



DISTILL VENTURES CONFIRMS INVESTMENT IN DISTILLED NON-ALCOHOLIC SPIRIT BRAND SEEDLIP

Monday 4 July 2016: Distill Ventures, the Diageo-backed and funded accelerator programme for entrepreneurs launching and scaling innovative drinks brands, has confirmed its first investment in a distilled non-alcoholic spirit. This follows today's announcement by SEEDLIP that it is part of the Distill Ventures programme with Diageo holding a minority stake in the business.

This represents the first time Distill Ventures has backed a non-alcoholic product. SEEDLIP will benefit from the same mentoring and support as other Distill Ventures portfolio companies while it builds its own sales and marketing activities and looks to expand beyond the UK.

SEEDLIP was created by entrepreneur Ben Branson to solve the dilemma of 'what-to-drink-when-you're-not-drinking' and is the world's first distilled non-alcoholic spirits brand.

Ben Branson said: "Distill Ventures has been great in giving me the support and freedom to develop SEEDLIP in just the way I want. With SEEDLIP we're effectively developing a new drinks category, appealing to consumers looking for a refined alternative to alcohol. This really was pioneering work and partnering with Distill Ventures has helped me understand the industry, shape the product I dreamed of, and launch it in the right way."

Helen Michels, Global Innovation Director, Futures Team, Diageo: "We are hugely excited to confirm our investment, through Distill Ventures, in SEEDLIP, the world's first distilled non-alcoholic spirit. SEEDLIP is a company of exceptional quality with a visionary founder offering a 'sophisticated alternative' to alcoholic drinks.

"We recognise the opportunity of non-alcoholic drinks and our portfolio already includes Guinness Zero in Indonesia, Guinness Malta in Africa and more recently Orijin Zero in Nigeria. We continue to explore and invest in this area and, in SEEDLIP, we have found a unique product which gives people a complex and refined drinking experience. For generations, Diageo has been innovating and meeting consumer trends by offering new products, formats and ingredients. Now in its third year, the Distill Ventures programme continues to allow us to discover and support new brands within pioneering categories, anticipate shifts in consumer behaviour and ensure our business remains at the forefront of trends in the years to come."

Shilen Patel, co-founder of Distill Ventures: "We first met Ben two years ago, and as his ideas on SEEDLIP developed, it seemed increasingly obvious to us that this would be a great addition to the portfolio and we're delighted that Ben felt the same way about joining the programme. SEEDLIP is led by an outstanding entrepreneur shaping the future of a whole new category in drinks. More bars and restaurants want to offer high quality non-alcoholic options as part of their range and SEEDLIP gives them a great option to do that.

"SEEDLIP made sense because it was founded by a pioneering entrepreneur it and follows a model that is in many respects close to a spirits brand. We continue to be led by a desire to invest in outstanding founders, and our emphasis will remain firmly on alcoholic drinks."

*SEEDLIP Spice 94 and SEEDLIP Garden 108 are available from Seedlipdrinks.com.
RRP: £27.99*

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Notes to editors:

Contacts

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About SEEDLIP

SEEDLIP is the world's first distilled non-alcoholic spirits brand solving the dilemma of 'what-to – drink-when-you're-not-drinking'. Launched in November 2015 by Ben Branson to continue his family's 300 year old farming legacy, Seedlip has been championed by some of the most influential bartenders, sommeliers and chefs and is available in some of the UK's finest Michelin Star restaurants, hotels and retailers including The Ledbury, The Savoy and Selfridges.

Blended and bottled in England, SEEDLIP's range contains two variants: SEEDLIP Spice 94 and SEEDLIP Garden 108.

SEEDLIP Spice 94 is an aromatic and complex blend of individual copper-pot distillates including two barks, two spices and two citrus peels. Spice 94 is best served long with Fever Tree Tonic and a red grapefruit twist or short in non-alcoholic cocktails.

SEEDLIP Garden 108 is a green and floral blend of individual copper-pot distillates including handpicked peas and hay from the founder's family farm and traditional herbs including spearmint, rosemary & thyme. Garden 108 is best served long with Fever Tree Elderflower Tonic or short in non-alcoholic cocktails.

For further information visit www.seedlipdrinks.com or contact WickerWood.

Instagram: [@seedlipspirits](https://www.instagram.com/seedlipspirits)

Twitter: [@SeedlipSpirits](https://twitter.com/SeedlipSpirits)

About Diageo

Diageo is a global leader in beverage alcohol with an outstanding collection of brands including Johnnie Walker, Crown Royal, J&B, Buchanan's and Windsor whiskies, Smirnoff, Cîroc and Ketel One vodkas, Captain Morgan, Baileys, Don Julio, Tanqueray and Guinness.

Diageo is a global company, and our products are sold in more than 180 countries around the world.

The company is listed on both the London Stock Exchange (DGE) and the New York Stock Exchange (DEO). For more information about Diageo, our people, our brands, and performance, visit us at www.diageo.com. Visit Diageo's global responsible drinking resource, www.DRINKiQ.com, for information, initiatives, and ways to share best practice.

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About Distill Ventures

Established in 2013, Distill Ventures is an accelerator programme for entrepreneurs wanting to develop, scale and sell alcoholic drinks businesses. It offers a route to cash investment, with mentoring and access to expertise. Distill Ventures' aim is to help founders build the great spirits businesses of the future. It's a partnership with Diageo, who provide the investment funding, as well as access to their global network of experts. Distill Ventures operates across all drinks categories, and invests at all stages, from pre-launch (or "seed" businesses) through to those requiring significant expansion capital.

Further information on Distill Ventures and details of the accelerator programme are available at distillventures.com

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To date, Distill Ventures has worked with a range of drinks brands, including Stauning whisky in Denmark, and Australia's Starward whisky, which was recently awarded "World's Best Craft Distilled Whisky" at the San Francisco Spirits Competition.

Twitter: @DistillVentures