

THE SPIRITS BUSINESS

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New vistas



Game of
Tariffs put the
market on edge

Fighting
Cognac brands
invigorate the

RYE WHISKY

Brooklyn's finest

BCB Brooklyn continues to grow year on year, with the 2025 showcase primed to welcome a huge number of visitors and exhibitors

Each June, Brooklyn's Industry City buzzes with excitement as bartenders and other drinks professionals flock to New York for BCB Brooklyn. The drinks and drink-based discussions will be flowing this year on 10 and 11 June, with a robust education schedule and author's spotlight offered alongside an ever-expanding show floor.

There is a moment of anticipation and wonder that event vice-president Jackie Williams loves to witness each year, as attendees make their way past registration and towards BCB Brooklyn's iconic large red letters. "My favourite moment of any trade show is as soon as you open the doors because people are coming in and they say:

"I've been really excited about this, and now I'm looking up, and we're here," she says.

Williams, who has been in the trade show industry for close to two decades, says she will sometimes stand on the elevated ledge in one of the courtyards and watch as people reconnect with industry friends, or see an online connection in person for the first time.

LARGE PRESENCE

Last year's BCB Brooklyn was the largest to date, with more than 5,300 industry professionals attending, an increase of 18% from the previous year. There were 230 exhibiting brands present, with people on the floor representing 47 US states and 48 countries. "It's really nice to see the growth outside of the tri-state area

continuing to evolve," Williams says, noting that the event staged 52 education sessions, hosted 132 speakers, and poured 550,000 drinks or samples.

With weeks to go until the 2025 convention takes place, Williams says she and her team are starting to get renderings of brand booths and finalising ways to bring the community together.

This year will see the return of a VIP lounge, offering special ticket holders a place to sit, cool off, and chat in a more relaxed setting. There will be exclusive content sessions in the VIP space called 'crafted conversations'. "We haven't had a VIP lounge since before the pandemic," Williams says.

BCB Brooklyn will also hold a first-timers meet-up for those new to the convention.

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It is part of an effort to make the show easier to navigate, alongside increased signage and an interactive floorplan on the website.

BARTENDERS SHINE

This year, Williams hopes to better emphasise the acclaimed bartenders making drinks on the BCB floor, with names like Dale DeGroff and Tony Abou-Ganim gracing last year's floor, at times alongside one another.

"It's always amazing to see legends like that showcasing their craft and their skills," Williams says. "I have a trick up my sleeve I'm hoping to be able to bring to fruition to make that a little bit more front and centre."

At the same time, BCB Brooklyn attracts social media stars who represent a new frontier in cocktail creation, and a chance to catch drinks trends and the people who fuel them live and in-person. "Networking is great on social networks," Williams says, "but it's even more special when we're able to do it in person."

LOW AND NO

Williams says to expect a larger no-and-low presence on the show floor and in the educational slate, including 'Exploring the Overlooked Practicalities of Running an N/A Beverage Program' on the Tuesday, and 'Hacking Non-Alcoholic Cocktails – Science, Systems, and Service' on the Wednesday. There are also two exhibitor-only sessions planned for Monday, which are both focused on no and low.

This year, BCB Brooklyn has also teamed up with Women of the Vine & Spirits and Diverse Power Brands for a Brand Accelerator Pitch Competition designed to spotlight innovation, creativity, brand story, and market potential. Eligible brands must be an emerging-brands-pavilion exhibitor at BCB Brooklyn, a first-time exhibitor, or a company under five years old.

"At the end of the day, how are we as BCB Brooklyn, helping businesses build their business?" Williams asks. "In addition to creating more value for our customers and elevating the on-site experience, that's what our team is really focused on."

