

XVI HABANOS FESTIVAL: TOP CHEFS AND GREAT CIGARS JOIN TO CREATE UNIQUE PAIRINGS

- The two Michelin stars chef Ron Blaauw, together with the renowned sommelier Cuno Van't Hoff, will be responsible for preparing a very special dinner where haute cuisine will be combined with the prestigious Trinidad and Cohiba brands
- The Alliance of Habanos with some of the best beers in the world and the first contest to get the longest ash are some of the new initiatives to be included in the program of the event
- Hoyo de Monterrey, Partagás, Trinidad and H. Upmann will be the famous brands and protagonists of this sixteenth edition of the Festival which starts on 24 February

Havana, 10 February, 2014.- Only two weeks to go for the start of the most important annual event surrounding the best tobacco in the world in Cuba. Habano lovers will travel from all over to hear the secrets of a centuries-long tradition first hand and enjoy an unforgettable week. From **24 to 28 of February, Cuba will become the international scene for the XVI edition of the Habanos Festival.**

Wednesday, 26 February will be the day on which **top chefs and top Habanos make the best pairings** between haute cuisine and the prestigious **Trinidad and Cohiba** brands. Chef **Ron Blaauw**, with two Michelin stars, together with the renowned sommelier **Cuno Van't Hoff**, both from the Netherlands, will be responsible for the tribute dinner to the Trinidad brand to be held at the Museum of Fine Arts of Havana. Along with the new brand sizes, during the evening the presentation of a very special **Cohiba** Habano will take place, to be tasted for the first time by the attendees. Just as Blaauw says, *"A Habano has something magical. We will create some refreshing dishes so there will be appetite for a close with a Habano"*. For Van't Hoff, *"Trinidad has a medium to full bodied taste, spicy, with some coffee and chocolate aromas"* (*Exclusive interviews in documents attached*). Both will have the support of chef **Israel Gata**, head of the kitchen at the Hotel Iberostar Parque Central in Havana.

On the morning of the same day, the attendees will witness an **innovative Alliance of Habanos**. Beer will be the protagonist of this meeting guided by the Belgian sommelier **Ben Vinken**, expert on Habanos and beer, in which there will be **some of the most prestigious beer in the world**: the Belgian brands **Duvel, Leffe, Malheur and Chimay** and the Cuban brand **Bucanero**. To begin with, the aromatic and balanced taste of the **H. Upmann Half Corona** will be joined by the renowned Cuban malt flavour lager **Bucanero**. Secondly, attendees will discover the perfect beer for the delicate aromas of the **Hoyo de Monterrey Epicure No. 2**. To do so, they will have to choose between the great strength of **Duvel**, made with Pilsen malts and black beer **Leffe Abbey Brown**, winner in 2012 of the gold medal in the World Beer Cup. And finally, participants will perform the same exercise with the unmistakable richness, aroma and flavour of **Partagás Serie D No. 4** and the beers **Malheur Brut Reserve**, very dry and pale, and the fruity and smoky black beer **Chimay Grande Reserve**, possessing a taste reminiscent of black chocolate.

The XVI Habanos Festival will begin on Monday, 24 February with the press conference presentation of the major launches for 2014, featuring the **Hoyo de Monterrey, Partagás, Trinidad and H. Upmann** brands, among which there is always the presence of the **Cohiba and Montecristo**. Habanos s.a. will also announce its 2013 financial results and the entire cast of personalities from all fields, who as big fans of the Habano will enjoy the Festival. The program of this unique week will also include other new activities such as the **first contest to get the longest ash**, with its exclusive evenings filled with Cuban charm and flavour, and its traditional and awaited activities, among which will be an exclusive concert by **Los Van Van**, the legendary Cuban band led by **Juan Formell**.

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