

The Macallan unveils its home away from home at Heathrow

By **Chris Madden in London, UK** on September, 12 2019 | Spirits & Tobacco



From left: Edrington Managing Director EMEA Travel Retail Jeremy Speirs, Heathrow Retail Director Fraser Brown and Dufry World Duty Free CEO Fred Creighton officially opened the boutique



The Macallan Boutique collection new edition was launched earlier this year to celebrate the brand's association with water

Gulf-Africa Duty Free magazine attended the official launch of Edrington's The Macallan's new boutique outlet at London Heathrow Airport.

The store, which was opened in partnership with Dufry and Heathrow, is a "home away from home" for the brand, according to Dufry's World Duty Free CEO Fred Creighton. The design, which features a wooden ceiling and décor and a curved wooden structure at the entrance, seeks to invoke The Macallan's new Speyside distillery which opened last year.

Evoking the brand's home is crucial to bringing The Macallan to life for shoppers, which is the central purpose of the store according to Edrington Managing Director EMEA Travel Retail Jeremy Speirs.

"This is not about trying to maximize sales," he explained. "This is about showcasing what we do with our brand, what we're going to do and bringing the distillery here for those who can't get up to Speyside."



The store aims to invoke the look of the new Macallan distillery on Speyside

The store aims to invoke the look



Heathrow Airport

The Macallan Boutique in

The store features a video wall showcasing the brand, its home and its heritage, as well as a prestige wall, with a showcase displaying premium selections from the Macallan range. Speirs says the plan is to capture the attention of whisky shoppers at the airport.

"The great thing about an airport is people have this very precious commodity called time on their hands," he said. "I think the dwell time is about an hour in airports, we are fighting against other

brands of course but we have the chance to work and give the consumers who come in an experience. Even people who know the brand very well can come in and see the prestige wall and see some expressions they may not already know, they can taste some expressions, but they also learn.”

This in-store theatre and interactivity is at the heart of what Edrington and Dufry have sought to create at Heathrow. Creighton believes stores like this can be used to share a brand’s story with shoppers and provide a vital tool in the battle against digital retailers.

He explained: “The reality is that in duty free and tax free, we need to be very conscious that the proposition we have is all about experience; in terms of product, in terms of exclusivity, in terms of the environment you can create and then through the staff, the excitement you can bring when you can tell that story in a way that you can’t do online.”

Working together

If creating something special is the goal, both Creighton and Speirs say a collaborative approach is the only way to create a unique experience. The new Macallan boutique spawned from a conversation in Cannes two years ago and both companies say they are delighted to see it come to fruition.



Heathrow, Edrington and Dufry collaborated for several years to create this boutique experience

“This is not an overnight thing that has just happened, it is two or three years on the making and there is some major investment going on into the brand,” Speirs said.

Creighton added: “To have a relationship with a brand such as Macallan is very important to Dufry because it allows us to segment the market. It allows us to attract a connoisseur at times that you don’t necessarily get when you’re in a main duty free and tax free store.”

The Macallan boutique initially opened in July.