

DIAGEO WHISKY SUMMIT BRINGS THE BEST OF SCOTLAND TO CHINA

Under Diageo's leadership, the landmark annual two-day event will immerse visitors into the world of scotch whisky and unveil the latest trends driving scotch culture in China

Guangzhou, 17 November 2017

Diageo, the world's leading premium drinks company, is holding the second edition of its annual Whisky Summit on 17-18 November in Guangzhou, China. The two-day summit brings together over 500 industry experts, scotch adorers and business partners to discuss and share whisky knowledge, trends and opportunities in a series of panels, workshops and tasting masterclasses.

China is the single largest alcohol market in the world with a growing luxury consumer base. There is a large penetration opportunity for international spirits, particularly scotch whisky. By 2022, 75% of the nation's urban population will be classified as middle class; a trend which is also helping to grow the demand for more premium products like Johnnie Walker. Testament to the growing demand for scotch amongst Chinese consumers, scotch whisky exports to China grew by 45% to £27m in the first half of 2017 according to the Scotch Whisky Association.

The Diageo Whisky Summit is expected to be one of the most exciting and engaging immersive scotch whisky experience ever hosted in China. For the first time Diageo will showcase all the whiskies from its 27 distilleries in operation in Scotland. Visitors will be visually brought to Scotland through virtual tours of some of Diageo's most iconic distilleries, journeys through the four scotch whisky regions and masterclasses given by some of the world's most renowned whisky experts like Jim Beveridge, Johnnie Walker Master Blender, Georgie Crawford, Lagavulin Distillery Manager and acclaimed whisky writers Charles MacLean and Dave Broom. The summit will also be attended by famous Chinese scotch whisky gurus Steven Lin and Sam Lu.

Sam Fischer, Diageo's President Greater China and Asia commented:

'I am honoured to open the Diageo China Whisky Summit for the second year running. Diageo is the global leader in scotch whisky and our ambition is to make scotch the number one international spirit category in China. Our Chinese scotch business is on a strong growth trajectory. We are beating the competition, having recently extended our leadership in the super deluxe scotch segment, and we are accelerating performance in the single malts category with Singleton. We are also the fastest growing player in the premium segment and are driving share and attracting new consumers with innovations like Johnnie Walker Blender's Batch and Haig Club Clubman. Scotch has an exciting future in China and I am confident Diageo is well placed to continue to drive the growth of the category and establish its leadership.'

Mark Edwards, General Manager, Diageo China commented:

'Chinese consumers have a thirst for knowledge on scotch whisky and a desire to refine their appreciation of its heritage, provenance and craft credentials. The Diageo China Whisky Summit is one of the major initiatives we have kicked off to drive scotch category awareness and excitement about Diageo's scotch portfolio. We put a strong focus on education to inspire and recruit new consumers. We have also supported the opening of whisky boutiques in Xiamen and Guangzhou, setting up mentoring events and investing behind 'liquid on lips' activities in the growing number of malt bars that are opening up in the country. Scotch is vibrant in China and Diageo is well positioned to ride on the trend with our unrivalled selection of brands.'

Sarah Dickson, Scotch Whisky Association global affairs director, commented:

“Scotch whisky is a globally renowned product and I am proud to be part of this Diageo summit that brings together so many industry experts and enthusiasts to celebrate Scotland’s national drink. Some £4 billion of scotch is shipped across the world each year, making it the UK’s biggest food and drink export, and a vast contributor to the country’s economy. In the first six months of this year, demand for scotch in China increased as the economy grew, with direct exports up 45% to £27 million. Tourism is another important part of the scotch whisky industry and last year 1.7m visits were made to distilleries in Scotland, with many coming from China. We are confident China’s relationship with scotch will continue to strengthen in the years to come.”

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Media enquiries:

Global: Camille.dor@diageo.com - 00447590809470

China: Rachel.Zhou@diageo.com - 0086 18721037209

About Diageo

Diageo is a global leader in beverage alcohol with an outstanding collection of brands across spirits, beer and wine categories. These brands include Johnnie Walker, Crown Royal, J&B, Buchanan’s, and Windsor whiskies, Smirnoff, Cîroc and Ketel One vodkas, Captain Morgan, Baileys, Don Julio, Tanqueray and Guinness.

Diageo is a global company, and products are sold in more than 180 countries around the world. The company is listed on both the London Stock Exchange (DGE) and the New York Stock Exchange (DEO). For more information about Diageo, our people, our brands, and performance, visit us at www.diageo.com. Visit Diageo’s global responsible drinking resource, www.DRINKIQ.com, for information, initiatives, and ways to share best practice.

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