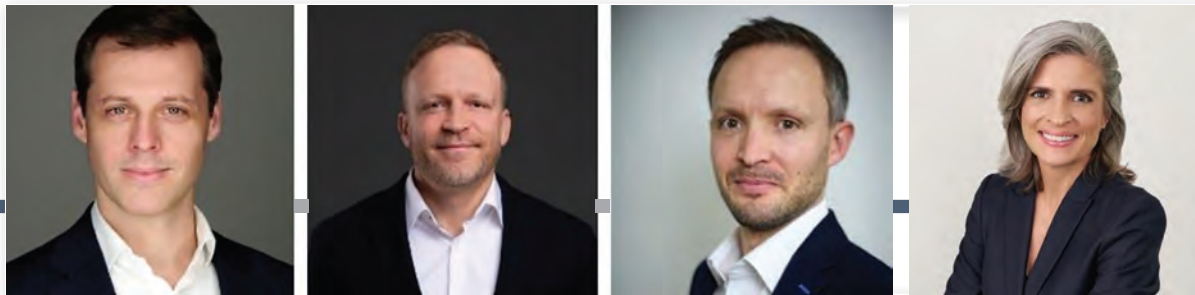
which has been named the "Best Airport over 40 million passengers in North America" for the sixth time in seven years by ACI's ASQ awards. Toronto Pearson regained the ranking in 2023 after winning "Best Airport over 40 million passengers in North America" for five consecutive years between 2017 and 2021.

"The results of this year's survey and this award is the outcome of the collective hard work from all our employees, to deliver in new ways that heighten the reliability and enjoyment of the experience at Pearson," said Deborah Flint, President and CEO, Toronto Pearson. "We see the results of our investments in people, assets, and technology that enhanced operations and improved every part of the passenger journey. Whether it's launching new digital tools to give our customers more control

over their experience, to deploying new modernized equipment and completing more asset restoration programs, this is all part of our commitment to providing passengers with a world-class experience – and we are excited to deliver even more in the years ahead."

Toronto Pearson also introduced The Pearson Standard in 2023, a program that formalizes accountabilities for airport partners and Toronto in order hold everyone to a wide range of operational standards.

Note: Dallas Fort Worth International Airport and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport were also named Best Airport over 40 million passengers in North America for 2023.



Felipe Grant, Markus Suter, Greg Ford, and Julia Seve have been added to the IAADFS Board of Directors.

IAADFS adds four supplier members to Board of Directors

In another important step that expands its scope, the International Association of Airport and Duty Free Stores (IAADFS) added four new Board members from the supplier community to its Board of Directors. Board members serve for a two-year term.

The new supplier Directors, announced in early March, include Greg Ford, General Manager - TR Americas, Pernod Ricard; Felipe Grant, General Manager, Puig Travel Retail Americas; and Markus Suter, Market Manager GTR - The Americas, Lindt.

At the end of the month, the IAADFS also announced that Julia Seve, Managing Director for L'Oréal Travel Retail Americas, had become a Board member.

This marks the first time that the Association's supplier partners have seats as voting members of the association's Board of Directors.

Michael Payne, President & CEO, IAADFS, comments: "While our supplier partners have long been members of the association, have served on several advisory committees, and have been strong supporters throughout the years, this represents an expanded role and vital addition to the Board."

"The addition of these talented and well-respected members of the duty free and travel retail industry, all from

prestigious and major industry companies, will be invaluable additions to the Board and our deliberations. This is particularly relevant as we examine how to best respond to the changes and opportunities confronting our industry and evaluate the services that we provide to our members," stated Rene Reidi, Chairman, IAADFS.

"We very much appreciate their support and interest in becoming active members of the Board of Directors. These appointments will bring a varied and in-depth knowledge of their sectors and the overall industry to IAADFS as we adapt to the ever-changing nature of our business."

Felipe Grant is an accomplished professional with 20 years of experience in the beauty industry, previously working with L'Occitane and LVMH. Since 2020 he has been General Manager Travel Retail Americas with Puig. His leadership and vision have been instrumental in the company's retail development, driving the transformation of such brands as Carolina Herrera, Rabanne, Jean Paul Gaultier and Penhaligon's.

Markus Suter has worked for more than thirteen years with Lindt. For the last ten years Markus has been based in Brazil, responsible for travel retail within the Americas. Suter has successfully built up Lindt's business in Latin America and North America, helping to establish the

company's strong market position in the region by focusing on premiumization.

Greg Ford has spent almost 20 years in the liquor industry, including the last nine focused on the travel retail business across Europe and the Americas. Following a decade of working at Diageo, Ford joined Pernod Ricard in 2018 and currently leads their travel retail business in the Americas, based in Miami. Since relocating to the U.S. from the UK in 2022, he has maintained his role as a strong advocate for the interests of the duty free and travel retail industry throughout the region.

Julia Seve has more than 20 years of experience working at the L'Oréal Group, the world's leading beauty group. During her time with the company, she has served in several capacities, including various roles in Brazil, France, and most recently, the United States, as the Managing Director for L'Oréal Travel Retail Americas.

"We could not be more excited and pleased to have these [individuals] be a part of our Board. With their insights and knowledge of the industry they will be a huge part of our plans and direction going forward," said Payne.

These new additions follow the appointment of Starboard President and CEO Lisa Bauer to the Board, the first time that cruise retailing has been represented on the Board.

TFWA appoints new Conference Director

Michele Miranda has been promoted to TFWA Conference Director.

She took over the role on February 1 and is now responsible for overseeing all of TFWA's conferences and workshops.

Miranda has successfully brought her expertise to high-profile functions worldwide throughout her career.

Having worked at TFWA as Conference Manager since 2015, Miranda's unique portfolio of skills have enriched TFWA

events for nearly a decade and will continue to do so as the association marks its 40th anniversary year.

"I offer my heartfelt congratulations to Michele on her well-deserved promotion. Michele has proven to be an outstanding member of the TFWA team over the past nine years, and has done much to enhance the quality of our conferences, ensuring the participation of some of duty free and travel retail's most compelling, engaging

and knowledgeable speakers. I have no doubt that her enthusiasm, energy and professionalism will stand her in good stead in her new role of Conference Director," said TFWA President Erik Juul-Mortensen.



TFWA

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Core Plus Duty Free's year one journey of growth and innovation

Operating from a modest kiosk at Melbourne Orlando Airport (MLB) in Florida since 2019, Core Plus Duty Free opened a 500-square-foot store in MLB in January 2023 as part of the official inauguration of the airport's Terminal Renovation and Expansion. The small airport, which serves Central Florida (home of Disney World in Orlando), handled 747,000 passengers last year, the second highest traffic volume in its history. Almost 107,000 were international passengers, nearly all of them coming through British holiday company TUI, whose season runs from April through the end of November.

Core Plus Duty Free is operated by Legacy Consulting Group, an ACDBE and HUB certified small business founded by Brittany Williams Leverett, who is the company's president and CEO. *TMI* spoke with Williams Leverett about her first full year in operation in the store and the lessons she has learned.

"We had a fantastic year. We grew our gross sales by 66% between 2022 and 2023, and raised our transaction-per-basket to \$54 and change," she says.

In 2023, MLB completed a \$72,000,000, 86,000-square-foot expansion that brought a new terminal, restrooms, food, beverage and retail space, plus new passenger bridges able to support wide-body aircraft. This expansion allowed Core Plus Duty Free to move into its new space, says Williams Leverett.

"The past year has been such an adventure. I was still working a second tech job when we opened the store. But I finally stepped into my full time entrepreneurship in June of last year and haven't looked back since then," explains Williams Leverett.

"I really focused on the store, focused on getting us more products. For example, we went from having one tobacco provider, Weitnauer, and now we have JTI onboard, and, fingers crossed, we're hoping to add another one pretty soon.

"We also have some wonderful new brands, some of which are travel exclusives – we added Noshinku, an award-winning natural ingredient nourishing hand sanitizer, and La Bella Donna, all-natural mineral cosmetics and Pooka infused body butters, both of which are women-founded brands."

Williams Leverett believes that some of the most valuable lessons she learned



Brittany Williams Leverett (right) and the Core Plus Duty Free team.

over the past year have come about while helping her staff learn and flourish.

"The most fun part of the past year, an area that I feel often gets overlooked, is that I really spent time to help develop my team.

"I started paying attention to all of their different strengths and matching their strengths to the needs of the business. I promoted almost 100% of the team that I had at the time to unique roles that helped us cover departments.

"Most duty free businesses have departments for inventory management, for merchandising, for sales floor, but as a little unicorn of a company I had to build this.

"So in the off-season, after we finished our UK flights with TUI in November, I sat down with the team so we could work on developing standard operating procedures. I told them that I wanted their buy-in with this, I wanted us to build this together.

"And it is incredible what they've created. We have training guides, merchandising in planograms, and full receiving and processing staff. Whereas before I was in the mix of it, now I had a chance to move from working in my business to working on my business.

"I am very proud to highlight this, especially as we're moving into year three, and this typically doesn't happen. Before, with my multiple jobs, I was concentrating on just staying afloat."

Core Plus Duty Free has now been operating for more than a full year in the new terminal at Melbourne Orlando Airport, including a full season of international TUI flights.

"In the 'off-season' we are open for domestic travelers, and are seeing higher

fragrance purchases, as well as higher sales of other novelty travel items. But we cannot sell duty free liquor and tobacco to domestic travelers," says Williams Leverett. The international flights begin again in April.

Customer Service Accolades

The Core Plus Duty Free website is filled with positive comments from travelers, that praise the customer service, products and helpful staff.

"It's been really fun teaching my team how to upsell, teaching them how to move products, placing them in the right places.

"I'm really grateful for my Aunt Claudia, who taught me what she did during the time she was alive. She said always be flexible and open to change, and not be afraid when things change. Because often times, it's for the good. (Brittany launched Core Plus Duty Free with her Aunt, Claudia Williams-Hope, in 2018. Claudia died suddenly in 2020.)

"We lost team members, we gained team members, and it was always for the better. I learned I could trust people and let them do their thing. I stood back in the store one day, and I was in the way. Everything was being handled for me."

To sum up the past year, Williams Leverett says she would like the industry to see her company as a "partner in success."

"We have embarked on a journey of growth and innovation. We have strategically partnered with exclusive brands, and transformed the retail experience at this airport with a focus on discovery, luxury and one-of-a-kind customer service. The results so far speak for themselves."



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Overnight visitation to Canada still not at 2019 levels

2023 was a year of regaining momentum for tourism to Canada, according to Destination Canada.

Monthly overnight visitor arrivals gradually improved throughout the year. Despite a slowdown in the pace of recovery during the peak summer period, by the end of the year monthly arrivals reached 96% of 2019 levels.

Canada opened its borders to international visitors in late summer 2021, but the country did not remove all COVID-19 restrictions until October 2022.

Total global arrivals to Canada were

18.3 million, up a fantastic 43% on the 12.8 million visitors in 2022. However, this number is still just 83% versus 2019.

The strong arrivals recovery recorded in 2023 was led by Mexico, France, the U.S., and the UK.

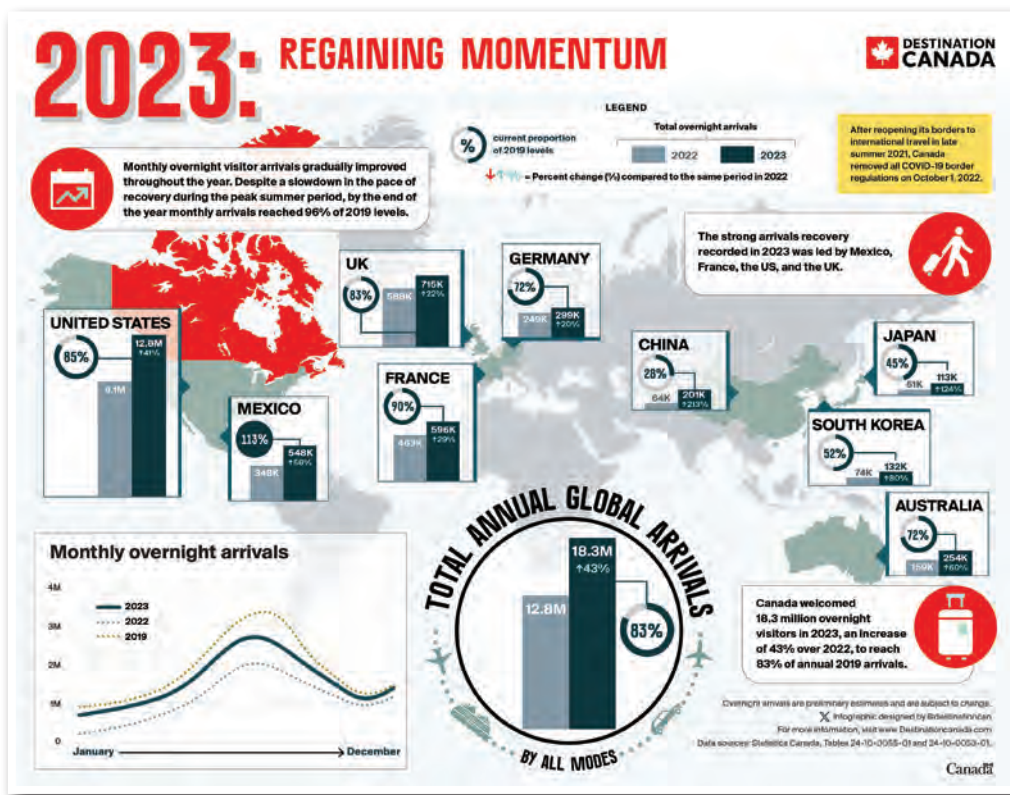
Overnight visitors to Canada from the United States reached 12.8 million in 2023. This is up 41% on the overnight numbers in 2022, but still just 85% of the 2019 numbers.

The United Kingdom, Canada's second most important market, had 715,000 overnight visitors in 2023. This number is

up 22% versus 2022, but is still only 83% compared to 2019.

Overnight visitors from France reached 596,000 in 2023, rising 29% from 463,000 visitors in 2022. This is 90% of the amount of French visitors to Canada in 2019.

Mexico is the only major source market that had more visitors to Canada in 2023 than in 2019. 548,000 Mexicans visited Canada in 2023, up 58% versus 2022, and up 113% compared to 2019.



FDA celebrates 40 years with new logo

Canada's Frontier Duty Free Association is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2024.

In 1982, the first duty free store was opened in Emerson, Manitoba by the Resch family. By 1984, a number of other stores had opened across Canada (ie. Windsor, Sarnia) and as a collective, they decided to found the Association to work together to grow and



1984
2024

improve the land border duty free industry through networking and advocacy. "Forty years later the Frontier Duty

Free Association continues to work for industry growth," comments Executive Director Barbara Barrett. "We will be doing a social media campaign and possibly a few other things to mark the anniversary and most certainly, we will be celebrating at our Convention in November," Barrett tells *TMI*.



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Join us in West Palm Beach, Florida, for the 2024 Summit of the Americas, the signature event for the duty free and travel retail industry in the Americas and Caribbean! Don't miss this opportunity to connect with colleagues for valuable networking, learning, and business-to-business meetings during this three-day event.

Visit www.2024summitoftheamericas.org to learn more about registration, room reservations, and ways to increase brand exposure through exhibit space and sponsorship.

Canada: Ontario Buyers Group helps duty free operators deal with suppliers/liquor board

Ontario duty free stores have banded together as a buying group to have a stronger voice with its supplier partners and the Ontario Liquor Board.

Chris Foster, who heads the group and owns Queenston-Lewiston Duty Free in Niagara Falls, Canada, tells *TMI* that the combined weight of its Ontario members has had a positive impact in its interactions with the government agencies.

“It is harder for us to compete with as single individual locations. So together we have a bigger voice when having conversations with suppliers. The idea behind the group is that we all have the common thread of having to deal with the Ontario Liquor Board, all of our liquor runs through that government agency. It made a lot more sense to have a smaller subgroup of operators in the group. And it’s helped us in dealing with the liquor boards, as well as government lobbying, and dealing with the province,” says Foster.

“We’ve also been able to manage to get in front of certain government officials to educate the government about duty free.”

Going Local

The Ontario buying group has brought in many local craft wines, spirits, and beer

to its locations.

“In Ontario we are currently dealing with 48 craft distillers, and 379 products that have been listed as of October 2022 in all of the land border stores with the exception of one, as well as the airport,” says Foster.

“We’re constantly adding new suppliers that were not involved in the original program. We’re also unfortunately listing some products that may not be as effective as some of the other ones. It’s amazing because the products range from ready to drink products like coolers and seltzers, to beers and ciders all the way up to vodka, gin, and whiskey.”

Despite the influx of new products, Foster tells *TMI* that sales in his Niagara Falls land border duty free store are still down 20-30% versus 2019.

In fact, sales across Canada’s land border stores still remain down an average of 20-30% versus 2019.

“There are small changes. I think that some of the stores were 30 to 40% down last year. Maybe some people thought it would change much quicker. But the reality is that there are some land border stores that believe they are not going to get back to 2019 numbers for five years.”

One positive sign for recovery is that the customers that do shop are spending more.

“The interesting thing is when you compare our business to our traffic and our crossings there is definitely not a consistent correlation between the two. We’re seeing less traffic crossing the border these days. But our sales are performing better because we’re having more people spending more money in the stores. Also, our premium offerings are up and our average sales per customer is up. Get the traffic to return then we’re going to be in a very positive situation.”

Queenston-Lewiston Duty Free

Foster’s Queenston-Lewiston Duty Free store has just started a renovation of the shop that will expand its retail footprint by 2,000 square feet.

“We are always evolving. Unfortunately, Starbucks for us never survived COVID. So we are claiming that space for retail, and we have a major facelift going on. We just put the holding wall up today, and putting in a new cash area, redoing our front entrance, changing our flow of traffic,” says Foster.

“We’ll be able to expand our fragrance and perfume and cosmetics area. We’re going to shift some product categories around and we’re going to be able to add to the product categories that we’re seeing trending up. So tequila, American whiskey, scotch, all those categories are going to see some healthy increases in space.”

The new construction will also change the flow of the store.

“One of the challenges we have is that people come in to the store just to use the restroom facilities and they may not necessarily want to shop in the store. So what we’ve done is we’ve designed the new store to push all those customers that are using the restrooms onto the retail space.”

Foster and Queenston-Lewiston must be doing something right. The store won the 2023 FDFA Gold Standard Platinum Award Category B, and Foster was honored with the Outstanding Contributor Award.



It was a night of awards for Chris Foster and Queenston-Lewiston Duty Free at the 2023 FDFA Gold Standard Awards. Left: Chris Foster; Queenston-Lewiston Duty Free (holding award) poses with Jeff Butler, 1000 Islands Duty Free, Kyle Hiebert, Emerson Duty Free, and Tania Lee, Blue Water Bridge Duty Free after Foster was presented with The Outstanding Contributor Award. Right: Queenston-Lewiston Duty Free Shop won the Platinum Award- Category B.

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Some of the high-end retail boutiques located in Icon of the Sea's Central Park neighborhood, a hub for live plants, restaurants and shops.

Royal Caribbean's *Icon of the Seas* sets sail with a spectacular shopping experience operated by Heinemann Americas

Gebr. Heinemann's Heinemann Americas subsidiary is operating 14 retail venues onboard Royal Caribbean's *Icon of the Seas*, currently the largest cruise ship in the world, which set sail on its maiden voyage from Miami to the Caribbean in January.

The ship is 365 meters long and can accommodate 5,610 guests and 2,850 crew members.

"We are thrilled to be able to equip this stunning ship with such a diverse and exceptional retail offering. Guests can expect a spectacular assortment and unforgettable shopping experience aboard *Icon of the Seas*," said Nicolas Hoeborn, Managing Director of Heinemann Americas, Inc.

The stores offer an exclusive selection of Royal Caribbean branded logo merchandise, fine watches, fine & fashion

jewelry, spirits, perfumes & cosmetics, and vintage luxury leather goods and watches.

Prestige brands onboard range from Chanel, to Cartier and Hublot watches offered in a multi-brand store that also carries certified pre-owned Rolex time pieces.

The ship also includes the first-at-sea Omega boutique, and brands new to the cruise channel, such as Sunday Riley, Bond No.9, Parfums de Marly, Kylie Cosmetics, Supergoop, Sol de Janeiro, and Casamigos.

Another store offers certified pre-owned luxury handbags with unique and rare exclusive models from Hermès, Louis Vuitton and others, as well as watches.

The carefully curated retail offer also features a cobranded collection with Vineyard Vines and an Icon exclusive Woodford Reserve.

Shopping possibilities and Retailtainment

The stores are strategically positioned throughout the ship, including within the vibrant Royal Promenade, the picturesque Central Park, and the family-friendly Surfside, providing guests with immersive Retailtainment experiences overseen by a team of 35 dedicated professionals.

Heinemann currently operates the retail concessions aboard Royal Caribbean's *Wonder of the Seas*, *Odyssey of the Seas* and *Independence of the Seas*, as well as the new *Icon of the Seas*.

Icon of the Seas marks the third new build launched by Heinemann Americas since the onset of the pandemic, and the company says that it cements its standing as the leading travel retail expert for new builds within the industry.



Cunard's *Queen Anne* elevated retail experience enchants with new luxury brands and unique Cabinet of Curiosities gallery

With less than three months to go until the launch of its new ship, luxury cruise line Cunard has revealed a glimpse of the elevated retail experiences awaiting guests on *Queen Anne*, which have been curated by Harding+. From *Queen Anne*'s Cabinet of Curiosities to its Experience Lounge, guests will be treated to retail experiences unlike they have experienced before on a cruise ship.

A unique collection of 115 household brands will have a presence on board, from luxury watchmaker Bremont to the beauty division of French fashion house Chanel.

Twenty-seven of these brands are first-time partnerships for Cunard – including Hugo Boss, Raishma, Chapel Down, Whittard, and 886 Royal Mint. Garrard, the first official crown jeweler in the UK, will also have its first boutique on board a Cunard ship.

Queen Anne will also herald a new era of retail therapy at sea with an expertly curated selection of Walpole brands on board. Walpole is the official sector body for British luxury, and Cunard became a Walpole member in 2019.

The ship's redefined retail spaces, expertly designed by Sybille de Margerie, will feature meandering pathways to inspire exploration and intrigue, enabling guests to intuitively weave through areas, with seamless connections leading shoppers from one category to another.

The on-board experience

From light-filled boutiques with stunning sea views housing jewelry, clothing, accessories, and gifts to carefully curated collections of pre-loved accessories from designer names for a sample of sustainable indulgence, *Queen Anne* will feature several special spaces designed to bring products to life in up-close experiences.

The Grand Lobby Boutiques is the ultimate venue for retail indulgence. Here guests will find the first ever Garrard fine jewelry boutique at sea, as well as *Queen Anne*'s Cabinet of Curiosities, and



Experience Lounge.

The Cabinet of Curiosities is a dazzling new concept featuring 38 display cases showcasing curated treasures from a variety of luxury brands that will celebrate the style and intrigue of travel.

This immersive, one-of-a-kind rotunda gallery will showcase a 360-degree display of collectibles, jewelry, fashion, and art from Cunard's partner brands – such as Chanel and Bremont – that are available to buy, alongside never-before-seen treasures from the luxury cruise line's archives.

Another element of *Queen Anne*'s elevated retail offering is the Experience Lounge, a space where retail intertwines with food and drink, allowing the ship to enhance activations and events in style.

To further enhance the guest

experience, *Queen Anne* will offer a dedicated Shopping Host, the only role of its kind in the Cunard fleet. This personal shopping concierge will have an extensive knowledge of the available assortment as well as brands' stories to offer guests a rewarding retail experience.

In addition, a personalization desk will be available for guests who wish to add a personal touch to purchases through engraving, embossing, and more.

Queen Anne

Throughout her maiden season, *Queen Anne* will sail from Southampton on itineraries to the Mediterranean, Scandinavia, the Canary Islands, and the Norwegian Fjords, visiting more than 60 unique destinations in 16 countries – taking in several of Europe's most enchanting ancient cities.

Katie McAlister, President of Cunard, said: "Luxury ocean travel is all about escapism and being immersed in a world full of unique and enriching experiences. It's a philosophy we are passionate about bringing to life with our new ship *Queen Anne*, which is why we are all so excited about her elevated retail offering. Nowhere else will travelers be able to find such a beautifully curated collection of luxury brands at sea or learn about heritage brands in such an engaging way as with *Queen Anne*'s Cabinet of Curiosities."



CUNARD



***Sun Princess* shops deliver premium retail experience at sea with Chanel, TAG Heuer, Breitling, Shaun Leane and more, created by Harding+**

Sun Princess, the first Sphere Class ship from Princess Cruises, is set to offer an elevated, world-class shopping experience curated by Harding+ as guests sail to exciting parts of the Mediterranean and the Caribbean beginning at the end of 2024.

Within the more than 5,800 square feet of retail space spanning two decks, guests can explore a wide selection of more than 200 premium brands from fine jewelry and premium timepieces to fashion and leisure wear, beauty and wellness, and accessories, all fused with an evolving blend of lifestyle and experiential activations.

Sun Princess also will introduce more than 25 first-at-sea brands, including Chanel No. 1, Beyond Yoga and Varley, sustainable fashion from Neu Nomad, and Italian elegance with Pinko handbags.

In addition, the first Princess-branded merchandise boutique – Waves

– debuts on board, offering the exclusive limited Princess Inaugural collection that celebrates the iconic new ship as well as new lines featuring the Princess Seawitch.

“This expansive retail environment, created in partnership with Harding+, marks a new level of excellence for Princess retail,” said Sabine Muhlberger, vice president of onboard revenue experience at Princess Cruises. “Our guests are going to love this new and unique shopping experience that will enhance the already spectacular cruise experience aboard *Sun Princess*.”

The retail design aboard *Sun Princess* creates open and spacious areas for extended discovery. Interactive retail and pop-up locations will also add an engaging and exciting retail experience.

Deck 8 features The Premium Watch Lounge, featuring the first-at-sea Breitling

Lounge concept and the latest TAG Heuer boutique design, as well as The Fine Timepieces Boutique, which features a selection of signature timepieces for both men and women from Longines, Rado, Tissot, Hamilton, in addition to pre-owned Rolex watches.

Within The Beauty & Wellness Boutique on Deck 8 guests will find the world’s top cosmetic and skincare brands, such as Chanel, Dior, Lancôme, Estee Lauder, Clinique, and a curated range of sustainable and organic skincare brands including Comfort Zone, Neom Organics, This Works, Rituals and unisex clean skincare by REN Skincare.

The innovative shipboard shopping experience also includes professional-grade skincare education, products, and services from Chanel, Dermalogica and Prai Beauty; three new fine jewelry brands,



The new Sun Princess will debut the first-at-sea Breitling Lounge concept and the latest TAG Heuer boutique design.

including the award-winning London-based jewelry designer Shaun Leane, Parisian-based jewelry designer Yvonne Leon as well as a diverse selection of gender-neutral precious metals and materials from John Hardy, and costume jewelry featuring the latest retail store concept design from Swarovski; and fine spirits offering onboard experiences like Johnnie Walker Blue Xordinaire as a travel retail exclusive

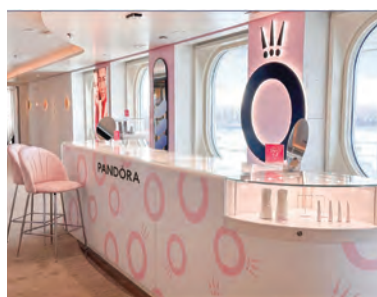
The *Sun Princess* will feature engaging pop-ups with interactive brand displays, that will include designer eyewear activations from brands like Tom Ford, Prada, Oakley, and Maui Jim, pre-loved luxury leather and accessories from Chanel, Louis Vuitton and Gucci, and Pandora Jewelry.

The 175,500-ton, 4,300-guest *Sun Princess* also offers an array of exciting new entertainment and experiences, the greatest assembly of culinary experiences from celebrated chefs and celebrity collaborators, as well as luxurious staterooms and suites across a broad spectrum of categories.

Inaugural 2024 *Sun Princess* cruises to the Mediterranean, Europe and Caribbean are on sale now.



The Beauty and Wellness Boutique on the *Sun Princess* carries top cosmetics and skincare brands.



Princess Cruises and Diamonds International form exclusive retail partnership for *Sun Princess*

High-end fine jewelry retailer Diamonds International has announced its first retail partnership with Princess Cruises for *Sun Princess*. The partnership will offer guests a carefully curated selection of the finest jewelry.

The business partnership with Princess Cruises marks a significant milestone in Diamonds International's history, reinforcing its commitment to providing an exceptional shopping experience for cruise guests worldwide. The alliance reflects the shared values of both companies — a dedication to maintaining and delivering the highest standards of quality, service, and elegance.

Albert Gad, CEO of Diamonds International, expressed his enthusiasm about this exciting partnership, stating, "For the last 30 years, we have had business with Princess Cruises in the Caribbean. The core of our clients at Diamonds International consists of Princess guests. Our Crown of Light client,



particularly our Crown of Light Couture client, is synonymous with the upscale guests onboard Princess Cruises. We saw a great opportunity to bring our product onboard the ships, and we look forward to continuing this partnership."

Guests onboard *Sun Princess* are in for an immersive shopping experience, where they can explore Diamonds International's exquisite collections, and custom create jewelry using rare diamonds, gemstones, and exclusive designer brands

such as Crown of Light® Diamonds, Safi Kilima® Tanzanite, DeBeers Forevermark Diamonds.

"We are excited to unveil Diamonds International on our newest vessel *Sun Princess*. Our guests will experience the most magnificent fine jewelry collections and unique exclusive crafted pieces, accompanied by unparalleled customer service," said Sabine Muhlberger, Princess Cruises vice president, onboard revenue experience.



MSC to host naming ceremony for *MSC World America* at new cruise terminal in Miami in April 2025

MSC Cruises will host the naming ceremony for its newest mega-flagship—*MSC World America*—on the evening of April 9, 2025 at the company’s new PortMiami terminal. The ceremony will honor MSC Cruises’ investment in Miami and its commitment to the North American market, with the traditional breaking of a champagne bottle and a slate of immersive onboard events highlighting everything the ship has to offer.

The *MSC World America* will be MSC Cruises’ largest ship to serve the U.S. and its first in the region to be powered by LNG. *MSC World America* is the second of the line’s groundbreaking World Class ships and is specially designed with the North American guest in mind, featuring unique restaurants, bars and experiences that seamlessly blend European design with American comfort.

Spanning 22 decks, measuring more than 150 feet wide and featuring 2,614 staterooms, *MSC World America* will be the centerpiece of the Miami skyline when she is named in 2025.

Rubén A. Rodríguez, President, MSC Cruises USA, said: “There is no better place to welcome *MSC World America* than the cruise capital of the world. We look forward to seeing her sail out of our new, state-of-the-art cruise terminal built in partnership with Miami-Dade County and PortMiami. As we build upon our offering in the North American market and help attract more international guests to the Caribbean, we are excited to bring our newest and most remarkable ship yet

to Miami. We eagerly await April 2025, when we can welcome guests on board to experience the world of choice that our new flagship has to offer.”

The launch of *MSC World America* at MSC Cruises’ new PortMiami terminal, coupled with MSC Cruises’ upcoming \$100 million U.S. headquarters in downtown Miami, underscores the company’s dedication to South Florida. The PortMiami facility will be the world’s largest cruise terminal once completed and is poised to revolutionize the cruising experience for up to 36,000 guests each day. The terminal will support MSC Cruises’ continued growth at PortMiami.

Following the naming ceremony, *MSC World America* will set sail for her inaugural season on April 12, 2025. She will sail alternating 7-night Eastern and

Western Caribbean itineraries with stops in Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic; San Juan, Puerto Rico; Costa Maya and Cozumel, Mexico; Isla de Roatan, Honduras; and Ocean Cay MSC Marine Reserve in The Bahamas.

MSC World America is carefully designed to help reduce her impact on the environment. The ship runs on LNG, a lower-emissions fuel, and is ready for renewable energy sources. Shore power connectivity, where available, reduces emissions by allowing the ship’s engines to be switched off in port. Smart technology is used throughout the ship to ensure guests can travel in comfort while keeping energy and water use low. A robust onboard recycling program minimizes waste, and even the propellers are designed to reduce noise and avoid disturbing marine life.



MSC Cruises’ new PortMiami terminal is currently under construction.

About *MSC World America*

MSC World America will create an eye-catching silhouette against the Miami skyline when she enters service in April 2025. The new World Class ship's signature plumb bow will rise vertically from the waterline and her Y-shaped aft will open onto the impressive outdoor World Esplanade. Overall, *MSC World America* will contain more than 420,000 square feet of public space, and offer top-of-the-line features and facilities.

Ship environmental information

At launch, *MSC World America* will be one of the most energy-efficient cruise ships in the world, surpassing all design

requirements under the International Maritime Organization's Energy Efficiency Design Index (EEDI). The ship's latest-generation engines will reduce greenhouse gases emissions (GHG) by up to 20 percent, along with an 85 percent reduction in nitrogen oxide emissions and a nearly total elimination of sulphur oxide and particulate emissions. The ship is capable of running on Bio-LNG and Synthetic Renewable LNG, either of which would achieve greenhouse gas emissions reductions of up to 100 percent.

Wastewater is treated to a very high quality that exceeds the standards in place at many shoreside municipal wastewater treatment systems worldwide and meets

the strictest international IMO standards, including the so-called Baltic standard.

The ship is fitted with advanced waste management systems to reduce, reuse, and recycle the waste generated on board.

MSC Cruises has reduced the intensity of its ship operations by 33.5 percent since 2008, and the company will achieve a 40% reduction ahead of the IMO 2030 target. Far beyond simply finding further operational efficiencies, MSC Cruises is embracing new technologies and identifying paths for switching to non-carbon and renewable fuels, while working with fuel providers and other partners on using Bio-LNG and Synthetic Renewable LNG in the near term.

MSC Cruises appoints Stefano Menegotto SVP of Onboard Revenues and Suzanne Mahoney as Head of Retail

MSC Cruises has appointed Stefano Menegotto as SVP of Onboard Revenues, based in the Company's headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

Menegotto brings more than 25 years' experience and joins MSC Cruises from a 19-year tenure with Starboard Cruise Services, part of LVMH Group. At Starboard, he held the role of VP & Managing Director for EMEA and APAC, leading the retail strategy for multiple cruise lines. Prior to this, he worked for Luxottica Group as Country Manager in Turkey, India and Belgium.

MSC Cruises also announced that Brandon Briggs will be taking on a new position in Fort Lauderdale next month as SVP Onboard Revenue Operations for the U.S. – a market of strategic importance for MSC Cruises.

MSC Cruises has also appointed Suzanne Mahoney as Head of Retail, based in Geneva reporting to Menegotto. Mahoney will take on responsibility for the retail offering across the fleet and the future growth of the commercial retail offering.

Mahoney has over 30 years' experience in Travel Retail having started her career with Pernod Ricard's World Brands Duty Free in 1994 before joining World Duty Free in 2000. Since then, she has worked both with luxury brands such as Lanson Champagne & The Edrington Group in the US., before joining Harding+



Stefano Menegotto is MSC Cruises new SVP of Onboard Revenues. Suzanne Mahoney has been named new Head of Retail.



in 2014 where she was Director of Buying & Merchandising. She joins MSC Cruises from LiBi Retail, a hospitality tech innovator that makes hotels shoppable for the brands that guests experience during

their stay. She remains on the Board of LiBi Retail.

MSC Group – Cruise Division Head of Retail Adrian Pittaway left the company last year to pursue other interests.



Brandon Briggs will move to Fort Lauderdale and become SVP Onboard Revenue Operations in the U.S.



The Moodie Davitt Report's Dermot Davitt moderated a panel made up of Carnival Cruise Line VP of Onboard Revenue Luis Terife, Starboard Cruise Services President & CEO Lisa Bauer, and What Comes Around Goes Around CEO Seth Weisser at last year's Seatrade Cruise Global.

One on One with Dermot Davitt

The Moodie Davitt Report's president talks with *TMI* about Retail Day at Seatrade Cruise Global in Miami in April

Seatrade Cruise Global is partnering with *The Moodie Davitt Report* to host a dedicated retail day at its 2024 event in Miami. The event runs from April 8-11 at The Miami Beach Convention Center with the retail sessions taking place at the same venue on the morning and afternoon of April 10.

Through the collaboration, a full day of retail-related programming will take place for the first time at Seatrade Cruise Global. This reflects the fast-growing importance of retailing to cruise line revenues and its role in enhancing the guest experience, and follows a successful Retail panel session at Seatrade 2023.

The Moodie Davitt Report President Dermot Davitt tells *TMI* that the full day dedicated retail conference comes after a positive response to the 2023 panel session.

"Delegates that attended were pleased to see a focus on the retail business, which has become so vital for cruise lines, given its own space in the event calendar. With Seatrade Cruise Global's status as the world's major gathering of the cruise line industry each year, it offers a platform for discussion and debate about the role of retail and its future," says Davitt.

Themes to be addressed at the event include the future of onboard retailing, industry partnerships, sustainability in the retail design and offer, technology, the role of people, cruise port collaborations and how the sector can drive luxury

brand growth to the next level.

Thought leadership will be provided by a combination of senior cruise line executives, leading concessionaire representatives and brand owners.

"This year we feature a full day of retail-themed conferencing in a dedicated space, well supported by leading concessionaires Starboard and Harding+, plus brands and brand representatives including Effy Jewelry, Duty Free Global and DENIZEN Destination. Our sessions co-organized with Seatrade Cruise Global will include a keynote interview with a senior cruise line figure about the role of retail in commercial terms and in shaping the guest experience. We will discuss partnership within the cruise 'Trinity' with input from a cruise line, concessionaire and brand owner," says Davitt.

"We will talk about nurturing people and teams in cruise retail, asking how we can better attract and retain staff and what factors ensure a committed, enthusiastic workforce?"

"We will cover the importance of 'going local' and 'story-telling' in retail, both from cruise line and port viewpoint.

"We will explore the opportunity for luxury jewelry & watches in cruise retail, with input from cruise line, retailer and brand. And we will address what sustainability means in the context of retail design and product offer onboard cruise ships."

SeaTrade has announced its series of speakers for Retail Day (See story on page 38).

"We will also feature senior figures from Starboard, Harding+, Heinemann Americas, Avolta, Global Ports Holding, Effy Jewelry, LVMH Beauty, Diageo and DENIZEN Destination," he says.

The 2024 Seatrade Retail Day will reflect the ever-growing importance of retailing to cruise line revenues and its role in enhancing the guest experience, says Davitt.

"We hope it helps to generate new ideas for collaboration in the sector among all parties in the cruise 'Trinity' and amplifies the business opportunity that cruise represents within travel retail."

While this is the inaugural year that a full day Retail event will take place at Seatrade, Davitt is hopeful that this year will be the first of many.

"We are in discussions about how to build on this year's one-day conference in 2025 and beyond, and see the potential for The Retail Day to become a core component of Seatrade Cruise Global in the future."

Seatrade Cruise Global 2024 will bring together thousands of cruise professionals to network, learn and find new solutions to industry challenges. The 2023 event welcomed over 10,000 guests, 500+ exhibitors and more than 80 cruise brands.

The Life of a Seatrade Ambassador *by Nadine Heubel*

When I moved to Miami in Spring of 2016 to take over the responsibility of CEO at Heinemann Americas, I knew very little about the dynamics of the cruise industry. I had had a brief professional encounter while working at Hugo Boss when we opened the first ever Hugo Boss boutique at sea onboard AIDADiva in 2007. I also knew the cruise industry as a passenger from various cruises with my mom during the years.

One could say that I was really a cruise novice. But with the cruise channel the focus of the Heinemann Americas business, I had to learn really quickly.

I heard about Seatrade Cruise Global, the biggest cruise event in the world, and the following year I attended the event at the Miami Beach Convention Center for the first time. I recommend to everyone who is new to the channel to attend Seatrade Cruise Global; the educational aspect of it is mind-blowing. From the “State of the Industry” panel at the first day of the event – the CEO’s from all major cruise lines are on stage together and talk about their personal outlook of the industry – to countless sessions focused on many different aspects of the industry, to the enormous exhibition hall, Seatrade Cruise Global is the all-encompassing event of the industry.

When I walked the exhibition hall for the first time I was blown away by the variety of the exhibitors (countries, cruise ports, shipyards, technology companies, etc. etc.) It was then when I realized the enormous economic impact this industry has.

What I did not find though, was any session or any exhibitor related to retail. But as I was still digesting what I had learnt during the week and as I was still awed by it, I honestly did not think about the lack of a retail presence.

Fast forward to early 2022, after a devastating COVID crisis for the cruise industry, a friend of mine – Shannon McKee, a well-known cruise industry figure and an ambassador herself – reached out to me to tell me about the Seatrade ambassador program. She asked me if I was interested to be named



Nadine Heubel organized the Cruise Retail Session last year. Seen here with Dermot Davitt of The Moodie Davitt Report.

their retail ambassador as Seatrade was acknowledging the importance of retail for the cruise industry and the lack of its presence at their signature events. I loved the idea and was honored to be chosen to help put retail on the map for Seatrade. An ambassador is a pro-bono role and comparable to a board advisory role.

My responsibility as an ambassador includes promoting the Seatrade events through my social media channels, act as an advisor to their senior team with every question which might come up regarding retail, connecting them to the important players in the industry and work on a strategy to support promoting retail on a bigger scale.

The first idea we launched together was the Retail Wave Makers podcast in summer 2022. We are now already in our third season and have released 12 episodes so far. Focus of the podcast is to introduce listeners to all aspects of cruise retail. We talk to retail executives from the cruise lines, cruise retailers and vendors. In the latest season the spotlight has been on the various positions onboard and their interaction with retail. The podcast can be found on the Seatrade website and on

Apple Podcast.

Last year for the first time, Seatrade organized a retail session on one of the stages in the exhibition hall. We had a very interesting session moderated by Dermot Davitt from *The Moodie Davitt Report* where the cruise trinity – a cruise line, a retailer and a vendor - talked about challenges and the very positive outlook of cruise retail.

The Moodie Davitt Report and Seatrade have expanded their partnership and this year are hosting a full day dedicated to retail in a separate conference room. I feel very blessed that I can support the organizers with the curation of the program.

The biggest highlight for me is the fact that I can moderate two sessions myself. One of my sessions is about HR and the wonderful staff onboard ships and the other sessions is about sustainability. Both topics are very close to my heart, and I cannot wait to be on stage with some amazing panelists.

So far, I have very much enjoyed my Seatrade Ambassador journey – but most of all, I appreciate being able to provide information that supports the cruise retail industry gaining the attention it deserves within the broader cruise community.

Onboard Shopping gets Dedicated Initiative Retail Day at Seatrade Cruise Global Program

Seatrade Cruise Global has partnered with *The Moodie Davitt Report* to launch The Retail Day – a one-day program dedicated specifically to onboard retail, on April 10 at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

As the retail sector continues to drive revenue for cruise lines, this brand-new program reflects the fast-growing importance of retailing's role in enhancing the guest experience. The conference sessions will cover topics including enhancing the guest experience, sustainability and taking luxury brands to the next level.

The program also provides attendees with the opportunity to meet and connect with senior cruise line executives, concessionaire representatives and leading brand owners.

Seatrade Cruise Events Global Brand & Event Director Chiara Giorgi says: "We are pleased to partner with *The Moodie Davitt Report* for The Retail Day at Seatrade Cruise Global. We look forward to delivering a series of sessions that add value for our guests, with insights, debate and conversation about the role and future of cruise retail front and center."

Conference Sessions – It's All About Retail at Sea

The conference will begin at 10:00 am on Wednesday, April 10 with Opening Remarks and will continue through to The Retail Day Reception at 4pm. Key sessions include:

- A View from the Top: A one-to-one interview with a leading cruise line CEO about the role of retail in commercial terms and in shaping the guest experience
- Nurturing our People – The Retail View: How do we better attract and retain people in Cruise Retail?
- Where Next for Luxury in Cruise Retail?
- Embracing Sustainability in Cruise Retail

Some of the speakers taking part in the program include:

- Gustavo Antorcha, President, Holland America Line
- Stefano Menegotto, SVP Onboard Revenue, MSC Cruises
- Luis Terife, Vice President Guest

Commerce & Onboard Revenue, Carnival Cruise Line

- Lisa Bauer, President and CEO at Starboard Cruise Services
- Natalia Rolle Phillips, Director, HR at Heinemann Americas, Inc.
- Patrick Molloy, Senior Vice President at Harding+
- Global Ports Holding VP, Business Development Retail & Ancillary Andres Villalever
- André Marzloff, Managing Director Travel Retail Americas at LVMH Beauty
- Estelle Baumann, Managing Director at DENIZEN Destination

Notable partners

The program is also supported by platinum and gold partners: Effy Jewelry, Starboard Cruise Services, Harding+; and further supported by: Cazcabel Tequila, Duty Free Globa, Kurvball Whiskey, Mermaid Gin, The House of Somrus, and DENIZEN Destination.

Evolution of Cruise F&B

Dive into the future of cruise drinking and dining at the 2024 F&B@Sea Conference. F&B industry visionaries, leading chefs and top mixologists reveal the latest consumer trends and sustainable practices shaping the cruise dining experience, at the same time satisfying modern tastes and ethical standards.



Wednesday, April 10

11:45 am – 12 noon –

Keynote Address: Presentation of F&B Trends Survey

12 noon – 1 pm

State of the Industry: Navigating the Cruise F&B Supply Chain

2:15-3 pm

The Evolution of Specialty Restaurants on Board

3:15-3:45

Sustainable Seafood at Sea

4:45-5:30 pm

Princess Cruises brings you ... the Good Spirits at Sea Experience by Celebrity Mixologist Rob Floyd

Thursday, April 11

11:30 – 12 noon

Workshop Keynote: Conscious Trends Shaping Cruise F&B Supply & Demand

12:30 – 1:30

Supplier Workshop: Conscious Trends Shaping Cruise F&B Supply & Demand

1:40-2:20

F&B Waste Management Solutions: Reducing, Upcycling, Disposing

2:20 – 3:00 pm

Raising the Bar: Bringing New Bar Concepts to Life.

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Seatrade Cruises' 2024 Cruise Food & Beverage Trends Report tracks challenges and shows that experiential dining is on the rise

Ahead of the second edition of F&B@Sea (April 10-11, 2024), Seatrade Cruise has published its second Cruise Food and Beverage Trends Report. The findings from the report indicate a momentum towards experiential dining and/or opportunities for passengers to connect with communities visited via their gastronomy with demand for local cuisine, authentic cultural food experiences and immersive dining predicted to gather pace in 2024 and beyond.

The report, which captures the views of cruise lines, manufacturers, distributors, and suppliers of food/beverage, while also representing the views of associations, training providers and consultancies, reveals challenges impacting the sector as well as several key trends influencing shipboard drinking and dining.

Top Challenges

The cruise food and beverage industry is expected to be worth \$8.9 trillion by 2026. Some of the top challenges cited by survey participants are inflation/price increases (cited by 68.92% of respondents), supply chain disruption (cited by 48.65%), and longer lead times for restocking/orders (cited by 35.14% of respondents). This corresponds with the results of 2023's Cruise F&B Trend

Almost a third of respondents said they were unable to connect with cruise line buyers (32.43%), and slightly less said they were unsure of current food and beverage trends leading the way in cruise (29.73%).

Obtaining certain produce/alternatives, being unable to meet sustainability demands/new regulations, and suppliers going out of business were seen as less critical factors. Some complexities were associated with rejigging the food and beverage offer/menus and being unable to provide options for dietary needs.

Key Trends

Authentic cultural food experiences (cited by 45.21%), immersive dining (32.88%), and local culinary options (31.51%) are the three food trends most likely to take off during the period 2024/25. Sustainability is also expected to be a key focus within the culinary space, with 26.03% of respondents choosing plant-

based diets and produce, 21.92% selecting sustainable agriculture/ sustainably sourced seafood, and the same number specifying zero-waste cooking.

Overall, cruise ship cuisine will continue to be broad-ranging from Asian fusion with the highest number of votes (54.79%) to Levantine with the least amount of votes (5.48%) – and sourcing from remote areas will be facilitated mostly via the support of port agents.

Low to no alcohol beverages amassed 46.58% of votes, health/wellness supplement drinks garnered 39.73% of votes, and low to no calorie beverages, 30.14%, indicating an inclination towards drinks with health and wellness in mind.

“The return of this detailed report provides a unique opportunity for food and beverage suppliers to gain a glimpse into the abundant possibilities for growth within

the cruise industry,” says Chiara Giorgi, Global Brand and Event Director for Seatrade Cruise. “Armed with invaluable insights and an informed perspective, industry executives will find the perfect ecosystem for collaborating and connecting with cruise line decision-makers at this year's F&B@Sea.”

F&B@Sea was developed in close consultation with cruise lines, food and beverage stakeholders, and culinary leaders with support from Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) and industry consulting leader MarkeTeam. More information about F&B@Sea is available at www.seatradecruisevents.com/fnbsea

The complete 2024 Cruise F&B Trends Report is available online at www.seatradecruisevents.com/fnbsea



Two examples of prominent F&B trends in cruise are the rise of Celebrity Chefs and destination cuisine. Both are featured this month in season three of the award-winning TV series *Wild Harvest*. The program features “survivor” Les Stroud and Master Chef Paul Rogalski alongside Queen Elizabeth's culinary team in Alaska. Shot on location in the ports of Sitka, Haines, Juneau, Icy Strait Point, and Ketchikan while sailing through Hubbard Glacier, Stroud shares his wisdom of wild edibles which Chef Rogalski and Queen Elizabeth Executive Chef Roland Sargunan and members of the Cunard culinary team use to create sophisticated gourmet dishes.

Wild Harvest is broadcast globally in over 60 countries, including India and China, and on 450 American Public Television (PBS) stations in 50 states, with top-tier media company Blue Ant Media in Canada.

Carnival brings the fun with its beverage options across its fleet

All cruises are different and that extends to the food and drinks packages that are available onboard. Carnival Cruise Line invites its guests to “Choose Fun.” That is its tagline and the fun is designed to run through everything that happens onboard. Zachary Sulkes, AVP, Beverage Operations, Carnival Cruise Line tells *TMI* that Carnival tries to infuse fun in everything it does from a beverage perspective.

“The drinks, the staff, the menus: it is all fun. This leads to huge volume. Our guests order lots of drinks including cocktails, beers, waters, wines, etc.,” says Sulkes.

The drinks packages offered on Carnival are unique to the cruise line.

“We handle drink packages much differently and do not rely on inclusion of beverage packages to sell our cruises. There are no free packages per se (unless you are high level casino player). So, therefore, the amount of guests that have packages is quite low in comparison to all other cruise lines. And, we only have 2 packages. One that is only for sodas and juices (Bottomless Bubbles) and the other that is all drinks \$20 and under (but limited to 15 alcoholic drinks in a 24 hour period),” says Sulkes.

Carnival offers a diversity of offers for its drink menus across its ships.

“The XL class of ships have over 20 different beverage menus for guests to choose from depending on the location on the ship,” says Sulkes.

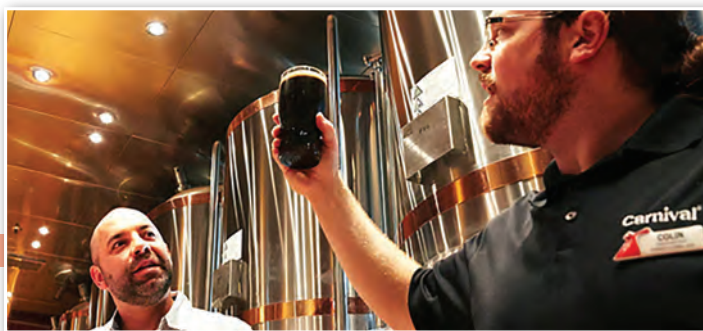
Brewing onboard

Carnival Cruise Line is serving up a number of its own private-label beers crafted by its in-house brewery team.

Carnival was the first cruise line to can and keg its own private label beers crafted in-house in 2019, after introducing the onboard brewery concept on Carnival Vista in the Red Frog Pub & Brewery in 2016.

Carnival Cruise Line now features onboard breweries on six ships, says Sulkes.

“We have a new beer brewed onboard that is the Heroes American Pale Ale. The hops are picked by a veterans group and then we donate \$1 from the sale of every beer to Operation Homefront. We are now selling Heroes pint glasses on all ships



Sampling some beer brewed onboard at Carnival Vista's Red Frog Pub & Brewery

fleetwide regardless if they have a Heroes bar onboard with \$1 from every glass sold going to Operation Homefront.

There are also Carnival-exclusive beers available in cans on every ship. While ParchedPig West Coast IPA, ThirstyFrog Caribbean Wheat and ParchedPig Toasted Amber Ale are also available as portable pints.

Carnival has partnered with Lakeland, Fla.-based Brew Hub to produce the beers.

Close Loop Packaging to reduce single-use glass at sea

Carnival introduced a new pilot program that is introducing closed-loop packaging to the cruise industry aboard Carnival Cruise Line ships in an attempt to reduce single-use glass.

Through a collaboration with Bacardi and innovative circular economy technology company ecoSPIRITS, the pilot will determine if re-usable containers developed by ecoSPIRITS can be used to serve Bacardi rum on Carnival ships, in turn reducing single-use packaging by 95 percent. The concept is being tested for three months on three ships operating from Miami: Carnival Celebration, Carnival Horizon, and Carnival Sunrise.

“As we continue to work towards our sustainability goals, the collaborative work

of our beverage team, ecoSPIRITS and Bacardi is a great example of thinking in ways that are truly out-of-the-box, or in this case – out-of-the-bottle, to develop new partnerships and practices that further our ongoing efforts,” says Sulkes.

Bacardi was selected for the pilot because it is among the most-ordered spirits across the fleet and a staple of some of the craft cocktails most popular with Carnival guests. The rum will be transferred from ecoTOTE to serving format using ecoSPIRITS' SmartPour™ technology. New silver and red Bacardi-branded SmartPours will be placed in select bars on the three ships for beverage team members to serve cocktails featuring Bacardi Superior rum.

Carnival is constantly updating the beverage options available on its ships to stay relevant with its guests.

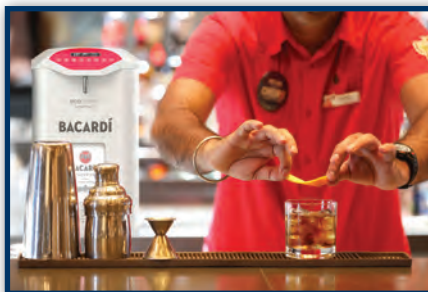
“We have increased our bourbon and whisky selection over the past few years and guests are very pleased with the offer. We tried non-alcohol options at Alchemy Bar over the past year and it really didn't go well. It was not bad, but there were just not enough sales to justify the extra inventories. We are looking at some low-alcohol options to see if the response is better,” says Sulkes.

“Our guests still like fun, sweet drinks and we stick to that.”

Sulkes says the menu will definitely evolve over the coming years.

“Stay tuned. As we don't have another new build ship coming for three years, we have time to review, refresh, and renew our offer to stay current with the guests and to meet their expectations of FUN.”

Carnival has partnered with Bacardi and ecoSPIRITS to reduce single glass use at sea.



Caribbean tourism celebrates strong growth in 2023, continued recovery forecast into 2024

Caribbean tourism continued its positive recovery trend in 2023, growing by an estimated 14.3% increase in international stay-over arrivals, the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) reported during its “Caribbean Tourism Performance Review 2023” in mid-March.

Delivering the report in Bridgetown on March 15, Dona Regis-Prosper, Secretary-General of the CTO, shared that 2023 growth was in line with CTO’s forecast for the year, and attributed the outcome to sustained demand for outbound travel from the United States – the Caribbean’s main source market; enhanced tourism-related infrastructure within the destinations; the fulfillment of strategic marketing initiatives; and augmented airlift capacity between the region and its source markets, albeit unevenly distributed among the destinations.

The recovery of global tourism has been resilient, despite variability in the regional performances, according to Regis-Prosper, with the Caribbean surpassing pre-pandemic arrivals by a modest 0.8%, outperforming most of the main global regions in terms of recovery.

“Based on preliminary data provided so far by the destinations in the Caribbean, tourist visits were approximately 32.2 million – about four million more than in 2022,” stated Regis-Prosper, who noted that the data showed that each month’s arrivals exceeded those of 2022 thus establishing a continuous growth trend over the past 33 months as tourism steadily rebounded toward pre-pandemic levels.

Arrival levels amongst Caribbean destinations either significantly recovered or moderately exceeded the benchmark numbers of 2019, with 11 destinations, Anguilla, Aruba, Curaçao, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, St. Maarten, Turks & Caicos Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands performing better than in 2019. The majority of those recovered greater than 50% of their 2019 arrivals. In addition, multiple destinations registered new record levels for tourist arrivals in a single year.

United States and Canada Markets

For the Caribbean, only the U.S. market has fully recovered, while the

recovery rates of arrivals from Europe and Canada reached 88.2% and 88.1%, respectively. An estimated 16.3 million stay-over arrivals to the region came from the United States, representing an annual growth rate of 12.7%. U.S. performance established a new record level of arrivals and surpassed the pre-pandemic arrivals by 4.2%. The performance of the Canadian market resulted in an estimated three million Canadian tourists visited by the end of the year, an increase of 46.1% compared to 2022. Increased air service from major Canadian cities to Caribbean destinations played a pivotal role in driving up visitor numbers.

Europe, Caribbean and South America Markets

Regis-Prosper noted that arrivals from Europe to the Caribbean region were stagnant in 2023. A total of approximately 5.2 million trips originated from the market. In 2023, travel among Caribbean residents to destinations within the region increased by approximately 3.6%, a total of 1.6 million trips, which was 0.3 million more compared to 2022. This also indicated a recovery of 62.5% from pre-pandemic levels.

“Despite this positive outcome, intra-regional travel remained expensive due to fragmented air service and reduced air capacity,” said Regis-Prosper. By the end of the year, trips from South America to the region surged by an estimated 14%, totaling 1.7 million trips.

Caribbean Hotel Performance

The Caribbean hotel sector experienced a remarkable turnaround in 2023, including a surge in the establishment of new hotels and resorts. According to STR, throughout the Caribbean, average room occupancy grew to 65.6% in 2023 from 61% in 2022. The average daily rate (ADR) experienced a considerable increase of 11.8% with the region’s ADR reaching US\$329.37 while the revenue per available room (RevPAR) jumped 20.2% to US\$215.97.

Cruise Tourism Performance

Preliminary data for 2023 showed that Caribbean destinations received

an estimated 31.1 million cruise visits, reflecting an increase of 11.3 million visits or 56.8% compared to 2019. This level established a new record for the regional cruise sector, surpassing the previous record of 2019 by 2.4%. Pent-up demand and the resumption of operations drove strong bookings for Caribbean cruises, along with improvements in cruise infrastructure such as larger ships, enhanced facilities, itineraries, and shore excursions.

Projections indicate that the cruise sector will continue its upward track, with an estimated 34.2 million to 35.8 million cruise visits expected in the Caribbean in 2024. This anticipated expansion falls within the range of 10% and 15%.

Remarkable Resilience

Chairman of the Caribbean Tourism Organization’s Council of Ministers and Commissioners of Tourism, Kenneth Bryan, who also serves as the Cayman Islands’ Minister of Tourism and Ports, noted the remarkable resilience of the tourism industry and its ongoing recovery and growth in 2023. However, he emphasized that the industry and the region will continue to face an array of challenges, including the high cost of travel, ongoing conflicts, heightened geopolitical tensions, and their anticipated impacts, in 2024.

“Caribbean destinations remain adaptable and responsive, and the region is still highly desired by travelers for its safety and diversity of tourism products,” stated Chairman Bryan, adding that the region will also be positively impacted by key developments in 2024, including increased air capacity throughout the year, which will facilitate greater access between the destinations and some of their legacy and emerging markets.

“The Caribbean’s prospects appear highly promising, with more regional destinations poised to either match or surpass the arrival figures recorded in 2019. Anticipated growth is forecast to range between five percent and 10%, potentially welcoming between 33.8 million and 35.4 million stay-over tourists,” concluded Chairman Bryan.



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with two additional locations TBA...



Grenada St. Thomas St. Croix Sint Maarten St Barth Trinidad & Tobago Tulum, Mexico

Contact: kattoura@dfrg.us



The beautiful Maison Rouge in the historic district of downtown Christiansted offers top luxury shopping.

Pan-Caribbean retail power Rouge Duty Free adds new islands, new stores

Not only did Rouge Duty Free open in Trinidad in 2023 – its 9th Caribbean island location – but the luxury and beauty retailer is about to take a giant step forward in Grenada, as it expands its charming flagship in the renowned Port Louis Marina into six new outlets. The Rouge stores will be the key retail element in the new Silver Sands complex at Port Louis Maritime Village debuting in June.

The Port Louis Marina and the undeveloped lands at Mount Cinnamon resort were acquired by Joyau des Caraïbes Ltd (JDC), owner of the 5+ -star Silversands Grenada, in 2020. The luxury developer pledged to invest around \$350 million to develop the two sites, with plans including four five-star hotels, a spa, exclusive residential villas, food and beverage outlets, retail and an entertainment hub. The Silver Sands “Luxury District Fashion Boutiques” at Port Louis is now nearly complete.

“In addition to expanding our offerings in the beauty boutique and our liquor store, Rouge will now also have two outlets carrying handbags and sunglasses, one for tobacco and cigars, a clothing boutique and another for accessories,” explains Raymond Kattoura, whose company Duty Free and Travel Retail Group manages the business for Rouge in the Caribbean. “We are negotiating with the world’s top designers with shops at Miami’s Fashion District and St. Barth, and brands that fit in this Luxury Mega Yacht Marina.”

Trinidad

Rouge Duty Free entered into its ninth Caribbean country in December with its acquisition of the Vendôme perfume stores in Trinidad & Tobago.

Rouge took over two Vendôme stores, one each in the Trincity and Gulf City Malls, carrying high-end brands in fragrance and skincare.

Although the current stores are duty paid, Kattoura says that Rouge is entering into duty free by the end of this year, and has plans to open a duty free division on the island.

“We have since signed a contract to open a flagship store at the Falls

at Westmall, which will cover nearly 2,000 square feet of space, and we are in negotiations to open in two other malls on the island,” he tells *TMI*. “We expect to open the Westmall location this summer. We are also waiting for the right space to open in the airport, where we expect to be operating by this fall.”

“With a population of some 1.5 million, we think that Trinidad has been underserved when it comes to perfume and beauty,” he added. “In most of our locations, the Rouge stores have become a leading retail option for the local populations as well as tourists, and we see this happening in Trinidad as well.”



Rouge has now added a ninth Caribbean country acquiring two stores in Trinidad, with more to come.

U.S.V.I.

Rouge Duty Free reports that its two stores in St. Croix – the original store in Orange Grove and the Maison Rouge in downtown Christiansted -- have been “doing so fantastic,” that Rouge is now opening a third location adjacent to its Orange Grove boutique.

“The new space will allow us to expand into handbags, accessories, beauty tools from Geske, and Montblanc bags, and give us more room for fragrance in the original store,” says Kattoura. “In February we opened a new Spa Cabine for the exclusive Swiss skincare brand Bellefontaine, where we give facials and treatments, which was very well received.”

Kattoura reports that Rouge is also pursuing leads for an additional location in St. Thomas.

In St. Barth, the Creed store operated by Rouge is doing very well, and will be celebrating its first anniversary in June. This is the only Creed store in the Caribbean.

Grand Cayman

Rouge’s Grand store in downtown Grand Cayman continues to over-perform and the launch of a new Spa Cabine for Bellefontaine was another success. Rouge will be opening a second store in Grand Cayman before the end of the year, confirms Kattoura.

Tulum

At the end of 2022, Rouge also opened two locations in Tulum, on the Mexican Riviera, which is currently one of the hottest destinations in the region. Rouge Duty Free was the first perfumery in Tulum.

The flagship store is located in the heart of the Archaeological district, in Aldea Zama, and carries an extensive selection of fragrances and beauty brands, a vegan skincare line, sunglasses and accessories. The store also features a Beauty Spa Cabine.

The second Rouge Duty Free location is in Tulum Center at the Hunab Lifestyle Center shopping area.

Tourism is expected to boom even further from the opening of the new Felipe Carrillo Puerto International Airport in Tulum in December and the launch of the Tren Maya (Maya Train) project, which connects Cancun and dozens of destinations across the Yucatán peninsula, including Tulum.



The elegant new Rouge Duty Free flagship in Tulum, Mexico incorporates textures and materials of the historical ruins in the Architectural district, synchronized with a modern touch and feel.

“We see business in our two Tulum stores picking up since the opening of the new airport in Tulum and the train from Cancun,” said Kattoura. “We expect the new direct flights to the U.S. to bring significant increases,” he tells *TMI*.

Kattoura also reveals that Rouge will be opening a third location in Tulum in the Hotel Zone before the end of year – it will be a small store in one of the new hotels being built on the beach.

Rouge Duty Free’s promise to become a pan-Caribbean power is already a reality.

With the recent Vendôme purchase, Rouge Duty Free is now operating in Trinidad, in St. Thomas and St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands, in Grand Cayman, Grenada, St. Maarten/St. Martin and Tulum, Mexico as well as operating the only Creed store in the Caribbean in St. Barth. With the opening this year of six new stores in Grenada, plus one in St. Croix, one on St. Thomas, one in Tulum, one in Grand Cayman and at least two in Trinidad, Rouge is definitely the formidable player in the Caribbean duty free market.

Tulum flights from the U.S. take off at the end of March; new Maya Tren connects with Cancun

Since the new Felipe Carrillo Puerto International Airport in Tulum, Mexico was officially inaugurated in December, it has been handling domestic traffic on carriers like Viva and Aeromexico.

Now, at the end of March, the new airport will begin receiving direct flights from the United States.

American carriers Delta, Spirit, United, American and JetBlue, will begin flying between the U.S. and Tulum on March 28.

Delta will offer service between Atlanta and Tulum, American will launch with service from Charlotte, Miami and Dallas-Fort Worth.

Spirit will operate Tulum routes from Orlando and Fort Lauderdale.

On March 31, United will begin nonstop flights from Newark, Los Angeles, Houston and Chicago. In June, JetBlue will begin service out of New York’s John F. Kennedy International Airport.

The new direct flights are expected to be a huge boon to the up-and-coming tourism in the region, complementing that of nearby Cancun.

Tulum is also benefiting from the launch in December of the \$20 billion Tren Maya (Maya Train) project, which connects Cancun and dozens of destinations across the Yucatán peninsula, including Tulum. When completed, the train will feature 34 stops across the states of Quintana Roo, Yucatán, Campeche, Tabasco, and Chiapas.

Argentina: A Hundred Days of Milei

Inflation slows in South America's second largest economy, but economic outlook still shaky *An economic overview by John Gallagher in Buenos Aires*

At the time of writing, Javier Milei has been President of Argentina for one hundred days. There have been quite a few changes in the country since he took over in December from the Alberto Fernandez / Cristina Fernandez Kirchner controlled government. Milei has been trying to rush laws through to deregulate the economy and make life better for the citizens, but the opposition and the trade unions are trying to prevent changes to the status quo. Everyone agreed that this would all take a lot more than 100 days and a large amount of patience from the electorate. Pessimists argue that the government will need 100 years to get the economy going again.

Argentina's economy continues to struggle, but inflation appears to be slowing. The monthly figure is now down to 12%, a huge improvement compared to the +30% figure Milei's team inherited. Single digit monthly inflation is now expected sometime in Q2, but few analysts are prepared to predict how the year will end. Remarkably, the slowdown in inflation has been achieved at the same time as the government has reduced subsidies on transport, electricity, water, and other public services.

With the shadow of hyperinflation disappearing, Milei's economic team is now looking at government spending, trying to cut the fiscal deficit. Whole ministries have been closed and several departments merged. The government is refusing to print money to fund the deficit or artificially stimulate growth and is instead relying on a positive agricultural performance in the first half to bring much needed Dollars into the country.

Central bank reserves have increased since Milei took over and optimists are saying that restrictions on USD purchases may be removed early in the second half of the year.

When Milei took office the official value of the USD was 365 pesos. Almost immediately, he devalued the official rate to 800 Pesos. The grey market USD was

being exchanged at around 1000 Pesos, increasing to 1250 Pesos in mid-January. This has now fallen back to 1030 and the exchange rate gap has reduced to around 20% - whether this is due to successful economic measures and a deliberate policy not to print Pesos to finance deficits, no one is sure. But the markets seem to be supporting his policies so far.

Impact on Duty Free

When the gap between the official and grey market exchange rate falls there is a direct effect on duty free sales in Argentina. Argentine residents who took advantage of the official exchange rate available at Argentine-based airport and border stores when using local credit cards are purchasing less – at the same time foreign tourists also cut their spend, especially those from Brazil who were paying in Pesos in notes they had acquired in exchange houses. In a recent visit to Puerto Iguazu, I noticed that the long lines of Brazilians to get into the duty free shops, common during most of last year, had virtually disappeared. There is no comment from operators on what has happened to sales, and we are unlikely to get any official news until Avolta publishes its Q1 sales figures. Suppliers, however, have confirmed that sales are down.

At the same time, the change in the relative value of the dollar has also put the brakes on cross border shopping for groceries and other household goods. Paraguayans and Uruguayans living close to the Argentine border made shopping visits a weekly occurrence. Gas prices in Argentina have also moved up significantly. But since the devaluation, the relative values have changed, and shoppers are staying at home.

Travel still growing? Open skies ahead

So far, the December devaluation has not affected passenger numbers on domestic and international flights. Both domestic and international traffic numbers

showed increases for the last three months compared to the same period 12 months ago. Perhaps tickets had been bought before the devaluation was announced and we may have to wait another month or two to see a negative effect. With inflation slowing down and the exchange rates stable, analysts are saying Argentina is no longer the bargain country it was last year, and overseas visitors may not be rushing to spend vacation time.

The Argentine government announced last week that it has signed an open skies agreement with Brazil. This is clearly good news for airport retail as airlines will now be allowed to operate new services and frequencies without seeking permission. Argentine low-cost airlines will clearly benefit, and aviation experts say that several airlines are looking to start operations in Brazil.

Milei has confirmed that his government intends to sell flagship airline Aerolineas Argentinas – but the actual sales model has still to be decided. The company has historically lost money for several years and the government has indicated that it will not finance a loss-making airline. There is talk of a workers cooperative with the government supplying initial working capital. Local press reports have also suggested a possible sale to Eduardo Eurnekian; but with his company holding the concession to manage the majority of the country's airports, this would be difficult to get approved through current anti-trust legislation.

Although trade unions have started organizing strike action to protest against the government's economic program, social tensions have in the main part been absent. Most electors seem to be prepared to give the government some time to sort things out. However real salaries are falling, and the situation may change if positive results are not seen in the short term. The government will certainly be hoping that they see the green shoots of a revival sooner rather than later.

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Avolta begins operations in new border duty free store in Fray Bentos

Avolta has extended its Latin American footprint by claiming the tender to operate the Fray Bentos Duty Free Shop in Uruguay. The duty free shop is located adjacent to the Libertador General San Martín International Bridge that links the Uruguayan town with the Argentine town of Gualeguaychú. Fray Bentos is situated 280km from Buenos Aires and 310km from Montevideo.

Working with local business partner Nuevo Paso de Frontera, Avolta won the tender that had been called in 2023. Avolta started operating the store at the beginning of March in the premises vacated by former incumbent Darok, when it ceased trading.

A totally new store will be built later this year when the whole border crossing is modernized as part of the Uruguayan government's plans to improve conditions for drivers at land border crossings. More than \$14 million will be invested by the

government in the renovation project.

Avolta operates airport duty free stores in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Ecuador, and Colombia in addition to a border store in Uruguiana in Brazil.

JG



Changi to stick with Galeão concession?

Brazil's current policy on airport privatization remains unclear fifteen months after the new administration presided by Luis Inacio da Silva took over control of the government. The last part of the Bolsonaro government's airport privatization program with the proposed privatization of Santos Dumont, the Rio de Janeiro domestic airport, was immediately canceled.

The Changi controlled concession at Rios's Galeão International Airport has also been under doubt for some time. Rio's traffic figures were disappointing prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the airport has struggled to produce solid traffic figures. But recent traffic restrictions put in place in Santos Dumont have helped the airport managers see a slight recovery.

Total traffic reached 7.95 million passengers in 2023, up from 5.89 million

in 2022 but still a long way from the 16.9 million the airport saw in 2015. Traffic figures in 2024 have also been positive with total traffic reaching 2.46 million for the first two months of the year compared with 1.32 in 2023. Changi is hoping for at least 14 million passengers this year.

Back in 2021, Changi intimated to the Brazilian government that they wanted to return the concession as the figures did not allow them to make a profit and their projections indicated that a decent financial performance was a long way off.

However, the recovery in traffic has brought the two sides to the negotiation table and Changi may decide to stay with the concession but it is asking the government for a significant reduction in the concession fee. At the beginning of March, the Ports and Airports Ministry has requested the Government's Federal Court

of Auditors to approve a 50% reduction in the concession fee.

But there is preoccupation in government circles that this reduction would bring about similar requests from other airport concession holders.

Industry analysts told *TMI* that the Sao Paulo Guarulhos concession holders were looking for a contract extension to compensate for the traffic downturn during the pandemic years. Aeroportos do Brasil, the manager of the Viracopos concession, is also looking to change certain clauses of the agreement where they had promised a series of infrastructure improvements. Inframerica, a subsidiary of Corporacion America, is also looking for a comprehensive concession review before conducting further airport improvements at Brasilia.

JG

Bath & Body Works opens in Iguazu with London Supply

London Supply has opened a new Bath & Body Works shop-in-shop in its flagship store in Puerto Iguazu. Company commercial director Maggie Ducos told *TMI*: “We are really pleased to open this new section in our biggest store, and we are incredibly grateful to Essence Corp. for allowing us to highlight the Bath & Body Works brands in our Puerto Iguazu store. We know that our Brazilian and Argentine customers love these brands, and we are so pleased to offer them a full range of personal care products as well as some great fragrances. We are sure the full range will be an enormous success.”

Ducos mentioned this will not be the only change in Puerto Iguazu this year. “We are constantly looking at adding to our range and giving something new to our shoppers. Very shortly we will be making changes to the part of the store where we sell our extensive range of bags and luggage. In addition, we are also planning to make significant changes to the area where we sell domestic appliances. We hope to have everything up and running before the end of Q1. But we are all sure there will be further changes as we go on in the year.”



London Supply Foundation

In early January, the London Supply Foundation celebrated the 18th edition of their annual charity golf tournament. As in previous years the tournament was held at Club del Lago Golf de Punta del Este. The tournament had more than 250 participants.

The foundation raised US\$ 667,268 for various charities. In accordance with last year's donations 10% of the total, almost \$67,000, was donated to Uruguayan children's cancer charity the Pérez Scremini Foundation. The balance will be

used by the Foundation to finance London Supplies ongoing activities in the Primero de Mayo district of Puerto Iguazu and other areas in Argentina and Uruguay where the company is involved.

María Taratuty, executive director of the Foundation, celebrated the spirit of solidarity shown by participants, sponsors and all those involved in the organization of the event. “This will allow us to start 2024 to continue the work we have been carrying out and gives us a great incentive to attain all our objectives.” *JG*

New Lima terminal to open in December

Airport concession manager Lima Airport Partners has announced that the new passenger terminal at Jorge Chavez International Airport will open on December 18, 2024. The new terminal will allow the airport to grow capacity to just under 40 million passengers.

Last year, 21.3 million passengers used the airport, an increase of 14.1% on the previous year but still 10.1% below the 2019 figures. LAP is forecasting that the airport will reach 30 million passengers in 2031.

Juan José Salmón, CEO of LAP, said that more than 80% of the 270,000sqm terminal has been completed and they are on schedule to open by mid-December.

The airport commercial team is also putting the final changes to the commercial side of the new terminal. Duty free stores, bars, restaurants and VIP lounges will take up 28,000 sqm with the center-piece being the 4,000 sqm walk-through duty free store

operated by Lagardère.

Lagardère has also played a significant role in the development of the Food



& Beverage offer available in the new terminal. The company will directly manage 11 outlets in a special Food Court featuring internationally renowned Peruvian chefs Mitsuharu Tsumaru and Jaime Pesaque.

In addition, Lagardère will operate a duty-paid store in the domestic departure area.

Lagardère commenced operations in Lima in January 2023 after winning the duty free concession with a unique profit-sharing agreement with LAP.

With Peruvian gastronomy at the heart of the restaurant area, LAP has also confirmed that Peruvian products such as Alpaca and fine silver jewelry will feature heavily in the commercial zones.

LAP is planning to close the current terminal on the evening of December 17 and begin operations in the new terminal the following day.

JG



New beauty show in Miami scores huge success with over 19,000 visits

There was a new show in town whose success underscored the need and hunger for a true beauty event in the region, especially one that catered to the Americas, including travel retail.

Cosmoprof North America Miami concluded its inaugural edition with resounding success, solidifying its position as a premier beauty launchpad. The event, held January 23-25 at the Miami Convention Center, welcomed an impressive 19,000 visits representing 113 countries, alongside a diverse array of over 700 exhibitors from 40 countries.

Exhibitors at Cosmoprof North America Miami (representing categories in skin care, makeup, fragrance, hair care, nails, and the beauty supply chain) had the opportunity to showcase new products and launches, contributing to the event's overall

success. The dynamic show floor was a bustling hub for innovation, highlighting the latest trends and groundbreaking beauty solutions.

“The success of the first edition of Cosmoprof North America Miami is really a positive signal for the development strategy of the Cosmoprof network,” declared Antonio Bruzzone, Chief Executive Officer of BolognaFiere Group. “As a global partner for business for all beauty stakeholders, our aim is to facilitate networking and commercial relationships; starting from today we can provide our global community two specific events dedicated to the U.S. market, enriching the global offer of our international platform.”

While few major fragrance brands attended this inaugural event – a traditional travel retail/duty free category—there were

many really exciting skincare, makeup and nail care brands on display, all categories that are generating increased attention from retailers throughout the global travel retail industry. One fragrance launch did stand out however—the inaugural fragrance for football (soccer) super-star Lionel Messi, produced by Australian company Game On Product Group. I doubt that a single person attending the event did not stop at the centrally-located Messi stand, even though the Icon himself was not in attendance, as he was the Icon on the newly launched *Icon of the Seas* from Royal Caribbean.

Beauty tools were a huge draw—especially German brand Geske whose accessibly priced collection of high-tech, beautifully designed products were a center of attention. Geske has invested significantly in the Cosmoprof events since the brand launched two years ago, and it appears that the company is creating huge interest in the category (more on Geske on page 61), while significantly raising its visibility throughout the world.

TMI's Lois Pasternak saw quite a few travel retail operators at the event, especially some well-known names from Latin America. While key travel retail mega brands may not have been exhibiting at this inaugural event, representatives from key companies came to check it out and attend some of the “CosmoTalks” information sessions.

One of the distinctive features of the event was the presence of country



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NEW YORK

Bloom

The New Fragrance





Left: The Cosmoprof Miami ribbon cutting took place Tuesday morning, January 23. From left: Freddie Peterson, General Manager of Miami Beach Convention Center; Rickelle Williams, Assistant City Manager of Miami Beach; City of Miami Beach Commissioners Joe Magazine, Laura Dominguez, and Tanya Bhatt; Antonio Bruzzone, CEO of BolognaFiere; David Whitaker, President & CEO of Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau; Liza Rapay, Vice President of Cosmoprof North America; Ed McNeill, Senior Vice President of USA Beauty, Informa Markets; and Wendy Kallergis, President & CEO of Greater Miami and the Beaches Hotel Association. Right: A standing room only Cosmo Talks session moderated by WWD's Jenny Fine.

pavilions, supported by foreign governments that recognized the pivotal role of creating exposure for their brands in the U.S. These pavilions, representing countries Brazil, China, Colombia, France, Germany, South Korea, Spain, and Turkey, added a global dimension to the event, fostering international collaboration and showcasing the beauty industry's diversity.

HIGHLIGHTS

The Buyer Program and Collaboration with U.S.C.S.

The Buyer Program, an exclusive initiative by Cosmoprof facilitating impactful B2B networking between exhibitors and buyers, orchestrated a multitude of highly productive meetings. Notable participants in the Buyer Program comprised esteemed companies such as 1 Hotels, Blush-Bar, CVS Health, Icsitum, Nordstrom, Olivela, El Palacio de Hierro, Space NK, and Walmart Puerto Rico. Also, in collaboration with the U.S. Commercial Service, 175 delegates were registered from 17 countries, including Colombia, Ecuador, Ghana, Jamaica, and Mexico, fostering meaningful B2B engagements with exhibitors.

Education

CosmoTalks and Cosmopack Education sessions emerged as significant highlights of the show, with numerous sessions selling out before the event, underscoring the industry's hunger for education. Topics ranging from "Beauty Business Start-Up: What You Must Know Before You Launch!" to "Revolutionizing Beauty: Unveiling the Secrets of New

Product Innovation" and "The Lowdown on Environmentally Conscious Packaging" drew eager attendees seeking invaluable insights and expertise from speakers representing The Estée Lauder Companies, Shiseido, Ulta Beauty, Unilever, and more.

Rumor has it that there will be some travel retail sessions next year.

The Press Zone

Situated on the show floor, the Press Zone offered exhibitors an exclusive opportunity to establish one-on-one connections with influencers and prominent consumer and trade press figures from Allure, BeautyMatter, The Beauty Industry Report, CEW, Elle, Hola TV, NewBeauty, Real Simple, and Today.com.

Cosmoprof North America Miami proved to be a catalyst for industry professionals, providing a unique platform for networking, business expansion, and knowledge exchange. As the inaugural edition came to a close, the overwhelmingly positive response from both exhibitors and attendees affirmed the event's success and marked the beginning of a new era for beauty innovation in Miami Beach.

Rebeca Durán, International Manager of Stanpa, was really satisfied with the first edition of the exhibition: "Cosmoprof Miami went quite well for Spanish companies, and we are pleased with the outcome. A significant number of visitors came from Latin America, but there were also visits from [the] U.S. and Canada. We'll be participating [in the] next edition with a bigger Spanish pavilion, in representation of Beauty from Spain."

The second stop of the Cosmoprof Network for the U.S. beauty community will be Las Vegas for the 21st edition of Cosmoprof North America Las Vegas at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center from July 23-25, 2024, with registration now open. The second edition of Cosmoprof North America Miami is scheduled to take place in Miami Beach, Florida, from January 21-23, 2025, further solidifying its role as a crucial platform for the beauty industry in the Americas.

Register now for Cosmoprof North America Las Vegas at www.cosmoprofnorthamerica.com/las-vegas/ and take advantage of early bird pricing through May 17th.

"As we celebrate the triumph of Cosmoprof North America's expansion to Miami, the launch's success reverberates into Las Vegas, solidifying both shows as vital hubs in the ongoing robust growth of the beauty industry in the United States," remarked Ed McNeill, Senior Vice President of USA Beauty. "With a shared objective, these events provide an unparalleled experience, nurturing innovation and fostering connections for all stakeholders."

"With the success at Cosmoprof North America Miami, we look forward to the sustained momentum at Cosmoprof North America Las Vegas in July," said the Professional Beauty Association's Executive Director, Nina Daily. "These notable events underscore the power of collaboration and a collective vision dedicated to empowering beauty professionals, strategically shaping the future of the industry."



PERSEUS

PARFUMS de MARLY
PARIS



L'Oréal International Distribution (LID) treated its Diesel brand to a major relaunch in North America, culminating in a show-stopping splash in New York City's Times Square.

L'Oréal International Distribution: Filling in the White Space through partnerships, collaboration and a new approach to growth

Despite its rich portfolio of brands, the L'Oréal Group realized that there were markets around the world that were under-potentialized and the company recently added a new business unit to its structure designed specifically to build select brands in these areas. The world's leading beauty group has launched L'Oréal International Distribution, familiarly known in the company as LID.

According to Annie Grégoire, General Manager of LID's North American zone, the concept was initiated by L'Oréal's current CEO, Nicolas Hieronimus, back in 2019, while he was still Deputy CEO in charge of Divisions.

"Hieronimus was looking at ways of accelerating the growth of the Group apart from acquisitions – even as we are very active in the acquisition world-- looking at how we could generate growth from the portfolio of brands that we already have," explains Grégoire. "Basically, he built a chart and put all the brands we had on the X axis, and then placed the countries where we were present on the Y axis.

And in between the two axis we found all these white spaces: the opportunity was substantial."

The L'Oréal Group has just come through several very successful years—"We bounced back into 2021 going twice the speed of the market. And in 2022, we had a grand slam, meaning that every single division and every single category beat the market," said Grégoire.

L'Oréal generally credits the strength of its portfolio for its ongoing success.

The company currently has 62 active beauty brands, each with a distinct brand identity, notes Grégoire.

"The main reason for our recent achievements -- apart from the people that work in the company --is our portfolio of brands, which are so complementary. We have 62 beauty brands that are live right now, including the Group's 36 international ones, as well as more than 87,000 employees in 150 countries. But still, we have a lot of white spaces out there. So this is the reason why LID was created.

"And our mission as a company, as

a worldwide citizen, is to offer each and every person around the world the Best of Beauty by creating the beauty of the world. The L'Oréal Group's purpose is to create the beauty that moves the world.

"So LID was created as a brand building entrepreneur with the mission of accelerating the conquest of the white spaces. And the notion of brand building is of key importance. We are not just blanketing the world with products, we're protecting their brand equity positioning, and ensuring the brand identity," she explains.

To do this, LID has been divided into five zones which are complementary to L'Oréal's existing geographical zones: North America; Latin America; Europe, which includes Middle East/North Africa & Sub-Saharan Africa; North Asia and South Asia Pacific. Some of these include travel retail to some extent.

Accelerating growth in white space requires a whole new set of approaches, skills, and ways of working, says Grégoire.

"We at LID have an agility and speed

of movement and decision-making that I've never seen in the last 20 years that I have been part of the Group. This independent structure allows us to have smaller committee decisions and to move quite quickly. And with the zones we address opportunities by region rather than from a country by country point of view," explains Grégoire.

North America zone targets specific brands

The North American zone, which is based out of Miami, also covers Canada and the Caribbean, as well as Travel Retail America for some of the brands, which creates efficiency and agility at the same time.

"We have one team to manage all that, whereas at the local affiliate level --which is the traditional go to market of L'Oréal -- you'd have Canada, the U.S., the Caribbean and travel retail," she says.

LID's North American portfolio is currently smaller than that of most of the

other four zones because it complements the local U.S. and Canadian affiliates, which are both very mature.

"Together, we all complement each other, and we work hand-in-hand with affiliates to complement their product offering," says Grégoire.

The new venture is so successful that it has quadrupled its business in 4 years, with future projections that are continually revised upward, says Grégoire. "And every year I've been in this beautiful venture we've been over delivering."

Re-building classic brands

LID's North American portfolio currently consists of four fragrance brands: Guy Laroche, creator of L'Oréal's legendary Drakkar Noir fragrance for men, Paloma Picasso, Cacharel, and Diesel. These are handled through distribution partnerships. LID works with Parlux Holdings in the U.S., with Prestilux in Canada, and Travel Retail is handled through Actium, a new partnership that was

signed last November.

"It's quite an exciting time as the integration of these brands within the LID portfolio has put them on an accelerated growth trajectory. And we're seeing the results coming through. Distribution partnerships are at the heart of everything we do, but we're emphasizing the notion of brand building," says Grégoire.

"We are establishing ourselves within the Group as being the authority in terms of managing distributor partnerships, and exports. We don't just distribute to sell, we distribute to build brands. So the notion of partnership is quite important. When we select the partner to go to market, we ensure that we have 360 degree support from them going from traditional sales, to trade marketing to marketing. We do PR with them, we do social media with them. We go 360 degrees."

In 2023, LID expanded further by creating an online hub for direct-to-consumer distribution. The hub currently distributes two major skincare brands: Biotherm, for distribution in the U.S. and shu uemura, for distribution in the U.S. and Canada. The online hub is being handled by THG Ingenuity, the commerce division of THG plc, with whom LID signed a DTC management deal last October.

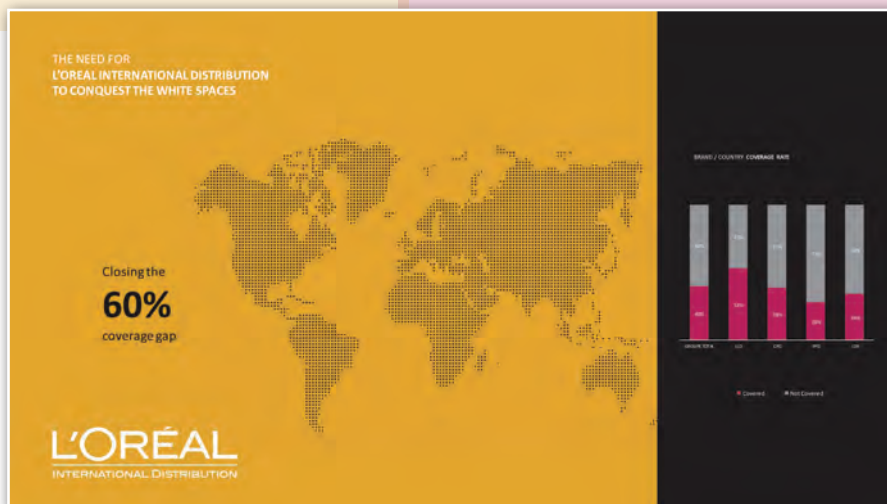
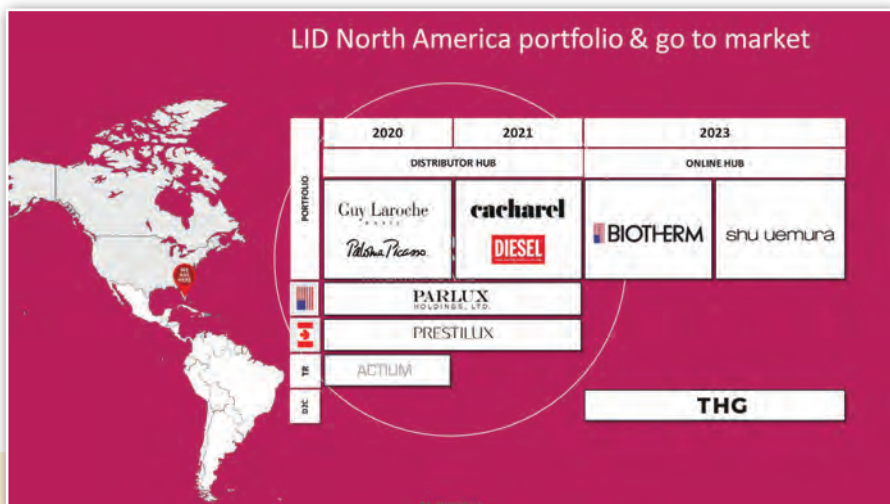
The Hut Group is the owner of the LookFantastic website in Europe, which is the number one pure player of beauty in Europe, says Grégoire.

"L'Oréal International Distribution's mission is to build brands in the North America zone in an agile and efficient way, leveraging the expertise and manpower of external partners to amplify the acceleration of our portfolio's brands. This partnership with THG Ingenuity is the perfect example of that mission coming to life within a DTC environment as we will be benefitting from their fully integrated services and their personalized, consumer-centric e-commerce expertise."

Broadening distribution opportunities

Another advantage of the LID mandate is that it enables the company to take advantage of a broader range of distribution opportunities as a way to fill some of the empty white space.

"LID is a new business unit in the L'Oréal Group," says Grégoire. "It's complementary to the affiliates in the region and to travel retail. We work in close partnership with travel retail and we are very excited about our new partnership with Actium for our brands."



Ultra-luxury skincare brand Bellefontaine brings its Swiss expertise to the Caribbean

One of the most luxurious Swiss skincare brands – Bellefontaine –has just debuted in the Caribbean, as it rolls out exclusively in the most prestigious spas and boutiques in the world.

Bellefontaine was created in 2006 by Peter Yip, one of the partners behind the legendary La Prairie.

Yip, who grew up in Hong Kong surrounded by paintings of beautiful women by his father, the artist, Ping-Sum Yip, has lived in Switzerland for more than forty years and been involved with the beauty industry since 1978. Since he collaborated on the launch of La Prairie, Yip was responsible for establishing the luxury brand across Asia, until the partners sold the brand in the early 1990s.

After sale of his “first baby,” Yip started looking for a way to create a new high-end skincare.

“My goal with Bellefontaine was to create an antidote to skin aging,” Yip tells *TMI*'s Lois Pasternak during an exclusive interview in Miami during Cosmoprof.

“We made a major investment in cutting edge Swiss laboratories. I wanted to take a holistic approach to skincare, and combine traditional Chinese plants and the flora in Switzerland. As a result, all our products are based on the edelweiss flower, from which we created the Edelgen complex. This ingredient is the foundation of all the Bellefontaine products.

“We take a 360 approach to anti-aging,” said Yip. “The Bellefontaine research is focused on the fight against soft inflammation & free radicals to protect the skin. We stimulate the skin’s defenses to block and prevent this process.”

According to Yip, Bellefontaine’s edelweiss flower extract is combined with exclusive active ingredients and ultra-sophisticated molecules that helps to soothe and dissipate discomfort while reducing redness, strengthening the skin barrier, preserving its natural hydration and balance and offering improved protection.

Bellefontaine’s spa-oriented product line offers anti-ageing, moisturizing,

purifying, men’s care, stem cell treatment and more.

All Bellefontaine products are created and developed by the company’s own R&D department and 100% made in Switzerland.

The brand is available in more 35 countries across Europe, Asia and the Middle East, where it is available through a network of exclusive deluxe beauty centers, clinics, SPA and exclusive perfumeries and department stores. The brand is doing particularly well in Russia and China, says Yip. It launched in the U.S. in spring 2020, where it is found at Neiman Marcus and Bergdorf Goodman.

As of February, Bellefontaine has also launched in travel retail in the Caribbean through the Rouge stores.

“Bellefontaine is my second baby after La Prairie. I have spent my life making something to please all the ladies of the world, to help them maintain themselves. I am now 78 and I intend to maintain myself as well. That is why I use all the products on myself first.”



Bellefontaine enjoys high-profile debut in Caribbean through Rouge

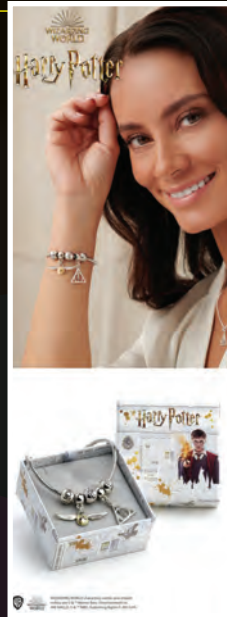
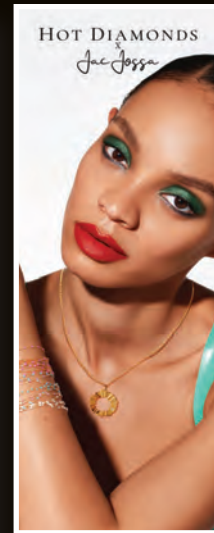
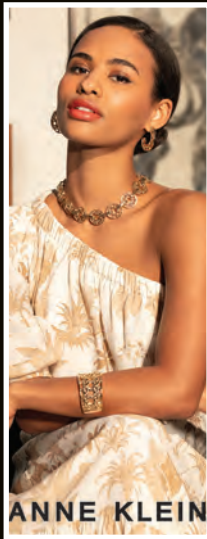
Luxury Swiss skincare Bellefontaine hit the Caribbean with an “elegant” bang, beginning February 15 exclusively in the Rouge stores in St. Croix, in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The four day special event took place at the Orange Grove Boutique and Mansion Rouge, with a one-day Masterclass in each location, conducted by Bellefontaine’s famed international esthetician, Sophie Demaret.

Rouge launched Bellefontaine the following week in its Grand store in Grand Cayman, where it held two master classes that were open to the public on February 23 and 24.

Next on the agenda, Rouge is launching Bellefontaine at its Port Louis shops in Grenada. This launch will coincide with the inauguration of the new Silver Sands complex in Port Louis Maritime

Village in early May, where Rouge is operating seven retail outlets.

Rouge is also introducing the luxury brand in its newly acquired stores in Trinidad, according to Raymond Kattoura, whose company Duty Free and Travel Retail Group manages the business for Rouge in the Caribbean.



Carolina Herrera partners with Avolta with cross-category pop-up stores at Mexico City and Ezeiza airports

Carolina Herrera has partnered with Avolta to captivate travelers with two vibrant and immersive cross-category pop-up spaces at Mexico City International Airport Terminal 2 and Buenos Aires Ezeiza International Airport Terminal A.

The pop-up spaces – which were launched over the busy festive peak travel period and the start of 2024 – showcase the brand’s signature bold red, an iconic feature of its new retail design, and embodies the brand’s *Alegria de Vivir* mantra of empowered femininity and sophistication.

The promotional spaces feature a wide range of top-selling fragrance pillars including Good Girl, Bad Boy, 212 and CH fragrances, alongside a selection of travel retail-exclusive products.

Also highlighted is the brand’s star launch, Good Girl Blush, a re-interpretation of the iconic Good Girl Eau de Parfum fragrance with a delicate blush pink hued stiletto and a powdery expression of floral femininity.

Herrera Beauty celebrates self expression

For a full brand experience, both pop-ups include Herrera Beauty makeup products, the first ready-to-wear and personalizable makeup line.



The colorful Carolina Herrera exclusive high perfumery Lucky Charms fragrances collection at Buenos Aires Ezeiza International Airport.



The Carolina Herrera pop-up store in Mexico City colorfully immerses travelers in the brand’s fragrances and cosmetics.

The collection embraces self-expression and blurs the line between makeup and jewelry with an inspired assortment of accessories including fashionable print caps, charms and colorful tassels.

Herrera Beauty features a wide range of textures and finishes, including its high-pigmented Fabulous Kiss Lipsticks, to the best-selling Fabulous Eyes Mascara.

Completing the Herrera Beauty collection is the newly launched Good Girl Liquid Blush.

Beauty advisors are on-hand at both locations to offer full in-store makeup services, tailored product recommendations and expertly recreate the brand’s most iconic looks.

In Ezeiza Airport, travelers can also discover the brand’s exclusive high perfumery Lucky Charms fragrances – a collection of six floral scents in two-toned bottles that come with a customizable and interchangeable Herrera Beauty charm.

Coinciding with the pop-up launches, Carolina Herrera also launched a two-month digital social media, influencer and OOH media campaign to build awareness of the latest spaces.

The social media campaign, which featured Sense of Place captions to enhance the Carolina Herrera brand experience, reached over 50 million total impressions in Buenos Aires and Mexico City during its run.

Felipe Grant, Puig General Manager Travel Retail Americas, said: “The launch of our latest Carolina Herrera pop-ups in Buenos Aires and Mexico City in partnership with Avolta is a testament to our commitment to delivering an unparalleled cross-category travel retail and consumer experience in the Americas.”



The new Carolina Herrera makeup collection is featured in the Mexico City pop-up.

It's a 10 creator Carolyn Aronson discusses Travel Retail and global expansion

With its cult-classic product, the Miracle Leave-In, It's a 10 hair care has grown exponentially, becoming a global brand now sold in more than 84 countries. More than 10 million bottles of the product are sold annually and It's a 10 products are available in more than 25,000 salons and 15,000 professional chains like Ulta in the U.S.

TMI had the opportunity to speak with It's a 10 founder and CEO Carolyn Aronson, head of one of the only female-owned professional hair care brands in the world, about the brand's venture into travel retail and other exciting expansion endeavors.

It's a 10 started its venture into travel retail in late Spring 2023 through Katherine Sleipnes' International Brand Builders Inc. (IBBI), with an expanded rollout this year.

"We're very excited about introducing hair care into travel retail; it's long overdue," Aronson tells *TMI's* Lois Pasternak.

"It's a very approachable brand. Much of the traveling population feel very comfortable buying my products; it's not too high end, it includes easy to understand products that have multiple uses. People don't need to travel with five different products, they can travel with one. And it's the kind of product that once you start using it, if you forget it at home, you feel like 'oh no, I'm going to have such a bad hair week' because I don't have my It's a 10 Leave-In with me. I mean, there are not many companies that have been able to create a Golden formula within the beauty world. And this is truly what I consider one of the Golden formulas, she says.



It's a 10 creator Carolyn Aronson

"I've been a hairdresser for 38 years, I've seen products come and go. I've seen the ones that last for 30 and 40 years, and this is definitely one of those products. And if someone is running through an airport that carries it, they would say 'Oh, look, I can grab my Leave-In, because Paris doesn't have it.'"

After being in business for 18 years, It's a 10 is now going worldwide.

"We are currently in 84 countries. We just launched Vietnam. The woman who runs the distributorship tried it when she went to college in Boston, and knew she wanted to bring it to her country," notes Aronson.

"This product is a good hair day in a bottle. That's the best way to describe it. And you know that when you are without your good products, you literally feel different. Right? You want to feel just as good traveling as you do at home."

Aronson points out how well suited the brand is for people on vacation.

"For those beach days when you're in the sun – It's a 10 protects your hair because it has UV protection. We have a huge surfer following where their hair gets really trashed from the salt and the sun and this is one of the only products that they can continuously use and save their hair. So people traveling on these 'sun and fun' vacations are using Leave-In to help save their hair."

The multi-functional products are formulated to appeal to women from their 20s to 50 and above, with tailored products to meet all hair needs, says Aronson.

"One of the things that makes It's a 10 different is that the products deliver instant, multifunctional results. When I say it's for

all hair types, it's because I've created a collection around each Leave In formula, and each one solves hair problems. So no matter what color your skin is, or what ethnicity you are, or what type of hair you have, we have a formula to work within all cultures and all hair types. And that's really what I focused on from the very beginning."

For travel retail, the company has created a travel retail assortment with travel size products, sets and duos in its best-selling collections. The company is also introducing TR gondolas.

Be a 10 and Rewind

Aronson expanded to makeup several years ago with Be a 10 color cosmetics and just recently launched a men's hair color line called Rewind it 10.

"My mantra is to create products for women that are easy to use and address her beauty needs from head to toe. Be a 10 is a multi-functional easy to use makeup line that has built in applicators so you don't need YouTube tutorials or a million brushes to create those instant 'be a ten' looks," says Aronson.

Each product has an innovation – from the metallic colors of the Dazzling eye shadows that can be layered for different intensities, to the 2-wands-in-one applicator of the mascara, Be a 10 is a simple, easy to use multifunctional makeup that's professional quality, she says.

Rewind it 10 is a men's hair and beard color kit, with vegan, cruelty free formulas that fights greys at the roots. Aronson's partner in the venture is rapper Fat Joe, and the brand has gotten a huge boost from celebrity endorsements.

Available in four different shades, each one sports "famous guys" on the box, including football player Travis Kelce; kickboxer and mixed martial artist star Stephen Thompson; R&B singer, songwriter, and producer Tank; and actor/singer Jencarlos Canela.

"We launched Rewind It 10 in Sally Beauty stores at the end of December and sold \$1.5 million worth of product in three weeks. Our celebrity endorsers have an aggregate social media posting of over 10 billion people between all of them, with more joining them every day. It is a huge success," says Aronson.



Worldclassbrands highlights wellness and beauty tech at Summit

Lenny DiCristofano's Chicago-based travel retail agency worldclassbrands (which partners with UK-based Martin Lovatt of Magnify Brands) will be showcasing several lines of best-selling wellness and beauty tech products from his multi-category portfolio at the Summit of the Americas.

Focusing on brands that are innovative, disruptive, on trend, sustainable and affordable, beauty and wellness has become one of worldclassbrands' fastest growing categories, several of which it presented in Cannes last year as well.

Key among these is Beauty Pro, a UK brand that has sold treatment masks in salons since 2010, and launched at-home salon products that DiCristofano and Lovatt began showing in 2022.

With a multi-award winning product range that includes 100% plant-based serums, anti-aging and nourishing eye and face masks, body care and a range of beauty tech devices, the company checks all the boxes for innovation and sustainability.

Its plant based Daily Serums range is 100% vegan, water free and packaged in recyclable and reusable materials. In 2023, BeautyPro went a step further, and launched 100% Biodegradable Sheet Masks and Packaging.



Key products in the award-winning range include a biodegradable eye-warming mask that soothes tired eyes and a men's range called Barber Pro. In 2023, Beauty Pro launched its 100% Biodegradable Sheet Masks and Packaging, a move the company sees as a huge step forward for its sustainability credentials. An ever growing selection of its products are now certified as vegan by the Vegan Society, as well.

"We're always improving our existing ranges to ensure they encapsulate the very best formulas and are in line with our company ethos. This includes always working to make sure our packaging is kind to the planet and our ingredients are ethically sourced," say co-founders Ibs Ansari and David Herdman on the

company website.

Beauty Pro's collection of hand-held, travel-friendly beauty tools include its LED Wand 5-in-1-anti-aging tool, a T-Bar Sonic Vibrating anti-aging device, its Hydratest skin analysis device and its Photon LED Light Therapy Facial Mask.

Wonderbalm

One of Beauty Pro's hero products is its Wonderbalm, an all in one multi-purpose skin care balm that nourishes and conditions the skin. The multi-use balm can be used for a multitude of skin solutions, including skin moisturizer, natural first aid kit, hair mask for conditioning, lip balm, after shave balm, hand cream and cuticle moisturizer, makeup primer, makeup remover, eye cream, tattoo aftercare, hydrating skin mask, burns, cuts & scrapes.

The balm is 100% vegan, cruelty-free and made with all-natural ingredients, free from additives, preservatives and parabens. Deeply hydrating, its replenishing formulation is rich in vitamins and antioxidants, using Olive Oil, Shea Butter, Candelilla Wax, Orange Peel Oil and Vegetable Oil to moisturize, protect and promote natural glow.

See the full worldclassbrands portfolio at the Summit of the Americas at booth #601.

Coty and Kylie Jenner debut first Kylie Jenner fragrance

Kylie Jenner continues to expand her beauty business into new categories with the launch of her debut fragrance, Cosmic Kylie Jenner — a magnetic, skin-inspired scent that smells "out of this world." Crafted by Kylie, her first fragrance envelops the wearer in a rich, warm and sweet aroma.

Cosmic Kylie will be onconter in TR Americas on May 15th. This ambery floral fragrance opens with star jasmine and blood orange, has a heart of golden amber and red peony accords, and finishes with a soft dry down of vanilla musk accord and cedarwood.

Cosmic Kylie Jenner is housed in a sculptural bottle designed to resemble a piece of art from another world and formed to fit perfectly in the palm of your hand.

"I wanted to create something that

was truly unique to me in every aspect, from the scent to the bottle, and a fragrance that people have never smelled before but that feels immediately comforting and delicious..." says Kylie Jenner. "Because this fragrance is so personal to me, I also wanted the bottle and the pack-aging to reflect that so I designed the carton with my birthday embossed in roman numerals and the bottle was shaped to fit in the palm of your hand. I cannot wait to share this with you."

This debut fragrance by Kylie Jenner combines her olfactive vision and unique aesthetic with Coty's leading fragrance expertise and global reach. Cosmic Kylie Jenner furthers the Kylie Cosmetics brand as a global multi-channel beauty phenomenon.

Kylie Jenner Cosmetics and Cosmic



Kylie are represented in the Caribbean and Mexican travel retail markets by Tairo International.

Geske beauty tech brings its AI-fueled skincare revolution to TR

Beauty tools were a huge draw at the inaugural edition of Cosmoprof North America in Miami earlier this year—especially German brand Geske, whose accessibly priced collection of high-tech, beautifully designed products were a center of attention. Geske has invested significantly in the Cosmoprof events since the brand launched two years ago, and it appears that the company is creating huge interest in the category, while significantly raising its visibility throughout the world.

With its holistic, innovative AI approach to managing consumers unique skin care needs, Geske German Beauty Tech says that it brings to life the efficiency and precision of G-Beauty through science-backed technology, ergonomic designs and the power of AI to create a range of multifunctional prestige beauty tech tools at an affordable price point (\$8 to \$100).

Since its debut at Cosmoprof in Las Vegas 2022, where the brand was awarded “Best Beauty Tech,” Geske has gone on to become “the most awarded beauty brand.” The first year alone it won “Most Innovative Product 2022” from Stamegna Retail Management in London, the NACDS TSE Award 2022 (USA) for “Best Product Personal Care / Health and Beauty Category” and the jury at the influential CES tech event marked Geske as THE pioneer in beauty tech and innovation. *Elle* magazine just named it the No. 1 Beauty



Innovation. The design awards it has won are too numerous to list.

The products

Geske features 250 clinically tested and innovative skincare devices ranging from cleansing devices and dermal rollers to micro-needling and LED/light treatment devices, along with a collection of skincare products specially developed to pair with the devices to allow for the optimal skincare experience.

The devices help users curate personalized skincare routines tailored to their skin’s needs by pairing its tech-centric beauty devices with the free AI-powered app.

Users download the Geske German Beauty Tech app on Google Play or the Apple App Store for free. It is available in 131 countries and in 45 languages. They take a selfie and the personalized SmartAppGuided skincare AI algorithms

scan their skin in a matter of seconds and present them with an accurate analysis that highlights the skin’s potential areas of improvement. You define what’s most important for you amongst 10 different skin goals.

Geske offers an unprecedented 15-year guarantee in addition to the standard local product warranty, and says that its devices are equipped with professional beauty technologies usually reserved for dermatologists and cosmetic salons, all at an average price of \$49.95.

The Geske message

So far this year, the brand has launched a star-studded Instagram campaign that stars such style icons as Paris Hilton, Megan Fos, Courtney Cox, Nina Dobrev, Romee Strijd, Toni Garrn, and Aida Domènech, among others. These stars are reaching millions of followers with the Geske story.

According to Geske, the beauty device market is currently valued at \$75.30bn, and is expected to grow by 18.6% by 2030. The skincare industry is on the cusp of a spectacular growth curve, and Geske says that it is poised to spearhead that growth with life-changing beauty tech solutions available in 131+ countries.

Geske is currently launching in travel retail in the Americas. For information, contact astrid.steinhauser@geske.com

Timeless Skin Care highlights success following Cosmoprof North America Miami

Timeless Skin Care, a brand committed to providing innovative skincare products of exceptional quality and value, enjoyed news-worthy success at Cosmoprof North America Miami this past January.

As the inaugural Cosmoprof North America Miami event welcomed over 19,000 visits and 700 beauty exhibitors, Timeless Skin Care received additional attention since its global best-seller, 20% Vitamin C + E Ferulic Acid Serum (1.7oz) was listed as #1 in the exclusive CosmoTrends Report curated by BeautyStream in the ‘Shields Up’ category at the show.

Timeless Skin Care was also featured in the CosmoTalks session that took place on January 23. The CosmoTalks and

Cosmopack Education sessions emerged as significant highlights of the show, with numerous sessions selling out before the event.

As a result, the Timeless Skin Care’s booth was booming with guests and distributors from around the globe. The brand tells *TMI* that it received interest from global distributors and has already formed new partnerships that will assist brand expansion into new territories.

Timeless Skin Care is represented in travel retail in the Americas through Katherine Sleipnes’ IBBI.

Timeless Skin Care is disrupting the skincare market with innovative ingredients that are backed by extensive research and an initiative to ensure customer satisfaction, through which the brand is

actively transforming skincare routines worldwide at an affordable price point.

For more information, please visit: [@timelesshaskin / www.timelessha.com](https://www.timelessha.com)



Marcolin adds elegant butterfly silhouette model to its 2024 GUESS Travel Retail collection

Eyewear company Marcolin has unveiled new sunglasses in its 2024 GUESS Travel Retail collection.

The latest addition to the collection features a feminine butterfly silhouette with an elegant, trendy shape that travels between delicate vintage inspirations and modern finishes with a strong character and great refinement, says Marcolin.

The metal front is characterized by semi-enameled black trim on top and sides, overlapping the slim rose gold rims.

The frame features transparent injected temples in the same color, embellished with a glitter surface and decorated with the tonal GUESS logo. The gradient lenses gently fade from purple to peach.

The style will be available exclusively for the Travel Retail channel in airports



all over the world, starting in April and presented in a special pouch that can also be used as an original clutch bag.



Safilo and Missoni extend license through 2029

Safilo Group and Missoni have renewed of their global licensing agreement for Missoni brand eyewear until the end of 2029.

Missoni has represented a significant brand in Safilo's women's luxury fashion portfolio since 2020 thanks to its collections characterized by the innovative use of the fashion house's iconic textiles and colors, giving them a distinctive identity. This style fully expresses the authenticity of the brand's DNA making the Missoni eyewear collections immediately recognizable and unique.

"We are very proud to renew our partnership with Missoni. In only 4 years of collaboration we have been able to strongly develop the eyewear category, in particular in the main European markets and in North America. This renewal offers us a new and stimulating opportunity to consolidate and broaden our distribution, continuing to work together with the brand," said Angelo Trocchia, CEO of Safilo Group.

"We are glad to announce the renewal of our partnership with Safilo until 2029. The construction of lasting and solid relationships with our partners is, for us, a fundamental priority, as it allows us to develop high-quality projects that can lead to long-term success. During these past four years, the significant contribution of the eyewear category has been one of the driving factors of our growth that will further benefit from this agreement in the upcoming future," commented Livio Proli, CEO of Missoni Spa.

Victorinox unveils Airox Advanced travel gear line

Victorinox has launched a smart new line of luggage called the Airox Advanced collection.

The collection employs the same meticulous pursuit of excellence as its Swiss Army Knife, says the company. The suitcases are the lightweights in the Victorinox hardcase portfolio and offer an intelligently designed interior. Featuring a contemporary style, the suitcases have pure silhouettes and a matte shell finish in Black, Storm or Stone White.

Victorinox Head of Global Travel Retail & Fragrance Sales, Gloria Dix, said: "With global passenger traffic in 2024 expected to reach new heights, the Victorinox travel retail team is preparing for a thrilling year of growth driven by new openings and an evolved brand strategy focused on core competencies and key product launches in Travel Gear and Watches. We are excited to build on the success of the original Airox collection with the launch of Airox Advanced, an expertly designed, intelligent range of suitcases that will appeal to travelers who value lightweight luggage, quality, and subtle style."

Designed and engineered in Switzerland, the Airox Advanced suitcases feature an externally mounted dual-



telescopic handle system, engineered by Victorinox to provide comfort, stability, and more packing capacity. The Butterfly Opening System with two divider walls enables easy packing on both sides of the suitcase without the mesh panels getting in the way. The interior comes with antimicrobial lightweight lining, silver mesh, and a touch of red. A Swiss Army Knife scale on the back panel allows for personalization. Additionally, the suitcases can be expanded for an extra 4 cm of flexibility.

The collection includes Carry-On sizes and a medium and a large suitcase. Like all Victorinox Travel Gear products, the Airox Advanced collection offers a global 1+10 years warranty and is available at selected Victorinox stores, in local and travel retail markets, and online.

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Bacardi Global Travel Retail (GTR) used AI technology last October at MIA in partnership with Duty Free Americas in a Bacardi Rum Tales activation. The activation featured a digital Rum Selector platform, which travelers could access by scanning a QR code in-store with their smartphones.

How digital tech is transforming liquor promotions

The growing digital toolbox available to duty free retailers has the power to transform the effectiveness of liquor promotions in the years ahead, writes Joe Bates.

Step back in time two decades the typical duty free liquor retailer relied on a tried-and-trusted box of promotional tools, whether it be straightforward price discounts, gifts-with-purchase, liquid-to-lips sampling or more involved prize draws and competitions. Today, these promotional mechanics remain available to retailers but a growing array of digital options are possible too, from interactive digital touch screens and LCD video walls to personalized AI brand ambassadors and Virtual Reality (VR) headsets.

It's a brave new world and a potentially complicated one for older generations to grapple with but vital to master if duty free retail wants to remain relevant. "Using digital tools in travel retail stores is extremely important for retailers and brand owners to interact with legal age Gen Z shoppers," argues Tim Young, a former Brown-Forman GTR executive and now managing director of Young Spirit Consulting. "This consumer group expects to see and use digital technology and, if used correctly, it makes their shopping experience more interesting and easier.

"Digital tools are very helpful to educate shoppers on brands often giving

them a more immersive experience than a person in the store can provide," he continues. "Moreover, if there is a sharing element to the activity such as an opportunity to send a video message or picture to a friend, the instore experience can be amplified beyond simply what is seen instore. For brand owners and retailers, the sharing of instore experiences on social media channels is very powerful."

Americas playing digital catch-up

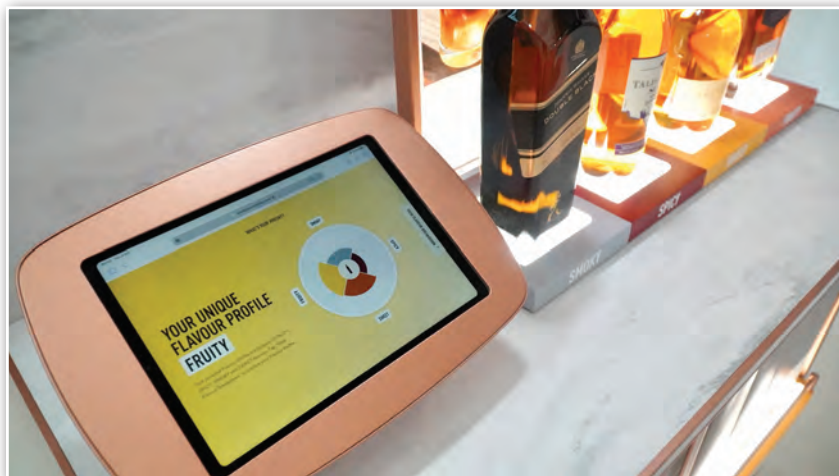
In many ways, the Americas are lagging behind other travel retail markets in their adoption of digital promotional tools and the digital retail innovations despite the U.S. and Brazil having the first and third-highest number of domestic e-commerce sites globally, according to a recent report by Markinblog. While online pre-order and loyalty member apps have become commonplace in the Americas travel retail space in recent years, other regions are experimenting with more advanced digital services.

By way of example, South Korean operator Lotte Duty Free unveiled an online liquor store last year, offering 1,200 products and targeting local Korean

travelers. Lotte also installed a cocktail-serving robot bartender in its new Lotte Duty Free Wines & Spirits at Singapore Changi Terminal 2. Similarly, back in 2022, Taiwan's EverRich Duty Free made headlines by releasing a limited-edition Year of the Tiger Kaoliang baijiu as a non-fungible token (NFT), a unique digital artwork that doubled as a certificate of ownership for the purchaser, on the NFT platform OpenSea.

In fairness, many Americas-based operators are realizing they need to step up their digital game. "Digital technology while important remains a smaller part of our business," acknowledges Chris Foster, owner of Ontario-based border operator Queenston-Lewis Duty Free. "We continue to offer digital signage throughout the store. Several suppliers continue to explore digital options within display fixture designs. We will be exploring more digital options throughout the year and will look to partner with key suppliers in getting the duty free messaging out."

Keith Gildea, Diageo Global Travel Head of Americas, adds: "It can be argued that the Americas' consumer is less inclined to some digital elements of marketing and



Diageo's AI-backed 'What's Your Whisky' tool was developed to help unlock Scotch for those who might not have tried it before or might be reluctant to consider it.

sales pre-travel in comparison with say some Asia/Pacific consumers. E-commerce is not there.

"However, in one regard it is similar," he continues. "Traveling consumers in the Americas are consuming digital content daily and this is why we have to show up pre-flight, during transit and beyond for our travel retail offer.

"The omnichannel approach is something which we believe demands the highest standards and consideration in marketing and which presents a digital opportunity over and above screen ad space which is evolving in every region."

The benefits of an omnichannel approach

Omnichannel activations which effectively broaden promotions beyond the physical confines of the store to include the pre-flight booking stage, in-airport advertising locations, airline, airport and retailer websites and social media platforms are undoubtedly growing in popularity in the Americas. A fine example was last September's month-long Jägermeister 'The Secret is You' campaign pop-up which ran at New York JFK Terminal 4 in partnership with DFS Group and airport advertising company Clear Channel Outdoor.

Large Clear Channel Outdoor screens and video walls throughout the terminal directed passengers to the 90 square-meter

pop-up situated next to the DFS Wines & Spirits store. Consumers were then offered an ice-cold shot of Jägermeister and could pose in front of a camera, choosing from a range of animated artistic backgrounds, including one with New York City landmarks, to relive some of the best nights out.

The fun images were then shared on



Last September, Jägermeister featured a month-long 'The Secret is You' campaign pop-up at New York JFK Terminal 4 in partnership with DFS Group and airport advertising company Clear Channel Outdoor.

the pop-up's giant screen, in Jägermeister's online Ice Cold Gallery and on social media. The travelers were emailed the final image as a poster which could then be shared on various social media platforms. "Digital and consumer-centric activations will remain a key cornerstone of all our high-profile promotions as we strive to connect, engage and excite travelers by bringing the Jägermeister brand to life," insists Mast Jägermeister vice-president global travel retail Tobias Witte.

AI and personalized recommendations

AI technology has experienced a period of explosive growth over the past few years, fuelling both excitement and concerns. The global race to harness AI's power is already well underway, with its influence already rippling across various sectors, including travel retail. In the realm of promotions, AI is proving very adept at creating personalized recommendations for travelers.

A prime example of this trend is Diageo's AI-backed 'What's Your Whisky' tool which was developed to help unlock Scotch for those who might not have tried it before, might be reluctant to consider it or wonder how to dip their toe in the water of such a complex, possibly intimidating category. "This flavor-based question tool we can use on e-commerce platforms, host on websites or indeed offer in-person airside via screens and tablets," explains Diageo Global Travel's Gildea.

He adds that the ‘What’s Your Whisky’ is already being used with Diageo’s retail partners in the Americas, including at Attenza Duty Free in Panama, with Aer Rianta International at Montreal airport; Avolta at Toronto airport, and with border store operator UETA.

Similar technology was used by Bacardi Global Travel Retail (GTR) last October at Miami airport in partnership with Duty Free Americas in an ambitious Bacardi Rum Tales activation. This promotion sought to tempt travelers to trade up to more premium Bacardi-owned rums such as artisanal Venezuelan rum Santa Teresa 1796, Caribbean blended rum Pyrat and Facundo, an ultra-premium Puerto Rican rum sourced from the private reserves of the Bacardi family.

The activation featured a digital Rum Selector platform which travelers could access by scanning a QR code in-store with their smartphones. They could then take an interactive quiz asking them questions about their interests, lifestyle and flavor preferences to guide them to a recommended rum choice. Highlighting the omnichannel nature of the campaign, travelers were also encouraged to try the Rum Selector via a targeted digital marketing campaign that engaged with them before they traveled.

Don’t forget the human touch

In the rush to embrace digitally driven promotions, there are downsides and dangers, of course. Costs can be high and operators and their brand partners have to be transparent about their data collection practices and protect customer privacy, for instance. Technology should be intuitive and user-friendly, regardless of the customer’s tech-savviness. It should also be robust in the high-footfall environment of airport retail.

“The big downside to technology is when it stops working or isn’t working properly,” argues Young. “I have been in many stores when screens are blank and this clearly does not look good. Also, digital tools must work hand in hand with people. In my experience, it is not enough to have a sophisticated touch screen in a store and expect shoppers to use it. Instore staff are needed to help guide shoppers and encourage them to use the technology.”

Similarly, passionate and knowledgeable human sales staff remain vital. “Digital certainly has its place, but so do traditional methods of marketing,” insists John McDonnell, managing director



Fiona Harkin, foresight director at The Future Laboratory

international at Tito’s Handmade Vodka, which recently installed an in-store digital screen at Honolulu airport which proved successful. “In this increasingly high-tech world, it’s important not to lose focus on the importance of high touch, that personal interaction with real people.”

What will the future bring?

Looking to the future, it’s clear the advent of AI is only going to increase the speed of digitization within travel retail, affecting every area of the business, including promotional activations. Against this backdrop, Fiona Harkin, foresight director of leading international trends consultancy The Future Laboratory argues travel retail need not be a laggard but could emerge as an excellent testing ground for what she labels “EQ-Commerce”.

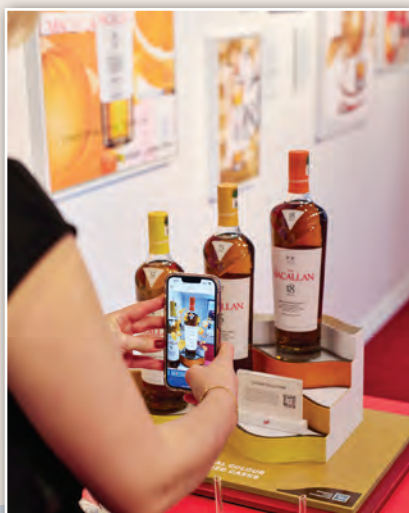
“This is seeing innovative retailers experiment with technology to create intelligent, empathic commerce journeys

– where every touchpoint is a learning opportunity, and AI is catering for customers’ idiosyncratic needs and wants at scale,” she explains.

“In an age when brand loyalty is dwindling, brands and retailers are creating new opportunities for engagement, destinations for hyper-personalized, bespoke and omniscient relationships with their customers. This means offering Discovery Commerce using dynamic, real-time personalized shopping feeds that are incredibly accurate at deciphering what a person is looking for.”

She argues that NFTs and virtual stores shouldn’t be one-off gimmicks for travel retailers but opportunities to forge long-lasting relationships with customers. As for spirit brands, she urges them to invest in data partners so that digital marketing can become personalized and to put more emphasis on strengthening customer loyalty. “Ensure every customer is a collector and every promotion is an opportunity for AI to leverage learnings on core customer values.”

Harkin’s detailed future vision is, of course, a world away from the simple price-off discounts and sampling opportunities of the analogue era but travel retailers of all ages need to understand that times have changed. If properly implemented and utilized, digital technologies can have a transformative effect, increasing sales, retaining customers and building brand equity.



Edrington Global Travel Retail partnered with International Shoppes to open an immersive pop-up at JFK Terminal 1 featuring the newly launched global travel retail exclusive The Macallan Colour Collection.

The nearly 800 sq ft. JFK Terminal 1 Macallan Pop Up Space which opened in September 2023 is fully personalized to create a memorable encounter of The Macallan brand and Colour Collection. It remained open through the end of March 2024.

QR codes are featured throughout the store and bring to life an augmented-reality experience to educate customers on the unique messages of the collection and the various whisky notes.

The Pop Up features an interactive customer engagement tool “Discover Your Expression” which assists customers to find the appropriate age-statement suited to their individual preference.

“We are committed to offering the best products and exceptional customer service to our traveling clientele and digital plays a pivotal role in assisting on that. We consistently partner with our vendors to explore new and exciting ways to engage customers on a journey of exploration and discovery,” says Scott Halpern, International Shoppes co-CEO.

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The Macallan Colour Collection began rolling out to the cruise industry in the beginning of 2024.

Edrington marries luxury and experience to elevate the cruise passenger journey

Edrington is prioritizing cruise as a key aspect of its global travel retail business.

The parent company of The Macallan, Brugal Rum and Highland Park is focusing on providing cruise guests unique experiences and engagements that bring its premium portfolio of brands to life.

The company's primary goal is to premiumize its portfolio available onboard cruise ships while targeting the top bars and restaurants on these ships

with new launches for Brugal, Highland Park and The Macallan. In addition to this enriched portfolio of premium expressions, Edrington has also created a variety of interesting serving rituals and food pairing initiatives for the cruise sector.

"We are so excited about the growth of the luxury industry, both from the hoteliers that are entering the market, but also the existing cruise lines that are raising their games with celebrity chefs and really fine dining," Anette Mourier, Global Cruise

Manager, Edrington, tells *TMI*.

Marriage of luxury and experience

In line with Edrington's premiumization approach, The Macallan and Ritz-Carlton have partnered to offer passengers a luxury whisky experience – The Macallan Rituals – onboard the Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection. Currently available onboard its new yacht *Evrima*, The Macallan Rituals deliver a sensorial experience, allowing passengers to explore



The Macallan Rituals is currently available onboard The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection's new yacht Evrima.

a curated range of signature serves and prestige drams, available in cocktails, neat, or ‘On the Rock’.

The pinnacle of The Macallan Rituals is Rare Expressions, reserved for guests looking to explore some of The Macallan’s most precious whisky. These whiskies are served in Lalique glassware by bartenders wearing white gloves who enhance the experience by imprinting the guest’s initials on a leather coaster to commemorate the serve. The guest will also receive a custom card with details of the dram they enjoyed, creating a lasting keepsake.

Guests enjoying a Travelers’ Exclusives experience are offered the choice of taking their dram neat or on the rocks. The serve is delivered using the Diamond Jigger. Should the guest prefer their whisky on the rocks, a flawless ice ball is created in front of them using The Macallan ice ball maker.

For guests seeking to explore The Macallan across a number of different expressions The Macallan Whisky Journey gives them the opportunity to select three different drams from The Macallan Quest Collection. Created exclusively for Global Travel Retail, The Macallan Quest Collection features a quartet of whiskies – Quest, Lumina, Terra and Enigma.

The Macallan Rituals are brought to life through a bespoke bar cart from which servers can deliver engaging and entertaining interactions. The cart incorporates a unique Diamond Jigger feature, as well as The Macallan luxury ice ball maker.

“The Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection has a clear focus on helping its guests create lasting memories, something which has fueled our ambition to deliver the ultimate on-board whisky experience with The Macallan Rituals. Across our serving rituals we have sought to elevate the experience at every step, delivering our iconic single malt with a sense of theater and panache which allows guests to explore, enjoy and engage with The Macallan in memorable and intimate fashion,” says Mourier.

The Macallan Colour Collection

Since the beginning of 2024, The Macallan Colour Collection, a new range of age statement whiskies which celebrate the brand’s commitment to natural color and reflect the influence of sherry seasoning, has been rolled out in the cruise industry.

The GTR exclusive Colour Collection comprises five age statement single malt Scotch whiskies. From the gold oak of the Colour Collection 12 Years Old to the burnished chestnut of the Colour Collection 30 Years Old, the range spans the radiant tones of the whisky spectrum, to showcase the natural tones derived from maturation in The Macallan’s sherry seasoned oak casks.

The Macallan Colour Collection marks the return of age statement whiskies to The Macallan’s global travel retail offering.

The Collection also features a new visual identity inspired by the brand’s heritage and spiritual home, The Macallan Estate, and highlighting its intrinsic connection to nature.

Crafted predominantly from sherry American oak casks, the Colour Collection includes a subtle touch of European oak which the company says achieves a harmonious and beautifully balanced range of whiskies.

The Macallan Colour Collection is a collaboration with U.S. graphic designer David Carson, who took inspiration from Jerez, a land of historic vineyards and fine wines where The Macallan’s sherry seasoned oak casks are crafted.

With cruise lines being 90% on-premise, the return of age statements is key to success in the channel, according to Mourier. Increasingly, cruise consumers are requesting specific age statements such as the The Macallan 12 Year Old – something which is also welcomed by food and beverage directors, says Mourier.

Connecting on-premise and retail

With a view to better connecting the retail and on-premise businesses, Edrington has introduced The Macallan Flight Experience to six cruise lines.



Andrés Brugal, Edrington’s most exclusive rum expression to date, is another ultra premium expression that the company has brought to cruise. Only 460 bottles of Andrés Brugal sipping rum are available worldwide, with 60 exclusively sold in the U.S., and 62 bottles earmarked for travel retail.

Hosted and led by the onboard sommelier or mixologist, the Flight Experience masterclass invites guests to learn about and savor several The Macallan expressions. The masterclass also educates guests on what makes The Macallan the most valuable single malt in the world while giving them an understanding of the Colour Collection and its progression of intensity, flavor and maturity. At the end of the masterclass, guests have the opportunity to purchase the collection instore.

Mourier says Edrington is extremely optimistic about the future of cruise, as both brands and cruise lines together raise and premiumize the guest experience.

“We are excited to see how the cruise industry is starting to lead the way in F&B with restaurants and mixology becoming increasingly sophisticated for both established cruise lines and new hotel groups.”



Juan Gentile (far right) and part of the DISC team at their Miami office.

DISC solidifies regional growth with strategic brand additions and Miami warehouse

In the three years since Juan Gentile created Distribution Spirits Company (DISC), the company has stayed true to its founding vision, and has consolidated and strengthened its presence in the Caribbean market and duty free sector.

Gentile, who worked for Edrington for almost 20 years, most recently as Senior Vice President, Managing Director Americas Travel Retail at Edrington Americas, tells *TMI* that while DISC has added strategic brands to its portfolio, its goal is to continue to reinforce its presence in the regions it operates with its current portfolio of premium wines and spirits.

“We aim to solidify our position as a trusted partner for both our customers and brand owners, ensuring that we continue to deliver the right brands to the right territories and channels,” says Gentile.

“I want to say I’m truly pleased with our progress since we began in 2021. Throughout our growth, we’ve stayed true to our original strategy, which has led to a natural expansion to further reach our brands’ target consumers more effectively.”

DISC and its brands have primarily targeted North American nationals, with a lesser focus on Western Europeans and Latinos, says Gentile.

“Recognizing that these consumers travel frequently by air or sea within the region, we’ve capitalized on the concept of the consumer travel trail, ensuring that we engage with them throughout their journey. This strategy has naturally extended into duty free markets, particularly those brands

that we also carry for Caribbean domestic.”

Gentile emphasizes how important it is for DISC to be constantly in the market, as the Caribbean is made up of many different islands with people who speak different languages and might drink different spirits.

“Drawing from over 20 years of experience connecting brands with consumers across Europe, Latin America, and Global Travel Retail, the one fundamental lesson reaffirmed is that people always come first. This principle applies not only to our team and company but also to our customers and consumers.

“Ultimately, the journey with DISC has reinforced the importance of putting people and relationships at the forefront of everything we do,” he says.

“In particular, serving the Caribbean market has highlighted the region’s remarkable ethnic and cultural diversity. Each market has unique consumptions preferences and purchasing behaviors. By understanding the nuances of this diversity and their dynamics, we can tailor our strategies and offerings to better resonate with our target audience in the markets we serve.”

Warehousing

DISC has consolidated its FTZ warehouse operations in Miami, a move Gentile says was key to his company taking its next steps in the region.

“One of our key priorities is to further enhance our customer service standards

by consolidating our FTZ warehouse operations. With a focus on brand building, customer satisfaction, operational excellence, and strategic partnerships, I’m confident that we’ll achieve our objectives and further solidify DISC’s position as a leader in the region,” he says.

“Our recent acquisition of our own FTZ zone underscores our commitment to providing innovative supply chain solutions and further enhancing our distribution capabilities.”

Cruise

While Gentile founded DISC with a focus on the Caribbean and duty free markets, the cruise business was the obvious next step, he tells *TMI*.

“Our cruise business is an exciting new venture for us. We’re just beginning to introduce our premium portfolio of brands to the cruise market, and it’s been a good journey so far.

“We’ve listed Tequila Kah and Rooster Rojo on Virgin Atlantic, offering travelers the opportunity to experience premium quality tequila brands, and Ballotin on Norwegian Cruise Lines.

“In our efforts to expand our presence within the cruise industry, we’re actively engaged in conversations with major cruise retail and Ship Chandlers. Our goal is to establish our portfolio as a preferred choice among cruise passengers, offering our customers a selection of premium spirits to enhance their passengers’ onboard experience.”

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The right partner in Promo

From the beginning in January 2021, Disc has partnered with Promo International, which has the infrastructure and history in the Caribbean that has allowed DISC to succeed, says Gentile.

“Partnering with Promo International and particularly with Sergio Sanchez, Promo’s owner, has been crucial to the growth and success of DISC since day one. I feel incredibly fortunate to have met Sergio, who brings a wealth of business experience and entrepreneurial mindset. His extensive experience in navigating the Caribbean markets for over 30 years has been invaluable to help us strike the perfect balance between the long-term brand-building goals and the short-term business delivery objectives,” he says.

“One of the critical contributions from Promo has been their supply chain solutions and strong back-office team. This infrastructure has been instrumental in ensuring the efficiency and reliability of our logistics operations, so important to supply a complex region.”

A growing premium portfolio

DISC has announced a number of critical premium portfolio additions over the past year that Gentile has begun to introduce to the market.

This February, Sazerac Company Inc. and DISC announced a distribution partnership for select Caribbean domestic markets. Last September, Ian Macleod Distillers (IMD) appointed DISC as its exclusive distribution partner for Americas Travel Retail.

“From the outset, DISC been committed to building a robust portfolio of premium brands. The recent announcements regarding partnerships with Ian Macleod and Sazerac mark exciting milestones in our journey adding to our strong portfolio including Edrington, Amber Beverage Group, Brockmans, Bottega, amongst others,” he says.

“With the addition of Ian Macleod’s esteemed brands, such as Edinburgh gin, Glengoyne and Tamdhu, we’ve further strengthened our presence in the gin and Scotch whisky categories in the Duty Free channel, offering our customers high-quality brands that are successful in DF Europe.

“Similarly, joining forces with Sazerac for Caribbean domestic, has expanded our portfolio offering in categories we were not playing to include iconic American brands like Buffalo Trace, Eagle Rare, Fireball and Mr Boston, catering to the diverse preferences of our consumers.”

Ballotin Chocolate Whiskey is another

exciting addition to the DISC portfolio, says Gentile.

“It offers a delightful fusion of rich chocolate and smooth whiskey, creating a decadent flavor experience. One of the trends we’ve observed in the spirits industry is the growing popularity of flavored whiskeys, especially those designed for crafting cocktails. Ballotin Chocolate Whiskey taps into this trend, offering versatility and creativity for both professional mixologists and consumers alike,” he says.

“Additionally, we’re expanding our presence of Ballotin in most Caribbean domestic markets, offering consumers the opportunity to enjoy this exceptional whiskey beyond the confines of the cruise ship during their Caribbean voyages.”

Gentile is thrilled about what comes next for DISC.

“Together with our partners, we look forward to shaping the future of the spirits and wine industry in Travel Retail and Caribbean, delivering exceptional experiences to consumers, and building lasting success. DISC has a deep gratitude to our partners for entrusting us with their brands and to our customers for partnering with us, and here’s to many more years of fruitful collaboration and shared achievements.”

Mast Jägermeister launches Teremana Tequila and Gin Sul into GTR

Mast Jägermeister SE has announced two additions to its global travel retail portfolio, Teremana Tequila and Gin Sul.

Teremana, with its full range of three expressions, Blanco, Reposado and Añejo, will be available at selected international airport stores globally, and is also launching into selected domestic markets throughout 2024.



Algarve lemons, will be available in selected travel retail stores globally.

Teremana is a premium, hand-crafted, small-batch tequila made in the Jalisco Highlands of Mexico. Founded by Dwayne ‘The Rock’ Johnson, Teremana has had unprecedented success as the fastest premium spirits brand to reach 1 million 9L cases in annual sales in the U.S. since its launch in 2020.

Mast Jägermeister Vice-President Global Travel Retail, Tobias Witte says:

“We are the exclusive distribution partner across all markets for Teremana and Gin Sul and bring global sales, marketing and logistics expertise to drive their continued success and growth. Teremana is a vibrant and dynamic brand and we are really excited about working closely with Dwayne, our founder. Gin Sul is a small boutique brand at a very early stage of maturity and we look forward to developing its potential in travel retail.

“We are delighted to introduce consumers in airports around the world to Teremana and Gin Sul. We are especially thrilled to showcase Teremana to a diverse, global consumer audience in key international airports. We have exciting plans in place to establish the footprint of both brands and look forward to bringing them to fruition in the coming months and years in collaboration with our travel retail operator partners.”



Gin Sul, the super-premium gin presented in its signature white clay bottle, was Mast Jägermeister’s first strategic partnership with another spirit’s brand. Currently available in 17 domestic markets, Gin Sul, a dry gin with roots in Portugal, crafted in Hamburg with fresh

Tito's brings cruise business in-house

Following the successful growth of its cruise business through WEBB Banks, Tito's has brought the management of cruise in-house beginning January 1st, John McDonnell, Managing Director International, Tito's Handmade Vodka has confirmed to *TMI*.

"Cruise is a substantial piece of our duty free business. It is almost 50%. The broker model is good at the beginning, but when the business grows it makes sense to manage it directly. This is a natural progression," says McDonnell.

"We are going to hire somebody to manage the cruise business for us. The transition was seamless and we are excited about the future of cruise and Tito's."

Before Tito's began managing its cruise business directly, WEBB Banks activated a highly successful partnership on Royal Caribbean's President's Cruise in July 2023 out of Galveston, Texas.

"The Royal Caribbean President's Cruise was a huge success. The cruise started in Texas and Tito's as a Texas-based

brand was involved as a sponsor. It is natural for us," says McDonnell.

"But we are now doing cruise lines all over the world. A huge piece of our business is cruises. We just scored Viking Cruises in Europe. We got our first ferry line called Stena, which is predominately in Scandinavia. You can activate the brand so well on the cruise lines. On Virgin Voyages we have our Tito's 375ml in all of their RockStar Suites."

Securing airline listings outside the U.S. is another key focus for Tito's, says McDonnell.

"We are now on Air Canada selling 50mls onboard. We are the pouring vodka on Copa Airlines and on BermudAir.

"We just secured the 200ml listing in all Dufry America (Avolta) stores, continuing to expand our distribution of small sizes."



Tito's had a highly visible presence on Royal Caribbean's President's Cruise in July 2023.

Sint Maarten Princess Juliana International Airport introduces the first ever Moët & Chandon Vending Machine in the Caribbean

The first ever Moët & Chandon vending machine in the Caribbean is now available for travelers departing from Sint Maarten Princess Juliana International Airport (SXM).



The vending machine, which dispenses mini bottles of the iconic champagne, is located within the departure hall at Caribbean Liquors Duty Free (CLDF), a company that has been partnering with the airport since the 1970s.

The Moët & Chandon vending machine offers a convenient and elegant way for travelers to celebrate their trip or surprise their loved ones with a special gift, says the company. The vending machine is stocked with Moët & Chandon Imperial Brut, and each mini bottle comes with a complimentary golden sipper for easy enjoyment.

The vending machine is part of the airport's ongoing efforts to enhance the passenger experience and provide a diverse range of products and services. SXM Airport is the second busiest airport in the Eastern Caribbean and serves as a hub for regional and international flights. The airport is known for its scenic approach over Maho Beach, where planes fly low over the water and land on the runway.

CLDF is a leading retailer of duty free products in the Caribbean, offering a wide selection of international and regional spirits, wines, tobacco, and confectioneries. CLDF has been operating at SXM Airport since 1976.

"We are thrilled to introduce the Moët & Chandon vending machine at SXM Airport, as it is a unique and innovative way to showcase our partnership with one of the most renowned champagne brands in the world," said Sheila Jeffers, the Manager of CLDF. "We hope that our customers will enjoy this luxury experience and toast to their travels with Moët & Chandon."

The Moët & Chandon vending machine is available for use by all departing passengers who are of legal drinking age. The vending machine accepts custom Moët & Chandon tokens that can be purchased at the check-out counter at CLDF. CLDF accepts credit cards, US Dollars, Euros, and local guildler currency. The price of the Brut mini bottle is \$21 USD.



With brilliant bright colors, and striking “Day of the Dead-type” visuals, WEBB Banks and Southern Glazer’s featured a month-long activation for Recuerdo Mezcal at New York’s JFK Airport enticing many a traveler to stop in and try the award-winning mezcal at the DFS duty free store in Terminal 4. Running from mid-October to mid-November, the colorful counter offered sampling, and live Mariachi music on the weekends – and was perfectly timed to coincide with Halloween and Mexico’s Day of the Dead celebrations.

Combined WEBB Banks – Southern Glazer’s powerhouse delivers synergies, market expansion, deeper focus on growth categories

A little over a year after Southern Glazer’s Wine & Spirits acquired Miami-based WEBB-Banks, the new combined organization has delivered on its promise, creating a new wine and spirits powerhouse in the Caribbean, Central America, South America, as well as the travel retail and cruise sector, WEBB Banks Chief Operating Officer Jose Castellvi tells *TMI*.

The acquisition expanded Southern Glazer’s reach in the Atlantic and travel retail, and strengthened its logistical capabilities to deliver products more efficiently to complex markets in the region.

“It has been a fantastic year. Southern Glazer’s basically transferred all of the international business to WEBB Banks. That’s why we’ve kept the name. WEBB Banks has the brand equity in the Caribbean, Central America and also in travel retail and cruise,” says Castellvi.

“We have been trusted to continue to run the business. All of the management team have signed agreements to stay on for a specified period of time, which has added a lot of stability into the company.

“Southern Glazer’s is letting WEBB Banks run this business. That’s why they purchased us. They liked our relationships, our portfolio, our market knowledge, and our team. And so they haven’t tinkered

with that very much,” says Castellvi.

The combination of Southern Glazer’s and WEBB Banks has created synergies between WEBB Banks’ market expertise and Southern Glazer’s strong industry relationships, superior capabilities, and deep consumer and trade insights.

“I am sure there is going to be an evolution. But they’ve been nothing but supportive. What is coming next is more system upgrades.”

“And we’ve also been able to take advantage of Southern Glazer’s huge warehousing in Miami,” says Phillip Jarrell, WEBB Banks Vice President Innovation, Cruise & Key Accounts.

Two divisions

Southern Glazer’s and WEBB Banks have two formed divisions to separate its business in the regions it covers.

“Webb Banks is the traditional branded brand division that you know. This division has not changed. We continue to maintain a strong in-market presence,” says Castellvi.

“Then there is the Blue Water Division. This was the traditional Southern Wine division that we have kept separate. By doing so this it has allowed us to stay focused with our entire wine and spirits portfolio.”

Each division maintains a separate sales and marketing support team. The finance and logistics departments provide support to both divisions.

“With SGWS now supporting both divisions, they have been able to provide additional back-office support to the overall business.”

Combined portfolio of brands

WEBB Banks has a well balanced portfolio split between wines and spirits, and has been adding new brands and locations.

While the company had already been representing Freixenet Mionetto, starting on February 1 it has taken over cruise lines and travel retail.

“It’s our intent, because they’re the largest sparkling producer on the planet, to really focus on this portfolio and give it a lot more attention moving forward. It is the number one prosecco in the world with Mionetto, the number one cava in the world with Freixenet, and there are so many other brands in their portfolio that have been under focused. We want to see this grow a lot,” says Jarrell.

“We expect to see sparkling wines continue to grow and we hope that we see people continue to move back towards premium still wines.”



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Craft beer is another important focus for WEBB Banks, especially in the Caribbean.

“Tilray is a cannabis company, but the division we are talking about is only craft beer. There is Sweetwater out of Atlanta, Montauk out of New York. And they just bought a couple of west coast breweries as well, plus eight more brands from AB InBev including Shock Top and a couple of others that are more mass, but we see that becoming a more prominent part of the business as well,” says Jarrell.

“Why haven’t we done more with craft beer in the Caribbean? Because the Caribbean wasn’t ready yet. And now we

feel like cruise lines and domestic markets in the Caribbean have really come a long way. And we are excited about what that offers.”

WEBB Banks has added a number of new tequilas to its agave portfolio, says Castellvi.

“The agave portfolio is large, and it is not just tequila, but mezcal as well. We think that we can provide a lot of services and different price points and different consumer personality types with all of the different brands we have.”

Liqueurs are another success story for the company.

“The liqueur section continues to grow

for us. Illva, Disaronno, Tia Maria have done very well for us in every channel: Caribbean, domestic, cruise. A brand like Tia Maria did very well over the last two years and that is an area that we continue to expand,” says Castellvi.

WEBB Banks wants to be a complete beverage partner.

“We’re going to continue to focus on innovations and craft cocktail. Really modern mixology will continue to be something that we focus a great deal on. We are also looking at the non-alcohol sector,” says Jarrell.

Nassau Paradise Island Food & Wine Festival

WEBB Banks is a Platinum Sponsor of the Nassau Paradise Island Food & Wine Festival, which allows the company to showcase its brands to reach local and international guests at Atlantis in the Bahamas.

Nassau Paradise Island Wine & Food Festival showcases world-renowned top chefs, master sommeliers, mixologists, and celebrated TV personalities with walk-around tasting events, lively culinary demonstrations and classes, and intimate chef-led happy hours, lunches, and dinners.

“This is the second edition of the Nassau Paradise Island Wine & Food Festival, in conjunction with the Food Network. We have an incredible team of our own going, but we have also partnered with so many brands there this year,” says Jarrell.

“And we’re doing multiple events with Food Network stars Martha Stewart, Andrew Zimmern, with Robert Irvine and several other chefs and mixologists as well. We expect to see 20,000 people there over the course of the event between March 13 to 17. We’re doing 15 events over those five days ourselves. It’s an incredible investment from our brand partners and ourselves to be there. But it’s such a platform for us. It’s a partnership with Atlantis that is years and years in the making that continues to improve, continues to go to new heights.”

Amelia Sofis, 818 Tequila, Florida & Caribbean Market Manager

WEBB Banks will use the event to introduce new brands, new flavor profiles, and new techniques, says Jarrell.

“And it’s not just a wine and food festival. It is very much a culinary opportunity. It’s very much a mixology

opportunity.”

Festival proceeds support Atlantis Blue Project Foundation, dedicated to saving marine life and its habitats throughout the Bahamas and Caribbean seas.



Kris Shirley Endean, Director of Supplier Relations, WEBB Banks, with Martha Stewart



Phillip Jarrell, WEBB Banks Vice President Innovation, Cruise & Key Accounts; Rachel Hale, President of The Hale Effect; Roberto Volpe, Area Manager; Gonzalez Byass, and his fiancée, Veronica.



Biggar & Leith targets travel retail success with Shanky's Whip and Butterfly Cannon

“2024 is going to be the year of duty free for Shanky's Whip,” Daniel Bras, Export Director at spirits creator, importer and distributor Biggar & Leith tells *TMI*.

Shanky's Whip, an Irish whiskey infused with natural vanilla and caramel, is the number one brand for Biggar & Leith, with domestic success in almost eighty countries around the world.

Biggar & Leith's portfolio of brands includes Splytail Rum, Stambeco Amaro, Hotel Starlino aperitivos and amaro, Gladstone Axe Malt Scotch, Butterfly Cannon tequila, along with Shanky's Whip Irish whiskey liqueur.

The company was created in 2015 by spirits industry veteran Elwyn Gladstone, who previously worked with Hendrick's gin, Kraken and Sailor Jerry rums. Biggar & Leith's first brand was Malfy gin, which it sold to Pernod Ricard in 2019. That sale allowed Biggar & Leith to create their own range of spirits.

“Biggar & Leith has always created brands that work outside the box. They have a different approach to the category, the packaging was always very cool and different,” says Bras, who began working for Biggar & Leith in 2021 after stints with Actium, who were agents for Malfy gin, and Alfred Giraud whisky.

“Our really crazy success globally is Shanky's Whip, the black Irish whiskey liqueur. We are going to sell 1.2 million bottles this year in the third year of the brand. On a global level this is by far our number one brand. It is an incredibly delicious product that has a conversion rate of almost 30%. People who try it buy it. We are now in the four corners of the earth. The U.S. is the number one market followed by South Africa. We have very



Butterfly Cannon at DFS JFK Terminal 4

fast growing markets around Europe, Asia, Latin America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand,” says Bras.

“We did a lot of global domestic distribution quickly and we are just now bringing Shanky's into the travel retail channel.”

“We believe greatly in the importance of Travel Retail for brand building - it is a window to the world and a great place to showcase new brands to international travelers,” says Elwyn Gladstone, co-Founder of Biggar and Leith.

Having the right partners in travel retail is key, Bras tells *TMI*.

“We work with Actium for the Americas and JP GTR for Europe and Middle East. They are focusing on Shanky's Whip and Butterfly Cannon tequila.”

Biggar & Leith has started listing Shanky's Whip on cruise ships and is targeting Shanky's home market as a natural fit.

“We are listed in ten retail stores from Harding+ in the Caribbean. In Q2 we are doing a strong activation with P&O Cruises in Europe, basically taking over the retail store and decorating the tunnels that lead to the store. We are also conducting lots of tastings,” says Bras.

“Hopefully we will be listed with ARI in Dublin and we are in negotiations with some of the biggest guys in travel retail. For Shanky's Whip duty free will be one of our top priorities in 2024-25.”

Butterfly Cannon tequila is the other brand Biggar & Leith is launching in global travel retail.

Butterfly Cannon, created in 2021, started by being the first range of premium 100% agave flavored tequilas, and consists of three SKUs, including a blue color changing tequila that definitely stands out on shelf, says Bras.

“Butterfly Cannon has been making good strides in U.S. travel retail. While not as big as Shanky's on a global basis, it is doing super well in the U.S. We are also doing well in Europe, but are still very niche and growing from a smaller base.

“Because this brand is doing well in U.S. domestic, and tequila is such a big thing right now, we started in travel retail earlier than we did with Shanky's Whip.

Today, we are listed with DFS in JFK, LAX, and SFO. We are with the main cruise retail operators with Harding+, Starboard, and Heinemann Americas in a total of 45 ships. And we are hoping to expand quickly. We are also with Harding+ in the UK.”

Between Shanky's Whip and Butterfly Cannon tequila, Biggar & Leith has two unique brands that are now ready to excel in travel retail, says Biggar & Leith co-founder Gladstone.

“Our brands tend to be highly different from the category - and great gifts - Shanky's Whip is truly one of a kind - a Black Irish Whiskey Liqueur with standout packaging - it makes for a perfect gift. Similarly, Butterfly Cannon is unique within the category - there are lots of flavored tequilas, but our Blue, color changing liquid stands out from the crowd.”



Mockup of the Shanky's Whip activation taking place on P&O Cruises Britannia in Q2.

Cruise listings, premium activations, highlight MONARQ's regional power

With an impressive portfolio of top-name brands, MONARQ Group's investment in its team and office has paid off as the independent distributor and marketer of premium alcoholic beverages has become one of the top players in the region.

"Despite the political - and socio-economic challenges in South America and the general destocking at distributor - and wholesale level, 2023 has been another strong year for MONARQ," Robert de Monchy, MONARQ Group Founder tells *TMI*. "We have further grown and strengthened our organization and have recently moved into our new larger office in Coconut Grove, Miami, to accommodate the short term as well as the future expansion of the company. These investments are paying off, as the year 2024 has started incredibly well, tracking way ahead of last year-to-date."

MONARQ says that in the aftermath of the pandemic, there was a spike in Caribbean tourism in 2022. However, macro-economic and political challenges have begun to impact MONARQ's business in South America.

"Last year, countries like Argentina, Peru and Ecuador have been dealing with serious political - and social-economic challenges. Unfortunately, Haiti is currently going through very turbulent times, which we follow closely because of our brand partners at Barbancourt Rum," says de Monchy.



MONARQ featured Condesa Gin at JFK Terminal 4 with DFS.

Fast-growing cruise channel

While countries in Latin America and the Caribbean are dealing with these challenges, cruise has gone from strength to strength for MONARQ and its brands.

Cruise was MONARQ's fastest growing channel in 2023 and that momentum has continued into 2024.

"Bermuda's Gosling's Rum and Ginger Beer have been very successful across the cruise lines due to the popular 'Dark and Stormy.' We have tapped into some strong growth opportunities with this brand. For example, Carnival Cruise Line listed the Dark and Stormy on their

menu for 2024. Also, the 'Carajillo,' made with Licor 43 and espresso, has seen strong growth over the last year and into 2024, especially on Norwegian Cruise Line. We created a special menu insert for NCL, highlighting the Carajillo," says de Monchy. "We also partnered with Regent of the Seas to create an exclusive Hayman's Gin tasting experience onboard their newest ship *Grandeur*, highlighting the rich history of Hayman's, being a great pairing for Regent of the Seas guests."

In the United States, MONARQ has taken its partnership with DFS to the next level, and will be featuring some of its high-end whiskies at the first Master of Wine and Spirits event taking place in the country later in the year.

"In partnership with DFS we have recently installed a beautiful display of Condesa Gin at JFK Terminal 4 in New York. We are also a partner in DFS' Master of Wine and Spirits event. For the first time, DFS is launching this gala experience in the USA, and we have partnered together to highlight several of our brands, namely Tomatin, Benromach and Matsui. We have further created an exclusive Tomatin Master Class for this event, highlighting extremely rare qualities such as Tomatin 50-year-old," says de Monchy.

In Latin America, MONARQ has had wins for its brands with London Supply.

"We are experiencing a continued long-term success with the frozen Limoncello di Capri activation at London Supply in Iguazu. Early January, MONARQ was a proud sponsor again of the London Supply golf charity event with Heineken and Drumshanbo Gunpowder Gin."

New brands

MONARQ's portfolio continues to grow and evolve as it adds new brands.

"We are proud to have further strengthened our (world) whisky portfolio with renowned premium international brands such as Nikka from Japan, Kavalan from Taiwan and The GlenAllachie and The Glenturret from Scotland.

"Our partner Brown-Forman has recently acquired Diplomatico rum, which we are currently launching throughout the territory. Moreover, we recently launched White Claw Hard Seltzer in the Caribbean."



MONARQ Group and Scottish distillery, The Glenturret, announced that they have formed a strategic distribution partnership for the Caribbean and Latin America.



MONARQ

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MONARQ Group is a leading independent regional import, distribution & marketing group of premium alcoholic beverages in the domestic - and duty-free markets of Latin America & the Caribbean as well as the USA duty free channel.

Please visit us during the Summit of the Americas 2024 at the MONARQ Booth, located in Suite 11.

Penderyn Whisky grows travel retail business through appeal to single malt consumers

Penderyn Whisky has made significant progress in global travel retail since the pandemic ended as more consumers demand something different and more retailers find space on-shelf for a non-Scotch whisky, Simon Roffe, Director of Business Development at The Welsh Whisky Company Limited, tells *TMI*.

“It has been a challenging time for a small brand with limited resources, but what has impressed me is the enthusiasm for people to look for something a little bit different,” says Roffe, who joined the fast-growing spirits company in Wales in June 2020 after his most recent role as Managing Director, Global Travel Retail at Halewood Wines & Spirits.

“In numbers terms, in 2023 we were about 80% up on 2022 in the travel retail business and we are five times bigger than we were pre-pandemic.

“I look at where the business was in 2019 before I joined and where are we now in distribution, number of doors, and volume. In volume we are five times bigger than we were. We have also increased the number of doors dramatically by focusing on some critical elements instead of a scatter gun approach.”

Travel retail success in Europe and the Americas

Penderyn has had particular success in the travel retail markets both closer to its Welsh home and internationally.

“In the UK travel retail market we are pretty well positioned in airports, cruise, and ferries,” says Roffe.

“Our business with cruise retail with Harding+ has grown phenomenally over the past year. We started on two ships and now we are on 27. And it comes because they are prepared to put on shelf something a little bit different from what people will see in the domestic market. We can influence them through better training, through experiences. We have not done it quite yet, but there is an ambition to put distillery cask experiences onto cruise ships. We can even do limited editions or special bottlings for a minimum of sixty bottles with a personalized label.”

Penderyn has added new listings in



Penderyn Whisky has had particular success in travel retail with activations such as this in Birmingham International Airport last March.

Latin America as a result of the TFWA show, to grow on the success of its travel retail doors in North America.

“We are just about to launch domestically in Brazil. We are in Uruguay and now Argentina. We are just going live with London Supply with Penderyn Patagonia after they saw it on-stand in Cannes. We are working with DFS in JFK, SFO, and LAX. We are listed with nine border operators already, which gives us visibility for the Canadian market.”

Long-term vision drives expansion

Roffe says the global travel retail strategy is linked to the company’s international plan.

“We have a long-term vision that half of our business will be international and half will be UK-based within the next five years. At the moment it is about 70% UK-based and 30% international. Duty free makes up around 2% of the total business.”

Despite the latest success, Penderyn continues to face challenges from retailers who have been resistant to a small whisky from Wales.

“We must be able to convince retailers to create space, awareness, and knowledge for the consumer who is looking for something different,” says Roffe.

“The challenge would be to focus our strategy on following the consumer who is relevant to us for domestic and international markets. We look at Europe, Asia, UK, and North America, plus markets where there is an emerging consumer for single malt whisky. That means that we are not necessarily chasing the standard doors of the bigger players.”

Penderyn whisky sits in the world whisky category, which Roffe says is one of the fastest growing elements of the whisky business.

“We are appealing to a new generation of consumer who is looking to move away from the generic bigger brands. World whisky is small, but it is fast-growing in domestic markets and travel retail. Some retailers fail to see that and fail to give space to innovation not just in whisky but in other categories. And they fail to move quickly enough,” says Roffe.

Roffe admits that the challenge for most duty free operators is that their shelves aren’t big enough, but Penderyn has a good track record where there are pockets of single malt consumers.

“We have shown that we are happy to invest. We believe that the business should have a little more openness to innovation to world whisky.”

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Haleybrooke showcases top players in fast-growing wine & spirits categories

Haleybrooke International is showcasing brands from some of the best-selling categories in the wines and spirits sector at its booth at the Summit of the Americas.

Haleybrooke International President Patrick Nilson tells *TMI* that he is looking forward to a successful show, and will have representatives from his brand owners onhand to discuss their brands with attendees.

Tequila

Tequila is still on fire in the United States. According to the IWSR, global tequila volumes are set to rise at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of +7% between 2022 and 2027, and the U.S. is poised to grow at a CAGR of +9% over the same period.

Nilson believes that Haleybrooke has the ideal tequila in its portfolio to take advantage of the popularity of the agave category

“While it seems that a new tequila brand is being launched each day, Centinela is in the enviable position of having its own agave fields and distillery and the largest inventory of aged tequila in the world with 69,000 oak barrels aging in their warehouse in Mexico. Centinela actually supplies tequila for some of the top tequila brands including some of the newcomers so I am confident that we will have supply of Centinela Tequila for our customers going forward. We now have six Centinela Tequila SKUs available in-bond in Miami with suggested retails from \$29.00 to



\$65.00 a bottle,” says Nilson.

World Whiskey

Haleybrooke will be featuring the award-winning Penderyn Single Malt whiskies from Wales on-stand, tapping into the growing category of world whiskey.

“Penderyn had a very successful year in Travel Retail in 2023 being up 80% versus 2022. Their GTR business is five times bigger than before the pandemic. At the Summit in 2023 we featured Penderyn Madeira Finish Single Malt and Penderyn Faraday which is a Travel Retail exclusive. DFS was interested in the brand but also wanted the Penderyn Legend and the Penderyn Portwood Finish which they listed at LAX, SFO and JFK so we now carry all four SKUs in-bond in Miami.”

Vodka

Haleybrooke is looking to capitalize on the extraordinary success Broken Shed Vodka has had in the USA domestic market with its customers in travel retail.

“The Liquor Handbook states that Broken Shed is the fastest growing vodka in the USA for the third year in a row and I will be telling that story to our Travel Retail customers explaining why consumers love Broken Shed Vodka which receives its smooth taste due to whey, the dairy byproduct, being used in the distillation process,” says Nilson.

Fine French Wine

Haleybrooke has represented Labouré-Roi Burgundy wines for airport and border stores in North America but it is also now the Travel Retail agency for three additional Boisset wineries in Burgundy France. The company added J. Moreau & Fils, the famed Chablis producer founded in 1814; Antonin Rodet founded in 1875 with 50 references from Grande Bourgogne selling over one million bottles a year; and Nicolas Potel founded in 1997 with a wide selection of red and white Burgundy wines.

“We will have wines from all four wineries available for tastings at the Summit of the Americas,” says Nilson.

Bottega

Haleybrooke represents Bottega liqueurs, spirits, still and sparkling wines for Travel Retail in the USA including Bottega Gold Prosecco which is the #1 sparkling wine in Travel Retail according to the IWSR. Bottega’s booth is located at Foyer 5 which is next door to the Haleybrooke booth (Foyer 6) at the Summit of the Americas.

U.S. Spirits Exports Hit Record High in 2023 Driven by American Whiskeys

Total U.S. spirits and American Whiskeys set new records following the lifting of retaliatory tariffs on American Whiskeys, according to the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS).

The DISCUS American Spirits Export Report found U.S. spirits exports totaled \$2.2 billion in 2023, up 8% compared to last year. American Whiskeys, which account for 63% of all U.S. spirits exports, increased by 9% over 2022 to reach a record \$1.4 billion.

In December 2023, the EU announced that it would continue the suspension of tariffs on American Whiskeys in the steel

and aluminum dispute for 15 months, until March 31, 2025. If no agreement is reached, the EU will reimpose its tariff on American Whiskeys at 50%, up from the previously imposed 25%.

The analysis also showed that over the past two decades, global U.S. spirits exports, driven by American Whiskeys, have increased 280%, from \$587 million to more than \$2.2 billion (2002-2023).

Approximately 40% of U.S. spirits were exported to the EU totaling \$883 million, making it the U.S.’ largest export market. Total U.S. spirits exports to the EU grew by 24% compared to 2022.

The top five markets for U.S. spirits in 2023 were: 1) European Union (\$883 million); 2) Canada (\$262 million); 3) Mexico (\$139 million); 4) Australia (\$138 million); and 5) United Kingdom (\$129 million).

American Whiskeys accounted for 63% of all spirits exports in value terms and 34% in volume terms. The top five markets for American Whiskeys in 2023 were: 1) European Union (\$705 million); 2) Australia (\$121 million); 3) Japan (\$106 million); 4) United Kingdom (\$86 million); and 5) Canada (\$76 million).

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Sustainability, ethics key priorities for Brown-Forman

Sustainability has always been an important focus for Brown-Forman and its flagship brand Jack Daniel's.

Climate action, water stewardship, circularity, sustainable packaging, sustainable agriculture, and sustainable forestry all play key roles in the process of bringing the Brown-Forman spirits to market.

Jack Daniel's Master Distiller Chris Fletcher tells *TMI* that the company's sustainability efforts have roots going back to the 1990s when Jack Daniel's started a partnership with the University of Tennessee to replant hardwood species within the state that were under distress.

"We focused on hard maple first, which is very important to Jack Daniel's, as we then make charcoal out of it. Then white oak, which is critically important for American whiskeys, along with some black walnut. We started planting tree farms in the late 1990s," says Fletcher.

"It takes decades for these trees to mature and to be able to produce acorns and things that can become seedlings. But it's amazing to see these trees today."

The company is committed to the conservation of the existing hardwood forests it depends on for its white oak barrels and sugar maple charcoal.

Reducing emissions with zero waste

Brown-Forman has also committed to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across its owned operations and supply chain with the goal of halving its emissions by 2030 and becoming net-zero GHG emissions by 2045.

Jack Daniel's is even making natural gas from its grains. The company is committed to zero waste and transforming the way it conducts business using circularity principles, designing out waste, and keeping products and materials in use.

"At Jack Daniel's we've been zero waste for the last several years. At the distillery our grains had predominately been used for animal feed. However, we've just broken ground in the last few months and in 12 to 18 months will complete an anaerobic digestion facility in Lynchburg. This will take the spent grains from the bottom of the still, which are non-fermentable, and pump them into the digester, where microbes will break down all of the organic material into methane



David Rodiek, Vice President, Managing Director Global Travel Retail, B-F; Chris Fletcher, Jack Daniel's Master Distiller; and Maik Ladebeck, B-F Corporate Communications at the 2023 TFWA World Exhibition.

natural gas. That gas will be captured, compressed, and pumped into a crude line where it will go out and be refined. So we will literally be making natural gas from the waste distilling. That's a big one that we have on our radar," says Fletcher.

Solar farm and watersheds

"Brown-Forman is also building a solar farm about eight miles from the distillery that will drop our energy usage by about 30 to 40%."

Fletcher says Brown-Forman is committed to protecting the health of key watersheds in its communities, with the goal of ensuring that 100% of its high-risk and business critical watersheds achieve

water balance by 2030.

"We now own about 3,000 acres in the county. Much of that is protecting the groundwater. And, of course, so we can have barrel houses to age our whiskey. We want to pull as little water out of that cave as possible. Several times over the years we have looked at a way of running the distillery on what we call a thicker mash. This will enable us to use less water per bushel of grain. To put it in perspective, back in the 1980s, we would have needed about 35 gallons of water from that cave for every one bushel of grain that we brought in. Now, we do about 23 gallons, we've reduced water use by over 30%."

Sustainable packaging is already showing up in travel retail.

Late last year, Brown-Forman announced a new Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey 50ml bottle produced from 100% post-consumer recycled (PCR) plastic for airlines, representing a step forward in the company's sustainability journey. The new 50ml bottle replaces the existing 15% PCR bottle across all U.S.-based airlines, beginning with Delta Airlines in late Summer 2023.

"The Jack Daniel's 50ml 100% PCR bottle initiative is part of Brown-Forman's broader commitments to environmental responsibility and highlights our ongoing efforts to reduce our environmental footprint and promote a circular economy," said David Rodiek, Vice President, Managing Director Global Travel Retail. B



GMAX Travel Retail targets unique brands with a point of difference

It all started with a unique rum with a point of difference for Garry Maxwell and Tim Young's eventual partnership at GMAX Travel Retail.

Maxwell had founded GMAX Travel Retail in 2020 in the midst of the pandemic, after 18 years at Premier Portfolio. Young created his Young Spirit Consultancy in 2021 to assist premium beverage companies after 20 years with Brown-Forman, most recently as Vice President, General Manager Africa. They were separately looking for brands to work with for their respective companies.

"We were both in discussion with Equiano rum. That was our founding brand. They were the brand that asked if we would both be interested in working for them," Young tells *TMI*. "This is a big industry that is all over the world in lots of different channels. You can do it yourself, but it is great when you've got a good partner to deal with."

So Maxwell and Young started collaborating, and the two seasoned spirits professionals found that they were a great fit with each other, says Young.

"Garry would say we complement one another really well. He has been in the industry for much longer than I have. He's got a great background with all customers, but he is very strong in the airline channel. I've obviously got the background working for Brown-Forman and Seagram's before that. I think we bring good complementary skill sets," says Young.

"We represent the brands as an agent. We do all of the sales, commercial, and the marketing work. We work in all channels and all regions, but only in travel retail."

Young tells *TMI* that GMAX's vision is to bring brands to travel retail that have something that is unique about them, something a little bit different.

"We want brands that have really good stories to tell with really strong points of difference. Equiano Rum really ticked that box for us as the world's first blend of African and Caribbean rum. So that is where it started and we have gradually found other brands that also tick that box and have strong points of difference. And our portfolio has grown," says Young.

"We are lucky that we have Au vodka in our portfolio, which is the number one selling premium vodka in the UK."

GMAX Travel Retail represents brands in multiple categories in travel retail with unique brands in spirits, perfume and cosmetics, electronics, watches and jewelry, gifts and accessories, and logo and destination products.



And the GMAX portfolio continues to grow and add brands.

"I think we have doubled in size. Our booth in Cannes doubled in size, which is a good reflection of our increase. We've got a really interesting mix of brands that have really good points of difference that are doing well in domestic markets and that we believe travelers are really going to be interested in seeing them in travel retail," says Young.

The GMAX spirits portfolio now includes Au Vodka, Equiano Rum, Waterford Whisky, Tarquin's Gin, Tidal Rum, Moutai Bulao Baijiu, RY3 Whiskey, Ron Izalco, La Fee Absinthe and Puertos de Indias Gin.

GMAX is exhibiting at the Summit of the Americas at Stand #606.

This change in packaging is projected to reduce the annual use of first-use plastic material by up to 220 tons across all U.S. domestic transportation sales of Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey 50mls.

Additionally, the new airline-specific packaging will result in an estimated greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction of 33% for the primary package when compared to the existing package.

Andy Battjes, Brown-Forman Director of Global Environmental Sustainability, Global Supply Chain and Technology, said: "Increasing the PCR content of our

packaging is an important piece of Brown-Forman's sustainable packaging strategy. We anticipate extending the use of 100% PCR plastic to other products and package formats in the future."

B-F named a most ethical company

In addition to its sustainability efforts, Brown-Forman has been recognized in 2024 as one of the World's Most Ethical Companies for the past three years.

The accolade comes from Ethisphere, a global leader in defining and advancing the standards of ethical business practices,

and the assessment is grounded in Ethisphere's proprietary Ethics Quotient, which requires companies to provide over 240 different proof points on their culture of ethics; environmental, social, and governance practices; ethics and compliance program; diversity, equity, & inclusion; and initiatives that support a strong value chain. That data undergoes further qualitative analysis by Ethisphere's panel of experts who spend thousands of hours vetting and evaluating each year's group of applicants.

Monkey Shoulder unveils new refreshed packaging

Monkey Shoulder whisky is revealing a fresh new look and feel to its bottle, the first major change to the brand's bottle since it was launched in 2005.

The changes include a bold refresh of the label and a lighter bottle - up to 25% in glass reduction. The new look bottle will be available in global travel retail, supported by activations in key airports including London Heathrow, Paris CDG and Dubai from mid-2024.

The new and improved Monkey Shoulder bottle includes a longer neck for an easier pour. The label design has been optimized for maximum impact, moving to a split label design designed to deliver premium cues to match the award-winning liquid. The size of the brand logo has been increased, to improve shelf appeal and stand-out on the back bar, in store and online.

Monkey Shoulder's distinctive brand asset - the 'three monkeys' icon - features pride of place on the new label. The 'three monkeys' badge maintains its position on the new design, and the debossed three monkeys remain on the wooden cork for a premium feel.



The innovations to the design were optimized with an AI-powered visual analysis to test key features and label viewability, alongside consumer testing. The result is a new look bottle and label that not only maintains its premium cues and distinctiveness, but improves recognition, ease of comprehension and visual appeal to both fans and potential new drinkers of the brand, says the company.

Ifan Jenkins, Global Brand Director at Monkey Shoulder says: "This is the perfect time for a packaging refresh for Monkey Shoulder. With strong growth

momentum and ambitions across the globe in key markets such as the U.S., UK, France, Australia, Nigeria, Poland, and Taiwan, among others, now is the time to push forward with an innovative look and feel. With this refreshed look, we intend to continue recruiting a new generation of whisky drinkers and further inspire people to discover Monkey Shoulder as the perfect spirit for cocktails. The redesign is also the first in a series of bold moves for Monkey, with it being part of an exciting new refresh to our entire brand visual identity and communications platform, which will be launching in 2024."

Monkey Shoulder Scotch whisky remains one of the fastest growing premium whisky brands in the world, with double-digit value and volume growth from 2022 to 2023.

Diageo trials lighter aluminum Baileys bottle with Heinemann

Diageo Global Travel is launching Baileys in an aluminum bottle for an initial trial period.

The new aluminum format makes the bottle five times lighter than traditional 70cl Baileys bottles with a lesser carbon footprint. Validated by the Product Carbon Footprint Analysis, EcoAct (January 2024), the new carbon footprint represents a reduction of 44% versus the previous glass bottle.

Diageo Global Travel is initially partnering with German travel retailer Gebr. Heinemann for the release. The new bottle made from aluminum will be available on Heinemann's loyalty program platform first (Heinemann x ME), before being available for purchase in Amsterdam Schiphol, Frankfurt and Copenhagen international airports. Later in April it will be available in domestic retailer stores across Germany.

Commenting on the announcement: Andrew Cowan, Managing Director of Global Travel said: "We traditionally sell a heavy product in travel retail – a glass

bottle. Though glass is recyclable and not the worst form of packaging, it remains heavy and energy intensive to make. In Global Travel we want to find solutions to lighten our bottles and therefore reduce their carbon footprint in transit. We are excited to trial this option for Baileys. Much more to do and come."

Baileys, which has a strong commitment to sustainable production, from the cows and farms where its cream is sourced in Ireland to its packaging and design, has been certified B Corp status.



DANZKA highlights Copenhagen roots with new bottle design

DANZKA has redesigned the aluminum bottle for its iconic Danish vodka.

The DANZKA bottle has always combined a lightweight aluminum bottle that cools five times faster than a glass bottle that is unbreakable, re-usable and a real eye-catcher on the shelves.

The latest bottle design upgrade keeps the Nordic characteristic look and impresses with an even more minimalistic appearance.

In the new bottle layout, the company has integrated a key element "est. in Copenhagen" recalling the roots of its Premium Vodka.

How global events from shipping lanes to water levels impact the worldwide supply chain

Miami-based logistics infrastructure company WTDC is celebrating its 47th anniversary this year. Founded by the Gazitua family in 1977 as Miami's first General Order Warehouse, the family was already running a successful freight forwarding business called Florida International Forwarders (FIF) at the time of WTDC's founding. Over the years, WTDC added additional services such as bonded warehousing, customs brokerage, and transportation licenses and is a recognized market leader worldwide. Sean Gazitua, son of the founder and the current president & CEO of WTDC, shares his insights and concerns about the current state of supply chain issues and how his company is dealing with them.

As president and CEO of a worldwide logistics company and foreign trade zone, it is imperative that I stay informed of global events that could affect customers while championing efficient and sustainable practices. Three areas of notable importance that have shaped the past year, and continue to require vigilance, are the crisis in the Red Sea, the water levels in the Panama Canal, and the commitment to implementing sustainability measures.

Attacks in the Red Sea and Sea of Aden on major shipping lines CMA CGM, Maersk, and MSC shook the international shipping industry last fall. Emboldened by the October 2023 Hamas attacks on Israel, Houthi militants in Yemen launched what they call a war of solidarity with the Palestinians. Missile attacks and hijackings have unfortunately occurred consistently until the time of this writing in late March 2024. Vessels linked to U.S., Israel, and UK interests were initially targeted by the rebels, but recent missile attacks have been less discretionary.

The Red Sea crisis is a significant disruption to maritime shipping as the Suez Canal accounts for 15% of the world's shipping traffic. With the crisis showing no immediate signs of ceasing, all major carriers are avoiding the area to instead choose a 3000-3500 nautical mile (6000 km) detour around South Africa's Cape of Good Hope. After some initial changes to spot rates, the shipping industry has mostly stabilized considering this crisis. Alternative shipping lanes, like the detour around Africa or the Panama Canal have become the new normal, though the Panama Canal has not been without its own challenges over the last year.

A historic 2023 drought caused the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) to reduce daily vessel crossings from 36 to 24. Lake Gatun, a freshwater reservoir that feeds the Panama Canal locks and is a drinking water source for half of Panama, was at its lowest recorded depth as the dry season began.



Sean Gazitua, President and CEO, WTDC

The drought was further compounded by the El Niño weather phenomenon.

As Panama Canal crossings decreased, queues increased. 135 ships were backed up waiting to cross in August 2023. Coveted crossing-slots were auctioned by the ACP to the highest bidder, including a \$2.4 million bid to jump the line. With some rainfall over the last few months, vessel crossings have improved to 26 per day, still well shy of the typical 36 daily crossings. Delays in the Panama Canal, which handles 3-5% of all maritime traffic, can cause major global maritime disruption.

The Panama Canal drought is a stark reminder of the far-reaching impacts of climate change on critical infrastructure. As the canal grapples with water scarcity, corporations worldwide are increasingly recognizing their role in environmental challenges.

Through conversation, education, and even trial and error, WTDC is building a sustainability profile that achieves



the company's eco-friendly goals while meeting the environmental objectives of our global partners. The company issues carbon credit reports so these partners can meet their own environmental benchmarks, increasingly a shareholder or government mandate.

The company's environmental footprint is reducing through recent infrastructure upgrades: a fleet of electric forklifts, recycling electronics waste, installation of LED lighting in the warehouse and offices, and installation of high-efficiency air conditioning units. We centralized control of the air conditioners to optimize cooling times and align them with office use. Currently, we are sourcing a new roof that will incorporate modern cooling materials.

Our Zero Waste to Landfill initiative emphasizes recycling and proper disposal of waste. WTDC has been working with our supplier partners to safely reduce packaging waste on incoming shipments. Damaged pallets are picked up for repair and cardboard is recycled. We even installed compost bins to break down food and paper waste. The project now impacts how we approach the services of our vendors. For example, single use plastic lunch containers constituted a notable portion of daily trash. Through our recommendations, our top lunch vendor switched from using plastic to compostable containers to house their daily lunch offerings.

The real goal of any sustainable measure should be to improve the quality of the customer experience, to elevate the status of employees, and to impact the community and environment. Recently our family company celebrated 47 years in business. We continue to be an asset to our customers because we are informed and have a long track record of adaptability to the ever-changing environmental and geopolitical landscape. Have a great Summit of the Americas!

Nestlé ITR continues sustainability efforts with KitKat using cocoa from Nestlé’s Income Accelerator Program

Nestlé International Travel Retail (NITR) is set to launch the first KitKat made with cocoa mass from beans grown by farmers engaged in the company’s Income Accelerator Program in travel retail. By mid-2024, Nestlé plans to use segregated cocoa butter for all its KitKat chocolate in Europe, with plans to expand to other regions in the coming years.

The new ‘Breaks for Good’ KitKat aims to connect traveling consumers with the farmers in Nestlé’s program while raising awareness about the sustainability of the cocoa used in the bars.

The KitKat wrapper will include a ‘Sustainably Sourced Cocoa’ stamp and a QR code which will direct consumers to further details on the program and its impact on cocoa farming communities.

Chocolate made with sustainably sourced cocoa will first be used in the majority of KitKat products available in European travel retail, including KitKat’s new Destination Packs, KitKat Chunky, Mini Mix and its Sharing Bag. The new products are expected to be rolled out over the coming months, with their launch supported by an extensive ‘Breaks for Good’ campaign.

NITR General Manager Stewart Dryburgh said: “KitKat is a key brand, not just for us, but generally in the travel retail Confectionery category.

“KitKat has consistently embraced innovation, centered around its iconic ‘Have a break, Have a KitKat’ tagline, and is now taking a huge step to embrace sustainability. ‘Breaks for Good’ puts cocoa farmers – and our mission for a sustainable future for all involved in the cocoa and chocolate production chain – at the center of our



products. And, of course, to the center of the Confectionery category in travel retail.

“KitKat is such a noticeable brand, perfect to represent Nestlé’s efforts to create meaningful impact in cocoa communities.”

Nestlé’s Income Accelerator Program (IAP) was launched in January 2022 to help close the living income gap of cocoa-farming families and reduce child labor risk by encouraging changes in behavior and rewarding positive practices – both within the home and on the farm. The program also encourages better agriculture practices. Payments are divided evenly between the male and female heads of household, empowering women to act as agents for positive change by saving, investing and sharing responsibilities.

The IAP was introduced to build on the learnings of the Nestlé Cocoa Plan which was launched back in 2009. It has engaged more than 150,000 cocoa-farming families so far, building on three pillars: better farming, aiming to improve livelihoods in communities;

better lives, aiming to improve social conditions for families; and better cocoa, aiming to improve product sustainability.

The IAP builds on Nestlé’s ambition to transform its global cocoa sourcing and achieve full traceability and physical segregation of its cocoa product from origin to factory.

The Income Accelerator Program also tackles child labor risks and deforestation.

The program incentivizes cocoa-farming families that enroll their children in school, implement good agricultural practices, engage in agroforestry activities, and diversify their incomes.

The program has so far supported over 10,000 families in Côte d’Ivoire and is expanding to Ghana this year to reach some 30,000 families. By 2030, Nestlé intends to reach an estimated 160,000 cocoa-farming families in the company’s global cocoa supply chain to create an impact at scale.



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Quality Street launches next sustainability step through travel retail

Nestlé International Travel Retail (NITR) announces the latest innovation for its popular Quality Street line, using travel retail-exclusive paper sharing packs, following the introduction of paper candy wraps. Travel retail is the first market to have paper used both inside and outside.

Following the introduction of recyclable FSC-certified paper packaging for its twist-wrapped sweets in October 2022, Quality Street has now revealed colorful new paper sharing packs, with global travel retail as the launch pad.

The eye-catching 750gr packs - which launched in January - are clearly marked 'I am paper'.

NITR General Manager Stewart Dryburgh said: "This is big news, not just for Nestlé and Quality Street but for the confectionery category in general."

Quality Street and sustainability

"It underlines NITR's strong focus on sustainability and its commitment to reducing the use of virgin plastic, boosting recycling and supporting a circular economy. It is also a clear indication of our determination to meet the needs and demands of the increasing number of travelling consumers who are looking to purchase sustainable products."

Quality Street, which is the second Nestlé confectionery brand to introduce paper following Smarties, has used only certified sustainably sourced cocoa since 2015, and Quality Street chocolate is made from milk sourced from farms in Scotland that have been part of a sustainable farming partnership with Nestlé since 2003.

The brand collaborates with the Rainforest Alliance that goes beyond certification of cocoa beans into other impact areas. In fact, the Rainforest Alliance is not the only organization



Quality Street is partnering with on its journey to make cocoa more sustainable. Other include International Cocoa Initiative, Fair Labor Association, KIT Royal Tropical Institute, Earthworm and Jacobs Foundation.

Lindt & Sprüngli Global Travel Retail features Easter Garden concept at São Paulo-Guarulhos and Paris Charles de Gaulle



São Paulo-Guarulhos

Lindt & Sprüngli is celebrating Easter with vibrant Easter Garden activations at São Paulo-Guarulhos and Paris Charles de Gaulle airports.

Central to the high-profile promotions (HPP) is a life-size bunny display adorned with the Lindt GOLD BUNNY, Lindt's hero Easter product, surrounded by Easter baskets containing the LINDOR Present Egg 300g and the LINDOR Small Eggs Bag Milk in 180g or Assorted 180g. The festive baskets are nestled atop lush, carpeted grass amidst visuals of trees and bushes, evoking the ambiance of a blooming Easter garden. Visitors to the activation sites can also find Lindt's popular travel retail exclusive LINDOR Tubes 400g and 175g, available in an array of flavor variations such as Milk, Dark Assorted and Assorted.

Peter Zehnder, Head of Lindt & Sprüngli Global Travel Retail commented:

"Easter is a key gifting moment in the calendar in which consumers look forward to treating loved ones to novel and indulgent chocolate gifts. Each year around Easter we aim to offer shoppers exciting activations and products that cater to their gifting needs, delivering on the 'Say it with chocolate' pillar of our Category Vision. We hope that the activations in São Paulo and Paris encourage shoppers to celebrate Easter with pure indulgence."

Global Travel Retail growth

Lindt & Sprüngli reported 20.1% organic growth for its Global Travel Retail business in the financial year 2023, returning almost to pre-COVID-19 levels. The robust growth in the reporting period was supported by strong performances in all regions, which benefitted from the return to high passenger numbers.

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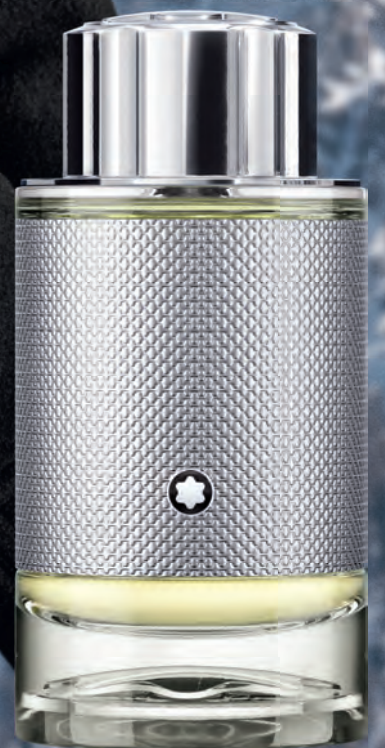
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