

Kavalan unveils first 2019 launch with Concertmaster Sherry Finish

By **Mary Jane Pittilla** on September, 9 2019 | Spirits & Tobacco



The Kavalan Concertmaster Sherry Finish is double matured in Spain's finest sherry casks after ageing in refill casks

Kavalan distillery's first global release of 2019 has hit the bars and shelves in Taiwan, with a global roll-out to follow.

The Kavalan Concertmaster Sherry Finish at 40%abv is the second whisky in the Concertmaster range, double matured in Spain's finest sherry casks after ageing in the distillery's special reserve of refill casks.

Kavalan CEO Mr Lee described the whisky as highly elegant, rich and silky smooth, with notes of dark dry fruits and savory nuttiness.

He said the newly opened Kavalan Whisky Bar in Taipei had created a special cocktail for the launch of the Concertmaster Sherry Finish.

"It's based on the iconic Bond Vesper Martini, except that our head bartender Shane Lin has replaced₁

the vodka in the recipe with Concertmaster Sherry Finish. This adds fruitiness and gives it more depth and body," Mr Lee said.

Lin was inspired by the new whisky's clean, pure and well-rounded profile. The cocktail he has created is described as sharp and refreshing. Its name, Long Story Short, refers to the cocktail's effectiveness.

Master Blender Ian Chang said Concertmaster Sherry Finish underwent a two-part ageing process. The first round of long maturation in the distillery's high-quality American oak refill casks allows the purity and fruitiness of Kavalan's distillery spirit to develop, while lending the whisky its delicate aromas.

The second part involves finishing in sherry-seasoned American oak casks, which gives the whisky its complexity of layers and further brings out the depth of flavors made possible in Taiwan's unique subtropical climate.

"Just like our first Concertmaster, the finishing in sherry casks mellows out the flavors, adds depth and multiple layers, and locks in an incredible softness to the whisky," Chang said.

The first Concertmaster in the range has a Portuguese ruby port cask finish. The concertmaster is an orchestra's lead violinist and revered as the most highly skilled player on stage. Kavalan's Concertmaster Series blends and tunes the aromas and flavors in its whisky to create depth and balance, the company said.

Tasting notes

Concertmaster Sherry Finish is pale apricot in color. The nose begins with a soft bouquet of sweet vanilla and toffee accompanied in the background by subtle chocolate and layers of crème brûlée, made complex with rich, ripe dark fruits and walnut and almond nuttiness continuing onto the tongue.

The round, thick mouthfeel, dominated by a burst of this series' signature taste of tropical fruits, is balanced and lingers long on the finish.