

SUNNY SPIRITS

Market Profile on: **SPIRITS**

From: **May 2005**

No longer relegated to the Christmas market, spirits are now essential for summer days, either on their own or mixed up in the cocktail shaker. Karina Corbett reports.

Although spirits tend to be more associated with the spirit of Christmas, trends in recent years have seen the summer months also become a popular time for spirit consumption. The increase in the number of cocktail bars has heightened our interest in more exotic infusions, so much so that cocktail recipes are a frequent feature in various newspapers and magazines nowadays and cosmopolitans, margaritas and mojitas are essential items on any modern day party menu. "There is a natural uplift in sales of spirits at Christmas," said Ann Marie Finucane, marketing manager at Grants of Ireland. "But in terms of a drink like Malibu, there's less of a skew towards Christmas. It's definitely a summer drink. Malibu encapsulates the whole Caribbean feel and would be a key summer drink. May, June, July and August – these summertime months see over 30% of Malibu sales." Finucane agrees there has been a rise in cocktail drinking in Ireland and added that this has been good for drinks like Tia Maria and Kahlua, which are ideal cocktail ingredients. Innovation has been good too for the spirits industry, as people are now tending to experiment more with traditional type drinks.

Whiskey, for instance, used to be drunk simply neat or on the rocks, whereas now a measure of Jameson is a regular addition to the cocktail shaker. People are also drinking the likes of vodka in more novel ways. Vodka and cranberry, which is an ideal summer tippie, has never been more popular and a lot of vodka can now be bought pre-flavoured. Barry Fitzwilliam Maxxium's managing director Michael Barry too says that summer is a great time of year for the drinks industry and they look forward to promoting the extensive portfolio they have for the coming months, with **Mickey Finns**, Cointreau and the Absolut range all amongst the summer sizzlers this year.

BARRY FITZWILLIAM MAXXIUM ABSOLUT VODKA

April saw the launch of the newest member of the Absolut family – Absolut Rasberri. This coincides with phenomenal sales growth for Absolut both domestically and internationally. Absolut has secured its place as the no. 2 global spirit brand and also coincides with double-digit sales growth in Ireland so far in 2005. Absolut is the ultimate in summer chic!

VLADIVAR VODKA

Vladivar Vodka is experiencing incredible sales growth in the off-trade so far in 2005. In the UK, Vladivar is the no. 2 selling vodka brand. Retailing at €17.99 it is supported by a multi million advertising campaign on Sky. Barry Fitzwilliam Maxxium are confident that 2005 will be a brilliant year for the brand.

KILBEGGAN IRISH WHISKEY

The Kilbeggan Irish whiskey brand comes from a historic Westmeath distillery, and was re-launched by the Cooley distillery in 1994. Since then, it has enjoyed particular success on the export market, especially in Germany, where Cooley says it is the No.2 Irish whiskey brand.

CONNEMARA IRISH WHISKEY

Connemara peated single malt is the only peated single malt Irish whiskey. Reviving the age-old tradition of barley kilned over peat fires, this unique product is a smooth, complex, and balanced single malt. Connemara has garnered gold medals in a number of international spirits competitions and won the Best of Irish title at the world Spirits Competition in San Francisco 2004. The Connemara range has been extended with the extraordinary Connemara Cask strength and the introduction of the newly released Connemara 12 year old.

TYRCONNELL SINGLE MALT

Now available in over 30 countries worldwide, Tyrconnell is quickly becoming an internationally distinguished brand of Irish Single Malt. Recently repackaged to reflect the premium quality, Tyrconnell is an attractive proposition to those wishing to trade up to single malt.

SOURZ

Sourz is proving to be a phenomenal success and growing since its introduction to the portfolio last year. Sourz' unique sweet and sour flavour make it a brilliant tasting shooter. The flavours (Sour Apple and Tropical Blue) and vibrant colours appeal to 18-24 year old drinkers. At only 15% ABV, it represents an increased opportunity for consumers to enjoy shots, and for you to increase sales.

TIO PEPE

The world's leading brand of sherry, Tio Pepe is synonymous with Spain and its tapas culture. Produced by Gonzalez Byass, Tio Pepe should be enjoyed chilled, served with ice. Tio Pepe is an ideal aperitif on those warm summer evenings.

COINTREAU

Cointreau epitomises summer – a cool experience on ice with a warm afterglow, surrounded by the exotic scent of oranges while maintaining its elegant French heritage. Cointreau is the perfect partner for summer cocktails, renowned for livening up a margarita, making a long drink even longer with 7UP, or the stylish party cosmopolitan cocktail.

BOLS

As the no.1 selling mixable liqueur in Ireland, Bols is at the heart of every great cocktail. Today, Bols supplies 27 high quality liqueurs to over 100 countries worldwide. The recent new bottle design is lighter in weight and features a more prominent shoulder and neck shape with a moulded grip, making it easier to use when pouring shooters or mixing cocktails. Bols Distilleries are one of the largest and oldest producers of fine spirits and liqueurs in the world, some dating back to the year 1575. Many of the unique flavours of Bols liqueurs are made with fruit juices thereby creating the ideal platform for some of the best cocktails around. The selection of flavours available from Bols is vast and include Bols Blue, Grenadine, Advoccat, Crème de Cacao, Cherry Brandy, Amaretto and many more. Among the classics, Bols Triple Sec Curacao is essential in a

cosmopolitan and Bols Crème de Cacao (brown) in a Brandy Alexander. Log on to experience the world of BOLS Liqueurs and try out one of their many delicious cocktail recipes www.bolscocktails.com

AFTER SHOCK

A hit with young adults, After Shock is one of the fastest growing speciality spirits in Ireland and a key driver in the dynamic shooter category. With 4 variants (Red, Blue, Green and Black), it is one of Ireland's favourite shooters. After Shock Black is the newest member to be introduced into the After Shock family. This new variant, red berry spice, features a hot and cold sensation on the taste buds.

JAGERMEISTER

Jagermeister, the famous German schnapps, is a huge seller in the shooter market, particularly among student trend-setters, and is growing internationally. It is a half-bitter German schnapps with a unique blend of 56 herbs and spices, so it is practically good for you! Jagermeister has recently secured itself as the number 15 global spirit and also coincides with double digit growth in Ireland in 2005. Already known for its rock music sponsorship programme, the brand is committed to connecting with customers through extensive trialling and promotion. The new Jagermeister tap machine is revolutionising the way shots should be served. This highly visible machine delivers perfectly chilled shots for high volume serving.

MICKEY FINNS

Mickey Finns has been on people's lips for over 100 years since the original Mickey Finn was operating bars in the Whiskey Row area of Chicago in the early 1900s. More recently Mickey Finn has become more famous for his great tasting range of flavoured liquor. Since slipping its way into the market in 2001 Mickey Finns has grown to be a must-stock brand for the summer months. Sour Apple and Butterscotch are now firm favourites on drinks lists across the country.

KETEL ONE VODKA

Ketel One Vodka is handcrafted in small batches by the Nolet family in Schiedam, Netherlands. Produced to a recipe that was perfected in 1691 by first generation Nolet, Joannes Nolet. Today this special vodka is still produced to this painstaking formula by the 10th Generation Nolet, Carl Nolet Sr. Ketel One is widely recognised as one of the smoothest vodkas in the world. This is the result of a complete commitment to quality by the Nolet family. Pot-distilled like a fine cognac or whiskey and then laid to rest in underground tile lined tanks. When the moment is right the vodka is bottled for shipment around the world, but only after it is personally tasted and approved by a member of the Nolet family. This commitment to quality does not come cheap, but vodka connoisseurs across the globe recognise Ketel One as a guarantee of the smoothest vodka in the world.

MARTIN MILLERS GIN THE SPIRIT OF INSPIRATION

Martin Millers Gin is a premium London dry gin. Its unique combination of quality botanical, the use of only the heart of the distillation process and pure Icelandic water creates a clean flavour with rounded edges and with an alcohol volume of 40% it is one of the few gins that can be enjoyed neat. Martin Miller's Gin forms the ideal base for cocktails, which can enhance the subtle flavours of its natural botanicals. Internationally, Martin Millers Gin was launched in 2002. It made an immediate impact and was awarded 'Spirit of the year' by the Beverage Testing Institute in Chicago, the world's largest and most powerful drinks testing institute. Launched in Ireland in 2004, Martin Millers Gin has fast become the gin brand of choice for those in the know, and is the favoured brand in a number of leading bars and restaurants across Ireland. For further information on Martin Miller's Gin call Brinkman Beverages on 012101008 or info@brinkmanbeverages.ie

MALIBU

A coconut flavoured rum based spirit, Malibu is extremely popular with both men and women. The smooth easy taste means that Malibu can be served in a variety of exciting ways – neat, on the rocks or mixed with cola or any of your favourite fruit juices such as orange, pineapple or cranberry to create a delicious taste sensation. This summer Malibu is introducing two new flavours – Malibu Mango and Malibu Pineapple. Both new products are made with exactly the same Caribbean White Rum. The new exotic flavours fit perfectly with the brand essence being easy going and perfect to enjoy with friends. These new flavours are delicious when mixed with lemonade and ice making for a refreshing and light drink perfect for summer evenings. The launch of Malibu Mango and Malibu Pineapple will be supported by a heavy weight promotional campaign and TV advertising for the brand. Distributed by Grants of Ireland, Malibu is available in major multiples at a recommended retail price of €19.49.

TIA MARIA

Tia Maria is one of the world's most luxurious and enigmatic liqueur spirits. Made with a subtle coffee flavour and a hint of vanilla and chocolate, Tia Maria is a truly exotic spirit drink with a unique velvety smoothness. Tia Maria can be enjoyed straight or on ice, or alternatively it can be mixed with chilled cola or milk for a refreshing summer taste. The almost magical quality of Tia Maria makes it a versatile liqueur spirit for any mood or occasion. Tia Maria has also recently launched Tia Maria Orange – made with the same coffee flavour with a subtle hint of orange, ideal for enjoying on a summer's evening. Tia Maria is distributed by Grants of Ireland and is available in all multiples at a recommended retail price of €22.59.

GO BIG WITH BACARDI BREEZER THIS SUMMER

Perfect for summer, Bacardi Breezer's bigger 70cl bottle with a screw top cap is the perfect partner for barbeques and parties. Available in orange, Bacardi's Breezer's biggest selling flavour and now in pineapple, the 70cl SKU has become a firm favourite with Irish consumers since its launch and is now the fastest growing segment of this market. So cash in by stocking in time for the summer season!

BORU VODKA

2005 is already proving a very successful year for Boru Vodka, with exciting off-trade promotions taking place, coupled with the ongoing expansion of the company's sales force team. Boru Vodka's recent 'Just Slightly Superior' award-winning advertising campaign has received very positive reactions from customers nationwide, winning the coveted Adshel Poster of the Year award for its quirky executions. This summer looks bright and busy for Boru Vodka, with a busy promotional calendar planned, including exciting value added offers for consumers, aimed at attracting more consumers to the vodka category. Boru Vodka is the ideal summer drink, served either with tonic or soft drink, or as a quality base for special fruity summer cocktails. Why not mix things up with Boru Vodka's unique and patented 'Trinity Pack', featuring three stacked bottles of Boru Original, Boru Orange and Boru Citrus – guaranteed to add a zest to any summer barbeque. Boru Vodka is the premium Irish vodka brand, handcrafted in small batches from pure grain and crystal pure Irish spring water. Unlike other vodkas, Boru Vodka is quadruple distilled to ensure an exceptionally smooth and pure vodka experience not to be missed.

IRISH DISTILLERS LTD CORK DRY GIN

Distilled to an original recipe dating from 1798, Cork Dry Gin is Ireland's biggest selling gin. The combination of juniper berry, lemon, lime, coriander and Cork Dry Gin's mystery ingredient give it its uniquely refreshing flavour profile; it was awarded top points in a recent tasting conducted by Wine Ireland magazine. Cork Dry Gin continued its sponsorship of the prestigious Irish Sailor of the Year awards this year, is supported by regular on and off-trade promotions, and will launch new outdoor and print advertising over the summer months, following last year's successful 'Refreshingly Attractive' campaign. The distinctive square bottle is an icon of Irish design and can probably be found in every drinks-cabinet in Ireland. Considered the quintessential summer drink, there's nothing quite like a refreshing Cork Dry Gin and tonic to hit the spot. An original ingredient in many classic cocktails, gin has recently been making a come-back in the trendy bars. It seems that classic chic is in, and it's heartening to see that it's our home-grown Cork Dry Gin that is leading this gin-chic revolution.

HUZZAR VODKA

Huzzar vodka is a top class, quality vodka made with a unique filtering process. It is icecold filtered, making it one of the smoothest and purest vodkas in the world, perfect on a hot summers day. The Huzzar tube is strong and bold, ensuring good shelf stand-out. It features the distinctive Huzzar slashes cut into the front of the tube, thus replicating the distinctive Huzzar bottle. Huzzar is perfect for creating a mouth watering cocktail like the Huzzar Cranberry Mule, Huzzar Vodka Cranberry Juice and Ginger Beer.

JAMESON

Jameson is one of Ireland's most successful brands of all time. In 2004, over 20 million bottles were sold around the world and some of this growth can be contributed to people finding new ways and occasions to drink Jameson. Party people, for example, prefer it mixed, or in a cocktail, or as an alternative refreshing choice on a summer's day - and when it comes to mixers anything goes. Some of the world's coolest and most popular cocktails like Jameson Irish Breeze and Irish Mule have been inspired by the smooth taste of Jameson, which is being enjoyed around the world.

PADDY

Paddy is Ireland's third largest selling whiskey and is the only mainstream Irish whiskey to use single malt in its blend, thus creating its uniquely rich and mellow flavour. Paddy can be consumed neat, on the rocks or as a long drink with Coke. Paddy's packaging was refreshed in 2004, and the 'rebel spirit' advertising campaign featuring Irish TV personality, Hector O'hEochagáin, generated huge interest in the brand. First distilled in 1779, the whiskey originally sold under the unlikely name, 'Cork Distilleries Company Old Irish Whiskey' until a young salesman by the name of Paddy Flaherty joined the company in 1881. Paddy was a larger than life character who became famous in his native county for his then daring innovation of sampling his potential customers, by buying a round of Paddy in each pub he visited. Over time, Paddy became synonymous with the whiskey and publicans began writing to the distillery, asking for another case of 'Paddy's whiskey'. Despite frequent differences of opinion with his employers concerning his unconventional sales techniques, the 'Paddy whiskey' name stuck so much that in 1912 the distillery owners bowed to public pressure and officially changed the name to 'Paddy Irish Whiskey'. It could only happen in Ireland.

FINCHES

Finches has just launched new eye catching livery with a contemporary look which has a unique stand out presence. The Finches mixer range are extremely competitive when compared to others in the market, selling a 1.5 litre bottle at the same price as a 1 litre bottle - competitive pricing without compromising on taste. A neck collar promotion will be on pack from early June offering consumers the chance to buy Tyrone Crystal hand-made glasses at a discount of up to 50%. An intensive advertising campaign, which was launched in October of 2004, has proved successful in rebuilding the brand and encouraging product to rapidly sell off shelf. Finches adverts are currently showing on cinema and television with bus shelter posters and 48 sheet posters used too reinforce this advertising. The flavours in the 1.5 litre mixer range are Tonic, Low Cal Tonic, Soda, White and Ginger Ale.

Source: CHECKOUT MAGAZINE - <http://www.checkout.ie>