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Canada's stringent new restrictions suspend Caribbean and Mexican flights, mandate quarantines

The Canadian government has suspended all flights to Mexico and Caribbean destinations until April 30 in an effort to control the spread of coronavirus variants.

On January 29, the government of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced new rules on international travel, in addition to the multi-layered approach on COVID-19 already in place. As a result, Canada's airlines have agreed to suspend all flights to and from Mexico and Caribbean countries until April 30, 2021. This went into effect as of January 31, 2021.

Consequently, Canadian carriers Air Transat, Air Canada, WestJet, and Sunwing have cancelled their services to all Caribbean destinations and Mexico. The airlines will be allowed to operate repatriation flights over the next two weeks to return their customers to Canada.

Region reacts

Both Mexico and the Caribbean, which depend on Canadians for much of their tourism revenue, voiced strong reservations about the flight cancellations.

Mexico's federal government has warned that Canada's three-month suspension of flights to Mexico could cause a "profound economic crisis."

Caribbean countries – a destination favored by Canadian tourists—are also protesting the decision.

The Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association (CHTA) pointed out that the region has one of the world's lowest rates of Corona-virus (COVID-19) infections, hospitalizations and death.

"The Caribbean's economic survival is in serious jeopardy as tourism-dependent economies struggle with the consequences of the pandemic and travel restrictions being imposed and considered by its most popular countries of origin for travel," said the organization in a statement.

The order also limits other international flights to four airports -- Montréal-Trudeau International Airport, Toronto Pearson International Airport, Calgary International Airport, and Vancouver International Airport. Passengers on these flights need to show proof of a negative pre-departure COVID-19 test.

Quarantines in force

Further exacerbating the travel restrictions, the new regulations also require incoming passengers to quarantine at designated hotels for three days as they await test results and isolate at government facilities if the tests are positive.

All travelers arriving in Canada will need to reserve a room in a Government of Canada-approved hotel for three nights at their own cost, and take a COVID-19 molecular test on arrival at their own cost. The government estimates this cost could be more than $2,000.

Land entry restrictions

The Government of Canada says that it will also introduce a 72-hour pre-arrival testing requirement (molecular test) for travelers seeking entry in land mode, with limited exceptions such as for commercial truckers.

France closes Caribbean borders

In related news, the French government suddenly closed borders of many of its overseas territories across the Caribbean to all but essential travel in an effort to curtail the spread of COVID-19.

In the Caribbean, the closures include St. Barts, St. Martin, Martinique and Guadeloupe.

The indefinite border closings took effect on February 3.

TSA to enforce face coverings at all checkpoints

As of Feb. 2, the Transportation Security Administration will require all travelers to wear face coverings at U.S. airport screening checkpoints. Passengers who fail to comply with face covering requirements may be denied entry or boarding, as well as subject to fines.

"TSA will fully comply with the President's Executive Orders, CDC guidance, and the DHS National Emergency determination to ensure healthy and secure travel across all transportation sectors. This will help prevent further spread of COVID-19 and encourage a unified government response," TSA official Darby LaJoye said in a Twitter posting.

The new mandate follows the order issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Jan. 29 requiring face coverings on airplanes and all public transportation, strengthening an executive order signed earlier by President Joe Biden. The CDC order echoes a requirement already in place by major airlines

TFWA moves Hainan Special Edition to June 21

Tax Free World Association has moved the TFWA Asia Pacific Hainan Special Edition event by a month, from its original date of May 10-13, to June 21-24. The Association said the move was made "following consultation with its local partners and assessment of the situation for regional and global travel."

The decision was taken by the TFWA Board to allow maximum opportunity for delegates in Asia and beyond to participate in the event, said TFWA. The event has generated considerable interest from brands, retailers and other industry stakeholders, said the announcement.

In addition to an on-site event in Hainan – the most dynamic market in travel retail today as evidenced by new store openings in Hainan by Dufry (see page 3) and DFS (page 4) with local partners this week – delegates will be able to take part from a distance via streamed content and virtual TFWA One2One meetings.

"We believe that the change of dates makes sense given the evolution of the health and travel situation around the world. We know that there is great demand for a live event that meets the current needs and budgets of brands and buyers, and we are confident that Hainan is the perfect venue for such an event. The new date will also allow delegates to visit the many new retail developments in Hainan, both in Sanya and Haikou. The excitement around these new ventures will add even more of a sense of occasion to what I'm sure will be a very welcome return to our event program," said **TFWA President Jaya Singh.**

TRAVEL MARKETS INSIDER

More high-profile speakers sign on for Summit of the Americas Knowledge Hub

The International Association of Airport and Duty Free Stores (IAADFS) and South American Duty Free Association ASUTIL have unveiled additional speakers for the Summit of the Americas – A Virtual Experience, which takes place on April 5-9, 2021.

The new speakers, who will participate in keynote addresses and panel sessions each day at the virtual Knowledge Hub, will analyze the short- and medium-term outlook for travel in the Americas, offer consumer views of the channel and assess how the economic situation for the region is likely to shape up post-crisis.

The all-digital Summit is being organized by IAADFS and ASUTIL in partnership with *The Moodie Davitt Report*.

3Sixty Duty Free Chief Operations Officer **Alex Anson** will represent the Miami-based airport, airline and omnichannel retailer in a retailer panel on day one.

Duty Free Americas CEO **Jerome Falic** and IGL Vice President **Justin Guay** will discuss the future for the border store channel in the Americas (in a session also featuring Neutral CEO **Marcelo Montico**, already named).

SMT Duty Free Executive Vice President **Eddie Ferenczi** will discuss the prospects for industry recovery in the Caribbean market, while, separately, Marshall Retail Group (a WHSmith company) Chief Development Officer **Roderick McOwan** will join a session to talk about the opportunities to grow the travel essentials and speciality retail business in North America.

A range of speakers, including Servy (formerly Grab) CXO **Jeff Livney** and Spark Business Services Group Founder and CEO **Heidi van Roon**, will address the theme of blending humanization and digitalisation in the post-COVID world.

On the brand side, Bacardi Global Travel Retail Global Head of Marketing **Ignacio Vázquez** will speak about driving a bright future for brands in the channel.

Latin American & Caribbean Air Transport Association (ALTA) Executive Director & CEO **José Ricardo Botelho** will offer a view of the future from the airline perspective.

The economic outlook for Latin America will be presented by respected Argentinian economist **Carlos Melconian**.

Olivier Ponti, VP Insights at leading travel analytics company ForwardKeys, will discuss the prospects for travel recovery across the regional market.

The event will also feature insights about the views of the consumer in the new world of travel. Influential US travel website and blog The Points Guy will be represented by Executive Editorial Director **Scott Mayerowitz**, while J.D. Power Travel Practice Lead **Michael Taylor** will reveal the latest data from the company's North America Airport Satisfaction Study.

Visitor registration to Summit of the Americas – a Virtual Experience is free to all travel retailers, airport companies and exhibitors and is open at the official event website: virtualamericassummit.com.

For more information on the event, please visit virtualamericassummit.com or contact Irene Revilla (Irene@MoodieDavittReport.com) / Steven Antolick (info@2021summitoftheamericas.org)

DFNI Americas Awards to take place at virtual IAADFS/ASUTIL Summit to honor positive initiatives through the crisis

The DFNI Travel Retail Americas Awards will take place on Wednesday, April 7, as part of the **Summit of the Americas.**

The 2021 Summit of the Americas is hosted by **IAADFS** & **ASUTIL**, and will be held as a virtual event co-organized by *The Moodie Davitt Report* and **FILTR**.

Organized by *DFNI magazine* to highlight travel retail excellence within key regions of the global travel retail market, the 2021 DFNI Americas Awards will recognize achievements across North, Central and South America. The awards will be presented in a fully virtual ceremony during the virtual Summit of the Americas.

The award categories encompass retailer operators, airports and brands, judged by a panel made of independent industry experts. The awards are open to all companies working in duty free and travel retail across the Americas.

Although the awards program normally celebrates the best in travel retail, this year *DFNI* has launched a special edition that will focus on the positives to emerge from 2020.

DFNI-Frontier Sales Director Felix Barlow commented: "We are pleased and proud to continue the long association of the DFNI Americas Awards with the IAADFS/ASUTIL Summit of the Americas. We are grateful to both associations for their ongoing partnership and support and we look forward to recognizing the achievements of the industry of the past 12 months at the special virtual Summit of the Americas."

Special categories for 2021

Airports, retailers and suppliers have been forced to adapt and survive through the coronavirus crisis. *DFNI* has introduced special categories for 2021 to recognize how travel retail stakeholders have transformed.

DFNI-Frontier Editor Kapila Ireland explains: "*DFNI* has developed special categories for this year in light of the unprecedented challenges that businesses have faced. This year we have chosen to celebrate the companies, teams and people that have made a real difference – whether it is in support of the industry, within their organizations or to the community. We also hail the hero products that have made an impact with consumers in the travel retail arena despite the challenges the sector has faced."

Ireland adds: "Perhaps your business has stepped up its commitments to sustainability, provided the community with PPE or medical supplies, or maybe you have adapted in a way that prevented job losses or even win new business. We feel these initiatives should be applauded considering the extraordinary circumstances of the past year."

Categories for 2021 include the new *Exceptional Achievement by a Retailer* awards, which will honor activities by retailers operating in each channel; the *Team of the Year* award; and the *Hero Product of the Year* awards, across all major categories.

For this year, DFNI's *Airport in the Americas with the Most Supportive Approach to Retail*, *Americas Supplier of the Year* and *Americas Travel Retailer of the Year* awards will hail those companies that have been an example to the travel retail industry in their support of staff, partners and to the wider business.

Entries are now open. Find out more on our website.

The 2021 DFNI Americas Awards will close on Friday, February 26, 2021.

For entry and event logistics enquiries contact: Emma Parslow, emma.parslow@emap.com. For sponsorship opportunities contact felix.barlow@dfni-frontier.com

DUFRY

TRAVEL MARKETS INSIDER

Dufry and Hainan Development Holdings open first shop at Haikou's Mova Mall in Hainan

The first shop of the collaboration between Dufry and Hainan Development Holdings (HDH) opened on January 31, 2021 at the Mova Mall in the city-center of Hainan's capital Haikou in China.

The opening of the new Mova Mall duty free shop represents Dufry's first involvement in a duty free operation in mainland China and is an important entry point in the attractive Hainan market. The opening was timed to coincide with the Chinese Spring festival, which is an important travel, holiday and shopping period.

The new downtown duty free shop called GDF Plaza, Global Duty Free Plaza, offers customers an attractive selection of internationally renowned brands and local premium labels covering all core categories such as perfume & cosmetics, food and confectionery, wine & spirits and sunglasses.

The store also offers Dufry's online reserve and collect service preorder system.

The opening is the first phase of the collaboration within the Mova Mall complex, with further openings planned in Q3, 2021 and in the first quarter 2022.

The full complex will span over two buildings, Aquarius and Capricorn, of the Mova Mall and will offer visitors an extraordinary shopping experience across 38,920 square meters of retail space once fully completed.

For the second and third opening phases, an additional range of top luxury and lifestyle brands has been engaged allowing to further extend the product offer to reach over 350 brands, reports Dufry.

Mova Mall is a major tourism and shopping destination in Haikou's city center, featuring a vast leisure offer of shopping, dining and entertainment facilities, as well as over 2,500 luxury hotel rooms in walking distance. The Mova Mall complex welcomed 22 million visitors in 2019, and visitors from mainland China can buy duty free items up to 100.000 RMB (US$14,000) per year.

Dufry's involvement in Mova Mall duty free shop is the first project in the strategic cooperation agreement signed earlier this year between Dufry and Hainan Development Holdings to develop opportunities in Hainan's travel retail market. In addition to the supply of global brands, Dufry will share its global experience in travel retail with HDH.

Julian Diaz, Dufry Group CEO, commented: "We are proud to see the first shop of our collaboration with Hainan Development Holdings now welcoming customers, who enjoy shopping in this attractive environment offering unique experiences.

"The combination of Hainan Development Holding's in-depth understanding of the local market with Dufry's global duty free expertise, customer behavior insights and access to all the renowned global brands creates a unique combination of skills contributing to the successful development of this promising business.

"We are looking forward to continue our collaboration with HDH and identify further duty free opportunities in the fast-growing Hainan market."

The partnership with Hainan Development Holdings is in line with Dufry's growth strategy in Asia and builds on the company's existing and long-standing footprint in China. Dufry operates travel retail businesses in China since 2008, and manages duty-paid shops at the Shanghai Hong Qiao and Chengdu Airports. Dufry's presence in Greater China also extends to Hong Kong and Macau.

A welcome sight as shoppers fill the new duty free shop opened in Hainan's Mova Mall by Dufry and Hainan Development Holdings on Jan. 31.

IATA: 2020 worst year in aviation history

2020 was the worst year in history for air traffic demand, according to the full-year global passenger traffic results from the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

Revenue passenger kilometers (RPKs) fell by 65.9% compared to the full year of 2019, by far the sharpest traffic decline in aviation history. Forward bookings have also been falling sharply since late December.

International passenger demand in 2020 was 75.6% below 2019 levels. Capacity, (measured in available seat kilometers or ASKs) declined 68.1% and load factor fell 19.2 percentage points to 62.8%.

Domestic demand in 2020 was down 48.8% compared to 2019. Capacity contracted by 35.7% and load factor dropped 17 percentage points to 66.6%.

December 2020 total traffic was 69.7% below the same month in 2019, little improved from the 70.4% contraction in November. Capacity was down 56.7% and load factor fell 24.6 percentage points to 57.5%.

Bookings for future travel made in January 2021 were down 70% compared to a year-ago, putting further pressure on airline cash positions and potentially impacting the timing of the expected recovery, says. IATA.

IATA expects 2021 traffic to improve to around half of what it was in 2019. IATA's baseline forecast for 2021 is for a 50.4% improvement on 2020 demand that would bring the industry to 50.6% of 2019 levels. However, there is a severe downside risk if more severe travel restrictions in response to new variants persist.

Should such a scenario materialize, demand improvement could be limited to just 13% over 2020 levels, leaving the industry at 38% of 2019 levels.

"Last year was a catastrophe. There is no other way to describe it. What recovery there was over the Northern hemisphere summer season stalled in autumn and the situation turned dramatically worse over the year-end holiday season, as more severe travel restrictions were imposed in the face of new outbreaks and new strains of COVID-19," said Alexandre de Juniac, IATA's Director General and CEO.

"Optimism that the arrival and initial distribution of vaccines would lead to a prompt and orderly restoration in global air travel have been dashed in the face of new outbreaks and new mutations of the disease. The world is more locked down today than at virtually any point in the past 12 months and passengers face a bewildering array of rapidly changing and globally uncoordinated travel restrictions," said de Juniac.

See IATA's breakdown of international air travel by regions on page 6.

TRAVEL MARKETS INSIDER

DFS and Shenzhen Duty Free Group bring “The World in a Day” to first phase of new retail development in Hainan

Celebrating “The World in a Day,” DFS Group and partner Shenzhen Duty Free Group inaugurated the first phase of their new downtown duty free retail complex in Haikou Mission Hills, Hainan.

The opening ceremony took place on January 31.

Phase One of the new store offers an immersive tour of “The World in a Day,” incorporating elements from DFS gallerias in locations from Venice and Paris to Sydney and Macau. Customers will be able to choose from an initial selection of categories including fashion, beauty, watches and jewelry, with more product assortments to be added in subsequent phases.

The complex, located within one of Hainan’s largest and most popular leisure resorts, will be completed in phases over the next two years. It will eventually span more than 30,000 square meters and boast, among other highlights, the largest Beauty Hall in DFS’ global network.

The Mission Hills project is the result of one of the strongest partnerships to date in the booming Hainan duty free sector, representing more than 100 years of combined expertise in duty free retail, comments DFS.

“The collaboration between DFS and Shenzhen Duty Free provides an unparalleled opportunity for visitors to Hainan to experience international luxury retail in one of China’s most popular holiday destinations,” said Benjamin Vuchot, DFS Group Chairman and CEO. “We look forward to creating a new world of exciting products and experiences for customers in Hainan.”

About Shenzhen Duty Free

Founded in 1980, Shenzhen State-Owned Duty Free Commodity Group is the first wholly state-owned enterprise in China to operate duty free commodities approved by the State Council. It is mainly engaged in the retail business of duty free goods at ports, as well as the business of property management, modern logistics distribution and commercial trade. Currently it operates more than 40 retail stores directly, covering eight ports and seven off-site duty free shops in Hainan, and other locations.

DFS Group and partner Shenzhen Duty Free Group inaugurated the first phase of their new downtown duty free retail complex in Haikou Mission Hills, with a celebration of the World in a Day. Shown below: Paris and Venice.

Godiva to close all its North America stores

Godiva is closing all of its U.S. locations – another retail victim of the coronavirus pandemic -- as in-store visits for its luxury chocolate have significantly declined.

The company plans to shutter its 128 locations in North America, which includes 11 in Canada, by the end of March.

The company said in a statement that demand for in-person shopping "waned as a result of the pandemic and its acceleration of changes in consumers’ shopping behavior."

Many of the Godiva boutiques are located in shopping malls, which have been hit hard in the pandemic. Godiva will still be available online and at third party retailers, said the company.

The announcement of the closings come two years after Godiva announced an ambitious plan to open 2,000 cafes around the world by 2025. The chocolatier opened its first cafe in the U.S. in New York in April 2019.

Retail operations in Europe, the Middle East, and Greater China will continue in “formats that reflect the unique cultural preferences of those markets,” Godiva said.

Godiva has around 5,000 chocolatiers in 100 countries worldwide.

L’Occitane U.S. files Chapter 11 to fight leases

The U.S. division of French beauty products maker L’Occitane International SA has filed for bankruptcy, as it attempts to close unprofitable stores and renegotiate “burdensome” rents, which the company says “no longer reflect the market.”

The U.S. unit L’Occitane Inc., which operates 166 boutiques in 36 states and Puerto Rico, filed a chapter 11 petition last week in the U.S. Bankruptcy Court in Trenton, N.J.

The filing does not include the L’Occitane en Provence brand or any operations outside the U.S.; parent company L’Occitane International S.A. (“Group”); or any other Group subsidiaries, including ELEMIS and LimeLife.

The company is behind on $15 million in rent and seeking to shed lease obligations after the COVID-19 pandemic cut into sales.

The retailer said that the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly limited retail operations throughout the country and suppressed consumer willingness to shop in person. The company listed 29 separate properties for closing in the court papers.

The Company has filed with the Court a series of customary motions seeking to continue operating its business as usual, in-store and online. The filing said it intends to continue to pay wages and provide employee benefits, honor gift cards, as well as pay suppliers.

In letters to customers and suppliers from Yann Tanini, Managing Director of L’Occitane North America, the company said,

“To put L’Occitane in the strongest position for the future, we are taking action now to right-size our store footprint here in the U.S., which will include closing select locations.

“Rest assured, we remain committed to offering you multiple ways to access our full L’Occitane offering – at our boutiques as well as through our easy-to-use and growing online platform.”

DISTILLED SPIRITS COUNCIL OF THE UNITED STATES
TRAVEL MARKETS INSIDER

DISCUS: Pandemic leads to major shift in U.S. alcohol buying habits

There is no question that spirits sales in travel retail are suffering. But some positive news from U.S. domestic off-premise markets indicates strong consumer demand that spells optimistic potential recovery for travel retail post-COVID, particularly among more premium brands.

The pandemic's devastating impact on the U.S. hospitality industry in 2020 resulted in major shifts in consumer buying behaviors and innovative relief measures. These changes are expected to boost economic recovery, modernize the alcohol marketplace and increase consumer convenience for years to come, according to the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS).

"Tariffs and the pandemic left a wake of destruction in the hospitality industry in 2020," said DISCUS President and CEO Chris Swonger. "Permanently enacting marketplace modernizations introduced in response to COVID-19, from online delivery to cocktails-to-go, will aid in the recovery of restaurants, bars and craft distilleries."

Even with the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. spirits industry experienced solid sales growth in 2020, with strong off-premise sales at liquor stores offsetting weak on-premise sales amid nationwide restaurant and bar closures and restrictions.

Supplier sales in the United States were up 7.7% in 2020 to a total of $31.2 billion, while volumes rose 5.3% to 251 million 9-liter cases. Overall, total beverage alcohol sales by volume grew 3%.

Off-premise sales were up 18%; on-premise sales were down 44%; **and sales at global travel retail outlets dropped to nearly zero.**

At the start of the pandemic in April, U.S. restaurants and bars lost 5.8 million jobs – almost one out of every two jobs, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Through December 2020, 2.3 million jobs have not been recovered.

Swonger pointed out that governors across the nation moved quickly in response to COVID-19, issuing temporary measures such as cocktails to-go and expanding delivery options. Now, state legislatures are pressing forward to make many of these effective relief measures permanent.

To date, 18 states have filed legislation to make cocktails to-go permanent. Legislation has also been filed in some states to permit direct-to-consumer shipping of spirits, which was expanded in eight states during the pandemic to support craft distillers who were forced to shut down their tasting rooms and tours.

U.S. spirits consumers gravitated to super premium products

Most relevant to travel retail, the DISCUS report shows that the strongest growth took place from higher-end, super-premium brands.

"The increase in spirits sales revenue reflects consumers' willingness to spend a little extra on super-premium spirits during the past year since they were not traveling, going on vacations or dining out as often," said DISCUS Chief Economist David Ozgo, noting that sales of super-premium spirits represented 40% of revenue growth.

"We saw a renewed interest in home bartending as people stocked their bars with a range of spirits categories to experiment with new drink recipes and create craft cocktails at home."

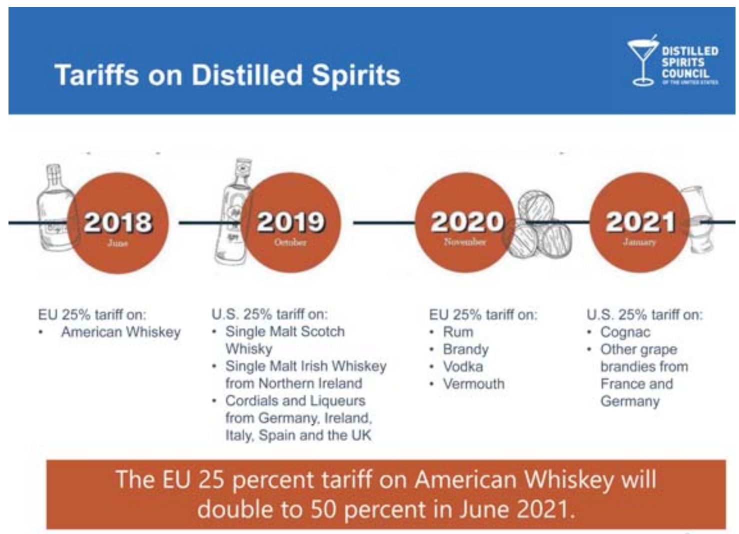
Tariffs hurt U.S. spirits exports

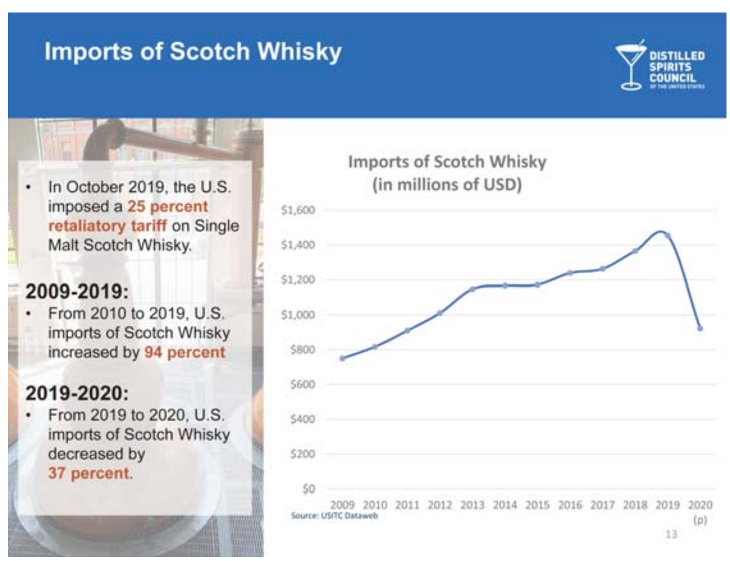
Christine LoCascio, DISCUS Chief of Public Policy, reported that retaliatory tariffs imposed on U.S. spirits as a result of unrelated trade disputes continue to stunt U.S. export growth.

Since the EU's imposition of a 25% tariff on American Whiskey in 2018, the value of American Whiskey exports to the UK and EU have decreased 53% and 38%, respectively. In June 2021, the EU tariffs on American Whiskey will automatically increase to 50%.

LoCascio stated that U.S. retaliatory tariffs on certain imported spirits have had a similar harmful effect, including a 37% decline in U.S. imports of Scotch Whiskies since the imposition of a 25% tariff on Single Malt Scotch Whisky in October 2019.

DISCUS' number one legislative priority in 2021 on the federal level is to secure an immediate suspension of tariffs on all distilled spirits.





2020 Key Spirits Category drivers of sales growth in the U.S. included:

*American Whiskey sales up 8.2% or $327 million to $4.3 billion; Rye Whiskey was up 16.9% or $40 million, reaching $275 million;

*Tequila/Mezcal sales up 17.4% or $587 million to $4.0 billion; Mezcal up 7% or $19 million totaling $124 million;

*Cognac sales up 21.3% or $413 million to $2.4 billion; and

*Pre-mixed cocktails sales, driven by spirits ready-to-drink (RTD) products, up 39% or $137 million to $489 million.

TRAVEL MARKETS INSIDER

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Worst year for aviation IATA reports:
2020 international air passenger market

IATA reports that international passenger demand in 2020 was 75.6% below 2019 levels. Capacity, (measured in available seat kilometers or ASKs) declined 68.1% and load factor fell 19.2 percentage points to 62.8%.

A breakdown by region follows.

North American airlines' full year traffic fell 75.4% compared to 2019. Capacity dropped 65.5%, and load factor sank 23.9 percentage points to 60.1%. December demand was down 79.6% compared to the same month a year-ago, a pick-up over an 82.8% drop in November reflecting a holiday surge.

Latin American airlines had a 71.8% full year traffic decline compared to 2019, making it the best performing region after Africa. Capacity fell 67.7% and load factor dropped 10.4 percentage points to 72.4%, by far the highest among regions. Traffic fell 76.2% for the month of December compared to December 2019, somewhat improved from a 78.7% decline in November.

Asia-Pacific airlines' full-year traffic plunged 80.3% in 2020 compared to 2019, which was the deepest decline for any region. It fell 94.7% in the month of December amid stricter lockdowns, little changed from a 95% decline in November. Full year capacity was down 74.1% compared to 2019. Load factor fell 19.5 percentage points to 61.4%.

European carriers saw a 73.7% traffic decline in 2020 versus 2019. Capacity fell 66.3% and load factor decreased 18.8 percentage points to 66.8%. For the month of December, traffic slid 82.3% compared to December 2019, an upturn over the 87% year-to-year decline in November reflecting pre-holiday momentum that was reversed toward the end of the month.

Middle Eastern airlines' annual passenger demand in 2020 was 72.9% below 2019. Annual capacity fell 63.9% and load factor plummeted 18.9 percentage points to 57.3%. December's traffic was down 82.6% compared to December 2019, improved from an 86.1% drop in November.

African airlines' traffic fell 69.8% last year compared to 2019, which was the best performance among regions. Capacity dropped 61.5%, and load factor sank 15.4 percentage points to 55.9%, lowest among regions. Demand for the month of December was 68.8% below the year-ago period, well ahead of a 75.8% decline in November. Carriers in the region have benefitted from somewhat less severe international travel restrictions compared to the rest of the world.

Beam Suntory to establish Global Headquarters in New York City in 2022

Beam Suntory announced that it will establish its global headquarters in New York City in mid-2022.

The company will relocate most Executive Leadership Team positions, its global Brand House organization, and select global corporate function roles to space at 11 Madison Avenue in Manhattan. The company's current headquarters in Chicago will remain home to its North America business unit and certain corporate positions.

"As one of the world's greatest global cities, New York will provide a unique environment to help us accelerate our premiumization strategy and growth plans. We see excellent opportunities to immerse our company and global brand building efforts more deeply in New York's vibrant restaurant, bar and consumer environment, what we call the Gemba," said Albert Baladi, President & CEO of Beam Suntory.

The company has entered into a long-term lease agreement for approximately 100,000 square feet of space at 11 Madison Avenue, which will also serve as a joint office with Beam Suntory's parent company, Suntory Holdings. The company expects to open the New York office next year following design and build-out of the space.

In addition to Beam Suntory's North America headquarters in Chicago, which will remain the company's largest global office, the company has a strong presence in Tokyo and also has offices in global cities such as Shanghai, Singapore, Sydney, Madrid, Frankfurt, London, Delhi and Los Angeles.