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Asahi Beverages partners with South Australian distillery Never Never to shake up (and stir) Australian premium spirits

Asahi Beverages has acquired super-premium distillery Never Never, one of Australia's most highly-awarded gin brands, which has grown rapidly since its inception.

Never Never launched in 2016 when three mates - George Georgiadis, Tim Boast and Sean Baxter - turned their passion into a business and started distilling gin out of an Adelaide shed. The brand has since picked up a number of awards – including World's Best at the World Gin Awards and three consecutive wins as Champion Australian Distiller at the Australian Distilled Spirits Awards.

Never Never's home is on top of Chalk Hill in the spectacular region of McLaren Vale, South Australia, where it produces its gins such as Triple Juniper and Oyster Shell. Bartenders and gin-lovers alike have embraced Never Never's flavour concentration, innovation and obsession with quality – which distinguish it from other brands in Australia's \$3.8 billion premium spirits segment.

Asahi Beverages Group CEO Amanda Sellers said: "We are acquiring Never Never because we recognise Never Never's incredible brand and success. Combining Asahi's reach with Never Never's amazing portfolio, extensive spirits knowledge and capability will enhance the value proposition for our customers."

Never Never will be sold through Asahi's alcohol division Carlton & United Breweries.

CUB CEO Danny Celoni said: "Our two companies are a terrific fit. Never Never's rapid growth has been driven by premium products, commitment to quality and strong hospitality offering - attributes we share. Adding a high-quality, Australian-made gin to our range plugs an important gap in our offering and complements our leading multi-beverage portfolio.

"We can't wait to start offering this product to our customers and through our distribution network to help this internationally-recognised Aussie gin achieve the scale it deserves."

Never Never Managing Director and Co-Founder George Georgiadis said: "When we founded Never Never, our vision was to create exciting and innovative gin that competed with the biggest brands in Australia and pushed the boundaries of what's possible. This partnership allows us to realise our vision by helping change, and also grow, Australia's gin market, where around 80% of gin Australians drink is imported – despite Australia being home to some absolutely cracking gin brands.

"With their consumer brand-expertise and deep customer relationships, Asahi will help grow Never Never in a way which we've always aspired to. Our values have been crucial in building our brand, and align incredibly strongly with the values and culture of Asahi Beverages."

The three co-founders have been front and centre of the brand since day one and will remain in their roles. The acquisition won't have any effect on day-to-day operations but will allow Never Never to be available to a broader range of customers, and provide better support and offerings for existing customers and consumers.

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ABOUT ASAHI BEVERAGES

Asahi Beverages is a part of Asahi Group Holdings, a global leader in alcohol and non-alcohol beverages and food. AGH is headquartered in Japan and listed on the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

Asahi Beverages is Oceania's leading beverages company.

We produce many of Australia and New Zealand's favourite alcohol and nonalcohol beverages – some with histories stretching back to the 19th century. We have an ambitious innovation and sustainability agenda and while producing the very best drinks.

ABOUT NEVER NEVER

Never Never's home is on top of Chalk Hill in the spectacular region of McLaren Vale, South Australia. They welcome about 85,000 visitors a year and employ about 15 people fulltime and around 30 casual workers.

Never Never's signature product is Triple Juniper Gin – a modern classic made for the best G&Ts and classic cocktails. Oyster Shell Gin is Never Never's number 2 product, quickly gaining popularity with mixed and martini serves. Ginache – Grenache Gin rounds out the top three, a great supper and mixer infused with McLaren Vale grenache grapes.

The Never Never is the space beyond the Never Never and between the stars: where two worlds collide to create something magical. To step into it takes a sense of adventure, ambition and real imagination. To get there we have pushed the boundaries of what's possible and shaken up the global gin industry with flavour innovation and a bold, fearless attitude.