

Kavalan barrels into first whisky bar



Kavalan's first Whisky Bar in Taipei seeks to recreate the distillery's maturation warehouses

Taiwanese whisky brand Kavalan has opened its first bar in Taipei for connoisseurs to drink whisky from the barrel.

The Kavalan Whisky Bar showcases the brand's 21-strong whisky range. The pilot trial ends August 1.

Located on Nanjing East Road in the busy Zhongshan District of Taipei, Kavalan Bar seeks to recreate the distillery's maturation warehouses.

Here, from stacked casks, you can drink whisky on tap from the barrel. Kavalan master blender Ian Chang said the idea was to promote the high quality of Kavalan's Solist range, sold in the US as Kavalan Cask Strength Series.

"On the production side, cask strength means taking a sip straight from the barrel. Drinkers can do exactly that in this bar to experience the purity and quality of our whisky. They can choose which selected cask-strength whisky they want, walk up to the cask with their glasses, and start pouring," Chang said.

The casks are lined with stainless steel to keep the whiskies in an optimal condition.

Dependent on stocks, the bar is the only place in the world where fans can access the full 21-strong range of Kavalan's expressions launched since 2008.

This includes the two limited "X" whiskies released last year for Kavalan's 10th anniversary as well as the rare Kavalan Solist Brandy and the Kavalan Distillery Reserve Peaty Cask, which is only otherwise available at the Yilan distillery.

On top of that, the bar's take-out message is that whisky is a sensory experience to be savoured with all five senses.

Designed to create an experiential experience, the bar's special effects include air gusts simulating 1

the Pacific breezes that aid oxidation.

Two giants in mixology head up the bar and have crafted their signature Kavalan cocktail menu made up of 10 Kavalan whisky and gin cocktails.

The bar consultant is Aki Wang, known as the Asian cocktail godfather, whose Indulge Experimental Bistro ranks in the World's 50 Best Bars. The bar manager is award-winning bartender Shane Lin, champion of the 2018 Bacardi Legacy Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau.

Plans are under way for the Kavalan Whisky Bar to provide culinary food pairing.

Kavalan's award-winning distillery in Yilan County is located one hour from Taipei and attracts one million visitors annually.