

## Distiller-Owned

An Interview with Eric Brass, Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder, Tequila Tromba



Eric Brass

**EDITORS' NOTE** Eric Brass grew up in Toronto, Canada with ambitions of entering the world of finance and making his mark with an eye for detail and sharp fiscal reasoning. Moving to Guadalajara, Mexico for a six-month university exchange program in 2005, he struck an immediate friendship with Australian roommate Nick Reid and later with James Sherry. Enticed by the culture, the land, and the people, it was over sips of tequila that a passion for the agave spirit was born and an idea to educate the greater populace on the nuances of truly remarkable tequila emerged. From passionate intent, the storm of Tromba began to build under the guidance of Master Distiller Marco Cedano and his son, Rodrigo.

**COMPANY BRIEF** Tequila Tromba (tequila.tromba.com), named for the intense rainstorms that rejuvenate the agave fields of the Jalisco Highlands, emerged when a group of young tequila lovers teamed up with the original Master Distiller of premium tequila, Marco Cedano. Building the brand out of their backpacks bottle by bottle, bar by bar, they remain uniquely distiller-owned and have become one of the world's top craft tequilas. Their entrepreneurial spirit, obsession for quality, and passion to change the way the world sees tequila has

brought them to where they are today – and they look to celebrate their commitment to craftsmanship in every sip. Tromba currently sells Blanco, Reposado, Añejo, and Extra Añejo tequilas and is sold in North America and Australia.

**What was the vision for creating Tequila Tromba and how is the brand positioned in the industry?**

Tequila Tromba was created to bring accessibility to ultra-premium, high-quality tequila. When we started Tromba, we knew we had to have a great Mexican pedigree behind us. We partnered with Marco Cedano, who was the original Master Distiller of Don Julio and, this year, is celebrating his 50th year making tequila. This not only makes our production special, but makes us a distiller-owned tequila. We strongly believe that true craft requires a true craftsman.

**You did not come from the spirits industry. What interested you in building a tequila brand and made you feel there was an opportunity and need in the market?**

I've always had an entrepreneurial itch and I saw a gap in the tequila market. Not being an



Tequila Tromba Reposado



Tequila Tromba Añejo

industry veteran turned into a bit of a competitive advantage because it allowed me to look at each problem differently and not with the conventional wisdom. I wasn't going to outspend our big competitors, but I was going to outlove our customers by thinking and acting differently.

**How do you explain tequila to a person who has never experienced the spirit, and do you feel that there is still a stigma around tequila?**

I would say that stigma is passing very quickly. When I used to do training and asked "who has a bad tequila story" – 75 percent of the room would raise their hands. Today, it's closer to 10 percent. Tequila is the second most premium spirit on the planet, after cognac. If you would have told me that would happen five years ago, you may as well have said that we would be living on the moon. However, I always believed that if high-quality tequila was being brought to market, people would fall in love with tequila the way I did all those years ago down in Guadalajara.

**What have been the keys to Tequila Tromba's growth in the industry?**

We have one of the world's best master distillers who is also an owner – which makes our devotion to quality and craft incredible. It's like a chef preparing a meal for his family with the effort and expertise being put into their craft. In terms of how we look at the marketplace – our devotion to the bartending world has been a key success factor. We really focus on telling our story to the hospitality world and having the bartending community be unofficial brand ambassadors for Tromba.

**How critical is it for Tequila Tromba to continue to innovate and where is innovation taking place for the brand?**

It's key. The education and knowledge of consumers in the tequila segment is growing at



*Tequila Tromba Blanco*

a rapid rate and we want to fulfill their need in a way in which Marco's 50 years of experience can. We have two new innovation items coming this year – stay tuned.

**Will you provide an overview of Tequila Tromba's product offerings?**

We have our core line – Blanco, Reposado (aged for a minimum of six months) and Añejo (aged for two years).

We offer a single cask line where customers can curate their own barrel of Tequila Tromba Reposado or Añejo and have their name/logo on the bottle. This has been a resounding success and customers love to taste through the nuances of the different

barrel offerings and find the tequila that fits their palate.

We released a limited, highly allocated amount of our Extra Añejo which is aged for four years and really displays what those extra years in a barrel can do to add complexity and flavor to our tequila.

In 2023, we will be bringing our Cedano line to the market. Named after our Master Distiller, Marco Cedano, this tequila is celebrating his 50th year making tequila. The Cedano line will have some production techniques that have never been used in the world of tequila.

**How do you define the Tequila Tromba difference and what sets the brand apart in the tequila space?**

The craft and expertise that goes into producing every bottle of Tequila Tromba. Most of our competitors are using third parties to just buy their tequila and package the product. We are a distiller-owned tequila brand and having control of every step of our production process allows us these incredible advantages. ●



*Tequila Tromba XA*



*Tequila Tromba Reposado Single Cask*