



NEW OPPORTUNITIES: Victoria Miller, right, founder of Sip Seekers.

Opening door to rare access to distilleries

BY BRIAN STORMONT

Scottish drinks tourism platform Sip Seekers has launched Sip Seekers Unlocked, a new series of limited-capacity experiences giving whisky lovers rare access to distilleries and parts of Scotland's drinks industry they would not ordinarily be able to visit.

The concept will see Sip Seekers work directly with producers to create one-off or limited experiences at working distilleries not normally open to the public, alongside unusual behind-the-scenes access beyond conventional visitor programmes.

And the first gates to be unlocked are at one of Scotland's most intriguing new single malt distilleries.

On Thursday October 8, just 10 whisky lovers will be invited inside Aberargie Distillery in Perthshire for a two-hour experience hosted by the distillery's head of production, Graeme Mackeddie.

Normally closed to the public, Aberargie has no conventional visitor centre

or daily tour programme. Guests will step inside the working distillery, explore its production areas and maturation warehouse, and taste new make spirit, an exclusive warehouse sample and Aberargie's newly released whiskies at the place they were made.

The independent, family-owned distillery began production in 2017 on the Morrison family's 300-acre farm just south of Perth, following a genuine barley-to-bottle philosophy, with barley grown on the surrounding estate.

After years of maturation, Aberargie released its inaugural single malt in 2026.

And on September 15, it will launch the first two whiskies in its new Expressions range, exploring the influence of two estate-grown barley varieties – heritage variety Golden Promise and modern variety Laureate.

Taking place just weeks later, Unlocked will give guests the opportunity to taste both new expressions at their source, alongside

new make spirit and a warehouse tasting.

For Sip Seekers founder Victoria Miller, Aberargie demonstrates the wider opportunity behind Unlocked: expanding Scottish whisky tourism beyond the traditional visitor-centre model.

"Scotland has more than 150 operating Scotch whisky distilleries, each with its own people, place and story behind it," she said.

"At Sip Seekers, we want to proudly shine a light on those stories and everything that makes whisky so special, right across Scotland."

The launch comes as Scotland's whisky industry navigates a challenging global trading environment, making opportunities to diversify revenue and deepen direct consumer relationships increasingly important.

Scotch Whisky exports were worth more than £5.3 billion in 2025, but declined during the year amid challenging global trading conditions.

Applied Nutrition hikes outlook as sales jump 50% despite pressures

Applied Nutrition has hiked its earnings outlook thanks to a 50% surge in sales and forecast more growth over the year ahead despite pressure from rising whey prices.

The health and wellness brand – which is backed by TV personality Coleen Rooney – said it now expects annual underlying earnings to jump by 40% to around £43.3 million after sales soared to £160m in the year to July 31, up from £107m the previous year.

This compares with previous expectations for earnings of £42m and revenues of £148.4m for the full year.

It said that since June 1, trading had remained strong with "sustained demand across the group's markets and channels".

Applied Nutrition added it is set for further solid growth in the year to July next year, upping its guidance to £47.7m in underlying earnings,



Applied Nutrition expects earnings to rise by 40%.

which would mark a 13% rise, and sales of about £205m.

But it cautioned that profitability would be knocked next year as it faces rising costs of whey, which now is used in a greater proportion of products. The Liverpool-based group recently relaunched its Critical Whey range to tap into rising demand.

It said underlying earnings margins would fall slightly in 2026-27.

Applied Nutrition's earnings upgrade comes in spite of the firm cautioning in March that sales volumes would be impacted across the Middle East because of the Iran war.

The group is set to report full-year figures on November 16.



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