

THE XVI HABANOS FESTIVAL BEGINS WITH THE LAUNCH OF HOYO DE MONTERREY AND PARTAGÁS BRANDS

- **Habanos s.a. presents Le Hoyo de San Juan and Partagás Serie D No. 6, which will be the focus of this year's Welcoming Evening**
- **The sales of Grupo Habanos, which this year celebrates its 20th anniversary, have experienced a significant growth of over 8% in 2013**
- **The names of the celebrities from different fields attending the event will be announced during the week**

Havana, 24th February 2014.- The XVI Habanos Festival, the long-awaited annual meeting of lovers of the best tobacco in the world, **begins today**. People from **more than 80 countries**, including 300 journalists and photographers, travel every year to Cuba to learn more about the origins of the Habano and enjoy a full activity programme that includes exclusive evenings. **Hoyo de Monterrey, Partagás, Trinidad and H. Upmann** are the brands that will be taking centre stage at the sixteenth edition of the Festival. Attendees at the Festival will be able to enjoy an exclusive first experience of their new *vitolas*, as well as the **rest of Habanos launches for 2014**, which usually includes the prestigious **Cohiba and Montecristo** brands. **Celebrities from across the globe**, whose names will be announced during the week, will also be joining guests throughout the week of celebration, **which runs until Friday 28th February**.

Club Habana will be the stage today for the **Welcoming Evening** where the **Hoyo de Monterrey and Partagás** brands will be taking centre stage, providing this year attendees with an exquisite setting in which to enjoy their new *vitolas*: **Le Hoyo de San Juan and Partagás Serie D No. 6**. Hoyo de Monterrey has renovated its historical Le Hoyo Series with a thick *vitola* of intermediate length (ring gauge 54 x 150 mm long), which only uses *Seco* and *Ligero* leaves from San Juan y Martínez*. This provides the **Le Hoyo de San Juan** with the consistency and intensity characteristic of the leaves growing in that zone, while keeping the brand's elegant flavour. As for Partagás, it has enriched its Series with a new *vitola* that maintains the character of the brand's flavour in a surprising size creating the **Partagás Serie D No. 6** (ring gauge 50 x 90 mm long), a Habano that can be smoked in around 15 minutes. Over the course of the evening, an incredible Mapping will be shown for guests to enjoy as well as a synchronised swimming show and the best Cuban music. The legendary band **Los Van-Van**, led by **Juan Formell**, will be performing for the first time in a Habanos Festival, and promise to provide the greatest ending to an unforgettable evening.

On Wednesday 26th February a celebration in honour of the **Trinidad** brand will be held in the Museum of Fine Arts in Havana. The new **Trinidad Vigía** *vitola*, which retains the exclusive brand flavour in an innovative heavy ring gauge size, and the new **Cohiba Edición Limitada 2014** will be tasted during a gastronomic feast prepared by the famous Dutch chef **Ron Blaauw** - the holder of two Michelin stars - and sommelier **Cuno Van't Hoff**.

The XVI Habanos Festival will come to a close on **Friday 28th February** with the traditional **Gala Evening**, in which the **first H. Upmann Reserva will be presented: Upmann No. 2 Reserva Cosecha 2010**. Made with leaves from the Vuelta Abajo 2010 harvest, carefully selected and aged for at least 3 years, the Habanos of this Reserva have been made **Totalmente a mano con Tripa Larga** -Totally hand made, Long Filler-. Over the evening, the **Habanos 2013 Awards** will take place with awards in three main categories - Production, Communication, and Business - being presented whilst the evening finishes in style with the world renowned **Grand Humidors Auction**. As with every year, the funds raised from the auction of these true masterpieces will be used to support the **Cuban Public Health System**. Famous artists will perform in this event, including musician **Edesio Alejandro** who was nominated to the 2010 Latin Grammy Awards, and one of the great Cuban singers, **Adriano Rodríguez**, the winner of the Cuban National Music Award in 2013.

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Innovative activities

The programme of the XVI Habanos Festival includes new activities of interest for the audience.

Belgian and Cuban beers are this year beverages chosen for the **Alliance with selected Habanos**. The **Belgian sommelier** and beer expert, **Ben Vinken**, will lead this event, which will include **some of the most prestigious beers in the world**: the Belgian beers **Duvel, Leffe Brown, Malheur Brut Reserve** and **Chimay Grande Reserve**, and the Cuban **Bucanero**.

The **first contest to get the longest ash** - an innovative, surprising event - will be held on **Thursday 27th February**.

That same day, at 15.30h, the Festival will include the pairing of **Vodkas and Habanos**, where the prestigious **Absolut** Vodka will be tasted with **Montecristo Edmundo**, considered one of the Habanos' benchmarks.

The **Habanos Moments'** event will take place after this activity, on Thursday February 27th at **16.30**. The **Habano Punch Double Coronas** will be tasted with diverse and outstanding chocolates and drinks such as: Whisky **Glenmorangie 10 Years Old**, Cognac **Hennessy VS**, **Chivas Regal 12 Years Old**, **Chivas Regal 18 Years Old**, **Heineken** beer, **Varadero Supremo**, Ron **Isla del Tesoro**, Licor **Pazo Pondal**, Brandy **Torres 15**, Licor **Bols Chocolate 17**, and **Celebrations Sparkling** chocolate selection.

This Festival includes **interesting conferences on Habanos including**: "**170 years of H. Upmann**" in which Mr Raúl Martell will examine the history of this German-born brand and "**Tobacco, cinema, and great stories**", by Mr Rigoberto López will both take place on Wednesday 26th February; on Thursday 27th February, Mr. Vladimir Andino and Mr. Felipe Milanés will talk about "**Elements that have an influence in the combustion of Habanos**"; finally, the talk "**Habanos Vintage**" by Mr. Simon Chase, after which an aged Habano will be tasted, will take place on Friday 28th February.

Grupo Habanos 2013 Financial results

2014 is the 20th anniversary of the creation of Habanos s.a. to promote the marketing of Habanos all over the world, and the XVI Habanos Festival will be celebrating this anniversary. The creation of this new company entailed a modernisation that has served as a platform for the expansion of the presence of Habanos through a network of exclusive distributors on all five continents.

In 2013 **Grupo Habanos**, which markets worldwide and in exclusive the 27 Habanos brands, all of which are made *Totalmente a Mano* -Totally hand made-, had a **turnover of 447 million dollars**. This amounts to a **growth** -taking the constant exchange rate into account- of **over 8%**. This is a positive trend that shows the company's strength as a global leader despite the difficult economic and legal environment.

Walfrido Hernández Mesa, Co-president of Habanos s.a., said that *"the experience acquired over these 20 years, as well as our excellent collaboration with the industry and agriculture, are the basis to continue to grow in the future in leadership of totally hand made cigars"*.

As for **Luis Sanchez-Harguindey**, Co-president of Habanos s.a., he stated that *"our strategy, which focuses on offering an exclusive, high-quality product to Habano lovers, is the most suitable way to strengthen our global leadership, consolidating sales and profitability in mature markets and expanding our culture and sales in countries with the potential for development"*.

Ana López, Marketing Director at Habanos s.a., says that one of the main achievements of the company in its 20 years of life was *"the consolidation of the company's position as a leader in the Premium cigar market on the basis of a solid marketing strategy based on product innovation, specialised distribution to final consumers, and communication, where the Habanos Festival - created in 1999 - has played a key role"*.

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About Corporación Habanos s.a.

Corporación Habanos is the world leader in the Premium cigar market (Hand made cigars). Habanos s.a. 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, 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** made with the process *Totalmente a Mano* -Totally hand made-, (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**. For more information, visit www.habanos.com.

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