

# On location: The Macallan partners with Avolta in luxury boutique at London Heathrow T5



Celebrating The Macallan's new boutique: Edrington Regional Managing Director - Global Travel Retail, Jeremy Speirs, Fred Creighton Avolta's CEO for the UK & Ireland, and Fraser Brown, Retail Director Heathrow Airport at an exclusive launch event on May 7

The Macallan has unveiled its latest travel retail boutique concept at London Heathrow Airport Terminal 5, in partnership with Avolta and Heathrow, where the single malt whisky brand is targeting high net worth individual (HNWI) travelers. GTR Magazine was on location for the launch event.

The luxury-pitched store represents a new chapter for The Macallan at Heathrow. It replaces the brand's first stand-alone boutique, which opened in 2019 in the upstairs retail area at T5 and now on the ground floor with several luxury brands as neighbors, is an upgrade in size, positioning and customer service offer.



Located right in the heart of Terminal 5 - Heathrow's busiest terminal - the luxury boutique brings the spirit and atmosphere of The Macallan's home in Speyside, Scotland, directly to travelers

Designed in collaboration with internationally acclaimed architect Jamie Fobert, the 84-square-meter boutique brings to life The Macallan's new experiential retail concept, 'Nurtured by Nature'.

The space is themed around thoughtful craftsmanship and delivers an immersive, multisensorial experience - from the sustainable materials used in the fixtures and fittings to the sensorial and tech-driven personalization iPad service that invites guests to discover the right whisky product for them.

Design touches for the store interior include a flowing wave-like wall paying homage to the brand's Speyside distillery's distinctive undulating roof, while a striking copper wall displaying rare releases evokes the curiously small stills that The Macallan uses on its estate.



The store opening underlines The Macallan's continued dedication to engaging with global shoppers and delivering standout experiences in travel retail



Behind the till bar area, a textured Albariza stone wall nods to the fertile soil of Jerez, Spain, birthplace of the sherry used to season the brand's oak casks. Throughout, botanical-inspired merchandising, including olfactory features such as aroma bells, further strengthens the boutique's connections to the natural world.

Edrington Regional Managing Director - Global Travel Retail, Jeremy Speirs, commented, "Opening our new boutique at Heathrow Terminal 5 marks a major milestone for The Macallan, reinforcing our global growth ambitions and commitment to elevating the retail experience in ultra-premium spirits. Heathrow's status as Europe's premier travel hub, as well as our close, strategic partnerships with London Heathrow and Avolta, make it the ideal location to showcase our brand's rich heritage, exceptional quality, and craftsmanship. We are proud to offer an immersive and memorable experience, enabling travelers to creatively connect deeply with the unique spirit and story of The Macallan in a space which offers a strong emotional link to the brand's home in Speyside."

### **Luxury strategy**

"This is a journey we've been on for six years now," Speirs told GTR Magazine. "Fraser (Brown) and Fred (Creighton) took a big risk with us in 2019 as the first stand-alone spirits brand in Heathrow and now, [with the new store], we've proven our worth. It's a better space. For us it feels entirely natural to have [the luxury] neighbors that we do downstairs," he said.

Heathrow is an important retail destination for the brand, said Speirs. "We look at a few things in the airport, we look at the demographic and number of passengers, and we look at the adjacencies as a big part. So, we do very much position ourselves as a luxury single malt brand. This opening represents a wider piece about global brand positioning. This is the first travel retail boutique and includes the widest range of both core and prestige products available anywhere in our retail portfolio (apart from at the estate).



An elevated personalization offer is a key part of the customer service in-store

### **Speyside landscaping**

For Speirs the store was a statement of intent: “We really wanted to bring our Speyside home to life here in the boutique. We are bringing the landscape to our customers; this is the ‘nurtured by nature’ strategy for retail and more will follow with a similar look and feel because we are trying to create consistency in our brand.”

“We are surrounded by nature up there [in Speyside] and sustainability is an important part of our strategy as a brand. We want to emulate that space and bring it out in the world for our customers,” he explained.

According to Speirs, consumers don’t see channels, they see brands. “Whether they are someone who already drinks The Macallan or if they aspire to drink The Macallan from seeing it at a restaurant or a bar, they will hopefully see our brand and this wonderful store environment here at Heathrow Airport, and come in to find out more,” he said.

Fraser Brown, Retail Director at Heathrow added, “We are delighted to welcome The Macallan’s new boutique to Terminal 5, a space that not only elevates our luxury retail offering but also brings a sense of place and storytelling that resonates with international travelers. As the UK’s international gateway, Heathrow is where global journeys begin and end, and The Macallan is bringing the spirit of their Scottish home to life for passengers from all over the world. This opening reflects our continued ambition to curate truly world-class experiences for every passenger who passes through the airport.”

Fred Creighton, Avolta’s CEO for the UK & Ireland, commented, “We are very pleased to celebrate

the opening of The Macallan Boutique at Heathrow Airport Terminal 5, in collaboration with Edrington and Heathrow Airport. We've created an immersive environment that rewrites luxury travel retail, where storytelling, innovation and craftsmanship come together, offering travelers exclusive whiskies, sensory-led experiences and bespoke lifestyle accessories. We're excited to welcome guests to discover and connect with The Macallan in this truly unique setting."

### **Artistic collaborations**

Unique to Heathrow, the boutique also showcases the result of several artistic collaborations which add extra layers of depth to its sense of place. 'The Botanic Series' is a triptych of pieces created exclusively by renowned London-based artist Juli Manara.

This triptych, approached with a playful and surrealistic lens, reflects the artist's interpretation of the natural woods and wildlife surrounding The Macallan Estate. Hundreds of carefully captured images have been combined and transformed into a whimsical composition where the distillery's architecture harmoniously blends with the Highland landscape. The warm autumnal hues evoke an intrinsic connection between the estate's vibrant nature and the rich, natural color of The Macallan whisky.

The Macallan also commissioned Mimi Xu Studio to create a bespoke soundscape - 'Connecting Our Home to the World' - using field recordings of natural sounds recorded at The Macallan Estate.

The new boutique offers passengers an engaging, sensory-led retail experience supported by the brand's expert consultants, who will help them understand their own whisky preferences. This can be delivered at a dedicated seating area for 1:1 engagement with shoppers, where samplings can be conducted, along with product presentations. This journey of discovery is also aided by an interactive digital 'Discover Your Expression' tool, which recommends different expressions of The Macallan based on personal taste preferences and consumption occasions.

Shoppers at the Heathrow boutique can find an expanded selection of The Macallan's Prestige range, including rare whisky releases- such as TIME:SPACE Mastery, Red Collection, and certain Fine & Rare expressions as well as a curated range of lifestyle accessories, including scarves, hats, and Lalique glassware, uniquely available outside of The Macallan Estate.