



31 May 2007

Tragus acquires leading Italian chain, Strada

Tragus Limited (Tragus), one of the largest mid-market restaurant chain operators in the UK, is pleased to announce its acquisition of Strada for a total consideration of £140m. Debt facilities were provided by Barclays Capital and Tragus was advised on the transaction by Rothschild. Tragus will acquire all of Strada's 50 contemporary Strada Italian restaurants and an additional 5 units trading as Belgo and Bierodrome. The Strada business operates primarily on the UK high street and has strong growth potential with a good pipeline of quality sites. Tragus sees ample opportunity to grow the business from its current level to circa 150 units in the UK.

Tragus management believes the Strada chain of restaurants, with its premium quality offering of fresh Italian dishes, will enhance the Group's fast-growing portfolio of restaurant brands including Café Rouge and Bella Italia. The addition of a contemporary Italian chain to the existing Tragus portfolio will greatly increase the Group's position in the casual dining sector, an area that continues to grow in popularity. In particular, Strada offers a premium position in the Italian restaurant sector and complements Tragus' existing Bella Italia brand.

This is the second acquisition Tragus has made under Blackstone's ownership and follows the acquisition of 16 MA Potters sites in February 2007. The enlarged business with over 230 outlets is well positioned to continue its success and strong growth in the French and Italian restaurant sectors.

Graham Turner, CEO of Tragus, said: "We are delighted to have acquired such a high quality and well recognised brand with real growth potential. We believe there is significant benefit to combining the Strada business within the Tragus group and continuing the Strada story of consistent high quality growth."

Enquiries

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Notes to Editors

Tragus Limited (Tragus) is one of the largest mid-market restaurant chain operators in the UK, with 234 sites across the country serving over 14 million meals every year. Tragus operates primarily under the Café Rouge, Bella Italia and Strada formats in the UK.

www.tragusgroup.com

Café Rouge (89 sites), www.caferouge.co.uk

Café Rouge is the UK's only established national French restaurant brand, with sites designed to provide the look and feel of a classic Parisian bistro and a menu that includes steak frites, moules and tarte tatin. Café Rouge is predominantly a high street brand but it also operates successfully within a retail and concessionary environment.

Bella Italia (68 sites), www.bellaitalia.co.uk

Bella Italia is an all-day Italian trattoria with a rustic ambience. Its restaurants are in prime locations predominantly on the high street but it also operates from leisure park sites. In addition to classic pizzas and pasta its broad menu also includes a range of grill, main courses, sandwiches and salads.

Strada (55 Sites), www.strada.co.uk, www.belgo-restaurants.com

Strada (50) is a group of contemporary Italian restaurants located on the high street serving good quality, simple, freshly prepared dishes using the finest seasonal produce available. The menu offers hand stretched pizzas, fresh pastas, risotto and grilled meat and fish dishes. Belgo and Bierodrome (5) offer traditional Belgian food accompanied by the widest selection of Belgian beers in funky surroundings.

Ortega (5 sites), www.ortegatapas.co.uk

Ortega is a tapas bar and cantina with a unique atmosphere that captures all the passion and spirit of eating and drinking in Spain. Ortega offers an extensive and authentic tapas offering along with delicious paellas, steaks and seafood main courses. The bar serves traditional Spanish drinks such as Sangria alongside a selection of wines, lagers and classic cocktails.

Brasseries (19 sites)

Tragus also operates 19 brasseries under the brands Amalfi, Oriel, MA Potters and Abbaye.

Blackstone Group Limited

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