

ARI set to spend \$10m on T1 shops



Aer Rianta International is spending €8m (\$10m) on new shops at Dublin Airport's Terminal 1 in one of its biggest Irish investments to date.

This will also include opening one of the biggest whisk(e)y stores in Europe carrying brands with origins from all over the world when the new store opens on January 23 next year.

In an interview in Dublin with TRBusiness earlier this month, Aer Rianta International CEO Jack MacGowan said: "You'll have seen a lot of boards as you walk through [Dublin Airport] today a lot of the shops are under construction."



He said the new whisk(e)y shop is one

of the biggest projects the retailer has been working on within the mix of shops and the ARI team is 'most excited' about this new concept.

MacGowan said that Dublin's existing Irish Whiskey Collection concept won an award back in 2011 and this and many other initiatives have been all part of ARI's exercise in 'lifting a lot of our staff expertise up to what we call ambassador level from 'expert level'.

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In the interim prior to the new shops opening, ARI has managed to fit all of its brands into a smaller space, which MacGowan says means that it's a bit cluttered at present. He said ARI has also added staff to help customers shop.

BUILDING ON STRONG SPENDS

He said proudly: "The disruption effect, which would normally have been 15-20% is being kept to a minimum – around about 5% in T1 and that, we think, is a fantastic result for the team."

ARI has also been building the spend per passenger, which MacGowan describes as 'pretty high' already and this 'has been helped what he describes as 'a strong focus on the Dublin-London route and the key routes of Dublin-North America, Dublin-Dubai and Abu Dhabi'.



He said that a lot of attention has been paid to the ranges of

products made available to passengers on these routes and this has also paid off.

He added: "The other thing we're doing that is very interesting is something for the kids. This is a shop called Candy Cloud, so it is bringing together gifting, toys and guilt and buying kids a toy as a present – because it's actually not done very well as a concept.

"It's a bit of a Willy Wonka-type image, but it's fantastic. That's just two of our things and we're redoing our perfumery and a couple of other little things on wine, so that's an absolutely fantastic new story for Irish consumers".

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[An in-depth one-to-one interview with Jack MacGowan conducted in Dublin earlier this month can be found in 'The World's Top 10 Operators 2013' report, accompanying the October 2014 issue of The Travel Retail Business].

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