

PR 4 – March 1st, 2012

PERSONALITIES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD ENJOY THE HABANOS FESTIVAL

- Actor and musician Jim Belushi surprises guests during the 520th Anniversary of the Discovery of Tobacco in Cuba Night with an impromptu music jam alongside Phil Manzanera
- The Welcoming Night features other personalities including Jack Bruce, ex NBA players, Travis Best and Dale Davis alongside Chef Sergio Torres, who were delighted with the new Cohiba Pirámides Extra
- This year's Festival sees exclusive and exceptional tastings and alliances feature, including that of Habanos & Port Wines and the Cohiba Behike with *Havana Club Máximo Reserva 100 años*

La Havana, 1st March, 2012- Habanos and the World's finest gastronomy combined on Wednesday to celebrate the 520th Anniversary of the Discovery of tobacco in Cuba by the Europeans. Present at the event was American actor and musician, **Jim Belushi** who is also a member of legendary band, **The Blues Brothers**. The evening saw him star in a spectacular concert with ex-guitarist from **Roxy Music**, **Phil Manzanera**.

One of the main dishes served during the evening was designed by **Chef Sergio Torres** of Michelin starred restaurant in Barcelona, **Dos Cielos**. His creative culinary concept was based on the gastronomic exchange that occurred during the discovery of the New World, and featured American native *frijoles* with mushrooms and native truffles from Europe. Habanos presented **Montecristo 520 Edición Limitada 2012** during this gala.

Other personalities in attendance included **Jack Bruce** and ex NBA players, **Travis Best and Dale Davis**. Bruce, ex member of the legendary band Cream, gave a concert which opened this 14th edition of the Habanos Festival with Cuban singer **Augusto Enríquez** and Phil Manzanera. All of them were among the first to taste the **Cohiba Pirámides Extra**, presented during the **Welcoming Evening**.

Approximately 1500 participants from more than 70 countries had the chance to visit the origins of the World's best tobacco at the *Vuelta Abajo** plantations, in *Pinar del Río**, in Cuba. They were also able to try it during tasting events and contests such as the alliance between **Vinhos do Porto (D.O.C. – Port Wines)** and **Habanos* (D.O.P.)**. Another tasting event saw the top of the range products from two of Cuba's most prestigious brands: *Havana Club Máximo Reserva 100 años*, (an exceptional and very limited edition of Cuba's most prized rum by experts) and **Cohiba Behike** (the most exclusive line of the emblematic Habanos brand: Cohiba).

Another highlight on the agenda was **Dr. Eusebio Leal, Havana City Historian**, who gave a **master lecture** where he enlightened participants on the history of tobacco in Cuba from 1492 to today.

The **Habanosommelier** award is a prestigious accolade that recognises the growing interest in expert advice for gastronomy and tobacco at some of the world's most exclusive restaurants. This year's contenders, **Andrés Arteaga**, from Chile, **Luis García**, from México and Cuban **Daniel Reyes**, will have to wait until Friday to discover which one of them is the best **Habanosommelier**.

This Friday, ahead of the Gala Dinner event which will mark the closure of the XIV Habanos Festival, documentary *Cigars: the heart and soul of Cuba*, produced by **James Suckling** and directed by **James Orr**

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(recognized film director of films such as *Three Men and a Baby*, *Mr. Destiny* and *Father of the bride*) will be shown.

The **Gala Dinner** will be dedicated to the Romeo y Julieta brand which will see the launch of two new products. The first is the **Romeo y Julieta Churchills Reserva 2008**, which is the first reserve from the brand, and the second is **Romeo y Julieta Petit Churchills**, a new vitola that will delight (thanks to its format) with its characteristic aromatic and balanced flavor, suitable for any occasion. The Festival will conclude with the **traditional Auction of Humidors** which represent the most prestigious Habanos brands **Cohiba, Montecristo, Romeo y Julieta, Partagás, Hoyo de Monterrey and H. Upmann**. The money raised will be donated to the **Cuban Public Health System, which over the past 11 years has received over \$9 million** as a result of the auction.

Corporación Habanos s.a.:

Corporación Habanos s.a., is the world leader in the premium cigar market (Hand made cigars), sells Habanos in both Cuba and the rest of the world. To this end it has an exclusive distribution network, with presence in more than 150 countries across the five continents. For more information, please visit: www.habanos.com.

Habanos s.a. currently distributes all 27 Cuban brands that belong to the **Habanos (D.O.P) Protected Denomination of Origin** with a range of products that includes all 27 premium Cuban Brands (made with the process Totalmente a Mano- Totally by Hand-, a process only applied in Cuba today, that was used for the first time almost 3 centuries ago in the island). Some of the most important Habanos brands are **Cohiba, Montecristo, Romeo y Julieta, Partagás, Hoyo de Monterrey, H. Upmann, Punch, San Cristóbal de la Habana, Trinidad and Bolívar**, among others. For more information, please visit: www.habanos.com.

*(D.O.P.) Protected Denomination of Origin

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