



For Immediate Release

## **FORMER PATRÓN TEQUILA AND DISTRIBUTOR EXECUTIVES REUNITE TO LAUNCH NEW SPIRITS VENTURE**

*John Paul DeJoria, Ed Brown, Lee Applbaum, Brad Vassar,  
and Dave Wilson Join Together to Create Round 2 Spirits, LLC*

GEORGETOWN, TX (January 22, 2024) – The founder of Patrón Tequila, together with Patrón’s former leadership team and a past senior executive from the largest distributor in the U.S., have all reunited to launch Round 2 Spirits, LLC, a new Texas-based venture focused on developing innovative, disruptive, and iconic new spirits brands.

The founding partners of Round 2 Spirits bring years of experience across all aspects of the spirits industry, as well as consumer packaged goods and retail:

- **John Paul DeJoria**, the self-made billionaire founder of Patrón Tequila and Paul Mitchell hair care, and a passionate entrepreneur and philanthropist.
- **Ed Brown**, for more than 20 years the former Chief Executive Officer of Patrón Spirits, responsible for the brand’s \$5.1 billion acquisition in 2018 by Bacardi Limited. Brown is Chairman and CEO of Round 2 Spirits.
- **Lee Applbaum**, former Chief Marketing Officer of Patrón Tequila and Grey Goose Vodka who also formerly led marketing teams at Target Australia, Wheels Up, and Coca-Cola over his 30-year career. Applbaum is Round 2 Spirits’ President and Chief Operating Officer.
- **Brad Vassar**, who brings 37 years of senior leadership experience in the industry’s wholesale tier, was for 15 years the COO of Southern Glazer’s Wine and Spirits. He is now Chief Commercial Officer at Round 2 Spirits.

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- **Dave Wilson**, a 40-year industry veteran across manufacturing, finance/administration, and sales/marketing on both the supplier and distributor sides of the business. Wilson was formerly President International and COO of Patrón Spirits and is now Round 2 Spirits' Chief Strategy Officer.

"We had an amazing run together, Ed Brown built a world class team at Patrón and led that brand into the history books as one of the most successful spirits in the entire beverage alcohol industry," says DeJoria, who founded Patrón in 1989. "Along the way, all of us became very close and trusted friends, and we just couldn't pass up an opportunity to work together again, for a round two."

Also joining the leadership team at Round 2 Spirits is Antonio Rodriguez, the former production director at Patrón Tequila in Mexico. The company has also hired a team of industry experts in sales, marketing, and back office/logistics roles.

"In addition to our founding partners, we've brought together a team of top industry talent who all share a commitment to building high-quality, world class artisanal spirits," says Applbaum. "Our goal is to leverage our collective experience to identify scalable consumer opportunities for innovative products that aren't being addressed by today's brands. We're looking at trends across the spirits marketplace to develop and build brands that capture consumers' imagination and create memorable, shared experiences."

Round 2 Spirits is planning a national launch later this year of its first product, which will be produced at a craft distillery that the company recently acquired and have substantially upgraded to accommodate anticipated growth.

To learn more about Round 2 Spirits, please visit [www.round2spirits.com](http://www.round2spirits.com).

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