

A Portfolio Of Brands

An Interview with Scott Jove, President, Shaw-Ross International Importers

EDITORS' NOTE Scott Jove joined Shaw-Ross as Manager, Commercial Strategy, in 2015, and was named VP Sales and Marketing in 2017, bringing a fresh perspective to the commercial team at Shaw-Ross. Before joining Shaw-Ross, Jove spent time in the financial services industry with Grant Thornton and in management consulting with AT Kearney. He gained his alcohol beverage industry experience working at Southern Wine & Spirits of America. A licensed attorney in the state of Florida, Jove brings a unique skill set to Shaw-Ross, which enabled him to take a major role in the recent restructuring of the company. Jove holds a BA from Duke University and both a JD and an MBA from the University of Miami.



Scott Jove

COMPANY BRIEF Founded in 1968 as a boutique wine and spirit importer representing a handful of brands, Shaw-Ross (shawross.com) has grown into one of the U.S.' leading importers representing nearly 40 suppliers from around the world whose brands enjoy full national distribution through a network of outstanding wholesalers. By concentrating on building a balanced portfolio of wine and spirits that cover the spectrum from small boutique gems to powerhouse volume brands, Shaw-Ross is able to offer a wide range of interesting and unique products that are relevant in today's ever-changing environment.

How do you define Shaw-Ross' mission and purpose?

Shaw-Ross is a family-owned importer of alcohol beverages proudly representing a portfolio of wine, spirits, and sake suppliers from around the world. We offer a full range of services including commercial, operational, and compliance while integrating our brands into our national network of distributor partners. In the three-tier system that regulates alcohol beverages in America, we have the scale to meaningfully call on the nation's largest distributors on behalf of our independent supplier partners.

What excited you about the opportunity to lead Shaw-Ross and made you feel it was the right fit?

I was excited about the opportunity to lead Shaw-Ross into the future, building on an incredible legacy and culture that Bruce Hunter instilled over the past 25-plus years. Being part of the team that incubated and accelerated Whispering Angel in the U.S. market up until it was acquired by Moët Hennessey in 2020, I've had an incredible experience with the company. Shaw-Ross also imports several category leading brands such as Gekkeikan sake and Reál Sangria, which is another very exciting aspect of the opportunity. It's exciting to take over a portfolio of brands that is already thriving and look forward to continuing that growth well into the future.

Will you discuss your focus on the premiumization of the Shaw-Ross portfolio?

Our portfolio continues to premiumize with the addition of high-end wines and super-premium spirits. Over the past year, we have added the rights to Seña and the Viñedo Familia Chadwick on the wine side and pick up





Hemingway Rye, Papas Pilar Rum, and Crystal Head Vodka. As the consumer continues to lean into higher-end products, we at Shaw-Ross adjust our focus to fit the market needs and trends.

Will you highlight Shaw-Ross' expansion of the Japanese category and prioritization of legacy brands such as La Scolca, Frescobaldi, and Seña?

We are the proud category leading importer of sake in America, representing over 50 percent of the market share according to Nielsen. Gekkeikan sake is the category leading brand in the U.S., and we are doing over half-a-million cases per year. We also bought Tyku from Diageo last year, which is well known for its distinct packaging, and we are excited to relaunch the brand at the beginning of 2025. Beyond sake, as Japanese spirits continue to gain popularity with the U.S. consumer, we are excited to have recently added iichiko Shochu to our portfolio. Iichiko sells over 7 million cases in Japan, and we are excited to build the Japanese shochu category in America with a strong focus on mixology and bartender engagement.

As a family-owned importer, we are proud to represent family-owned wineries and find that our values usually align. With that in mind, we are focused on providing a full-service route to market for overseas family-owned wine producers including Frescobaldi, La Scolca, Marques de Riscal, Sartori di Verona, and Rapaura Springs, among others.

What have been the keys to the strength of Shaw-Ross and how do you describe the Shaw-Ross difference?

The key to success at Shaw-Ross is our people and the family culture. We take pride in creating a collaborative work environment, with an open-door policy at the office ensuring that everybody has a voice and feels comfortable enough to be heard. We have an incredible family here at Shaw-Ross, with 20-plus year veterans of the company as well as newly hired employees who bring a new energy and perspective to the company as we continue to evolve.

Did you know at an early age that you had a passion to work in the wine and spirits industry?

I have always known that I wanted to work in the wine and spirits industry. My grandfather founded Shaw-Ross back in 1968 and growing up with him as my mentor, I always wanted to be like and learn from him. After spending many years working in the industry and learning what areas resonated most with me, I found my passion in representing brands and bringing them to market. I'm proud to be the first family member to work at Shaw-Ross, and I strive every day to continue my family legacy.

What are your priorities for Shaw-Ross as you look to the future?

Looking to the future, Shaw-Ross' major priorities are to remain focused on working with family-owned prestigious wine suppliers from around the world while expanding our premium craft spirit portfolio into new and exciting categories. As always, our priority remains our people and to that end reinvesting our time and resources into the Shaw-Ross Family will always be a core value of the company. ●

