

Whyte & Mackay champions the power of Single Malts as growth driver



Clarisse Daniels, Whyte & Mackay Regional Director Global Travel Retail was joined in a panel discussion at the APTRA India Conference by Neha Jabbar, Head of Marketing, Gulf & India Travel Retail, Pernod Ricard; Guy May, Director, Global Business, The House of Somrus; Leila Stansfield, Managing Director, Bacardi Global Travel Retail, Sandra Tassilly, Commercial Director, APAC, MENA & India, Diageo Travel Retail, and moderator Shalini Kumar, Editor, Spiritz Magazine

Single Malt Scotch Whisky is driving the continued growth of the spirit category in global travel retail as the preferred choice for Indian consumers. This was the message from Whyte & Mackay's Clarisse Daniels as she took to the stage at the Asia Pacific Travel Retail Association (APTRA) India Conference in Delhi last week.

Daniels, as Regional Director Global Travel Retail, laid out the importance of distinctive in-store experiences tailored to meet travelling shoppers' desire for inspiration and discovery.

Whyte & Mackay - a Gold Partner for inaugural APTRA India Conference - highlighted the strategic importance of the region to the global Scotch Whisky category. The company noted that consumer demand for Single Malt has propelled Whyte & Mackay to significant growth in the Middle East & India across their portfolio of pedigree Single Malt Whisky Brands, led by The Dalmore and Jura.

Scotch Whisky is regarded as the backbone of the spirit industry. According to Pi Insight, whisky is the preferred spirit for 60% of Indian alcohol buyers in travel retail, with that figure rising year-on-year fueled by Single Malts. After more than two decades of strong growth, the Single Malt Scotch

market is now worth US\$10 billion globally despite tight allocations. Single Malt is both the third biggest category in the travel retail spirits market and the number one duty-free category in some locations, including Delhi and Mumbai.



The panelists discussed the strategic importance of the Asia Pacific region to the global Scotch Whisky category

Speaking to the panel, Daniels underlined the key role younger consumers have played in driving growth. Millennials and LDA Gen Z often make Single Malt Scotch their first foray into whisky, which means that with India having a larger Gen Z population than the US and China combined, the future is promising for the category. Consumers in India are key contributors to the global picture around the rising middle class, as India is home to the world's second-biggest middle-class population after China. As their spending power continues to grow, these consumers are willing to spend on luxury, within which high-end expressions of Single Malt whisky are seen as a desirable category.

Creating elevated in-store experiences for these new, discerning consumers is one of both the biggest challenges and opportunities facing the travel retail sector. In discussion with the panel, she highlighted that the modern luxury consumer is not just shopping. They are looking to “experience the exceptional”. Daniels highlighted that 44% of high-net-worth Indian alcohol buyers are women and that women love Single Malt as it conveys status, success, and make them stand apart.

This conversation really resonated with the audience at the conference, who acknowledged that there is room for improvement to attract more women with spaces for them to relax, with cocktails and food pairing.

Whyte & Mackay's 'Masterpiece in the making' - The Dalmore was described as an excellent example of this in practice. The brand has not relied upon the traditional marketing levers in the Single Malt category, yet has become the fastest growing top-eight Single Malt brand, and No.3 luxury Single Malt brand in GTR (IWSR). This success, according to Whyte & Mackay, is due to the company's deep understanding of the channel, which has ensured that The Dalmore remains relevant to travelling shoppers and high net worth consumers.

Speaking after the event, Daniels said, "We have an incredible opportunity in global travel retail with the Indian traveler, both as Whyte & Mackay and for the wider Spirits sector. But it is an opportunity which we must seize in the right way.

"Modern luxury consumers are looking to explore and experiment, and that is why we must create sanctuaries for them, away from the stresses of the airport environment, and ensuring that shoppers' needs are met in the blink of an eye. These are the conversations we at Whyte & Mackay are having with our retail partners in the region and we are very grateful to APTRA for creating a platform for this discussion. It has been wonderful to meet with colleagues and friends in Delhi during the event and it is an excellent chance to put a spotlight on what is fast becoming one of the most important opportunities for our industry."