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Cuban government eliminating exit visa restrictions

A “blockbuster” announcement eliminating the 51-year-old mandatory exit visit for Cubans traveling off of the island made by the Cuban government on Tuesday is being met with “euphoria” according to media reports.

Others are greeting the decree with more caution, however, as authorities will still be able to deny travel by many Cubans for reasons of defense and “national security,” according to the Associated Press. These exceptions could prevent both professionals and dissidents from traveling overseas.

But a notice published in Cuba’s Communist Party newspaper *Granma* on Tuesday said that as of Jan. 14, Cuban citizens will only have to show their passport and a visa from the country of their destination in order to travel.

Besides the exit visa, the new policy also eliminates the need for a letter of invitation from an institution or person in the destination country.

The elimination of the exit visa had been promised since last year by President Raul Castro as part of his five-year reform plan. Analysts called it the latest and biggest step in a gradual relaxation of restrictions on things like opening private small businesses, owning cell phones, staying in tourist hotels and buying and selling homes and cars, according to the AP.

A Special Report on Cuban tourism in the October issue of *Travel Markets Insider* takes a close look at the impact that U.S. travel restrictions and the Euro crisis are having on the island, where arrivals continue to be strong.

In fact, neither the 50-year-old U.S. travel ban against Cuba, nor Europe’s crippling economic crisis, have put a dent in Cuba’s tourism industry this past year.

A steady stream of Canadian tourists, and -- despite frustrating red tape, the growing number of Cuban-Americans visiting the island thanks to new U.S. regulations -- resulted in more than 2 million foreigners traveling to Cuba during the first eight months of 2012 -- up by 5.2% over the same period last year.

Please see the full story in the October/November issue of *TMI* magazine. *TMI* will present an analysis of the impact the elimination of the exit visa will have on Cuba and the surrounding islands when more information becomes available.

Wm. Grant and International Shoppes create branded lounge for elit vodka at JFK T5

William Grant & Sons teamed up with International Shoppes at New York’s JFK International Airport Terminal 5 to create a sophisticated Lounge for premium vodka elit by Stolichnaya, on October 10-13th. Designed to bring the brand to life and identify with its target audience, the activation used the opportunity to tell the unique story of elit, emphasize its exclusivity and encourage consumers to react with the brand and try a variety of cocktails.

The elit Lounge offered a premium yet utilitarian environment where its target consumers could relax, catch up on world news via media publications and iPads, enjoy a cocktail, and take advantage of a free shoe shine.

NYC elit brand ambassadors and trained bartenders were onhand to mix and offer a variety of vodka-based cocktails, while sampling

models gave out information about the brand.

elit cocktail napkins, and special cocktail menus supported the branding of the lounge and all visitors were offered a free gift of either a branded shoe horn or shoe bag. Visitors were additionally given a \$5 voucher off any purchase of two bottles of elit vodka.

“The elit Lounge offered a unique brand experience to its target audience, categorized as the Discerning Hunter and The Hunters Apprentice,” explained WGS Global Travel Retail Regional Marketing Manager Paige Parness. “These are men with entrepreneurial spirit, either paving their way or self-made with incomes from \$100-\$250k and aged from 25-54 over both categories. The Discerning Hunter has a preference for super and

ultra -premium spirits, while the Hunters Apprentice prefers vodka and beer but is following in the Discerning Hunter’s footsteps. The elit Lounge offered these consumers the perfect opportunity to relax before a flight and enjoy the premium taste of this superb vodka.”

William Grant & Sons is the distributors of Stolichnaya Vodka

Vice Vodka Icewine flies high with Singapore Airlines listing

Ultra-premium VICE Vodka Icewine has added Singapore Airlines to its growing list of clients. SAL has listed the new VICE 500ml format with gift box on board all of its flights commencing with the recent Fall 2012 program.

“We’re obviously extremely proud and honored to be featured on the Singapore Airlines program. It is a very exclusive space,” says Export Director Steven Ciccolini. “We’ve prided ourselves on crafting the world’s first and only luxurious blend of Canadian Icewine and Canadian Vodka and being recognized by one of the world’s premier air carriers is certainly gratifying.”

Jeslyn Ho, Sales & Marketing Director for DFASS Group who runs the successful Singapore Airlines program, commented, “Gifting makes up a large portion of our inflight sales.

The elegant bottle and giftbox make VICE perfect for gifting, which is ideal for Asian airline passengers.”



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Sunglasses suppliers announce short-list ahead of second category awards

The judging panel for travel retail's second Sunglasses Awards, to take place in Cannes next week, have announced the short-list of contenders for the six awards categories. (In alphabetical order)

Best new in-store environment for sunglasses

Aerofirst - Moscow Sheremetyevo
Gebr Heinemann - Oslo
IOSC/Dufry - Buenos Aires

Best standalone sunglasses concept

Everrich - Taipei
Nuance - Antalya
Gebr. Heinemann - Oslo

Innovation Award (NEW FOR 2012)

CDFG - Sanya
Hellenic Duty Free - Virtual window
IOSC/Dufry - Punta del Este VIP Lounge

Best Dedicated Sunglasses Sales Team (NEW FOR 2012)

DFS
Runway Duty Free
World Duty Free Group

Best Off-airport Retailer of Sunglasses (NEW FOR 2012)

CDFG
DFS
MSC

Sunglasses Retailer of the Year

DFS
Gebr Heinemann
Kappe Schiphof
World Duty Free Group

Executives from awards host Luxottica, fellow sunglasses suppliers Marcolin, Maui Jim and Safilo, and Martin Moodie of *The Moodie Report* made up the judging panel.

Head Judge Francis Gros (Group Travel Retail Director, Luxottica) said,

"Sunglasses has consistently performed as the fastest growing category in travel retail over the last 3 years, due in no small part to the way retailers and suppliers have consistently raised the bar in our category. The Sunglasses Awards is about recognizing such pioneering initiatives, and we look forward to welcoming our partners to the workshop and awards next week. Congratulations to all the short-listed companies."

The Sunglasses Awards 2012 is part of the agenda for Luxottica's fourth Sunglasses Category Management Workshop at the TFWA World Exhibition in Cannes - 6pm on Tuesday 23rd October 2012 at the Gare Maritime. By invitation only.

Caribbean Tourism Organization reveals new vision

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), the international agency responsible for the development of Caribbean tourism, has announced a new vision for the 30 island nations that make up its membership: "To position the Caribbean as the most desirable, year round, warm weather destination by 2017."

The CTO Board of Directors and the Council of Ministers and Commissioners of Tourism approved the vision at their meetings in St. Kitts last week. This new vision is one of the outcomes of a review of the organization conducted recently by the corporate strategy consulting group, McKinney Rogers.

"This vision helps us focus on achieving our very important objective within a realistic timeline while continuing to provide strategic leadership in tourism," said Hugh Riley, the CTO's secretary general.

In order to realize this vision, the CTO will continue to lead in the areas of sustainable tourism development, human resource development, research and information technology, membership services, communications and marketing. The organization also says that it has a renewed purpose: Leading Sustainable Tourism - One Sea, One Voice, One Caribbean.

Chivas to build new whisky distillery

Pernod Ricard's Chivas Brothers has announced its intention to build a new malt whisky distillery and has begun the planning process for a site in Speyside. The company is consulting the local community and planners regarding a location on the River Spey near Carron.

The new distillery would supply high quality Speyside malt whisky for the Chivas Brothers portfolio of blended whiskies. It will use the latest innovation and environmental expertise, such as heat recovery technology, and provide a first class working environment.

The site would also be visible from the nearby Speyside Way walking trail, so the intention is to make the external façade blend in with the surrounding riverside scene and follow vernacular codes of the region.

Chairman and CEO Christian Porta commented: "Our success in growing our brands across the world, in existing and new markets, to many historical highs means that creating new distillation capacity is a key next step for our business. This new distillery will supply high quality Speyside malt whisky for many of our blends in the years to come. This is another example of our sustained investment in our Scotch whisky operations which, combined with consistent innovation and marketing, will continue to drive the growth of our business."

The new distillery will occupy the site of the Imperial Distillery which has remained inactive since 1998 and was acquired by Chivas Brothers in 2005.

Earlier this year, Chivas Brothers announced its plans to grow its malt whisky distillation capacity by 25% by April 2013 with the re-opening of Glen Keith distillery and expansions at four existing Speyside distilleries. It also increased the capacity of The Glenlivet Distillery by 75%.



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Coty launches a “Master of Seduction” For Joop Republic in Brazil



Brazilian soap opera star Malvino Salvador and Coty's Lourdes Mejia at the Sao Paulo Business Fair in 2011.

Coty Prestige has conducted a regionalized effort for Joop in Brazil for the last two years, which is now expanding into Uruguay TR and local markets.

According to Coty Travel Retail and Export Americas Marketing Director Lourdes Mejia, Joop Homme is loved by Brazilians and ranks #7 in prestige male fragrances.

“The fragrance DNA is all about being a ‘master of seduction,’ so with this in mind we asked ourselves: How can we deliver the message in Brazilian terms?” she tells *TMI*.

“We decided to zoom in on the local masters of seduction: *up and coming soap opera actors!* The program was so successful, it is now in its second year and the POS initiative is being expanded to Uruguay local markets and travel retail. We are also using robust digital platforms though Instagrams, Facebook and Twitter,” she says.

In 2011, the launch year of the program, the Joop Homme Ambassador was Brazilian soap opera star Malvino Salvador. The campaign ran from July to September, 2011, featuring the up and coming star's image in POS materials in windows,

body displays, panels, banners and counter displays.

“Malvino Salvador was presented as Brand Ambassador for Brazil during the annual fragrance fair in Sao Paulo, Brazil that takes place in July. In addition to the trade announcement, we took advantage of the event to present the campaign to local market retailers/buyers from all over Brazil, as well as PR and Press, Journalists were invited for exclusive interviews. We also used Salvador for one-on-one interactions with distributors and sales and beauty advisors,” says Mejia.

Coty also developed a local point of sale campaign featuring Malvino, which was premiered with the department store chain Renner.

Twenty Renner doors were dressed up and featured spraying action and Malvino did a personal appearance at Renner's flagship in Sao Paulo, posing for photos and autographs with consumers and press. The campaign was also featured in Renner's Father's Day catalogue.

The results were impressive, reports Mejia: 15 Journalists attended, including TV media. The Joop Homme ambassador campaign featuring Malvino Salvador was the third best promotion in the history of the department store.

For 2012, the Joop Homme Ambassador Brazil campaign featured soap opera star Julio Rocha. The results are still being tabulated.

Bric's honors 60th anniversary

Italian leather goods brand Bric's celebrated its 60th anniversary on September 15 in the presence of 400 guests.

The entire Briccola family, their employees, sales agents, distributors, suppliers, friends, local authorities, fashion journalists and primarily over 150 customers from all over the world, celebrated this milestone anniversary. Over the past 60 years, Bric's has become one of the leading brands for luggage, a brand recognized the world over for its ability to combine tradition with innovation and practicality with elegance, says the company.

The event took place at the Villa Erba, the Visconti family's historic residence on Lake Como, where the guests had the chance to get a taste of taste Italy's culinary arts through a gastronomy themed itinerary and to visit the Luchino Visconti museum and its antique pieces of furniture.

Bric's will be exhibiting in Cannes at Riviera Village, RA7



Las Vegas Airport

Bacardi celebrates “Oaktober” Fest in airports around the world

One year after the launch of Bacardi Oakheart at the TFWA World Exhibition in Cannes, Bacardi Global Travel Retail is celebrating ‘Oaktoberfest’ in airports around the world.

To mark the occasion, travelers are being served a special cocktail – Oak & Coke– Bacardi Oakheart Rum over ice straight from a barrel and mixed with Coca-Cola – by hosts and hostesses dressed in Bavarian costumes.

The promotion also invites travelers to have their photograph taken behind a cut-out board of a Bavarian costume or at “an Oaktoberfest Hall” surrounded by the festivities.

Prominent advertising on the airports' concourses and sampling play an important role in the HPP, and include opportunities for consumers who then purchase the Oakheart Rum from one of the impressive in-store product displays to receive either a free stein glass, a T-shirt or an iPhone® case.

The Bacardi Oakheart event takes place from Las Vegas to Copenhagen and from Dublin to Antalya, says the company.



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