

New Distributor Vows to Make Brazil's Cachaça Pitú Popular in the US

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Pitú, a popular cachaça brand in Brazil, should soon have widespread distribution in the United States thanks to an agreement between Winebow, EFCO Importers and The Pitú Company (Engarrafamento Pitú) in Vitória de Santo Antão, in the northeastern Brazilian state of Pernambuco.

The Pitú Company began bottling cachaça in 1938 and today, Pitú is the most exported brand of cachaça globally, and the second largest cachaça producer in Brazil. Pitú produced 80 million liters of the 1.3 billion liters reportedly produced in Brazil in 2006.

Cachaça, a spirit made from sugar cane, is the most popular distilled alcoholic beverage in Brazil and the third most popular spirit in volume, worldwide.

Cachaça is the main ingredient of the caipirinha (Brazil's margarita), the national cocktail of Brazil that is fast becoming a favorite drink in the United States and around the world.

EFCO Importers was one of the first to bring cachaça into the United States when they began importing Pitú twenty years ago.

Marty Friedland, CEO and founder of EFCO Importers, states, "I have enjoyed my relationship with the Pitú brand and the Cavalcanti family owners, and wanted to assure that the transference of this business was handled in an honorable fashion to an organization that would continue to represent Pitú with the same passion that I have exhibited over the last two decades."

Maria das Vitórias Cavalcanti, known as Vitória, is a third generation owner and current Director of Products and International Affairs for the Pitú Company. Vitória has a degree in Chemical Engineering from the Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil and in 1998 she was elected President of the Brazilian Development Program of Cachaça.

During her two term presidency, Vitória was instrumental in lobbying the Brazilian government to create a Denomination of Origin for cachaça similar to that of Tequila in Mexico and Cognac in France.

With the evolution of the sector and the adherence of other producers, the Brazilian Institute of Cachaça was created in 2006, and Vitória was elected President.

"We are looking forward to our relationship with Winebow and we are pleased to see that the company is committed to representing family owned properties that focus on high quality and standards," says the Pitú owner.

Leonardo LoCascio, President and CEO of Winebow, Inc., has been an admirer of the Pitú brand for many years. He was first introduced to cachaça in 1980 while attending a family wedding in Brazil.

LoCascio approached Marty Friedland and expressed interest in the Pitú brand several years ago. Upon his recent decision to retire after nearly sixty years in the beverage business, Mr. Friedland turned to Winebow.

"Our relationship with Mr. Friedland and the Pitú brand has enjoyed a strong partnership at our wholesale distribution network for almost twenty years," says LoCascio.

"The Winebow family will feel a void with the retirement of Marty, but we look forward to continuing his legacy and positioning Pitú Cachaça as a brand leader in the United States."

Winebow founded in 1980 by Leonardo LoCascio, is a major importer and distributor of wines and spirits from around the world. Winebow is a leading importer of premium Italian wines under the Leonardo LoCascio Selections label, the de facto seal of approval for Italian wine enthusiasts.

Under the Winebow Brands International (WBI) division, Winebow also imports nearly 20 producers from Spain, as well as a growing list of quality wines from Chile and Argentina, and Bruichladdich whisky from Islay, Scotland.

Winebow is headquartered in Montvale, New Jersey with additional offices in New York, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Washington, D.C.; Boston; Massachusetts; and Wallingford, Connecticut.