



Diageo Opens Landmark Global Johnnie Walker Visitor Experience

Diageo's Johnnie Walker Princes Street, the eight-floor new visitor experience for the world's best-selling Scotch whisky, has opened in the heart of Scotland's capital city.



Four and a half years in the making, Johnnie Walker Princes Street is the centerpiece of Diageo's £185 million investment in Scotch whisky tourism in Scotland — the largest single investment program of its kind ever seen in Scotch whisky tourism.

To mark the opening, a Johnnie Walker flag was raised above the landmark building by Ivan Menezes, Chief Executive, Diageo, and Barbara Smith, Managing Director of Johnnie Walker Princes Street, against the backdrop of Edinburgh's skyline, including the world-famous Edinburgh Castle.

"This is a proud day for everyone," said Menezes. "Last year, Johnnie Walker celebrated 200 years since founder John Walker opened the doors to his small grocery store, and today represents the next chapter of the incredible story. Johnnie Walker Princes Street is a landmark investment in Scotch whisky and into Scotland, and it sets a new standard for immersive visitor attractions. It celebrates Scotland's remarkable heritage, our incredible skilled whisky-makers and looks to the future by engaging new generations of consumers from around the world in the magic of Scotch whisky."

"Set over 71,500 square feet, it takes the concept of personalization to a scale never before seen in a global drinks visitor experience," according to a company statement.

- Visitors on the Johnnie Walker Journey of Flavor tour will have their personal flavor preferences mapped with drinks tailored to their palate.
- With more than 800 flavor combinations available in the innovative dispensation systems, one person could visit Johnnie Walker Princes Street every day for more than two years and not have the same experience twice.
- Over 150 diverse employees — speaking 23 languages between them — will work at the facility.
- The cellar has become a whisky treasury with unique whisky casks available for sampling.

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IWSR Predicts Material Opportunities for Increased Premiumization of Beverage Alcohol Consumption in Key Markets & Categories Post-Covid-19

by The IWSR Drinks Market Analysis, www.theiwsr.com

Significant premiumization opportunities exist, but brand owners should plan for a two-speed recovery in key markets post-Covid. Markets with high vaccination rates and substantial financial support structures will thrive in the short to medium term, however IWSR expects to see significant downtrading in less protected markets and regions.

Lockdown Savings

The premium-and-above beverage-alcohol market stalled amid lengthy periods of lockdown during 2020, but with opportunities to spend severely curtailed, consumers in developed economies accumulated extraordinarily high levels of savings.

In the U.K., the household savings ratio hit 25.9% in the second quarter of 2020 — the highest figure since tracking began in 1987. In France, the figure was 27.4%, and in April 2020 in the U.S., the personal savings rate hit 33%, according to government reports.

"Covid restrictions have led consumers to appreciate the value of at-home treating through the purchase of premium products," said IWSR Research Director Jose Luis Heroso. "The pandemic has put a lot of things into perspective, and 'carpe diem' is back on the agenda."

Many brand owners responded to this pent-up consumer demand, moving promotional spend to targeting consumers at home and becoming more creative in terms of at-home packaging and experiences.

Premium Gains: Markets

IWSR expects premium-and-above price bands for spirits to more than regain 2020's volume losses during 2021, reflecting the fact that alcohol remains an affordable luxury for those willing and able to spend.

However, less developed nations will be impacted harder and for longer by the effects of Covid-19.

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