

THE RUNNING

THE CONTENDERS FOR THE ANNUAL DRINKS INTERNATIONAL RETAIL AWARDS HAVE BEEN ANNOUNCED. JOE BATES HAS THE LOWDOWN













OPERATOR AWARDS

AIRPORT DRINKS RETAILER **OF THE YEAR**

Dubai airport fine wine and spirits retailer Le Clos was one of two shortlisted contenders for this prestigious title. Highlights for the multi awardwinning Middle Eastern operator in 2016/17 included an impressive sales increase of 45%; two record-breaking single liquor transactions, the highest being \$530,000; and the successful launch of an e-commerce site in multiple languages.

DFS Group is the other shortlisted company for this award. Recent innovations and developments include the launch of a new cross-category, downtown watch and whiskies boutique in Macau; the staging of an inaugural global whisky festival, and the opening of a new Whiskey House concept at Hong Kong airport, offering more than 250 whiskies.

AIRPORT BAR OF THE YEAR

Launched last year, the Airport Bar of the Year award hit its stride in 2017 with two outstanding entries. The Virgin Atlantic London Heathrow Clubhouse sets new standards for airport bars, both in the training of its staff through an alliance with Bacardi, and through partnerships with leading bars around the world and investment in cutting-edge virtual reality technology.

The second challenger is the Book & Bourbon restaurant at Louisville international airport. Run by HMS Host, the library-themed outlet features a whiskey-oriented cocktail list with classics such as the Sazerac Rye, Mint Julep and Old Fashioned, as well as a menu of some 90 whiskies, including rarities such as Pappy Van Winkle 23 Year Old.

PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR

The Partnership Initiative of the Year has always proved a popular and competitive TRA award the judging panel: Le Clos' impressive, and The Famous Grouse.

ongoing partnership with The Macallan, which now accounts for nearly 70% of the operator's malt sales, and ARI's partnership with Diageo to open The Guinness Export House at Dublin airport.

IN-FLIGHT DRINKS RETAILER OF THE YEAR

Our shortlist for this award includes inflight retail giant Gateretail and its strategy of premiumising the buy-on-board programme of Easyjet, one of Europe's largest low-cost carriers, through actions such as the listing of craft beer brands and a menu of superpremium gins and quality

British Airways is the other nominee in this category. The UK airline caught the judges' eyes with a Christmas whisky festival at its Heathrow lounges in partnership with Tomatin, and for flying the flag for English sparkling wine by listing Bolney Wine Estate's Vintage Blanc de Blanc for its first class passengers.

FERRY/CRUISE LINE DRINKS RETAILER OF THE YEAR

P&O Ferries once again entered this award with a solid entry detailing its activities to drive sales in the beer, wines and spirits sector, successfully achieving a 10% increase in spend per passenger. Viking Line is the other challenger for this award, winning praise for its annual Whisky Festival, the introduction of a new craft beer concept onboard its MV/ Cinderella ship created in partnerand 2017 was no different. Two ship with Heineken, and the launch contenders were shortlisted by of exclusive whiskies with Wolfburn **SUPPLIER** AWARDS

DRINKS LAUNCH OF THE YEAR

The non-dairy cream liqueur Licor 43 Orochata is a shortlisted entry for the first of our supplier awards. Hailed as a 'game changer' by owner Diego Zamora, the brand has quickly become a duty free sales success. Mast-Jägermeister's new super-premium herbal liqueur Manifest, which was launched at selected Gebr Heinemann airport stores with branded tasting bars this year, is the other contender in this category.

TRAVEL RETAIL EXCLUSIVE OF THE YEAR

The role of travel retail exclusives becomes more important each year. Once the preserve of whisky companies, travel exclusives are now commonplace in other spirit categories. This trend was amply demonstrated by the shortlist for this year's award. which includes Heathrow Exclusive GB Gin, distilled exclusively for the London hub and World Duty Free by Chase Distillery, and Martell Cordon Bleu Extra, which made its world debut at Singapore Changi airport with DFS last year.

LUXURY DRINKS LAUNCH OF THE YEAR

MARKETING

CONCEPT BY A

TRAVEL RETAILER

Delhi Duty Free

Services impressed with

its well executed Whiskey

Luxe airport promotion, which

included a full programme of digi-

Le Clos' launch of a multi-lingual

e-commerce site was our other cho-

sen contender. Through partnerships

with travel companies, a digital mar-

keting campaign and bespoke offers,

the site exceeded its first-year sales

tal marketing initiatives.

target by 300%.

The travel retail channel is now arguably the pre-eminent place to sell luxury spirts and this award continues to gain popularity. The shortlist for this year includes the £2,000 Craigellachie 33 Year Old from Bacardi Global Travel Retail, and Angus Dundee's Tomintoul Quadruple Cask 40 Year Old, limited to just 500 bottles, and priced at £2,500 each.

DRINKS INNOVATION OF THE YEAR

The travel-retail liquor sector has a high turnover of launches so true innovation is difficult thing for any supplier to achieve. Nonetheless, the judging panel was impressed by the quality of this entries, settling on a trio of nominees- Jägermeister Manifest, billed as the world's first super-premium herbal liqueur, Angus Dundee 50 Year Old Blended Grain Scotch, and Martell B l e u Intense Heat Finish Cask Limited Edition XO, cognac finished in heavily charred casks for six months

OF A DRINKS BRAND OF THE YEAR

In the image-conscious world of travel retail, packaging plays a very important role and, as a result, this award is always hotly contested. This year's shortlist includes Mackmyra Expedition, the Swedish whisky company's first travel retail exclusive, and the repackaged, colour-coded Glenfiddich Cask Collection.

PRESENTATION BOX OF THE YEAR

This award saw the otherwise underrepresented wine category make a welcome appearance with two shortlisted, gift-oriented entries from France's best-selling Champagne brand Nicolas Feuillatte. Chivas Regal also made the short list for a partnership with audio producer LSTN Sound Co to create a limited-edition Chivas 12 Year Old Gift Tin featuring images of deconstructed headphones. The Generosity: Amplified project aimed to raise funds for hearing aids via the Starkey Hearing Foundation.

MARKETING CONCEPT OF THE YEAR

Hendrick's has long championed the use of cucumber in its hero ginand-tonic serve so the creation of a World Cucumber Day on June 14 was a clever next step, which was translated into a major global travel-retail campaign for brand owner William Grant & Sons. The marketing concept involved activations at airports and onboard cruise lines, which were supported by a typically quirky





Bacardi. owned Dewar's whisky also made

it into the winners' e n c l o sure with its most ambitious interpretation of its John Dewar & Sons Fine Whisky Emporium concept to date. The pop-up store at Frankfurt airport aimed to engage millennial travellers with a range of fun activities and an innovative 'vapourised' whisky sampling experience.

FINE WHISKY EMPORIUM



LE CLOS