

# Brown-Forman elevates its whisky portfolio with focus on super-premium offerings



Jack Daniels will roll out new dynamic content promotional shelving for permanent travel retail spaces in 2024

Brown-Forman is setting its sights on the super-premium whisky market, with Jack Daniels leading the charge. In an exclusive interview with *GTR Magazine*, Stéphane Morizet, Marketing Director Global Travel Retail at Brown-Forman, reveals the company's strategic focus on elevating its portfolio, starting with its iconic Tennessee whiskey brand. This move aims to capitalize on the growing demand for premium spirits in travel retail, offering discerning travelers new opportunities to explore and invest in high-quality, craft-oriented whisky expressions.

## **Bonded Series**

A new Jack Daniels Bonded Rye Whiskey is being introduced to global travel retail in October for the company's big Q4 push after its US debut in 2022, building out the brand's super-premium portfolio - solidified as a key driver in Brown-Forman's market strategy. "Tennessee whisky is still the beating heart of what we do; we see so much category growth. We want to offer a bit more in terms of craft and authenticity for people who want to try more whisky styles. It's a different style of Jack, appealing to more connoisseurs," Morizet says.

The Bonded Series is Brown-Forman's latest introduction to GTR, following its successful launch in the United States. The series has received critical acclaim, with Jack Daniel's Bonded being awarded Whisky of the Year by Whisky Advocate. Now, the company is ready to introduce this prestigious line to its international travel retail customers. "With this new bottled-in-bond designation, we are introducing a new era of Jack, with credibility and craft credentials. The price is a 50% premium step up - we believe there is lots of head room in this category for Jack Daniels. We are investing in more craft expressions. The brand has global recognition and we want to leverage that, especially in Asia where there is still mileage in the super-premium whiskey category," explained Morizet.

The Bonded Series marks a significant expansion for Brown-Forman in travel retail. Following its successful US launch, where it garnered critical acclaim and was named best whisky of the year by Whisky Advocate, the series is now set to make its mark in the international travel retail market.



Brown-Forman launched its ultra-premium Benriach 1966 Cask Aged 50 Years in May, a rare and exceptional whisky

Morizet emphasizes the global importance of Jack Daniels Bonded, highlighting its potential in the Asian market. He outlines the company's strategic approach: "In terms of activations we want to build the permanent visibility first, before extending out with regional activations. This year we're still focused on our Jack Daniels Single Barrel 100% Proof through targeted activations, and our American single malt. We will look at more activations for the Bonded Series in 2025."

### **Jack Chat**

The Brown-Forman GTR team is also focusing on digital retail communication. At TFWA Asia Pacific, the team introduced partners to an updated shelving unit featuring dynamic digital content from

Jack Daniels. According to Laura Smith, Global Marketing Manager GTR for Jack Daniel's, this tool offers a more reactive approach to promotional activity within duty-free shop floor spaces.

Brown-Forman is revamping "Jack Chat," its digital personalization tool introduced in 2020, for travel retail spaces. The QR code, which is being rolled out as part of future promotions on shelves, offers travelers multiple options to help them find a whisky choice to suit their needs and allows brand ambassadors to step in to engage with customers one-on-one.

## **The trinity**

At TFWA Asia Pacific, Brown-Forman celebrated the rich legacy and luxurious range of its single malt whiskies for its Asia-based customers. Among the featured products were Glenglassaugh Sandend, honored as Whisky of the Year, The Glendronach 10 Years Old, Benriach Smoky Quarter Cask, Benriach Triple Distilled 10 Years Old, as well as Benriach Triple Distilled 25 Years Old, all travel retail exclusives.

Master Blender Dr Rachel Barrie told *GTR Magazine* that Benriach, Glenglassaugh and Glendornach are the trinity of the Brown-Forman super-premium range. Produced by three very different distilleries, they represent the Scottish landscape - the coast, the valley and the mountain. According to Barrie, each product reflects different consumer profiles and their varied whisky preferences.

"Our biggest focus is going to be Benriach; it's arguably the truest of all the Speyside distilleries, a fruity rich malt with added peat smoke for one month and triple distillation," she says. "For travel retail we have a 25YO and a 40YO too, created through unique triple distillation experimentation. We want to have an aged spectrum for GTR, which needs to offer something rarer. With an eclectic distillation we can afford to do this."

In Singapore, Brown Forman launched its ultra-premium Benriach 1966 Cask Aged 50 Years, reflecting the unparalleled craftsmanship and rarity of this exceptional whisky which is priced at £25,000 (RRP). Five of the 37 bottles are destined for the GTR channel.

## **Ongoing support**

Woodford Reserve represents another key brand pillar in Brown-Forman's portfolio, further exemplifying the company's ongoing premiumization strategy and increasing focus on unique luxury editions.

The Woodford Reserve Distillery Series and Master's Collections, both limited editions, are still relatively new to GTR. To support their ongoing introduction, Brown-Forman is leveraging Woodford Reserve Sensory Lounge bar activations. These experiential spaces have been strategically placed in major international airports, including New York, Los Angeles and Paris. The most recent addition to this global network of activations was at Istanbul Airport in December 2023, further expanding the brand's visibility in key travel hubs

These airport bar activations can be adapted to a large bar footprint with input from the city's cocktail bar partner, for example a bespoke serve interpretation for an Old Fashioned, or a smaller footprint activation with brand ambassadors serving travelers from the Woodford Reserve Master's Collection, as the company moves this activation to further global airport locations.