



Fidani unveils global expansion programme

DFNI Exclusive

By Michael Eaton

DR Group subsidiary Fidani Chocolatier, which was formed 11 years ago to manufacture and market premium chocolates in Malaysia, has drawn up plans for a travel-retail expansion programme after its debut appearance at the TFWA Asia Pacific show in Singapore last month.

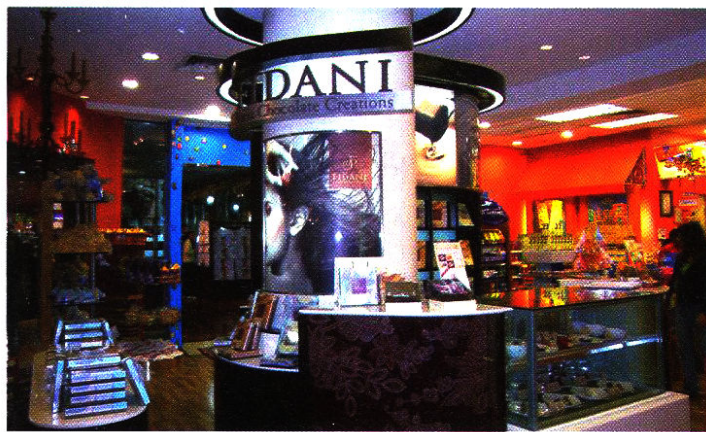
Fidani business executive Eiling Lim told *DFNI*: "Until now we have only distributed the brand locally, but we believe it is time to showcase Fidani internationally. We hope to be able to secure a presence at several airports, starting with other Asian and Middle Eastern countries. We have put a lot of effort into giving Fidani an international appeal, with the right packaging and products.

"At present we are available at all leading airports in Malaysia, including all Choc Stop outlets, operated by sister company Chocolate Sales & Supplies (CSS), and

a store in Genting Highlands (pictured). We also run ad hoc promotions in downtown shopping centres, sell to non-CSS outlets at airports and market corporate and wedding gifts."

Lim revealed that plans also include a Fidani chocolate and café concept. She added: "We also want to establish a chocolate museum where the public can learn about chocolates and how gourmet products are made. We have our own factory in Shah Alam, where everything is hand-made, and one of our main advantages is that our chocolates are completely Halal-certified, whereas other gourmet chocolates contain liquor. Fidani will appeal to Muslim customers who indulge in gourmet products."

Fidani unveiled its new Symphony collection alongside its Classic range in Singapore. It also offers novelty item Fidani l'Amour; Fidani sugar free products aimed at diabetics; and Fidani Almond Dates for festive occasions.



Asian success lifts Maxim's

French fine food, chocolate and liquor company Maxim's de Paris has reported a 10% global sales increase year on year and singled out Asia as a key region for growth.

Travel-retail and export manager Françoise Brabant said: "Fine food is gaining a bigger share of spend in many domestic markets and the Maxim's brand has profited from this premium trend. Our lines are now available in more than 50

countries and travel-retail remains a big target. We are working on new merchandising plans to enhance our in-store presentation."

Maxim's is also planning several chocolate launches for this autumn; it has already redesigned its gold tin of 40 assorted biscuits in red to match the company's livery. This year's revamped gift pack collection includes a Farandole hamper containing chocolates, biscuits, foie gras and champagne.

Dchoc looks beyond South African base

South African company Dchoc, which was launched as an online premium chocolate specialist service two years ago and also offers cigars, is ready to explore the travel-retail channel more fully after launching at Cape Town and Johannesburg OR Tambo International airports earlier this year.

Director Tim Hartzenberg said the company is keen to talk to retailers, distributors and agents. "We have enjoyed growth in the South African travel-retail market because of our premium quality and distinctive packaging and we want to expand," he said. "We use imported ingredients and our research and development kitchen is focused on creating rare, exotic flavours. We

don't have a one-product-fits-all approach so we can offer chocolate gifts for any region based on local tastes and preferences."

Dchoc, which offers 24-hour delivery with its online gift service in South Africa, claims that "instant on-shelf recognition" is achieved through its hand-crafted wooden gift boxes, designed to resemble jewellery caskets.

The company is introducing new packaging with embossed labelling at Cape Town and OR Tambo airports this month. "Each of our seven ranges will be easily distinguishable on-shelf and the unique products are ideal for South Africa's booming tourism economy," said Hartzenberg.

Guylian and Callebaut collaborate on revolutionary antioxidant process

Belgian chocolate seashell specialist Chocolaterie Guylian has collaborated with Barry Callebaut, which claims to be the world's leading chocolate manufacturer of premium cocoa and chocolate, over the first consumer-product usage of Acticoa cocoa.

Acticoa is described as a "revolutionary production process which ensures that naturally-occurring flavanols from the cocoa bean are preserved".

Barry Callebaut chief innovation officer Hans Vriens explained: "In the conventional chocolate-making process, 70% of the cocoa polyphenols are lost. We have succeeded in developing the Acticoa process in which up to 80% of the flavanols found in raw cocoa beans are retained".

Guylian has developed new Extra Sea Shells with 74% cocoa. Export and travel-retail director Steven Candries commented: "These are rich in antioxidants and retain the flavour of luxury chocolate. Consumers are becoming more demanding and want premium chocolate with health benefits. What mainstream consumers are not yet aware of is that a high percentage of cocoa does not necessarily equate to high levels of antioxidants. Even though natural cocoa powder contains high quantities of antioxidants, standard cocoa processing techniques kill about 70% of the cocoa beans' polyphenols."

The new dark chocolate Extra Sea Shells are available in a 22-piece 250g gift pack; in a 11-piece 125g box; and as a six-piece (65g) trial size.

Bad Boy Power Drink signs with Alfa

California-based Bad Boy Power Drink has appointed Alfa Brands to market its Turbo Shot products in North American duty-free and travel-retail, including the US, Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean.

Bad Boy Turbo Shots 2oz bottles are claimed to provide an

instant energy boost, fighting fatigue and increasing stamina. They are available in four different flavours: Original, Lemon, Orange and Bad Girl Berry. Marketing campaigns have linked the product to extreme and mainstream sports.