TRAVEL MARKETS INSIDER

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The Duty Free at Peace Bridge opens with new ownership in Fort Erie, Canada



The grand opening of the new The Duty Free at Peace Bridge on October 15.

One of the most important Canadian land border duty free stores has gotten a new lease on life, as The Duty Free at Peace Bridge celebrated its grand opening on October 15.

The business came under new ownership on June 1, 2026, after the previous operation closed on May 31.

New owner Justin Guay, who operates three land-border duty free stores in Quebec through his family business, IGL Duty Free, brought in two well-known Canadian duty free leaders, Sherri Gidney, General Manager, and Chuck Loewen, a former general manager of Peace Bridge Duty Free, who has returned as a senior adviser, to operate what was once one of the leading duty free border stores.

Together, the team brings decades of experience in the duty free industry, along with an understanding of the role the business can play in the local economy. Since taking over, the new owners have restocked the store, improved facilities and introduced new services.

According to an article in the *Fort Erie Observer*, Loewen said that the occasion was particularly meaningful for him. He and his wife were there when the current building opened approximately 30 years ago, and he became its first general manager.

During his remarks, the *Fort Erie Observer* article said that Loewen also reflected on the partnerships that helped establish the business as an important part of the border plaza. Working with the Peace Bridge Authority and the Town of Fort Erie, the operation helped secure the municipal road now known as Duty Free Way, along with highway signage directing travelers to the store.

Guay and his team say they intend to continue working cooperatively with local, regional and border partners as the business develops.

A store transformed

Speaking to *TMI,* Gidney said that the team inherited a largely empty store when it took over in June, and has since rebuilt the merchandise selection, improved facilities, trained staff, and is developing a new food service offering.

"We changed almost everything under the new ownership," Gidney said.

The store now offers an expanded selection of wines, spirits and other products, and its souvenir and apparel assortment has grown substantially.

One of the most significant additions is a restaurant designed to operate 24 hours a day, which is set to open in November. The restaurant reflects the around-the-clock nature of the Peace Bridge crossing. The business currently employs about 40 people from the local community and plans to add 10 to 15 positions as restaurant operations expand.

While the duty free shopping remains an attraction for international travelers, the new store is designed to be appealing beyond pricing. *Continued on next page.*



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Swarovski names new Travel Retail executives

Swarovski has promoted **Isla Daw** as Head of Travel Retail, where she has succeeded **Andreea Marginean (Vantu)**, who has moved to a new role as Global Head of Wholesale.

In her six years at Swarovski, Daw was most recently Global Head of Go-To-Market and Trade Marketing. Prior to this role, Daw was the head of marketing and communications for Southeast Asia and India at Swarovski from 2020 to 2023. Before that, she also held marketing for Asia Pacific at The Body Shop and senior product manager for skincare at L'Oréal.

Martin Ortiz de Rozas has joined the company as Head of Travel Retail Americas. Ortiz de Rozas brings more than 10 years of experience from L'Oréal Travel Retail to the new position, including as Marketing Director and Brand General Manager, plus six years handling the Argentina local market. Most recently, he was Vice President Commercial Management at MSC Cruises.

Astrid Steinhaeuser has also joined Swarovski as Key Account Manager with a focus on the Caribbean and the US-Canada borders. Steinhaeuser most recently was Sales Director-Americas for International Brand Builders Inc.

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The Duty Free at Peace Bridge opens with new ownership *Continued from page 1.*



Executives Justin Guay, Sandy Rienzo and Chuck Loewen celebrate the Grand Opening of The Duty Free at Peace Bridge.

Gidney said the goal is to offer a broader product selection, convenient service and a comfortable place for travelers to stop before continuing their journeys.

The company is also working toward introducing online ordering with convenient pickup. The dutyfree.ca website, acquired as part of the tender process, is expected to be redeveloped to support brand awareness and services such as click-and-collect.

Montreal-based marketing agency Haus of Park has been engaged to help develop the store's branding, messaging and marketing approach. Plans also include promotional campaigns aimed at American football fans and other travelers, with promotions planned through the Christmas season.

The new owners are also drawing on experience from their Quebec locations. IGL received the Frontier Award for DFNI Border, Downtown or Non-Airport Retailer of the Year in 2022, recognition the team hopes to build on in Fort Erie.



Their goal is to bring the same emphasis on service, quality and customer experience to the Peace Bridge location.

Changing border travel

The reopening comes as cross-border travel patterns have been affected by political tensions between Canada and the United States.

Nevertheless, the new owners remain optimistic about the future of cross-border travel and the longstanding relationship between Fort Erie and Buffalo.

Rather than focusing on the past, the team is concentrating on the location's future.

For Guay, that future includes building a business that serves travelers while contributing positively to the community where it operates.

With its expanded retail offering, restaurant, plans for additional local jobs, and a renewed focus on customer service, the new ownership hopes The Duty Free at Peace Bridge will once again become a destination for travelers and a business that Fort Erie can be proud of for years to come.

"There is no reason that The Duty Free at Peace Bridge cannot become the number one border duty free store in Canada," notes Gidney.

Sherri Gidney (left), Ashley Greaves, and Justin Guay.

INTERNATIONAL

Lagardère Travel Retail enters Munich Airport

Lagardère Travel Retail has acquired Aichinger Gastro, marking its entry into Munich Airport, Germany's second-largest airport. The acquisition adds six foodservice outlets to its German operations, extending its presence across the country's leading airport hubs.

Founded in 2003, Aichinger Gastro operates six outlets in the airside area of Munich Airport. Its portfolio brings together a range of foodservice concepts tailored to airport travelers, from coffee-focused offers to distinctive food propositions.

The acquisition marks an important step in the development of Lagardère Travel Retail's business in Germany. Already operating more than 200 outlets across nine airports, the Company has built an extensive presence in the country's airport market. Its entry into Munich complements this network, following significant business developments at Frankfurt and Düsseldorf, and further broadens its reach across Germany's leading airports.

The acquisition is also in line with Lagardère Travel Retail Germany's development plans, which aim to build on its position in German airports and pursue further growth across both travel retail and foodservice. Following the acquisition, Lagardère Travel Retail will work closely with the Aichinger family and the local management team to ensure continuity for employees, airport partners and travelers.

Joan Moreno takes key role at Ricola Travel Retail; Roberto Fernandez promoted at NITR

Ricola has appointed **Joan Moreno** as **Head of Global Travel Retail**. Based in Spain, Moreno will lead Ricola's global Travel Retail business, focusing on strengthening partnerships and developing new growth opportunities.

Moreno brings extensive international FMCG experience from his career at Nestlé, most recently as Global Commercial Development Lead for Nestlé International Travel Retail. He previously held various marketing and commercial roles in Spain and was responsible for commercial business development across more than 100 markets.

In his new role, Joan will work closely with Ann Nee Lim and Ricola's wider commercial teams to strengthen relationships with Travel Retail partners and further expand the brand's presence in the channel.

Nestlé International Travel Retail (NITR) has appointed **Roberto Fernandez** as **Commercial Development Team (CDT) Manager**, succeeding Joan Moreno, who is leaving Nestlé to head up travel retail at Riccola.

Fernandez, currently a Key Account Manager at NITR, will lead the function responsible for advancing the company's category growth agenda with retail partners, reinforcing its commitment to category leadership, shopper engagement and the long-term development of confectionery in travel retail.

The CDT function plays a central role in translating NITR's category vision into execution with retail partners. Bringing together category development, brand priorities and shopper engagement, the team focuses on strengthening visibility, driving footfall and conversion, and delivering elevated shopper experiences.

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U.S. Travel Association calls on Congress to stem $11 billion drop in international U.S. visitor spend

The U.S. Travel Association has issued a new forecast that warns America's inflation-adjusted international visitor spending is projected to fall nearly $11 billion in 2026, a 6.3% drop to $163 billion. Despite a record 2.44 billion domestic trips, total inflation-adjusted travel spending is projected to decline 0.7% to $1.35 trillion. The Association is calling on Congress to take action before the December 11 funding deadline.

Travel prices are projected to rise 7.2% in 2026, more than twice overall inflation of 3.4%. U.S. international arrivals are not forecast to recover to 2019 levels until 2030, and the U.S. share of global long-haul arrivals has fallen from 10.3% in 2019 to 7.7% in 2026 and is projected to slip to 7.1% by 2030.

Jobs and tax revenue.

Travel supports more than 15 million American jobs and generates $92 billion in state and local taxes. Following a September meeting with President Trump at the White House, travel industry leaders proposed a national goal of welcoming 100 million international visitors annually by 2030.

Achieving that goal could generate $68 billion in additional annual visitor spending and support more than 350,000 additional jobs. The projected $11 billion year-over-year spending decline represents economic activity across visitor-serving businesses; it is not a modeled jobs or tax-loss estimate.

In New York City, international visitors represented roughly half of tourism spending in 2025; all tourism supported 397,000 jobs and $7.5 billion in tax revenue. Other gateways—including Miami, Los Angeles, Orlando and San Francisco —also depend on high-spending overseas guests. Meanwhile, elevated fuel prices weigh on regional drive markets as more Americans shift toward car travel.

With a December 11 deadline looming, the U.S. Travel Association is calling on Congress to pass government funding and enact lasting protections so TSA officers and air traffic controllers receive uninterrupted pay during future funding lapses, reducing the threat of holiday airport disruptions and travel chaos in the next divided government.

In 2027, the organization is calling for Congress to reauthorize Brand USA and restore to full funding, expand visa processing and stop unnecessary visa fees, entry barriers and uncertainty, while accelerating investments in air traffic control and airport security modernization.

These steps will deliver greater value for domestic travel and the national goal of welcoming 100 million international visitors a year by 2030, they say.

"The current Congress must keep America moving this holiday season. The next Congress must help America compete," Freeman said.

"We have the opportunity to deliver a better travel experience for Americans and bring more international spending and jobs back to our communities. Standing still is not a strategy."

Competitors are gaining ground

Destination	International arrivals, 2019 → 2026	Change In International Arrivals 2019 to 2026
United States	79.4M → 67.8M	−14.6%
France	90.9M → 111.9M	+23.1%
Spain	83.5M → 106.6M	+27.7%
Japan	31.9M → 44.9M	+40.7%
World	1.47B → 1.64B	+11.7%

International overnight visitor arrivals. All 2026 figures are forecasts. U.S.: U.S. Travel Fall 2026 Forecast (Tourism Economics, October 2026). Other destinations and world: WTTC Economic Impact Research 2026 (April 2026 data).

Allianz survey finds younger travelers eager to cruise

New research from Allianz Partners highlights the appeal of cruising, particularly among younger adults. Travel insurance provider Allianz Partners finds that 60% of surveyed past cruise travelers across all age groups are likely to book another cruise within the next 12 months, with enthusiasm particularly strong among travelers ages 25–34 (72%).

Allianz notes that the findings show that travelers see value in setting sail. In fact, 76% of surveyed past cruise travelers agree that cruises offer good value for money compared with other types of vacations.

According to the Allianz survey, **c**ruising appeals to travelers with different vacation styles. Across the survey sample: 73% expressed a positive attitude toward cruising; 71% reported having taken a cruise; among adults ages 25–34, 43% say they love cruising and prefer it to other vacation types.

With 60% of surveyed past cruise travelers likely to book again within a year, the results offer a timely look at potential repeat-cruise interest as the industry prepares for 2027 departures.

Allianz Partners offers travel insurance through most major U.S. airlines, travel advisors, online travel agencies, hotels, cruise lines and directly to consumers.

"Travel protection should not feel separate from the cruise experience," said **Daniel Durazo,** Director of External Communications at Allianz Partners. "When the value is communicated clearly, it can become part of how the industry builds loyalty, supports travelers and creates a more confident path from consideration to embarkation."

Methodology

Allianz Partners conducted an online survey of 1,000 U.S. adults ages 18 and older from August 26–31, 2026. Respondents were required to have plans to travel and to have previously purchased travel insurance. Cruise-specific findings among past cruise travelers are based on responses from 712 participants.

The London Supply Group Foundation honored with international award for its Supersanitos campaign

The London Supply Group Foundation was honored with a 2026 Gold Stevie Award—one of the most prestigious international competitions in the corporate and institutional sectors—for its children's health program **Supersanitos**, carried out at the Barrio 1° de Mayo Educational Park in Puerto Iguazú, Misiones.

The official awards ceremony took place on Wednesday, October 28, in Paris. The delegation that accepted the award consisted of **Teddy Taratuty**, president of the London Supply Group Foundation; **María Taratuty**, director of the institution; **Dr. Guillermo Goldfarb**, medical coordinator of the Supersanitos campaign; and **Florencia Peña** and **Juan Cassina**, members of the team.

The Foundation won gold in the category *Corporate Social Responsibility Program of the Year in Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America*, placing the Argentine organization on par with renowned global brands that have been honored at the Stevie® Awards for their social commitment.

Supersanitos: A Model for a Community-Based Approach with Global Reach

With eight successful editions and a satellite dental campaign, Supersanitos annually coordinates the efforts of public and private healthcare professionals to provide comprehensive medical care to children and adolescents. The program takes a multidisciplinary approach to health: it combines specialized clinical care—in pediatrics, ophthalmology, and otolaryngology—with assistance in nutrition and child care.

It also incorporates vaccination programs, music therapy sessions, and workshops focused on adolescence, sexual health, and bullying prevention.

Through this approach, the initiative has established a key model of collaboration with the public sector. A strategic pillar of the program lies in clinical traceability and the systematic follow-up of detected cases, which allows for measuring the actual impact and the evolution of health indicators in the educational community year after year.

Regarding the award, **María Taratuty**, director of the London Supply Group Foundation, noted:

"Bringing this project to the international stage and receiving an award of this caliber highlights the rigorous, professional, and deeply humane work we have been carrying out for years in Puerto Iguazú. At the Foundation, we do not believe in sporadic interventions, but rather in supporting children's growth in a comprehensive manner and with real impact metrics. This Gold Stevie® not only honors our team and the medical professionals who make it possible, but also every family and teacher who trusts us."

The London Supply Foundation notes that this international award adds to an outstanding track record of accolades that the campaign has garnered nationally, including the Conciencia Award and various recognitions at the RSC (Responsabilidad Social Comunicativa) Awards. It also represents a new global achievement for the Foundation, which had previously been honored at the Frontier Awards, Charity Focus, for its community work in the country.

The London Supply Group Foundation was established in October 2008 as part of the Corporate Social Responsibility Program of the Argentine company London Supply Group, with the mission of working toward a better quality of life.









MSC Cruises and Heineken bring new Formula 1 collaboration to São Paulo

Formula 1 returned to São Paulo over the weekend of November 6-8, 2026, with MSC Cruises as title sponsor and Heineken helping to bring race weekend excitement to guests at sea.

While the cars were on track at the FORMULA 1 MSC CRUISES GRANDE PREMIO DE SAO PAULO 2026, guests sailing from Miami aboard *MSC World America* were the first to experience the excitement of race weekend alongside the enjoyment of their cruise holiday.

Heineken and MSC Cruises turned race weekend into the highlight of the voyage, with live screenings, watch parties and race-themed competitions.

As MSC Cruises and Heineken are both established Global Partners of Formula 1, they partnered to bring Formula 1 beyond the track, combining the excitement of the sport with the MSC Cruises guest journey and Heineken's focus on shared fan experiences. The collaboration also builds on a longstanding relationship between the two brands, with Heineken a trusted supplier onboard MSC Cruises' ships for many years.

In addition, an exclusive MSC Cruises, Heineken and Formula 1 limited-edition branded can will be available on board. The new Limited Edition Heineken can features a Formula 1 car and an MSC Cruises ship side by side, set against a coastal town backdrop, in Heineken's iconic green.

Guests can enjoy the can in select bars* across the MSC Cruises fleet, while fans ashore can find it in selected duty free stores* in Brazil.

It will also be served onboard *MSC World Asia*, MSC Cruises' newest flagship, when she begins sailing in the Mediterranean from December 4, 2026.

While the biggest celebrations took place on *MSC World America*, additional activities ran on selected ships across the MSC Cruises fleet, including *MSC Seascape, MSC Seashore, MSC Seaside* and *MSC World Europa*.

Following São Paulo, race-day experiences will continue across the fleet for the rest of the 2026 Formula 1 season and throughout 2027. Guests sailing on a race weekend can gather with fellow fans in sports bars, on pool decks and at other entertainment hotspots to follow the action live.

Gianni Onorato, CEO of MSC Cruises, said: "At MSC Cruises, we are always looking for new ways to enhance the guest experience through partnerships with world-class brands. We have enjoyed a longstanding relationship with Heineken as a trusted supplier onboard our ships, and we are proud to deepen that relationship through this new activity. Together with Heineken and Formula 1, we are creating engaging new experiences that bring the excitement of race weekend to life at sea, allowing guests to connect with the sport they love while enjoying unforgettable moments onboard."

Reinoud Ottervanger, Managing Director EMEA Export & GDF, said: "MSC Cruises, Heineken and Formula 1 are leaders in creating legendary experiences that inspire and excite people around the world. Our longstanding partnership with MSC Cruises is built on that shared ambition. With this limited-edition can and unique race-weekend parties, live screenings and themed activations on the open sea, we are bringing fans together and creating moments they will remember forever."

**The MSC Cruises x Heineken® x Formula 1 Limited Edition can is available in select bars across the MSC Cruises fleet from November 4, 2026 and in selected duty free stores in Brazil. Onboard race-day experiences continue through the 2026 and 2027 Formula 1 seasons. Prizes and onboard activities vary by ship.*



The new Limited Edition Heineken can features a Formula 1 car and an MSC Cruises ship side by side, set against a coastal town backdrop, in Heineken's iconic green.

Dewar's celebrates Diwali in 30 airports around the world

Bacardi launched its 2026 Diwali campaign in travel retail for Dewar's Blended Scotch Whisky, inviting travelers to 'Celebrate with the Most Celebrated' during one of the most widely celebrated festivals of the year.

From October 1 to November 30, 2026, almost 30 travel retail locations - led by Dubai, Muscat, Bangalore and Delhi, and Toronto in North America - are showcasing vibrant, limited-edition Dewar's Diwali gift packs, exclusive to travel retail and a perfect gift for whisky lovers.

At the heart of the campaign are limited-edition Diwali gift sleeves, exclusive to travel retail, for DEWAR'S 15-Year-Old, DEWAR'S 16-Year-Old and DEWAR'S 18-Year-Old. Created in partnership with an Indian design studio, the illustrated design captures the color and excitement of Diwali homes: rows of lanterns and traditional diyas (oil lamps), fairy lights and torans (door hangings) made of colorful flowers. Following its strong reception with travelers and retail partners in 2025, the collection returns for 2026 with refreshed designs.

Exclusive to travel retail, DEWAR'S 16-Year-Old is a Blended Scotch Whisky crafted through the DEWAR'S signature two -stage ageing process. Finished in sherry casks and ex-Islay casks, it reveals layers of dark fruit, honey and warm spice.

"Diwali matters deeply to more than a billion people, many of whom travel across continents to celebrate it with the people they love, and it's one of the biggest gifting moments of the year," says Darragh Ryan, Marketing Director, Bacardi Global Travel Retail. "Our invitation to 'Celebrate with the Most Celebrated' reflects what makes DEWAR'S special: 180 years of craft, more awards than any other Blended Scotch Whisky and the artistry of our seven-time World's Best Master Blender, Stephanie Macleod. With key activations in Dubai, Muscat, Bangalore and Delhi, we're giving gift-buyers every reason to get their Diwali celebrations off to a flying start."

The campaign engages travelers throughout their journey, combining digital advertising with in-store activations that invite shoppers to discover the DEWAR'S Diwali range. Activity is tailored by location, from expert brand ambassadors and tastings to gifts with purchase and interactive experiences.