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GOOD NIGHT MR. LEWIS

An Interview with Gerber Group's Mystery Man, Scott Gerber

By Steve Lewis

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A few years back, when I was a partner in SLDesign, I had the pleasure of working with Scott and Rande Gerber, who hired us to work on their rooftop at the [W Hotel Buckhead](#). Rande Gerber is, of course, that former ex-model who is married to Cindy Crawford and is the face of such brands as the [Whiskey](#), [Whiskey Blue](#), [Whiskey Sky](#), [Whiskey Park](#), [Whiskey Bar and Grill](#), [Wetbar](#), [Underbar](#)...you get the idea. He also heads up those [Stone Rose](#) joints. With somewhere near 30 properties worldwide, Gerber Group is one of the world's top hospitality brands. *Cont...*

The Gerber group just opened three new venues in the new W Santiago and a Stone Rose Bar and Grill at the JFK Delta terminal. They also offer the midnight bar collection, which is a complete line of seven essential cocktail mixers “made with all the finest all natural ingredients.” With all these amazing achievements and projected developments, Rande Gerber and the Gerber group are household names. However, my Chihuahua has almost as much name recognition as Rande’s brother and partner Scott Gerber.

A google search of his name took me to a ton of Rande links. But Scott Gerber is responsible for directing all of the business operations, including new business development, negotiating partnerships, liaison with property owners, overseeing management and coordinating construction of the properties. He is a gentleman and a scholar with a BS in finance from the University of Arizona. I caught up with Scott yesterday and shot him a couple of questions. He’s a very busy guy.

I googled you and found practically nothing. It basically just refers people to your brother Rande or the Gerber group. Why do you prefer being in the background?

It’s much safer that way. [Laughs]. I run the business end of the business. Rande is more involved with the design and aesthetic.

We all know that Rande is much more than just a pretty face. Is there a clear separation of duties?

Yes, there’s a clear delineation. Rande wouldn’t get involved with the day-to-day operations.

How many places are you operating and how many more are in the works?

We operate 30 properties and we’re having conversations about 10 more. Probably we’ll start up 5 of these this year.

This JFK Stone Rose Bar and Grill fascinates me. Nowhere in my experience is food and service worse than at an airport. I guess that’s changing. Tell me about your synergy with Delta.

Our [midnight bar collection](#) is being served on Delta flights. Instead of just getting a little bottle and a mixer we make margaritas and cosmos. We

teamed with Delta on this and it’s an in-flight revolution. I travel every other week and I know what has been available to a traveler. Were often waiting for a plane for one, two or even five hours. At Stone Rose we have a full bar and menu so you have a relaxed and stylish spot while you are waiting. Our menu gives you a great sandwich or steak and a variety of bites like buffalo mozzarella salad, buffalo wings. Much more than the typical traveling fare.

I guess with increased security we are all forced to spend more time in the airports waiting. Did that extra time factor into your decision to open an airport location?

Of course. Travelers are told to be there two hours before their flight. Everyone comes at least one hour early. We wanted to provide something besides the cheesy places that are currently the norm. You can now get a great drink and food while you wait for your plane. Delta asked us to get involved as they try to take their brand more upscale. They even have David Barton exercise facilities at their terminal at JFK.

As hospitality drives the major hotel chains, the Gerber group is the big kid on the block. The Stone Rose in JFK raises the bar and creates a whole new market for food and beverage brands. I’m sure that very soon other hospitality groups will get into the act. Will it be long before we see [Pure](#) at the Las Vegas airport? Or [Tao](#), LAX? How about [La Esquina](#), LaGuardia? Customers want things the way they want them, and that means everywhere. They want Whole Foods not Met Foods. They want high end design and style in their boutique hotel, not just in the room, but in the clubs and restaurants that bring the beautiful locals to them. Luxury, boutique brands, with increasingly enhanced amenities, will be available to them wherever they go. Thank god I have a place to hang and eat at JFK. The Delta brand means something more to me today than it did the last time I traveled. What a great idea. If I ever find myself in Santiago, Chile, maybe visiting my friend Lindsey Risk, I’ll stay at The W and visit the Gerber Group’s Whiskey Blue, W Lounge and Red 2 One. I know I can expect high design, great service and an understanding of my needs.