



**BOMBAY SAPPHIRE® Returns Historic Laverstoke Mill to its Former Glory;  
Opens State-of-the-art Gin Distillery & World Class Visitor Experience**

**Sneak peek into the new global brand home prior to public opening on 1 October**

LAVERSTOKE, England, September 18, 2014 -- BOMBAY SAPPHIRE®, the world's number one premium gin by value and the fastest-growing premium gin<sup>[1]</sup>, is proud to announce the doors to Laverstoke Mill - its gin distillery, visitor experience and brand home - will open to the public on 1 October, 2014.

With less than two weeks to the historic grand opening, celebrations started early yesterday with more than 200 invite-only guests experiencing an exclusive first showing of the renovated site and a spectacular unveiling of the unique glasshouses where the 10 botanicals - juniper, lemon peel, grains of paradise, coriander, cubeb berries, orris root, almonds, cassia bark, liquorice, angelica - chosen for the unique taste of Bombay Sapphire are grown on display.

The newly restored site provides an opportunity for the public to explore Laverstoke Mill as a state-of-the-art gin distillery and world-class visitor experience that marries the site's history and beauty with the highest standards in design, functionality and sustainability.

For more than 200 years, the mill produced high quality paper for the bank notes of England. The mill expanded with the growth of the British Empire. During Queen Victoria's reign, it rose prominently and Laverstoke Mill began making bank notes for England's newly acquired lands, including India. This deep-rooted heritage connects the story of England, Laverstoke Mill, India and the 1761 British recipe for Bombay Sapphire.

The two hectare former brown-field site, just 60 miles from London, is an impressive collection of 40 buildings - showcasing many fine examples of Victorian and Edwardian architectural styles. The utmost care was taken to retain as much of the original buildings as possible balanced with the modernity of the British-made spirits brand.

Reflecting on the restoration project, Global Category Director for Bombay Sapphire Ben Farlow says, "We fully respect the importance of heritage and have made every effort over the last four years to ensure Laverstoke Mill is a place that is reflective of its past, and holds the fundamental principles of creativity, integrity and beauty at its centre. It is fantastic to witness the opening of Laverstoke Mill and show-off the incredible design and splendor of the site which we are proud to call our home as it provides the perfect setting to showcase an elegant brand as Bombay Sapphire."

Laverstoke Mill has been recognised as the first distillery and first refurbishment to achieve an 'Outstanding' design-stage Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) accreditation<sup>[2]</sup> for its distillery process buildings.

"This marks the start of a new legacy for Bombay Sapphire gin. For the first time, we are opening our doors to the public and inviting them to explore the story of Bombay Sapphire," says Nik Fordham, Master Distiller of Bombay Sapphire. "We are very proud of how we craft

each and every bottle of Bombay Sapphire on site and look forward to sharing that passion and enthusiasm with the public."

Hosted by Bombay Sapphire Global Brand Ambassador Raj Nagra, guests at last night's event were treated to an evening of entertainment with live music from Britten Sinfonia - Britain's most pioneering Chamber Orchestra. The celebration culminated in a spectacular and contemporary show of lights, unveiling the two intertwining botanical glasshouses - one tropical and one temperate - which were designed in collaboration with acclaimed London designer Thomas Heatherwick and his team at Heatherwick Studio to complement the natural beauty and functionality of the site.

In a journey of self-discovery of the modern and immersive distillery experience, invited guests were encouraged to use interactive maps to explore the distillery and learn the craftsmanship and heritage behind Bombay Sapphire. Guests wandered through the botanical glasshouses and Botanical Dry Room, saw the historic Dakin Stills, uncovered the rich history of Laverstoke Mill in the Heritage Room, and ended the experience with a classic Bombay Sapphire cocktail in the beautifully designed Mill Bar alongside the River Test.

Those closest to the project served as hosts to explain the different experiences of the site including Master of Botanicals Ivano Tonutti, Master Distiller at Laverstoke Mill Nik Fordham, Estate Manager Will Brix, and designer Thomas Heatherwick. Guests learned about the gin's unique Vapour Infusion method - the delicate distillation process which captures the natural flavours of the botanicals to produce a smooth and complex-tasting gin.

"It's amazing to finally see the vision come to life. This project consumed my attention ever since Bombay Sapphire approached me with the prospect in 2010, and my team and I feel honoured to have been part of such an incredible journey," adds Heatherwick. "The unique distillation process, alongside the sheer wealth of heritage associated with the site, fascinated me and provided the perfect inspiration to create a centerpiece worthy of such an incredible project."

The Bombay Sapphire Distillery at Laverstoke Mill also features the Empire Room, a new advocacy and training centre to educate the world's top bartenders. Tailored brand education master classes will be hosted here for trade and media guests from all over the world, offering an incredible learning experience and opportunity to understand and share in the core values at the heart of Bombay Sapphire.

For more information about the Bombay Sapphire Distillery at Laverstoke Mill and to book tickets, visit <http://www.distillery.bombaysapphire.com>.

<sup>[1]</sup>Data sourced by IWSR (International Wine and Spirit Research\*), for the 12 months to the end of December 2013.

<sup>[2]</sup>Rating granted in accordance with 2008 BREEAM criteria.

## Editors Notes

- Laverstoke Mill was recorded as a corn mill in the famous Domesday book of 1086 - the grand survey by William the Conqueror to assess all his newly claimed land.
- Between 1719 and the 1950's, Laverstoke Mill was owned by a single family, the Portal family.

- Laverstoke Mill expanded with the growth of the British Empire. During Queen Victoria's reign, it rose prominently and Laverstoke Mill began making the paper for the bank notes for England and then its newly acquired lands.
- As Queen Victoria pushed farther to include exotic and far away India, the mill created paper for India's bank notes as well. At this time history connects England, Laverstoke Mill and gin.
- English gin gained notoriety when the classic gin and tonic was created in British Colonial India. Tonic contained the quinine believed to fend off malaria and its bitter taste was smoothed by the flavourful gin.
- To evoke this period of significant gin history, BOMBAY® Original and BOMBAY SAPPHIRE® were given their names and Queen Victoria, Empress of India, was emboldened on the label.
- Laverstoke Mill reaped the bounty and hired the most prominent architects of the era to build a showcase for fine bank note paper production.
- Bombay Sapphire has been a success story since it was acquired by family-owned Bacardi. The strategic focus on respecting brand heritage, authenticity and superior quality enabled the brand to grow faster than all other major international premium gins - making Bombay Sapphire the top-valued premium gin in the world.
- Bacardi owns a portfolio of world-class brands and has a well-known track record of maintaining the unique heritage of the origin of its brands through various visitor centres.

#### **About BOMBAY SAPPHIRE®**

Bombay Sapphire is the fastest growing of the major premium gin brands and the world's number one premium gin by value. Based on a secret 1761 recipe, Bombay Sapphire gin is created by perfectly balancing a unique combination of 10 hand-selected exotic botanicals from around the world. The natural flavours of the botanicals are captured through a delicate distillation process called Vapour Infusion which results in the tantalising, smooth and complex taste that is Bombay Sapphire.

The Bombay Sapphire brand is part of the portfolio of Bacardi Limited, headquartered in Hamilton, Bermuda. Bacardi Limited refers to the Bacardi group of companies, including Bacardi International Limited.

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