



PRESS RELEASE

Spadel invests in The Mocktail Club, a start-up active in the booming non-alcoholic cocktail sector

Brussels, 7 November 2023 - The Source, the Spadel Group's venture capital fund, today announced that it has acquired a stake in The Mocktail Club. Founded by sisters Marie and Kaat Claessens, this Belgian start-up specialises in the highly promising segment of alcohol-free cocktails (or mocktails) based on natural, low-calorie ingredients. This investment will help The Mocktail Club to accelerate its development in the Benelux and increase its presence in supermarkets and restaurants. This investment is fully in line with The Source's vision of providing financial and strategic support to innovative start-ups in the beverage sector, thereby contributing to their growth.

In 2015, Marie Claessens, a young alcohol-intolerant woman from Antwerp, decided to launch a blog on which she shared her original recipes for mocktails. The website was a huge success, but many of Marie's followers pointed out that they didn't always have the time to make these cocktails themselves. So in 2017, the aspiring entrepreneur decided to give them a helping hand by making the mocktails herself and selling them in 1-litre bottles, so they could easily be shared with friends. Since then, The Mocktail Club has been a runaway success. Since 2019, the year Kaat Claessens joined the company alongside her sister Marie, the volume has increased tenfold and the company has sold over 430,000 bottles in total.

Mocktails are a fast-growing segment. According to a recent study published by IWSR, the global market for alcohol-free ready-to-drinks is set to grow by 14% every year until 2025. More and more consumers are looking for healthy, tasty alternatives to alcoholic beverages, either because they don't drink alcohol at all, or because they want to reduce their consumption of alcoholic beverages without giving up the pleasure of enjoying a cocktail. *"We're targeting all consumers who don't drink alcohol or want to live more balanced lives and still enjoy a night out with friends without feeling left out,"* explains Marie Claessens. *"Today, people who don't drink alcohol quickly find themselves with just a glass of water or orange juice. Together with my sister Kaat, we're delighted to be able to meet this growing demand by offering excellent, ready-to-drink mocktails, produced in Belgium and made with fresh, local and mostly organic ingredients."*

A partnership that's not just financial

The Mocktail Club now offers 9 unique blends made from natural ingredients, with no artificial flavors, no concentrates, and only unrefined sugar. These include a combination of elderflower and basil, apple and thyme, as well as grapefruit and vanilla. These products are available at Colruyt and independent Delhaize stores, as well as in some twenty Michelin-starred restaurants, a large number of gourmet restaurants and many specialist retail outlets. Thanks to the financial resources and expertise provided by The Source and Spadel, the



ambition is to move up a gear in the coming years. *“Today, we are best known in Flanders, but our aim is to strengthen our presence in French-speaking Belgium and the Netherlands, before expanding distribution to other European countries”,* Kaat Claessens points out. *“In the months and years to come, we want to extend the availability of our mocktails in supermarkets and also be present in more restaurants.”*

The collaboration between The Mocktail Club and Spadel is more than just a financial investment. The aim is for the two companies to grow together in the fast-growing market for non-alcoholic cocktails and alcohol replacers, which are taking up more and more space on supermarket shelves and on the menus of cafés and restaurants.

“We are delighted to be able to support The Mocktail Club in its expansion ambitions in the Benelux and beyond,” says Clément Yvorra, Global Business Development Manager at Spadel. *“We were won over by Marie and Kaat’s personal story, their entrepreneurial spirit and the quality of their products. Our aim now is to help them grow with our expertise in the beverage market. We may also consider helping The Mocktail Club with the distribution of their mocktails.”*

The investment round in which The Source participated was also supported by two other business angels: Famille Jan Haspeslagh and Gil Dumarey.

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About Spadel

Spadel is a European family-owned group whose mission is to offer consumers natural solutions to their hydration and refreshment needs throughout their lives. It markets brands of natural mineral water, spring water and refreshing drinks based on natural mineral water: Spa and Bru in Benelux, Devin in Bulgaria, Wattwiller and Carola in France. Sustainable development is a natural part of the Spadel Group's DNA. In 2022, the Spadel Group achieved a turnover of 320.8 million euros. At the end of 2022, the group employed 1,329 people.

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