

Liquid

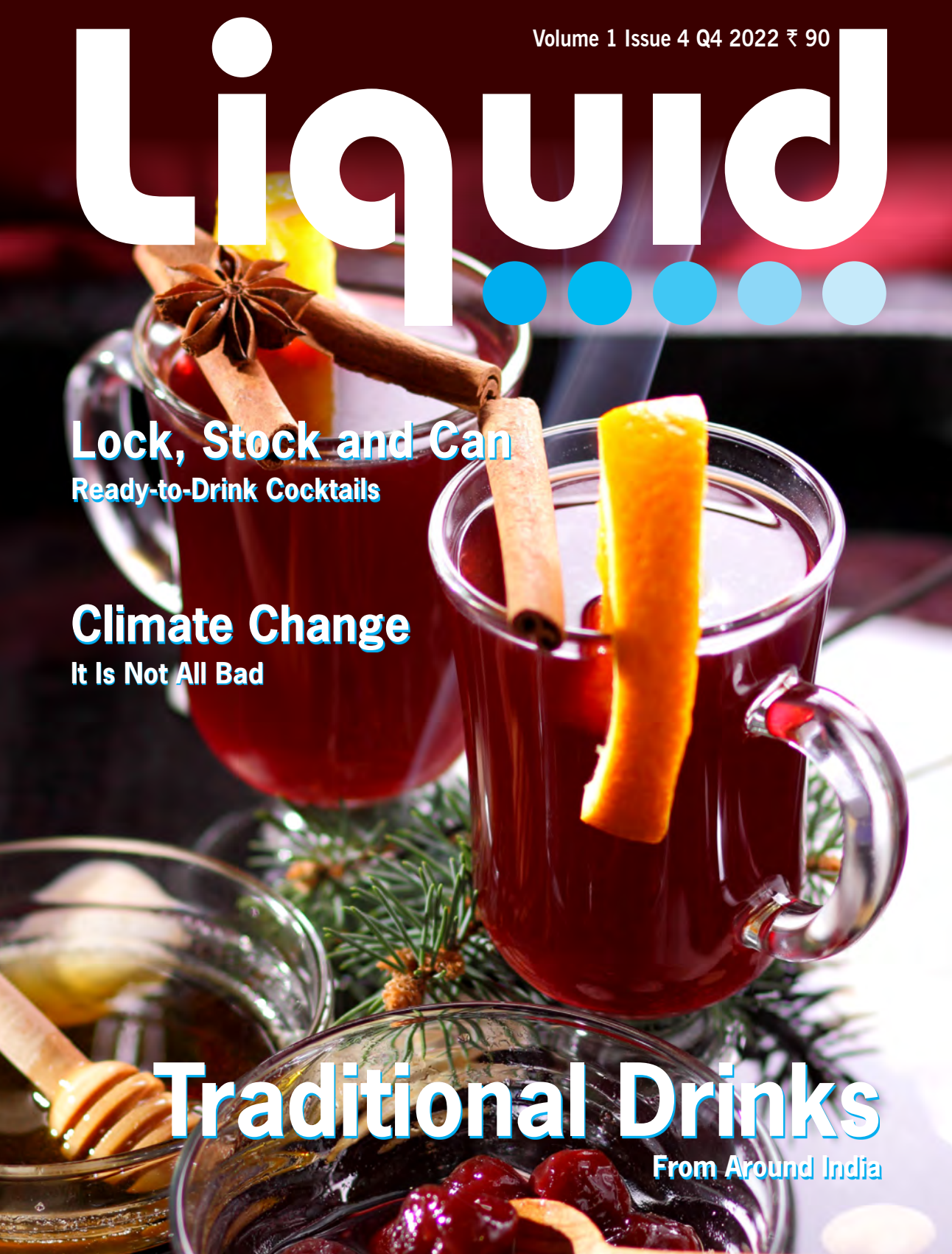


Lock, Stock and Can
Ready-to-Drink Cocktails

Climate Change
It Is Not All Bad

Traditional Drinks

From Around India



Whisky Pairing Dinner



His Excellency Alex Ellis, British High Commissioner to India hosted a Scotch Whisky Pairing Dinner at his residence in New Delhi to welcome the Chief Executive, Mark Kent, and International Director, Ian McKendrick, of the Scotch Whisky Association. FINE India Editor, Rajiv Singhal, was invited to sit down with a select group at this table.

India is the largest whisky market in the world and a key export market for Scotch whisky. However, despite being hugely popular with Indian consumers, Scotch Whisky holds an abysmal 2% share. Kent exuded optimism around the on-going negotiations for the India-UK Free Trade Agreement. This landmark deal could create a significant opportunity for alcoholic beverages as it is expected that the long-standing tariffs will be reduced and the substantial barriers to trade will be eased.

“Scotch Whisky must be shared”, insisted McKendrick. “And I’m delighted to present some selected bottles to this wonderful group.” A Moroccan-themed meal was

laid out to pair the three scotch whiskies: Longmorn 18 years and Tamdhu Amber 14 years both from Speyside and Bunnahabhain Cruach-Mhona (no age) from Islay. The single malts brought a sense of place – the seas and where the spirit belongs. The meal was rounded up with a Sticky Toffee Pudding and liqueurs.

Artisanal British Spirits



“See things differently” was the apt campaign slogan for the Department for International Trade (DIT) that hosted an invited Indian audience at the ‘Spirits of the United Kingdom’ table-top walk-around tasting at the Shangri La-Eros, New Delhi. A delegation of 16 Craft Distillers of fine spirits – Whisky, Rum, Gin, Liqueur, Vodka and non-alcoholic beverages – presented a range of products.

The British High Commissioner to India H.E. Alex Ellis welcomed guests and hoped that more British artisanal products would be available in India once the new free trade agreement is in force. The Indian government has signalled its intent to lower tariffs.

Due to time constraints, a complete tasting was not possible. But, the Garam Masala Gin from Batch

Distillery in Burnley, Lancashire and Love Delhi Gin from King's Hill in the Pentland Hills in Scotland stood out. These companies deserve a special mention for wooing business partners with an extra effort to localise their products.

India is not only one of the largest markets in the world for alcoholic beverages, but also the fastest growing. Traditionally, India has been a very important customer for the UK beverage industry. Scotch Whisky is the largest drink export with the equivalent of more than 136 million bottles consigned to India in 2021. Gin is riding the new wave and generating some interesting volumes.

Wines from Castilla-La Mancha



Wines from Castilla-La Mancha and IPEX organised a wine tasting with the Economic and Commercial Office of the Spanish Embassy at Instituto Cervantes, New Delhi. Six wineries – Bodega Camino Alto, Bodegas Campos Reales, Bodegas Del Saz, El Vinculo from Familia Fernandez Rivera, Punctum and Bodega

Romero de Avila Salcedo presented a selection of wines across different styles – sparkling, white, red, rosé, organic, biodynamic and amphora. The representatives of the wineries were at hand to guide the tasting.

This was followed by an information session by Gagan Sharma, at which six selected wines from the delegation were tasted. A standout offering among these was Ana Maria Romero's pewter label, amphora-aged Romero de Avila Salcedo, named after her grandfather.

With a history of wine making dating back to the Romans, Castilla-La Mancha is today Spain's largest wine producing area accounting for about 50% of the country's production and about 80% of the bulk wine production.

This region is in the heartland of Spain, southeast of Madrid. The region is also famous for its Manchego Cheese, Saffron and as the home of the 'knight', Don Quixote, from Miguel Cervantes' epic 16th century novel. It is a vast high plateau that appears harsh and hostile to wine making. However, modern vinification techniques allow for fresh, crisp, delicate, fruity whites and more complex, mature reds.

ProWine Mumbai

The 2nd edition of ProWine Mumbai was held in October at the newly-opened and uber luxe Jio World Convention Centre in Bandra Kurla Complex Mumbai. This two-day trade show for wines and spirits was organized by Messe Düsseldorf of ProWein World.

The inauguration was done right with the popping of Champagne and the ribbon-cutting involving a few Ambassadors, Consul Generals and other dignitaries. Official numbers claim 150 companies showcasing 1000+ brands across 19 countries at the event garnered 4140 visitors, many of whom had travelled to Mumbai, including Liquid.

The show was laid out to an international standard – definitively demonstrating what wine and spirit trade shows in India can be. International producers exhibited



UNCORK INDIA

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alongside Indian producers in one of the first mask-free post-pandemic shows. Country pavilions of France, Chile, Portugal and Australia were the main attractions. Indian importers also showcased their portfolios. Spirits included gin, vodka, single malts, rum, tequila, mezcal and beer. Accessories, glassware, water and other beverages completed the mix.

ProWine organisers managed to obtain licenses and permission issues so that the exhibits could be displayed and sampled at site. Visitors were given an excise permit to consume. However, some stocks got tied up in red tape, preventing some exhibitors from showcasing and offering tastings for those.

The wines and spirits business in India is growing and there is a keen interest in this market – many are eyeing the opportunities. Many stakeholders from the industry converged at ProWine Mumbai 2022, which Thomas Schlitt of Messe Düsseldorf India termed as “The platform to Meet, Network and Taste.”

Sosyo goes with Reliance

Sosyo, a heritage brand with a 100-year legacy in carbonated soft drinks and juices, has announced a 50% joint venture with Reliance Consumer Products, a wholly owned subsidiary of Reliance Retail Ventures that reported a consolidated turnover of US\$26 billion.

Sosyo Hajoori Beverages was established in 1923 during the “Swadeshi” movement by Abbas Abdulrahim Hajoori in Surat, Gujarat. Four generations of the family have grown the brand to be one of the leading players in the domestic soft drinks market and one of India’s top 1000 brands.

Brands in their portfolio include Sosyo, Kashmira, Lemee, Ginlim, Runner, Opener, Hajoori Soda and S’eau.

Their approach was somewhat simple – stay consumer centric and ensure consistent quality. The expertise in developing formulations allowed frequent flavour launches, which have helped build the unique proposition for Sosyo’s loyal customer base in India and overseas.



Speaking about the partnership, Isha Ambani of Reliance said, “We welcome the desi power of this heritage brand to our portfolio. Sosyo will be empowered with new opportunities.” Abbas Hajoori of Sosyo is upbeat “It will help us rapidly scale our reach to make Sosyo accessible to consumers across India. It is a defining moment in our 100-year journey.”

This Reliance investment comes close on the heels of their recent acquisition of the iconic beverage brand ‘Campa’. They are leveraging their knowhow, consumer insights and depth in distribution network to bring a bouquet of high value indigenous brands to the Indian consumer.