

# Benchmark's Annual Conference: Private Label Wines and Best Hotel Rankings

by [Maria Lisella](#) / April 04, 2019



*Virginia's Lansdowne Resort and Spa will return to its Benchmark Resorts & Hotels portfolio.  
Photo: Benchmark/Matthew Flowers Photography*

At Benchmark Global Hospitality's annual conference, and amid kudos from U.S. News & World Report for 22 properties in the Benchmark Resorts & Hotels and Gemstone Collection, CEO Alex Cabañas talked about the company's most recent "passion project," the development of a private label wine that will be made exclusively for the hospitality company.

A partnership was established between Benchmark Global Hospitality and Scheid Family Wines, one of California's largest producers of wine and a leader in the development of Monterey's thriving wine industry. Patrick Berwald, vice president food & beverage at Benchmark, said, "We are tremendously proud to bring our guests a truly special product that is 100 percent estate-grown and sustainably farmed." Scheid Family Wines' nationally distributed portfolio of brands includes Scheid Vineyards, District 7, Metz Road, and Ryder Estate.

In other news at the annual conference, the return of Virginia's Lansdowne Resort and Spa to its Benchmark Resorts & Hotels portfolio was announced. The award-winning property is located in Leesburg, just 30 miles from Washington, D.C., and 15 minutes from Dulles International Airport, in Virginia's bucolic wine and equestrian country. Lansdowne Resort and Spa joins two sister properties in Virginia, including the historic Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center in the Blue Ridge Mountains, and The Inn at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg.

Another notable development was the debut of The Kartrite Resort & Indoor Waterpark — located in Monticello, in New York's Catskill Mountains — which will open in May 2019 on 1,600 wooded acres, the site of the Resorts World Catskills entertainment complex. In addition, Benchmark took over the management of the historic Spruce Point Inn in Maine, which is a retreat that started as a

hunting and fishing lodge in the late 1800s; and the addition of the Hilton University of Florida Conference Center at Gainesville.

More than half of Benchmark's business is comprised of the leisure market, with the balance a combination of meetings, incentives, signature events and conference business. The company develops, manages and markets independent soft-branded and experiential resorts, hotels, and conference centers under the banners of Benchmark Resorts & Hotels; its lifestyle and luxury Gemstone Collection; and Benchmark Conference Center division etc.venues, which provides city center venues. Etc.venues announced the establishment of an additional 16 venues throughout the UK, including in London, Manchester, and Birmingham. Additionally, 2-3 more venues are expected to open in the New York City's Financial District this year.

Earlier this year, the U.S. News and World Report 2019 Best Hotels ranking was announced and included Benchmark properties. Spanning 15 states and the Caribbean, honors went to three Silver Badge winners that placed in the Top 30 percent of all ranked luxury hotels within a destination. They include Villas of Grand Cypress in Orlando, which placed 13th in the Orlando-Walt Disney World market. Benchmark's newest hotel, La Cantera Resort & Spa in San Antonio, placed 7th in San Antonio. In the Caribbean, Santa Barbara Beach & Golf Resort placed 2nd in Curacao.