

GOT FLAVOR

Sean “Diddy” Combs Deems Coconut and Red Berry the Next Big Things for Cîroc

When Cîroc Vodka debuted in 2003, it quickly stood out from other vodkas on the market. Unlike the typical grains associated with the spirit, Cîroc was made using French Mauzac Blanc and Ugni Blanc grapes, and distilled five times. Waves were made once again, four years later, when Diageo unveiled its collaboration with Sean “Diddy” Combs; the entertainment guru would lead all brand management activities for Cîroc, swiftly making it a status symbol among an affluent, fashionable crowd. Now, at the launch of this new decade, there’s more reason for buzz: the introduction of Cîroc Coconut and Cîroc Red Berry, infused with natural coconut, tropical fruit, raspberry and strawberry essences.

This brand extension is one way of keeping the Cîroc brand fresh, providing target consumers access to “sophisticated celebration.” Randy Carlson, director of

innovation, Diageo North America, says Cîroc is the fastest growing major vodka in the U.S. Net sales are up 159% in year two, and he expects the new Cîroc flavors to further drive growth of the brand.

“According to recent IRI data, vodka flavors are growing faster than regular vodka, and generated 21% of total dollar growth in the category,” he notes. “The popularity of flavored spirits combined with the partnership with Sean “Diddy” Combs position this brand to deliver sales on- and off-premise. Coconut and Red Berry were chosen because consumers and bartenders found coconut to have the highest appeal of any proposed Cîroc variant in our research—in fact, coconut in particular scored high among male consumers—with berry not far behind.”

Any new product that launches in today’s saturated marketplace—especially one as competitive as vodka’s—must ensure its mixability factor. “Neutral spirits like



CÎROC RED BERRY REPARTEE

1 ½ oz. Cîroc Red Berry
4 oz. Lemon Lime Soda
Dash of Grenadine

CÎROC CARIBBEAN

1 ½ oz. Cîroc Coconut
5 oz. Pineapple Juice

vodka based spirits have a lot of versatility and will continue to drive sales. They can be mixed in cocktails and also served on the rocks. And both of our new Cîroc Flavors taste luxurious when mixed with juice or your favorite mixer,” Carlson adds.

Both the coconut and berry flavors tie into a number of creative and easy-to-make cocktails like the “Cîroc Double Nut” with Cîroc Coconut and Frangelico, and “The Cîroc Spiced Red Berry” with Domaine de Canton ginger liqueur and fresh lemon juice.

To facilitate consumer trial, Cîroc Red Berry and Coconut will be price-lined with Cîroc Base for easy recognition on retail displays. The modern, clean packaging of the new flavors reflects the quality that people expect from the original recipe.

“As we enter a new decade, it’s important to review what’s worked and what hasn’t,” Carlson explains. “In this economy people are more selective and particular. Consumers need reassurance that the brand they buy has substance and credentials. That’s why Cîroc will continue to drive sales.” ■



Sean “Diddy” Combs, the face of Cîroc, with master distiller Jean-Sébastien Robicquet