

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Johnnie Walker targets Asian consumers with maritime partnership

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Johnnie Walker House and Dream Cruises partnership

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Scotch whisky producer Johnnie Walker is voyaging east by sea with the help of a local cruise line.

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Johnnie Walker House's 21st and latest lifestyle oriented setting will be aboard Genting Dream, touted by Dream Cruises as Asia's first-ever luxury cruiser. Asia's growing cruise market and the continent's enormous population and economic development give the partnership a promising outlook.

"At Johnnie Walker House, we are constantly innovating new and unique whisky experiences to cater to the demands of luxury consumers today," said Lawrence Law, global director - Johnnie Walker super delux luxury portfolio Johnnie Walker House. "With the launch of Johnnie Walker House on Genting Dream, we are creating a flagship home for Scotch whisky at sea.

"As the 21st property globally, this is an exciting moment for Johnnie Walker House in Asia and we look forward to introducing our heritage and brand to a new audience, on board this stunning new ship," he said.

Dreams of Johnnie Walker

The partnership was announced in Beijing at a Dream Cruises roadshow event. Eight Johnnie Walker Blue Label bottles with the Dream Cruises logo were unveiled by Dream Cruises president Thatcher Brown and Mr. Law.

The exclusive bottles from the press unveiling will be made available for purchase for cruise passengers.



Johnnie Walker Blue Label

Johnnie Walker House will open its 21st experiential center overall and first at sea aboard Genting Dream. There, passengers will enjoy luxurious accommodations, fine dining experiences and concepts, and the brand's fine whiskies.

In a statement, Dream Cruises' Mr. Brown said, "We are delighted that Genting Dream will feature the world's very first Johnnie Walker House at sea.

"Whisky appreciation in Asia is significant and growing, and guests on Genting Dream will be able to learn more about the art of producing the very finest Scotch whiskies," he said. "I'm sure they will also greatly enjoy appreciating some of the world's most prestigious Scotch whiskies in the company of fellow connoisseurs."

The center will include a tasting bar, a "whiskey constellation wall" that provides a comprehensive index for distilleries which provide Johnnie Walker's access to more than 7 million casks of whiskey and a blending table and malt wall display designed for educational and social purposes.



Genting Dream

The Genting Dream location also will include tasting options of rare John Walker & Sons variants and single malts that are not available elsewhere. These whiskies will also be available for purchase, duty-free and personally engraved.

Studies have shown that Asian consumers are responsive to exclusive products. Offering personalized exclusives on-board will likely let Johnnie Walker forge stronger connections with the new clientele as it seeks to strengthen its presence in Asia.

With a focus on culinary excellence, including diverse cuisines, an at-sea dining concept and indoors-meets-outdoors seating, Dream Cruises is fitting partner for Johnnie Walker. A shared commitment to the full dining experience makes the brands natural partners in a way that will read as authentic to fans of both brands.



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Johnnie Walker

Riding the wave

Booming Asian economies are enabling growth in most sectors. However, the cruise market presents a unique opportunity for brands in that it allows for partnerships that can expose products to a new audience who might otherwise be less attentive, providing a platform for brands to invest before making a push into the more competitive continental market.

A July 2015 report from Agility Research showed that affluent Asian consumers show a strong interest in cruise tourism, with the market growing by double digits over the three preceding years.

In general, Asian markets offer strong opportunities for travel service providers, as economies grow and consumers have more disposable income. For global lines, gearing Asia Pacific itineraries towards local consumers may boost bookings ([see story](#)).

Recent months have shown Johnnie Walker's efforts to win over consumers in new markets with high-concept, exclusive touchpoints.

For example, the Scotch whisky-maker recently expanded its Johnnie Walker House network of lounges with an invite-only location in Singapore.

As the first-of-its-kind in Southeast Asia, the Johnnie Walker House in Singapore offers connoisseurs the Diageo-owned spirits' prestige range of rare and collectable scotch whiskies. Johnnie Walker Houses are a network of stand alone and airport boutiques dedicated to the brand's whiskies with an objective of informing consumers about its products in a curated lifestyle setting ([see story](#)).