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Diageo Reserve Global Cocktailian

Diageo Reserve, the luxury portfolio of Diageo, has announced the creation of a new Global Cocktailian role — the first of its type in the industry, according to a company statement — “in order to forge more meaningful relationships between the Reserve business and the wider luxury industry.”



Lauren Mote - Diageo Reserve Global Cocktailian

The role will be filled by award-winning Canadian mixologist, educator and industry advocate, Lauren Mote.

Announcing the appointment, Cristina Diezhandino, Managing Director Diageo Reserve, said the role of Global Cocktailian was “a significant appointment for the business and a step forward in placing Reserve brands into culture and lifestyle through knowledge, passion and storytelling.”

“Diageo Reserve was founded on breaking new ground and is globally recognized as a benchmark in the luxury industry,” Diezhandino said. “Therefore, we need to be at the forefront of trends — transcending the drinks category to draw learnings from other categories in order to deliver our vision of making luxury experiences available, accessible and aspirational to everyone.

“From our 2016 *World Class: Future of Cocktails* report, we know that people now value experiences over possessions, and we are seeing the rise of the emotional economy with people looking for deeper connections to brands. Therefore, we are very excited to appoint Lauren — a hugely respected contributor to the global drinks industry with an exceptional mix of passion, skills and experience — as a storyteller and trendsetter who will help us bring these deeper connections to life.

“As an award-winning bartender, business owner and drinks authority, Lauren will be a passionate advocate for luxury craftsmanship and our Reserve portfolio, working with influencers and the media, and her expertise will help support our commercial development and innovation streams. In addition, she will be a figurehead for our industry-leading World Class program, working alongside our World Class Bartender of the Year to promote the craft of bartending and inspire people across the globe to drink better.”

The Diageo Reserve brands include Johnnie Walker Blue Label, Ciroc, Don Julio, Bulleit, Tanqueray No. Ten, Ketel One, Zacapa and a collection of single malt Scotch whiskies.

Equity Crowdfunding

Special to Modern Distillery Age by Lenny Gotter

Fundraising when you own a small business can be a difficult task. Owners often spend their time running the business and trying to keep the doors open day after day. When they do go to look for financing, they don't realize how time-consuming looking for money can be. If you have a business that grosses less than \$1 million, investors can be scarce and hard-to-find. I've often heard that it's easier to raise \$5 million than it is to raise \$500,000.

Most of the time, entrepreneurs end up relying on friends and family for investment, or they end up hiring someone to help them secure financing.

Crowdfunding has been around for a few years now to help smaller businesses raise capital. There are a number of loan-based crowdfunding sites available such as Wefundme. I was recently at the American Distillers Institute convention and Slava, the CEO from IndieGoGo, gave a speech about its equity crowdfunding program.

With equity crowdfunding, investors get a financial stake in the company they're supporting. Owners can decide to offer company shares in exchange for investment or offer a revenue share to investors or even raise capital via debt offering.

This is different than sites like Wefundme, because they're going through highly regulated and verified portals. Companies that have raised capital through this in Portland have gone on to raise more, and they do work with the SBA. The sweet spot so far seems to be newer companies who have only been around for six to 12 months with less than \$1 million in revenue. However, I just sent Indiegogo referrals for companies that have been in business for several years, and they seemed interested in working with them.

Republic Restoratives is a distillery in Washington, D.C., that raised \$300,000 with the terms stating that investors will be paid back 10% of the company's gross

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Smirnoff Gets Political

Advertising Age has reported that Smirnoff playfully went after Donald Trump's pledge to testify under oath amid allegations that Russia meddled in the U.S. election. In new outdoor ads, Smirnoff states that it is “made in America, but we'd be happy to talk about our Russian ties under oath.”

The ads first appeared last weekend in small parts of the New York metro area.

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